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IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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KOREAN WAR REMAINS IDENTIFIED

The remains of two American soldiers who were missing in action from the Korean War have been identified and are being returned to their families for burial in the United States.

They are identified as Army Sgt. Hallie A. Clark Jr., Hannibal, Mo., and Army Sgt. James T. Higgins, Benham, Ky.

On Nov. 27, 1950, near the town of Kujang in North Korea, Clark's 2nd Combat Engineer Battalion was overrun by Chinese troops, forcing the unit to withdraw to the south. When the unit regrouped the following day, more than 70 men, including Clark, were reported missing.

Following agreements negotiated with North Korea, joint recovery teams led by the U.S. Army Central Identification Laboratory Hawaii (CILHI) excavated a burial site in May 1999, believed to contain the remains of U.S. soldiers who died during the Korean War.

The team found human remains from two individuals along with artifacts and debris suggesting the men may have been associated with an engineering unit. They were apparently killed when a bazooka they were firing exploded.

On Nov. 1, 1950, Higgins' 8th Cavalry Regiment came under a massive enemy frontal assault by Chinese forces near the town of Unsan in North Korea, approximately 60 miles north of Pyongyang. When his unit regrouped the following day, he was found to be missing in action.

Following the cessation of hostilities, a returned American POW reported that Higgins died from a grenade explosion on the day of the attack.

His remains were recovered by the CILHI during excavations in North Korea in August 1997.

The accounting of these two soldiers marks the fifth identification of servicemen as a result of joint U.S. - North Korean remains recovery operations. Since 1996, teams from the CILHI have conducted 12 such operations and recovered remains believed to be 42 soldiers. Approximately 10 more are undergoing forensic review at CILHI's laboratory.

This year marks the fifth consecutive year that U.S. teams have operated in North Korea. Since 1996, negotiators led by the Defense Department's POW/Missing Personnel Office have reached agreement with North Korea on accounting for missing Americans.

American team members departed Hawaii on June 25 to begin the first of this year's five recovery operations in Kujang and Unsan counties in North Korea. Each operation will last approximately 30 days, and will include 20 American team members. These operations were part of the agreement with North Korea, negotiated in Kuala Lumpur earlier this month.