

**AMERICAN PRISONERS OF WAR IN
SOUTHEAST ASIA, 1970**

HEARINGS
BEFORE THE
SUBCOMMITTEE ON NATIONAL SECURITY
POLICY AND SCIENTIFIC DEVELOPMENTS
OF THE
COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
NINETY-FIRST CONGRESS
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AMERICAN PRISONERS OF WAR IN SOUTHEAST ASIA, 1970

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 29, 1970

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS,
COMMITTEE ON NATIONAL SECURITY
POLICY AND SCIENTIFIC DEVELOPMENTS,
Washington, D.C.

The subcommittee met at 10:05 a.m. in room 2255, Rayburn House Office Building, Hon. Clement J. Zablocki (chairman of the subcommittee) presiding.

Mr. ZABLOCKI. The subcommittee will please come to order.

This is the first in a series of hearings which the Subcommittee on National Security Policy and Scientific Developments is holding on the problem of American prisoners of war in Vietnam.

Last November, this subcommittee also held hearings on the prisoner of war issue. As the result of those hearings, we drafted and reported out a resolution calling on Hanoi to live up to the requirements of the Geneva Convention on prisoners of war and provide humane treatment for American military personnel they hold captive.

At this point I would like to introduce the text of that resolution into the record, without objection.

(The text follows:)

[H. Con. Res. 454, 91st Cong., second sess.]

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

Whereas more than one thousand three hundred members of the United States Armed Forces are prisoners of war or missing in action in Southeast Asia; and

Whereas North Vietnam and the National Liberation Front of South Vietnam have refused to identify prisoners they hold, to allow impartial inspection of camps, to permit free exchange of mail between prisoners and their families, to release seriously sick or injured prisoners, and to negotiate seriously for the release of all prisoners and thereby have violated the requirement of the 1949 Geneva Convention on prisoners of war, which North Vietnam ratified in 1957; and

Whereas the twenty-first International Conference of the Red Cross, meeting in Istanbul, Turkey, on September 13, 1969, adopted by a vote of 114 to 0 a resolution calling on all parties to armed conflicts to ensure humane treatment of prisoners of war and to prevent violations of the Geneva Convention; and

Whereas the United States has continuously observed the requirements of the Geneva Convention in the treatment of prisoners of war; and

Whereas the United States Government has repeatedly appealed to North Vietnam and the National Liberation Front to comply with the provisions of the Geneva Convention; Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate concurring), That the Congress strongly protests the treatment of United States servicemen held prisoner by North Vietnam and the National Liberation Front of South Viet-

nam, calls on them to comply with the requirements of the Geneva Convention, and approves and endorses efforts by the United States Government, the United Nations, the International Red Cross, and other leaders and peoples of the world to obtain humane treatment and release of American prisoners of war.

Mr. ZABLOCKI. Subsequently the subcommittee's resolution was adopted unanimously by the House and Senate. It was a demonstration of the unity of all Americans—regardless of their views on the war—in supporting the right of our American POW's to humane treatment, in accord with the dictates of international law.

IMPACT OF CONGRESSIONAL RESOLUTION

Recently, I asked the Department of State, the Department of Defense, and the Red Cross to provide the subcommittee with a report on how the resolution had been helpful to them in carrying out their work on behalf of our prisoners of war and their families.

Copies of replies have been provided this morning to members of the subcommittee. It is clear from the letters that the resolution has been useful in marshaling opinion here at home, and throughout the world, on behalf of our POW's.

I will not take time to read these letters this morning, but will put them in the record at this point, without objection.

(The letters referred to follow:)

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE,
Washington, April 15, 1970.

HON. CLEMENT J. ZABLOCKI,

Chairman, Subcommittee on National Security Policy and Scientific Developments, House of Representatives, Washington, D.C.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: Responding to the request received from your staff, I am glad to give you the following report on the use we have made of House Concurrent Resolution 454 expressing the concern of the Congress about the treatment of American prisoners of war in Southeast Asia.

Our delegation to the Paris meetings on Vietnam first informed the other side of Congressional action on this resolution following the hearings conducted November 13, 1969, by your Subcommittee, and approval of the Resolution by the Subcommittee and full Committee. On December 18, three days after the resolution was adopted by the House of Representatives by a vote of 405-0, Ambassador Habib made the following statement in the Paris meeting:

The demand that North Vietnam provide humane treatment for the POW's in this manner has wide endorsement in the United States and in the world at large. The House of Representatives of the United States has just passed unanimously a resolution on which states the following:

"Be it resolved by the House of Representatives that the Congress strongly protests the treatment of U.S. servicemen held prisoner by North Vietnam and the National Liberation Front of South Vietnam, calls on them to comply with the requirements of the Geneva Conference, and approves and endorses efforts by the United States Government, the United Nations, the International Red Cross, and other leaders and peoples of the world to obtain humane treatment and release of American prisoners of war."

The Senate added its unanimous approval to the Resolution on February 18, 1970. Ambassador Habib brought this confirmation of Congressional concern to the attention of the North Vietnamese and Viet Cong delegations in Paris on February 26, as follows:

Let me call your attention to the fact that on February 18 the United States Senate, by a unanimous vote, adopted a resolution concerning prisoners of war. The House of Representatives had earlier passed an identical resolution—also by a unanimous vote.

Let me read the operative portion of that resolution: ". . . The Congress strongly protests the treatment of United States servicemen held prisoner by North Vietnam and the National Liberation Front of South Vietnam, calls on

them to comply with the requirement of the Geneva Convention, and approves and endorses efforts by the United States Government, the United Nations, the International Red Cross, and other leaders and people of the world to obtain humane treatment and release of American prisoners of war."

A copy of the full text of Ambassador Habib's statement on this date is enclosed for your information and use.

In short, the adoption of H. Con. Res. 454 by both Houses of Congress without a dissenting vote has enabled our spokesman in the Paris negotiations to document the wide range of concern felt by the American people about the treatment of our prisoners of war, and has put the other side on notice that our Government will not rest until all the prisoners are released and the fullest possible accounting is received of the missing. Our delegation has raised the prisoner of war issue repeatedly in the Paris meetings as part of our wide-ranging effort to induce the communist authorities to live up to their obligations under the Geneva Convention to treat prisoners humanely. We have also sought to keep this subject constantly before the eyes of the world opinion. H. Con. Res. 454 has been and, we believe, will continue to be most helpful in these efforts.

Sincerely,

ELLIOT L. RICHARDSON.

ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE,
Washington, D.C., April 29, 1970.

HON. CLEMENT J. ZABLOCKI,
Chairman, Subcommittee on National Security Policy and Scientific Developments, House of Representatives, Washington, D.C.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: This letter is in response to the recent request from your staff for information concerning the specific use the Department of Defense has made of House Concurrent Resolution 454, which expresses the concern and indignation of the Congress over the mistreatment of American servicemen being held prisoners of war in Southeast Asia.

It is a pleasure to inform you that we immediately provided the Resolution to all of the families of the men who are captured or missing for their information and encouragement. Most impressive and gratifying to the families was the strong endorsement by the Congress of the efforts in behalf of the prisoners which have been undertaken by our Government, and by the many people and leaders around the world who have assisted in this cause.

Reports on the hearings regarding the Resolution have been of particular value. Upon our receipt of the initial stenographic transcripts of the hearings before your Subcommittee, we compiled information from those transcripts for distribution to over three thousand next of kin of the men who are prisoners or missing. We did the same with the complete hearings before your Subcommittee on November 13 and 14, 1969, entitled, "American Prisoners of War in Vietnam."

Since then, these documents have been used as authoritative reference materials by the wives and families of the prisoners, and by the many service officers responsible for improving the welfare of the next of kin and, wherever possible, the well-being of the men themselves.

There can be no doubt that House Concurrent Resolution 454 and the related documentation will remain a most useful and encouraging tool in our continuing efforts to bring about an early solution to this difficult and frustrating problem.

Sincerely,

G. WARREN NUTTER.

THE AMERICAN NATIONAL RED CROSS,
April 22, 1970.

HON. CLEMENT J. ZABLOCKI,
*U.S. House of Representatives,
Washington, D.C.*

DEAR CONGRESSMAN ZABLOCKI: The American Red Cross is continuing its action both on a domestic front and around the world to stimulate a universal awareness of the fact that the North Vietnamese have publicly stated they have no intention of abiding by the terms of the Geneva Convention for the Protection of Prisoners of War. Our efforts, however, are not only to arouse

world public opinion but to encourage our Red Cross counterparts in every country in the world, 112 in all, to take definitive action directly with the appropriate North Vietnamese authorities.

We are particularly appreciative of the action taken by the Congress in the unanimous adoption of Concurrent Resolution 454. We have taken this as an expression of a universal desire of the people of the United States that we should continue to press without letup in our national and international efforts in behalf of Americans held prisoners by the North Vietnamese.

We have given the Concurrent Resolution both national and international circulation. Our own house organ, the American Red Cross News-Letter, of which some 60,000 copies are printed, contained information on this action by the House and Senate. Copies have gone to all network TV and radio news bureaus, wire services, newspapers, magazines and business publications throughout the country. Copies are sent to all Government agencies and major business corporations. Through the facilities of our own organization, this newsletter has gone to all 3,500 Red Cross chapters and branches in every part of America; and through various press releases this information has been shared with Red Cross societies in every country in the world as well as with the International Red Cross headquarters in Geneva, Switzerland.

Our efforts to stimulate American public support by encouraging their direct communication with Hanoi have elicited, according to the Post Office, tens of thousands of letters, with a steady flow of letters pouring in every day. We further have received assurances from the Post Office Department that their information indicates the letters are reaching Hanoi via Moscow and Peking. Thus there is no doubt in our minds that the North Vietnamese authorities are getting a very clear picture of American sentiment on the prisoner-of-war issue.

We have no doubt but that the Concurrent Resolution has been of enormous help to us in this marshaling of American and worldwide opinion on the subject and we expect to make repeated use of it for that purpose in the future. Accordingly, it scarcely needs saying—but merits emphasis—that we are extremely appreciative of Congress' action in this matter.

Sincerely yours,

JOHN C. WILSON,
Executive Vice President.

OBJECTIVES OF THE HEARINGS

MR. ZABLOCKI. By reconvening our hearings on the POW issue at this time, we are seeking to accomplish several objectives:

First, we wish to continue to demonstrate the deep concern of the Congress over the fate of our prisoners of war, and the well-being of their loved ones here at home.

Second, we desire to be brought up to date on developments and events relating to the POW problem which have occurred in recent months.

Third, we want to hear testimony on behalf of other POW resolutions which have been introduced into Congress since last November.

Fourth, we wish to help bring attention to the bipartisan, congressionally sponsored rally May 1 at Constitution Hall on behalf of American prisoners of war and their families.

At this first hearing we are pleased to have as witnesses outstanding Members of Congress.

INTRODUCTION OF CHAIRMAN RIVERS

Our first witness is the distinguished Chairman of the House Armed Services Committee, our colleague, the Honorable L. Mendel Rivers of South Carolina. A very esteemed Member of Congress, Chairman Rivers is the author of a House Concurrent Resolution 499, which is directly concerned with the plight of our prisoners of war.

Mr. Chairman, we are indeed privileged to have you as the lead-off witness in this series of hearings, and we are delighted you were able to give some part of your valuable time this morning to appear before this committee. If you will proceed with your statement.

**STATEMENT OF HON. L. MENDEL RIVERS, CHAIRMAN, COMMITTEE
ON ARMED SERVICES, U.S. REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM
THE STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA**

Mr. RIVERS. Well, it is all right with me, you can just report the resolution out, without my remarks, Mr. Chairman, because it is a shame for you to waste those encomiums.

Mr. ZABLOCKI. On the contrary, your testimony will certainly assure us that the resolution not only will be reported unanimously by this subcommittee and our full committee, but approved by the Congress, by a similar unanimous vote.

Mr. FULTON. And the Republican side adds to that, too.

Mr. RIVERS. Thank you. Mr. Chairman, I want to thank you and your distinguished committee. I am not unmindful of what you have done in this area. As you know, we held hearings. I want to thank you and your distinguished subcommittee. I recognize, too, that you are very busy, and I am very grateful for this privilege of bringing my thoughts to your distinguished group.

At the outset, I want to say mine is a concurrent resolution expressing the sense of the Congress in so many words, that the issue of the POW's will be the prime discussion having priority over all other discussions, if and when this peace conference ever gets down to business at Paris, and I don't think there is any problem facing the people of the United States that is more paramount than that of the prisoners of war.

I recognize there is a division of opinion on the objectives of our participation in the war in Vietnam, but if there is one issue arising from that war on which all Americans can and should be united, it is the issue surrounding the treatment of the U.S. servicemen who are held captive by these savage Communists. These men have earned the full sympathy, understanding and support of every man, woman, and child in this country and, for that matter, in every free country in the world. Their plight and the plight of their families will be resolved only if we in the Congress continue to call the attention of the world to the outrageous and inhumane treatment these men are receiving.

The primary reason for this resolution is to notify the leaders of North Vietnam and the National Liberation Front that the Congress of the United States is united with this administration and the American people in demanding an immediate solution of the prisoner of war question. Regardless of other matters under discussion, this humanitarian problem, which is totally unassociated with either the military or political settlement of the issues, is, to us, our very first and highest priority.

POW STATEMENTS AT PARIS PEACE TALKS

Now, of course, I commend the President and Ambassador Habib for their efforts in raising this issue of prisoners of war at each of the sessions of the Paris talks—but through no fault of theirs, the dele-

gates from Hanoi and the N.L.F. have refused to respond. Let me quote from the text of remarks by Ambassador Habib at the Sixty-First Plenary Session of the New Paris Meetings on Vietnam, on April 2, 1970:

For some time now you have brushed aside our side's repeated efforts to take practical steps to carry out a humanitarian policy toward prisoners. There is no reason why we should not discuss and deal with the questions involving the treatment and release of prisoners of war. These are specific matters which can be discussed and resolved without delay. Humanitarian treatment of prisoners is an urgent problem even while the conflict continues in Vietnam. We have sought on this—as on other issues—to find ways by which each side could take measures that would contribute to progress toward a peaceful settlement.

As part of our efforts to assure prisoners the treatment that they have a legal and moral right to expect, we have sought to provide for repatriation of sick and wounded men held on both sides. Last week the Government of the Republic of Vietnam announced a decision concerning the unconditional repatriation of 343 sick and wounded prisoners of war. What is required in this case is only the simple step on your part of making practical arrangements for the safe repatriation of these sick and wounded prisoners. Are you ready to do so?

At the same meeting, Mr. Chairman, he later stated:

Your attitude toward discussion of relevant issues remains negative and unreasonable. This is clearly evident in your silence in response to our efforts to open the way to some meaningful discussion of the treatment and disposition of prisoners of war.

Your attitude toward the prisoner of war question is absolutely lacking in any humane consideration for the prisoners or their families. Your stubborn refusal to discuss this humanitarian question is appalling. It seems that you have no interest even in the fate of your own soldiers who have been wounded and captured while fighting for your side.

Let the record show the plain evidence that your policy toward prisoners and families of missing or captured men is utterly lacking in humanitarian consideration.

Let the record show that you callously turn aside an unconditional offer by the Government of the Republic of Vietnam to repatriate back to North Vietnam 343 seriously sick and wounded prisoners of war.

Let the record show that you have refused to identify all the prisoners of war you hold or to provide what information you have to families about the fate of other men.

Let the record show that despite your announcement last December that prisoners in North Vietnam would be allowed to send and receive letters once every month, three months have passed and still most prisoners have not been heard from even once during that period.

Let the record show that not even one prisoner of war you hold in South Vietnam has ever been allowed to write a letter to his family.

Let the record show that eye-witness accounts, photographs and other evidence demonstrate that Americans who fall into your hands face prolonged solitary confinement, inadequate diet, improper medical treatment, and oftentimes death—to be plain: uncivilized and inhumanitarian treatment.

Let the record show that you refuse to give impartial observers access to your prisoner camps in order to see what kind of treatment your prisoners are in fact accorded.

Let the record show that your side holds many seriously sick and wounded prisoners of war, as well as many prisoners who have been in captivity for extremely long periods of time—up to six years—and that you refuse to release these prisoners.

Let the record also show that you follow a policy of callous whimsy in dealing with the prisoners and their families. You allow some prisoners to write, you deny the same right to others. You receive some families who come to Paris, rebuff others. You answer a few requests for information from families or third parties, you ignore others. You are even capable of turning a deaf ear to appeals from young women trying to determine whether they are wives or widows.

We intend to keep this sorry record before you and before the world. We will not let you forget the plight of these prisoners or their families. You have a re-

sponsibility to them—both a legal responsibility under the 1949 Geneva Convention and a humanitarian responsibility which goes far beyond legal requirements. These are responsibilities which you cannot escape.

Yet despite these forceful pleas—which are not always given the news coverage they deserve—they have fallen on deaf ears of the representative from Hanoi and the NLF.

The time is now to focus world attention on this problem and this problem alone—unassociated with anything else. To refuse to negotiate on any other issue until this is resolved will spotlight the barbaric attitude of these Communist leaders toward this basic humanitarian problem.

HEARING BY THE ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE

On March 6, 1970, Mr. Chairman, our Committee on Armed Services held a hearing at which time we heard from the wives of five American servicemen who are either prisoners of war or missing in action.

By way of an interpolation, this hearing came after this resolution was introduced. This resolution was introduced in February, and we had them before our committee in March, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. ZABLOCKI. Mr. Chairman, we hope to have wives of prisoners of war before our committee this Friday, May 1.

Mr. RIVERS. I am sure you will be impressed, as we were. Now let me tell you about that hearing. The room was filled with the families of other missing servicemen. In my many years in the Congress, I have never seen a more emotional moment. These women, whose bravery equals that of our most gallant warriors, plead with us to show our concern over the plight of servicemen so held not to let their husbands or themselves be used as pawns of international politics.

Now that we are engaged in troop withdrawals, now that we have presented meaningful topics for discussing a political settlement—we in the Congress, Mr. Chairman, cannot sit idly by while the Communists classify our American servicemen they hold as war criminals.

Yet the Communists refuse to negotiate on this or any other matter until the United States has withdrawn all of its troops. We must break this stalemate. Other than the Communist nations, there is no country in the world that desires that this war continue. They all want the Paris negotiations to be meaningful.

So, if they are to achieve their objective, the most important issue, that of prisoners of war, must first be settled. To refuse to negotiate on any other issue until the question regarding care, treatment, and the release of prisoners of war is resolved, will force the leaders of the world to exercise, to the maximum extent possible, diplomatic pressures on the leaders in North Vietnam and the National Liberation Front, to resolve at least, this one issue—so that the question of a military and political settlement then could be discussed.

LETTER FROM A PRISONER'S MOTHER

We are compelled to act and compelled to act now.

In closing, let me read you a portion of a letter I recently received from Mrs. Robert Lee Kushner, mother of Maj. Harold Kushner, a physician, held in a prison camp in South Vietnam since November 1967.

I just wonder what the morale is of the American POW who went to Vietnam proudly representing his great country with the knowledge that we are the strongest, most resourceful country in the world and yet * * * and yet a tiny little rotten country is keeping the upper hand . . . while our boys are rotting away (for how ever long they can survive) and their own government for all intent and purpose has abandoned them.

These men deserve and should have first priority as troop withdrawal * * * yet, there is no plan for them at all. What chance will they have as the troops continue to be withdrawn?

I am no military strategist * * * and no politician * * * I am only a mother. Frankly, this situation is beyond my comprehension.

Please don't get the idea that I'm a cry-baby . . . would you believe that I've not shed one tear since we heard my son was missing in November of 1967 * * * I'm too stubborn and decided to wait for the luxury of tears until the great day when I will see my son and literally rain bucketsful of blessed tears * * * conversely, I think now is the time to try to rouse the powers-that-be into some sort of action * * * and yet we have not gotten to first base in Hanoi, in Paris, or even with our own in Washington.

I do know that you will keep the wellbeing and the release of the prisoners uppermost in your mind, and I pray that your influence can get the ball rolling and get these brave men home.

Mr. Chairman, this is not a Mendel Rivers job. I have no more dedication than the most junior member of your committee. We all have the job. There is enough dedication for us all. I know the sleepless nights you have experienced, and of every other member of this great body. I just hope that maybe this thought, which I have translated into a resolution, might do something. If we withhold any other discussion until we discuss what is happening to our flesh and blood, this will be worth it. And I know you will do the right thing. There is no question in my mind. I just urge you to—I hope this meets with your approval. If it doesn't whatever you do will have my full support, and I will back you to the limit, because I know the dedication each of you has, and I want to thank you for this hearing.

As I say, I know how many people pull at you all over the floor. I happen to be a committee chairman, and people come to me with all kinds of military problems, but if you could have seen the hearing I had, with these women, these wonderful girls, who would have made a resolution as I have, to do the very best I can, and I am sure when you will have the hearing, you, too, will continue the great work you have begun, in this great committee, and I want to thank you very, very much.

Now, I will be privileged to respond to any questions any of you gentlemen may have on this, Mr. Chairman.

EFFECT OF VIETNAMIZATION ON POW'S

Mr. ZABLOCKI. At the outset, may I commend you for your leadership and dedication in this cause. I want to thank you for the confidence you have expressed in our committee. I can assure you that your confidence will not be betrayed; at an early date, we will act on your resolution. I think that speaks for itself.

In your closing remarks, Mr. Chairman, quoting from a letter that you had received from one of the mothers of prisoners of war, Mrs. Robert Lee Kushner, prompts me to seek your comment on a report that was made recently. The Washington report of the American Security Council carried an article by Duane Thorin, a former POW in North Korea. In that article he speculates that the North Viet-

namese have shown captive American prisoners quite a few factual reports about the present Vietnamization policy. Mr. Thorin states, and I quote, "There is a disturbing inconsistency between the President's pledge to the families of captive and missing men in early December that he would negotiate a settlement as quickly as possible." The conflict, he maintains, is between that statement and the President's press conference statement on December 8, that he believes the Vietnam war will come to a conclusion regardless of what happens at the bargaining table, because we are replacing American troops with Vietnamese troops.

Mr. Thorin concludes that there is nothing within the Vietnamization policy that offers any solace or hope to the American prisoners of war.

Would you care to comment on Mr. Thorin's statement?

Mr. RIVERS. Well, if this is a criticism of the President, of course I don't. He deserves our understanding with all the things he has to do. I know this morning, I have a hard job, trying to get my \$21 billion authorization bill, which is much too little, but I am sure the President wants to do everything he can, and like the Tonkin resolution, I think any backing we can give the President will be a message to these people, because it is remarkable, the pipeline that this crowd has from Washington.

I had that Frishman boy before our committee, and he had an article in which he told about his cell, about the rats and the roaches and the filth and the dirt that these men have to endure in these prisons, these prisoners, these POW's. Have you had that young man before your committee?

Mr. ZABLOCKI. I have not.

Mr. RIVERS. His name is Frishman; he is a lieutenant. And you ought to hear this boy.

We had this young man who escaped after 5 years, and the only reason he escaped, the B-52's in South Vietnam, where he was, blew his crowd into smithereens. He was scheduled to be shot. I don't know how he survived 5 years. He is that little major, Major Rowe, I think, is his name. You should have heard his story, and he had it without one note. It rolled out of his head with a rote-like rendition that would stagger your imagination, as well as inspire you and compel you to determine to make a determination to do something. And, Mr. Chairman, we are dealing with savages. The most inhumane sadists—I don't know where they get all their ideas.

You ought to hear some of the stories we have heard, how they have treated the South Vietnamese. And that is the N.L.F. And these are rough people, and I think that we just put it right up to them, say: "Either you go do this or else we may have to lead into an ultimatum." An ultimatum of some kind.

And somebody asked me what it would be. I said it could be anything. I wouldn't rule out anything to these people. These men would ten thousand times rather be dead, and I am sure their families would rather they be, knowing that we tried to release them, than sitting there as they are, not knowing, never knowing, and I don't know how many of them have died. Nobody knows that.

But it is a tragic thing, and a perplexing one. It staggers the thoughts of everybody.

Mine is just one of many thoughts that have been brought to your attention, and I know, and it may be good, and it may not be good; you will have to determine that, and I am sure you will make a good determination. But this is the worst thing I have ever run into.

AN ULTIMATUM TO HANOI?

Mr. ZABLOCKI. The proposal of issuing an ultimatum to Hanoi has been made in some circles. Would you venture a timetable?

Mr. RIVERS. Absolutely. Absolutely.

Mr. ZABLOCKI. In your opinion, what would be ultimatum date?

Mr. RIVERS. I would say after such and such a time——

Mr. ZABLOCKI. Should we make it now?

Mr. RIVERS. I would have made it yesterday.

Mr. ZABLOCKI. By May 31, is it?

Mr. RIVERS. I would have made it yesterday. Yesterday was too late. I would say, "After such and such a date, we are putting you on notice, we will not be responsible for our actions, because of your treatment of the POW's." I would dress it up in some of this highfalutin' language that these State Department people can dress up stuff, but I would figure it so they could understand it.

Mr. ZABLOCKI. It is a difficult decision to make, of course.

Mr. RIVERS. It is.

Mr. ZABLOCKI. And if you set a date, propose an ultimatum, we had better be prepared to carry it out.

Mr. RIVERS. We had better be. As far as I am concerned, I am.

Mr. ZABLOCKI. And not to change our mind 24 hours before the target date.

Mr. RIVERS. That is right. I think you are absolutely right. We had better be able to do it, and make no mistake about it, make a resolution; but you must remember, Mr. Chairman, some of these people have been in prison for 6 years. How long is patience? How long is patience? And the Asians are known for patience. They will outwait you every time. An eon to them is nothing.

Mr. ZABLOCKI. An ultimatum, of course, is, as I said, a serious and risky step, particularly when some of our legislators, some of our national leaders, are proposing even softer approaches to the enemy that you have so graphically and vividly described.

Mr. RIVERS. Oh, yes. I had one young man come to our committee, he rolled off the names of five members of the other body so fast that it would make your head swim, and he said: "Every day, every day, every day, every day, their speeches were played over" to them, just poured out of these loudspeakers, speeches of members of the other body.

Mr. ZABLOCKI. Did the members of the other body hear Lieutenant Frishman?

Mr. RIVERS. I don't know whether they did or not. It would be a good thing, wouldn't it be? I don't know whether they did or not. But Rowe is the one they ought to hear. But they had them down fast. This boy said he had nothing else to do but go crazy. He said his buddy died.

Mr. ZABLOCKI. Mr. Chairman, I am sure the members of the subcommittee fully are aware of who the members of the other body might very likely be—the five members.

Mr. RIVERS. I can assure you that it is not the gentleman from Kansas (Mr. Dole) because if he is not a hawk, there never was one in the sky.

Mr. ZABLOCKI. Mr. Fulton.

Mr. FULTON. Thank you.

Mr. RIVERS. I mean, he is after me, you see, as a hawk, because nobody is ahead of me in this area—on winning the war, if that is what is called a “hawk.”

Mr. ZABLOCKI. Well, it is really not a disgrace to be called a hawk, but I would rather be called an eagle.

Mr. RIVERS. Well, I think an eagle, too, but, I guarantee, nobody is going to ever call me a capon. [Laughter.]

I am a Jim Fulton Democrat. I believe in fighting.

Mr. ZABLOCKI. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Fulton.

Mr. FULTON. We would like to welcome you here, because it is a time for plain and firm speaking by patriotic people. I want to congratulate you. Our committee needs people like you.

Mr. RIVERS. Thank you.

EMPHASIS ON THE PLIGHT OF PRISONERS

Mr. FULTON. Our committee needs people like you coming before it to emphasize this. I like the comment on the first page, “their plight”—and that is the plight of the prisoners of war—“and the plight of their families, will be resolved only if we in the Congress continue to call the attention of the world to the outrageous and inhumane treatment they are receiving.”

I liked, further on page 5, your particular reference that “The most important issue, that of prisoners of war, must first be settled.” I admire you for saying it, and I believe this subcommittee, every one of us, agrees with you wholeheartedly on that.

I like also the fact that you have brought up the humanitarian side and our willingness to do likewise, on page 2, when you say: “Last week, the Government of the Republic of Vietnam announced a decision concerning the unconditional repatriation of 343 sick and wounded prisoners of war.”

As a matter of fact, I am proud of the House of Representatives, that we unanimously, on several occasions, have made our feelings very firmly known on identification, the fair treatment, and the release of the prisoners of war, and living up to the Geneva Convention. This action has been unanimous each time in the House of Representatives.

Mr. RIVERS. Right.

FORMULATING A RESOLUTION

Mr. FULTON. So that we in the House have a clear record, representing the American people, and that is right across party lines.

Might I make you a suggestion on the form of your resolution, possibly that Congress requests the President to continue to make strong representations, so that we put the policy at the very top of the U.S. Government priorities. I believe we have had that emphasis already, both in our committee resolution and my motion to recommit.

I believe that we asked the President himself to continue to make these representations, so that it puts this policy highest on the list. Of course, we want the American negotiators at the peace conference in Paris to be instructed, but I would like to get something directly recommending to the President his strong continuing action. Would you agree to that?

Mr. RIVERS. Well, if you put the sense of the Congress in it. We can't direct him. It has to be the sense of the Congress. We can't direct the President.

Mr. FULTON. I agree, but we could request the President, though, to continue his efforts.

Mr. RIVERS. I don't see how it would hurt the resolution. I am sure you wouldn't want to weaken it. Anything that would strengthen it would be satisfactory to me.

Mr. FULTON. Thank you. Our subcommittee especially appreciates your taking the time to come on a very busy day.

Mr. RIVERS. It is going to be a busy one for me, but I reckoned it was the only time that you could hear me, and I am very grateful, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. FULTON. Thank you.

Mr. ZABLOCKI. Mr. Fountain.

COMMENDS CHAIRMAN RIVERS

Mr. FOUNTAIN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, I know how busy Chairman Rivers is, and we don't want to detain him any longer than necessary; he does have a bill to present on the floor today, I understand; but I do want to thank him for coming before the subcommittee and giving us the benefit of his views in support of the resolution.

He has made a very forthright statement, and in response to questions, as usual, he has given forthright answers. And I must say I share his views. It is almost inconceivable to me that a nation as strong and powerful as ours could have adopted the policy about the war in Vietnam that we have adopted in the last few years. I am fast becoming one of those who feel that we might as well get out of Vietnam, so long as we can do it consistent with the safety of our own men, if we are not going to stand firm and do those things which ought to be done in defense of freedom, especially for those who are prisoners of war.

I realize we have to be cautious that we don't further endanger the lives and the safety of these men who are prisoners; but would you agree, Mr. Chairman, that if the enemy is unwilling to negotiate first, in connection with release of prisoners of war, or at least give us the kind of information which would justify us in concluding that they are being treated properly, or will be treated properly in the future, that they are not going to negotiate on anything with any other serious consequences during that Paris conference?

Mr. RIVERS. I think that is what the resolution tried to say. That is what I tried to say.

Mr. FOUNTAIN. In other words, if they are unwilling, in the face of the impact of world opinion, to show even a little consideration for the men who are no longer fighting them, who are in their possession, who are captives, then it looks to me like we are wasting time in Paris.

Mr. RIVERS. Mr. Fountain, I get on the floor every year and tell the House what the military needs, and it is only a down payment, every year—roughly 20-plus billion dollars every year—to even keep us current. We are worse off now than we have been since I have been chairman—since I have been chairman—in the state of health of your military.

Somewhere down the line, this country has got to make a stand. It burns me up to see how Jerome Holland, whom I know, one of the outstanding Americans, an All-American at Cornell, he served on my draft panel, being assaulted by those people up in Sweden. The President ought to call him home, and as a first step, reduce that embassy to something less than ambassador. Holland is too great an American to have to undergo the indignities he has.

Now, these Swedes, in addition to decoying our boys up there and causing them to leave their own country, putting them in relief up there, or whatever they do, they have been pretty bad toward us, and they lack a lot of being on our side. Somebody has got to feel the determination of this country's might.

BOMBING NORTH VIETNAM

Now back to North Vietnam. The term that this country has made, as a first step, you ask me, would be the consideration for the resumption of the bombing north of the DMZ. That would be the first step. Now, if we are guilty of a crime against our own people, it is gradual escalation in Vietnam. We put our troops there, and escalated, and we have escalated up to 50,000 deaths—42 combat and the rest of them noncombat. We should have won this war, and we could have won it, but the boys who are captive, when they hear of these other boys going home, they are going to say: "What about us?"

Now let us consider as a first step the resumption of the bombing, and if this doesn't work, let us consider something else. Let these people see something of value begin to disappear from the face of the earth up there. All the military needs is the order. They can wheel and sway and swing high in the sunlit silence, and hovering there, as the poet says, they can push those craft through those footless halls of air, and nobody can stop them. All they need are the orders.

Now let this crowd find out that there is a new Commander in Chief, who means what he says. And if the Congress says, "We are willing to back you up; most precious things we possess are the men who are dying in Vietnam a slow death." And if they have got to die, when they come home, let us go up to Hanoi and bring them home in boxes. Some of them will be living. They have already learned that. Some of them will be living.

But let Hanoi know. There are a lot of things Hanoi has that they want to keep. One of them is Haiphong. There are tons of steel mills that McNamara didn't come any closer to them than he did to the Capital of the United States, when he picked out the targets.

Now, this is serious business, and as you have said, Mr. Fountain—I am tired of this war. If we are not going to win it, I accept this Vietnamization; I think that someday we have got to come to it. I have got that much sense, and I am backing my President to the hilt. He is the only one we have, and we will get nowhere cutting him down.

But we have got to back him up and give him ideas. And I consider as the first step the resumption of the bombing, after that ultimatum, and after you have given us something on the floor to work from. And I am sure you will give us the right thing. I have the greatest affection for you and the greatest confidence in your leadership, and the greatest regard for this committee. It is a great committee. You have done a ton of things since you came to Congress.

I remember what you did behind the Iron Curtain for your own people, the Poles, and think of that massacre, and all those things. I was here. I remember. And I know what Hitler did to the helpless people in Europe, and now we are getting a dose of it.

Now I am liable to make a speech if I don't get out, Mr. Chairman.

A WORLDWIDE TELEVISION PLEA ?

Mr. FOUNTAIN. Mr. Chairman, I just want to ask him one thing with respect to this resolution. Do you feel that it would be worthwhile if the President of the United States were to go on a worldwide television-radio program and concentrate his attention on the subject of our prisoners of war and say those things which he thinks are appropriate and which might be necessary not only in trying to get more of world opinion concerned and interested, and active, but also in having appropriate impact upon the enemy?

Mr. RIVERS. Well, let me answer you my way. A lot of people in Europe have suffered. They understand something. They would understand. But with the satellites, and Nixon's capacity to speak, plus the fact that he has some top-notch writers, he could go to the heartstrings of the mothers, the sweethearts, and the wives throughout the world. And I think if he would consider it, it would be worthwhile.

I would go to any extent to try to avoid any escalation of this war, any escalation. But we can't let our own feelings intervene all the time. I would try everything that I could.

Lyndon Johnson did it. He went to 16 nations at once, to try to get these people to talk. He said: "I will go anyplace, any time, any day," and he did it, and I am sure Nixon would do the same thing.

But I will leave that in your wise hands, and whatever you do, whatever you do, I will do everything I can to help you.

Mr. FOUNTAIN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. ZABLOCKI. Mr. Berry.

Mr. BERRY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Thank you, Chairman Rivers, for coming over here today, and every day that you are carrying out this great work. I have no questions. I just want to agree with you, so thoroughly, and I am confident that we could use a thousand words, but they don't understand that. The only thing they understand is determination and force.

Mr. RIVERS. That is right.

Mr. BERRY. And I would agree with you that we give them this ultimatum, and then if they pay no attention, then we block Haiphong.

Mr. RIVERS. There are a million things we can do. You wouldn't have to kill one person to render that port useless. There are more ways to render that port useless than a country boy can go to town.

Mr. BERRY. And I think that Moscow, if they saw that we meant business, would hurry to get their ships out of there.

Mr. RIVERS. Well, somewhere down the line, we have got to take a stand—somewhere down the line.

Mr. BERRY. I just want to commend you, and Senator Dole and the rest who are doing such a great job.

Mr. RIVERS. Thank you. I won't take any more of your time.

AMPLIFICATION OF HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION 499

Mr. ZABLOCKI. Mr. Chairman, I know that you are very anxious to get to your committee, but would you care to amplify the third resolve of your resolution? Would you care to amplify?

Mr. RIVERS. Anything you say.

Mr. ZABLOCKI. The resolution states that no other negotiations should proceed until there is substantive progress on the prisoner of war issue. Do you advocate that we discontinue our talks in Paris?

Mr. RIVERS. Exactly. Until this is done. And if they don't want to talk about this, pack your bags and come home. It has cost us tons of money. Have you ever talked to Cabot Lodge about his experience over there?

Mr. ZABLOCKI. Yes.

Mr. RIVERS. I talked to one of the most promising young gentlemen we had in the U.S. Army. He was over there with Lodge—a brilliant young man. I never saw such a discouraged person in my life. And Lodge was discouraged, and Lodge doesn't discourage easily. You know, he finally quit.

I have visited him and talked with him at length about their experience. They say they never had anything like that.

I would pack up and come home, and then I would decide something else.

Mao Tse-tung, the patron saint of this crowd, says: "All diplomacy begins at the barrel of a gun." Now, if anybody understands it, it is this crowd. And we are in a position to do a lot of things we have never even tried.

Mr. ZABLOCKI. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I join my colleagues in commending you, and I certainly will assure you we will act expeditiously as possible on your resolution.

Mr. RIVERS. Thank you.

Mr. FULTON. Your statement and appearance are very good.

Mr. RIVERS. Thank you very much.

INTRODUCTION OF SENATOR DOLE

Mr. ZABLOCKI. Our next witness today is the Honorable Robert Dole, U.S. Senator from Kansas. Senator Dole is a well-known former Member of this House. We have asked him to testify today about the spoken purpose of the rally at Constitution Hall next Friday, because of the leading role which he has taken in organizing that event.

Senator Dole, if you will proceed.

**STATEMENT OF HON. ROBERT J. (BOB) DOLE, A SENATOR FROM
THE STATE OF KANSAS**

Senator DOLE. Thank you.

Let me introduce, on my right, Mrs. Bruce Johnson, who is a Michiganiite, but now lives in Salina, at Schilling Manor—has just returned from Paris last evening, the most recent wife to visit Paris. I understand she did some outstanding work there.

Mr. ZABLOCKI. It is our intention to call on Mrs. Bruce Johnson right after your testimony.

Senator DOLE. Oh; fine. She can give me some moral support, then, today.

First let me say that I have listened with great interest to my friend Mendel Rivers. I am certain no one questions his honesty and integrity as he faces this issue.

I heard the reference to the other body, and I assume that must have meant the U.S. Senate. I, of course, recognize that there are differences of opinion over the war in Vietnam, some very sharp differences, in the Senate of the United States. I would point out that on Friday evening, on May 1, which happens to be Law Day, U.S.A., we are holding a tribute to American prisoners of war and those missing in action in Constitution Hall, at 8:00 p.m. We are now quite certain that over 700 wives and mothers and fathers will be here from all across the country. You haven't read about it in the press, but these are good, decent American people. They don't seem to attract the television notice or the widespread press notice that they would if they were here to burn the flag or to storm the Pentagon. These are Americans who have made great sacrifices, and who make the sacrifices day after day—not 2 days or 3 days but 2 years or 3 years, or 4 years, or 5 years.

I have had an interest, as certainly each of you has had a great interest, in American prisoners of war and in Americans missing in action. I know you have a great and a deep and abiding interest in veterans and servicemen, because I served with all of you for 8 years in this body. I am reassured every day in the Senate, and am thankful every day, that there is a House of Representatives.

EFFECT OF POW RALLY

I am not certain whether the tribute Friday evening will have any great impact on Hanoi or whether the resolution just discussed by Chairman Rivers will have any great impact. I am not certain whether the resolution passed yesterday, the Sikes resolution, which declares May 1 a Day of Recognition, and does express a sense of the Congress that the President declare Sunday, May 3, a National Day of Prayer for the humane treatment and safe return of American prisoners of war and Americans missing in action, will have any great significance.

But I do believe, after visiting at great length with a number of wives and families from all across the country, that this may mean better treatment for their husbands and sons. There is a strong feeling that the enemy knows what we do in this country. The enemy is alerted when we are doing something, so I strongly support not only the resolution introduced by Chairman Rivers but would like to stress as strongly as I can the need for public participation, the need to

demonstrate that Americans do care. Let me point out that my, I guess, negligence or neglect in a certain sense, was fully exposed when I attended a freedom rally in Constitution Hall on February 21, the day before Washington's Birthday this year.

It was organized by some well-intentioned people. There were a number of wives and mothers there. They were there to pay tribute to their husbands and their sons. It was a bipartisan meeting. I was on the program, representing Republicans; Congressman Tom Downing, an outstanding member of this body, was there to represent the Democrats. We recognize there is no partisanship in this issue.

We arrived, or I arrived at the Hall, expecting a good turnout. In fact, I had just passed a crowd flocking to the Washington Monument to demonstrate against the trial of the Chicago Seven. There were hundreds and thousands of people advancing to that area. So, as I approached Constitution Hall, I was at least hopeful there would be a reasonable number of people inside. I was deeply disappointed, and frankly, somewhat distressed, to find in a hall that seats 3,811 only about 250 people there.

I have a feeling that many of the wives were convinced that this is how much Americans care. So I said that day, in a moment when I felt as I do now, that we have a great responsibility, that I would undertake to fill Constitution Hall within 90 days. And this, of course, is about to result in the tribute we pay on May 1.

It is a nonpartisan, nonideological event. We are not there to discuss whether we should escalate or de-escalate. We are not there to discuss involvement in Laos or Cambodia. We are not there to discuss whether this President or this Republican or this Democrat has done more or done less. We are not there to criticize.

We will be there on Friday evening, at 8 o'clock, to pay tribute to some 700 or 800 wives and parents, and to do two things: first and foremost, to demonstrate that Americans do care. We are hopeful that 3,811 seats will be filled. And though we recognize that many Members of Congress have genuine conflicts they can't escape, we are hopeful that at least a hundred or more Members of Congress will be present, and we are quite certain that will happen.

DEMONSTRATE CONCERN TO ENEMY

We also wish to demonstrate to the enemy that Americans are concerned. We are willing to plead with the enemy, we are willing to condemn the enemy, but above all, we want them to know that we are concerned about Americans: that these are men.

In addition to Constitution Hall, we have an overflow auditorium, the Interior Department Auditorium; in addition to that, we hope there are so many people there that we will have to arrange some accommodations in the areas around Constitution Hall.

We have an outstanding program. Mrs. Johnson will be on the program. So will Mrs. Singleton, a personal friend of Congressman Olin Teague from Texas, and he will introduce her. Mrs. James B. Stockdale, who will be before your committee, will be on the program. H. Ross Perot, who has done a great deal for American prisoners of war, and has been successful in calling them to the attention of the American people, will serve as an honorary cochairman with Mrs. Stockdale. Captain James Lovell, one of our space heroes, will be

there, to demonstrate that, despite the moon madness that sometimes grips America, and despite what I feel was a disproportionate amount of publicity given to three men and two wives, and one mother—and we all prayed for the safe return of the astronauts, we have not forgotten that there are almost 1,500 Americans who have been prisoners and who have been in danger not for 2 days, not for 3 days, or 4 days, and whose wives have not been alone for 2 or 3 or 4 days but who have been alone for 2 and 3 and 4 and 5 years.

Captain Lovell recognizes this. He is a great American. He is a great hero, and he will be present.

In addition, there will be other outstanding Americans who will participate in the program, to let the wives and families know, that in addition to the speeches we make on the floor, that in addition to the letters we write when they contact us, that we are willing to go the extra mile, or willing to do what they feel we should do, to demonstrate that there is great concern.

I am puzzled at times, as I know the members of this committee are. We are frankly concerned whether we can fill Constitution Hall. If Abbie Hoffman would denounce this meeting, he would be on television and it might assure a good crowd. But frankly, it is distressing, and it is puzzling to understand the mood of America, or to reflect the mood of America when you cannot tell the story such as this to the American people.

BIPARTISAN CONGRESSIONALLY SPONSORED RALLY

We are using every resource we can—without the media, because they have been most reticent about publicizing this tribute, and we are not a group of kooks. It is a bipartisan committee. On the Senate side, we have Senator Muskie, Senator Mansfield, and Senator Stennis, Senator Goldwater, Senator Murphy, Senator Dominick, and myself.

On the House side, there are three Democrats and three Republicans: Congressman Daniels, Congressman Sikes, Congressman Teague, Congresswoman May, Congressman Roudebush, and Congressman McKneally, and I think that members of this committee would agree that they are responsible Members of the Congress. We have differing views on the war in Vietnam. We have differing views on our involvement there. But we have a common concern that our American men have been abused, and that the enemy has not lived up to the Geneva accords.

I certainly appreciate this opportunity to be here, and to discuss briefly and perhaps in a rambling way, what we hope to achieve.

On Saturday morning, following the Friday night meeting, the wives and the mothers and the fathers who are here will meet privately at 10 o'clock Saturday morning, in the Interior Department Auditorium. They will discuss what they might do next, again in the true spirit and the true American tradition of what they may do in a responsible way for their husbands and for their sons. Mrs. Stockdale will outline in some detail what they propose.

We have had great cooperation from the Defense Department in the effort on Friday. We have had great cooperation from everyone. I don't want to minimize the efforts of any Member of Congress; everyone we have asked to help or participate has done so.

HOUSE RESOLUTION ON MAY 1 OBSERVANCE

You are aware that on last Thursday, within 20 minutes after leaving my office, Congressman Sikes had discussed the resolution with the Speaker, Speaker McCormack, who gave it his strong endorsement, and the minority leader, Congressman Ford, and it passed the House within minutes. Every Member of the House was given 5 days to comment on that resolution. It came back to the Senate, where it was passed, with an amendment with reference to the Day of Prayer on Sunday.

It may be a very small thing that we are doing. It may not be newsworthy. But it is important, I know, to you gentlemen, and, I know, to the wives, such as Mrs. Johnson and Mrs. Stockdale and Mrs. Wynn, and many others.

It is also important to men in the service generally, not only the prisoners, to know that there is this concern. And it should be some reassurance, I hope, to those who are now in uniform, to know that if a similar fate should befall them, that the American people care, and that their elected representatives care.

So I would ask permission that my statement be made a part of the record. I may have omitted some of it, but I thought perhaps I could best express it this way.

(The statement referred to follows:)

PREPARED STATEMENT OF BOB DOLE, A SENATOR FROM THE STATE OF KANSAS

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee, I appreciate the opportunity to appear before you today to discuss American Servicemen who are being held as prisoners of war and are missing in action in Southeast Asia.

TREATMENT OF AMERICAN PRISONERS

If there is one issue today in our country that truly transcends all differences, it is that of the treatment accorded captured United States personnel. The United States has always maintained a strict national policy of fair and civilized treatment for prisoners of war and Americans of all political and philosophical persuasions have expressed their outrage and indignation over the unconscionable attitude and actions of the Viet Cong and North Vietnamese toward the prisoners in their hands. This Committee has received testimony which fully documents the humiliation and abuse to which captives have been subjected as well as the unpardonable manipulation of information on the status of prisoners and missing men.

These tactics strike a universal chord in all men of decency and honor, and we have seen the response in Congress. In the Senate and House, members from both parties have exerted determined efforts to obtain information about prisoners, exert Congressional authority and prestige in their behalf, and secure aid for their families. Any attempt to catalog the numerous endeavors by members of Congress would run a grave risk of omission, but I do wish to extend my congratulations to you, Mr. Chairman, to Members of the Committee, and to the whole House of Representatives for the role you have played. The Senate, also, has been involved in many efforts.

I would, however, take this opportunity to call the Committee's attention to recent events in which Congressional participation is playing a leading role.

MAY 1 TRIBUTE

To place these activities in perspective, I would recount a bit of personal History. On February 21, 1970, I attended a Constitution Hall "Freedom Rally" in support of prisoners of war. As you know, Constitution Hall is quite large. It can accommodate 3,811 people. Thus, you can imagine the disappointment of all involved in that event when only about 300 attended. Foremost among the

disappointed were numerous wives of prisoners of war and men missing in action who were present as guests of honor.

That night I resolved that Constitution Hall would be filled to give voice to a ringing tribute to draw the attention of all men of conscience and compassion to the plight of these valiant Americans. May 1 was chosen as the date.

Soon after embarking on this undertaking, I realized that such a project would be extremely complex. To better organize and express this tribute, I enlisted the aid of six colleagues. The distinguished Majority Leader (Mr. Mansfield), the Junior Senator from Arizona (Mr. Goldwater), the Junior Senator from Colorado (Mr. Dominick), the Junior Senator from Mississippi (Mr. Stennis), the Senior Senator from California (Mr. Murphy), and the Junior Senator from Maine (Mr. Muskie) responded enthusiastically and have been most generous in their assistance.

Six members of the House of Representatives also joined us. They are Mr. Roudebush of the Fifth District of Indiana, Mr. Teague of the Sixth District of Texas, Mrs. May of the Fourth District of Washington, Mr. Daniel of the Fifth District of Virginia, Mr. McKneally of the 27th District of New York, and Mr. Sikes of the First District of Florida. Their participation has also been highly vigorous and valuable.

The tribute will be nonpartisan and nonideological. Those assisting represent both parties and hold differing political viewpoints, but we all agree American prisoners have not been treated in accordance with the 1949 Geneva Conventions. And we believe they deserve America's unwavering support, regardless of any differences over conduct of the war.

Plans for the May 1 Tribute have been arranged in consultation with Mrs. James B. Stockdale, Coronado, California, National Coordinator of the National League of Families of American Prisoners in Southeast Asia, and H. Ross Perot, a Dallas, Texas executive who has been instrumental in promoting international efforts for the release of Americans.

Mrs. Stockdale and Mr. Perot agreed to serve as Honorary Co-chairmen for the event. We have received a response worthy of the men we seek to honor. Veterans organizations, civic groups and individual citizens have come forward volunteering every kind of assistance and support as well as seeking information about admission to the event.

CONCURRENT RESOLUTIONS OF CONGRESS

Although thirteen members of Congress have been directly associated in this effort, events of the past week have exemplified the interest and concern of all members. H. Con. Res. 582, expressing the sense of Congress concerning prisoners and missing servicemen, was brought up under suspension of the rules in both the House and Senate with the full cooperation of the Democratic and Republican leaderships. Its passage was secured in both bodies without objection.

Mr. Chairman, I request that H. Con. Res. 582 and its companion measure, S. Con. Res. 62, be printed in the hearing record following my statement. Incidentally, S. Con. Res. 62 is sponsored at the present time by 74 Senators.

APPEAL FOR INTERNATIONAL JUSTICE

You will note that the Resolution calls for commemoration of May 1, 1970, as a day for an Appeal for International Justice for all American POW's and MIA's in Southeast Asia.

We entitled our tribute "An Appeal for International Justice" and chose the date of May 1 because that date has been designated "Law Day U.S.A." by a Joint Resolution of Congress which makes specific reference to the ideals of justice under law between nations.

We chose to declare our support for these missing and captive Americans within the context of Law Day to emphasize our belief in the rule of law, especially the law of nations as embodied in the 1949 Geneva Conventions on prisoners of war. These Conventions are the definitive statements in international law concerning treatment of prisoners of war, and both North Vietnam and the NLF have persistently and callously violated them, notwithstanding ratification by North Vietnam on June 28, 1957. Despite ratification and the clear language of the Conventions, Hanoi and the Viet Cong have committed the following calculated violations:

They have refused to identify all American prisoners of war;

They have denied to American prisoners of war the right to communicate regularly by mail with their families;

They have refused to provide proper nourishment and humane treatment for all American prisoners of war, information on their detention camps and access by neutral observers; and

They have continued to detain the seriously ill and wounded.

SATURDAY MEETING

On Saturday, May 2, the more than 700 wives and parents of POW's and MIA's from every part of the Country who are coming for the Friday ceremonies will hold a meeting in Washington of their organization, the National League of Families of Prisoners in Southeast Asia. As I mentioned earlier, Mrs. James B. Stockdale is their National Coordinator, and speaking from personal knowledge, I can attest to their courage and gallantry, especially that of the wives who have provided such invaluable help with the May 1 arrangements. They are keeping a long and solitary vigil, and, second only to the men whose watch they keep, they deserve the fullest measure of American support and encouragement.

DAY OF PRAYER

H. Con. Res. 582 provides a means by which the entire American public can demonstrate its backing for their countrymen who are captive or missing in Southeast Asia as well as for the families who wait for them. Point 4 of the Resolution Resolves: "That the President declare Sunday, May 3, 1970, a National Day of Prayer, for humane treatment and safe return of these brave Americans."

The recent Day of Prayer for the safe return of the three Apollo 13 astronauts showed the depth of the concern Americans hold for those who carry our country's colors on distant and hazardous missions. I am sure a similar degree of concern and personal involvement will be shown for the fate of the 1,472 or more American servicemen who are captive or missing in Southeast Asia.

No more fitting culmination could be found for this weekend's activities. The efforts of the Appeal for International Justice and the meeting of the National League of Families can be joined on a massive basis by every American in his personal meditations and worship on Sunday.

Hopefully, the interest stimulated by these and other efforts will endure and grow. Hopefully, they will provide some measure of comfort and encouragement to the wives and families.

But our greatest hope is that our prayers will be answered and our men will be released and return to their loved ones and countrymen.

Senator DOLE. Let me give recognition, too, to the American Legion, and the Veterans of Foreign Wars, and the Paralyzed Veterans of America, and the Disabled Veterans, and every patriotic group that we have contacted has responded.

We think that this will be the largest gathering of wives and mothers and fathers in one place since the Vietnam war started; and whether we were for or against our involvement, whether we are for or against escalation or de-escalation, or complete withdrawal, this is probably the most significant gathering of Americans that we have had in this great city for a long, long time.

ROLE OF THE MEDIA

Mr. ZABLOCKI. Thank you, Senator, for coming before the subcommittee. I can assure you that not only the members of this subcommittee but our colleagues in the House are in agreement with the work you have done and I am sure join us in commending you for your efforts.

In a small way, we are trying here to point up the May 1 rally at Constitution Hall.

Senator DOLE. I am most grateful for your invitation to appear. I don't want to seem unduly critical of the media. Maybe it has been partly our responsibility, but it just puzzles me sometimes. A very outstanding newsman told me: "Well, this is a great thing, but it is really not news, because we have had prisoners of war for hundreds of years."

I can understand that perhaps it is not news in the sense that it is something that is precedent-breaking, but it is news that the prisoners of war, and Americans, are not treated humanely. That is news. That should be called to the attention of the American people. As far as I know, this is the first time an enemy has refused American prisoners, the great majority of them in any event, the right to communicate with their families. It is the first time an enemy has refused to repatriate the sick and disabled.

That should be news. We find plenty of space and plenty of time on radio and television to fault what Americans may do around the world. Perhaps with the help of this committee and the members of the committee, we can make this news and really sustain the interest of the American people.

That is all we seek to do. Because I believe, as I am certain the chairman and every American does, that these men should be treated humanely; and it just occurs to me that if the enemy were reading this, day after day, or knew that day after day, they were going to be exposed to criticism if they did not treat the prisoners correctly and in accordance with the Geneva Conventions, it would have a great impact.

I would like to make a part of the record the resolution passed by the House and Senate, the concurrent resolution, the so-called Sikes resolution.

Mr. ZABLOCKI. Without objection, it will be made part of the record. (The resolution referred to follows:)

H. CON. RES. 582

Whereas the health, safety, and well-being of every individual American serviceman is of great value and importance to this Nation; and

Whereas over 1,500 American servicemen are imprisoned by Communist forces in Southeast Asia; and

Whereas these captors have refused to identify all of these prisoners of war or servicemen missing in action or provide information as to their health and condition; and

Whereas these captors have denied these prisoners of war the right to regularly communicate by mail with their families; and

Whereas these captors have refused to permit the inspection of the facilities at which these prisoners of war are confined; and

Whereas these captors have refused to exchange or permit medical treatment of sick or wounded prisoners of war; and

Whereas the continued callous exploitation of these helpless men brings anguish and sadness, not only to the families and friends of these prisoners of war, but to compassionate people everywhere; and

Whereas the first of May of each year is recognized as a day of dedication to law and justice: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That it is the sense of Congress

(1) That Friday, May 1, 1970, be commemorated as a day for an appeal for international justice for all the American prisoners of war and servicemen missing in action in Southeast Asia;

(2) That men of compassion and good will throughout the world be urged to search all peaceful avenues available to insure that these men be treated humanely and fairly in accord with the standards established by the Geneva Convention;

(3) That every possible effort be made to secure their early release from captivity; and

(4) That copies of this resolution be delivered by the appropriate representatives of the United States Government to the appropriate representatives of every nation of the world.

MEMBERS CAN HELP IN THEIR DISTRICTS

Mr. ZABLOCKI. Again I want to assure you we fully agree with you, Senator. I was about to say that the meeting at 10 a.m. Friday, May 1, of our subcommittee is to call further attention to the 8 p.m. meeting. At 10 a.m., in the main Foreign Affairs room—that is room 2172 of this building, the Rayburn Building—we will hear testimony from five wives of American servicemen who are either known prisoners of war or listed as missing in action.

As you said there are so many of us in Congress who have had prior commitments. May 1 is Law Day, and we have made commitments to be in our own communities. We will, of course, be with you in spirit, and I, for one, intend to send a wire to the rally.

Senator DOLE. Fine.

Mr. ZABLOCKI. And I would hope that my colleagues would do likewise, and if we are not there in body, we will have our messages there.

Senator DOLE. The women understand the great demands upon Members. We were unable to acquire the hall until a late date, and I know the chairman and others have tried desperately to avoid their conflicts, but this is Law Day. One of the themes of Law Day, of course, is international justice, so we designated May 1, in any event, as an appeal for international justice, and we certainly appreciate your efforts.

Mr. ZABLOCKI. And, Senator, let me assure you that as I make my address on Law Day in Milwaukee, I will refer to your 8 p.m. rally at Constitution Hall.

Senator DOLE. That will be even more helpful.

Mr. ZABLOCKI. As I say, there are many interested people who cannot be present.

Senator DOLE. That spreads the message, and that is the hope that we have.

Mr. ZABLOCKI. And I hope you will bring that message to those who will be assembled, that there are meetings elsewhere in the country where, in spirit, they are with you at Constitution Hall, that Members of Congress are carrying the same message to their respective districts.

Again, congratulations to you.

Mr. Fulton.

TAKE ACTION TO SHOW SUPPORT

Mr. FULTON. You have made an excellent statement, and I believe, with you, this is the time for a firm position and plain speaking; so I congratulate you on it.

Secondly, I believe that your comment that the U.S. Congress should keep taking actions to show the spirit of the American people behind this particular problem is an excellent statement. We should be taking actions from time to time, so that we are keeping it in front of the general public, but also transmitting the message nationwide that this is of first priority to Congress.

There is no difference of opinion that I know of in the House of Representatives on this subject at all. As you know, we have had several votes on this particular subject, and each time, it has been unanimous.

Senator DOLE. Yes.

Mr. FULTON. So I want to assure the wives, families, and fathers and mothers and children, that Congress is deeply interested, that it is more than just a political matter with us, it is a matter of deep concern and one which many of us have had some experience with.

In my own district, we have several wives, parents, and families and we are doing the best we can, in our district, to see that, there is the information, and the adequate treatment, and then the exchange of prisoners of war.

So I strongly support this resolution and want to thank you as well as the wives and families present today. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator DOLE. There will be a great number here from Pennsylvania. Just as an example, there are 75 wives and primary next of kin from California coming. They consider it a highly significant event, and we hope the American people do.

Mr. ZABLOCKI. Mr. Fountain.

NEED TO PUBLICIZE CONSTRUCTIVE ACTIONS

Mr. FOUNTAIN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I know that there are others to be heard. I simply want to join you and other members of the committee in commending Senator Dole for his very forthright, meaningful statement, and commend him for the leading role he is playing in focusing attention, not only in this country but throughout the world, upon this problem. It is inconceivable to me that there will not be such an overflow crowd that you have to have loudspeakers, so that those who are standing on the outside will be able to hear what goes on, on the inside, and be able to participate from outside in spirit, in support of this drive.

I quite agree with you that one of the big problems in America, not just with the communication media but even in our own communities, is to focus attention on positive and constructive things. The tendency of people, too often, I think, is to be against something, to vote against something, rather than for somebody or for something; and I think the press and other communications media are reluctant for the simple reason that too often the general public does not show enough interest in this sort of thing.

But I think positive and constructive efforts such as the one you are leading are necessary and ought to be publicized. A press agent is needed, and I don't know of any better way of improving the image of the press itself, than for the press to concentrate the same attention on this constructive, positive approach that it focuses on those things which confuse and frustrate and result in all sorts of moral and spiritual deterioration in this country.

This event is news, of course, and the people want to know about it. It seems to me that you will have a very large crowd, if this is properly publicized. People don't go to things they don't know about, and we have so many things to read about. Frankly, I didn't know about this meeting myself until yesterday. We have so much to read.

But it needs to be publicized, and there are places where it does reach the people, and we know, radio and television, as well as the news media, and the front pages especially, and headlines, attract attention, and they can always find appropriate headlines for things that really make news.

And so I want to join you and commend you in what you are doing and express the hope that you will have a tremendous outpouring of expression on behalf of what you are doing with sympathetic understanding for the wives and mothers, the sweethearts and loved ones, of these men who are confined in prisons of the enemy.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. ZABLOCKI. Mr. Fraser.

WHAT FOLLOWS THE RALLY?

Mr. FRASER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I first want to join my colleagues, Senator, in commending you, and I think the chairman and the others have spoken for all of us. I don't think there is any question but what North Vietnam is in violation of the international agreements with respect to the treatment of prisoners. It is very difficult to understand why they should pursue this line.

Having lost a member of my own family, not in war but in another way, I can well understand that the uncertainty that is involved here would be even more devastating, more difficult to bear, than the knowledge that one's loved one either was living or had been killed.

What happens if nothing follows as a result of this effort? What do we do next?

Senator DOLE. Well, I have enough confidence in the wives and families to think that something will follow. They will have a private meeting on Saturday morning, of wives and parents. I understand at that time they intend to take some action to gain some official identity and then to plan what they may do next.

But they understand that every Member of the Congress is sympathetic. As you might guess, though, sometimes they wonder why we can't do more. I am not certain what we can do. We can pass resolutions, we can make statements, we can participate; we can't demand and can't extract the man from the enemy.

So, hopefully, this is a beginning of a sustained effort to just keep it in its proper perspective. We are not trying to go overboard, as far as any dramatization, but if there were 900 people gathering to storm the Pentagon, that might be a headline, but the fact that 900 wives and mothers are here to pay tribute may not even make the first two or three pages.

Perhaps I believe it should have equal treatment; and I might say to Congressman Fountain that we have a number of publicity features coming today and tomorrow and the next day, and there have been many areas where the media has been most helpful.

The hearing on Friday morning, and the hearing today, with Chairman Rivers and Mrs. Johnson present, should give us the impetus we need for Friday.

If you have any suggestions on what might happen after that, the wives are looking for ideas, desperately searching for ideas. You may know that in one area in Minneapolis, they had a sort of a post

card operation, and with the help of the Red Cross, and the radio and television station, in a very short time, over 25,000 people in that area had signed cards addressed to the enemy, expressing their feeling about the issue.

Maybe this is insignificant, but there is a great morale boost to the wives. So it was meaningful.

“DEEP SYMPATHY AND CONCERN”

Mr. FRASER. Well, I don't have any good suggestions, Senator. I think any way that can be developed to try to influence the other side to comply with, it seems to me, just elementary decency, wholly apart from international conventions, ought to be pursued.

As you know, I would like to see this war brought to an end, and I guess everyone would. I would probably move out of it more rapidly than others would, but the problem of getting the North Vietnamese to comply with these agreements, I think—I have been quite aware of the plight of the wives. I think we all have. The media have provided that information, even to their various efforts to call attention to the plight they find themselves in. I think probably because there is a general consensus, though, which is both one of deep sympathy and concern, that the media doesn't find this to be newsworthy, and the news seems to dwell on conflict and confrontation.

I am not sure if there were more publicity what that would lead to in turn.

What we really need is to find a way to make something happen that will bring an end to this situation. That is, I guess, what our goal is.

I don't know what to suggest, beyond what is being tried here, and I think it is a good effort. I am very much in support of it.

I want to commend you and the others for working on this.

COMMENDATION OF SENATOR DOLE

Mr. ZABLOCKI. Mr. Berry?

Mr. BERRY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I have no questions. Only to say, Senator Dole, that I want to commend you and the others on both committees who are doing such a good job. I only regret that I won't be able to be here, because I have to go out home tomorrow afternoon. And I should add this: That I appreciate the opportunity, Mr. Chairman, to be here, because I am not officially a member of this subcommittee. I guess I could be classed as representing the silent majority. But keep up the good work.

Thank you.

Senator DOLE. Well, just let me say, I recognize that as the chairman, Congressman Zablocki, has said, there are many who can't be here, but his suggestion is an excellent one—and if you are speaking in South Dakota, North Carolina, or Minnesota, it would be most helpful to call attention to this. The wives aren't asking sympathy; they want awareness.

That is an excellent suggestion that you have, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. ZABLOCKI. Well, I have suggested that those of us who will be absent send a telegram.

Mr. BERRY. Oh, yes; excellent.

Mr. ZABLOCKI. While we are in our own districts we can refer to the rally at Constitution Hall, and bring the message to our people.

Senator DOLE. And call attention to the fact that the resolution passed by the Congress with reference to Law Day contains a phrase with reference to international justice.

Mr. ZABLOCKI. Yes.

Senator DOLE. I am going to stay with Mrs. Johnson for a few minutes.

Mr. ZABLOCKI. You are welcome to stay, Senator.

Senator DOLE. She has done a great job, and we are proud to have her living in Kansas on a temporary basis; and we hope, for her sake, and her family's, it is very temporary.

TV ARRANGEMENTS FOR RALLY

Mr. ZABLOCKI. Just a final question, Senator Dole.

What arrangements are being made for national television coverage, which could be used, then, worldwide?

Senator DOLE. We are contacting the networks, and there will be press conferences Friday with Mrs. Stockdale and Mr. Perot and others. I will be on the "Today Show" tomorrow morning with reference to this program.

We have others working on coverage of the event, and this is why we think it is so important that there be people standing in the aisles. We want the message to go to the enemy, in a proper way, to let the enemy know that this is how Americans really feel. We recognize some of the problems the press and networks have so we are making every effort we can to contact them. If any one here has any way to contact the media for us, we are always appreciative, and the wives appreciate those efforts.

We have talked to Peter Kenney at NBC, he is working on it; we have talked to Mr. Galbraith of CBS, and ABC has been most helpful, and generally they are coming around.

Mr. ZABLOCKI. It is at such times as this that I regret that our House meetings are not televised. Television is prohibited under the House rules but I think the meeting Friday morning could have very well been televised, if we didn't have restrictive regulations.

Thank you, again, Senator.

Senator DOLE. Thank you.

Mr. ZABLOCKI. We wish you well, and commend you for your work.

INTRODUCTION OF MRS. JOHNSON

At this time, I would like to call on this lovely lady, Mrs. Bruce Johnson, of Salina, Kans., who returned on Tuesday from Paris, where she had several meetings with the National Liberation Front, in an attempt to learn the whereabouts of her husband, an Army major who has been listed as missing in action in South Vietnam since 1965.

Mrs. Johnson is the mother of three children.

Mrs. Johnson, we are extremely pleased to have you with us. If you would detail for the committee your experience of the past few days, and give us any thoughts which you might have on the problem of American prisoners of war, we would be deeply grateful.

STATEMENT OF MRS. BRUCE G. JOHNSON, SALINA, KANS.

Mrs. JOHNSON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I appreciate this opportunity to meet with you today. It is difficult for me to express how encouraging it is to find that within America today there is a growing awareness and interest in the problems and fate of our men who are the missing in action and prisoners of war. It seemed for many years that this was not the case and the public was not aware of this terrible situation within many homes and lives. It is indeed encouraging that the awareness and concern of this difficult problem is resulting in hearings such as these.

At this point, I especially wish to express my gratitude to Senator Dole of Kansas, to Senator Griffin of Michigan, and to Congressman Harvey of Michigan. I feel fortunate in that these Senators and Representative of my home States are not only concerned about the prisoners of war and the missing in action, but that they are willing to put expression to their concern and are willing to act on their concern—that our men have effective voices to speak on their behalf while they are in circumstances where they cannot speak for themselves, is as important to the other wives here in this room, I am sure, as it is to me.

I also welcome this opportunity to, hopefully, shed a little light on one particular aspect of the prisoners of war and missing in action problem in Southeast Asia and call your attention to those American men who are missing or are being held as prisoners of war in South Vietnam and Laos. These men comprise almost one-half the total number of men missing in action and prisoners of war in Southeast Asia. These Americans are not held in Hanoi and they seem to be the forgotten of the forgotten.

My husband is a career Army infantry officer who became missing in South Vietnam on June 10, 1965. During these many years there has been no word from my husband, nor has there been any information learned about his present whereabouts or circumstance. My situation is not unique. No wife or relative of any of our missing in the South or captured by the National Liberation Front or enemy forces in the South, has ever heard from her loved one. No letters have come out of the South or from Laos. No address has ever been provided by the National Liberation Front so that we might send packages to our loved ones held in the South. The National Liberation Front has never provided even a partial list of these American men they hold captive. In February of 1970, as the apparent results of press pressure regarding these facts, a spokesman of the National Liberation Front finally gave the name of one American Army officer who is held by their side in the South. This was the first, and remains the only instance, to my knowledge, that even one name of an American prisoner of war was provided.

The American prisoners of war and missing in action, who are believed held in the South by enemy forces, include every man who became missing wearing an Army uniform (with the exception of three or four Army men who became missing in the North) and all of the ground combat Marine forces who became missing as a result of actions in South Vietnam. There seems to be so little public awareness of the plight of these Army and Marine men—there seems to be so

little emphasis placed on the terrible circumstances under which these captured American ground forces must live and endure, month after month, year after year.

SENDS PACKAGES AND LETTERS

Of course, I have sent packages to my husband, as I'm sure other wives and relatives whose loved one became missing in the South, have done. For six Christmases, I have prepared and mailed a package that I hoped would reach Bruce. Year after year these packages are returned to me, marked "refused." The National Liberation Front still provides no address nor does it give any indication that they will receive or allow packages for our husbands. I continue to write letters. During the first year or two, I sent them to an address in Algiers, and in these past years, to an address in Cambodia. These letters have never been returned to me, but there is really no evidence to support, or reason to believe that our men in the South ever receive the letters that we send to them. Of those few men who have escaped from the South and who have been repatriated, not one has indicated that he received mail. Not even one letter had been received by an Army officer who had been a prisoner of the National Liberation Front for more than 5 years before his escape.

Since the peace talks began in Paris, I have sent many letters to Madam Binh asking for some word of my husband. I have always felt such an assurance that Bruce is alive despite these years without word of him. Feeling as I do, I could not, with honesty, ask, "Am I a wife, or a widow?" I can only share these years with my husband in prayer and concern for his well being and wait for that day of his return. For our children, it is especially difficult, as it is for all children of our missing in action and prisoners of war. For the most part, our children sense my own feelings and share the belief that their father is alive, but still there are times of deep uncertainty and distress for them. The last time the children saw their father was in 1964 and their ages were 4, 3, and not quite 2. When their father became missing in 1965, our oldest son was 5, our middle child, Bryan, was 4, and Colleen was 2. Today their ages are 10, 9, and 7 so you can see our children have lived most of their lives not knowing so important and basic a matter as whether their father is alive or whether he is not.

TERRIBLE BURDEN ON CHILDREN

If I could perhaps share with you just a few of the difficult moments that the children of our missing men face, I think it would help us realize the terrible burden of hardship that is imposed upon so many little ones across our Nation by the present attitude and policies of the National Liberation Front, the North Vietnamese and the Pathet Lao in not giving information on whom they hold and in not permitting communication between the men and their children, wives, and parents.

When Colleen Joy was 3 and 4 years of age and she would see a father and his little girl together. I would notice her walk several paces backward from the father and child and I could see how closely she would watch and observe their relationship. She was so intently

interested in how a father and his daughter related to each other. She would never enter into the situation. It appeared that she did not know how to relate to a father, so she would only quietly stand back and study and try to learn about fathers in this way. How wonderful it would be if little girls could know if their fathers were alive; how wonderful if fathers could write to their little girls.

Our middle child, Bryan, is our sensitive child. I suppose that many of the little boys of our missing in action and prisoners have dreams of their fathers. Bryan came to me one morning only a few weeks ago and said, "Mamma, I had a dream of Daddy last night." "Did you, Bryan, what was Daddy doing?" "The Vietcong were beating Daddy, but I saved him and we ran away." I asked, "What did Daddy look like, Bryan?" He replied, "I didn't see his face." I said, "Why didn't you see his face, Bryan?" My child looked at me and answered, "Because I didn't remember what Daddy looked like." How great a burden could be lifted from our children if they could believe and be assured that their fathers were not being treated cruelly by their captors.

One of the painful experiences of our oldest child, Bruce, occurred when he was in the third grade. His class was making valentines to be sent to each of their fathers. It was a rather typical school exercise common in the life of all schoolchildren. Bruce began to cry and could not prepare a valentine for his father. He was, even then, knowledgeable enough to feel that even if the valentine were sent to his father, the Vietcong would not permit his father to have it. Bruce is not prone to crying, but apparently the situation hurt him especially badly at this time. How much it would mean to so many children, if they could believe that the Vietcong would permit their fathers to receive their valentines—to receive the letters that they do write.

These are just three examples of what goes on in so many homes across America each day. I think sometimes we all have a tendency to overlook the pain and sorrow that is a way of life for the children of American prisoners of war and missing in action. Because children can not always express themselves as we wives and parents do, we must not forget that perhaps, second only to their fathers, they are suffering most of all.

APPEAL TO MADAM BINH

As I have mentioned, there have been many occasions when I have written to Madam Binh asking her for some word of my husband. She is, I believe, the mother of two children, and in one of my letters I asked that information on the status of my husband be granted, even if not for my sake, then for the sake of our children. There has never been a response to any of my letters. I had sent a telegram to Madam Binh asking for information, telling her that my children and I were anxiously awaiting her reply. Again, there was no response.

Finally, on April the 9, I sent a telegram to Madam Binh stating that I would be arriving in Paris on April 17.

I requested an audience with her in regard to my husband, Army Maj. Bruce Johnson, who had been missing in South Vietnam since June 10, 1965. I mentioned that I would contact her residence upon

arrival. I did arrive in Paris on Friday the 17th, and almost immediately, as soon as I could find an interpreter, I did contact the residence of Madame Binh. I stated that I would like very much to speak with Madame Binh. I was told that Madame Binh was very busy and could not speak or meet with me, but I did converse in English with a woman who described herself as a secretary of Madame Binh. She stated to me that they did not know I was coming.

I mentioned that a telegram had been sent, but really didn't dwell on that aspect. I expressed by desire to speak with Madame Binh in regard to my husband.

I was told again, by the secretary, that Madame Binh was very busy, and that she could not meet with me. I asked if there was anyone with whom I might speak in regard to my husband. She said "No, there is no one."

I asked again, "There is no one who could tell me the status of my husband?"

The reply was "No."

I told her of the length of time that my husband has been missing, and the fact that not one word has been heard of him; not one letter has been received. I repeated my request to have someone meet with me and give me some information on my husband. Her response was that war is a tense time. She stated, and I quote, "We do not know of our men; why should you know of yours?" Before I could comment too much further, there was a click on the telephone, and she had hung up.

I was not able to give her my telephone number, or the hotel at which I was staying, nothing further.

Of course, she had my name, but I thought if they had wished to contact me, they would have been unable to do so.

Within moments, I was preparing a letter to Madame Binh. I don't know that I would wish to take the time to read all of it to you gentlemen, but in part I thanked her for the opportunity of speaking with her secretary in English. I again mentioned how earnestly I had hoped to hear some word of Bruce, particularly for the children's sake, who even then were anxiously awaiting word of their father, in Kansas. I hoped that she might understand the concern I felt, and expressed that even if she could meet with me only very briefly, that certainly this would mean much to me. In closing, I requested an appointment for the following Saturday morning. I stated that I would be at her residence at 10:30 a.m., and if this were not convenient for her or did not fit into her schedule to please contact me at my hotel, or leave a message. I personally took this letter to her residence, gave it to a man at the gate. I saw him hand carry this letter into her residence.

I received no word or message from Madame Binh or her staff that the meeting could not take place. I received no telephone call, and the following morning, Saturday, at 10:30, at the stated time, I was at the gate of her residence. I was told by a caucasian who spoke French that Madame Binh was not in. When I asked for her secretary I was told that the secretary, also, was not in.

It was suggested after much deliberation—he would talk with me at the gate, and then return into the residence to apparently consult with someone—and after a considerable length of time, that I was to

leave my name and the telephone number where I might be reached; this, of course, I did, although they already had the information. He also volunteered at that time that possibly Madame Binh might be in at two, so on that very afternoon at 2:30, I once again contacted the residence of Madame Binh, and asked to speak with her. I was told, "Madame Binh is resting."

Sunday evening, I once again called the residence and was told by a man who spoke French (and at this time I did not have an interpreter with me) that he could not speak English. The conversation did not go on.

INTERVIEW WITH EMBASSY EMPLOYEE

On the morning of Monday, the 20th, I again called the residence of Madame Binh and again spoke to the same secretary. Our conversation was in English and I stated once again that I had come here alone for the purpose of learning the fate of my husband and surely this was not too much to ask, that someone meet with me after all of these years and tell me of his fate. The secretary told me that Madame Binh was very busy, and that she would not be able to see me, but she said, "Here is Madame Binh's reply to you, and to all the other wives and families of American Army men, and I quote:

Since the American Government has sent American Army men to South Vietnam to wage an aggressive war against the South Vietnamese population, it is responsible about the fate of these Army men, and on our part, we have always advocated and put into practice a humanitarian policy toward the American Army men who have come to make war against our people and who have been captured by the Liberation People's Party.

At my request the secretary repeated the reply slowly and carefully so that I could copy it down on paper. As we continued in our conversation. I asked her, then, why in all of these years, almost 5 years, if the policy of the National Liberation Front is a humanitarian one, as they say that they are, have I been unable to hear from or receive a letter from my husband? I expressed that surely it would be a part of a humane policy that a man would be allowed to write to his wife and his children, in 5 years.

She stated to me that in war, it is a difficult situation to know where anyone is. At this point, she responded, "Ask President Nixon where he is."

I believe I replied by saying that President Nixon doesn't know where my husband is; that my husband is not missing in the United States. I added that no one knows where he is except someone of the National Liberation Front.

I asked her again, "Is there anyone with whom I might speak?" If I went to Vietnam, would there be anyone there who could tell me the answer to this question?

Her response, again, was just a simple "No," and she said in war it is difficult to know, she continued on that, where people are, their own people, our people, and again stated that I already had Madame Binh's reply to me. Shortly, she ended the conversation by stating that another phone was ringing and said, "I must go now."

As I continued to think about our conversation, I couldn't help but realize that despite the difficulties of war, 5 years should be a sufficiently long period of time for any organization or government to learn the status of a man. I couldn't help but recall, too, that the one

wife who was given information on the status of her husband by the National Liberation Front was the wife of a man who had been held for approximately 2 years. I felt within myself that even under the most inefficient circumstances, surely 5 years should be a sufficiently long time to ascertain the status of a prisoner or a man missing in action.

Again, I wrote to Madame Binh, expressing this thought, that 5 years would seem a particularly sufficient length of time to obtain information on a man, and that I did not feel her answer was sufficient, because I had come only to learn of the fate of my husband, and her response did not tell me where my husband was.

I sent this letter special delivery.

I called again the following morning, and was told that the letter hadn't been received. This time, the secretary of Madame Binh would not speak English, so the entire conversation was carried on with my interpreter, in French, and in part she went over our previous conversation and stated that already Mrs. Johnson had been given her response in regard to her husband and that basically her statements were the same in that they did not know of my husband, and, finally, the conversation was ended when she said, "We are too busy to continue to take all of these calls."

LETTER TO NLF OFFICIAL

That was on Tuesday. That Tuesday afternoon I wrote a letter to Mr. Ly Van Sau, which perhaps I could share with you. It was dated April 22. Mr. Ly Van Sau, as perhaps you gentlemen already know, is the one person of the National Liberation Front who had ever met with any relative, wife, child, mother, or father of any man who is missing in the South, and only that one such meeting has, to date, occurred. He is a member of the delegation at the Paris peace talks.

DEAR MR. LY VAN SAU: I have come to the Bureau of Information of the National Liberation Front here in Paris to leave this message and to ask if I might meet with you. I am deeply concerned about the fate of my husband, Army Maj. Bruce G. Johnson. My husband became missing in South Vietnam on June 10, 1965. There has been no word from him or of him in all these years. I came to Paris on Friday, April 17, and despite my many attempts to meet with Madame Binh or to obtain word on the status of my husband, I still do not know of his circumstances. Madame Binh's reply to me was not sufficient, as I still have no word on the fate of my husband. I can recall that just recently here in Paris, you were able to meet with an American wife and tell her the circumstances of her husband. It would be so difficult, as I am sure you can understand, to return to my children without word of their father. I appeal to you to take even a little of your time to meet with me regarding this matter. I anxiously await your response.

I hand carried this letter to an office address in Paris proper. It is called the Bureau of Information of the National Liberation Front. I gave it to a young lady who would appear to me to have been a French girl. I saw no one else there. She seemed quite receptive about taking the letter. I told her that it was for Mr. Ly Van Sau and that it was very important. She stated that he was not expected there that day (Wednesday), but that she was expecting him sometime on Thursday, which was also the day of the talks. She assured me that she would give him the letter. I thanked her, and I left.

I attempted no contact with Mr. Ly Van Sau on Thursday realizing that because of the talks he quite legitimately could not be available to meet or talk with me.

On Friday morning, I returned to the bureau of information. This time I was met at the door by a Vietnamese man. I had gone alone, and again, being unable to speak Vietnamese or French, asked to speak with Mr. Ly Van Sau, or if he were not there, inquired as to whether he had left a message for me. The Vietnamese man who answered the door indicated that he could not speak English and after a short time, he went to get another Vietnamese man, who was able to speak English.

I again went over the distressing situation of having come to Paris, of having been there for quite some time and of having hoped to learn some word of my husband. This man seemed to understand. In fact, he stated many times, "I understand. I understand very well." He said that he, himself, did not know of my husband's fate or circumstances. He did not give his position in the National Liberation Front, nor did I ask him of his position. He stated to me that Mr. Ly Van Sau was gone, and that he would be gone for a week. I explained to him that because I came to Paris on my own means, I would be unable to remain that much longer and asked if there were someone else who was taking Mr. Ly Van Sau's place that I might meet with or speak with in this regard. He was able to give me the name of the gentleman who apparently does replace Mr. Ly Van Sau when he is away, a Mr. Tran Van Hue. I asked him if I might use his name in calling Mr. Hue, as a referral, and he was willing to do that. This man at the bureau of information was kindly and helpful and made no rude statements in regard to my husband or my country. I called the number of the residence of Mr. Tran Van Hue that afternoon and I was told by whoever answered the phone that Mr. Hue was not there, that he was in Germany, but that he was expected back late Sunday evening.

It was suggested that I attempt to call him the following Monday morning.

CALLS MR. HUE AGAIN

On the following Monday, which I think takes us to about the 27th, I again placed the call. In a short time Mr. Hue was on the phone and we conversed without an interpreter in English. I told him why I was contacting him, expressing myself very much in the same way as I did in the letter to Mr. Ly Van Sau. He expressed his deep concern, and the main point of his conversation was that in Paris, their delegation was there to negotiate a peace. He said the delegation did not have any information on the prisoners of war, and when pressed regarding the matter of my husband's situation, he kept suggesting that I contact the Red Cross of the National Liberation Front.

At one point, I asked him if the International Red Cross committee could contact their Red Cross. He seemed reluctant to express himself too clearly, I felt, on this matter. He continued to state that I should refer any questions about prisoners of war, or about my own husband, to their own Red Cross, their "personal Red Cross." I asked him where their Red Cross could be reached in Vietnam, and he said that I might address any inquiries or whatever to the National Liberation Front Red Cross in care of any of their embassies in countries where the National Liberation Front is recognized. He listed some of these countries mentioning, Cuba, Algeria, Tanzania, Egypt, and others.

I asked him what he felt I might tell my children, after my having come here and going home without being given any word of their father. He told me to tell them that he gives them their deepest sympathy, that he is a father and that he can understand. He stated that he had lost many relatives in the war.

His general theme of conversation with me seemed to be without insult to me, my husband, or my country.

I returned to the United States yesterday evening. I had spent approximately 10 or 11 days in Paris trying to learn some word of my husband's fate. I have had three conversations with the woman who describes herself as a secretary of Madame Binh. I had the conversation with the member of the delegation, Mr. Tran Van Hue, and then, of course, the meeting with the man at the bureau of information.

But, still despite my efforts, I will be returning to my children, and will not know the answer, the one answer for which I had gone.

COMMENDS MRS. JOHNSON

Mr. ZABLOCKI. Thank you, Mrs. Johnson, for sharing with the subcommittee your efforts in trying to locate your husband or obtain some news about Maj. Bruce Johnson. I know my colleagues join me in extending our admiration of your courage, and there is little that we can say at this time that would be comforting. But I can assure you we join you in your hope and prayers that the whereabouts and the fate of your husband, and indeed all prisoners of war, will soon be known and in whatever way we can join in your efforts and the thousands and millions of others, hundreds of thousands, rather, of Americans, who are concerned, we will do the utmost.

Mrs. JOHNSON. I appreciate that statement. I think perhaps I can say for myself as well as for all of the wives who are here today, that more than concern for us, we would ask a concern for our men.

I listened with complete interest to the statements of Senator Dole and Mr. Rivers in regard to America and our policy.

I think that it would not be, perhaps, overly dramatic to say that the problems of our prisoners of war and missing in action could be viewed as a national emergency. I would ask each of you to realize that many of us wives and parents have acted spontaneously as a result of our own love and caring for our husbands and sons and have done all that we can to attempt to change their awful plight and gain some information on the status of our loved ones. Our efforts and love, alone, are not enough; no more than it would have been enough, if, during the difficult days when the spaceshot and astronauts were in great distress, for the flight center, the engineers, and all other Americans to have wrung their hands and expressed great concern, but then said, "All right, Mrs. Lovell, you and all of the other wives and parents of the astronauts may come to the controls and do what you can to save your husbands and sons." In some respects, this seems to be the situation that we find in America in regard to the terrible situation of the prisoners of war and missing in action.

I am deeply convinced that this matter must not only be a matter of top priority in those homes where that loved one is missing, but

it must become a matter of top priority within our Nation—from each home and heart across our land reaching even to the highest levels of our Government.

I know that this problem is a unique one and a terribly difficult one for our country, but I am completely confident that America has the talent, the dedication, and the abilities from within her greatest natural resources—her people—to honorably find the solution to this problem.

There has never been a difficulty or problem too great for the American people to solve—and with all America joining together in prayer and in action, we will not fail these, our men, nor will we fail America.

Mr. ZABLOCKI. We surely join you in your confidence Mrs. Johnson. Let me commend you for the eloquent way you have presented your statement.

Mrs. JOHNSON. Thank you.

Mr. ZABLOCKI. Mr. Fountain?

“THE POWER OF PRAYER”

Mr. FOUNTAIN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I want to join you in commending Mrs. Johnson and thanking her for coming before the subcommittee. I am one of those who believes strongly in prayer, and I do think that somewhere, some time, in some way, shape, or form, if enough of us humble ourselves, and pray to the Almighty, The Creator of the Universe, that he might inject into the hearts and minds of the enemy, and those who have custody over our men, and those who continue to make war that the Almighty might find the way, and decide in His own wisdom that something has to be done, and that the impact would be upon the right thinking people among the North Vietnamese. I am sure there are some wonderful people in North Vietnam, quite a few, no doubt, who are concerned about your husbands as well as about their own people, but regrettably, they are not in places of power; they are not in places where they can do anything about it. And so I am extremely interested in that part of the resolution, that amendment, calling upon the President to proclaim a Day of Prayer.

I realize that oftentimes, this sort of thing is looked upon as something on the surface, something that is useless, something that may be political, but it seems to me that an appropriate declaration, under proper circumstances, could have a tremendous impact. I think all Americans, the most privileged people in all the world, need to recognize the power of prayer, and need it more desperately, I think, than people in other parts of the world, because the advantages we have far exceed those of anybody else. When we see the moral deterioration which is taking place in our land, in such a variety of ways, that in itself is sufficient incentive for us to recognize the need for prayer.

But I do hope that we can encourage enough people to recognize that there is a Creator; that man did not make himself, and that the universe did not create itself. In His own way and in His own time the Master will find an answer, through the minds and hearts of men.

Before Senator Dole departs, I would like to take this occasion to commend him again, to say I am proud of him because he has joined

our brothers in the other body. We were fortunate enough to have him as a member of the Committee on Government Operations and we were honored to have him as a member of the subcommittee which I had the honor of chairing when he was here in the House. He served with distinction here, and in a very short time in the Senate he has already demonstrated his capacity to do the same thing in that body, and I am hopeful that in a variety of ways the background and training and experience which he received in the House which I do think probably more nearly represents all of the people of America than the other body will enable him to inculcate into that institution some of those characteristics which I think are desperately needed for a better understanding of the problems we face.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator DOLE. Thank you, Mr. Fountain.

Mr. ZABLOCKI. Mr. Fraser?

Mr. FRASER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I want to join in the statements of the chairman, and I want to thank you, Mrs. Johnson, for the very graphic and moving account of your efforts, and I hope that some answer is found.

Mrs. JOHNSON. Thank you.

CORRESPONDENCE PUT INTO RECORD

Senator DOLE. Mr. Chairman, would you be willing to have her letters made a part of the record.

Mr. ZABLOCKI. I was about to ask Mrs. Johnson if she would be willing.

Senator DOLE. We can make copies for her and send them over.

Mrs. JOHNSON. I am not sure that I have them complete here.

Mr. ZABLOCKI. You will receive a transcript of these hearings in order to correct your testimony. At that time you may add the letters to the transcript. We will be delighted to have them.

(The correspondence referred to follows:)

(Copy of telegram sent p.m. of April 9, 1970—told by Western Union it would arrive the following morning)

MADAME RICH,

Provisional Revolutionary Government, 49 Avenue Cambaceres, Veurievia-le-Buisan, 91 Esome France:

I will arrive in Paris on April 17. Request audience with you regarding my husband, Army Major Bruce G. Johnson, missing in South Vietnam since June 10, 1965. Will contact your residence upon arrival.

KATHLEEN JOHNSON,
Salina, Kans.

(Copy of letter taken to residence at approx 5-5:30 p.m. on April 17th—seen carried into residence)

FRIDAY, APRIL 17, 1970.

DEAR MADAME BINH: I was pleased to have the opportunity to talk with your secretary this morning. I, of course, had so wanted to speak with you in regard to my husband, Major Bruce G. Johnson (OF102205) who is missing in Vietnam. I can appreciate that you are a busy woman since you occupy so high a position within the National Liberation Front.

I'm sure you know, Madame Binh, how earnestly I have yearned to hear some word of my husband in all these many years and how our children, even now, are anxiously awaiting my return with word of their father.

I hope you will understand the concern I feel for my husband and will graciously try to find time to meet with me, even if only very briefly.

It occurs to me that it might be easier for you if I could come to your residence and not further inconvenience your schedule by meeting you at another place. With that in mind, may I come to your home tomorrow morning, Saturday, April 18th at 10:30 a.m.? I will look forward to meeting with you at this time unless it is too inconvenient for you. If this does not meet with your convenience, would you please call me at my hotel and leave a message at the hotel for me.

Sincerely,

KATHLEEN B. JOHNSON.

(Mailed spec. del. at 11 a.m.) Special Delivery

TUESDAY, APRIL 21, 1970.

DEAR MADAME BINH: For many hours, I have reflected upon the conversation that I have had with your secretary yesterday. Still it remains impossible for me to understand why you choose not to meet with me as I came only to ask that some word of my husband's circumstances be granted and that I might return home to my children with word of their father.

I realize that there are difficulties in war but as I thought of this, I recalled how just recently one wife was told by a representative of the National Liberation Front, here in Paris, that her husband is alive and well. As I further thought on this matter, I could not help but realize that since my husband, Army Major Bruce G. Johnson (OF102205) has been missing since June 10, 1965, there has been a sufficiently long period of time to permit information of a status to be learned, even under difficult circumstances. As a mother, surely you must sense the terrible hardship that is placed upon my children as they wait and hope for word of their father.

I have written to you on numerous occasions regarding my husband's status and there had been no response from you. Also, I had sent a cablegram for information and there was no response. Now I have come to Paris to ask to meet with you. Surely you can not consider my request for such a meeting unreasonable after so many years have passed during which there has been no word of my husband or from my husband.

Even if a meeting would not be granted by you, I feel that it would be no more than humane to tell me or to ask your secretary or someone from your delegation to tell me of the exact status of my husband.

I came to Paris only for this information and for my children's sake, it would be difficult, indeed, to return to them without word of their father. I await your reply.

Sincerely,

KATHLEEN B. JOHNSON,
Mrs. Bruce G. Johnson.

(Copy of letter to Mr. Ly Van San, April 22, 1970)

APRIL 22, 1970.

DEAR MR. LY VAN SAN: I have come to the Bureau of Information of the National Liberation Front here in Paris to leave this message and to ask if I might meet with you. I am deeply concerned about the fate of my husband, Army Major Bruce G. Johnson (OF102205). My husband became missing in South Vietnam on June 10, 1965. There has been no word from him or of him in all these years.

I came to Paris on Friday, April 17, 1970, and despite my many attempts to meet with Madame Binh or to obtain word on the status of my husband, I still do not know of his circumstances. Madame Binh's reply to me was not sufficient as I still have no word on the fate of my husband.

I can recall that just recently, here in Paris, you were able to meet with an American wife and tell her the circumstances of her husband.

It would be so difficult, as I am sure you can understand, to return to my children without word of their father. I appeal to you to take even a little of your time to meet with me regarding this matter. I anxiously await your response.

Sincerely,

KATHLEEN B. JOHNSON,
Mrs. Bruce G. Johnson.

Mr. ZABLOCKI. Thank you. We want to thank both of you, and before we adjourn, I would like to ask permission, if there is no objection, to include in the record of these proceedings, a report from the Department of State entitled "Prisoners of War."

Without objection, it will be made a part of the appendix of the record.

(The report referred to may be found on page 118 of the appendix.)

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. ZABLOCKI. Our next meeting in this series of hearings on the prisoners-of-war problem will be, as I stated earlier, on Friday, May 1, at 10 a.m., in the main Foreign Affairs Committee room. We invite you again, Mrs. Johnson, if you are free, to come.

Mrs. JOHNSON. Thank you.

Mr. ZABLOCKI. The witnesses at that time will be five wives of American servicemen who are either known prisoners of war or listed as missing in action.

The subcommittee will also hear testimony from Mr. H. Ross Perot, the Texas businessman, who has been very active on behalf of our POW's and their families.

I would also like to remind the subcommittee that tomorrow, Thursday, at 2 p.m., in this room, we will hear testimony on the foreign policy implications of satellite communications. Our witnesses will be the Director of USIA, the Honorable Frank Shakespeare; Dr. Joel Bernstein, of AID, and Mr. Arnold Frutkin, of NASA.

Again, Senator, thank you, and Mrs. Johnson, for appearing before our committee.

Senator DOLE. Thank you.

Mr. ZABLOCKI. The subcommittee stands adjourned.

(Whereupon, at 12:10 p.m., the subcommittee adjourned.)

AMERICAN PRISONERS OF WAR IN SOUTHEAST ASIA, 1970

FRIDAY, MAY 1, 1970

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS,
SUBCOMMITTEE ON NATIONAL SECURITY
POLICY AND SCIENTIFIC DEVELOPMENTS,
Washington, D.C.

The subcommittee met at 10:20 a.m. in room 2172, Rayburn House Office Building, Hon. Clement J. Zablocki (chairman of the subcommittee) presiding.

Mr. ZABLOCKI. The subcommittee will please come to order.

Today we open a very special session in our series of hearings on the problem of American prisoners of war in Southeast Asia, special because we have with us as witnesses five wives of American servicemen who are missing in action, are known prisoners of war in Vietnam.

Moreover, in the audience today are many persons who have loved ones held captive by the enemy in Vietnam—wives, children, mothers, fathers, brothers, and sisters.

They have come to Washington today to participate in the bipartisan congressionally sponsored rally to be held tonight at Constitution Hall at 8 p.m. We are indeed honored and privileged to have so many of you with us on this occasion.

At this time I would ask all of you here who have a relative missing or captured in Vietnam to rise and be recognized. [Applause.]

Permit us to pay tribute to you and give you our assurance that we will do everything in our power to speed an early return of your loved ones.

At this time we will hear brief statements from five wives of American prisoners of war on men listed as missing in action. In a sense they are not only speaking for themselves, but for all of those in this room and, indeed, in this country who have relatives missing or captured in Southeast Asia.

In this order we will hear from them: Mrs. Karen Wood of Tucson, Ariz., and Waunakee, Wis.; Mrs. Jane Denton of Virginia Beach, Va.; Mrs. Lorraine Ramsay of Jacksonville, N.C., and New York. Mrs. Ramsay has with her two sons, Mark and Brian. Mark and Brian, will you rise, please. [Applause.]

Mrs. Valerie Kushner of Danville, Va.; and Mrs. Sybil Stockdale of Coronado, Calif.

In your presentations, ladies, we would appreciate your first telling us something about your own personal situation and then sharing with us your ideas about what the Congress and our Nation might do to bring effective relief to your husbands, yourselves, and your families.

Mrs. Wood?

**STATEMENT OF MRS. KAREN WOOD, TUCSON, ARIZ., AND
WAUNAKEE, WIS.**

Mrs. WOOD. Thank you.

Mr. ZABLOCKI. Excuse me for just one moment. I have been asked to ask Mrs. Robert Hill and Mrs. Karen Roach of California to raise their hands. I understand a member from California is anxious to know if you are here and wants to contact you.

Mrs. WOOD.

Mrs. WOOD. Thank you.

My name is Karen Wood. My husband, Lt. Col. Patrick H. Wood, was an Air Force jolly green rescue helicopter pilot. On the 6th of February 1967 he was flying a rescue mission over North Vietnam. After picking up the pilot that had been shot down, the helicopter was hit by heavy ground fire and burst into flames. It was hit a second time and it exploded.

The effect of the explosion caused the paramedic to be physically blown from the plane and he was later retrieved. The helicopter went into the side of a mountain. There were no survivors seen nor anyone heard from.

We have six young children at home, all of whom live as I do, in a very uncertain situation. It has been over 3 years. We have absolutely no knowledge as to his fate.

I am one of four wives from Tucson, Ariz., who have just completed a trip to nine countries: Respectively, Ottawa, Canada; London, England; Bonn, West Germany; Copenhagen, Denmark; Stockholm, Sweden; Vienna, Austria; Belgrade, Yugoslavia; Geneva, Switzerland; Cannes and Paris, France.

Our trip was financed by individual contributions from the people of Tucson. The purpose of our trip was to bring before the people the problems surrounding the prisoner-of-war situation in Southeast Asia.

We met with government officials and Red Cross representatives. We urged them to use every opportunity to express their concern to the North Vietnamese Government. Through the news media we reached thousands of people, telling them of our individual situations, stressing the fact that this is a humanitarian problem rather than a political one.

We urged the people to show their concern by writing the North Vietnamese in Paris and Hanoi, asking for humane treatment of the men and release of all names of detainees.

Without exception we were received courteously and sympathetically by all officials. We were assured of their concern and of the fact that they would avail themselves of every opportunity to express their concern on behalf of prisoners of war.

TRIP TO STOCKHOLM AND PARIS

On February 12, 1970, we wrote the North Vietnamese in Stockholm and Paris, informing them of our intended trip and requesting appointments. We received a reply from the North Vietnamese from Stockholm March 28, 2 days before we were to leave, telling us to work through the Committee of Liaison in New York.

We called the committee and asked for their assistance. Upon arriving in Stockholm, we sent a note to the North Vietnamese Embassy, advising them that we planned to come to the Embassy that day. When we arrived, we were told by a secretary to the North Vietnamese that there was no one available to see us as "Vietnam Week, organized by the Swedish people to support the just struggle of the Vietnamese people against U.S. aggression in Vietnam, begins from the 6th to 12th of April and all Embassy officials are going to different provinces to take part in those meetings and will only return to Stockholm next week. Therefore, it will be impossible to arrange an appointment as you have requested."

The North Vietnamese in Paris said by telephone that as they had no information on our husbands at the Embassy there was no point in granting an interview, and that all letters written to men in North Vietnam and information about them should be sent through the Committee of Liaison in New York.

They volunteered the information that all men held in North Vietnam would be writing to their families. Two of our group whose husbands are in a missing status, Mrs. Appleby and I, made a personal attempt to see the delegation, but were refused again.

All of us made a last attempt to deliver our petitions containing 48,000 signatures, asking for humane treatment of prisoners of war to the Embassy, along with letters from families. These were not accepted.

The only country we were refused admittance to was Poland. The reason given was that we were "too political."

We hope that we have affected public opinion, if only in a small way. We feel that only by a constant continuing effort will the public react to our plea for letters to the North Vietnamese on behalf of men missing in action and prisoners of war.

Thank you.

WHAT CAN CONGRESS DO TO HELP FURTHER?

Mr. ZABLOCKI. Thank you, Mrs. Wood.

Is there anything further that the Congress of the United States can do to assist your husband?

Mrs. WOOD. I feel, as I am sure many of the other wives feel, that at every opportunity, every Congressman, every Senator must speak out on behalf of the men who are missing. Only by constant attention to this problem will any positive good results come for our men.

Mr. ZABLOCKI. Unfortunately, quite a few Members of Congress have had prior commitments, today being Law Day in their districts. I can assure you that they will call upon Hanoi and the Vietcong to expedite the release of your husbands. I think their activity in their respective communities will be helpful.

Tonight's massive rally at the Constitution Hall will be a forward step. Speaking out 1 day is not enough. We must do it continuously.

Thank you for coming before this committee and presenting your excellent testimony.

I now call on the Congressmen to see if they have any questions or comments.

Mr. Broomfield?

Mr. BROOMFIELD. No questions.

Mr. ZABLOCKI. Mr. Fountain?

Mr. FOUNTAIN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. No questions.

I simply want to thank Mrs. Wood and the others for coming before the committee. I am hopeful that the impact of your presence here will prove to be meaningful. I think Members of Congress are just as confused and frustrated about this whole affair as anyone else. But I think the chairman has already assured you that we will continue to do everything we can in the hope that the power of public opinion and the power of God will have an impact upon the enemy and cause them to release information about our men who are prisoners of war.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. ZABLOCKI. Mr. Buchanan?

Mr. BUCHANAN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mrs. Wood, I would simply like to echo what the chairman and other members have said, that not only do you have our profound sympathy, but anything further that we can do to assist in this situation. I certainly know that your testimony today and your presence will help.

Thank you.

Mr. ZABLOCKI. I will now call upon our colleague, Mr. Broomfield, to introduce Mrs. Denton.

Mr. BROOMFIELD. Thank you very much, Mr. Zablocki.

It is my pleasure to introduce to our committee Mrs. Jane Denton, of Virginia Beach, Va. She is the wife of Navy Capt. Jeremiah Andrew Denton, Jr., whose aircraft was shot down over North Vietnam on July 18, 1965. He has since that day been a prisoner somewhere in North Vietnam. Although Mrs. Denton has had occasional messages during the last 5 years, she has been unable to obtain definite information about the extent of his injuries or his present physical condition. Despite these uncertainties, Mrs. Denton has managed to maintain her family of 7 children and to press courageously for the release of her husband. I know we all will profit from her testimony.

STATEMENT OF MRS. JANE DENTON, VIRGINIA BEACH, VA.

Mrs. DENTON. Thank you.

Mr. Chairman, members of the committee:

I appreciate the opportunity to speak to you this morning on behalf of the American prisoners of war and the missing in action in Southeast Asia. My husband, Navy Capt. Jeremiah Andrew Denton, Jr., is one of those prisoners.

Five years ago this month he said goodbye to me and to our 7 children and departed for the Far East where his squadron had been ordered to join our military forces operating off Vietnam. Three months later, on July 18, 1965, his aircraft went down over North Vietnam and he and his navigator, Lt. Comdr. William Michael Tschudy, were captured and have, since that day, been held prisoner somewhere in that far-off land.

These past 5 years have been incredibly difficult ones for his parents, our children, his brothers, and for me. But we can only surmise what horrors they have held for him. In one way our family is fortunate.

My husband was acknowledged as a prisoner a few days after capture and we have heard from him. Having watched other wives go month after month and year after year waiting for that letter that never comes, many of them not even knowing whether or not their loved ones survive, I fully appreciate our good fortune in having been spared that anguish.

However, beyond this I have little consolation. My husband will soon be 46 years old. I do know he was injured upon ejection from his aircraft and has suffered illness during his captivity. He has been quoted in the foreign press as having told a newsman that he had been ill with high fevers and that he believed he suffered from malaria. I have reason to believe that most of his time has been spent in solitary confinement. How devastating that must be to a vibrant, active man.

In May of 1966 my husband appeared in a television interview released by a Japanese news agency and shown around the world. I saw him, gaunt and haggard, subjected to an inquisition the obvious object of which was to force him to repudiate his country. Instead he expressed his loyalty.

We saw that night a shell of the man who had left here the year before. It was not easy to see one's husband or father in that condition and not be able to reach out and help him. It is still painful to visualize him that way, but that is the mental picture I carry of him to this day.

That was 4 years ago. What must his condition be now? How long will he have to wait and have I waited too long to speak out? These are questions which torture me.

WIVES SEEK PUBLIC SUPPORT

After years of silence and patience, we families decided to speak out and seek public support for our men. People around the world have responded to our plea and here in the United States the response is overwhelming. This is one issue on which the American people stand united.

We are not involved in the debate on whether we should or should not be at war in Southeast Asia; nor were our husbands. As military men they did not make foreign policy. Their job was to implement it. Ours is an appeal for human rights—a call for compassion!

We ask for compassion for our men over there. And we ask for compassion for the parents of those men—many of them aged. We ask, also, for compassion for our children. Many of our young children have never seen or cannot remember their fathers.

Can you imagine what it's like to have your young child go up to a stranger in uniform and ask, "Are you my daddy?" or have her ask you year after year "Do I really have a daddy?" This may seem like emotionalism, but I'm merely telling it like it is. These are everyday occurrences in the families of the prisoners of war.

In July of 1968 Minister Xuan Thuy, chief North Vietnamese delegate to the Paris peace talks, stated that once we stopped the bombing of North Vietnam the prisoner-of-war issue could be discussed.

Well, we stopped the bombing 18 months ago and still we wait for those discussions to begin. How could we be patient any longer?

I know our Government is concerned about the prisoners of war and the missing in action. Last week President Nixon spoke to the Nation about the war in Vietnam and I quote him. "My responsibility," he said, "as Commander in Chief of our Armed Forces is for the safety of our men, and I shall meet that responsibility."

I believe he includes the prisoners of war in that statement, but I do not believe strong enough action is being taken in their behalf. More strenuous efforts must be made now because time might be running out for some of them. As we withdraw troops and wind down the war, these men cannot be abandoned to chance or to the good will of their captors.

Mr. Chairman and members of this committee, I ask that you commit yourselves to the task of exploring every possible avenue which might lead toward a release of prisoners. Our men have suffered long and terribly. They cannot help themselves and so we ask that you help them.

I appeal to this Government to use every means at its disposal to persuade the Government of North Vietnam, the National Liberation Front, and the Pathet Lao to begin exchanging prisoners, to immediately release a complete list of prisoners held, and to accord them decent humane treatment for the remaining days of their captivity.

These men, who risked and lost their liberty so that we might enjoy ours, must not be forgotten.

Thank you.

Mr. ZABLOCKI. Thank you, Mrs. Denton, for your eloquent statement.

May I repeat that we pledge our efforts to expedite the identification, location, and the status of your husbands. We will try to initiate action for their early release. We also have heard eloquent testimony Wednesday from Mrs. Johnson, what difficulties she has, as a wife of a prisoner of war, what a difficult time she had in even trying to meet any of the North Vietnamese or the VC's in Paris.

Our reports are that our diplomats have difficult problems in trying to even discuss this matter. Our Government has tried at every opportunity to bring this into the negotiations at Paris. And I am sure we all are still very anxious for you to spell out for us what more strenuous efforts do you really have in mind besides talk? Because the Communists don't seem to have ears.

Mrs. DENTON. Mr. Chairman, I am a wife and a mother. I don't feel qualified to propose plans, but I feel the brainpower in this country can come up with a solution if the willpower is there.

I know our Government is concerned and people who are qualified have made suggestions for different avenues that could be explored and we are asking that every avenue be approached even with the slightest chance of success.

There is one thing I would like to show you. This is a picture of my husband taken shortly before he left for Southeast Asia. This is how he appeared on television 4 years ago. We can't leave those men there much longer, or they won't come back.

Mr. ZABLOCKI. I fully agree with you. We all agree with you and the only purpose of my question was for you to again reemphasize how very necessary it is for everybody in this country, particularly our Government, to have willpower. But don't ever underestimate the power of a woman, they say.

Mrs. DENTON. We appreciate this opportunity today, Mr. Chairman, and this is exactly what we want.

Mr. ZABLOCKI. Mr. Broomfield?

HAS HAD LETTERS FROM HUSBAND

Mr. BROOMFIELD. Mr. Chairman, I too would like to compliment Mrs. Denton on a very fine statement and reassure her that this is a matter that concerns us all. This is something that both Republicans and Democrats have joined together on.

The administration has on many, many occasions expressed its very strong concern and this is a matter it is working on constantly. May I ask how often have you heard from your husband? You did mention that you were one of the privileged to receive some correspondence.

Mrs. DENTON. I have had a total of 11 messages from him. For the first 4 years, one a year.

Mr. BROOMFIELD. When was the last time?

Mrs. DENTON. Friday, last Friday. This year I have received seven messages. Three of them came within 1 week of Christmastime. It was a total of seven. We feel this is a direct result of the publicity that the prisoner-of-war issue has been receiving. It is causing some action on the part of North Vietnam.

Mr. BROOMFIELD. Did you get any indication from this recent letter as to his condition?

Mrs. DENTON. No. He only expressed concern about us here because apparently I got the impression he has not heard from us in quite a long time, because he said, "I hope things are still OK at home." He didn't mention his condition at all.

Mr. BROOMFIELD. Thank you very much.

Mrs. DENTON. Thank you.

Mr. ZABLOCKI. Mr. Fountain?

Mr. FOUNTAIN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I, too, want to commend Mrs. Denton for a very fine statement. I quite agree that with all the manpower we have, it seems that we could have found some way to help. But I firmly believe that, in addition to what is being done throughout the world, what we need is God's power.

I think maybe the pressure from you wives and the people all over America and throughout the world may ultimately have an impact upon the enemy.

I personally feel that except for the influence and resources of Russia and Communist China the war in Vietnam would have ended long ago. Probably the Government should devote more attention to approaching the Russians about a solution. Surely it is an avenue worth exploring. Basically, Russia is still our enemy and is at the root of our trouble.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. ZABLOCKI. Mr. Buchanan?

NOT INVOLVED IN DEBATE ON VIETNAM POLICY

Mr. BUCHANAN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

You have stated that neither you nor your husbands—and correctly so—are involved in the debate concerning the rightness or wrongness of the policy in Vietnam; that as military men, simply it is their job to implement that policy. That is absolutely correct.

For those of us who have had some share, great or small, in policy decisions concerning Vietnam, I think this has been an issue on which each one of us has done a great deal of soulsearching and it has been a very difficult thing.

Whatever the rightness or the wrongness of our policy there, I think that there is a reality that you ladies have brought to the forefront, perhaps as no one else has, and that is simply this:

That the United States may have a wrong policy, but I doubt if it can be seriously questioned that our desire and our aim is for freedom and self-determination, not to conquer peoples, not to control territory, not to rule the world.

Yet, as you know, we have been the recipients of very heavy criticisms, both at home and abroad. I think the great reality of the inhumanity involved in this situation and the unwillingness of the other side to take into consideration the basic human rights involved have helped the world to take a second and perhaps more reasonable look at this total situation.

It is my profound hope that eloquent statements like yours here today will create the kind of pressure upon the North Vietnamese that will force even greater change than that implied by your increase in letters and force them to come to some terms with the situation.

There have been reports, and I don't know whether there is any truth in these reports or not, that certain groups have contacted some of you ladies to offer to arrange for letters in exchange for antiwar propaganda.

I wonder if to your knowledge there is any reality and substance for such reports.

Mrs. DENTON. We have heard from the groups and some of us have received letters through them. I don't know whether there is any—I can't say positively that anyone has been threatened with withholding a letter or with a letter being withheld from her unless she—you understand. I have no evidence that this has been done.

Mr. BUCHANAN. I have heard it the other way around, that letters might be promised in return.

Thank you.

Mr. ZABLOCKI. We are indeed honored and privileged to have with us this morning Senator Dole, who has led the movement and exerted much effort and preparation for the May 1 rally tonight.

It is a great personal privilege to call upon Senator Dole, former colleague of ours in the House, and to ask him if he would please address the assembly.

**STATEMENT OF HON. ROBERT J. DOLE, A U.S. SENATOR FROM THE
STATE OF KANSAS**

Senator DOLE. Thank you.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Let me say, first, I am pleased to be here today. I would only say at this point that we are going to see, we hope, everyone in front of me right now, in Constitution Hall tonight, and hope at 8 o'clock there will not be a seat in the place empty. We want to fill Constitution Hall for two reasons: First, to demonstrate to you that Americans do care; and second, to demonstrate to the enemy that Americans are alert and that we are concerned about 1,529 brave Americans missing in action or prisoners of war wherever they may be in Southeast Asia.

We have, we believe, an outstanding and a proper tribute to these men arranged for tonight. We hope you will be with us. We hope that from now until 6 o'clock, when you will be having dinner in room B-339 of the Rayburn Building, that you will contact all of your friends in the Washington-Virginia-Maryland area and urge them to attend, because I believe one way the message can be carried to the enemy and to Americans everywhere is through demonstration this evening by our presence that we are concerned.

I want to thank many, many wives living in this area who have been so helpful to our efforts. I certainly want to thank Chairman Zablocki for his great interest and his efforts. This weekend though he finds it necessary to be away from Washington, he is going to speak about our rally in his State of Wisconsin.

This is the kind of cooperation we need. These are the efforts that may produce results. No one knows what will be the result of the meeting this evening. We hope it will be a continuation of the great efforts made by yourselves, by Mr. Perot who will be a witness here in a few minutes, and by the Government. Above all, we hope it will awaken and alert Americans.

We need to eliminate the apathy. We need public opinion, because with aroused public opinion, you will find a change in the prisoner of war and the missing in action attitude of the North Vietnamese and Vietcong.

Thank you very much.

PRESIDENTIAL PROCLAMATION ON PRISONERS

Mr. ZABLOCKI. Thank you, Senator Dole.

At this time I would want to interrupt the hearing of the witnesses to read a Presidential proclamation.

As you well know, the Congress, Senate and House, passed a concurrent resolution dedicating May 1 to the prisoners of war, and calling upon the President to declare May 3 as a National Day of Prayer for them.

Accordingly, the President issued the following proclamation, which I will at this time read into the record:

One of the cruelest tactics of the war in Vietnam is the Communists refusal to identify all prisoners of war, to provide information about them and to

permit their families to communicate with them regularly. This callous policy, in violation of the Geneva Convention relative to the treatment of prisoners of war to which North Vietnam acceded in 1957, and it is in concept of established customs among civilized nations and of ordinary human decency.

The Government of the United States of America is making and will continue to make every effort to alleviate the anxiety of the families of these prisoners by working to change this situation. The Congress, by a House current resolution of April 20, 1970, has resolved that Friday, May 1, 1970, be commemorated as a day for an appeal for international justice for all the American prisoners of war and servicemen missing in action in Southeast Asia and has requested the President to designate Sunday, May 3, 1970, as a National Day of Prayer for humane treatment and the safe return of these brave Americans.

Now, therefore, I, Richard Nixon, President of the United States of America, do hereby designate Sunday, May 3, 1970, as a National Day of Prayer for all American prisoners of war and servicemen missing in action in Southeast Asia. I call upon all the people of the United States to offer prayers in behalf of these men to instill courage and perseverance in their hearts and the hearts of their loved ones and compassion in the hearts of the captors.

In witness thereof, I have hereunder set my hand this 29th day of April in the Year of our Lord 1970, and of the Independence of the United States of America and the 194th.

I will now call upon my colleague from North Carolina to introduce the next witness.

Mr. FOUNTAIN. Mr. Chairman, we are happy to present to our committee Mrs. Lorraine Ramsay, from Jacksonville, N.C., in the congressional district of Congressman Dave Henderson, who would have paid his respects this morning by being here personally except for a previous commitment in his district.

Mrs. Ramsay has two children. She is the wife of Marine Maj. Charles J. Ramsay, an observer who was shot down over North Vietnam, and who has been listed as missing in action ever since. She has not heard from him since then.

I am very happy Mr. Chairman, to present to this committee and this audience Mrs. Ramsay of Jacksonville, N.C.

STATEMENT OF MRS. LORRAINE RAMSAY, JACKSONVILLE, N.C.

Mrs. RAMSAY. Please know, Mr. Chairman, that I do appreciate the opportunity to appear here this morning on behalf of my husband and all Americans held captive in Southeast Asia. My husband, Marine Maj. Charles Ramsay, was downed over North Vietnam just north of the DMZ on the 21st of January 1968. Since that date there has been no communication from him nor verification from North Vietnam concerning his welfare, despite innumerable personal inquiries seeking this information.

Our sons are with me in Washington, so that we might attend together the tribute to MIA's and POW's this evening at Constitution Hall. Tomorrow will be our older son's birthday, the third he has celebrated since his father was downed.

And although I know only too well that word from his father would be the best present of all, he will have to be content with this tribute to his dad and to all of those missing and captured Americans about whom so little is known.

I have not as yet traveled abroad, but I have followed closely the visits made by some families to world capitals. I feel their efforts, though minimal in obtaining information about loved ones, are nevertheless commendable in presenting the situation in the true light or in the terminology of today, "telling it like it is."

Although recently two wives were given heartbreaking news, one that her husband was not a prisoner in North Vietnamese camps, and the other that her husband had died either in captivity or in an air raid, I feel the point here is to realize that these women had waited in hope for years for word.

The fact that they were finally given this information with its reliability still under question after so long a time is only one proof of the callous indifference and calculating measures placed upon families by the enemy. I have contacted the Hanoi delegation in Paris independently and through letters sent through groups of wives as well as Hanoi officials directly, but have never received even an acknowledgement of my inquiries.

Each month I write to my husband and send a package whenever North Vietnam so states it will accept packages. Although none have been returned, I have no way of knowing if he has ever received a letter or a package. I must say the conditions are even more uncertain for those families of men held by the Pathet Lao in Laos and by the Vietcong in South Vietnam.

Please know, gentlemen, that all expressions of concern in this matter by individual Congressmen and Senators and in the form of resolutions adopted by the House and Senate jointly encourage us in our need for strength. However, this is only a first step in showing support for our captured Americans.

ASKS "TOTAL COMMITMENT" TO MEN

Action must follow or words of concern will fade. It is the moral responsibility of all of our people under the dynamic leadership of every elected official, not just a few, to support constructive efforts to secure humane treatment of prisoners of war. There must be a positive, total commitment to these men, particularly to those over 1,100 men missing and to their families, so that they will not be written off, they will be accounted for.

There is so much said about everything being done to alleviate this situation. Yet for the most part, little has improved. Granted, there have been a few names verified as captured, a few new letter writers, information disseminated through what are called dissident groups. But these are piecemeal tactics, heaping added torture upon the majority of families who are still without word.

Recently a news report stated a group of Americans will be released sometime this summer to show North Vietnam's good faith. If this does occur, and if it follows as before, the names of these men will not be known until their actual release, which means months lie ahead of agonizing hope for all families intimately involved, that perhaps this time it might be their loved one.

Are we to be left at the mercy of an enemy who thus far has shown their ignorance of the definition of the word "mercy"? Are we to be left wondering the fate of our loved ones after the Vietnam hostilities end, as must have been the case of those families of the 389 known captured Americans still unaccounted for, following the Korean war?

Again, gentlemen, I want you to know your expressions of concern have encouraged us in our daily struggle. But I must commend to you, to all Congressmen, to all Senators and to all Government de-

partments involved in this matter, the fate of the over 1,500 men held captive.

I must lay before you the over 40,000 dead from this war, the thousands who have left arms, legs, eyes and sanity on that foreign soil and those who at this very minute are doing it all over again.

They served their country with dedication. They fight for us with honor. Let it not be said their reward was either indifference on the part of some and criticism from others for defending a Constitution, they were sworn to uphold.

Mr. Chairman, respected representatives, if there is a peaceful solution to this war, I urge you to use every means at your disposal to find it now.

If pressure is the solution, then I urge you to put our military leaders on notice to end this war, giving them the support needed to accomplish the task. If this war is allowed to continue, as a war of death and mutilation in Vietnam, and a war of polemics here in the safety of our shores, then all of the sacrifices of these loyal and brave men have been for naught.

If I could make one request, Mr. Chairman, I would ask that you urge other committees and subcommittees to hear the testimony of wives and parents of these missing and captured Americans as they consider their other priorities. Let your voiced concern show a top priority total commitment to these men and to their families.

Thank you.

Mr. ZABLOCKI. Thank you, Mrs. Ramsay.

I want to reiterate our commitment to your cause which is our cause. I can assure you that your testimony, the hearings today, will be made available to all Members of Congress. They will be printed and widely distributed and made available to every Member of the House and Senate.

Mr. Broomfield?

Mr. BROOMFIELD. No questions.

Mr. ZABLOCKI. Mr. Fountain?

Mr. FOUNTAIN. No questions.

Mr. ZABLOCKI. Mr. Fascell?

Mr. FASCELL. No questions, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. ZABLOCKI. I will call on Mr. Buchanan to introduce our next witness.

Mr. BUCHANAN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Chairman, our next witness is Mrs. F. Harold Kushner of Danville, Va.

STATEMENT OF MRS. F. HAROLD KUSHNER, DANVILLE, VA.

Mrs. KUSHNER. Mr. Chairman, gentlemen:

I want to thank you for the opportunity which you have given to me and to the other wives of men missing and imprisoned in Southeast Asia to be heard before the subcommittee today. The real and continued concern of our Members of Congress for the problems of these men is a great source of strength and gratification for all of us.

When Mr. Sullivan invited me here today, he suggested that I detail for you the events pertaining to my recent journey to Cambodia in an effort to provide my physician husband with much-needed medical

supplies. But frankly, gentlemen, that account is a matter of public record and, most tragically, it is not a unique story. Hundreds of other wives and mothers have undertaken arduous pilgrimages in an attempt to aid their husbands and sons. Some have even circumnavigated the globe in an endeavor to fix for themselves their own status—were they wives or were they widows.

Therefore, let us leave the rest of the world alone, and permit me in my testimony today, to concern myself with some of my journeys to Washington during the past year.

Last July, at the request of the Department of the Army, I came to Washington and, with a small group of wives and parents of prisoners of war, I had the pleasure of a meeting with the Secretary of Defense. Secretary Laird was very generous of his time and was kind enough to answer many of our questions regarding the policy of our Government toward the American prisoners of war. He assured us at that time that there would be no substantial withdrawals of U.S. forces from South Vietnam until direct negotiations on behalf of the prisoners had begun.

On September 17 I was in the gallery of the House when many of you gentlemen and your colleagues spoke so movingly of the depth of your concern for the prisoners and their families. You condemned the government of North Vietnam, the National Liberation Front, and the Pathet Lao for their inhumane and criminal treatment of the prisoners. You promised to all the families concerned your full support of the then 1,350 missing and imprisoned men. Some 3 months later a resolution to that effect was passed.

Then came my journeys to Cambodia and Paris. I returned to Washington on March 6 of this year when, with four other wives, I testified before the House Armed Services Committee. At the end of my testimony Chairman Rivers urged me to "keep the faith." Gentlemen, I have never lost faith in my husband, but at times I wonder if my country has lost faith in him.

The President's recent speech on Vietnam announcing the withdrawal of an additional 150,000 troops, contained a brief passing reference to the prisoners of war. It was almost an afterthought. May I note here that the President expressed his concern only for the men held in Hanoi, thereby ignoring the more than 700 missing in South Vietnam and Laos. His failure to mention these men serves to condone the inhumane policies of the National Liberation Front and the Pathet Lao.

TIRED OF PLATITUDES AND CONVOCATIONS

I come before you today to tell you that I am tired. I am tired of traveling and I am tired of publicly baring my private anguish. And I am most tired of Presidential platitudes and congressional convocations. They no longer reassure me, and they have never brought any relief to the men involved.

Two weeks ago the whole country rejoiced at the safe return of three astronauts from a hazardous mission in space. During the perilous journey of Apollo XIII, the full strength and resources of our country, our technological might and all our prayers were behind those men, and they knew it.

The Apollo astronauts are brave Americans and fully deserved all the efforts involved. But I cannot help thinking that this great country which can send men to the moon cannot get a letter to my husband in South Vietnam. While the ordeal of the Apollo astronauts and their families lasted only a few days, some of our equally brave and dedicated Americans have endured over 5 years of captivity, unable to communicate with their families, and suffering the most terrible mental and physical privations.

During the past 5 years, families have waited vainly and patiently for this Government to act. Men have died in those prison camps. The causes of death have varied: execution, torture, starvation, festering, and untreated wounds. But the reason for their deaths must be a lack of action on the part of the Government which committed them to this conflict in Southeast Asia.

We all know that this country, once dedicated to a goal, can achieve. I am asking you today to publicly and forcefully pledge yourselves to formulate and execute a plan of action which will return 1,500 men to the country for which they have sacrificed so much.

Mere words do not suffice. Now is the time for concrete and sustained action—action which only our Congress can accomplish.

Mr. ZABLOCKI. Thank you, Mrs. Kushner.

Mrs. KUSHNER. Mr. Chairman, if you will permit me, I would like to extend my remarks.

You have asked all of us here today—well, what can we do? Just as it is not ultimately our responsibility to leave our children, to take our savings and to travel around the world, just as it is not our ultimate responsibility to stand up and cry out the problems of the prisoners, it is not our ultimate responsibility to devise a solution to their problems.

SOME SUGGESTIONS FOR ACTION

However, I would be glad to give you some suggestions for action.

The first one of these would be the formulation of a special committee within the Congress to concern itself only with the problems of prisoners; the second would be to use your influence, and it seems to be very vast, with the President of this country, to make sure that all the prisoners are remembered, not only those in North Vietnam, but the over 700 in South Vietnam and Laos; third, the matter of troop withdrawals.

I would not say immediately stop all of our withdrawals. I think all of the wives here, more than anyone, can appreciate the anguish of a man separated from his family by this conflict. However, it should be publicly stated by this Government that our rate of withdrawal will be directly dependent upon prisoner release.

It is inconceivable to many of us here today that our Government can withdraw and pledge its withdrawal of almost half of our troops from a supposed victorious field of battle and leave behind 1,500 American prisoners.

Next, the men in Laos, who are possibly the most forgotten of all of the men, we are in no way, not even at that so-called Paris Conference, engaged in negotiations with the government of the Pathet Lao.

Immediate negotiations on behalf of the prisoners must be opened here.

Gentlemen, these are suggestions and they are not new suggestions. They have been presented to members of our Government, to our President, before; and they have not been acted upon. I read the testimony given before this committee last November when Mr. Fulton made several excellent and worthwhile suggestions regarding low-level battlefield negotiations and exchanges of prisoners in South Vietnam.

He was told that it was not feasible for our Government to initiate this action, because it might interfere with the Vietnamization of the war. It might tread on a few toes in Saigon. There might be a few hurt feelings among the safe Vietnamese Government.

Gentlemen, you have to decide for yourselves now exactly what is more important, hurt feelings in Saigon or the life of my husband!

Thank you.

Mr. ZABLOCKI. Thank you, Mrs. Kushner, for your very forceful statement. Let me assure you we need you to prod Congress and every agency in Government to do exactly what we want done in order to expedite the early release of the prisoners.

Thank you very much.

Mr. Broomfield?

Mr. Fountain?

WISDOM OF CREATING A JOINT COMMITTEE

Mr. FOUNTAIN. Mr. Chairman, I appreciate the very forthright and frank statement of the witness who has just testified. I think maybe there are some things that haven't been done that ought to be done; maybe some things that have been done that ought not to have been done. I don't know.

And I think the suggestions she has made have some merit. It is the first time I have heard these particular suggestions. I am sure you know we do have a resolution pending before this committee. Congressman Mendel Rivers, chairman of the Armed Services Committee, testified yesterday before this subcommittee in connection with this resolution which would make negotiations concerning our prisoners of war a first priority at the Paris Peace Talks. It is hopeful that this resolution may have an impact.

I haven't had time to give mature consideration as an individual—and I am only one of 435 Members of Congress—to the question of a special committee. But at first blush, it impresses me.

Here are the wives and representatives of 1,500 loyal and dedicated Americans, who have either given their lives or who are prisoners of war and are being mistreated by the enemy.

They represent a cross section of America, the voice of America, the sentiment and the strength of America, the courage and conviction and devotion of America. It seems to me that a special committee might well be considered.

However, as is well known, all of us serve on a variety of committees and there are only so many hours in the day.

We have responsibilities which we must undertake. We can't spend them all in any one area. But a special committee, it seems to me, is deserving of consideration.

We can use our influence to whatever extent we have it with the President and, while I am not a member of the President's party,

I am quite sure that the President has not deliberately omitted mention of our prisoners of war. In fact, I have heard him on a number of occasions express his concern about our men who are held prisoner.

His proclamation of a Day of Prayer is, I think, an indication of his great concern. But I agree with you, it may be well for the President, it may be well for all of us in places of responsibility, to speak out more forcefully and in a spirit which might have the kind of impact which would cause their release unharmed.

With respect to troop withdrawals, I think that is a suggestion, which the Executive and those who are charged with the responsibility of carrying on this war in Vietnam and getting our boys back home again, might seriously consider. I have strong convictions about this war in Vietnam. I don't think we should have gone there with ground troops in the first place, but, nevertheless, we are there.

And I think we ought to get our men out as fast as we can do so, consistent with the safety of those who are there and consistent with the responsibility which we have assumed, whether we should have assumed it or not.

I have mixed emotions about the decision which the President made, but he is the Commander in Chief of the Armed Forces of the United States and had access to all the facts which could be made accessible to a President of the United States.

While I have concern about the sending of ground troops into Cambodia, he is my Commander in Chief. He is the only pilot of our ship of state at this time. And I expect to support the decision which he made last night.

My only regret is that these North Vietnamese sanctuaries in Cambodia were not long ago destroyed. It is almost a crime for us to have embarked upon a war of this kind and then to have conducted it in such a way that our men could not adequately defend themselves and could not wage the kind of war which you have to wage in order to bring victory.

I am one of those who believes if you get involved in this sort of thing, you ought to try to win. But if we aren't going to win, then I think, consistent with the safety of our men, we ought to get them back here as fast as we possibly can.

One other observation, Mr. Chairman, I didn't intend to take this time, but I felt that the remarks of the witness justified a response. I hope this is an appropriate one.

I commented upon the fact that you are a cross section of America. I am a great believer in womanpower, as has already been mentioned, as well as God power.

And I would suggest that in addition to all of the things that are being done and said by our Government and by organized groups all over this land and throughout the world, we should do something which we in America don't do enough of. I can say to you, and I say it in all sincerity, I believe strongly in the power of prayer.

All of you wives and relatives have been doing that almost hourly, I'm sure, but not enough other Americans and not enough other concerned people throughout the world have been doing it.

I could even preach a sermon—which I won't do—but there are so many things we need. We need a new kind of home, a new kind of mother, a new kind of father, a new kind of teacher, a new kind of minister and lawyer and doctor, a new kind of public official, all sensitive to the crucial problems of the present, sympathetic but never forgetting the limitless possibilities of raising mankind to higher levels of cooperation and understanding and happiness.

We can't do it by doing the most unintelligent thing that the mind of man can conceive of, and that is the waging of war every 25 or 30 years.

So together it seems to me we can pray, agonize in prayer, and the power of that prayer may well have the kind of impact, supplementing the efforts of men themselves, which one of these days will bring your husbands and your loved ones back to America.

Let's try it.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

MR. ZABLOCKI. Thank you, Mr. Fountain.

Mr. Buchanan?

MR. BUCHANAN. Thank you.

In many ways I would agree with what the gentleman from North Carolina has said. It would be pertinent to add, however, what in a presidential prayer breakfast recently in Washington our President said, which was itself a quotation. I think it would be appropriate to this situation.

He said that we must pray as if everything depended upon God; and work as if everything depended upon us.

MR. ZABLOCKI. Mr. Fascell?

MR. FASCELL. I have no questions, thank you.

MR. ZABLOCKI. I will call upon Mr. Fascell. I know he relishes this opportunity, being a Floridian, to introduce our next witness, who is a Californian.

I know he is very pleased and proud to introduce our next witness.

THE NEED TO MOLD WORLD OPINION

MR. FASCELL. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I welcome the opportunity to join with this subcommittee of which I am not a member. I am delighted to meet once again the wives, relatives and friends of POW's. I marvel at their dedication, and their perseverance.

I met with some of you in New York as you tried in another forum to mold international opinion and American opinion behind a position which is eminently right. If we are going to tell it like it is, I think we have to recognize that the molding of opinion behind your cause is absolutely essential, both in terms of world opinion and American opinion.

Statements and declarations are useful only in that sense, and that the action you seek, of course, is one inextricably entwined between the military, diplomatic, and political policies at the highest level of your government. It is the only way your problem is ever going to be resolved, notwithstanding the fact that many of us, a lot of us, both in and out of Government, are thoroughly in agreement with everything you say and want to do.

In that frame of reference, Mr. Chairman, I am honored to present our next witness, Mrs. Sybil Stockdale of Coronado, Calif.

Her husband is James Bond Stockdale, U.S. Navy captain pilot, who has been a POW in North Vietnam since September of 1965. She is the founder and national coordinator of the League of Wives of American Veteran Vietnam Prisoners of War. She has been to Paris to speak to the representatives of the North Vietnam Government and I am pleased and honored that she is here today to speak to us.

STATEMENT OF MRS. SYBIL STOCKDALE, CORONADO, CALIF.

Mrs. STOCKDALE. Thank you, Mr. Fascell.

Mr. Chairman, and ladies and gentlemen, first of all, I want to express my gratitude to Senator Dole for taking the initiative which brings us all, so many of us, to Washington today and to all the Members of Congress who have helped us thus far.

My husband is Capt. James Bond Stockdale, U.S. Navy, and may I interject at this point that his mother's maiden name was Bond and he was James Bond Stockdale before Ian Flemming created his character.

Jim is a 1946 graduate of the U.S. Naval Academy, holds a master's degree from Stanford University in international relations, has four sons between the ages of 19 and 8, and is presently 46 years old, having spent one-ninth of his lifetime in solitary confinement in Communist prisons.

While serving aboard the aircraft carrier U.S.S. *Oriskany*, he was shot down while on a mission over North Vietnam, on September 9, 1965. He was listed as missing in action.

On April 15, 1966, I received two long, four-page letters postmarked Hanoi, confirming the fact that he was alive. The first was written on December 26, 1965. He said that he had been given only one letter from me, dated October 3. I had written a letter every week since he was listed as missing.

He also said, "As for my welfare and surroundings, I wish I could report on acquaintances in my straits, but I have not seen an American since I was shot down." He said he had a bum knee and shoulder, had been treated at the hospital and that he was told that he would soon be able to return to the hospital where the doctors would finish the job.

He reported he was able to hold his weight at what he believed to be about 140 pounds. His normal weight was 170 to 175 pounds. He said, "In the mental category I have my ups and downs. Perhaps solitude builds character. I sometimes think of how such experiences gave depth of insight to Dostoevsky and other writers. Be assured that, above all, I have securely found God."

He had been told that he could expect to be given one letter a month and perhaps could write as often.

In his second letter written on February 3, 1966, he said, "Keeping warm takes energy and I lost some weight." He also said, "I am still not used to being alone, but I have worked out methods to keep my mind occupied." He told me his knee and shoulder still needed medical attention.

I received two more letters from him in 1966 in which he reported things were very much the same with him and in a letter written on January 2, 1967, he said, "Let all know that all is the same with me."

Since 1967 I have received six very short notes from him, the most recent one having just arrived. It was written on March 25, 1970, and he was either only physically able to complete four lines on a seven-line form or was only allowed to write four lines. The complete letter contains 38 words.

This from a 46-year-old man with a master's degree in international relations, who dearly loves his family and when he was first captured wrote long four-page letters.

He has never indicated that his original circumstances have changed in any way and I can only conclude he has been in solitary confinement throughout his captivity. I understand from returned prisoners that this is customary treatment for high ranking officers.

COMMUNIST TECHNIQUE OF DEHUMANIZATION

A study of Communist techniques clearly indicates that this is customary treatment of prisoners held by them as part of their dehumanization of their captives. To the best of my knowledge, no American has ever seen my husband since he was captured.

The press reported in 1967 that a Polish journalist saw him, but that my husband refused to be interviewed and reportedly claimed to be the movie hero, James Bond. An article in the Soviet newspaper Pravda in late 1965 said, "One night when we were in Than Hwa, we saw a car parked by the city hospital. There were several Vietnamese standing by the car. Sitting on a bench and leaning against the car was a towheaded, husky fellow * * * a prisoner of war, an American pilot, Capt. James B. Stackdel. The pilot had been captured by peasants of a fishing village situated about 30 kilometers from Than Hwa."

My husband is not towheaded, but he was very gray when he left and I assumed the translation could mean light haired.

Those few Americans who have been granted visas to enter Hanoi have never reported having seen him, although they have, on occasion, brought back mail to this country from him, and have related to me on the telephone the fine treatment which the prisoners are being accorded.

I could only conclude from my own evidence that these people were either propagandists for the Hanoi Government or dupes. It has since been documented by returned prisoners that statements about good health and good treatment in the few letters so very few of our loved ones are allowed to write, are the result of coercion by the North Vietnamese.

HOW THE POW FAMILIES' GROUP WAS STARTED

After I learned that my husband was being held a prisoner in North Vietnam, I tried to determine what his rights were as the captive of a foreign government. I was counseled by the U.S. Government that it was in my husband's best interests for me to remain quiet about the fact that he was a prisoner.

I have never been able to determine the rationale for this policy, but assume there were reasons why the Government felt this policy was sound. I visited with Governor Harriman in 1966 and 1967, and in the summer of 1967, visited several congressional offices searching

for someone in Congress who would bring the plight of our American prisoners of war to the attention of Congress.

When the military savings deposit program, which allowed men serving in Vietnam to invest the savings from their military pay, was passed by Congress, I indicated that I wanted to participate and was told that my husband's pay did not qualify as the bill was so written that those being held in North Vietnam were excluded.

I asked several Government officials why this was so and was assured that it was just an oversight which I found both depressing and appalling. An amendment to that bill was eventually introduced in Congress at the request of the wives and families of those captured and missing and a year later we were allowed to invest the savings from our husbands' military pay in this program.

By 1967 I knew 33 wives in circumstances similar to mine in the San Diego area. Many of us had been meeting informally for some time and in 1967, we formed a local organization dedicated to the aim of trying to help our men. In order to better understand Government policy concerning our men and to assure ourselves that our Government was acting in the best interests of our loved ones, we invited Government representatives to come to San Diego to answer our many questions and to make them aware of our problems as dependents of those being held prisoner and listed as missing.

When my husband had been a prisoner for 3 years, my best judgment led me to believe that the best interests of the men could be served by letting the world know the truth about the rights of our husbands and sons as captives of a foreign government signatory to the Geneva Convention and North Vietnam's total violation of its most basic tenets.

I took a survey of the total mail received by the 33 wives I knew and reported those facts along with my personal situation to the press. That article appeared in the San Diego Union on October 28, 1968. I hoped that by telling the truth publicly myself, I might be able to encourage others to do the same.

At the time of President Nixon's inauguration, our League of Wives in San Diego asked as many as they could reach to send telegrams to the new President, Secretary of State, and Ambassador Lodge, requesting that the prisoner-of-war problem be given a high priority consideration during their administration.

In February 1969, I realized that the miniscule flow of mail was decreasing and, as I became increasingly concerned for my husband's welfare as well as that of all the men, I decided to telegraph the North Vietnamese in Paris inquiring about his welfare and felt others might want to do likewise.

I sent out a form letter asking others to notify me if they wanted to participate in a group effort to get information about our men. I set up a schedule so that 10-20 telegrams a week would be arriving in Paris, thus allowing North Vietnam time to check their records and answer our inquiries at a reasonable rate. I sent 61 original letters to others I knew throughout the country and asked them to pass it on to others they knew in our circumstance.

I received hundreds of letters back in return and for months we sent telegrams to the North Vietnamese on a scheduled basis. In many of the letters I received, wives and parents expressed the desire to

continue working as a group toward the end of trying to get information about our men and the protection of the Geneva Convention accorded to them. In other local areas wives had been meeting together and in June 1969 we gave our national group effort the name of the National League of Families of American Prisoners in Southeast Asia.

THE AIMS OF THE GROUP

Our aims are to inform fellow Americans and world citizens of the codes for treatment of combatant prisoners, as established by the Geneva Convention for the dignity and protection of mankind. We want to make known the true and desperate plight of the American prisoners of war and the men listed as missing in action and to make known that their desperate plight is due to the refusal of the North Vietnamese Government to abide by any of the simple humane requirements for the treatment of combatant prisoners.

Ours as a group is an effort to supplement that which our Government is doing to insure humane treatment for our men and in no ways reflects any discredit on the efforts made by our own Government.

We believe that the cumulative voices of the indignation from people all over the world will have a profound influence on the North Vietnamese Government if they want to be recognized as a respectable government in the world community.

We have been appealing to those spheres of influence which we felt might best be able to influence the Communists to accord our loved ones the protection of the Geneva Convention.

Last fall some of the wives and families began to go to Paris to seek information from the North Vietnamese directly. We publicized our trips so that the world would become aware of the desperate plight of our men and their families. Some of those making such trips paid for them out of their personal funds and some were sponsored by TV stations. Others were sponsored by civic organizations and concerned citizens who wanted to help in this way.

It would be unfair to name them publicly as there are so many who want to go to foreign agencies to inquire about their loved ones that they might be overwhelmed with requests to do for many what they felt they could do for a few.

AN AUDIENCE WITH THE NORTH VIETNAMESE

I was granted an audience with four members of the North Vietnamese delegation to the Paris Peace Talks on October 4, 1969, along with four other wives and a father-in-law. We asked about our individual loved one and also gave the North Vietnamese more than 400 letters of inquiry from the families of other captured and missing American servicemen.

We also gave the North Vietnamese several hundred letters with the request that it be delivered to our men and asked that they forward our request to Hanoi that all the families be notified soon about the status of their husbands and sons and that the sick and injured be repatriated.

They assured us that no more wives and families needed to make the trip to Paris in search of information and that all who wrote letters of inquiry to them would be notified by the North Vietnam Govern-

ment about the status of their loved ones. They would give us no estimate about when we might expect this information.

They read propaganda documents to us and showed a film which emphasized war activities. During our meeting they praised Dr. Spock, Graham Green, Stewart Meecham, Ann Schirra, and a Mr. Vernon from Berkeley. As I am sure you know, most of those who have sent letters of inquiry to the North Vietnamese still do not know whether their husbands and sons are alive or dead.

Several have since traveled around the world hoping to learn whether their men languish in Communist prisons or have long since died in the service of their country. We told the North Vietnamese we hoped they would soon see the short-sightedness of incurring world disrespect for the sake of using our men as political pawns in this conflict.

We have appealed to Congress as well as many other spheres of influence to take whatever action is necessary to insure the basic standards of human decency for our loved ones and we will continue to do so. I have found that when Americans are informed about the desperate plight of our men and their families, that they are deeply and genuinely concerned.

CONGRESSMEN SHOULD ENLIGHTEN THEIR CONSTITUENTS

I, therefore, respectfully request that each Senator and Representative of the people of America enlighten their constituents about the incredibly cruel mental and physical torture which captured and missing American servicemen held by the Communists have been enduring for years and continue to endure every long and lonely hour of every day and night, and then to poll their constituents about their concern for their fellow Americans in these circumstances and personally deliver the results of such a poll to the North Vietnamese.

The North Vietnamese have clearly demonstrated that they do care about world opinion and American public opinion. We have made some progress thus far in bringing about modification and change of the North Vietnamese attitude. Letters from some 400 men in North Vietnam have been promised and about half have been delivered. However, no mail has ever been promised from our men held in Laos and South Vietnam.

I ask you to try to imagine the daily torment which the wife of a missing man endures as she hears and reads of names released, a few at a time and she learns about a few more of her friends and acquaintances receiving mail and yet the fate of her loved one appears on none of these lists and she continues to hang in an agonizing limbo, not knowing whether she is wife or widow and how to answer her children's searching questions about their daddies. I am so profoundly proud of all of these wives and families who have faced disaster bravely and acted with the quality of dignity which they seek for their men.

The support we are asking of you is not related to any particular view on the war in Vietnam. We are only asking your help in obtaining humane treatment for your fellow Americans. I feel certain the American people will not find their elected representatives lacking in expressing to the North Vietnamese, again and again, their genuine concern for their fellow Americans.

Thank you.

Mr. ZABLOCKI. Thank you, Mrs. Stockdale.

May I express my congratulations and commend you for your many efforts in organization and your perseverance in bringing this issue to the attention of the public.

At this time I would like to also commend all of the wives who have testified before us and those we have present here in the audience for your courage and your resolve. We wish to assure you of our determination to action within the capabilities and jurisdiction of our committee.

A recommendation was made that a special ad hoc committee on the prisoner-of-war issue be organized. That suggestion may have merit. But I want to assure you as a part of the Foreign Affairs Committee, this subcommittee is in a privileged position to bring the POW issue continuously to the attention of the executive branch, the State Department, the Pentagon, and others as we deal with international affairs on a daily basis.

We thereby can bring special attention and will bring special attention to the issue.

At this occasion I must share with you a regret, almost a lament, that certain U.S. citizens and, yes, perhaps foreign individuals are not with us this morning to hear your testimony. Again, however, I want to assure you that as widely as possible within our means we will make your views known to others.

RECOGNITION OF SEAMAN HEGDAHL .

If I may just digress for a moment to recognize Seaman Douglas Hegdahl, who is with us in the audience. Seaman Hegdahl was released from North Vietnam just last August 1969. We are hopeful that Seaman Hegdahl will be available to the subcommittee to testify when we will bring servicemen who have been prisoners before the committee and tell their stories.

Again, on behalf of myself, I want to thank you for coming before us. I now call on my colleagues, if they have any further questions of the ladies and Mrs. Stockdale, particularly.

Mr. Broomfield?

Mr. BROOMFIELD. Mr. Chairman, I, too, want to join with you. This has been a very interesting and, I think, helpful meeting this morning. The suggestions and so forth meant a great deal to all of us and to the Members of the Congress and I want to commend each of the ladies for their own personal statements this morning and assure them that all of us will do all we can to continue to make sure that every effort is made for an early release of our American prisoners.

Mr. ZABLOCKI. Mr. Fountain?

ACTION AT THE UNITED NATIONS

Mr. FOUNTAIN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mrs. Stockdale, what kind of reaction did you get when you visited the United Nations?

Mrs. STOCKDALE. I was not at the United Nations itself. I was in California and was not able to be there myself, but Ambassador Rita Houser brought the case of the prisoners before the Human Rights

Commission. It has been very disappointing to us that the General Assembly has not concerned itself with this problem.

I think Congress could be very helpful in bringing this about and hope that they will help us with this.

Mr. FOUNTAIN. I was curious. Congressman Broomfield and I served in the United Nations in 1967 as delegates from this Government. Congressman Fascell, on my right, has just returned, I believe, last year.

It isn't easy, but I was curious to know what kind of response you got from the group you met with there. Do any one of you know what the Commission did?

Mrs. DENTON. I was there. Mrs. Houser made a magnificent statement. Since the statement, I am not aware of what has taken place or whether there has been a continuing effort. She was challenged immediately by Russia on the floor. We would be interested to know ourselves what is happening.

Mr. ZABLOCKI. Mr. Buchanan?

Mr. BUCHANAN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mrs. Stockdale, and ladies, you have spoken to the conscience of the Congress and of the world. If the leaders of North Vietnam and the Vietcong and the Pathet Lao have consciences, this gives them an excellent opportunity to demonstrate it. I think the same is true of the leadership of the Soviet Union. If these leaders have consciences, then this is an issue in which they can make that fact clear.

This morning your message has come through quite clearly. You have heard a lot of words. You want some effective action. I hope we can help provide that action.

Mr. ZABLOCKI. Mr. Fascell?

Mr. FASCELL. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I have several comments. First of all, with respect to the U.N. action, Mrs. Rita Houser is certainly a very able and eloquent spokesman. In taking up the item which was on the agenda of the Human Rights Commission, she presented the case on behalf of the United States for our prisoners of war.

As you know, she was immediately challenged by the Communists. Any action by way of a resolution expressing world sentiment which can come out of that commission will be after a long and tortuous fight.

We must press to get that done, because I think it is important to get that expression of sentiment.

COMMENDS WORK OF SUBCOMMITTEE ON POW ISSUE

There was a suggestion made by Mrs. Kushner, Mr. Chairman. As to the first one she made, let me join you in your comment and say that I can't think of a better subcommittee to be designated as a special committee to do the job of keeping alive and doing the prodding that is necessary at the executive level on this very important question.

As a subcommittee of the Foreign Affairs Committee deeply interested and concerned and having the jurisdiction and responsibility on a day-to-day basis, I think, Mrs. Kushner, you can say you have your subcommittee.

And the chairman is the kind of gentleman, having worked with him many, many years, I know, whose commitment is wholehearted and he will be tenacious.

I have been, of course, moved and impressed by all of the statements that I have heard. I must say in admiration that you ladies have put your finger on the real crux of the problem. The North Vietnamese frankly never gave you credit for that much sense or ability. In their inhuman game of psychopolitical warfare, which our loved ones are all a part of—they dreamed up the idea that their plan would work to divide our country and that American would be set against American and the divisiveness would result to the benefit of the North Vietnamese.

They don't understand American people. They don't understand the American process. The American process is witnessed here this morning by the statements that were made to this subcommittee. We are all critical from time to time of our Government. That doesn't mean we are going to desert it.

We want our Government to do what we think it ought to do. We express ourselves in no uncertain terms loudly and clearly as individual Americans and as your elected representatives. It is the greatest system in the world. We have flaws and we have weaknesses, but we also have fantastic strength because we really do have faith in each other.

It probably never occurred in the twisted, distorted psychopolitical mind of those who would manipulate human behavior to their own end that this kind of simple approach of faith in each other, faith in God, telling the truth, telling it like it is and getting people to do the right thing, really works. They don't understand that.

So, Mrs. Stockdale, I think that you have rendered a very valuable service by letting them know that the target is North Vietnam, and that is where the trouble lies. This is where all of our efforts are really directed, and eventually get North Vietnamese to change their mind and attitude and bring about that which is necessary and desirable.

You are advocating the very essence of international politics. I admire you for having not only perceived it, but putting it into action.

Mr. ZABLOCKI. Thank you, Mr. Fascell.

I wish to personally thank you for your kind words. Let me assure you they will serve as an incentive to achieve your expectations and the assurances that you have given to these wonderful ladies.

Mr. FASCELL. Mr. Chairman, I have never been disappointed in you yet and I don't think anybody else is.

Mr. ZABLOCKI. I want to say that I am indeed privileged as the chairman to have members on my committee and members on the Foreign Affairs Committee with whom we work who are dedicated men. If I am able to accomplish anything, it is because of their cooperation.

As I listened to you, I wondered what new action might be taken. I assure you that I shall personally see to it that the transcripts of these hearings be made available to the members of the International Control Commission who are supposed to look into these matters. It will challenge them to do their job right in South Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia, and North Vietnam, to see that they use their offices as

intended under the Geneva Accords. Let them see that inhumanities are not perpetuated and that your loved ones will be identified and released.

This is, I think, one action we can immediately assure you we will do.

Thank you again, ladies.

INTRODUCTION OF H. ROSS PEROT

Mr. ZABLOCKI. Now we will call as our next witness a gentleman who has been very active on the behalf of our prisoners of war and their loved ones. He is Mr. H. Ross Perot, a Dallas businessman who has received worldwide attention for his efforts to carry food, medicine, and other supplies to Americans held in North Vietnam.

In addition to that effort, he has made many other attempts to persuade the Communists to give out the names of the men they are holding and to permit American prisoners to write their families.

On Wednesday a story appeared in the press that an Air Force wife in Texas, has credited Mr. Perot with persuading the Hanoi Government to allow her husband to write her for the first time since his capture 4 years ago.

For his efforts, Mr. Perot has received national recognition. Just recently the President appointed him to the Board of Advisers to the United States Naval Academy, a school from which he himself graduated in 1953.

We welcome you, Mr. Perot, and want to express our appreciation to you for having taken time from your duties to come before this subcommittee to discuss your experiences in dealing with the prisoner of war problem. I understand, Mr. Perot, you have your lovely wife with you.

Mrs. Perot, would you rise? (Applause.)

I have asked for the recognition of your wife, sir, because I know, we all know, no man can accomplish much—as a matter of fact, can only accomplish little, unless his wife by his side helps him.

Mr. Perot, if you will please.

STATEMENT OF H. ROSS PEROT, DALLAS, TEX.

Mr. PEROT. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The basic purpose of all of the efforts that we have made has been to gain the release of the men. It is important for anyone studying the prisoner of war issue to understand that a prisoner of war loses all military value within 48 hours after he is captured.

Once a man is captured on the battlefield and interrogated, he becomes a burden to your economy. He uses food, medicine, facilities, guards, doctors, et cetera. Once you have captured that man and interrogated him, he loses his military significance.

Under the Geneva Accord if you release him he cannot go back into battle. I do not think any country in the world would question the integrity of the U.S. Government in bringing those men back home and keeping them home if they were released.

The North Vietnamese have kept these men under very adverse conditions. As I have just stated, the objective of our efforts is to

gain their release. The only way we can hope to get them out is, first, to understand the North Vietnamese and their objectives.

I would like to address myself to that subject.

The purpose of the Christmas trip, while stated as delivering food, medicine, and mail, was to have an opportunity to talk directly with the North Vietnamese and find out firsthand what they were thinking on this subject. By talking to them in their embassy in Vientiane during the Christmas trip, and talking to them directly and indirectly since that time through my representatives and through intermediaries who have long established relationships with the North Vietnamese, by talking to them all over the world, and at this time continuing to have teams of men stationed all over the world, this is what I have learned:

They are tough; they are resolute. They are like a 90-pound boxer who lasted 15 rounds with Rocky Marciano. They are battered beyond recognition. Never lose sight of the fact that a nation's leaders do not go on the battlefield. If the people in North Vietnam had a voice, this war would be over.

They have taken a brutal beating. If you want proof, go to the prison camps in the South and look at the age of the men who are coming in. I found 12-year-old boys in the prison camps in the South. It is not at all uncommon to find 14-year-old boys in uniform.

The North Vietnamese have lost a generation on the battlefield—maybe two generations. They are badly beaten. On the other hand, when you talk to them at the leadership level—at the embassy level—you find that they are getting tremendous ego satisfaction from being able to stay in the ring, under any circumstances at all with the most powerful nation in the world.

NORTH VIETNAMESE ARE "TOUGH"

The North Vietnamese leaders are analogous to a trainer in a boxing match. The trainer sits at the edge of the ring. He does not absorb the punishment. He has the towel over his shoulder, waiting for the proper moment to throw it in—signifying defeat.

The man in the ring is the individual North Vietnamese soldier. He has undergone tremendous punishment. The North Vietnamese talk openly about the fact that they have been able to persuade us to fight this war under terms that allow them to stay in the ring.

"Tough" is the first quality I noted.

Second, they are very keen students of our Government. They are better students of our Government than the average citizen of this country. They feel that our Government, compared to theirs, is inherently weak, but this opinion is based on some very unusual reasons.

They have very little interest in our leadership, because they see our leaders as ships that pass in the night—transitory figures. That is the inherent weakness they see. In this "inherently weak" system, they see that the people hold the ultimate power, that the people are part owners of this country and that the people select the leaders.

You can't talk to them 10 minutes without their making the observation that we have been involved in this war at a fairly intense level for over 5 years and most of the American people have completely kept themselves disengaged from the whole conflict. This is all-important to the North Vietnamese.

The North Vietnamese are more sensitive to public opinion in the United States than any other group that I have encountered. They are excellent students of U.S. public opinion. In conversation, they quickly point out the divisiveness in our country.

When they quote statistics of those who participate in moratorium demonstrations, I always point out that that represents only a fractional part of 1 percent of our population. The first time I said, "Don't you wonder what the rest of the people are thinking?"

They showed great insight into our country when, without any hesitation they shot back, "Most of them aren't thinking anything."

That is the problem and they are aware of it. It is not the moratorium groups in this country that prolong the war. It is the everyday citizen, like me, who is so busy with his own affairs, going about his own everyday life with his family unit intact, not making any personal sacrifices at all that he just doesn't have to think about it.

We are the people that prolong the war.

The next point I would like to make is that the North Vietnamese consider the prisoners an unimportant issue. They place the same value on these prisoners that I put in this pad of paper. If I have it, fine; if I don't have it, I can get another pad. They just cannot believe that a nation, most of whose population has been able to ignore the fact our men are being killed on the battlefield, can become aroused over, as they say, "just 1,500 men."

HANOI'S VIEW OF POW ISSUE

I have never heard them refer to the prisoners and missing as 1,500 men. It is always "just 1,500 men." I am completely convinced that they are sincere in this opinion and I can assure you that they are consistent, in every meeting we have ever had, direct and indirect in saying, "This can't be a national issue in the United States."

I have told them repeatedly that in our culture one program in need can arouse the concern of 200 million people, and that 1,500 men who have made a tremendous sacrifice for us can certainly arouse this whole Nation.

As we started to educate and inform the American people on a broad-scale basis, the North Vietnamese began to react. In my most recent conversations—direct, through intermediaries and through my staff—they are starting to frantically point out, "We know what Perot is trying to do. He is trying to teach the American people to hate us. He is trying to divert their attention from the war to an ancillary issue."

And our point to the North Vietnamese is, "You don't have to tolerate that because you hold the men. All you have to do is release the men and you have defused the issue. Until you do, you can count on us, with an ever-increasing intensity, to mobilize the American people on this issue, because of our concern for these men."

Most of our efforts are not visible. After this is all over and the men are home, we will be able to discuss our activities. I hope it will demonstrate to the individual citizen in this country who feels a little powerless, that the individual who cares can accomplish a great deal.

Why do we make these visible efforts? The North Vietnamese understands one thing—pressure. Take the pressure off and nothing happens.

Historically the North Vietnamese have found that when an American twists their arm, they will say, "Let's talk." At that point we release his arm and talk and talk and talk while they replenish supplies, while they increase their ability to fight on the battlefield.

On this issue we resolved that we would talk and twist at the same time. That is exactly what we are doing. Congressman Fascell pointed out that they hope to divide the country on the prisoner issue. He is right in the center of the bull's eye. That is exactly what they hope to do. We hope to show them that the prisoner issue is the greatest mistake they have made—that they have misjudged us.

MAKE POW'S A CAMPAIGN ISSUE

There is a great deal of interest in Congress now about the 1970 elections, because all of you gentlemen are running. Interestingly enough, I think there is even more interest in Hanoi.

They are sensing the winds of the 1970 elections even more keenly than you are, because of their understanding of how our system works and their knowledge that our people select leaders who reflect our thinking.

If you want to know what a Congressman or what a Senator can do to get these men out in a short period of time, make this one of the points in your campaign platform.

The North Vietnamese will not like that, but they will respect it, they can count it, and they can see it. I hope you will be very active with your colleagues, and I hope that the wives and families here will actively urge every candidate for the Senate and for Congress to make this a stated part of his platform.

A concerned person in the United States will mail a copy of your platform to Hanoi. I will accumulate all of these clippings and make sure they get to Hanoi, along with a map showing a geographic distribution, a list of all the men running for office and their position on the prisoner issue.

We will let them see what the future leadership in our Congress and Senate is saying on this issue. They will panic, because our elections are so important to them, when they see the intensity of feeling on this subject.

That is one thing every Congressman can do. Let's look at some of the others.

THE INTERNATIONAL RED CROSS

The International Red Cross has a direct responsibility for getting these camps opened and run in accordance with the Geneva Convention. They are doing an ineffective job.

I have met a number of the International Red Cross people in that part of the world and, if I were a prisoner of war, I would certainly hope to have a better string of men trying to gain my release. Their concept of aggressive action is a memo every 6 months.

When a man is rotting, he deserves more than that. I urge you to use the full power of your position to get the International Red Cross to move aggressively.

The efforts of the American Red Cross are first rate, but the International Red Cross has control here, not the American Red Cross.

I have talked to the United Nations and to Mr. U Thant. It was a very pleasant visit, like a visit to a Chamber of Commerce. I consider the U.N. a weak approach. The International Control Commission is another group that could help us a great deal. There are three members: Canada, India, Poland. Apparently it takes all three to do something.

Right now they are flying into Hanoi once a week, not seeing anything, they return to Vientiane. Anything we can do to encourage Poland to discharge her responsibilities as a member of the ICC Commission will benefit these men. Even with miraculous strength from Poland, which we really can't count on because of their tie to Russia, I feel that very little would happen there.

I concur with the chairman that establishing one more committee in Congress would not contribute to getting these men released. I think the committee structure already exists, but lacks the proper priority. Certainly the last thing we need to do is organize another group to talk about it. We need to organize groups to do something about it.

Let's consider other alternatives for Congress. I urge the Congress and the Senate to meet in joint session and spend the better part of 1 day—I don't mean next fall, I mean in the very near future—hearing from these wives, learning firsthand the plight of these men.

I would also ask you to do everything in your power to create a yes or no situation where the Congress and the Senate are either willing to give this the necessary time, or they are not.

If you do meet in joint session, the North Vietnamese at the highest level, knowing the scope and size of events that have historically caused you to meet in joint session, will feel a tremendous amount of pressure.

URGES PLACEMENT OF CELL REPLICAS

There are other things that Congress can do. In the Rotunda, I urge you to place replicas of the bamboo stockades, the cells our men live in in Hanoi; a tree with a man chained to it; and a replica of a 20-foot hole in the ground with a man in it.

As you go about your daily affairs, you can never forget the absolutely awesome price these men are paying for all of us. As high school children, college students, and older people from across the country come to Washington, they will also be reminded.

I urge the Defense Department to put the same facilities in a prominent place in the Pentagon, and the State Department to do the same so that all the officials have to look at it every day. Finally, I urge the President to put the same replicas in the Executive Office Building.

As a nation, the North Vietnamese have an inferiority complex. If you really pressure them on this issue, they will react. When I first began talking to North Vietnam, everybody told me be polite. I was, nothing happened.

Finally I told them, "You are nothing but animals." At that point we started talking business. because they wanted to assure me that they were really humane people, a first-class nation, and that they wouldn't mistreat these men. Making the treatment of our men a visible issue in the United States will bring the North Vietnamese to their knees.

Each time Congress meets, it is my understanding that there is an opening prayer. Am I correct there, sir?

Mr. ZABLOCKI. That is correct.

Mr. PEROT. I certainly agree with your comment about what every citizen can do. Every citizen can pray. I made this statement when I went on my Christmas trip. I asked every family in America, as they sat down together as a family unit for Christmas dinner, to remember these men and their families.

I can assure you that my children pray for these men every night. I want to urge the Congress and the Senate of the United States to pray for them every day, as you open your session, until they are released.

Congressman Buchanan, I agree with your premise to pray, then act. A combination of the two will get these men back home to their families.

There are many other alternatives that we can pursue. I think the steps I have outlined, if executed, would be far more than they can stand. To me, one of the great tragedies is that we have insulated our people from the war.

If the steps I have outlined and the things that you, in your wisdom, choose to do don't produce results, then I ask Congress, as a private citizen who has not been adversely affected by this war to impose some sacrifice on me and every other American citizen, as we have historically done when the United States is at war, so that every day as I go about my daily life, I can never forget that somebody else's son is on the battlefield, possibly will lose a leg, an arm, an eye, possibly will be killed or captured. Thus, every day in every way, I, as a part owner—a proud part owner of this country—will have to make a personal sacrifice. We must never forget what those men and their families are giving up for us.

This type of action will shorten the war. I am talking about things that will bring these men home, based on my experience with the North Vietnamese.

PUT "TREMENDOUS PRESSURE" ON HANOI

We have many new plans. Most of the things thus far were for the basic education of the American people. The Gallup Poll we took after Christmas indicated 67 percent of the American people understood the issue. Now that has increased to 80 percent.

Everything we do from this point forward will be designed to put the North Vietnamese under tremendous pressure.

We feel we know where they are sensitive. We plan to simply pound away until they release our men. As far as I am concerned, compiling names is important because it creates a firm identity of the man, and the North Vietnamese must produce that man at the end of the war, assuring the Geneva accords is important because it means humane treatment for our men.

But my interest is simply the release of our men, and I urge you to make that your interest. These other alternatives are fallback positions.

The North Vietnamese live in a barter economy. They are better traders than we are. They still go to the market and trade pigs for chickens, and they are good at it. They are used to trading.

Whatever you ask for, they will attempt to trade on the prisoner issue. Ask for release, keep them under so much pressure they have to release the men.

I know that getting things like cells, and stockades in the rotunda, there is a lot of redtape. Give me permission to put them there and they will be there in hours.

Finally, if everything I have outlined to you today is tried and doesn't work, let's turn to the American people. I have always felt, and I know you would agree, that most of the common sense in this country is with its people. Let's look at the American labor unions. The longshoremen in New York City have told the Russians that they will unload one Russian ship for every five prisoners they release and, until they agree to that, they won't unload any Russian ships in that area.

That is a strong proposal, and the North Vietnamese realize that. Through our labor unions, and there are millions of great Americans in these unions, or through our Congress, we say to our friends around the world who are trading with us and trading with North Vietnam, "Make a choice." Until we get our men back, if you send anything into North Vietnam, you won't get anything in this country.

I know we are all unanimous in hoping we never have to go to war again and hoping that we can end this war quickly. But please never forget in your great responsibilities the paradox that is taking place in this war. We are a Nation that would rise up in wrath as a Nation if a college asked a quarterback to play without a helmet in a football game.

Yet, month after month and year after year we have sent the best of our young men out on the battlefield, figuratively, without helmet, mouth guard, shoulder pads, or knee pads. We have not adequately supported the men we have asked to die for us. We must support them. We have men over there and they are stuck, as you have pointed out so well today. We must exert whatever pressure necessary to get these prisoners out.

There is no question in the minds of North Vietnamese officials, about the might and the power of the United States of America. There is a question in their minds, and rightly so, about the will of the people of the United States of America.

I think they feel that this Nation may have outgrown its people, that we have a Nation greater in resources and potential than the people who comprise it. From their point of view we appear pretty soft. This apparent internal softness gives them the resolve to continue the war.

Thank you very much.

Mr. ZABLOCKI. Thank you, Mr. Perot, for your eloquent statement and your graphic report.

This subcommittee extends commendation and congratulations for your activities in behalf of American prisoners of war. I can assure you, as I did the ladies, that this subcommittee and Congress will exert every effort to obtain humane treatment and ultimate release of our POW's.

As you know, we did have before this subcommittee in November of last year, Mr. Ramone Eaton, vice president of the American National Red Cross, and Mr. Harold Starr, secretary and counsel of the American Red Cross. They advised us of the difficulties that

the International Red Cross has been confronted with in carrying out its duties.

As you have suggested, however, it may be that every effort should be made to get the International Red Cross more involved and active on behalf of our prisoners of war.

HOW U.S. PRISONERS ARE CONFINED

You mentioned the replica of the stockade and other graphic and very dramatic pieces that could be put on display in the rotunda. How much space would this take if we were to see what we can do about it? Are they just photographs?

Mr. PEROT. No. I have had some of these constructed. I have the typical Vietcong stockade built. It is a bamboo stockade, about 7 feet high, but the cell is only 4 feet high.

The man sits with his legs in front of him with leg irons on his legs, spread-eagled. Typically, he is living in the jungle, in a marshy area. He is covered with things you can't duplicate here such as mosquitoes, and flies. He lives in his own waste.

That is what the great young men are going through for us. The construction would take an area of 5 by 7 feet. That is a full-scale replica.

The Hanoi-type cell will have to be a cut-away, because it is a true cell. If made authentically, you couldn't see anything because it has no windows. It is just like living inside a concrete box.

In Laos some of the men are kept in caves—some of the men are chained to trees. The Vietcong also chain men to trees. The replica would consist of a tree, and a chain with a man attached to it.

We probably wouldn't try to duplicate a cave because it is too complex. The hole in the ground could be constructed as a cutaway. The Pathet Lao use this method—they dig a hole in the ground, lower the man into it, throw him scraps twice a day and let him live in his own waste.

Perhaps we should plan this another way. Tell me how much space we can have, and I will fit the replicas into the available space.

I would suggest that you ask the International Red Cross to send the people responsible for getting Geneva accords established with North Vietnam, the same people who are supposed to be dealing with the Vietnamese, to come to Washington to meet with your committee. Talk to these people and draw your own conclusions. In the final analysis, it is not the International Red Cross, it is the individual man they send to talk with North Vietnam.

I think you would be appalled that they have not put in a better organization to bring relief to our men.

A LOCATION FOR REPLICAS IN THE CAPITOL

Mr. ZABLOCKI. As to space in the rotunda proper, we may not be able to get any. But there are other possible places in the Capitol.

Mr. PEROT. Maybe a better location would be at the subway. I understand there is a great deal of congressional traffic there. I would ask you to find a spot where every Congressman and Senator tends to pass every day—the cafeteria, subway, you name it. With your approval, we will put it there.

I would like for the American people to see it because it produces an instant change of attitude concerning the prisoners.

Mr. ZABLOCKI. Yes, you have read my mind. I would go one better by saying it is not only for the Senators and Congressmen to see, but where the greatest number of American people pass for them to see.

There may be some good location in the Capitol. We will discuss this with the Architect of the Capitol and the leadership to see what can be done. We would have to have a fairly good idea of how much space it will take.

Mr. PEROT. On all of these suggestions, the prayer, the joint session, everything we have suggested here, we stand ready to supply men, money, whatever it takes. We look to you for leadership, but as far as following in behind you, we will sweep up all the details.

Mr. ZABLOCKI. One space below the rotunda does come to mind. I believe it would be adequate. We have an architectural mockup of the Capitol and other historical things there now but they could be put aside for a while. I think that would be an ideal spot. It is in the Capitol underneath the rotunda.

Mr. PEROT. Could I contact a member of your staff and we will work on it from there?

Mr. ZABLOCKI. Yes, sir.

Mr. PEROT. Fine.

Mr. ZABLOCKI. You can contact us when you wish, Mr. Perot. We will remember you.

Mr. PEROT. To quantify my request, if I could just have one thing, first I would want the joint session; second, I would want every candidate to take a position.

I hate to put prayer third, but the North Vietnamese won't understand that.

Mr. ZABLOCKI. You would first get the prayer at the joint session.

Mr. PEROT. Right, but every day when you open each session, pray for these men because, as you all know, they need it.

Next in priority is the replicas of the cells. If these things don't produce short range results, Congress should impose a sacrifice on every American every day that we have men on the battlefield.

That will keep the American people's and Congress' attention focused on this whole problem.

Mr. ZABLOCKI. We certainly will try to follow through.

Mr. Buchanan?

CONCRETE SUGGESTIONS FROM MR. PEROT

Mr. BUCHANAN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I think there are some very fine, concrete suggestions here that we ought to pursue with dispatch. Mr. Perot with all due respect to our good friend and former colleague, Mel Laird, I really think we ought to put you and these ladies in charge of the war for a little while and we would get it over with.

Mr. PEROT. I am with you regarding the ladies.

Mr. BUCHANAN. The chairman suggests we could also use you in the State Department.

Mr. PEROT. I am not sure about that. I think the place for me is in the computer business. I could be one of these prisoners. You could

be one of these prisoners. That is the way our society works. "There, but by the grace of God, go I."

I am a Naval Academy graduate. I could be in one of those holes. I have every confidence that if I were a prisoner somebody in this country would be moving heaven and earth to get me out, because that is the way our society works. Frankly, about all that would keep me alive is the hope that somebody was trying to get me out.

The released prisoners here today will tell you that is what kept them alive.

Mr. BUCHANAN. I think it is very clear that—and perhaps this got through to the North Vietnamese when you were talking to them—we have a secret weapon: People like you, sir, and these ladies that I think will prove equal to the task of not only getting action out of the Congress and the Government, but getting the job done and getting these prisoners released.

I very much appreciate your testimony, sir.

Mr. ZABLOCKI. Mr. Fountain?

Mr. FOUNTAIN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Perot, I can't agree with you more about the impact of seeing what is happening. A couple of years ago I went with a special subcommittee to the Far East and had the privilege of going through the American hospital at Yokohama. I went from bed to bed through that entire hospital, composed of our men who had been badly burned.

Instead of being discouraged, I came out with a great deal more faith and encouragement, because in the faces of men whose bodies were so badly burned—they could wear no apparel, burned all over—I saw smiles and expressions of faith and joy of course, that they were there, but still concerned and proud to be Americans. It was quite an inspiration.

I have read of the sacrifices you have made. I think all of us appreciate it. You are certainly to be commended. I was particularly impressed, as I think all of the members of the subcommittee have been, by your testimony here today.

I think you have made some extremely meritorious suggestions and I hope that all of them, certainly most of them, can in some way be put into effect.

I was especially impressed with your description of the attitude of the North Vietnamese people and from what little observation I have had and conversations I have had with people in that part of the world, I think you are absolutely right.

INFLUENCE OF THE NORTH VIETNAMESE ON THEIR LEADERS

Your description indicates how they feel, which leads me to this question: How much influence do they have upon their leaders, upon their government in North Vietnam?

Mr. PEROT. The people? None.

There are certain things we can do. The best way to measure this is to go in the prison camps in the south and talk to the North Vietnamese soldiers. If we docked a ship into South Vietnamese harbors and offered any prisoner that wanted to go home his freedom, we would not be overrun with passengers.

I have asked these men if they wanted to go back home. If they wanted to go back to battle. Only a few wanted to go back on the battlefield. They would hedge about going back home. They wanted to be sure they would be welcomed. They felt somehow they wouldn't be allowed to return home, because they had been captured.

The people don't have a voice. It is the difference between an open and a closed society. I have been through a great deal of bad information trying to get good information on the subject of North Vietnamese attitudes. I suggest that, as you are briefed by people on this matter, you ask them if they are personal observations or hearsay.

There is much information here in Washington that is prepared, written, and presented by people who have not recently been in Vietnam. There is a gap between what is being said here and what is being felt and seen by men who are there. You could find yourselves making decisions based on inaccurate information in some cases.

The North Vietnamese, I conclude, don't have a voice in their government. There is something we can do. We started with no contacts at all with the South Vietnamese Government and with a lot of misconceptions based on what we had read. We found the South Vietnamese to be more sensitive and more emotional on the subject of our prisoners than we ever dreamed they would be.

THE CONCERN OF SOUTH VIETNAMESE OFFICIALS

We captured the concern of President Thieu, the entire cabinet, the generals, the colonels and while we were there, South Vietnam, a small nation at war, diverted several thousand troops a day, and substantial numbers of airplanes to let the press of the free world go through their camps and see their activities.

As the South Vietnamese officials talked to us, in some cases, tears would come into their eyes. You don't see that too often in this country. They feel strongly about our men and they deeply appreciate what our men have done for them. They want to help them.

The North Vietnamese give no information to their own people when a man is captured, wounded, or killed, they don't tell his family. There are about 400,000 families in the North that desperately hope the man is a prisoner. When you don't know the fate of a soldier, you hope he is a prisoner.

From a powerful radio station in South Vietnam we are already broadcasting or about to broadcast day after day the names and hometowns of the 8,000 North Vietnamese prisoners in the South.

The North Vietnamese officials wouldn't accept this information from us, so we are just going to stick it down their throats. Their people will want to know.

Starting with 400,000 missing men and assuming four or five people are immediately involved with each family, you can assume a large number of people will be listening intently to this broadcast. I think these broadcasts will be a very unsettling thing to the North Vietnamese. They will have to tolerate this until they release our men.

THE PEOPLE VERSUS LEADERS OF NORTH VIETNAM

Mr. FOUNTAIN. Will you express your opinion about the concern of the North Vietnamese people for public opinion in this country, including the leadership?

Mr. PEROT. I am talking about only the leadership. That is the only thing I am focused on there. The people in North Vietnam are just like people anywhere else. They don't want to be at war.

In order to get a fix on the leadership of North Vietnam, go to the refugee camps in Laos, talk to these very primitive neo people that for some reason fled miles through the mountains and jungles. They were living on the edge of existence where they were and you ask, "Why do you flee? Things were bad where you were. They are bad here, why did you flee?"

One 90-year-old man looked at me and laughed. He had crawled for 6 days through the jungle. He replied, "Why do you even ask?" He fled to be free. We have forgotten what that means, because freedom was handed down to us. We just accept it.

The refugees know what it is to lose freedom. They have seen the North Vietnamese come into their villages and take control. The North Vietnamese used to control the villages by killing the old leaders.

They found that leaders were hard to replace, so now they keep the existing leadership using very harsh methods. You gentlemen are leaders in our country. Picture yourselves as village leaders in Laos. The North Vietnamese have you, and your wife and children lined up in front of your house.

The North Vietnamese walk up, take your smallest child, and murder that child in front of you. At that point you hate them. On the other hand, you have three children left and a wife. They tell you that unless you obey them blindly, they will be back to kill the youngest.

At that point you have had an instant change of politics. There is no more effective way to threaten you than through your children. If they threatened you directly, you might not break. If they threaten to kill your children, you break in an instant. That is why the refugees flee.

The people who need to know, can learn much from talking to refugees that have just come out. You will get a deep appreciation of what it means to be free—what it means to be an American. You will certainly get an even deeper appreciation for these 1,500 men and the 40,000 dead that won't ever come back, in terms of the sacrifices they have made for us.

Mr. FOUNTAIN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

Mr. ZABLOCKI. Mr. Fascell?

Mr. FASCELL. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Perot, you have been very impressive because of your grasp and your practical approach. If there is a need for a quarterback in international politics, we have found one.

Mr. PEROT. My scope is much more narrow than that. I think without any question the biggest day in my life—and I have had a number of big days in my life—will be the day that I see these men lift their children into their arms.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF PUBLIC DIPLOMACY

Mr. FASCELL. I am going to make a surprising statement. If there is any one thing that will bring it about faster than anybody else, it is what you have described, what you have proposed and what you are actually doing.

Mr. PEROT. I believe it will work. If that doesn't work, we will be back again with a tougher plan.

Mr. FASCELL. You might be interested in knowing that this committee has been interested in and has been pressuring for years in many ways to bring at the international level the kind of pragmatic approach with respect to the achievement, implementation, and the formulation of our foreign policy objectives in this country, that which you bring to us in this casework solution.

We have had many hearings on the subject of the psychological dimension of foreign policy. I think we have had some success of education and stimulation in the executive branch. The old ways are obviously not sufficient. I am not being derogatory about the people whom we have either in our Military or in our Diplomatic Corps. They are outstanding and dedicated in my judgment. But there is a new measure which you can call graphic or demonstrative communications or public diplomacy; but it is an explicit recognition of the human factor—such as public opinion pressure on the leadership in North Vietnam, or educating and informing masses of people so it will have a direct reaction to Government policy.

You talk about an immediate change in politics; that is what I am talking about, too. It is the lack of this dimension in our foreign affairs that I have been critical of, our committee also has been concerned for many years because we felt that the United States has been backward, and squeamish about this direct approach to international politics in a day and age when modern communications techniques make it not only possible but essential—especially when it is being effectively and substantially in use by other nations.

For example, the North Vietnamese play American public opinion like a bowstring. They know what they have. It is easy for them to do it.

They rely on its reaction very heavily. Obviously the counterpressure must be just as effective, otherwise we not only fall behind in that which the United States seeks to accomplish but we cannot bring about the change of attitude. That is what I am talking about. That is what you are talking about.

Mr. PEROT. That's right.

Mr. FASCELL. That is why I believe your idea will be extremely effective and that is what is so exciting about it. Especially since it is being done by a group of men and women who are not in an official capacity.

That is something the North Vietnamese hadn't counted on.

Mr. PEROT. It will mean a great deal to the prisoners when they return, to learn what their wives and families did to gain their release.

Mr. FASCELL. I am sure the ladies don't mind having a guy like you helping them.

Mr. PEROT. If I can help them, I will.

Mr. ZABLOCKI. Mr. Fountain?

Mr. FOUNTAIN. Mr. Chairman, I would like to say that I would be very happy to be one of the introducers of an appropriate resolution for the joint session of Congress. We don't have to have a resolution for the other things. I think they are matters which we will have to work out with the leadership, both the House and the Senate.

But I would be very happy to be one of the introducers of a joint resolution for that purpose.

Mr. ZABLOCKI. You have just been witnesses to what I said earlier about the fine cooperation that I get from my subcommittee.

Mr. Buchanan?

Mr. BUCHANAN. I just wanted to say I don't want to limit the scope of this gentleman's activities. I think also we might put him in charge of the Congress for a little while.

HELP FROM THE MASS MEDIA

Mr. ZABLOCKI. Mr. Perot, I am sure you are aware that we have with us today some of the finest ladies and men in the field of communication, newspapers, radio and TV. You notice I put them in alphabetical order, not to show any preferences among the media. I know you didn't intend to ignore them.

Do you have a word for them?

Mr. PEROT. I sure do.

If you said, "Perot, I will give you any two things you want to get these men out," it would be very easy to tell me the two things I want. No. 1, I would want the support of the Congress of the United States in the things we have just outlined; and No. 2, I would ask every newspaper, radio and television station, every magazine in this country to study this issue. Large amounts of source material are available.

Analyze this material on the prisoners of war—crystallize their position as a publication—and then take a strong editorial position.

Let's take Look magazine. Look just hit the North Vietnamese right in the side of the neck. Look came out editorially against the war at an earlier time. They wrote an editorial in the past 2 weeks, it criticizing North Vietnam's handling of the prisoners.

This is a double-trauma for the North Vietnamese, because they were counting on Look to support them. The magazine has taken two positions—one on the war, another on the prisoners. If the newspapers, magazines, radio and television stations will take a position, we will see that North Vietnam knows of these editorials. We will provide them with a geographic and circulation analysis.

When North Vietnam sees these editorials they will react to keep this issue from growing.

When we sent women and children to Paris at Christmas, North Vietnam called out 50 policemen. They are afraid of women and children. I don't know. Maybe a planeload of women and children is a pretty ominous force.

More recently we had 80 newsmen and they brought out 150 policemen to keep the newsmen away from the North Vietnamese. They are frightened by a free press that they can't control. These 80 newsmen attended a press conference in Paris after the peace negotiations. The

North Vietnamese wouldn't recognize them. Finally these men were standing, shouting, trying to ask a question. The North Vietnamese and Vietcong would not respond to a question from the press that was not planted in advance.

When the free press in this country takes a position on the prisoner issue, and Congress becomes involved—we will put real pressure on the North Vietnamese. Then, it won't be too long until our men are released.

Mr. ZABLOCKI. I wanted to extend my personal appreciation that in your order of priority you referred to "Congress and the press." But then you corrected it and put it the "press and Congress." Being in Congress for a few years, I know the power of the press and I want them on my side, too.

Let me repeat, we have the finest men and women in the communications media here present. They listened attentively to your message and will do something about it.

INTRODUCTION OF LIEUTENANT FRISHMAN

I had introduced earlier Seaman Douglas Hegdahl. My attention has been called to the presence here of Navy Lt. Robert Frishman. Lieutenant Frishman was also released last year, in August, with Hegdahl, I understand.

He and Seaman Hegdahl will appear at the tribute at Constitution Hall at 8 p.m. tonight.

I want to again thank you, Mr. Perot, ladies and all of you who have come here to this session. It has been most fruitful, very revealing, stimulating and I can assure you that it will serve as an incentive for Congress to act.

The meeting is adjourned. The next session of the subcommittee on the question of American prisoners of war will be Wednesday, May 6, at 10 a.m. in room 2255 of the Rayburn House Office Building, when we will hear testimony from representatives of the Department of State, Department of Defense, and the American Red Cross.

Thank you again for coming. The subcommittee is adjourned.

(Whereupon, at 1:04 p.m. the subcommittee adjourned, to reconvene at 10 a.m., Wednesday, May 6, 1970.)

AMERICAN PRISONERS OF WAR IN SOUTHEAST ASIA, 1970

WEDNESDAY, MAY 6, 1970

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS,
SUBCOMMITTEE ON NATIONAL SECURITY
POLICY AND SCIENTIFIC DEVELOPMENTS,
Washington, D.C.

The subcommittee met at 10:07 a.m. in room 2255, Rayburn House Office Building, Hon. Clement J. Zablocki (chairman of the subcommittee) presiding.

Mr. ZABLOCKI. The subcommittee will please come to order.

Today is the third session which the Subcommittee on National Security Policy and Scientific Developments has held on the issue of American prisoners of war in Southeast Asia.

At the very outset, I want to express my regret that a conflict has developed. Our Republican colleagues are unable to be here because of a Republican conference, and some of the other members of the subcommittee have other committee hearings, so they also are unable to be here.

INTRODUCTION OF WITNESSES

We are certainly delighted that the witnesses this morning have been able to come before us, and will speak to a very important subject, the issue of our American prisoners of war.

Our witnesses are the Honorable G. Warren Nutter, Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security Affairs, the Honorable William H. Sullivan, Deputy Assistant Secretary, Bureau of East Asian and Pacific Affairs, Department of State, and Mr. Ramone S. Eaton, vice president of the American Red Cross, and Mr. Eaton is accompanied by Mr. John Curran, associate counselor of the American Red Cross.

Accompanying Dr. Nutter is Mr. Ralph Jefferson, special assistant to Dr. Nutter on prisoners of war affairs.

With Ambassador Sullivan from the Department of State is Mr. Frank Sieverts, Special Assistant to the Under Secretary for prisoners of war affairs.

Gentlemen, again we are pleased to have you with us today for this session.

As you know, our objective in calling this hearing is to be informed of developments, since our hearings last November. We also are seeking to determine what future congressional action should be taken to help bring relief to our captured American servicemen and their loved ones here at home.

Dr. Nutter, if you will proceed with your statement, please.

**STATEMENT OF HON. G. WARREN NUTTER, ASSISTANT SECRETARY
OF DEFENSE (INTERNATIONAL SECURITY AFFAIRS)**

Mr. NUTTER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I am honored to have this opportunity to represent the Department of Defense in these important hearings on the prisoner of war problem.

I come here in my capacity as chairman of the Department of Defense Prisoner of War Policy Committee, and as the principal adviser to Secretary Laird on these matters. I am sure that you are all aware of Secretary Laird's profound personal concern for the hundreds of captured and missing servicemen in Southeast Asia and for their brave families who must anxiously wait here at home.

On his behalf, I wish to express the Department's appreciation for all that this subcommittee has consistently done to relieve the plight of our men and to achieve their release. We particularly welcome open hearings such as these, for they provide a forum that the public here and abroad will respect and heed.

Last November, Mr. Doolin of my office described in some detail the enemy's shocking disregard not only for the obligations that it solemnly undertook as a signatory of the Geneva Convention Relative to the Treatment of Prisoners of War, but also for the most rudimentary standards of humane treatment. I am sorry to say that the enemy persists in detaining these men, even those who are gravely sick and wounded, and in treating them and their families shamefully and inhumanely.

EFFORTS HAVE BORNE SOME FRUIT

Our unrelenting efforts have, however, borne some fruit. When we testified in November, only 110 prisoners in North Vietnam had written to their families, out of a total of 1,399 missing or captured personnel. As of yesterday, 259 had done so. I understand that more mail is on the way, so that this figure will probably increase shortly.

Forty-six men, who were carried last November as missing in action, have been reclassified as prisoners of war, largely on the basis of letters that they were permitted to write home. Since November, 120 additional families have received their first word from men classified then—that is, back in November—as prisoners.

During the same period, a small number of wives have been able to wring some information from Hanoi about the fate of their loved ones. Unfortunately, the news has generally been distressing. Of some men, the North Vietnamese have said they have no record. In a particularly cruel display, they chose Christmas Eve 1969 as the moment for their agent to advise five wives that they were widows.

Since no details were provided on how their husbands had lost their lives, neither the wives nor the U.S. Government can accept this information as reliable.

When all is said, the enemy's conduct continues to make a mockery of its claims of "lenient" and "humane" treatment of our men and their families.

HANOI'S LACK OF A HUMANE POLICY

In the name of what humane policy does the enemy steadfastly refuse to publish a list of prisoners? The wives and families of over

1,000 men are left to wonder for years whether their men are dead or alive. Hundreds of wives ask this plaintive question: "Am I a wife or a widow?" They are answered by cold-hearted silence.

Hanoi's agents in the South have yet to permit a single prisoner held in South Vietnam to write home. The same is true for our men held captive in Laos. In support of their assertion that they treat prisoners humanely, Hanoi's spokesmen have claimed—falsely, to be sure—that all prisoners in North Vietnam are permitted to write to their families. If, by the enemy's own admission, mail privileges are such an important aspect of humane treatment, where are the letters from the South and from Laos? The enemy stands indicted by its own words.

Let me make it clear that a list of men held prisoner, important as it is, would not discharge the enemy's legal or moral obligations. We are entitled to, and shall insist on, the fullest possible accounting for all our men, including, in the case of those known to be dead, the circumstances of their death, the date and place of burial, and other details.

What kind of humane policy is it that denies an immediate exchange of sick and wounded prisoners, as required by the Geneva Convention? Or that rejects anything approaching inspection of enemy prison camps by impartial observers? Or that, as the President said last week, "tramples on solemn agreements . . . and uses our prisoners as hostages?" There is no doubt that the Convention applies to this conflict. There is no doubt that North Vietnam is obliged by its accession in 1957 to observe it.

What humane instincts cause the enemy deliberately to lay waste to 4, 5, and even 6 years of the lives of blameless men in a vain effort to sustain aggression?

There are those, I know, who disagree with what our Government is doing now to bring the conflict to a conclusion. But anyone who is searching to understand what the struggle is about and why we are committed to ensuring the right of self-determination for the South Vietnamese people, need look no further than the way North Vietnam treats those it holds captive.

CONTRASTING BEHAVIOR OF SOUTH VIETNAM

The contrasting behavior of South Vietnam is striking. From the beginning, the Government of South Vietnam has strictly complied with the Geneva Convention in its treatment of prisoners, including those initially captured by U.S. forces and turned over to South Vietnam as the detaining power under the convention. A full list of names is provided to the International Committee of the Red Cross and is available at all times to the enemy. Camps are conscientiously run and regularly inspected by the ICRC. Prisoners are well fed and cared for. They are permitted to correspond freely with their families, and they enjoy regular visiting days.

The South Vietnamese Government has further demonstrated its concern for innocent individuals, regardless of allegiance, by repeatedly offering to release the sick and wounded. On March 26, South Vietnam offered to return 343 sick and wounded men desiring repatri-

ation to the North. Despite rebuffs by the other side, betraying a callous disregard for the fate of even its own men, we plan to pursue such initiative vigorously to exert maximum pressure for reciprocal steps by the enemy.

We acknowledge that some individuals on our side have, in isolated cases, mistreated prisoners. However, the Government of South Vietnam and its allies have consistently observed the firm policy of punishing all such offenders, and working constantly toward elimination of all offenses. The record of our side stands in sharp contrast to the documented cruelty and inhumanity of the enemy.

WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE?

One question is increasingly asked today: Where do we go from here? The answer is that we shall redouble our efforts. We shall never falter in our resolve. We shall never despair. We have before us the noble example of the valiant wives, parents, and families of the missing and captured. They know what it is to live with dreadful uncertainty day after day and year after year. These brave next-of-kin spur us on, and well they should. But they are above all courageous and loyal Americans, and we owe them a special tribute for the strength and dignity with which they have borne their agonizing burden.

We must be frank. If there were a ready and easy way to relieve the plight of our missing and captured men, these hearings would not be taking place. But I believe that we have pursued the right course during the past year. Rather than reverse our direction, it behooves us to press forward with greater determination.

We are pursuing in Southeast Asia the course best calculated to convince the enemy that it can only gain by negotiating in good faith. And, as Secretary Laird observed last Friday night, the prisoner-of-war issue is the first that must be resolved by negotiation.

While pressing for a negotiated solution to the war, we must do our utmost to keep the plight of our captured and missing men steadily before the eyes of the American people and the world. We must lose no opportunity to dramatize the tragic and senseless inhumanity of imprisoning innocent men for years upon years.

We are still, of course, vitally interested in obtaining full information on all our missing men. But information and humane treatment are no longer enough. The passage of time introduces other imperatives. Over 400 of our men have been missing for more than 3½ years, longer than ever before in the history of the country. Some of our men are known to be prisoners for more than 5 years. This excessive time in captivity has rendered all of our men to be in fact sick and wounded entitled to immediate repatriation.

INTENT OF THE GENEVA CONVENTION

The Geneva Convention was never intended to doom military victims of war to endless years of bleak incarceration. We must make clear to Hanoi and to the world that the time has come to proceed with the release of all prisoners of war on both sides, highest priority being given to those who have been held captive 2 years or more.

Ambassador Rita Hauser put the case eloquently last November, in addressing the U.N. Third Committee, and I quote her statement :

* * *[the] Convention is not meant to create a life of privilege for captured military personnel. It is meant to insure minimum standards of human decency to helpless men who are in the power of their military enemy and can no longer pose a threat to that enemy, and to provide minimum solace to families who are far from the front lines. In wartime, when passions are inflamed, this Convention seeks to preserve those frail links of compassion and decency which are so urgently needed. Nurtured, these links may in turn help move enemies toward a realization of their common stake in finding the path to peace.

If North Vietnam desires peace in Southeast Asia, let it begin here. There is no more crucial issue between us. Resolution of this problem can point the way to resolution of the other obstacles to peace.

These hearings today and last week make an important contribution toward this end. The Appeal for International Justice at Constitution Hall last Friday night and the National Day of Prayer [and Concern] last Sunday will surely add to the sum total of awareness, concern, and determination both here and abroad.

This subcommittee heard some proposals last week about further actions the Congress might take. I support the suggestion that the Congress leave no avenue unexplored, including a joint session devoted to the prisoner of war issue. I urge each Member to make his position clear to his constituents this fall, and to encourage his constituents to make their own interest known. The Congress represents all America, and its voice is a powerful force. You can make our determination on this subject clear in Hanoi.

COMMENT ON HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION 499

I should like to comment briefly at this point on House Concurrent Resolution 499, introduced by Chairman Rivers. This resolution raises questions of negotiating tactics more directly of concern to the State Department, and Ambassador Sullivan will comment on these matters in his testimony.

Let me say, however, that the Defense Department is wholly in sympathy with the general thrust and spirit of the resolutions. Secretary Laird believes that the prisoner issue belongs at the top of the Paris agenda, and the U.S. delegation in Paris, ably led by Ambassador Habib, has in fact pressed the enemy almost exclusively on prisoner matters for many weeks. I would add, however, that our overall negotiating strategy should, in my opinion, have sufficient flexibility to permit us to cope with, and take advantage of, a wide range of possible future developments. I should hope that recognition of this need would be reflected in any resolution ultimately adopted by the Congress.

Mr. Chairman, this concludes my prepared statement. I will be happy now to attempt to answer any questions.

Mr. ZABLOCKI. Thank you, Dr. Nutter. Undoubtedly, your statement will give assurance and comfort to those who have loved ones who are prisoners of war. It emphasizes that the Department of Defense is, indeed, attempting to do everything possible to expedite not only identification of prisoners, but their early release.

THE PRISONER OF WAR POLICY COMMITTEE

To more clearly understand what the Prisoner of War Policy Committee's duties are, could you describe for the committee the objectives and activities of the committee?

Dr. NUTTER. Yes, sir; Mr. Chairman. The principal purpose of the committee is to coordinate the activities of the Department of Defense and various services in the area of prisoner of war affairs and to consult and advise our own policy.

The committee is an advisory committee. It is essentially advisory to me. The responsibility in the Department is mine to provide final advice to the Secretary. It is a large committee that is composed of representatives of all the services and of the various DOD agencies, OSO agencies, that are involved in prisoner of war questions.

We meet about once a month, and we have regular working committees that are constantly implementing the various decisions that are made, and coordinate the policy.

WHICH EFFORTS HAVE BEEN MOST EFFECTIVE?

Mr. ZABLOCKI. Mr. Secretary, you have endorsed the recommendation made before this committee as to further action on the part of Congress. On page 2, the top of page 2, you say, "Our unrelenting efforts have borne some fruit." Will you describe what efforts you believe have been particularly effective in pressuring the North Vietnamese to release names of men they hold, and to allow them to write?

This may give us an indication as to what additional steps Congress can take.

Mr. NUTTER. In all these matters, Mr. Chairman, it is very hard to point your finger at that particular activity or that particular event which finally leads to some movement abroad. I think it is the whole sum of the various efforts that have been undertaken during the year, but let me indicate some of the more important ones.

First of all, making the matter public, and carrying it to the public, and explaining to the American public and the world at large what the situation is. I think this has had an impact on the North Vietnamese. They wish to carry an image of civilized behavior. They are concerned about the support of the dissident elements in this country, and, of course, we find in prisoner of war matters that no matter where one stands on the question of the war, and what policy should be followed now in bringing the war to a conclusion, people are unanimous in their feeling—virtually unanimous, in any event, except for the hard-core few—in their concern for the treatment of these prisoners; and therefore, this has embarrassed the North Vietnamese.

Well, not only embarrassed them, but thwarted some of their efforts to get stronger dissent in this country.

The efforts of Congress, in passing resolutions, I think, have had a very important effect on them. There again, the fact that the resolutions are passed unanimously, and all members of Congress, no matter what their attitude on the war, and on Vietnamization, and other policies, support the concerns that are expressed for these prisoners. So I think they have been very important.

The trips of the wives abroad, privately-financed and organized, trips on their own, showing their deep concern, visits to the North Vietnamese embassies, to the embassies of third countries, I think these have helped to put considerable pressure on the North Vietnamese.

The activities of people like Mr. Perot, in his own private sphere, emphasizing the support of the American public, have been important.

I don't know whether I have left anything out, but I think that each one of these activities, including the efforts of the press to bring the story to the public, have had an important effect in causing the North Vietnamese to at least become somewhat less rigid on this matter.

SUGGESTIONS OF MR. PEROT

Mr. ZABLOCKI. Like you, Dr. Nutter, I believe the recommendations made by Mr. Perot were excellent. I am striving, as he requested, to see if mock-ups of the way the prisoners of war are being handled by the the North Vietnamese can be displayed at the Capitol, perhaps in the Rotunda.

I couldn't help but think over this last week that perhaps we ought to put one of these replicas in Ward Square, or somewhere where the students in our universities could be alerted and made aware of the treatment our prisoners are getting.

I will not ask you to comment on that. I know you have read the transcript of our Friday meeting with wives of POW's. Most of the wives in their testimony were appreciative of our Government's efforts. But one of the witnesses said, "Well, these resolutions, passed though they are unanimously, only words, words, words."

THE ULTIMATUM APPROACH

She wanted action. And therefore, what further action could you recommend? And as you know, because I know you are informed about the hearings, we did have testimony from the Chairman of the House Armed Services Committee that the United States should issue an ultimatum to the North Vietnamese, that they either release our prisoners by a certain date, or we would blockade Haiphong, or take other serious action.

What would your view be on such an action?

Mr. NUTTER. Mr. Chairman, I think we have to be very firm in our dealings with the enemy on this question. We have to constantly make it clear to him that we are going to insist that the prisoners be released, and that this be a very important element in any negotiations that continue.

I think that we have to be very cautious, at the same time, that we don't prematurely issue ultimatums that may not have the effect that we wish at the time that we issue them. The enemy has not yet shown a sufficiently serious interest in the prisoner-of-war question.

If I might digress here for a moment, when we began our activities of trying to bring this question into the open, in the minds of the North Vietnamese the prisoner-of-war issue was at the bottom of the list, so far as any discussions, any negotiations, any action on their part was concerned, and they consistently made this clear. In their

mind was the thought, of course, that they would resolve all other questions, and then the prisoners would still be within their power, and they could use them as hostages to get other kinds of concessions from us.

Our efforts over this period have been concentrated on one fundamental objective, which is to bring the prisoner-of-war question from the bottom of the list to the top. I feel, myself, that the prisoner-of-war issue can be resolved when the North Vietnamese have decided that negotiation is the best way for them to get out of the conflict that they are involved in. When the time comes that they are convinced that they must negotiate, they must have something to negotiate on. They must have something to offer, and the main thing they will have to offer us, in a serious negotiating session, will be better treatment of the prisoners of war and their release.

No single action, in my opinion, is going to bring them to the point where they want to negotiate. I think it will be the whole totality of what we are trying to do, the Vietnamization program in particular, which will convince them that they have more to gain by a peaceful negotiated resolution of the conflict than by continuing it indefinitely.

Mr. ZABLOCKI. To restate it, you would not suggest that an ultimatum be tendered to them?

Mr. NUTTER. I would not think at this time that the ultimatum would accomplish the desired effect.

VIETNAMIZATION AND THE POW SITUATION

Mr. ZABLOCKI. It has been said, Mr. Secretary, by a number of persons, including those who both support and those who oppose the war, that a policy of Vietnamization offers little solace for our prisoners of war, because if the war just fades away, rather than being negotiated to a settlement, our men could conceivably stay there the rest of their lives. Would you comment?

Mr. NUTTER. Yes, Mr. Chairman. I think both the President and Secretary Laird have been very clear on this question. They have stated without any qualification that these men will not be abandoned. We will not draw our troop strength down below an effective size as long as those prisoners are still in Vietnam. Even at the end of this coming year, after a drawdown of 150,000 more troops in Vietnam, we will still have there some 284,000. We feel that this is a sufficient presence to be able to continue to protect our men, because the reason we are drawing down the men we are is because the South Vietnamese are being trained and prepared to assume the burden that these men have assumed. If we were to leave them in South Vietnam, they would not have any battles to fight, so to speak. They would be extra men, and what we are drawing out are only those. But we shall not draw them down below the point where the presence is sufficient so that we can secure the release of these prisoners.

Mr. ZABLOCKI. And we should never even entertain the thought that our Government will forsake the prisoners of war, under any circumstances.

Mr. NUTTER. No, sir.

DETERMINATION OF "MISSING" STATUS

Mr. ZABLOCKI. I realize my next question, Mr. Secretary, may be better asked by another committee. However, since some of the ladies last week have called my attention to the matter, I think it would be proper to discuss here. If you care to, of course, you can expand on the answer after you receive the transcript. You have that privilege. My question is this: On page 2, you say, "Since no details were provided on how their husbands had lost their lives, neither the wives nor the U.S. Government can accept this information as reliable."

It is my understanding that individual servicemen are constantly being removed from the list of those considered missing in action, and declared to be dead. How are these determinations made? If you will first answer that question, I have another question that the wives were concerned about.

Mr. NUTTER. I think if I were to give you an accurate answer, I should submit it for the record.

Mr. ZABLOCKI. If you will, sir.

Mr. NUTTER. I will be glad to do that.

(The information follows:)

DETERMINATION OF DEATH REGARDING MISSING PERSONNEL

The actions of the Military Secretaries in determining status are governed by Title 37 USC. Essentially, Section 556 requires that the Secretary issue a report of death in the case of a missing member whenever information comes to his attention which constitutes conclusive evidence of death.

Frequently, men are reported by field units as missing in action solely because there is no conclusive evidence of death immediately available to the field commander. Hours, days, or weeks later, remains on hand are positively identified, aircraft wreckage is reached by a ground party, or some other reliable piece of evidence becomes available. In such cases, the missing member's status would then be changed to killed-in-action, or KIA.

Pursuant to statutory requirement, the status of missing personnel is reviewed automatically one year after the date of incident. Thereafter, there is no automatic review, but the case remains open and status would be re-examined upon receipt of any significant new information regarding the fate of the men.

In the case of a final settlement of hostilities, if the enemy professed to have no knowledge whatever of the man in question and the Government had exhausted every effort to obtain information about him, a presumptive finding of death would be made in due course.

From time to time over the years, propaganda organs of the enemy have stated that service members listed as missing actually died. The Military Services have rejected these statements unless they are clearly made by an individual authorized to speak for or on behalf of the enemy government; even then, the statement would not be accepted if it conflicted with reliable information otherwise available to the U.S.

Mr. ZABLOCKI. How does the change in status affect the pay allowance and benefits which may be available to a wife?

The complaint was that some of the benefits of a serviceman are denied wives and the dependents of prisoners of war.

Mr. NUTTER. We have made every effort, Mr. Chairman, to make sure this is not the case. I know there are some gray areas that the wives have raised. I would be very glad also to supply for the record an accurate statement on what rights and privileges we have extended to the wives, and those that are still pending, but—

Mr. ZABLOCKI. And in that statement, of course, you would include what privileges a serviceman or a dependent of a serviceman would enjoy that are denied wives of prisoners of war. Is that correct?

Mr. NUTTER. Yes, sir; I am not aware of any that are, but I will be glad to supply that.

(The information follows:)

SERVICEMEN'S BENEFITS FOR MIA/PW FAMILIES

The Department of Defense has made every effort to ensure that benefits which accrue to the families of service members are not denied to the next of kin of members missing or captured. The Department is not aware of any benefits denied because a member is missing or captured.

Moreover, there are two major benefits available to next of kin of missing or captured members which are not available to other service members and their families:

1. *Space Available Travel*.—Dependent next of kin of missing and captured personnel are authorized space available travel within the United States on military aircraft. In addition, foreign-born dependent next of kin may utilize overseas space available travel to their country of origin. (Families of members not missing or captured enjoy space available privileges overseas only when accompanied by their sponsor, or under certain emergency conditions.)

2. *Savings Program*.—A recent act of Congress exempted missing and captured men and their families from the \$10,000 ceiling on accruals in the Uniformed Services Savings Deposit Program (USSDP).

Mr. ZABLOCKI. And what is the difference being considered missing and being a known prisoner of war? How does that affect the status of the wife?

Mr. NUTTER. There, again, I think if this is a matter of some legal distinction, I had better get the correct facts and submit them to you.

(The information follows:)

DIFFERENCE BETWEEN MISSING AND PRISONER STATUS WITH REGARD TO FAMILY ENTITLEMENTS

The rights, privileges, or benefits of a serviceman's family are the same whether the man is in a prisoner of war or a missing in action status. Full pay and allowances continue in either case; no distinction is made on the basis of classification.

Mr. ZABLOCKI. Well, these will be very important answers, because some of the wives who were before the subcommittee last Friday indicated that they did not believe prisoners' wives and families had in every instance been treated equitably, and we will welcome your answers.

Mr. NUTTER. I would be very glad to provide them, sir.

Mr. ZABLOCKI. Mr. Ambassador?

STATEMENT OF HON. WILLIAM H. SULLIVAN, DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY, BUREAU OF EAST ASIAN AND PACIFIC AFFAIRS, DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Mr. SULLIVAN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I appreciate the opportunity to appear again before this subcommittee to discuss U.S. Government efforts on behalf of our men who are prisoners of war or missing in action in Southeast Asia.

At the outset let me repeat the assurance that this Government is committed, at the highest levels, to taking all useful actions to aid our captured Americans, to obtain information about them, to assure their decent treatment, and to obtain their earliest possible release and return to their families.

In his foreign policy report to the Congress February 18, 1970, the President expressed our commitment as follows:

In human terms, no other aspect of conflict in Vietnam more deeply troubles thousands of American families than the refusal of North Vietnam to agree to humane treatment of prisoners of war or to provide information about men missing in action. Over 1400 Americans are now listed as missing or captured, some as long as five years, most with no word ever to their families. In the Paris meetings, we have sought repeatedly to raise this subject—to no avail. Far from agreeing to arrangements for the release of prisoners, the other side has failed even to live up to the humane standards of the 1949 Geneva Convention on prisoners of war: the provision of information about all prisoners, the right of all prisoners to correspond with their families and to receive packages, inspection of POW camps by an impartial organization such as the International Red Cross, and the early release of seriously sick and wounded prisoners.

This is not a political or military issue, but a matter of basic humanity. There may be disagreement about other aspects of this conflict, but there can be no disagreement on humane treatment for prisoners of war. I state again our readiness to proceed at once to arrangements for the release of prisoners of war on both sides.

DETERMINATION EXPRESSED BY HIGH OFFICIALS

The President has given further expression of his commitment in other public statements, and in private contacts, with relatives of our prisoners and missing personnel. Other top officials of this administration have reiterated our commitment, leaving no doubt of our determination to continue to do all we can to achieve the early release of our men, and in the meanwhile to secure for them the humane treatment to which prisoners of war are entitled under the Geneva Convention of 1949.

In the State Department, Secretary Rogers and Under Secretary Richardson have continued to supervise our actions in this area. Pursuant to the President's leadership and at their direction, we have made full use of diplomatic and other potentially useful channels to probe for possible openings and to press the other side to treat the prisoners properly.

While it would be inappropriate for me to describe in detail the diplomatic actions we have taken and are taking, I think it is worth noting for the record that on the subject of prisoners of war we have found sympathy and support from a wide range of nations and organizations, including neutrals and ones who on other aspects of the Vietnam conflict disagree with U.S. policies. These governments recognize that treatment of prisoners of war is a humanitarian question, one which concerns all governments, and people everywhere.

Private organizations and individuals in this country and abroad have also made known their concern about North Vietnam's treatment of U.S. prisoners. In this connection let me mention the efforts by wives and other relatives of our prisoners and missing personnel, who have traveled to Paris and elsewhere to appeal personally for word of their loved ones.

ACTIONS OF WIVES OF PRISONERS

You have heard testimony from some of these wives in recent days. I would stress that this is not an action that the U.S. Government initiated or even encouraged. We recognized that responsibility for actions to aid our men in the hands of the enemy, and those listed as missing, was ours as a government to fulfill. We have accepted this responsibility fully and intend to carry it out by all useful means, diplomatic and otherwise.

However, when North Vietnam and the other Communist authorities in Southeast Asia persisted in their inhumane policies, the close relatives of the men, moved by deep personal feelings of loyalty and devotion to their loved ones, embarked on their own efforts to appeal directly to the other side. Some have traveled around the world, at private expense, attempting to see North Vietnamese and other officials in many countries.

After the first wives traveled to Paris, the North Vietnamese delegation said they would respond to requests for information from all wives, in person or by letter. This prompted other wives to travel, often at personal sacrifice, and hundreds wrote directly.

Over half a year has passed since these efforts began, but in the great majority of cases no response or other information has been received by the families, from the North Vietnamese or other Communist authorities. Despite the obviously personal nature of the efforts, North Vietnam accused the United States of "exploiting family sentiment." In fact the exploitation was theirs, since the problem results directly from the other side's refusal to abide by the basic, humane requirements of the Geneva Convention.

ACTIONS BY THE RED CROSS

Mr. Chairman, I am certain the American Red Cross representative will cover in detail their actions, and those of the International Red Cross on behalf of our prisoners of war. The Geneva Conventions have their origin in the Red Cross, and International Conferences of the Red Cross repeatedly have adopted resolutions appealing for humane treatment of prisoners of war, in accordance with the Geneva Convention.

Red Cross societies in other countries, as well as the International Committee of the Red Cross and the League of Red Cross Societies, have made known their concern about North Vietnam's refusal to treat prisoners of war humanely, in accordance with the standards of the convention.

Some Red Cross societies have stated their views publicly, others have conveyed their concern directly to Hanoi, believing this was the more effective action on their part. We appreciate the initiative of the American Red Cross in initiating and supporting these actions.

The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) also has continued its activities to aid prisoners of war on both sides in Southeast Asia. In South Vietnam, ICRC delegates and doctors regularly visit PW camps, prisoner collecting points, and civil prisons, conducting private interviews with individual prisoners, examining the conditions of detention, and reporting on their findings to the parties concerned.

This independent inspection of the conditions in which Communist PW's are held provides public confirmation of the fact that on our side, Geneva Convention requirements are complied with and respected. ICRC inspection of PW camps in South Vietnam helps assure that the prisoners are treated properly, with adequate food, medical care, recreation, and other rights set forth in the convention.

HANOI REFUSES TO COOPERATE WITH RED CROSS

The contrast with North Vietnam is obvious. Despite repeated requests, renewed again in recent months, North Vietnam has refused to permit the ICRC to visit U.S. and other allied prisoners. Despite worldwide concern about the treatment these prisoners are receiving, the Communist authorities have rebuffed all ICRC efforts to gain access to the prisoners, thus giving additional grounds for concern about the conditions in which the prisoners are held.

The ICRC has pressed its efforts without polemics, in the Red Cross tradition of neutrality and humanity. Yet Hanoi has spurned this recognized, impartial organization, whose responsibility for prisoners of war is established by international law and tradition.

Any discussion of recent efforts to aid prisoners must include the work of this subcommittee, and the Congress as a whole. We have greatly appreciated the concern about our prisoners of war and missing personnel expressed in House Concurrent Resolution 454, which originated in this subcommittee and which was approved without dissent by both Houses of Congress.

In his letter to you, Mr. Chairman, dated April 15, 1970, Under Secretary Richardson described the use we have made of the resolution in the Paris meetings. Let me quote the concluding section of Secretary Richardson's letter, which I understand has already been included in the record of these hearings:

The adoption of H. Con. Res. 454 by both Houses of Congress without a dissenting vote has enabled our spokesman in the Paris negotiations to document the wide range of concern felt by the American people about the treatment of our prisoners of war, and has put the other side on notice that our Government will not rest until all the prisoners are released and the fullest possible accounting is received of the missing. Our delegation has raised the prisoner of war issue repeatedly in the Paris meetings as part of our wide-ranging effort to induce the Communist authorities to live up to their obligations under the Geneva Convention to treat prisoners humanely. We have also sought to keep this subject constantly before the eyes of the world opinion. H. Con. Res 454 has been and, we believe, will continue to be most helpful in these efforts.

COMMENTS ON HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION 499

The subcommittee has before it new proposals for congressional action on this subject, in particular House Concurrent Resolution 499, submitted by Congressman Rivers, which calls on our negotiators in Paris to give prisoners of war "first priority on the peace talks agenda" and urges that "no other negotiations should proceed until there is substantive progress on the prisoner of war issue."

As Secretary Nutter has indicated, we agree that the release and decent treatment of our men demands the most urgent priority in the Paris talks. Many of our men have been held over 4 years—some over 5. We know that some of our men are ill or injured, that many endure isolation and solitary confinement, that the diet and medical care

available to them is inadequate. Under these circumstances we are committed to taking any diplomatic action that could contribute to their release.

We were gratified that Representative Rivers in his statement to this subcommittee last week quoted at length from Ambassador Habib's statement of April 2, 1970. This was one of many, repeated efforts by our negotiators to raise this subject in Paris. Throughout 1969, and in virtually every session of the Paris meetings in 1970, our spokesmen have singled out prisoners of war for major, special attention.

On several occasions our entire opening statement was devoted to prisoners of war, and in further exchanges and rebuttals we have pressed the other side relentlessly for their refusal to negotiate seriously on this subject. With your permission, I offer for the record a selection of Ambassador Habib's statements which show the extent to which we have concentrated our efforts on this subject.

Mr. ZABLOCKI. Ambassador Habib's statements will be made a part of the record at this point.

Mr. SULLIVAN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

(The statements appear in the Appendix, p. 131.)

Mr. SULLIVAN. These efforts will continue, and we are glad to know that they have congressional support.

At the same time, from past experience we believe it is important to give our negotiators the widest latitude in the methods by which they seek satisfaction on prisoners of war. It may be that progress on prisoners will be achieved along with progress on other subjects, and we believe it is necessary for our negotiators to retain flexibility to take advantage of openings as they appear.

The test of House Concurrent Resolution 499, as presently written seeks to limit such options, and if further congressional action is taken we would hope this language could be written to permit our negotiators to use whatever opportunities seem useful in pressing also on such other important aspects of the conflict as: withdrawal of North Vietnamese forces, enemy use of Laos and Cambodia, and enemy attacks on cities and other civilian facilities in South Vietnam.

We fully share the sense of frustration and concern about the enemy's treatment of our prisoners of war that has been expressed in these hearings, by relatives of our men, by Members of Congress, and by private citizens. We will continue to press the other side on this subject with our full energy and determination, giving this subject the most urgent possible priority.

At the same time we will continue to work for the honorable settlement which will allow peace to come to Southeast Asia, and which continues in our judgment to hold the best chance for early release of our men.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

THE STATE DEPARTMENT AND POW WIVES

Mr. ZABLOCKI. Thank you, Ambassador Sullivan, for your excellent statement. I, for one, am very confident, knowing full well your record as well as that of Dr. Nutter's record of service in the interest of our country, that this very troublesome problem of the prisoners of war could not be in more capable hands.

In your statement, Mr. Ambassador, on page 3, you say, "I would stress that that is not an action that the U.S. Government initiated or even encouraged." You are speaking of travel to Paris of the wives to talk to the North Vietnamese.

Does that mean that the State Department gives no assistance of any kind to these women? Do you mean that the Department does not debrief them after they have been successful in making contact with a member of the Hanoi delegation, or the NLF?

Mr. SULLIVAN. Mr. Chairman, I intended to convey by that statement that we had not instigated the travel of these wives, and we have not been, as the North Vietnamese accuse us, the provocateurs of the action which would exploit family sentiment, as they say. These wives and these families have undertaken their travel on their own initiative, and usually with the financial assistance of private organizations or private friends.

When they come to Paris, of course, members of our delegation and members of our Embassy render them all appropriate assistance. But the primary assistance that is rendered to them in Paris is done by a group of American volunteer wives, wives who are mostly the wives of American businessmen working and living in Paris, and these girls meet the families, assist them with all manner of personal problems, hotels and translation, actually function as the link between them and the North Vietnamese Embassy, the North Vietnamese mission.

All of them speak French, and so therefore, they act as the translators.

Our own association with them depends, of course, on the wishes of the families and the wives themselves. Most of them do come to see our people, and tell us what has transpired, and most of them are in direct contact with our mission there. But we do not force ourselves upon them, and they are under no obligation in their missions to Paris to see our people, if they feel that would in any way hamper or embarrass their efforts as private individuals.

Mr. ZABLOCKI. Mr. Ambassador, though the Department of State has not directly or indirectly initiated the travel of the wives to Paris, and their efforts to meet with the NLF or North Vietnamese representatives there or elsewhere, certainly you do not discourage them. Moreover, you would agree that their efforts have been helpful, as Dr. Nutter had stated, to bring attention to the plight of their husbands and their families?

Mr. SULLIVAN. Certainly, and I attempted to make clear in my statement that we think that this has been a very significant factor in making whatever grudging small movement the North Vietnamese have made in their releasing information. We do nothing to discourage this, and we do all the things without our legal authority and right to facilitate this. But the point I was making is that this is not an exploitation by us of private families.

WIVES HELP IN THIRD-COUNTRY CONTACTS

Mr. ZABLOCKI. The Department, I assume, is utilizing the effect that these visits have created fully, in its further negotiations and third-party contacts with the enemy.

Mr. SULLIVAN. Yes, indeed, and I think that, in many instances, the travel by individual families and wives to neutral countries, par-

ticularly to countries which are not often sympathetic with our objectives in Southeast Asia, has graphically brought to the attention of the authorities in these countries what the problem is, and what the basic inhumanity is that is involved in the way the North Vietnamese are conducting themselves.

This, then, has made it much more possible for us, when we make official approaches to those countries, to get a receptive and sympathetic hearing, and to get those countries actually to undertake certain measures officially on behalf of our prisoners, so that we think that there is nothing that has been more graphic, nothing that has been more emphatic, in bringing to the attention of these third-country governments the plight of these men, than the travel by these wives and families.

Mr. ZABLOCKI. It, therefore, should be indelibly clear that the State Department is just as concerned about the prisoners of war as any other department in Government, or any person, individual, or organization in the United States.

Mr. SULLIVAN. Very much so, and I am sure that the record of Ambassador Habib's entire stress on this matter in Paris, in the negotiations, the record of all the activities undertaken by our senior officials in the Department, a great many actions which, as I state here, are not on the public record, but which we have undertaken in private, quiet diplomacy, with other countries of the world, will bear out the amount of effort and the dedication of our Department to this effort.

RELEASE OF PRISONERS IN JULY?

Mr. ZABLOCKI. We have heard testimony from Mrs. Stockdale that the North Vietnamese have let it be known that they intend to release a few American prisoners of war sometime in the near future, probably next July. Mr. Ambassador, do you know anything about that?

Mr. SULLIVAN. We have heard these same rumors. We have not been able in any way to confirm them. As you know, there are nine members of our services who were prisoners who have been released in the past. They have been released without much prior notice. There has been no single pattern, either in terms of the calendar or in terms of the selection of the individuals, or the reasoning that we can attribute to the release, which can give us very much clue as to whether this rumor has any foundation. We fervently hope it does, but we have not been able to bring anything to bear which will confirm it.

HANOI'S USE OF PEACE GROUPS

Mr. ZABLOCKI. It is my understanding that many of the names which have been released since last November have come through the so-called peace groups. Would you describe the more important contacts of such groups which have resulted in names being released, and how has the procedure worked, and are these ventures on the part of such groups desirable?

Mr. SULLIVAN. Well, these peace groups have very definitely been used by the North Vietnamese in their efforts to exploit differences within the American public opinion, and to bring pressures to bear upon not only the Government, but more particularly upon the families of the prisoners.

There has been no specific pattern that this has followed. Many of the representatives of the peace groups have been invited to North Vietnam. They have been invited there for purposes, in most instances, which had no direct bearing upon the prisoners, but very often, when we knew they were going, we have been able to be in touch with them, usually through Mr. Sieverts who is here with me today, to ask them to raise the prisoner issue, as a matter of conscience, with the North Vietnamese. The North Vietnamese have used these groups to provide them not with a list of names, but to provide them with letters from the prisoners, and in bringing back those letters, we have been able to increase our knowledge, or when those letters have come back, we have been able to derive from that an increase in the knowledge of the names that are acknowledged as prisoners. So that we think the motivation, both of the North Vietnamese and usually of the peace groups, has not been fundamentally toward the improvement in humane conditions for our prisoners, or the fulfillment of the obligations of the North Vietnamese under the Geneva Convention, yet the net result has been that we have been able to obtain more information through the activities of these people, and it may be that the sensitivity of the North Vietnamese, to which Dr. Nutter alluded, manifests itself by the fact that they are willing to provide this information through these peace groups.

Some of these people have had direct contact with our prisoners, been able to observe the conditions under which they are kept, but we have no way of knowing how representative that has been, because it has usually been very small numbers that have met with them, and very obviously, very carefully selected people who have been brought to their attention.

Mr. ZABLOCKI. Both Dr. Nutter and you, Mr. Ambassador, and others, have very generously commented on the efforts of the subcommittee. You have mentioned Mr. Sieverts, who has been very active in your Department on this particular problem. I would be remiss if I would not, for the record, at this time state that your namesake, Mr. Jack Sullivan, staff consultant, has done yeoman work in this particular area for the subcommittee, and he deserves some of the credit you are giving to the subcommittee.

Mr. SULLIVAN. We appreciate that.

Mr. ZABLOCKI. I thought you would like to be advised that there is another Sullivan doing a great job.

Mr. SULLIVAN. Well, keep it all in the family.

Mr. ZABLOCKI. And it is not nepotism.

STATEMENTS BY MRS. CORA WEISS

It is my understanding, Mr. Ambassador, that Mrs. Cora Weiss of the Women's Strike for Peace held a press conference here in Washington last Friday, while our hearings were going on. It has been reported to me that she said that shortly she would release the names of about 100 more prisoners now being held by Hanoi, and that list would be all of the names. In other words, the rest of those listed as missing in the North, can be presumed dead, except the hundred more she would reveal. Do you know anything about this woman, and her statements? What credence can be given to her?

Mr. SULLIVAN. I think perhaps, Mr. Chairman, since Mr. Sieverts has been most directly in touch with Mrs. Weiss, and has talked with her on a number of occasions about these claims and about the activities which she has performed in this field, that it would probably be most instructive to have him answer that question, if you will permit him.

Mr. ZABLOCKI. Mr. Sieverts?

**STATEMENT OF FRANK SIEVERTS, SPECIAL ASSISTANT TO THE
UNDER SECRETARY FOR PRISONERS OF WAR AFFAIRS, DEPARTMENT OF STATE**

Mr. SIEVERTS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I am sorry to say I can't really respond to that particular question. I had not heard that she made such a statement at the press conference last Friday, and to my knowledge, she has not said, nor have the North Vietnamese said, that a forthcoming further list of names would be "all" of the prisoners in North Vietnam. That is in fact a question that is of great concern, of great interest to all the families of the men, as well as to us, but we have not yet heard that a final list from North Vietnam, or perhaps more important, letters from all the other men in North Vietnam, were on their way.

Mr. NUTTER. If I might comment on that, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. ZABLOCKI. Dr. Nutter?

Mr. NUTTER. I would say this: that we, of course, are very pleased to see the information, any information on our prisoners, come out through any source, in that sense. We do not condone the activities of these groups, or the use of these channels. The official channels are open and available to the other side at any time it would wish to use them. We could not treat a list that was handed to us by such an unofficial group as a definitive list. There would have to be verification.

We would not transfer our names in any way from prisoner of war category to missing or vice versa, without some substantial verification beyond and above a list of this sort delivered through unofficial channels. We are, however, of course, grateful for any reliable information that helps us to continue identifying the fate of our men.

PROBLEMS OF A "DEFINITIVE" LIST

Mr. SULLIVAN. I might also add that this question of whether any list is the definitive and total list of prisoners is something that has appeared in various forms and various rumors over the past few months, since the North Vietnamese have been permitting more and more of the prisoners actually to write their families.

Usually, any list is compiled not from a documentation given out by the North Vietnamese authorities, but is a compilation of the names of the senders of the letters who have been sending their correspondence to their families, passing through the hands of this group.

Now we have heard, for example, that at one point, Tass, the Soviet news agency, indicated it was going to publish a list of some 320 names, and that would be a definitive list. We do not consider, as Dr. Nutter said, that that would be an official discharge of the obliga-

tions that the North Vietnamese Government has, nor would we believe that a list composed of that number would be a complete list.

Mr. ZABLOCKI. Indeed, to settle on that as a definitive list would be really forsaking those who might still remain there. Simply releasing some names certainly is no conclusive evidence that Hanoi is willing to carry out its responsibilities under the Geneva agreements. To some extent, I would venture to say, these people are doing a disservice to the wives, and are compounding their agony and their frustrations and their unhappiness.

PROPOSAL FOR A JOINT SESSION OF CONGRESS

Mr. Ambassador, I note that you haven't commented on any of the proposals made to the subcommittee in earlier hearings. Secretary Nutter today has supported a proposal that Congress hold a joint session to hear from the wives of the missing in action, and has supported some of the other proposals made.

Would you comment first on the proposal that a joint session be held, and second, do you have any specific proposals for Congressional action?

Mr. SULLIVAN. Well, we certainly endorse, as Mr. Nutter suggested, the proposal for a joint session. We think that any action that this Congress can take in either or both Houses that expresses the concern and the sentiment of the Representatives of the people of this country is useful and helpful to us in the efforts to try to bring pressure upon the North Vietnamese to fulfill their obligations under the Geneva agreements. So that my omission of that was not because we in any sense diverged from Dr. Nutter's suggestion, but merely not to be redundant. I was addressing in this statement principally the resolution that you have before this subcommittee, from Congressman Rivers.

In general, I can say that our representatives in Paris, in their negotiations, can make good use of any statements or any actions by individual Members, by subcommittees, by committees, by the Congress as a whole, or by joint action of both Houses. So we certainly welcome any actions that are taken that keep this issue in the forefront, and express publicly the attitudes of this representative body.

Our representatives in Paris do not fail to use any one of the expressions that come from any of those sources.

Mr. ZABLOCKI. There was no doubt in my mind, Mr. Ambassador, but I didn't want to give the opportunity for anybody to read in an interpretation. Because you thought it would be redundant, you did not state your position, or the Department is uninterested.

In this area, redundancy doesn't exist.

Mr. SULLIVAN. Well, I thank you for giving me the opportunity to clarify that point, Mr. Chairman.

LEGAL STATUS OF MEN CAPTURED IN CAMBODIA

Mr. ZABLOCKI. Since the developments over the weekend, will there be any additional complication to the prisoner of war issue because we may now suffer men captured in Cambodia?

In other words, will addition of a new sovereignty as the location for a capture involve a new legal situation?

Mr. SULLIVAN. Fundamentally, our feeling is that the authorities who are responsible for the capture of prisoners are the same authorities in all instances. That is to say, the forces who would capture Americans in Cambodia would be North Vietnamese armed forces, or Vietcong armed forces, and they would continue to have the responsibility that they have borne all along. We have intelligence to believe and we have good reason to know that some of the Americans who have been captured in South Vietnam during the past several years have actually been held in Cambodian territory by the Vietnamese Communist forces, so that this geographical location has been something that has been with us all along, and has not particularly changed with circumstances.

TRANSFER OF PRISONERS TO NORTH VIETNAM

Mr. ZABLOCKI. That prompts another question, Mr. Ambassador. Is this any evidence that Americans who have been captured in South Vietnam or Laos eventually are taken to North Vietnam?

Mr. SULLIVAN. We know of at least one case in which a man was captured in Laos, and has been since known to be a prisoner in North Vietnam.

Mr. ZABLOCKI. Just one case?

Mr. SULLIVAN. At least one case. I can't confirm whether there are others, and some of the information that we have on this, we have achieved from rather sensitive sources, so what we can do is provide that for the record. Some of it may be classified, however. But I know, I happen to know of one individual, because this man was personally known to me.

Mr. ZABLOCKI. Well, I can certainly understand, Mr. Ambassador. The source of information can be classified, but the knowledge and the intelligence that we have need not be classified.

Mr. SULLIVAN. That is true.

Mr. ZABLOCKI. And therefore, if you would supply that for the record?

Mr. SULLIVAN. We will supply it for the record.

Mr. ZABLOCKI. Personally, I would be surprised if there were only one prisoner of war captured in Laos or South Vietnam who has been transferred to North Vietnam.

Mr. SULLIVAN. To the best of our knowledge, U.S. personnel, civilian as well as military, captured in South Vietnam by Communist forces are held in various locations in South Vietnam, or in adjacent areas in Cambodia. There is no evidence that prisoners captured in South Vietnam have been moved to North Vietnam. There have been occasional rumors to this effect, but no evidence or reliable indications. No U.S. serviceman missing or captured in South Vietnam has ever been reported as detained in North Vietnam, by North Vietnamese authorities, by released U.S. prisoners, or by other sources. There are indications that at least one U.S. prisoner captured in Laos, and possibly a few others, are detained in North Vietnam. Available evidence indicates that most Americans captured by Communist forces in Laos remain in Laos.

Mr. ZABLOCKI. Would such a transfer from one sovereignty to another on the part of the enemy entail any further violation of the Accords, in any respect?

Mr. SULLIVAN. Well, I think the responsibility in terms of the Geneva Convention of 1949 rests upon the authority whose armed forces actually achieved the capture, in this instance, so if there were North Vietnamese forces that captured the man in Laos, and then took him back to North Vietnam, there would be no change whatsoever in the locus of the responsibility for this.

Frank, do you want to add anything?

Mr. SIEVERTS. No, I think that is the fundamental point right there, the one that Ambassador Sullivan has just stated, that it is North Vietnamese forces, in various forms, who are responsible for capture, and therefore, the location where the men are held is really not a question of great legal consequence. The responsibility remains that of the North Vietnamese forces.

By and large, the evidence that we have indicates that men captured in South Vietnam remain in South Vietnam, or are held in the so-called sanctuary areas of Cambodia, and are not moved into North Vietnam, pursuant to North Vietnam's position that the NLF is an independent organization.

In fact, the prisoners in South Vietnam are a cause for very great special concern to all of us, because so much less is known about them, and if I might just take a moment to stress that point: no mail has ever come from a man in South Vietnam. We know men in North Vietnam have inadequate diet, inadequate medical care. From released and escaped prisoners in South Vietnam, we know the situation there is even worse, and the same is true in Laos.

TREATMENT OF ENEMY PRISONERS

Mr. ZABLOCKI. Is my understanding correct that the North Vietnamese and National Liberation Front prisoners captured by the U.S. forces are turned over to the ARVN?

Mr. SULLIVAN. To the Government of South Vietnam, yes, sir.

Mr. ZABLOCKI. It would be unthinkable for us to do so, of course, but imagine what Hanoi, Moscow, Peking would say if our military would take NLF and North Vietnamese prisoners captured by our military forces and transported them here and paraded them through the streets of the United States?

Mr. SULLIVAN. I think it is, as I say, unthinkable, in our terms, so the question is rather beyond our thinking.

Mr. ZABLOCKI. I am not advocating it.

Mr. SULLIVAN. Of course not.

Mr. ZABLOCKI. I am not advocating it. But this has been done by the North Vietnamese. Such conduct is in direct violation of the Geneva Conventions.

That is why I am so very pleased that we have this opportunity to bring to the attention of the American public and to those who sympathize with Hanoi, to bring to their attention how badly our prisoners have been treated, and how violations of the Geneva Convention have been perpetrated.

ROLE OF THE ICC

The International Control Commission is still in existence, is it not, Mr. Ambassador?

Mr. SULLIVAN. It is.

Mr. ZABLOCKI. Regardless of how it has functioned but the prisoner of war issue would be a matter of within its scope of jurisdiction and interest, would it not?

Mr. SULLIVAN. The International Control Commission in Vietnam, and the one which is currently defunct in Cambodia, had certain responsibilities under the 1954 agreements, for assisting with the exchange of prisoners that had been captured in the hostilities which those agreements brought to an end. They do not have a continuing responsibility with respect to prisoners under the terms of their mandate. As far as the International Control Commission in Laos is concerned, under the 1962 agreements, it did not have any original or continuing responsibility with respect to matters involving prisoners.

I would point out that all the parties involved here, all the states, all the governments, are signatories to the 1949 Geneva Convention on prisoners of war. Under that Convention, the International Committee of the Red Cross or another humanitarian organization would be the agency to insure respect for the convention, not the ICC.

But the obligation rests with the states, in the first instance. North Vietnam is obligated to accept a protecting power for the prisoners of war. It has refused to do so.

Mr. ZABLOCKI. I believe you mentioned the role of the ICC in this respect in Cambodia and Laos, but you didn't mention it in Vietnam. Does it therefore differ? Or did I misunderstand?

Mr. SULLIVAN. I may have misspoken myself. I intended to say that the ICC in Vietnam, and the ICC in Cambodia which is moribund, though still exists on paper, both stem from the 1954 agreements. They did have certain initial responsibilities in connection with the exchange of prisoners at that time—1954.

So the Vietnam ICC is in the same category as the Cambodia ICC. The Laos ICC is in a different category, because it came from a different set of agreements with a different set of precepts.

Mr. ZABLOCKI. Well, when would the ICC jurisdiction under the 1954 agreements lapse, or discontinue?

Mr. SULLIVAN. The 1954 agreements, as you doubtless remember, Mr. Chairman, are a whole group of documents which have to do with armistice arrangements, arrangements for transfer of prisoners, regroupment of forces, and movement of populations that chose not to live under the particular regime that was installed in that region.

These all had specifically to do, therefore, with the hostilities which were being terminated by the agreements of 1954 signed by the French.

ICC OPERATIONS IN VIETNAM

Mr. ZABLOCKI. I understand that, Mr. Ambassador, but the ICC is still to some degree operative in South Vietnam?

Mr. SULLIVAN. It is, yes.

Mr. ZABLOCKI. What is its role, therefore?

Mr. SULLIVAN. Its role now is supposed to be one of preserving the enforcement of the terms of those agreements which prohibit entry of foreign forces into South Vietnam, or violation of the neutrality of South Vietnam. These, of course, are the aspects of the 1954 agreements which have been so thoroughly flouted by the North Vietnamese over the years that they have been rendered pretty far from recognizable these days.

Mr. ZABLOCKI. I see a fine distinction there. Would the ICC be responsible for investigating violation of any agreements on the part of North Vietnam, for example, its method of treating Vietnamese prisoners, but not United States prisoners?

Mr. SULLIVAN. Well, there is no specific continuing ICC obligation with respect to prisoner matters, because the presumption of the 1954 agreements was that hostilities would have ceased. The ICC was supposed to concern itself on a continuing basis with seeking out, reporting and bringing to light violations of neutrality of South Vietnam.

Mr. ZABLOCKI. Will have ceased, but they have not ceased.

Mr. SULLIVAN. Hostilities did cease at that time, but were started again, of course, when the North Vietnamese infiltrated the re-groupes back down south again.

Mr. ZABLOCKI. Well, then, there is no point of continuing the ICC in those areas. Perhaps we ought to have a new international commission to look into this.

Mr. SULLIVAN. Well, the ICC in Vietnam, frankly, at this time, functions almost entirely as a transportation link between Hanoi and Saigon; they have a weekly flight that goes between the two areas. They do have personnel who are stationed in Hanoi, and in Saigon, but their other functions have been effectively blocked over the years, because of the fact that the Polish member has stultified the operations of the committee, through exercising a veto on its functions.

Mr. ZABLOCKI. What are we doing, then, in diplomatic channels, to encourage the members of the ICC, and specifically the Polish member, to do a job there?

Mr. SULLIVAN. On the ICC matter, particularly in Laos and Cambodia, we have recently done two things: one, we have endorsed, as far as Cambodia is concerned, the call by the Lon Nol Government for the reactivation of the ICC, for the reconvoation of it, by the cochairmen, the British and the Soviets. The British have endorsed this, but of course, the Soviets have not responded. As far as Laos is concerned, we have endorsed the call by Prime Minister Souvanna Phouma for the reactivation of the ICC in Laos. As President Nixon disclosed in his recent address, he sent letters not only to the cochairmen, but to the chiefs of state of all the signatory powers to try to get that organization to act to carry out its function of seeking out violations of Laos neutrality. We have continued to press in these quarters for making the ICC more active.

I think it would be less than frank to say that the ICC or the actions we have undertaken have borne any fruit whatsoever. We haven't seen any results. We believe that the Soviet Union particularly, as cochairman, has been deficient in its obligations to get this organization back into operation to seek out the forces which have been violating these territories.

Mr. ZABLOCKI. Mr. Ambassador, are you saying that Moscow didn't keep its word?

Mr. SULLIVAN. We believe that the Soviet Union has obligations under this agreement, and we believe that the Soviet Union has failed to carry out those obligations. Yes, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. ZABLOCKI. Thank you, Mr. Ambassador.

Thank you, Mr. Secretary.

Mr. Eaton? Mr. Curran?

We welcome you again before our committee, Mr. Eaton. If you will proceed, sir.

STATEMENT OF RAMONE S. EATON, VICE PRESIDENT, AMERICAN NATIONAL RED CROSS

Mr. EATON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

We have not submitted a formal statement. We would like to make some brief comments, and answer any questions that you might have.

First, we would like to express our appreciation to you for this opportunity of appearing before your committee again, because we feel that the initiative shown by your committee, following the meetings in November, which resulted in the concurrent resolutions, in most statesmanlike terms, out of the Congress, have been exceedingly helpful to our efforts to publicize around the world that regardless of any differences of opinion about the war itself, there was complete unanimity on this matter of the responsibilities of the North Vietnamese to adhere to the Geneva Conventions, and for this, we are not only grateful, but you should know that this has been truly effective, as I would like to point out in respect to some articles that have been taken.

FOURFOLD ROLE OF AMERICAN RED CROSS

First, to clarify the role of the American Red Cross, I would like to state that it is in four parts. First, it concerns the support of the American Red Cross to the U.S. Government, in carrying out its obligations under international law, as regards the Geneva Conventions.

Second, as regards the support by the American Red Cross of the International Committee of the Red Cross, which as has been previously stated, has the responsibility for the prisoner action under the conventions.

And then third, a matter which does not concern itself with legal obligation, but which we consider of enormous importance, which is that by tradition and experience, we know that the American Red Cross can move unilaterally at times to function when perhaps the International Committee, for whatever reason, has been stymied in its efforts to function under international law.

I would only point out in this connection the action of the American Red Cross at the time of the Bay of Pigs prisoner release, subsequent prisoner action in Cuba, the fact that for some 12 years, that we have been able to negotiate with the Chinese Red Cross on behalf of the Americans imprisoned in that country, and that, of course, following the Korean war, it was a society or unilateral action, which resulted in the release of the wounded first and then the prisoners at large second.

So it should be known that we move, always in a sense with the consent of the International Committee of the Red Cross, but that we move directly to attempt to deal with these prisoner questions, both directly with the Vietcong, directly with the North Vietnamese as well as with other societies around the world, because we believe that this might be effective, and our concern, of course, is for the prisoners themselves, and for their wives and families at home.

Then there is a fourth aspect of our work, which we reported on at your last meeting, which was the decision that we should do everything possible to arouse public opinion in this country concerning the plight of these prisoners, and the effects on their families.

THE "WRITE HANOI" CAMPAIGN

You will remember that we reported to you that we were planning a nationwide publicity campaign, first to bring the plight of the prisoners to the attention of the public, and secondly, to start a "Write Hanoi" campaign. We do keep in touch with individuals, through Red Cross societies around the world, who are in fairly constant touch with the North Vietnamese, with other Communist governments around the world, and we do learn things which are helpful to us.

Apart from what Dr. Nutter has stated as to the reasons why the North Vietnamese hold to their position in regard to these prisoners, it has been and is our firm belief that one of the reasons that they have held to this position is the belief that they aided their own efforts to establish an antiwar sentiment in this country by doing this.

We have that on the best authority, not only from them directly, but from others who deal with them. Therefore, we feel that this effort to arouse public opinion and later world opinion on this question, to disprove to them their belief that by holding these prisoners, they in any way aid their cause, has been particularly effective, and I would say here that great tribute should be paid to the wives and to the families of these prisoners, for the way in which they have withstood and to a degree that I do not believe any of us really know, the onslaughts of propaganda that has been put to them, both directly and by these peace groups and others.

And I have worked with these prisoners' wives in particular and we do owe them a great debt of gratitude.

Therefore, we consider that this public effort of ours is of major consequence today. And as Dr. Nutter says, I do not believe that you can pinpoint any one action that results in anything that has happened with respect to these prisoners, but I would simply use his figures again, and point out that since your meetings in November, since this nationwide campaign of public action, and incidentally, in which we were supported greatly by the newspapers of the country, that about 75 percent of all the mail that has come to these prisoners' families has come in this period of time, and regardless of the cause, this is of some significance.

CHANNEL FOR LETTERS TO PRISONERS

On the first statement, about the support of our U.S. Government in their international obligations, I would just like to point out to you certain actions that we have taken at the request of the Depart-

ment of Defense and on their behalf, in reporting to the International Committee of the Red Cross the names of all missing in action and known prisoners, and this had totaled, up to the present time, 1,859. In addition to that, again at their request, we have handed, from the next of kin, letters addressed to prisoners, whether they be prisoners in North Vietnam or in Laos or held by the Vietcong, to the International Committee of the Red Cross, and these have been forwarded, regularly, over the past 4 to 5 years. For example, 14,398 letters have officially gone from the American Red Cross to the International Committee of the Red Cross, and speaking of North Vietnam now, these letters are forwarded under registered mail with the return receipt requested, and we know, of course, that they do arrive at the post office in Hanoi.

Of course, from that point on, there is no way of knowing exactly what has happened to these letters. You might be interested in having a breakdown in respect to this, because these are not all addressed, of course, to North Vietnam. Some 835 letters have gone, in addition, to representatives of the Provisional Revolutionary Government, the Vietcong, in various parts of the world, where we have made contacts, with the hope, with the expectation, with the acknowledgment on occasion by them, that these letters would be forwarded.

Again, what actually happens to them once they are put down in Cambodia or Algiers or in Sweden, or in other places, we have no knowledge.

In addition to that, because there was a complete breakdown between the ICRC and their efforts to deliver mail in Laos, we have been sending mail, a total of 248 letters, to the Pathet Lao headquarters or mission in Hanoi, in North Vietnam, where they do have a regular mission. These letters, we know, have been delivered. Again, what has happened to them after their delivery in Hanoi, we do not know, but basically, that is what we do, among other things, on behalf of the U.S. Government itself.

WORK WITH INTERNATIONAL RED CROSS

On the further question of support of the International Committee of the Red Cross, we both support them and attempt at times to prod them. This is necessary, because they have a very difficult task. As you know, they have been refused entry into North Vietnam. Therefore, there has been no opportunity for them to fulfill their functions. They continuously attempt to achieve this objective, and I am certain that there is knowledge within the Government itself which wouldn't necessarily come to us of ways that they have attempted this, but I would have you know that we do work with them continuously, and we have reason to believe that they have taken several positions which have been very, very helpful to the prisoners and to us here in the United States.

For example, you are aware of the fact that one of the reasons that Hanoi refused the international committee permission to come in as a neutral intermediary in this case is because they maintain that these men are not prisoners of war, but that they are criminals.

It should be known that the international committee has taken a firm position on this point, both directly to the North Vietnamese and

to individuals and other governments around the world, that this is not a true statement of fact, and there was no legal basis for them to make such a statement; that these men, under the conventions, are prisoners, and should be accorded all of the protections of the conventions. These are ways in which we work with the international committee.

ENGAGE IN DIRECT ACTIONS

On the third point, Mr. Chairman, which we consider of great importance, which is the action on the part of the American Red Cross, on purely humanitarian grounds, to achieve in some manner a relationship or a connection which would aid these prisoners, this has taken many forms.

We have met directly with the Vietcong; there have been conversations, both directly and through third parties, with the North Vietnamese, and these are continuing; we have continuously worked with other Red Cross societies and through them at times with the support of their governments in getting these third parties to function on behalf, not of the committee, in this instance, but of the American Red Cross.

We think that this has been effective in some instances.

For example, I have here a letter which refers to Mrs. Kushner, whom you may know as the wife of a doctor who is a prisoner, we believe, of the Vietcong, who was helped greatly in Cambodia, in all of her contacts there, with the North Vietnamese and the Vietcong, by the International Committee of the Red Cross, because of our association with the Cambodian Red Cross, and this is all within recent times.

I mean, prior to the recent events in Cambodia. This is just one example.

We also deal with certain Red Cross societies who are able to make contact for us when we couldn't make contact within their particular countries. In a smaller sense, for example, we endeavor to help the wives who are traveling around the world. Just recently, within 10 days, we have held meetings with the Red Cross societies of all of Europe, including both Eastern and Western Europe. These meetings were held in France. There were some of the wives present at these meetings. For example, in one instance, one of the countries had refused permission for these wives to enter the country, refused a visa.

At this meeting, we were able to get them together with the head of the Red Cross Society of that country, so in spite of the fact they had been shut out, they were able to get their message across to in this particular instance, a Communist country. And so this effort of direct action, we want you to know, will continue. We believe it is effective, it is understood by the Department of State and by the Department of Defense, and as I said in the beginning, and this is quite important, it is fully understood by the International Committee of the Red Cross.

CAMPAIGN TO AROUSE NATIONAL OPINION

To the last point, Mr. Chairman, because I think this perhaps is the most effective action that is being taken now, which is an effort to continue the plan of arousing interest and understanding and action

on the part of the people of the United States in respect to these prisoners. We have started a second "Write Hanoi" campaign which goes into action on May 8, which is World Red Cross Day.

In addition to that, which will cover all of the newspapers of the country, radio, and television, throughout the country, our national convention will be held here within the next 2 weeks. There will be some 5,000 delegates assembling in Chicago, and the question of prisoners of war is a major question, within our convention.

There are resolutions within the convention on this subject, and in support of what we are endeavoring to do, I should say to you that we are now in touch with the 50 Governors, and groups throughout the country, seeking their understanding of what is taking place and the why of it, and asking for their support of our "Write Hanoi" public campaign.

Moving outside this country, following your action last year, of a concurrent resolution, a joint resolution in Congress, our board of Governors in February took action with a resolution, which has been communicated to all of the Red Cross societies of the world, 115, inasmuch as we included the Vatican and the Mogen David, of Israel, which is not an officially recognized Red Cross society, and in this, we not only communicated to them the resolution of our board, and told them of the problem, but we asked for specific action on their part, which was direct communication with Hanoi, in support of what you will remember was the Istanbul resolution, which was concurred in by all of those present; no dissenting votes were taken at that time, on this general resolution.

We have not only asked for a reply, but we have communicated back to these societies, when they haven't responded in a positive way, and this includes the society of China, the society of the Soviet Union, as well as all of the other societies of the world.

Having just met with the societies of Europe, I can say to you, Mr. Chairman, that that has had enormous effect around the world. Now this is a humanitarian question. This is not a governmental or a political question, but we have Red Cross societies now moving and taking action, when they have never done this kind of thing in the past, so we not only have public opinion in this country moving, but we have public opinion around the world, and we can't help but believe, from what we know of the attitude and the thinking of the North Vietnamese in this case, that this is the one thing that perhaps of all others may have some effect on their thinking and on their future negotiations as have been described to you by Ambassador Sullivan and Mr. Nutter.

This, in general, Mr. Chairman, is a picture of the concerns of the Red Cross, and of the positive action that we are endeavoring to take, and once again, I want to thank you for the positive action that you took within the Congress, which certainly was a help to us.

CHAIRMAN COMMENDS RED CROSS EFFORTS

Mr. ZABLOCKI. Thank you very kindly for your comments about the efforts of the committee.

I certainly want to thank you for coming before us this morning to testify, and report as to the progress made, and I certainly want to

reiterate what I said last November, about the efforts of the American Red Cross and you individually, your efforts, in behalf of the prisoners of war.

Again, our salute to you. And I agree with the tribute you pay to the prisoners of war wives, for their courage, understanding, and patience. They deserve our full sympathy and cooperation, and every effort in this moment of trial and tribulation on their part.

Did I understand, Mr. Eaton, that you say that May 8, that would be this Friday, would be World Red Cross Day?

Mr. EATON. That is correct, and all societies in the world, 113 of them at this time, do celebrate on that day, and some on days close to that date, what is termed "Red Cross Day," and these celebrations are internal, of course, for the most part, but there are international actions by the committee and by the League of Red Cross Societies on that occasion. We merely selected that date as a kickoff date for our new efforts in respect to public opinion in this country.

CRITICISMS OF ICRC BY MR. PEROT

Mr. ZABLOCKI. It is my understanding you were sent at least part of the testimony given by Mr. H. Ross Perot before the subcommittee last Friday. As you know, he was critical of the performance of the International Committee of the Red Cross, in attempting to bring help to our American prisoners of war. He was particularly critical of the personnel who have been charged with the responsibility of the ICRC. Would you comment on his statement?

Mr. EATON. He did not name personnel in the transcript which came to me, and I do not believe he named any personnel before this committee.

Mr. ZABLOCKI. He did not.

Mr. EATON. We are aware, in general, of any International Committee personnel that he has seen, because as you may know, or perhaps you do not know, Mr. Chairman, that the American Red Cross in the first instance, when he made the Christmas trip, in his efforts to carry supplies into North Vietnam, there was a full contingent of highly qualified Red Cross personnel on the plane with him. This group of men would have been the ones that would have functioned, if he had been successful in getting into North Vietnam. We did not attempt to publicize that. This was a private citizen venture; we were asked to be helpful with it, and we did.

In his second trip, we also had a representative on the plane, so we are aware of the various contacts he had. So that the only answer I would make was that his contacts, to the best of our knowledge, his personal contacts, were with what I would call the field men of the International Committee of the Red Cross, at several points, where he stopped down on his trip. Some of these men, I know individually. I could quote from a letter here, which I did quote briefly, from Mrs. Kushner in which she pays the highest tribute to the two International Committee representatives in Cambodia who were so helpful to her and to other wives who did go there.

Whether or not there was some particular instance that he had in mind, Mr. Chairman, I, of course, would not know. I would only say to you that as has been previously pointed out, the International Com-

mittee works under great difficulties. The Red Cross has no armies; it functions only through persuasion. It has been stopped by the action of the North Vietnamese in refusing to accept their responsibilities under the conventions. I am aware of the fact that they have continued their efforts, without cease, constantly trying to achieve success in this effort.

Beyond that, I do not believe any comment would be helpful.

U.S. CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE ICRC

Mr. ZABLOCKI. As you also know, Mr. Perot suggested that the United States withhold its contribution to the International Committee of the Red Cross until forceful action be taken by that body. I am sure you—

Mr. EATON. I would only say that you might be interested in knowing that the total contribution of the U.S. Government and the American Red Cross to the International Committee of the Red Cross represents only roughly about 5 percent of the contributions that are made, totally, by Red Cross societies and governments around the world. So it is a small amount, actually, when you consider the fact that I think the U.S. Government generally contributes to international bodies anywhere from 15 percent, say, up to 30-odd percent to the United Nations.

We ourselves contribute some 30 percent to the support of the League of Red Cross Societies which, as you know, is the coordinating body of all Red Cross societies.

I do not believe that any action or lack of action by the international committee would justify consideration of withholding the small amount of support that we give to them. I think contrarily we have to remember that their actions are on a very broad scale, they function from a position of neutrality, of long-term interest, and individuals perhaps with short-term interests might be impatient, perhaps, with their methods. I do not know.

Mr. ZABLOCKI. Then you believe any withholding of U.S. contributions would be, using State Department vernacular, "counterproductive."

Mr. EATON. I think it would be an enormous mistake, and would result, perhaps—the fact is, if anything, I think we should support them to a greater extent, because what they are doing, and what we hope they will do, and what they are doing that is not known would more than justify the support that we are giving to them.

Mr. ZABLOCKI. If I might comment at this point, this is probably the only point where I differ with Mr. Perot's suggestions.

RED CROSS STATUS IN NORTH VIETNAM

Would you discuss, Mr. Eaton, the status of the Red Cross in North Vietnam? What are its ties with the international secretariat?

Mr. EATON. The North Vietnamese have a society, an official, well-organized society. They are functioning as any society would, as an arm of their government, in time of what they consider to be a war conflict. The League of Red Cross Societies is in constant communication with them. The secretary general of the league has been there, has talked with them. As you may know, some Red Cross societies do

send direct relief to the North Vietnamese, and some of these same societies send equal amounts of direct relief to the South Vietnamese, on a purely humanitarian basis.

It is our hope, of course, that through some of the societies, that have been able to maintain good relationships with the North Vietnamese, that we might achieve some success with respect to the prisoners. I should say to you that in several instances, we are working directly with what might be termed "third world" or neutral countries, in an effort to have them work on behalf of the American Red Cross, in discussing matters related to the prisoners.

So the fact that some societies do maintain good relationships with the North Vietnamese is a help to our efforts as far as the prisoners are concerned. There is an effort right now underway to try to get the North Vietnamese to come to Geneva and to sit down with the League of Red Cross Societies, which of course might also bring them into contact with the international committee.

Whether this will be successful or not, of course, we do not know.

AN NLF RED CROSS?

Mr. ZABLOCKI. And has the National Liberation Front established a counterpart of the Red Cross in South Vietnam?

Mr. EATON. This is a debatable point at the moment, Mr. Chairman. About 4 years ago, it was announced that the, and I will use the word "Vietcong," had formed a Red Cross society, and the names of their officials were given. At that time, speaking personally, I did endeavor to contact them, through a Communist country, where they had, where the Vietcong had, a mission—we did make a contact which may not have been a contact in reality, but at least it was a communication contact, offering, you see, to work with them.

In other words, in effect, acknowledging them; if they want to call themselves a Red Cross society, that was all right with us, because we work with anybody that might result in benefits to the prisoners. But this never materialized, Mr. Chairman, and for the last 4 years there has been no hint of any kind as to whether they consider that they do have a Red Cross society or not.

ICRC PROTESTS TO HANOI

Mr. ZABLOCKI. You have, in your report, advised the committee as to the action of the Red Cross and the International Committee of the Red Cross in its efforts to advise societies in other countries, including the U.S.S.R., as to the prisoner-of-war issue. Has the International Red Cross made any type of strong direct protest to the Government of Vietnam for their refusal to abide by the Geneva Convention of Prisoners of War?

Mr. EATON. Based upon both conversations and correspondence, they have made a series of protests to them, with respect to this question and, also, to their refusal to permit them to come into North Vietnam to fulfill their functions under the conventions.

We communicated with them on this last effort. In February, they came back with a very strong reply that they would again renew their efforts with respect to attempting to achieve direct negotiations with the North Vietnamese. I happened to see the president of the inter-

national committee about 10 days ago. He had not achieved any success as far as this latest communication was concerned. At that time, he had certain plans for attempting to visit some of the missions of the North Vietnamese in a further effort to achieve his objective.

Mr. ZABLOCKI. That would be the head of the International Commission of the Red Cross?

Mr. EATON. International Committee of the Red Cross, which, as you know, is composed entirely of Swiss citizens, headed by a Mr. Naville, who is the full-time president of the committee.

Mr. ZABLOCKI. The response was from the Red Cross Society of North Vietnam?

Mr. EATON. Yes; they deal directly with the North Vietnamese. They deal with the Government on the one hand, and with the Red Cross Society on the other. They endeavor to deal in both directions.

Mr. ZABLOCKI. And there were responses to the pressures and protests made by the International Commission of the Red Cross?

Mr. EATON. That is correct. There have been responses. I was told that there had been no response to this last effort, which dates from March on.

Mr. ZABLOCKI. Since March, there is no response?

Mr. EATON. Yes, sir. But there have been responses in the past, and incidentally, you might like to know that there have been protests from the North Vietnamese through the international committee to us, for what they term were adverse actions on the part of the military of the U.S. Government. And you should know that in each instance, these have been handled by the American Red Cross directly with our Government, and in each instance, our Government has given a reply back.

Mr. ZABLOCKI. Promptly?

Mr. EATON. To the international committee, which went back to the North Vietnamese, but unfortunately, this is a one-way street.

Mr. ZABLOCKI. But our responses were prompt?

Mr. EATON. Indeed, yes. Direct and hand delivered, in two instances.

Mr. ZABLOCKI. What was the time lapse in the past? Prior to the March protests, how long did they wait to respond?

Mr. EATON. I would not be able to answer that directly without checking my records, Mr. Chairman. I would say that generally speaking, responses are slow. This is true with us. Incidentally, we correspond directly with the North Vietnamese. You see, we have proposed for over 4 years a direct meeting with the North Vietnamese Red Cross, because it is our hope that this thing can be brought into Red Cross channels. If we can bring this into Red Cross channels, but get away from the matter that you were discussing earlier, of channels with no responsibility and no authority and no, well, definitive trust being the channels that are used for giving, let us say, for example, these names to these families. So all of our emphasis is to try to establish direct relationships with the North Vietnamese Red Cross, we are still doing that.

NONCOOPERATION OF NORTH VIETNAM

Mr. ZABLOCKI. And up to this time, in the past, they have never chosen to release the names, the status, or the whereabouts of the prisoners of war through the International Committee of the Red Cross?

Mr. EATON. Or through any other Red Cross society, or through the American Red Cross. But we do continue our efforts to achieve this, and I might say to you that we have at the present time, which I would rather not discuss, but we have a specific effort underway, which we hope, again, will at least awake even them to both the opportunity and the responsibility they have to put this back into Red Cross channels.

Mr. ZABLOCKI. I know I need not express the hope that the Red Cross does not flag in its efforts in this respect, not only in the interest of the wives and loved ones of the prisoners of war and the prisoners themselves, but for the prestige of the Red Cross and the meaningfulness of the Red Cross. I know that your organization, the Red Cross, has an important humanitarian role to play in the future, as it has done in the past.

I want to wish you well in all of your efforts, and I thank you sincerely for coming before the committee this morning.

Mr. EATON. Thank you.

Mr. ZABLOCKI. Thank you very much, gentlemen.

The committee is adjourned until 2 p.m. tomorrow, when we will meet in this room to be briefed on progress at the SALT talks negotiations by Mr. Philip J. Farley, Deputy Director of the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency.

The meeting is an executive session. The committee stands adjourned. (Whereupon, at 12 noon, the subcommittee adjourned.)

APPENDIX A

STATEMENT OF MRS. GORDON PERISHO, MOTHER OF LIEUTENANT COMMANDER G. S. PERISHO, 655540/1320, USN, MISSING IN ACTION OVER NORTH VIETNAM SINCE 31 DECEMBER 1967

On 22 March 1970 a group of wives and mothers, composed of Mrs. Dorothy Bodden (Downers Grove, Ill.), Mrs. Irene Davis (Burlington, New Jersey), Mrs. Sharon Walsh (Minneapolis, Minn.), Mrs. Elizabeth Brasher (Tucson, Arizona) and myself left Los Angeles in an attempt to obtain information concerning the status of our loved ones. While enroute to the Orient we were graciously received by Admiral John McCain, Commander in Chief, Pacific, during a brief stop in Honolulu.

From there we proceeded to Hong Kong, held a press conference on POW/MIA matters, and then traveled on to Phnom Penh, Cambodia, arriving shortly after the new government of Prime Minister Lon Nol acceded to power. As a result of restrictions in travel being imposed because of the recent changes in government, we remained in Phnom Penh for over a week. While there we called upon the French, British, and Spanish Embassies and were cordially received by all three. The Spanish were particularly sympathetic to our request and they indicated that they had not been contacted previously on this subject and that they were happy to assist in any manner within their means.

Our attempts to visit the Red Chinese Embassy were rebuffed by guards at the gate who refused us admittance, laughed at us, took pictures and made tape recordings while we pleaded with them to see their ambassador. A copy of a UPI dispatch filed in Phnom Penh by Max Vanzi describes the event and is attached. We also received rather cold and unsympathetic responses from the Polish, East German, Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavian Embassies.

On 30 March our group departed Cambodia and flew to Saigon where we were received by General Brown, General Dixon and other members of the military services. While the rest of the group proceeded on to Vientiane, Laos, I remained in Saigon, joining with Mr. H. Ross Perot and his party on a tour of the POW camps at Da Nang, where the North Vietnamese and Viet Cong prisoners are being held. These prisoners, some of whom were only 14 or 15 years old, both male and female, were well fed, well cared for, and when queried by Mr. Perot, indicated no desire to return to their homes.

On Friday, April 3, I departed Saigon for Bangkok, planning to join the group there rather than in Vientiane since I had not been feeling in the best of health. The day after my arrival in Bangkok I received a call from the other ladies in Vientiane. They indicated they had been received by the North Vietnamese and had not received any substantive information concerning their loved ones because their area of loss was not in North Vietnam. They did suggest, however, that it would be wise for me to come to Vientiane and attempt to obtain information. I left for Vientiane that same day.

On Wednesday, 8 April, accompanied by Mr. Verner Blatter, assistant to Dr. Jurg Baer, Director of the International Red Cross Committee in Vientiane, I went to the North Vietnamese Embassy in the early morning and requested an appointment. I was told to return at 2 P.M. that same day and did so accompanied again by Mr. Blatter, who acted as my interpreter. We met with Mr. Phan Tam and I told him that I was an American mother, acting on my own behalf, not sponsored by any group, and that I was seeking information about my son. He was cordial and sympathetic and indicated that he would send the information concerning my son to Hanoi on the next International Control Commission (ICC) plane, which was scheduled to depart Friday. He further indicated that he expected a reply to his query when the ICC flight returned the following Friday.

In the meantime, the other members of my party met with Mr. Sot Phetrasi, the representative of the Pathet Lao in Vientiane. Receiving no information, two returned to the United States via Hong Kong and Tokyo, while the other two traveled to Geneva, Switzerland and Stockholm, Sweden before returning to the United States.

After remaining in Vientiane until the following Friday, 17 April, I was told that the ICC plane had not brought any information concerning my son and that any further information would be forthcoming through the "peace groups" or through Dr. Baer of the International Red Cross. I departed Vientiane the following day, proceeded to Bangkok and then returned to the United States, arriving in Quincy, Illinois on Monday, April 20.

In summary, I wish to add that I will continue to pursue every avenue available in order to learn the fate of my son. It is the general consensus of our group that trips such as ours are worthwhile in that they draw considerable amount of public attention to the plight of our captured and missing personnel. Although none of us received definitive information concerning our loved ones, we felt a sense of satisfaction in realizing that we were making every attempt which could be considered reasonably possible in order to act in their best behalf. In spite of our lack of success, we consider the North Vietnamese Embassy in Vientiane to be one of the best available means of obtaining information concerning captured and missing servicemen.

In conclusion, I would like to express my appreciation to the members of the International Committee of the Red Cross, the State Department officials in various countries who assisted us in our travels, the large number of military officers of all Services who assisted us in an unofficial capacity and extended their kindness and sympathy, and the members of the press who helped to publicize the trip. I personally hope that the members of Congress will respond to the ideas and suggestions which were put forward by Mr. Perot at the "Appeal for International Justice" rally which was held at Constitution Hall on 1 May and do all in their power to ensure that our captured and missing servicemen are accorded all the rights and benefits due them under the terms of the Geneva Conventions. Events such as the above mentioned rally, sponsored by Senator Dole in cooperation with Mrs. James B. Stockdale and the members of the National League of Families of American Prisoners in Southeast Asia do much to advance the cause of our captured and missing personnel.

NANCY H. PERISHO
Mrs. Gordon M. Perisho.

WOMEN WEEP WHILE GUARDS LAUGH

By Max Vanzi

PHNOM PENH, Cambodia (UPI).—Five wives and mothers of missing American servicemen stood weeping outside the Communist Chinese embassy Thursday and begged fruitlessly with laughing guards to see the ambassador.

Among them was Mrs. Gordon Perisho of Quincy, Ill., mother of Navy Lt. Gordon S. Perisho, missing in North Vietnam since Dec. 31, 1967.

"Do not laugh at us," the women pleaded as they clutched the bar of a black iron gate outside the embassy building.

The chief guard, wearing a Mao Tse-tung button on his shirt, yelled "go away!" but said nothing else.

The women remained outside the embassy gate for about 15 minutes, pleading "in the name of humanity" to see ambassador Fung Jung-chen.

The other women were:

—Mrs. Richard A. Walsh III of 2200 Newton Ave., Minneapolis, Minn. She is the wife of Air Force Lt. Col. Richard Walsh III, missing in Laos since Feb. 14, 1969.

—Mrs. Robert C. Davis of 23 East Broad St., Burlington, N.J., wife of Air Force Capt. Robert Charles Davis, missing in Laos since March 23, 1969.

—Mrs. William J. Brashear of 7551 Golf Links Road, Tucson, Ariz., wife of Air Force Maj. William James Brashear, missing in Laos since May 8, 1969.

—Mrs. Dorothy M. Bodden of 5707 Walnut Ave., Downers Grove, Ill., mother of Marine Sgt. Timothy Roy Bodden, missing in Laos since June 3, 1967.

The women flew here Tuesday in an effort to see North Vietnamese diplomats to find out if their husbands and sons were alive and to plead for humane treatment.

At the Chinese embassy, the women sobbed openly and kept up a steady stream of pleas to enter. They were ignored until the chief guard produced a tape recorder and stood expressionless in front of them, recording their voices through the gate.

The women said they would return Friday and try again.

STATEMENT OF PROF. J. B. NEILANDS, DEPARTMENT OF BIOCHEMISTRY,
UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, BERKELEY

My name is J. B. Neilands, I live at 185 Hill Road, Berkeley, CA 94708, and I am employed by the University of California as a professor of biochemistry. In March, 1967, I visited the Democratic Republic of Vietnam as a member of the Third Investigating Commission of the International War Crimes Tribunal, better known as the Bertrand Russell Tribunal. My trip was arranged by the latter organization, although I paid my own travel expenses.

On the afternoon of March 16, 1967, the day prior to our meeting with President Ho Chi Minh, some members of the Commission and a few other western visitors who happened to be in North Vietnam at the time were invited to talk with captured American pilots. The meeting took place that evening in the living room of a villa in Hanoi. The room was furnished with easy chairs, sofas and low tables. The hosts provided beer, bananas, candies and cigarettes (brand Dien Bien Phu); the atmosphere was cordial and informal. Present at the meeting were Colonel Ha Van Lau, some other officials of the government and interpreters. We were not given any guidelines or instructions on the nature or scope of questions to be asked of the prisoners.

The first prisoner was brought in from behind a curtain. He was dressed in a loose-fitting robe with wide, purple stripes. He was led into the room by an aid but was under no other form of physical restraint. After a brief conversation, the prisoner asked that we not publicize his name or attribute any statements to him because he feared reprisals against his family if his vigorous anti-war sentiments became known. He testified that he had been given excellent treatment throughout the period of his captivity. At Christmas he had been able to pray before an altar decorated with a nativity scene and during the holiday season he had received special food treats such as beer and peanuts. A virus infection he had developed was given expert medical attention. He was flying out of Da Nang and confirmed that he had on occasion dropped napalm bombs on hamlets. He was familiar with the content of the 1954 Geneva Accords, which provided a legal basis for termination of hostilities in Vietnam, and expressed the hope that these agreements could become better known within the United States. He handed me some letters to post to his relatives.

The second prisoner, who was interviewed separately, was Major J. W. Bomar. He had been flying out of a base in Thailand and his aircraft was struck at 30,000 feet altitude. He received certain wounds in the ejection process but it appeared that he would achieve a total recovery. He had been shot down only about a month previously and was still wearing bandages and using crutches, otherwise he was dressed as the prisoner just described. He went into some detail on the humanitarian treatment which followed his capture in a rice paddy. He was taken to a village where he received food and medical attention. His fractured ankle was set in splints, he was given clothing and basic necessities such as a toothbrush. He was able to learn something of the background to the war by reading Felix Greene's book, "Vietnam! Vietnam!", which was available in the camp library.

Major Bomar gave me some letters to mail and asked that I telephone his parents in Mesa, Arizona, to inform them of his safety. Before I left Hanoi I took from the prison camp a large packet of letters to be mailed within the United States.

In summary, both of the prisoners I saw appeared to be receiving humanitarian treatment. There was no evidence that they were under abnormal physical or mental duress. Both expressed the opinion that President Johnson had deceived the American public and both asked us to continue our efforts to end U.S. aggression in Indochina.

The New York Times on April 11, 1967, published a slanted account of my visit with the prisoners in which they created the impression that the men had been "brainwashed". Subsequently I wrote a letter to the Times asking that

they disavow the article and print a factual story of the interview; my letter was acknowledged but not printed.

It appears to be the policy of the American media to circulate inflammatory statements about the treatment of the prisoners. In my opinion, such charges are irresponsible and without foundation. The purpose of the allegations is probably to generate pro-war hysteria within the United States.

Respectfully submitted.

J. B. NEELANDS.

Dated at Berkeley, Calif.

MAY 12, 1970.

STATEMENT OF COMMITTEE OF LIAISON WITH FAMILIES OF
SERVICEMEN DEATAINED IN NORTH VIETNAM

New York, N.Y., May 18, 1970.

To: Subcommittee on National Security Policy.

Re: Prisoners of War, North Vietnam.

On May 1 your subcommittee held hearings on the issue of prisoners of war and took testimony from several wives of men listed as missing or as prisoners, and also from Mr. H. Ross Perot.

The record is not complete without also knowing the facts regarding successful efforts which have been made to open communication between prisoners and their families, thereby producing a list of men held by the North Vietnamese and confirmed by mail to be there.

Since December, when members of the anti-war movement went to North Vietnam and held discussions there enabling a channel to be opened for the flow of communication, the North Vietnamese have officially confirmed through this Committee the names of 335 U.S. servicemen who are being held in North Vietnam as prisoners. We have also received 861 letters from prisoners since December and have forwarded them to their families. As of this writing all but 23 families have received mail since December from their prisoner sons or husbands.

In addition, packages of six pounds or less are permitted each prisoner every other month. Prisoners have acknowledged receiving such packages and are requesting specific articles to be included in future packages. Requests for toilet articles including soap, toothbrushes, toothpaste, body and foot powder, as well as protein and mineral vitamins and canned foods are frequently made. Candies, nuts, peanut butter, coffee, sweetners, instant drink mixes, tinned ham or dried chipped beef are also listed.

Aside from the nine prisoners who were released by the North Vietnamese to members of the anti-war movement in February 1968, August 1968 and July 1969, delegations visiting North Vietnam have seen approximately 15 prisoners in Hanoi who have appeared to be in good health.

We enclose a list of men confirmed to be prisoners.

Inasmuch as President Nixon continues to use the prisoner issue as his main propaganda tool to justify perpetuation of the war, that is, if he can convince Americans that the North Vietnamese are cruel and inhuman they will learn to hate the enemy and therefore support the war, it becomes essential to place the facts in perspective. Efforts to cloud the real issues of the war are transparent. Over 400,000 men face daily risks to their lives in Cambodia, Laos and Vietnam. A million and a half Vietnamese have lost their lives since the U.S. replaced the French nearly fifteen years ago. Over 49,000 servicemen dead and more than a quarter of a million wounded are the real issues. Once the U.S. decides to end the war and withdraw its troops the question of prisoners will be discussed in Paris as part of the overall solution to the war.

We believe that this unprecedented effort to put families in touch with their prisoner relatives is testimony to the concern which the Vietnamese show for the victims of war. We are very pleased to have been able to help so many families and will continue to assist with the free flow of communication while the Administration pursues a tragic and useless war.

We will be glad to provide any other information regarding prisoners which you may feel will throw proper light on this subject.

Enclosures.

FACTS REGARDING PRISONERS OF WAR HELD IN NORTH VIETNAM

NAMES

The North Vietnamese have released the names of 335 U.S. servicemen being held in North Vietnam. Letters from these men have been mailed to their families to verify their status. This official confirmation from Hanoi was received by the Committee of Liaison with families of servicemen detained in North Vietnam.

MAIL

Letters from 291 prisoners have already been received by their families, and letters from the others are en route from Hanoi. Since December, 1969, 814 letters have been sent from North Vietnam through the Committee of Liaison to families here. Mail has come by hand with anti-war groups returning from North Vietnam as well as through normal postal channels. Mail from families goes directly to the camp of detention. The Committee of Liaison also forwards mail for families to Hanoi. One letter is permitted each prisoner each month on the air letter forms suggested.

PACKAGES

Each prisoner is permitted to receive one package every other month. Prisoners recently interviewed have requested specific items be included in these packages—e.g., tinned foods and toilet articles. They asked not to include clothes. Individually prisoners have requested specific articles such as photographs, eye glasses, and inhalers. Packages have been acknowledged by prisoners.

NUMBERS

On December 30, 1969, a list of approximately 1400 names of men listed as missing in action was released by the State Department. It represented men lost throughout Southeast Asia, including Laos, Cambodia, Thailand, South Vietnam, and North Vietnam. It has also been maintained by the State Department that of this number approximately 700 were lost over North Vietnam, 500 over South Vietnam, and 200 over Laos. The State Department has further stated to the New York *Times* that it has a list of 419 men listed as "Presumed Captured" in North Vietnam; however, reliable evidence—official confirmation by North Vietnam—has so far been released for only the above-mentioned 335 men.

RELEASES

In all, 9 servicemen have been released by North Vietnam. On February 16, 1968, the North Vietnamese released Navy Ensign David Matheny, Capt. John Black, and Maj. Norris Overly to Prof. Howard Zinn and Fr. Daniel Berrigan for the Peace Movement. On July 18, 1968, Hanoi released Maj. James Low, Maj. Fred Thompson, and Capt. Joe Carpenter to Stewart Meacham, Vernon Grizzard, and Anne Scheer of the Peace Movement. On August 5, 1969, the North Vietnamese released Lt. Robert Frishman, Seaman Douglas Hegdahl, and Capt. Wesley Rumble again to members of the anti-war movement including Rennie Davis, Jimmy Johnson, and Linda Evans.

FUNCTIONS OF THE COMMITTEE

The Committee of Liaison seeks to facilitate communication between servicemen imprisoned in North Vietnam and their families in the United States. The Committee receives letters from servicemen and forwards them to the families through the domestic mails. It also forwards letters to North Vietnam at the request of families. Families are, of course, still free to send letters directly but should note the correct address for both letters and packages:

Name of serviceman, serial number.

Camp of Detention of U.S. Pilots Captured in the D.R.V.

Hanoi, Democratic Republic of Vietnam via Moscow, U.S.S.R.

Captured servicemen may receive one letter a month and one package (not over six pounds in weight) every other month. The Committee does not forward packages. It is suggested that letters sent to the Committee for forwarding be sealed and that stamps be enclosed (not affixed) as letters are forwarded in packets.

The Committee is only able to be of help with respect to men who have been shot down over North Vietnam.

The Committee also is able to request information regarding the status of men thought to have been shot down over North Vietnam and captured there. For such inquiries the Committee needs to have the individual's service number, and any available information as to when and where he was shot down. With respect to such requests the Committee would expect to receive a letter to his family if the individual is being held in North Vietnam. If the individual is known to be dead or if the North Vietnamese have no information regarding him, the Committee expects to receive that word to the extent possible. In any case the Committee will communicate with the family concerned as soon as it receives word. In this way we expect that, as Xuan Thuy, head of the North Vietnamese delegation in Paris, has said, gradually all families of servicemen held in North Vietnam will hear from their relatives.

BACKGROUND

The Committee of Liaison has been established in response to an initiative created by the North Vietnamese and is an extension of previous efforts. It is not in any sense representing the government of North Vietnam.

Since 1965 there have been a number of meetings between people of Vietnam (from both the North and the National Liberation Front of South Vietnam) and Americans who oppose the war. On three separate occasions representatives of the American anti-war movement have gone to Hanoi and have returned with released servicemen. On one occasion an American peace activist went to Phnom Penh, Cambodia, to receive three American soldiers who were released by the National Liberation Front. Americans visiting Hanoi have frequently carried letters to captured servicemen at the request of their families and they have brought back letters when they have returned to the United States. On several occasions such visitors from the peace movement have met with captured pilots in Hanoi.

THE COMMITTEE

The Committee of Liaison believes that the safe return of U.S. servicemen captured in North Vietnam and the half-million others that the United States maintains in South Vietnam, Laos, Thailand, and aboard naval vessels can only come with a decision on the part of the U.S. government to completely withdraw from Vietnam. Because of this conviction, we who are serving on this Committee will also continue our efforts aimed at the immediate and complete withdrawal of all U.S. armed forces and weapons.

As individuals Committee members are active in a variety of organizations and groups committed to ending the war: the New Mobilization Committee to End the War in Vietnam, The Conspiracy, Clergy and Laymen Concerned About Vietnam, U.S. Inter-religious Committee on Peace, Fellowship of Reconciliation, Newsreel, Women Against Daddy Warbucks, Lawyers Committee on Vietnam, and Women Strike for Peace.

The Committee of Liaison is entirely dependent on donations from individuals and organizations, and welcomes any gifts to sustain its work.

The following 335 names have been officially confirmed by Hanoi to be prisoners held in North Vietnam—April 30, 1970:

ALABAMA

Michael K. McCuiston, 71416, Montgomery.
Herbert Benjamin Ringsdorf, FR75446, Elba.
Irby David Terrell, 3035168, Anniston.

ARIZONA

Kile Dag Berg, 3103302, Glendale.
Jack Williamson Bomar, FV2251452, Mesa.
Larry Edward Carrigan, 3119604, Scottsdale.
Joseph Crecca, Jr., FR83481, Phoenix.
Laird Gutterson, 26408, Tucson.

Thomas Mack Madison, 2249519, Phoenix.
 Dennis Anthony Moore, 541532, Scottsdale.
 John Joseph Pitchford, Jr., FV2245522, Scottsdale.
 Lewis W. Shattuck, 3036821, Mesa.
 Jack H. Tomes, FR65155, Chandler.
 Charles Robert Tyler, 58050, Phoenix.
 Jack Linwood VanLoan, 65085, Tucson.

ARKANSAS

James Lasley Lamar, 1909733, Little Rock.

CALIFORNIA

Wilfred Keese Abbott, 3081739, San Diego.
 Everett Alvarez, Jr., 644124, Santa Clara.
 Anthony Charles Andrews, FR3146561, Chico.
 Frederick C. Baldock, Jr., 666620, Lemon Grove.
 Robert W. Barnett, FR31021, Hawthorne.
 Cole Black, 594387, San Diego.
 Terry Lee Boyer, FR3153642, Visalia.
 Michael Lee Brazelton, FV3148690, Long Beach.
 Philip Neal Butler, 647398, LaJolla.
 William Wallace Butler, 3133430, San Rafael.
 Carl Dennis Chambers, FV3133401, Yuba City.
 Arvin Roy Chauncy, 614788, Lemoore.
 Claude Douglas Clower, 60547, San Diego.
 James Quincy Collins, 27908, Atherton.
 Michael Paul Cronin, 668952, Berkeley.
 Verlyne Wayne Daniels, 554745, Hayward.
 Edward Dale Estes, 605484, Lemoore.
 John Fer, 63823, San Pedro.
 Herbert Kelly Flesher, 32199, Sacramento.
 David Edward Ford, FV3122074, Sacramento.
 Henry Pope Fowler, FR3148574, Palo Alto.
 Charles R. Gillespie, Jr., 542951, Miramar.
 Collins H. Haines, 593915, San Diego.
 James Martin Hickerson, 561065, Lemoore.
 Harry Tarleton, Jr., 504424, Lemoore.
 Theodore Frank Kopfman, 597544, Lemoore.
 Carl William Lasiter, 66064, San Diego.
 Earl Gardner Lewis, Jr., 683095, San Diego.
 Alan Pierce Lurie, FR65266, Apple Valley.
 John Michael McGrath, 659291, San Diego.
 George P. McIwain, 697713, Montrose.
 John B. McKamey, 614791, Lemoore.
 Edward Holmes Martin, 584587, Coronado.
 Raymond James Merritt, 44729, Colton.
 Edison Wainwright Miller, 054602, Santa Ana.
 Joseph Scott Mobley, 701867, Manhattan Beach.
 Ernest M. Moore, Jr., 553659, Lemoore.
 Richard Dean Mullen, 584926, LaJolla.
 John H. Nasmyth, Jr., FV3120117, South San Gabriel.
 Dale Harrison Osborne, 614229, Hanford.
 James Glenn Pirie, 614186, Lemoore.
 Leo T. Profflet, 506413, Palto Alto.
 Darrell Edwin Pyle, FV3145936, Santa Ana.
 David George Rehmann, 698502, Lancaster.
 Wendell Burke Rivers, 555144, Oxnard.
 David John Rollins, 633926, San Diego.
 Kay Russell, 563567, San Diego.
 Howard Elmer Rutledge, 506435, San Diego.
 Paul Henry Schultz, 616785, San Diego.
 Robert James Schweitzer, 571894, Lemoore.
 William L. Shankel, 664281, Jackson.
 Robert Harper Shumaker, 548955, LaJolla.
 Charles Everett Southwick, 544716, Cupertino.

Charles David Stackhouse, 647984, Lemoore.
 John Edward Stavast, 52944, Claremont.
 Theodore Gerhard Stier, 669500, San Diego.
 Robert Lewis Stirm, FV3036919, Foster City.
 James Bond Stockdale, Coronado.
 Richard Allen Stratton, 602087, Hanford.
 Gary L. Thornton, 700903, Porterville.
 Robert Earl Wideman, 689953, Westminster.
 Brian Dunstan Woods, 618063, Lemoore.

COLORADO

William David Burroughs, FR27184, Aurora.
 Jerry Allen Singleton, 64076, Greeley.

CONNECTICUT

Read Blaine McCleary, 678398, Old Greenwich.

DELAWARE

Robert Bartsch Doremus, 597366, Wilmington.

FLORIDA

Ralph J. Browning, FR78556, Orlando.
 Alan L. Brunstrom, AO3023441, Miami
 Gerald L. Coffee, 625308, Sanford.
 Kenneth Williams Cordier, 71351, Tampa.
 Carl Boyette Crumpler, 27705, Orange Park.
 John Howard Dunn, 059941, Jacksonville.
 John Stewart Finlay, III, 19805, Satellite Beach.
 Kenneth Fisher, 67431, Sebring.
 Robert Byron Fuller, 542942, North Miami Beach.
 Ralph Ellis Gaither, 686365, Miami.
 Danny E. Glenn, 668152, Jacksonville.
 David Fletcher Gray, Jr., 3158230, Tampa.
 Guy Dennis Gruters, 78680, Sarasota.
 Lawrence N. Guarino, 52573, Satellite Beach.
 Keith Norman Hall, FR61501, Fort Walton Beach.
 Thomas Renwick Hall, Jr., 682719, Pensacola.
 William Morgan Hardman, 625171, Center Hill.
 John Heilig, 667042, North Miami Beach.
 Robert Bruce Hinckley, 3146679, Fort Walton Beach.
 James Otis Hivner, 50815, Tampa.
 James Leo Hutton, 602748, Lakeland.
 Charles Negus James, Jr., 544080, Sanford.
 Richard Paul Keirn, AO936812, Tampa.
 Wilson Denver Key, 669207, Jacksonville.
 Vernon Peyton Ligon, Jr., 33825, Melbourne Beach.
 John Sidney McCain, 624787, Orange Park.
 Glendon W. Perkins, FV3101454, Orlando.
 Douglas Brian Peterson, FR54627, Marianna.
 Peter Van Schoeffel, 584717, Naples.
 Kenneth Adrian Simonet, 23521, West Palm Beach.
 Bradley E. Smith, 682780, Eagle Lake.
 Wayne Ogden Smith, FR80670, Dunedin.
 Thomas James Sterling, FR45475, Fort Walton Beach.
 Richard George Tangeman, 669370, Sanford.
 Dewey Wayne Waddell, 54772, Fort Walton Beach.
 Lewis Irving Williams, 694463, Tampa.
 James Faulds Young, FR46611, Hollywood.

GEORGIA

Leon Francis Ellis, Jr., 3171887, Hull.
 Porter A. Halyburton, 677514, Decatur.
 Leo Gregory Hyatt, 613640, Albany.

Michael Christopher Lane, FV3134159, Atlanta.
 Giles Roderick Norrington, 690103, Albany.
 Thomas Vance Parrott, FV3103992, Dalton.
 Orson G. Swindle, 078193, Camilla.

HAWAII

George G. McKnight, A03051289, Honolulu.

IDAHO

Larry James Chesley, 3147498, Burley.
 Donald Glenn Waltman, FR53895, Kellogg.
 Thomas Joseph Barrett.

ILLINOIS

Thomas Joseph Barrett, FV3120130, Lombard.
 John L. Borling, 69907, Chicago.
 John William Frederick, Jr., 082847, Tremont.
 Thomas F. Norris, 77071, Godfrey.
 Gary Richard Sigler, FV3157864, Table Grove.

INDIANA

Richard Brenneman, FV3158661, Mishawaka.
 Hubert Elliott Buchanan, 3148528, Austin.
 Ronald Edward Byrne, Jr., 27821A, Kokomo.
 James Helms Kasler, FR24551, Indianapolis.

IOWA

Michael Thomas Burns, 31089503, Mount Pleasant.
 Robert John Naughton, 646287, Sheldon.
 Larry Howard Spencer, 674085, Earlham.

KANSAS

Charles Graham Boyd, FR72601, Wichita.
 Ramon Anton Hornick, FR49644.
 Edward Lee Hubbard, FV3122827, Overland Park.
 Gobel Dale James, FR3006133, Overland Park.
 Harold Eugene Johnson, FR72372, Overland Park.
 Ronald Lambert Mastin, FR79450, Overland Park.
 Joseph Charles Plumb, Jr., 678505, Overland Park.
 Leroy William Stutz, 78935, Cummings.

KENTUCKY

Robert Baldwin Purcell, 53786, Louisville.
 Dewey Lee Smith, 64990, Valley Station.

LOUISIANA

Lawrence Barbay, 3054027, Baton Rouge.
 Murphy Neil Jones, FR69506, Baton Rouge.
 Hayden James Lockhart, Jr., 62669, Alexandria.
 Bruce Gibson Seeber, 47135, West Monroe.

MAINE

Robert Irwin Biss, FV3103220, Bangor.
 Allan Russell Carpenter, 657951, Sanford.
 Markham L. Gartley, 703644, Greenville.
 Rofer Dean Ingvalson, FR30713, Sanford.

MARYLAND

James Franklin Bell, 515877, LaVale.
 Arthur William Burer, 3087646, Rockville.
 Hugh Allen Stafford, 614922, Cambridge.
 Bernard Leo Taley, Jr. 3129281, Baltimore.

MASSACHUSETTS

Paul Gordon Brown, 094576, Newton.
 Leonard Corbett Eastman, 624192, Bernardson.
 Charles Edward Greene, Jr. 3081054, Needham.
 Lauren Robert Lengyel, FR3081654, West Peabody.
 Kenneth Walter North, 53694, Wellfleet.
 Frederick Raymond Purrington, 680259, North Dartmouth.
 Timothy Bernard Sullivan, 686505, Springfield.

MICHIGAN

Robert Archie Abbott, FR81453, Sawyer AFB.
 Willard Selleck Gideon, 3025283, Mt. Clemens.
 Martin James Neuens, FR78831, Iron Mountain.
 Donald Eugene Odell, FV3057281, Mt. Clemens.
 Joseph Francis Shanahan, FR72120, Grand Rapids.
 James Howie Warner, 092816, Ypsilanti.

MINNESOTA

Richard Eugene Bolstad, FR81278, Minneapolis.
 David Everson, FR56893, Coon Rapids.
 David Robert Wheat, 677374, Duluth.
 David Williams Winn, 36646, Minneapolis.

MISSISSIPPI

James William Bailey 684790, Carthage.
 Thomas Edward Collins, III, 68082, Jackson.
 Carlyle Smith Harris, 46663, Tupelo.

MISSOURI

John Warren Brodak, 3108628, Jennings.
 John Walter Clark, 70474, Columbia.
 Donald Ray Spoon, 78929, Pleasant Hill.
 Robert Deane Woods, 632730, Garden City.

MONTANA

Rodney Allen Knutson, 667751, Billings.

NEBRASKA

Richard Raymond Ratzlaff, 681476, Stromsburg.

NEVADA

Richard Allen Dutton, FA22497, North Las Vegas.
 Richard Eugene Smith, Jr. 57992, Las Vegas.
 Dwight Everett Sullivan, 3025678, Las Vegas.
 Robert F. Waggoner, 3065137, Reno.

NEW HAMPSHIRE

Russell Edward Temperly, FR59025, Concord.

NEW JERSEY

Joseph Abbott, Jr., FV3057099.
 George Thomas Coker, 669409, Linden.
 John Arthur Dramesi, 65320.
 Jeffrey Thomas Ellis, FV3135610, Madison.
 Willis Ellis Forby, 304-351.
 Robert Campbell Jones, FR81333, Chatham.
 Edwin Frank Miller, Jr., 706510, Oakland.
 Joseph Edward Milligan, 3155216, Ammandale.
 Thomas William Sima, FV3038065, Riverton.
 Gerald Santo Venanzi, FV3173807, Trenton.
 Ronald John Webb, FR72828.

NEW MEXICO

James Lindberg Hughes, FR43211, Santa Fe.
Thomas Wrenne Sumpter, Jr., 32044, Hollowman AFB.

NEW YORK

Edward A. Brudno, 78285A, Harrison.
Arthur Cormier, AF12454730, Bay Shore.
Myron L. Donald, FR80331, Ossining.
Wayne Goodermote, 69319, Berlin.
Norman Alexander McDaniel, FR55957, New York City.
Kevin Joseph McManus, 78805, Brightwaters.
James Patrick Mehl, 543070, Hauppauge.
Melvin Pollack, FV3149044, Long Beach.
Charles Donald Rice, 710266, Setauket.
Charles P. Zuhoski, 691560, Jamesport.

NORTH CAROLINA

Arthur T. Ballard, Jr., 31816, Lake Lure.
Barry Burton Bridger, 3131623, Bladenboro.
Rendar Crayton, 529039, Charlotte.
Norman Carl Gaddis, 26772, Winston Salem.
David Burnett Hatcher, 304002, Mt. Airy.
James Edward Hiteshew, FR46668, Goldsboro.
Thomas Mitchell McNish, FR78806, Franklin.
Jerry Wendell Marvel, 070296, Newport.
William Andrew Robinson, RF14782798, Robersonville.
Norman Louross Wells, FV3037386, Goldsboro.

NORTH DAKOTA

Loren Harvey Torkelson, FV3155656, Crosby.

OHIO

Williams Joseph Baugh, 65597, Piqua.
Burton Wayne Campbell, FR70564, Amherst.
Harlan Page Chapman, 071437, Elyria.
John Peter Flynn, 15760.
Paul Anthony Kari, 66675A, Spencer.
Edward John Mechenbier, FR78807, Dayton.
Thomas Nelson Mow, 3175200, Columbus.
Cowan Glenn Nix, 74953, Warrensville Heights.

OKLAHOMA

Fred A. W. Franke, Jr., 513370, Midwest City.
Galand D. Kramer, FV3155965, Tulsa.
Harold DeLoss Monlux, FV3161422, Tulsa.
Thomas Shaw Pyle, II, FV3103812, Cordell.
Robinson Risner, 26905, Oklahoma City.
Herbert Clifford Walker, Jr., 3145724, Tulsa.

OREGON

James Eldon Sehorn, 3132084, Forest Grove.

PENNSYLVANIA

Wendell Reed Alcorn, 658707, Kittanning.
Gareth Laverne Anderson, 682482, Kane.
Arthur Neill Black, AF12666475, Bethlehem.
John Douglass Burns, 613414, Paoli.
David Jay Carey, 677935, Jeannette.
John Owen Davies, 3152430, Reading.
Edward Anthony Davis, 658959, Leola.
Jerry Donald Driscoll, 69973, Canton.

David Henry Duart, FV3057321, Canton.
 Glenn Leo Myers, 3141931, Pittsburgh.
 Jon A. Reynolds, FR68584, Bela Cynwyd.
 Mark John Ruhling, FV3139169.
 Robert Ralston Sawhill, Jr., FR24101, Carnegie.
 Konrad W. Trautman, FV1909945, Steelton.

SOUTH CAROLINA

William Renwick Austin, II, 71588, Simpson Vile.
 Babbey Ray Bagley, FV3034566, Sumter.
 Robert St. Clair Fant, Jr., 653848, Anderson.
 Arthur Thomas Hoffson, FV3152442.
 William Harley Means, Jr., 3058903, Sumter.
 Herschel Scott Morgan, 3057445, Sumter.
 Albert Edwards Runyan, FR49475, Sumter.

SOUTH DAKOTA

Laurence Victor Friese, 091579, Huron.
 Ronald Merle Lebert, FV3176215.
 Leo Keith Thorsness, FV3025937, Sioux Falls.

TENNESSEE

William Porter Lawrence, 543032, Nashville.
 Robert D. Peel, A03117963, Paris.
 Charles Nels Tanner, 588973, Covington.
 Raymond Arthur Vohden, 586702, Memphis.

TEXAS

Elmo Cinnard Baker, 30626432, San Antonio.
 John Charles Blevins, 82666, San Antonio.
 Ronald Glenn Bliss, FR78537, Temple.
 Donald Ray Burns, FR27184, Mineral Wells.
 James Arlen Clements, FV3021015, Queen City.
 H. C. Copeland, 3015953, Austin.
 Thomas Jerry Curtis, 47753, Houston.
 Glenn H. Daigle, 667122, Corpus Christi.
 Robert Nolan Daughtrey, A03056891, Del Rio.
 George Robert Hall, 25106A, Waco.
 Julius Skinner Jayroe, 3058693, San Antonio.
 Robert Duncan Jeffrey, FV3117985, Dallas.
 Samuel Robert Johnson, FR25936, Plano.
 Gordon Albert Larson, FR26473, San Antonio.
 Warren Robert Lilly, 57557, Dallas.
 Louis Frank Makowski, FR47317, Midland.
 Alton Benno Meyer, 74897, College Station.
 Armand Jesse Myers, FR47337, Universal City.
 James Edwin Ray, 80893, Conroe.
 Robert James Sandvick, 47755, Farwell.
 Thomas Gordon Storey, 73117, Austin.
 Ross Randle Terry, 622502, Lake Jackson.
 Terry Jun Uyeyama, 3085365, Austin.
 John Henry Wendell, Jr., FR61974, Houston.
 Glenn Hubert Wilson, FR54287, Universal City.

UTAH

Jay Criddle Hess, 3038594, Bountiful.
 Jay Roger Jensen, FV3033604, Layton.
 Jose David Luna, 3122671, Roy.

VERMONT

Hervey Studdie Stockman, 50436, Manchester.

VIRGINIA

James E. Bean, 35014, Arlington.
 James Robert Berger, FV3119242, Lexington.
 Allen Colby Brady, 542856, Virginia Beach.
 Fred Vann Cherry, 45554A, Suffolk.
 Michael Durham Christian, 673624, Virginia Beach.
 Kenneth Leon Coskey, 571080, Virginia Beach.
 Frederick Austin Crow, Jr., 26569, Hampton.
 Jeremiah A. Denton, Jr., 485087, Virginia Beach.
 Dale Walter Doss, 591159.
 Kenneth R. Fleenor, FR27797, Hampton.
 Paul Edward Galanti, 659047, Richmond.
 Howard Hill, 80413, Alexandria.
 Eugene M. McDaniel, 602046, Virginia Beach.
 James Alfred Mulligan, 504324, Virginia Beach.
 Edwin Arthur Shuman, III, 584738, Virginia Beach.
 William Michael Tschudy, 660481, Virginia Beach.
 Richard Dale Vogel, FR49594, Hampton.
 Walter Eugene Wilber, 539459, Virginia Beach.

WASHINGTON

Richard M. Brunhaver, 674218, Moxee.
 Michael Scott Kerr, 83644, Sequim.
 Wesley Duane Schierman, 3058242, Spokane.
 James Richard Shively, FR78909, Spokane.
 Raymond Walter Vissotzky, 3006144, Veradale.
 Lawrence D. Writer, FV3156989, Olympia.

WEST VIRGINIA

William John Mayhew, 691368, New Manchester.

WISCONSIN

Daniel James Doughty, 3037760, Ladysmith.
 Frederic R. Flom, 3157103, Appleton.
 Gerald Lee Gerndt, 3163167, Suring.
 Donald Lester Heiliger, 55023, Madison.
 William John Metzger, Jr., 684859, Wisconsin Rapids.

Kenneth Raymond Hughey, 31352.

BELGIUM

Wallace Grant Newcomb, 3130981, Liege.

ENGLAND

Robert R. Craner, FV3034313, Formby, Lancashire.

ITALY

Thomas Henry Kirk, Jr., 20794, Trieste.

[H. Conl. Res. 499, 91st Cong., second sess.]

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

Whereas the treatment of American prisoners in North Vietnam has been one of the most shameful chapters in the anguished history of the Vietnam war; and
 Whereas the Government of North Vietnam has not only violated the articles of the Geneva Convention concerning prisoners of war but has shown itself in the past to be indifferent to even the most elemental standards of humane con-

sideration by refusing to reveal the names of those held prisoner, refusing to allow communications with their families, and refusing to allow even the simplest ministrations to the prisoners by the International Red Cross; and Whereas the solution to the prisoner issue would be an important first step toward engendering the kind of trust which must be exchanged before any meaningful progress can be made in negotiating a settlement to the war: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That it is the sense of the Congress that the American negotiators at the Peace Conference in Paris should be instructed to insist that the matter of prisoners be given first priority on the Peace Talks agenda; and

That negotiations should seek improved treatment of prisoners, release of names of prisoners, inspection of prison conditions by the International Red Cross or other international bodies, and the assurance of continuing discussions looking toward the eventual exchange or release of prisoners; and

That no other negotiations should proceed until there is substantive progress on the prisoner of war issue.

ATTITUDES OF THE U.S. PUBLIC REGARDING NORTH VIETNAMESE TREATMENT OF AMERICAN PRISONERS OF WAR AND RELATED VIETNAM ISSUES

(A Study Conducted for United We Stand, Gallup International, February 1970)

DESIGN OF THE RESEARCH

The overall objective of this study was to measure current attitudes of the U.S. public regarding North Vietnamese treatment of American prisoners of war and related Vietnam issues.

A total of 1505 interviews with civilian adults was conducted during the first week in February 1970. The following questions were asked:

1. *If the United States were to withdraw all troops from Vietnam now, do you think the South Vietnam government would be able to stand on its own, or not?*
2. *If the United States were to withdraw all troops from Vietnam now, do you think many South Vietnamese people would be killed or imprisoned by the North Vietnamese, or not?*
3. *In your opinion, is Russia assisting the North Vietnamese in the war, or not?*
4. *(Hand Respondent Card A) In what way or ways?*
5. *If you had to make a choice at this time, would you rather live in North Vietnam or in South Vietnam?*
6. *Have you happened to have heard or read anything about the treatment of U.S. prisoners by North Vietnam?*
7. *What have you heard or read?*
8. *Just your best guess, about how many U.S. soldiers are presently prisoners in North Vietnam?*
9. *From what you've heard or read, do U.S. prisoners of war in North Vietnam receive good treatment or poor treatment?*
10. *(If Poor) Is the way prisoner of war camps are operated in North Vietnam due more to the policy of the North Vietnam government, due more to the officials in charge of the individual camps, or don't you have an opinion on this question?*
11. *North Vietnam says that the U.S. prisoners of war are being treated humanely. Do you believe this, or not?*
12. *Which do you think would be more likely to improve the treatment of U.S. prisoners of war held by North Vietnam—support by the American people of the U.S. Government's policy on Vietnam or support of Vietnam protest movements or moratoriums?*
13. *In your opinion, how much respect would you say the Leaders of North Vietnam have for the life of a prisoner of war—a great deal, some, hardly any, or none?*
14. *In your opinion, how much respect would you say the People of North Vietnam have for the life of a prisoner of war—a great deal, some, hardly any or none?*
15. *(Hand Respondent Card B) Which, if any, of the things on this card do you think the North Vietnamese have done to U.S. prisoners of war? Please just read off the letter or letters.*

16. Here is a question about information brought back from Vietnam by representatives of peace groups and Vietnam protest groups in the United States. In general, would you say this information has been a true reflection of the situation in Vietnam, or not?

The composition of the sample is to be found at the end of the report. It is followed by a description of the design of the sample and by tables of recommended sampling tolerances to have in mind when reading the report.

The national adult civilian population, 21 years of age and older, excluding the institutional population, was estimated as of November 1969, at 118,094,000.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

A. Treatment of U.S. Prisoners

1. Two out of every three Americans (68 per cent) say they have heard or read about the treatment of U.S. prisoners by North Vietnam. Among the college-trained segment of the population, 83 per cent express awareness.

2. When asked *what* they have heard or read, the aware group (the 68 per cent who say they have heard or read about the treatment of U.S. prisoners) give responses that are overwhelmingly unfavorable in regard to the treatment of prisoners. The specific replies given most frequently (without aid of handout card) are: U.S. prisoners are tortured or beaten; receive poor care and medical attention; are not allowed to communicate with their families. Only seven per cent of those asked this question say that U.S. prisoners are "treated well."

3. When asked a specific question on whether treatment of U.S. prisoners is good or poor, only one person in nine among the aware group say prisoners receive good treatment.

4. Seventy-seven per cent of the aware group, when shown a list of six items and asked to indicate what things, if any, they think the North Vietnamese have done to U.S. prisoners, say *prisoners have not been allowed to write their families*. The next highest proportion of the aware group (61 per cent) say *U.S. prisoners have been kept in solitary confinement*; 60 per cent say *U.S. prisoners have been tortured*; 46 per cent think *they have been starved*. One third (33 per cent) of all persons (who say they have heard or read about U.S. prisoner treatment) say the North Vietnamese have *killed* U.S. prisoners of war. Only two per cent say the North Vietnamese have done *none* of these things.

5. About four persons in ten of the aware group do not give any estimate of the number of U.S. soldiers presently imprisoned in North Vietnam. Only about one person in eight give an approximately accurate estimate (specifying a figure between 1,000 and 2,000). Thirteen per cent specify a number *less than* 1,000, while 34 per cent specify a number *larger than* 2,000.

6. Only 15 per cent of persons, asked whether the treatment of U.S. prisoners is humane or not, take the former category.

7. Among the aware group who say U.S. prisoners are treated *poorly*, the weight of opinion is that the way prisoners of war camps are operated is due more to *government policy* than to the *officials in charge of the individual camps*.

8. Among the aware group, seven in ten think the Leaders of North Vietnam have "hardly any" or "no" respect for the life of a prisoner of war, with a somewhat lower proportion, 55 per cent, saying this about the People of North Vietnam.

B. Russian Involvement in Vietnam

9. Nearly eight persons in ten of the total sample (78 per cent) think Russia is assisting the North Vietnamese in the war. College-trained persons are more inclined to hold this view than are persons with less formal education.

10. Nine in ten persons (89 per cent), when asked to choose from a list, think Russia is "sending arms" to North Vietnam. Large majorities in all population sub-groups hold this view. Majorities or near majorities in each of these groups also believe that Russia is "sending advisors." Fewer say Russia is assisting in "policy-making" (38 per cent) or is actually "sending troops" (14 per cent).

C. Possible Effects of U.S. Withdrawal from Vietnam

11. Two Americans in three (67 per cent) in the total sample think the South Vietnam government would not be able to stand on its own if the United States were to withdraw all troops from Vietnam now. This view is held by solid majorities in all groups, but is most pronounced among men, the college-trained, and younger persons.

12. Six persons in ten think many South Vietnamese people would be killed or imprisoned by the North Vietnamese if the United States were to withdraw all troops from Vietnam now.

D. Credibility of Information Brought Back by Peace Groups

13. A majority of the total (51 per cent) think the information brought back from Vietnam by representatives of peace groups and Vietnam protest groups has not been a true reflection of the situation in Vietnam. A substantial difference in opinion is found on the basis of age, with those in their twenties most inclined to accept the validity of this information.

E. Preferences for Living in South or North Vietnam

14. One person in ten of the total sample, if given a choice says he would rather live in North Vietnam than in South Vietnam. The person who favors North Vietnam in this respect is more likely to be a younger than older adult.

F. Views of Three Groups who Lean to a "Dove" Position

15. To gain further insight into attitudes regarding the treatment of U.S. prisoners, in addition to that furnished by breakdowns by demographic groups such as age, sex, and so forth, the survey results were analyzed on the basis of three groups who lean to a "dove" position. These are:

(1) those who think we should withdraw all troops from Vietnam immediately (based on a question reported in a February 15, 1970, Gallup Poll release which showed 35 per cent holding this view);

(2) those who think the information brought back from Vietnam by representatives of peace groups and protest groups has been a true reflection of the Vietnam situation; and

(3) those who think the treatment of U.S. prisoners would be more likely improved by support of Vietnam protest movements or moratoriums rather than support of the U.S. Government's policy on Vietnam.

The important fact emerges that the opinions of all three groups differ very little from those of the rest of the sample.

APPENDIX B

STATEMENTS BY AMBASSADOR HABIB ON THE PRISONER OF WAR ISSUE AT THE PARIS PEACE TALKS

MINISTER HABIB'S OPENING STATEMENT

Following is the text of the opening statement delivered by Minister Philip C. Habib at the Forty-Sixth Plenary Session of the New Paris Meetings on Viet-Nam, December 11, 1969.

Ladies and gentlemen: In recent weeks your side has sought, outside of these Plenary meetings, to persuade the world that you are seriously seeking a negotiated settlement of the war in Viet-Nam. You have spoken of your goodwill and serious attitude and of the reasonableness and correctness of your proposals.

We continue to hear the same demands for unilateral action which you have been making for the past ten months. We see no signs that your side is prepared to take any steps of its own to match actions by our side. We hear only more strident language.

You cannot convince us here, or public opinion at large, of your desire for genuine negotiations by protestations of goodwill alone. This is a clear case where actions speak louder than mere words.

For example, you constantly claim that you came to these meetings with what you term "goodwill and a serious attitude." It is worth examining what goodwill and serious attitude consist of.

Normally, in international negotiations, goodwill means the following things: to present reasonable proposals; to listen to the proposals of others; discuss one's own proposals and to explain them; to discuss the proposals of others and to ask for clarification; to be ready to deal with all parties; to be ready to give and take; and to reach an agreement to which all parties can honorably adhere.

By any normal standards, therefore, you have not yet shown here either goodwill or a serious attitude. You have made unreasonable demands and insisted that we accept them before negotiations can begin. You demand actions on our part with no indication of what you are prepared to do. You have rejected our positions out of hand and refused to discuss them. You had refused to deal with the Government of the Republic of Viet-Nam, even though you originally agreed to do so and even though that Government has agreed to meet with you without any conditions publicly or privately.

These, I submit, are not actions which demonstrate a serious attitude.

Your words and actions diverge also when you claim to accord "humane" treatment to our prisoners of war.

Here again there are standards by which one can define "humane" treatment. In addition to adequate diet and medical care, and the absence of physical or mental duress, humane treatment by any standard requires at least the following: repatriation of the seriously sick and wounded; inspection of POW camps by a recognized impartial authority; lists of all prisoners so that the families will know who is alive and who is dead; regular exchange of mail and packages for all prisoners.

Your government has not met these standards. You have not released the seriously sick and wounded. You have not allowed impartial inspection despite many attempts to arrange this. You have not provided a list of all the prisoners. Although on special occasions you have permitted some of the prisoners to receive mail and packages, you have not permitted this on a regular basis. Virtually no mail has been received by families in the past four months. There is no confirmation that any of the packages sent following your announcement of July 4, 1969, have been received by the prisoners.

Moreover, there is disturbing evidence that the actual treatment of the men you hold does not support your claim of humane treatment. There is evidence

of men being held in solitary confinement and of being subjected to physical and mental duress. This most certainly does not conform to universally recognized humanitarian principles. Your government acceded to the Geneva Convention of 1949 on prisoners of war and is thus fully aware of the fundamental standards of decency set forth in the convention, standards which over 120 governments throughout the world have pledged to honor.

Let me also refer to the charge you made last week that President Nixon's November 3 speech was a war speech. This, of course, is a patent distortion.

The truth is that in that speech, the President pointed to the measures which we have taken to reduce our military activity and presence in Viet-Nam. He renewed the numerous offers for peace which we have made. He pointed out that we have offered the complete withdrawal of all outside forces within a year. He recalled that we have proposed a cease-fire under international supervision. He referred to President Thieu's offer of free elections under international supervision. Your side seeks to ignore all of these elements.

These are but a few examples of the attitude which your side has adopted at these meetings. It is an attitude which has made meaningful negotiations impossible up to this time.

Ladies and gentlemen, the objective of the United States remains a negotiated settlement. We are ready to discuss anything that is brought up seriously by your side. Frankly, we do not consider your demands for unilateral action by our side—no matter how they are dressed up—to be serious efforts at negotiation. We do not accept your attempts to impose preconditions for negotiations, such as the overthrow of the government of the Republic of Viet-Nam.

As President Nixon said in his press conference on Monday, we are waiting for a serious proposal from your side. In the meantime, we have a plan for the orderly reduction of American forces in Viet-Nam and for strengthening the capabilities of the South Vietnamese to defend themselves. President Nixon on Monday indicated that that plan is going forward and is working.

Ladies and gentlemen, our side poses no obstacle to full discussion of all issues and all proposals. We are ready for serious negotiations on the basis of actions to be taken on both sides. The next step is up to you.

AMBASSADOR HABIB'S OPENING STATEMENT

Following is the text of the opening statement delivered by Ambassador Philip C. Habib at the Forty-Eighth Plenary Session of the New Paris Meetings on Viet-Nam, December 30, 1969.

Ladies and gentlemen: The issue which I wish to address today is the question of prisoners of war. In the midst of this traditional holiday season, a season for family reunions and celebrations, thousands of families are troubled over the fate of a relative missing or captured in Viet-Nam. This is a tragic situation, not just because family members are missing at this holiday period, but also because the families' uncertainty and anguish is so unnecessary and uncalled for.

I do not express only my government's view on this unfortunate matter, nor only the view of the American people. I express a view that is almost universally shared. It has been expressed in representative bodies throughout the world—in the United States Congress, in the United Nations, at the International Red Cross Conference in Istanbul last September, by many National Red Cross societies and by many governments. In fact, on this issue, North Viet-Nam is virtually isolated in the eyes of world public opinion.

Ladies and gentlemen, there are two questions before us, first, the critical question of humanitarian treatment for the prisoners your side holds. Secondly, the repatriation of all prisoners.

On the first question, your side's position does not conform to normal standards. On the second question, your position is unreasonable.

Some Americans have been held by your side since early in 1964. Others have been missing since that time. And yet you still refuse to inform all families of the fate of these men.

On December 22, a spokesman for your side is reported to have said, "We refuse to give the list of names to the Nixon Administration, but the prisoners' families will know their names by and by." A gradual, piecemeal process of providing a few names at a time to anxious families is no substitute for making known without delay the names of all prisoners of war.

Because of your side's continuing refusal to identify all prisoners of war, my government is today releasing to the press the names of U.S. military personnel who are missing in Southeast Asia and may possibly be your prisoners. I will give your side a copy of the list here as well. My government is taking this action in the hope that your side, even at this late date, will indicate which men are prisoners and those whom you know to be dead, as a matter of humanitarian concern for their families.

Your side claims that you provide humane treatment to the prisoners you hold. But you permit no independent and objective authority to verify this claim. Indeed, much of the evidence available to the outside world regarding the treatment of prisoners held by your side contradicts your claims. The prisoners have not been permitted to correspond regularly with their families, and to receive mail and packages on a regular basis. There is no assurance that the prisoners actually receive the mail sent them. Little mail is received by families from the prisoners.

Regarding the issue of mail, two American women who recently traveled to North Viet-Nam reported that families of prisoners could send a letter a month and a package of less than six pounds every other month to the POWs by addressing them with the prisoner's name and serial number, care of "Camp of Detention for U.S. Pilots Captured in the Democratic Republic of Viet-Nam, Hanoi, DRVN" and writing "Via Moscow" on the envelope. We would like your confirmation of the accuracy of this report. We would also like to know whether this means that the American prisoners will be permitted to write to their families on a regular basis.

As for the physical treatment of prisoners, there is evidence that prisoners held by your side have been subjected to solitary confinement, as well as to other forms of physical and mental duress. Your side has made no systematic effort to repatriate sick and wounded prisoners.

As President Nixon has said, this is an unconscionable position. There is no way it can be justified to the families of the prisoners or to the world at large.

This is not simply a narrow question of legal obligations. This is a question of humane treatment which civilized nations accord to those who are helpless, who pose no threat and who no longer have the means to defend themselves. It is also a question of decency toward the families of those who are missing.

On our side, the United States Government and the Government of the Republic of Viet-Nam have undertaken to respect the Geneva Convention in their treatment of prisoners of war and have arranged for the ICRC to visit prisoner of war camps in South Viet-Nam. The camps are regularly visited by ICRC delegates and doctors, who are able to meet individual prisoners privately. The names of the prisoners of war have been made available to the ICRC. Prisoners of war are able to send and receive mail and packages. The Government of the Republic of Viet-Nam in the past released sick and wounded POWs. Regular international inspection was shown that the prisoners of war held by the Government of the Republic of Viet-Nam are treated in accordance with the requirements of the Geneva Convention.

Let me turn to the question of the release and repatriation of prisoners of war. Your side says that the prisoner question cannot be settled except as part of an overall settlement of the war in Viet-Nam. For our part, we see no reason why there cannot be a negotiated release of prisoners of war on both sides prior to an overall settlement. You still refuse to discuss the release of the prisoners you hold. Although you have released a few prisoners on occasion, you refuse to negotiate a repatriation of all prisoners.

Instead of treating the prisoner question as a humanitarian issue, your side apparently wishes to use the prisoners as pawns in bargaining for an overall settlement of the war. But you refuse to negotiate seriously in Paris, thereby delaying an overall settlement of the war. Thus, you keep hundreds of families in agonizing doubt about the lives and welfare of their sons or husbands or parents while you seek to settle the war on your own terms.

If your side hopes to apply political pressure upon the United States through its harsh attitude regarding prisoners of war, you reveal a thorough misunderstanding of American public opinion. No American can condone your side's handling of the prisoner question. Your denial of the most fundamental precepts governing such matters has only resulted in unanimous public condemnation.

Ladies and gentlemen, I call on your side to live up to the international standards for the treatment of those who are missing or held prisoner in Viet-Nam.

This humanitarian issue should be dealt with separately from the political and military questions we face in the Paris meetings. We propose that our two sides enter promptly into discussions on all questions affecting prisoners of war held on both sides, including the question of their early release. The United States Delegation stands ready to enter into such negotiations without delay.

AMBASSADOR HABIB'S OPENING STATEMENT

Following is the text of the opening statement delivered by Ambassador Philip C. Habib at the Fiftieth Plenary Session of the New Paris Meetings on Viet-Nam, January 15, 1970.

Ladies and gentlemen: Since these meetings began almost a year ago, the United States and the Republic of Viet-Nam have made every effort to engage your side in meaningful negotiation for peace in Viet-Nam. Our aim in these meetings has always been to achieve an early settlement of the war. This has been the sole purpose of our proposals and of our repeated efforts to stimulate give-and-take discussion between our two sides.

We recognize that there are complex and difficult issues to be resolved between us. Our side has therefore steadfastly looked for ways to enhance productive discussion and avoid sterile polemics in these meetings. This was the purpose of our proposal for restricted sessions which you rejected last week, and we will continue to look for ways to enhance serious negotiations.

Last week, your spokesmen again devoted their speeches to your one-sided demands and your distorted characterizations of American objectives in Viet-Nam. In truth your statements are so filled with contradiction and misinformation as to be valueless for serious negotiations.

You refuse to negotiate a mutual withdrawal and have therefore impelled us to undertake the orderly replacement of American forces by South Vietnamese forces. Although this program is a logical consequence of your own refusal to negotiate, you nevertheless criticize us strongly for having followed this course. Yet, at the same time as you criticize us, you insist that this program is doomed to failure.

When American forces began to leave, you at first maintained that the force reductions were a trick, and later that they were inconsequential. Yet you term our proposal for more rapid mutual withdrawals, which would lead to complete removal of all non-South Vietnamese forces, as a "most unreasonable and impudent demand." You claim that mutual withdrawals "equate the aggressor with the victim of aggression," whatever that may mean considering that North Vietnamese forces have no right to be in South Viet-Nam. We believe that mutual action is a necessary basis for a negotiated settlement. It is unreasonable to demand our withdrawal without indicating what actions your side is prepared to carry out with regard to North Vietnamese forces.

Let me cite only a few more of your contradictions: In rejecting our proposal last week for a restricted session with all parties present, you stated that it was a "perfidious maneuver" designed to hide the truth from public opinion. Yet, at that same session you advocated restricted meetings between the United States and the self-styled provisional revolutionary government. Obviously your concern is not with the truth, but derives from your desire to exclude one of the parties at these meetings. Moreover, we said that we were prepared to continue plenary meetings alternatively with restricted meetings.

You demand the unconditional withdrawal of U.S. forces from South Viet-Nam so that the Vietnamese people can settle their own affairs. Yet you propose to discuss these affairs directly with the United States to the exclusion of the representatives of the Government of the Republic of Viet-Nam. The fact that you agreed to negotiate seriously with the Government of the Republic of Viet-Nam before these meetings began, and refuse to do so now, raises further questions about the sincerity with which you view these negotiations.

You charge us with desiring to negotiate from a position of strength and you say that our side is intensifying the war. Conversely, you proclaim that our military capacity daily grows weaker, and you cite statistics of our losses to support your own claims of military victory—statistics that are grotesquely exaggerated. While pleading an intent to negotiate seriously, you boast that your own military position grows stronger day by day, and that you are resolved to fight on to total victory if our side does not accept your demands. For you, a position of strength seems to be a virtue; for us, you charge, it is another "perfidious maneuver."

You say that the United States is unable to recognize reality in Viet-Nam, and thus miscalculates its position. Ladies and gentlemen, the reality in Viet-Nam during 1969 has been fully reported by the independent press of the world. American forces have been reduced significantly and will continue to be reduced. American casualties have decreased. The Government of the Republic of Viet-Nam provides security and ministers to the needs of the vast majority of the South Vietnamese people. If you genuinely believe the contrary statements you have made here, it is you who miscalculate.

In no instance is your refusal to negotiate more evident than on the issue of prisoners of war. Last week you reiterated your refusal to alleviate the suffering of the families of the men you hold until we reach an overall settlement of the Vietnamese problem. You again coldly rejected our proposals concerning the prisoners themselves. You have denounced our discussion of this issue as a "perfidious maneuver." Last week you went so far as to state that representations we have made here on behalf of the prisoners and their families are attempts on our part to downgrade these meetings.

What kind of sophistry is that? Why must the question of humanitarian treatment of prisoners in accordance with standards almost universally accepted await an overall settlement? Your position is illogical and has convinced no one.

Your side continues to refuse to identify all prisoners of war. You continue to refuse to allow an impartial authority to verify your claim that you provide humane treatment to the prisoners you hold. Finally, your side has refused to agree to minimum humane arrangements for sick and wounded prisoners who wish to return to North Viet-Nam. You have refused to release seriously sick and wounded prisoners whom you hold.

Your side maintains an unconscionable position on this urgent humanitarian problem which should be dealt with now. Consistent with practice among civilized nations, steps toward its solution should be taken immediately. They should not be deferred until we reach an overall settlement of the war. The prisoner question is a matter of humane treatment for men on both sides who pose no threat and who no longer have the means to defend themselves. It is also a question of humane sympathy for the families of all those who are missing or captured—whether those families are in North Viet-Nam, in South Viet-Nam, in the United States, or elsewhere.

Moreover, on the question of release and repatriation of prisoners of war, there is no defensible reason why there cannot be a negotiated release of prisoners of war on both sides prior to a negotiated settlement. Precedents are ample. As I have said before, the United States Delegation stands ready to enter into such negotiations without delay.

Ladies and gentlemen, the United States and the Government of the Republic of Viet-Nam desire an early negotiated settlement of the war. We have bent our efforts toward this end during the past twelve months. We have advanced reasonable proposals to achieve this objective.

You seem to prefer using these meetings to advance demands for unilateral actions on our part without any indication of that you are prepared to do. You refuse to negotiate in a meaningful way with one of the principal parties concerned. You have abused these meetings for propaganda purposes. As I said last week, the continuation of sterile plenary sessions does not serve the cause of a negotiated settlement. We hope that you will respond constructively to the initiatives we have taken for a negotiated peace in Viet-Nam. As soon as you do so, these meetings can make progress.

AMBASSADOR HABIB'S OPENING STATEMENT

Following is the text of the opening statement delivered by Ambassador Philip C. Habib at the Fifty-Third Plenary Session of the New Paris Meetings on Viet-Nam, February 5, 1970.

Ladies and gentlemen: Your consistent refusal to abide by the 1949 Geneva Convention on the treatment of prisoners of war is viewed by American and world public opinion with dismay. There is a long tradition among civilized nations of treating captured personnel humanely in wartime. This principle has been codified in the Geneva Convention of 1949 to which there are over 120 signatories, including North Viet-Nam, South Viet-Nam and the United States.

Furthermore, the prisoners of war question is urgent because of the deep humanitarian concern which is aroused by your unconscionable failure to insure that prisoners of war—and the families of men who are held prisoner or who are missing in action—are treated fairly and humanely.

The 1949 Geneva Convention sets forth clearly the requirements of humanitarian treatment. First, all prisoners of war must be immediately identified so that their families and their governments will know who is alive and who is not. Second, prisoners of war must be permitted to correspond freely with their families. Third, impartial observers must be allowed to visit prisoners of war regularly to verify whether their treatment is fair. Fourth, seriously sick and wounded prisoners must be repatriated as quickly as possible. These are minimum standards that are recognized and applied by all civilized nations.

On our side prisoners of war are treated in accordance with the provisions of the 1949 Geneva Convention. The International Committee of the Red Cross has access to prisoners of war captured by our side and to the prisoner of war camps in which they are held. Every one of these prisoners of war camps is publicly identified. The Government of the Republic of Viet-Nam transmits lists of prisoners of war it holds to the International Committee of the Red Cross. It permits a free flow of mail to and from prisoners of war. It has, over and over again, sought your side's cooperation in the repatriation of seriously sick and wounded prisoners of war.

Your side still refuses to identify most of the prisoners of war you hold in North Viet-Nam. You have identified none of the prisoners you hold in South Viet-Nam. Several weeks ago we handed you a list of over 1400 missing or captured Americans. The families of these men are waiting to know whether you will provide information about their status in an official and regular manner. The piecemeal and indirect provision of information through unofficial channels does not fulfill your obligations under the Geneva Convention.

Only about 170 families have ever received a letter from a man who is missing or captured in Viet-Nam. Many of these families have only recently received their first letter. In some cases, those men have been held since 1965—that is over four years with no word to their families.

There have been recent unofficial reports that American prisoners held in North Viet-Nam could send and receive letters and could receive packages on a regular schedule. Families are acting upon that information and will be waiting to see whether such packages and letters are actually received.

At the same time, American prisoners of war held in South Viet-Nam are also entitled to regular mail privileges. These prisoners have never been permitted to write letters to their families. The families of these men also should be able to send packages and letters to them and to hear from their men.

It is essential and urgent that impartial observers be permitted to visit prisoners of war held by your side both in North and South Viet-Nam in order to verify whether those prisoners are being treated humanely as you claim. We have new, shocking evidence that prisoners of war whom you hold are subject to inhumane treatment. Only recently it was discovered that your forces in South Viet-Nam had executed two American prisoners captured in 1966 after having put them on public display in several villages. This is a grave breach of the 1949 Geneva Convention and is unacceptable when measured against any standard of civilized behavior.

The representative of the Government of the Republic of Viet-Nam has recalled his government's efforts to obtain your side's agreement to the release of sick and wounded prisoners of war who wish to go to North Viet-Nam. We believe discussions with your side should begin, without delay, on arrangements for the immediate release of all seriously sick and wounded prisoners of war as well as for the early release of all other prisoners of war held on both sides.

Ladies and gentlemen, the question of prisoners of war is not only a burning humanitarian question, but also a question of your solemn legal obligation. Its solution must not await an overall settlement of the political and military issues involved here. World opinion demands no less.

We desire to engage in meaningful discussions of all prisoners of war questions with your side now. We await your serious response.

AMBASSADOR HABIB'S SUPPLEMENTARY REMARKS

Following is the text of four supplementary remarks by Ambassador Philip C. Habib at Fifty-Third Plenary Session of the New Paris Meetings on Viet-Nam, February 5, 1970.

I

We have sought from the beginning of these meetings to discuss in meaningful ways all the basic issues involved. The prisoner of war question is a basic issue in these Paris meetings. It is not a propaganda matter. It is a serious humanitarian question as well as a question of your legal obligations. It is not a question to be avoided as you have sought to avoid it today by wild charges and evasions of the basic considerations and obligations involved.

There are essentially three aspects in the prisoner of war question. First, the treatment of prisoners of war while they are detained; second, the release of sick and wounded prisoners of war; third, the release of all other prisoners of war. None of these questions needs await a resolution of the conflict.

Your side claims to treat prisoners of war humanely. Now what does "humane treatment" mean? Both in the 1949 Geneva Convention, and apart from it, the world community has demanded that humane treatment of prisoners of war include the following:

- (1) Identification of and accounting for all prisoners;
- (2) That all prisoners be permitted to communicate with their families on a regular basis;
- (3) That seriously sick and wounded prisoners be promptly repatriated; and
- (4) That impartial observers be permitted to verify that prisoners of war are being treated humanely.

Your side has not lived up to these standards of humane treatment. Your side has not even been willing to discuss the application of these standards of humane treatment. Let us take just one of these standards at this time. That is the identification of all prisoners of war.

We have made available lists of all prisoners of war in our hands. Your side refuses to give the names of the prisoners of war you hold. The question is: are you prepared to do as we have done and provide the names of all prisoners of war that you held, without delay?

II

You claim that you treat American prisoners of war humanely. What we have been trying to do is to clarify what you mean by humane treatment and to relate it to normal international standards.

At this time you appear unwilling to discuss in any meaningful way your responsibility to supply the names of prisoners and thus fulfill your obligation in this regard. I will return to that question again. Meanwhile, let me take another standard for humane treatment of prisoners of war, namely their right to communicate regularly with their families.

The Geneva Convention provides that each prisoner shall be permitted to send at least two letters and four cards per month as a standard of humane treatment. Yet, in over five years you have allowed only 170 out of all the prisoners you hold to write even one letter to their families. Even this limited number of prisoners has only been permitted to send an average of two letters a year—far less than the accepted standard. No American prisoner of war held by your side in South Viet-Nam has ever been permitted to write a letter. The question is the following: are you willing to do as we have been doing and let regular communications between the prisoners and their families take place?

III

To make progress at these meetings, the relevant issues need to be raised and discussed. To avoid issues is to block progress. Now, as at this time you appear unwilling to discuss the question of regular communications between prisoners and their families, I will return to that another time. Meanwhile, let me take up another standard of humane treatment.

Seriously sick and wounded prisoners should be promptly repatriated. Are you willing to do what we are willing and have offered to do? That is, arrange immediate repatriation of sick and wounded prisoners?

While you consider that issue, let me take up another standard of humane treatment. Impartial observers should be permitted to have access to prisoners of war and prisoner of war camps in order to verify whether prisoners are being treated humanely. The question is, are you willing as we are doing to allow impartial observation of your prisoner of war camps?

IV

Serious indignation arises when issues are avoided rather than discussed. Serious indignation arises when prisoners of war and their families are not accorded the treatment called for by all accepted international standards. The question of prisoners of war is an issue at these meetings. We have every right to seek for our prisoners of war the treatment which is theirs by right, by reason, and by international practice. Today you have avoided meaningful discussion of the issue of prisoners of war, an issue on which there is no logical or reasonable reason for us not to make some progress. We will return to this issue, because it is not an issue which can be left alone.

TEXT OF AMBASSADOR HABIB'S REMARKS

Text of the remarks delivered by Ambassador Philip C. Habib at the Fifty-Sixth Plenary Session of the New Paris Meetings on Viet-Nam, February 26, 1970.

First remarks by Ambassador Habib:

Ladies and gentlemen: Today in the interest of meaningful negotiation, I propose we discuss the problem of prisoners of war, a specific issue which should be resolved without delay. Both sides in the Viet-Nam war hold prisoners of war. On both sides, men are missing in action. The treatment and the fate of these men are practical issues on which agreement should and can be easily reached.

We have sought to discuss with you the standards of treatment applied to prisoners of war on both sides. For our part, the humanitarian provisions of the 1949 Geneva Convention serve as the basis for treatment of prisoners of war held by our side.

We have also tried to discuss with you the release of sick and wounded prisoners of war as well as the more general release of all prisoners of war. President Nixon, in his foreign policy report of February 18, reaffirmed "Our readiness to proceed at once to arrangements for the release of prisoners of war on both sides." For our part, we see no reason why early agreement should not be possible on the release of all prisoners of war.

One of the most pressing aspects of the problem of men missing in action is that families on both sides are anxious to know whether their men are alive or not. This, too, is a problem easily resolved through a system of immediate identification of prisoners held by each side. Our side has notified the International Committee of the Red Cross of the names of prisoners of war we hold.

These are problems, as I said, which each side faces. If you are prepared to discuss these issues in a practical way, I am confident we can resolve them. We are ready to begin such a discussion today.

Second remarks by Ambassador Habib:

Ladies and gentlemen: The repetition by your side of erroneous allegations and misconceptions with regard to U.S. policy is not a substitute for meaningful discussion of specific issues. Last week at the 55th Plenary Session, we sought to concentrate your attention and our discussion on some of the fundamental issues. At that time we answered your relevant questions and set forth a basis for meaningful discussion of those questions. Having done that, today again we seek to determine what mutual actions can be taken with regard to a particular important question—prisoners of war—so as to make progress at these meetings. How can it be considered useless—as a spokesman on your side said—to discuss such an important matter? Why is it superfluous—as another of your spokesmen said—to discuss the matter? Discussion of the question of prisoners of war is neither useless nor superfluous. It is urgent.

Third remarks by Ambassador Habib:

Ladies and gentlemen: You appear to object to discussion of relevant issues in some reasonable way. Polemics do not satisfy the needs of meaningful negotiation nor do polemic questions. Let me set forth here once again our position on the issue of withdrawal of forces and on the question of a political settlement. With respect to withdrawal of forces, you repeatedly ask when the United States will agree to the unconditional and total withdrawal of U.S. and allied forces. This is not a serious proposal. It continues to demand action on

our part without any indication of what you are prepared to do about North Vietnamese forces in South Viet Nam. For this reason it is unacceptable. Let me make this clear: The U.S. does not accept your demand that it alone withdraw its forces, leaving North Vietnamese troops in South Viet-Nam free to carry out their armed aggression.

We have many times said here that we are willing to see the complete withdrawal of all outside forces from South Viet-Nam.

You continually ask when the United States will agree to overthrow the government of the Republic of Viet-Nam. That is not serious negotiation. It simply underlines your unreasonable refusal to negotiate with one of the parties with whom you agreed to meet in order to work out a peaceful settlement.

As to the question of a political settlement, we have no intention of trying to overthrow the Government of the Republic of Viet-Nam. We have no intention of imposing any form of government on the people of South Viet-Nam, nor will we be a party to such coercion. We are prepared to accept any government in South Viet-Nam that results from the free choice of the South Vietnamese people. In that spirit, we fully support President Thieu's proposals for free and fair elections and his unconditional offer to discuss a political solution with your side.

In his report to the Congress on foreign policy of February 18, President Nixon recalled the following: "On May 14 I made a number of far-reaching proposals for a settlement. They included a mutual withdrawal of all non-South Vietnamese forces from South Viet-Nam and internationally supervised free elections." The President indicated in his report that the proposals he made on May 14 still stand, and that they offer all parties an opportunity to end the war quickly and on an equitable basis.

Now let me return to the question of prisoners of war, a subject that you seek to avoid discussing.

Let me call your attention to the fact that on February 18 the United States Senate, by a unanimous vote, adopted a resolution concerning prisoners of war. The House of Representatives had earlier passed an identical resolution—also by a unanimous vote.

Let me read the operative portion of that resolution: "... The Congress strongly protests the treatment of United States servicemen held prisoner by North Viet-Nam and the National Liberation Front of South Viet-Nam, calls on them to comply with the requirement of the Geneva Convention, and approves and endorses efforts by the United States Government, the United Nations, the International Red Cross, and other leaders and peoples of the world to obtain humane treatment and release of American prisoners of war."

For more than five years, your side has been assuring the world that American prisoners of war in Viet-Nam are treated humanely. You have adhered to that position here, despite extensive proof, including the statements of eyewitnesses and photographs, that the treatment accorded American prisoners does not meet internationally accepted standards.

This is true both in North Viet-Nam and in South Viet-Nam. For example, Lieutenant Frishman and Seaman Hegdahl described conditions in camps in Hanoi where they had been held which scarcely correspond to what most of the world accepts as "humane treatment." Major Rowe and Specialist Van Putten, who escaped after years in prison camps in South Viet-Nam, reported that they were there subjected to long periods of isolated confinement during which they were, for much of the time, locked in irons, that is not what the world regards as "humane treatment." Similar reports have been received from South Vietnamese who have escaped from your prisoner of war camps.

If you really treat prisoners of war humanely, why do you refuse to allow access to them by impartial observers such as the International Committee of the Red Cross?

If you treat prisoners of war humanely, why do you refuse to identify the prisoners of war you hold? If you treat prisoners humanely, what have you to say about a regular flow of mail between the prisoners and their families?

If you treat prisoners humanely, what are you willing to do with respect to mutual release of sick and wounded prisoners?

Fourth remarks by Ambassador Habib:

I would simply have this to say about Laos: you cannot cover up the truth about Laos with your charges of United States' aggression. The fact is that over 50,000 North Vietnamese troops are in Laos in violation of the 1962 Geneva Agreements, and they thereby threaten the survival of Laos. Prime Minister Souvanna Phouma has repeatedly condemned the presence of North Vietnamese forces in his country and their aggressive activities there.

Having said that, let me return again to the question of prisoners of war. You continue to avoid discussion of the questions we raised with respect to prisoners of war. Therefore, let me see if you are willing to clarify your own position in this regard. You have often spoken of humane treatment accorded to prisoners you hold. Can you describe that humane treatment and relate it to the standards accepted by all civilized nations?

Fifth remarks by Ambassador Habib

You are obviously avoiding clarifying your own positions on what constitutes humanitarian treatment of prisoners of war. Well, let us see if we can secure that clarification. Let us take one item which is a part of humanitarian treatment and is so accepted by all civilized nations.

You have said in the past that American prisoners are permitted to receive mail and packages and to correspond with their families on a regular basis.

As I have said before, families are now sending letters and packages to prisoners of war held in North Viet-Nam on a regular schedule as announced by your authorities. In turn, they are expecting letters from the prisoners on a monthly basis as promised. So far, however, their expectations have not been met.

As for American prisoners of war held in South Viet-Nam, we note that at the 53rd Plenary Session your side referred to statements which were made as long ago as October 1965 and May 1967 and which, among other things, state that American prisoners of war held in South Viet-Nam are permitted to correspond with their families. Yet, in all these years, not one single letter has ever been received from any of these prisoners of war. The families of these men have tried over the years to send packages and letters to them but have had no acknowledgement that any of this mail has actually been delivered to the prisoners of war.

Will you confirm that prisoners held in South Viet-Nam can now, in fact, correspond with their families and receive mail and packages? If so, what instructions should families be given for sending letters and packages to their men held in South Viet-Nam?

As we seek clarification of your position on treatment of prisoners of war, we hope that the answers to these questions and clarification of your attitude on those other standards of international practices previously mentioned will be provided.

Sixth remarks by Ambassador Habib

Ladies and gentlemen: Your continued refusal even to discuss the question of prisoners of war leads me to the regrettable conclusion that on this issue, as on other questions basic to a settlement, you are not yet ready to engage in serious negotiation.

It is not only that you avoid discussions of our proposals; you seem also desirous of avoiding discussion and clarification of your own position. It is also apparent, from your attitude, that you seek to use the prisoners as a means of applying pressure on the United States for an overall settlement. Let me just say on this point that this cruel attempt at playing upon the anxiety and anguish of the families of missing or captured men is entirely condemned by public opinion in the United States and elsewhere. We must also draw the conclusion from the evidence we have and from your actions here that you do not in fact live up to elemental standards of humanitarian treatment either for the prisoners or for the families of those who are missing or captured.

At the same time, you fail to live up to the obligations which you undertook in the 1949 Geneva Convention on prisoners of war.

As President Nixon stated in his report of February 18, "This is not a political or military issue, but a matter of basic humanity. There may be disagreement about other aspects of this conflict, but there can be no disagreement on humane treatment for prisoners of war."

AMBASSADOR HABIB'S OPENING STATEMENT

Text of opening statement delivered by Ambassador Philip C. Habib at the Fifty-Seventh Plenary Session of the New Paris Meetings on Viet-Nam, March 5, 1970.

Ladies and gentlemen: At last week's session, as we have in the past, we raised a number of specific questions about prisoners of war. We asked you to

define your own policies regarding prisoners or men missing in action and their families. You brushed aside those questions and refused discussion of this important problem in any way.

You convince nobody with your claims to apply a humane policy toward the prisoners of war you hold. As President Nixon said in his foreign policy report to the Congress on February 18, "Far from agreeing to arrangements for the release of prisoners, the other side has failed even to live up to the humane standards of the 1949 Geneva Convention on prisoners of war: the provision of information about all prisoners, the right of all prisoners to correspond with their families and to receive packages, inspection of POW camps by an impartial organization such as the International Red Cross, and the early release of seriously sick and wounded prisoners." He stressed that this is not a political or military issue, but a matter of basic humanity.

Your constant evasion in these meetings of any meaningful discussion of the prisoner question only underlines the complete disregard which you have shown for basic humanitarian considerations. Your attitude is unacceptable. It flouts international convention and world opinion.

Let me take one example. We have repeatedly asked you to identify all the prisoners of war you hold and to permit them to correspond regularly with their families. It is astonishing that we need even to make such a request. You have a legal obligation under the 1949 Geneva Convention to identify prisoners and allow them to write regularly. Moreover, these are simple acts of human decency any civilized nation is expected to carry out. Families have the right to an accounting of their men.

The Chief of North Viet-Nam's Post and Telegraph Department is quoted as stating recently that "approximately 320 American pilots carry on postal correspondence with their families."

Ladies and gentlemen, the truth is that in all these years families have received letters from only approximately 175 American prisoners held in North Viet-Nam. This means that over 1,200 families remain in doubt about the fate of their loved ones who are missing in action.

The number of men from whom letters have been received is, therefore, still substantially less than the figure announced in Hanoi. Moreover, even the figure of 320 announced in Hanoi is far less than the total number of American servicemen held as prisoners of war in North Viet-Nam. In view of these facts, we call on your side to provide the names of all the men captured and held by your side, as well as any information you have on other men who have been identified to you as missing in action. For those who are prisoners, there should be provision made for regular correspondence with their families.

You have called attention to statements issued in 1965 and again in 1967 by the so-called "Liberation Red Cross" saying that prisoners of war held by your side in South Viet-Nam could correspond with their families.

Families have for years sent letters to American military personnel and civilians captured in South Viet-Nam, using addresses of national liberation front offices in Algiers, Prague, and mainly, Phnom Penh. Your side has never confirmed that the letters reached the prisoners; and the families have never received any replies from their loved ones. Let me underline that appalling fact: not one single family has ever received a letter from a prisoner of war held by your side in South Viet-Nam. Direct appeals by next of kin regarding the fate of their loved ones to your officials in Paris, Phnom Penh and elsewhere have been rebuffed or ignored, as have appeals from the American Red Cross and other national Red Cross societies.

I repeat the questions I have asked before: will you confirm that prisoners held in South Viet-Nam can now in fact correspond with their families and receive mail and packages?

If so, what instructions should families be given for sending letters and packages to their men held in South Viet-Nam?

There are other aspects of the prisoner of war question that are pressing. You still do not permit impartial international observation of your prisoner facilities. This is an implicit denial of your claim that you treat prisoners humanely.

You neither release sick and wounded prisoners you hold nor agree to receive back sick and wounded prisoners of war held by our side who have expressed a desire to return to North Viet-Nam.

You continue to refuse to enter into immediate discussions with our side on the release of all prisoners of war held on both sides.

Ladies and gentlemen, indignation at your attitude on the prisoner of war question is rising in the United States. Last week I called your attention to a Congressional resolution, adopted unanimously by the House of Representatives and the Senate, protesting your treatment of American prisoners. Similar resolutions have been unanimously adopted by the Executive Committee of the National Governors Conference, by the Board of Governors of the American National Red Cross, by the Executive Council of the American Federation of Labor—Congress of Industrial Organizations, and by numerous state legislatures, city councils and civic groups around the United States. The American people—and the people the world over—are appalled by your lack of humanitarian consideration and can see no justification whatsoever for your attitude on the prisoner question.

Ladies and gentlemen, you should no longer avoid meaningful discussion of the prisoner question. There should be no further delay by your side in the application of the standards of humanitarian treatment to which prisoners of war are entitled.

AMBASSADOR HABIB'S SUPPLEMENTARY REMARKS

Following is the text of supplementary remarks by Ambassador Habib at the Fifty-Seventh Plenary Session of the New Paris Meetings on Viet-Nam, March 5, 1970.

Ladies and gentlemen: The fact that the war goes on does not relieve you of the responsibility to treat prisoners of war in humane fashion. In accordance with internationally accepted standards our side does apply such standards to prisoners of war, as the representative of the Republic of Viet-Nam has just set forth. Is your side prepared to do the same? Or will you continue to treat them in a fashion condemned by all people?

I have for some time now sought to elicit information from you about your policies concerning prisoners of war. You ignore our questions and refuse to discuss the prisoner questions with us. Your repeated exhortations instead that we accept your demands does not constitute serious negotiation. The prisoner of war question is an important and urgent matter. It cannot be shunted aside. I intend to continue pressing for action by your side but if you are not willing to deal with the prisoner question today in a serious and businesslike way, I propose that the meeting be adjourned until next week at the same time as usual.

AMBASSADOR HABIB'S OPENING STATEMENT

Text of opening statement delivered by Ambassador Philip C. Habib at Fifty-Eighth Plenary Session of the New Paris Meetings on Viet-Nam, March 12, 1970.

Ladies and gentlemen: Last week an official of your side informed Mrs. Raymond Schrupp, the wife of an American prisoner of war in South Viet-Nam, that families could send mail to the men whom you hold in the south by addressing it in care of the Liberation Red Cross in Phnom Penh. Families are acting on that advice and will be writing letters and sending packages to that address.

However, at that time your spokesman said nothing to indicate that the prisoners of war you hold in South Viet-Nam will, in turn, be allowed to send letters to their families on a regular basis. We are asking for confirmation that these men will, in fact, be permitted to write to their families regularly.

Text of second remarks by Ambassador Habib at Fifty-Eighth Plenary Session of the New Paris Meetings on Viet-Nam, March 12, 1970.

Ladies and gentlemen: On March 6, President Nixon issued a statement concerning the United States position on Laos. In that statement he made clear United States support for the independence and neutrality of Laos as set forth in the Geneva Agreements of 1962. President Nixon said:

"We desire nothing more in Laos than to see a return to the agreement and the withdrawal of North Vietnamese troops, leaving the Lao people to settle their own differences in a peaceful manner."

There is no need for me to elaborate further on his statement. Ladies and gentlemen, during these meetings, the fundamental issues that have emerged include the withdrawal of external forces, a political settlement and the question of prisoners of war. We have posed questions designed to clarify your position

on these issues and thereby to advance these negotiations toward a peaceful settlement of the war. We have also given answers to all of the questions you have posed which are relevant to our task here. You should study them carefully. In our discussion of specific issues, we have sought assurance that prisoners of war held by your side receive humane treatment. As part of that effort, today I have asked for confirmation that prisoners held by your side in South Viet-Nam will be allowed to send letters to their families regularly. An answer to that question should not be difficult.

Text of third remarks by Ambassador Habib at Fifty-Eighth Plenary Session of the New Paris Meetings on Viet-Nam, March 12, 1970.

Ladies and gentlemen: Prisoners of war are one of the issues relevant in these meetings. Just as other questions have been raised and discussed, so must this problem be discussed. I might even remind you that in your own ten points, the question is raised. We do not and we will not accept—as you seem to suggest—that prisoners of war cannot be discussed.

The question of prisoners of war should not be brushed aside. The prisoner issue is a question of the highest priority which calls for immediate attention.

Your persistent evasion of the prisoner question at these meetings underlines your unwillingness to meet the most elementary international standards of humane treatment for prisoners you hold. Moreover, outside these meetings you have made claims and promises regarding your policy toward prisoners and their families which have raised hopes that have not materialized.

Despite your claims and promises, your own actions make plain the regrettable truth. Your actions show a systematic attempt to deny the prisoners their rights and to use them and their families as instruments of propaganda.

Just in the past few months, various officials of your side, in North and South Viet-Nam, have repeatedly asserted that as a matter of policy all prisoners are allowed to correspond regularly with their families. This same claim has been made by your spokesman at this table. But in more than five years, letters have been received from less than 200 men held in North Viet-Nam. No prisoner of war held in South Viet-Nam has ever been permitted to send a letter to his family. More than 1,200 families remain in doubt over the fate of their loved ones.

In recent months, you have indicated that if families of American prisoners of war came to Paris, they would learn about their men. Yet, in most cases, when they came, you had no information for them, you promised that you would write to let them know; that, too, has turned out to be an empty promise.

You then announced that families need not come to Paris, but could write to your offices here to obtain information. Families still await responses. The result for these families has been deepened disappointment, and heightened anxiety.

You then said you would forward letters addressed via your offices here in Paris to men held both in North Viet-Nam and in South Viet-Nam. Yet there is no evidence that the many letters sent to you in response to this invitation were ever delivered to the prisoners. Once more; a case of empty promises on your part, and dashed hopes among the families.

You refuse to take the simple, humanitarian step of telling all families concerned, without delay, whether their loved ones are alive or not. For political and propaganda purposes, you exploit families' anxieties and doubts about the fate of their men by providing information through slow, indirect piecemeal and often unreliable methods. This does not meet your international responsibility. It is in fact evidence that your so called "humanitarian policy" is a sham. A humane policy demands that all families be informed immediately and officially about the fate of their men—both those who are prisoners and those whom you know to be dead. A humane policy also requires regular and frequent mail exchanges, impartial observation of prisoner facilities and immediate release of seriously sick and wounded prisoners of war.

Your disregard for the rights of prisoners of war and their families raises the serious question whether you are prepared to carry out international obligations which you have undertaken, such as in the 1949 Geneva Convention. It also raises the question whether you are even willing to live up to the promises which you yourselves make regarding these prisoners and their families.

As part of the effort we have made in regard to prisoner treatment, I asked today for a confirmation that prisoners held by your side in South Viet-Nam would be allowed to send letters to their families regularly. I still do not see why an answer to that question should be difficult.

Text of fourth remarks by Ambassador Habib at Fifty-Eighth Plenary Session of the New Paris Meetings on Viet-Nam, March 12, 1970.

Ladies and gentlemen: First of all, let me say that the question of prisoners of war is a fundamental issue. It is also a specific issue which can be dealt with at any time. I do not see where discussions of specific questions reduces the significance of this conference. On the contrary, I would say that the significance of these meetings would increase if we could have meaningful discussion of specific as well as more general questions. Reducing the significance of these meetings results from avoiding issues—not from facing them. We have never avoided meaningful discussion of any issue.

A spokesman on your side speaks of previous statements you have made on prisoners of war. In these statements, I have noted that you made claims of humane treatment accorded the prisoners. Will you describe that treatment accorded the prisoners. Will you describe that treatment and relate it to the standards accepted by all civilized nations? I also note that the only statement which you have made at previous meetings that is relevant to the particular question I raised today was your reference at the 53rd Plenary Session to the Liberation Red Cross statements of 1965 and 1967. In those statements there is a claim that prisoners of war held by your side in South Viet-Nam are permitted to correspond with their families. Consequently, while I still await a more direct confirmation—if that is your answer to my question today—families will be expecting to receive letters from all the men held in South Viet-Nam. We shall see whether their expectations will be fulfilled.

Text of fifth remarks by Ambassador Habib at Fifty-Eighth Plenary Session of the New Paris Meetings on Viet-Nam, March 12, 1970.

Ladies and gentlemen: As I said earlier, we have answered the questions you posed. You may not like the answers. But they are clear and I refer you to a study of the record of the previous meetings.

So we do not and have not avoided relevant questions. But in contrast you do not answer relevant questions regarding prisoners of war. I believe that it has been established without question that the issue of prisoners of war is a relevant one which can be dealt with now.

But it is clear, once again today that you seek to avoid serious discussion of the prisoner of war question and refuse to clarify your position on this issue. Those outside this meeting room in the United States and throughout the world will be keenly disappointed when they learn of your attitude at today's meeting.

The prisoner of war question cannot be ignored. You have a responsibility—a indeed a binding international obligation—to apply certain well-defined standards of humanitarian treatment to the prisoners of war you hold. Nothing less than full performance by your side in fulfilling these humanitarian commitments can be accepted. I intend to return to the prisoner question until these men receive the humane treatment required by international law and by ordinary decency.

Text of sixth remarks by Ambassador Habib at Fifty-Eighth Plenary Session of the New Paris Meetings on Viet-Nam, March 12, 1970.

Ladies and gentlemen: You cannot evade your responsibility toward prisoners of war or avoid discussion of the prisoner question by virtue of the fact that the war goes on. The rules of international law regarding humanitarian treatment of prisoners were designed precisely to apply during wartime situations. Although the war in South Viet-Nam continues, you still have a responsibility to treat prisoners of war humanely.

TEXTS OF REMARKS BY AMBASSADOR HABIB

Text of first remarks by Ambassador Habib at Fifty-Ninth Plenary Session of the New Paris Meetings on Viet-Nam, March 19, 1970.

Ladies and gentlemen: On a main issue involved in these meetings, that of prisoners of war, we have asked you a number of questions which have thus far remained unanswered. Just as we have replied specifically to your proposals and questions, we have a right to expect responses from your side to our proposals and questions on the prisoner problem.

We have asked you to make known the names of those you hold as prisoners of war and the fate of other men about whom you have information. Such information provided in an official manner would greatly ease the anxiety of hundreds of families in the United States.

We have asked that all prisoners of war be permitted to correspond regularly with their families.

We have asked that impartial observers be allowed to have access to your prisoner of war facilities.

We have proposed discussion of arrangements for the immediate release of seriously sick and wounded prisoners of war, as well as for the early release of all other prisoners of war on both sides.

If you would explain your position on each of these important aspects of the prisoner question, perhaps we will find a basis on which both sides can agree for dealing with this humanitarian problem.

TEXT OF SECOND REMARKS BY AMBASSADOR HABIB

Ladies and gentlemen: I have been struck by how little of what you have said today is relevant to the search for a negotiated settlement in Viet-Nam. To come to a meeting and concentrate on quoting pre-selected press citations is not serious negotiation. You retrace your distorted version of history and repeat your familiar erroneous charges. But you say nothing about what your side is prepared to do on the key issues involved here—troop withdrawal, political settlement and prisoners of war. This attitude on your part has long characterized your presentations at these meetings. It prevents our finding equitable solutions to the main problems and consequently impedes a negotiated settlement. In order for progress to be made at these meetings, your side must begin to discuss the central issues in a meaningful way. Meaningful negotiation means turning away from preconditions and demands for unilateral actions and, instead, entering into discussions of steps to be taken by both sides to bring a just and lasting peace to Viet-Nam.

As to Laos, you have again today made false and exaggerated charges about the situation in that area. Last week I referred you to President Nixon's statement of March 6 concerning the United States' position on Laos. There is no need for me to discuss the matter further here today.

Now let me return to a relevant issue, which should be discussed in a meaningful way and which should not be difficult to resolve. Again today, you avoid discussion of the prisoner of war question at these meetings. Let me recall that at the very first session of the official conversations leading up to the question, and thereafter throughout those conversations, spokesmen for your side repeatedly stated that you would be prepared to discuss any issue raised by our side in these meetings. For example, on July 30, 1968, in response to a question about United States' prisoners of war, Minister Xuan Thuy said that such questions could be discussed after the United States ceased its bombing of North Viet-Nam. On the same day, Mr. Nguyen Thanh Le said that after the cessation of bombing, and I quote, ". . . The two parties can discuss other questions that interest them . . . in an effort to get an agreement from the other side."

Despite these repeated pledges that at the Paris meetings, which are now going on, you would be willing to discuss all questions relevant to a settlement, you have spurned any meaningful discussion whatsoever of the prisoner question.

Such an attitude is not only inconsistent with the position you took earlier, but it is inconsistent with serious negotiations which is the purpose of our meetings here.

Let me ask again whether you are prepared to respond to the proposals and questions regarding prisoners of war which we have raised today and which we have raised previously.

TEXT OF THIRD REMARKS BY AMBASSADOR HABIB

Ladies and gentlemen: You continue to recite erroneous charges and historical distortions concerning the situation in Southeast Asia.

We reject those distortions and charges in their entirety.

Meanwhile, you continue to avoid discussion of specific issues relevant to those meetings and the search for peace in Viet-Nam.

We do not and have never avoided discussion of fundamental problems, as you charge.

That charge is, however, applicable to your refusal to discuss the prisoner issue.

In the past and once again today, you have repeated the same questions regarding the United States' position on two key problems involved in a negotiated settlement. You have asked whether we agree to the complete and unconditional withdrawal of United States' forces from South Viet-Nam. You have also asked whether we would overthrow the Government of the Republic of Viet-Nam and accept your proposals for a political settlement.

We have answered these questions many times. But because our answers do not accept your own terms as a precondition to negotiation, you claim that we have not responded seriously to your question. Despite this attitude on your part. Let me answer these questions again in very concise terms.

On the question of withdrawal of forces, the United States is prepared to act on the principle of total and rapid withdrawal of all American forces from South Viet-Nam; but to do so we must know what you are prepared to do with respect to the withdrawal of North Vietnamese forces. We have proposed the complete withdrawal of all non-South Vietnamese forces within one year. That is our proposed timetable. We will, however, consider any other timetable for the withdrawal of all outside forces, including the North Vietnamese forces, which you may wish to propose.

On the question of a political settlement, you should be clear on this point: the United States has no intention of imposing any form of government on the people of South Viet-Nam nor will we be a party to such coercion. We are prepared to accept any government in South Viet-Nam that results from a free choice of the South Vietnamese people. Our side proposes free and fair elections in South Viet-Nam to allow the South Vietnamese people themselves to decide their own political future. To ensure the honesty of elections and equal opportunities to all candidates, we proposed international supervision and a mixed electoral commission in which all political groups, including the National Liberation Front, would participate. We have pledged to accept any outcome of free elections regardless of what changes they might bring. The Government of the Republic of Viet-Nam has offered to talk with your side about all aspects of a political settlement without preconditions.

The position of our side on these two key issues is reasonable and clear. We are ready to discuss actions to be taken by both sides on these central questions. All that remains for progress to be made here is for your side to enter into serious discussions regarding steps to be taken by both sides to bring the war in Viet-Nam to an end.

Now once again, having replied specifically to your proposals and questions on relevant issues, we await replies from your side to our proposals and questions regarding prisoners of war.

Text of closing remarks by Ambassador Habib.

Ladies and gentlemen: Once again today your attitude at these meetings has prevented meaningful settlements of any of the issues.

You have shown again you are not interested in genuine negotiations but rather in maintaining your unacceptable demands for unilateral action on our part.

You have also shown again today your unwillingness to meet your obligations with respect to prisoners of war held by your side. Prisoners of war—their treatment, their disposition—is a fundamental issue which should not be avoided.

We have again responded to the questions posed by your side although you may not like our answers. On the other hand, you continue to be unwilling even to talk about these issues concerning prisoners of war which we have raised. You will not even explain your own position on this question. Much of what you have said today lacks relevance to the practical problems we face at these meetings: that we find a negotiated settlement of the issues involved in the Viet-Nam conflict. Your statements here about the situation in Southeast Asia are remarkable only for their distortion of the truth, in the face of the plain facts which have been publicized throughout the world during these past weeks.

In sum, your attitude continues to be the real obstacle to progress at these meetings.

TEXTS OF REMARKS BY AMBASSADOR HABIB AT 61ST PLENARY SESSION OF THE
NEW PARIS MEETINGS ON VIET-NAM, APRIL 2, 1970

Text of first remarks by Ambassador Habib.

Ladies and gentlemen: Your statements today once again avoid any genuine discussion of the issues but are devoted to sterile polemics replete with erroneous charges and flagrant distortions of reality.

Your side has persistently tried to turn these meetings aside from their true purpose of serious negotiation. You refuse to discuss in a reasonable way the fundamental issues relevant to a settlement of the war in Viet-Nam, namely withdrawal of external forces, a political settlement and prisoners of war. Instead of advancing proposals aimed at resolving these fundamental issues, you demand unilateral action on our part which you say we must accept in principle before genuine negotiations can begin. You have also refused to negotiate in any meaningful way with the representatives of the Republic of Viet-Nam, with whom you agreed to meet and seek a peaceful settlement of the war.

Your attitude is typified by the extraordinary statement of one of your spokesmen at the 59th Plenary Session that as long as the United States will not accept your side's proposal, the South Vietnamese problem cannot be settled. That is a totally unreasonable position to take in these negotiations.

For some time now you have brushed aside our side's repeated efforts to take practical steps to carry out a humanitarian policy toward prisoners. There is no reason why we should not discuss and deal with the questions involving the treatment and release of prisoners of war. These are specific matters which can be discussed and resolved without delay. Humanitarian treatment of prisoners is an urgent problem even while the conflict continues in Viet-Nam. We have sought on this—as on other issues—to find ways by which each side could take measures that would contribute to progress toward a peaceful settlement.

As part of our efforts to assure prisoners the treatment that they have a legal and moral right to expect, we have sought to provide for repatriation of sick and wounded men held on both sides. Last week the Government of the Republic of Viet-Nam announced a decision concerning the unconditional repatriation of 343 sick and wounded prisoners of war. What is required in this case is only the simple step on your part of making practical arrangements for the safe repatriation of these sick and wounded prisoners. Are you ready to do so?

Text of second remarks by Ambassador Habib.

Ladies and gentlemen: Your attitude toward discussion of relevant issues remains negative and unreasonable. This is clearly evident in your silence in response to our efforts to open the way to some meaningful discussion of the treatment and disposition of prisoners of war.

Your attitude toward the prisoners of war question is absolutely lacking in any humane consideration for the prisoners or their families. Your stubborn refusal to discuss this humanitarian question is appalling. It seems that you have no interest even in the fate of your own soldiers who have been wounded and captured while fighting for your side.

Let the record show the plain evidence that your policy toward prisoners and the families of missing or captured men is utterly lacking in humanitarian consideration.

Let the record show that you callously turn aside an unconditional offer by the Government of the Republic of Viet-Nam to repatriate back to North Viet-Nam 343 seriously sick and wounded prisoners of war.

Let the record show that you have refused to identify all the prisoners of war you hold or to provide what information you have to families about the fate of other men.

Let the record show that despite your announcement last December that prisoners in North Viet-Nam would be allowed to send and receive letters once every month, three months have passed and still most prisoners have not been heard from even once during that period.

Let the record show that not even one prisoner of war you hold in South Viet-Nam has ever been allowed to write a letter to his family.

Let the record show that eye-witness accounts, photographs and other evidence demonstrate that Americans who fall into your hands face prolonged solitary confinement, inadequate diet, improper medical treatment, and oftentimes death—to be plain: uncivilized and inhumanitarian treatment.

Let the record show that you refuse to give impartial observers access to your prisoner camps in order to see what kind of treatment your prisoners are in fact accorded.

Let the record show that your side holds many seriously sick and wounded prisoners of war, as well as many prisoners who have been in captivity for extremely long periods of time—up to six years—and that you refuse to release these prisoners.

Let the record also show that you follow a policy of callous whimsy in dealing with the prisoners and their families. You allow some prisoners to write, you deny the same right to others. You receive some families who come to Paris, rebuff others. You answer a few requests for information from families or third parties, you ignore others. You are even capable of turning a deaf ear to appeals from young women trying to determine whether they are wives or widows.

We intend to keep this sorry record before you and before the world. We will not let you forget the plight of these prisoners or their families. You have a responsibility to them—both a legal responsibility under the 1949 Geneva Convention and a humanitarian responsibility which goes far beyond legal requirements. These are responsibilities which you cannot escape.

How Long

(Prisoners' Lament)

We were serving at our country's calling
To a man, this we felt we should do
Never dreaming our lot would be prisoners
Only God knows how much we miss you

CHORUS

How long, how long must we linger
How long, how long must we wait
We are here because of man's folly
But how long must we suffer this fate

Three long years we have been in this hell hole
Three long years we've been ready to die
But each lash of their whip seems to spur us
And each blow helps to keep spirits high

CHORUS

They say we're alone in confinement
And our guards seem bewildered that we
Have a smile when they bring us our rations
As to God we give thanks gratefully

CHORUS

No, we're never alone in confinement
For we know we have good company
Yes, it's Christ our Lord who's our cell mate
And with Him we survive peacefully

CHORUS

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