

No. 563-00
(703)697-5131(media)
(703)697-5737(public/industry)

IMMEDIATE RELEASE September 14, 2000

REMAINS OF U.S. SERVICEMEN RECOVERED IN NORTH KOREA

Remains believed to be those of nine Americans missing in action will be repatriated Friday, Sept. 15, during National POW/MIA Recognition Day. In a formal ceremony at Pyongyang, North Korea, Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for POW/Missing Personnel Affairs Robert L. Jones will receive the remains, believed to be those of U.S. servicemen missing in action from the Korean War.

The remains will be flown on a U.S. Air Force aircraft from Pyongyang to Yokota Air Base, Japan, escorted by Jones and a uniformed U.S. honor guard. A United Nations Command (UNC) repatriation ceremony will be held in Yokota, then the remains will be flown to Hickam Air Force Base, Hawaii. Following a U.S. Pacific Command ceremony there, they will be transferred to the U.S. Army Central Identification Laboratory, Hawaii (CILHI) for forensic examination and positive identification.

A joint U.S.-North Korean investigation team recovered the remains from former battlefields in the North Korean counties of Unsan and Kujang, approximately 60 miles north of Pyongyang. The 20-person U.S. team is composed primarily of specialists from CILHI.

This recovery operation is the 15th in North Korea since 1996. Two more are scheduled for this year, with the fifth operation to conclude on Veterans Day, Nov. 11, 2000. Joint U.S. - North Korean teams have recovered 35 sets of remains so far this year, and 77 since the joint operations began. Five of these have been positively identified, while many others are in the final stages of the forensic identification process.

Of the 88,000 U.S. servicemembers missing in action from all conflicts, more than 8,100 are from the Korean War.