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14. ABSTRACT

Project CHECO was established in 1962 to document and analyze air operations in Southeast Asia. Over the years the meaning of the acronym changed several times to reflect the escalation of operations: Current Historical Evaluation of Counterinsurgency Operations, Contemporary Historical Evaluation of Combat Operations and Contemporary Historical Examination of Current Operations. Project CHECO and other U. S. Air Force Historical study programs provided the Air Force with timely and lasting corporate insights into operational, conceptual and doctrinal lessons from the war in SEA.

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Examination of
Current
Operations
REPORT

JOINT PERSONNEL RECOVERY IN SOUTHEAST ASIA

1 SEPTEMBER 1976

PROJECT CHECO
OFFICE OF HISTORY
HQ PACAF

Prepared by:
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CAPTAIN ARTHUR P. GEESEY
Project CHECO

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DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE
HEADQUARTERS PACIFIC AIR FORCES
APO SAN FRANCISCO 96553

PROJECT CHECO REPORTS

The counterinsurgency and unconventional warfare environment of Southeast Asia (SEA) resulted in the employment of USAF airpower to meet a multitude of requirements. The varied applications of airpower involved the full spectrum of USAF aerospace vehicles, support equipment, and manpower. As a result, there has been an accumulation of operational data and experiences that, as a priority, must be collected, documented, and analyzed for their current and future impact upon USAF policies, concepts, and doctrine.

Fortunately, the value of collecting and documenting our SEA experiences was recognized at an early date. In 1962, Hq USAF directed CINCPACAF to establish an activity that would be primarily responsive to Air Staff requirements and direction, and would provide timely and analytical studies of USAF combat operations in SEA.

Project CHECO, an acronym for Contemporary Historical Examination of Current Operations, was established to meet this Air Staff requirement. Managed by Hq PACAF, with elements formerly at Hq 7AF, 7/13AF, and 13ADVON, Project CHECO provides a scholarly, "on-going" historical examination, documentation, and reporting on USAF policies, concepts and doctrine in PACOM. This CHECO report is part of the overall documentation and examination which was accomplished. It is an authentic source for an assessment of the effectiveness of USAF airpower in PACOM when used in proper context. The reader must view the study in relation to the events and circumstances at the time of its preparation--recognizing that it was prepared on a contemporary basis which restricted perspective and that the authors' research efforts were limited to records available within their local headquarters area.

LYLE E. MANN, Brig General, USAF
Chief of Staff

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(U) Captain Brynn served a four-year tour of active duty at the Air Force Academy. He has been involved with Project CHECO on four different occasions from 1969 to 1974. His prior CHECO publications include: USAF Tactical Reconnaissance in SEA 1966-1969; Quick Reaction Force; and Effect of Airpower Against Armor. Captain Brynn is currently serving as a Foreign Service Officer assigned to the American Embassy in Colombo, Sri Lanka (Ceylon), as Second Secretary.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION (U)

MIAs, PWs and American Public Opinion on the Eve of the Paris Agreement (U)

(U) Article 8, Section b, of the text of the "Agreement on Ending the War and Restoring Peace in Vietnam" stated:

> (U) The parties shall help each other to get information about those military personnel and foreign civilians of the parties missing in action, to determine the location and take care of the graves of the dead so as to facilitate the exhumation and repatriation of the remains, and to take any such other measures as may be required to get information about those still considered missing in action.[1]

The development of an organization and the conduct of operations designed to determine the status of American military and civilian personnel who were missing in action, or otherwise lost, who died in combat or in captivity is the subject of this paper.

The Last Campaign:Casualty Resolution (U)

(C) More than a decade of direct American military action in Indochina without a significant pause for an exchange of prisoners or search for those missing in action ended in January 1973 with the repatriation of American prisoners of war held by the Democratic Republic of Vietnam (DRV) and the Provisional Revolutionary Government (PRG) of South Vietnam (Viet Cong). In the wake of Operation Homecoming, however, 2,409 Americans, including 21 civilians remained

unaccounted for. The total was divided almost equally between those listed as missing in action (MIA)* and those labeled presumed dead but body not recovered (BNR).* The number included 977 Air Force (MIA = 690, BNR = 287), 706 Army (MIA = 347, BNR = 359), 409 Navy (MIA = 132, BNR = 277), and 296 Marine (MIA = 105, BNR = 191) personnel, and 21 US civilians (MIA = 13, BNR = 8).[2] Seventy-eight percent of all MIA/BNR incidents were connected with crash sites.[3] The large Air Force total suggested a major difficulty in any proposed casualty resolution (CR) operations: the need to locate and examine crash sites scattered over remote sections of Indochina. Most BNR status Army, Navy, and Marine personnel were also connected with aircraft crashes.[4]

(C) The wide-ranging geographical aspect of SEA operations and the importance of the air war outside the Republic of Vietnam (RVN) were reflected in the relatively even distribution of casualty statistics among RVN, DRV, and Laos (988, 536, and 558 respectively). Only RVN afforded substantial prospects for CR activities during the

---

*(U) A different nomenclature was employed from time to time to describe Americans missing in action. In this report MIA will mean American military personnel missing in action. The term MIS will include the small number of American civilian personnel listed as missing. They were assigned to the Joint Casualty Resolution Command (JCRC) in 1973. The MIA and MIS status both implied the possibility the person so designated might be alive. BNR, as General Kingston noted in his end-of-tour report in December 1973, meant only KIA/BNR (killed in action).

course of military operations, and here most unresolved CR situations were related to portions of the country under the effective control of the PRG. As a result, 90 percent of the crash sites were under the control of "exbelligerents" after the Paris Accords were signed.[5] In addition, 276 personnel were lost at sea, all but 51 regarded as KIA/BNR rather than MIA. Cambodia accounted in the remaining 51 (MIA = 26, BNR = 25).

(C) Inevitably, unresolved Air Force losses in Laos (363) and North Vietnam (358) dominated its own casualty lists, whereas Army (522) and Marine (217) MIAs and BNRs were concentrated in RVN. Navy losses were divided almost equally between sea (173) and land (233) sites, with land losses concentrated in DRV (145).

(C) By early 1974, the geographic distribution of statistics had changed only slightly.[6] The distribution was to play a role larger than anticipated as a result of political developments beyond the control of CR operations. Because CR operations were to be limited almost completely to RVN-controlled areas of South Vietnam, a proportionately large percentage of unresolved MIA/BNR cases as of July 1974 were to be Air Force pilots and crew members.[7]

(C) Most of the casualties were related to crash sites. As of 15 March 1973, 383 were tentatively located in DRV. Another 284 were thought to lay within South Vietnam, largely in PRG controlled areas. Almost as many (244) were in Laos, 140 were at sea, and 16 in the Khmer

Republic.[8] Of the total (1,055), F-4 crash sites in DRV (108), Laos (67) and over water (29) constituted the largest single aircraft type in most areas. The UH-1 crash sites constituted the largest portions in South Vietnam (61) and Cambodia (4). Eighty-seven F-105s and 47 A-4s crash sites were located in DRV, and 38 A-1s in Laos. These excepted, none of the four countries involved contained more than 25 crash sites of any single aircraft. The variety of crash sites offered increased opportunities for site identification, but demanded a high level of expertise in aircraft identification.[9]

(C) Between April 1973 and July 1974, CR operations and other functions associated with the Joint Casualty Resolution Center (JCRC) were to alter these totals only modestly. Close monitoring of testimony obtained from PWs released in early 1973 suggested that as many as 104 personnel might have been captured, their remains found, or have died in captivity in addition to those acknowledged by DRV and PRG sources.[10] The number of crash sites detected increased from 1,055 to 1,080 and some were shifted from South Vietnam (-27) and DRV (-33) to "at sea" (+60), Laos (+16) and the Khmer Republic (+4).[11] In addition to the crash sites described above, some 430 "ground sites" and 50 "grave sites" were distributed throughout Indochina. The largest number in each case (350 ground sites and 36 grave sites) were located in South Vietnam. Laos held 46 ground sites and the Khmer Republic 37.[12]

(C) As of December 1973, total CR statistics (MIA/BNR) were similar to those of April (2,421 in December compared to 2,409 in April),[13] with a shift of about 100 from MIA status to BNR status. On 30 June 1974, a total* of 2,334 were still unaccounted for, with 1,288 listed as deceased and BNR.[14]

(U) Inasmuch as JCRC operations during the period of this study were limited to South Vietnam (except in the case of the repatriation of 23 who died in captivity (DIC) from DRV), it is worth noting that of the approximately 2,500 unresolved cases in SEA, 1,000 occurred in South Vietnam. Of these, approximately 25 percent occurred in areas controlled by RVN authorities, 65 percent in PRG areas, and 10 percent in contested areas.[15]

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*(U) Figures related to MIAs which the US believed DRV, PRG, and Pathet Lao officials were able but unwilling to resolve conclusively (either by releasing the PW, the remains, or information on the location of the remains) became the subject of a debate between the US and its Southeast Asia opponents and even within the United States itself. Against the number 101 of April 1973 may be placed the figure 67 "known POWs" released by the DOD in June.[16] By January 1975, the number of US personnel still listed as captured had been reduced to 37. The repatriation of 23 DICs remains would not by itself account in the change and status changes as reflected in available documents do not provide sufficient detail to determine whether CR operations accounted for a resolution of the remainder.

CHAPTER II

JOINT PERSONNEL RECOVERY CENTER, 1966-1972: FORERUNNER OF THE JCRC (U)

(S) The dramatic announcement by Presidential adviser Henry Kissinger in late October 1972 that peace was "at hand" was widely interpreted as putting the task of recovering Americans missing in action (MIA) and prisoners of war (PW) on a new basis. This was not entirely correct. Notwithstanding the allegations circulated within the United States about indifference to the fate of MIAs and PWs, there already existed the Joint Personnel Recovery Center (JPRC), activated on 17 September 1966. For nearly five and a half years, the JPRC served as the coordinating agency for the recovery of US military and civilian personnel, as well as those of other Free World Military Assistance Forces (FWMAF), who managed to evade capture, to escape, or to benefit from the occasional and unexpected hostile forces' generosity in releasing certain American or allied personnel. As the parameters of the war were extended, the JPRC's operations expanded to include North Vietnam, Laos, the Khmer Republic, and Thailand.[17]

(U) By early 1972, new conditions had imposed themselves upon the operations of the JPRC. The withdrawal of US ground forces from most of the regions eliminated the possibility of direct release of large numbers of MIAs and PWs through direct American military action. It also meant that fewer American ground personnel were likely to fall

into enemy hands. Secondly, as prospects for some type of peace settlement increased, adequate arrangements for receiving released PWs and for establishing accurate data concerning those MIAs not released as PWs, those killed in action (KIA), and those who died in captivity, became more urgent. In effect, American participation in the actual physical recovery of the more than one thousand military personnel and the smaller number of civilians missing in Indochina decreased even as the demand for a satisfactory and final accounting increased.

(S) To meet these frustrating and difficult requirements, the JPRC was reorganized on 15 March 1972, and its mission redefined by a COMUSMACV Contingency Plan (CONPLAN) dated 1 August 1972. The new concept cast JPRC in the role of an adviser to indigenous forces' efforts to recover American and other FWMAF personnel. The JPRC moved to meet its obligations in four ways: (1) Increased emphasis on the reward program; (2) the leaflet program; (3) the crash site inspection (CSI) program; and (4) the special collection program Bright Light. All were designed to cope with restrictions imposed by noncombatancy and with the increasingly difficult task of accounting for missing Americans in SEA.[18]

(C) The removal of American ground forces from the war theater cramped recovery operations, but the peculiar territorial configuration of Vietnam enhanced the role of offshore US forces. Indigenous

forces, assisted by US air power, were in a better position to contribute to recovery operations than had been the case before 1972. Increasing civilian confidence in the viability of US supported governments and military forces induced the JPRC to place particular impetus on the reward and leaflet programs fashioned in 1972. The reward program, in simplest form, offered cash prizes for information or other assistance contributing to the return of a US MIAs, PWs, and those KIAs whose bodies had not been recovered (BNR). Amounts varied, depending on the value of the information, the status (MIA or KIA) of the American, the country, and other factors. Compensation was advertised widely, and each instance of a cash payment was given maximum publicity. The leaflet program promoted the reward program by attempting to enlist the support of field elements through leaflets dropped within their areas of responsibility.[19]

(C) The rewards program was not a success in 1972. Eight bodies were recovered in the RVN by US and Vietnamese Army (ARVN) units. Hanoi released three US officers and enemy forces released 25 third country nationals (TCN) in Vietnam, Laos, and the Khmer Republic. None of these can be attributed to the rewards program. In a more limited sense, however, the rewards program was useful; for through it a considerable amount of fragmentary information concerning the status of MIA and KIA personnel was received by the JPRC.[20]

(C) The two other programs, CSI and Bright Light, attempted to meet restrictions imposed by the withdrawal of ground units through a large-scale effort in intelligence gathering, sifting, and evaluation. They used friendly forces as a primary source, and employed Americans on occasion to evaluate crash sites in non-hostile areas. The crash site inspection program was an ambitious operation designed to determine the status of MIA or KIA/BNR personnel lost in aircraft accidents. It depended on an automated data processing (ADP) file incorporating all available information on CSIs. The file, in turn, was updated by information provided by field elements' intelligence, and by such grave site and CSI inspections which American teams were able to carry out in safe areas.[21]

(C) Bright Light was designed to complement the information expansion function by providing the intelligence community with comprehensive guidelines for gathering information on US personnel in PW, MIA, or KIA status. Again, primary emphasis was placed on eliciting contributions from Vietnamese nationals. Local programs, spiced with cash rewards, were authorized for this purpose.[22]

(U) In retrospect, neither CSI nor Bright Light was successful, although the elements which contributed to the disappointing performance were largely beyond the control of the JPRC. Inevitably, incentives for retrieving information of the type required were compromised by the exigencies of the moment. Few ground units were inclined to devote time to information gathering when danger to life

was involved. The indigenous population was at times afraid to come forward with relevant information; or, more likely, unable to measure the value of whatever it was they might have seen. CSI work required specialists who could derive some meaning from aircraft remnants, decomposed bodies, and bone fragments. Worst of all, most information potential lay within areas controlled by hostile forces. In addition to deficiencies in the information gathering process, there remained the very real problem of developing a computer system which could handle an extraordinary range of fragmentary information, and the almost impossible task of determining whether the information was accurate. In 1973, when the JPRC had given way to the Joint Casualty Resolution Center (JCRC), a thoroughgoing review of ADP material revealed large-scale deficiencies in both content and arrangement.

(S) Collating intelligence reports, coordinating body recovery (BR) and CSI operations, monitoring SAR efforts, and developing dossiers on each US, FWMAF, and TCN individual listed as PW, MIA, or KIA/BNR constituted the JPRC mission as defined in 1972. This definition, however, was quickly overtaken by events which served to place increasing emphasis on one other aspect of the mission as defined in early 1972 and which in fact would lead to the JPRC's eventual supersession by the JCRC. From mid-1972, anticipation of a Southeast Asia-wide cease-fire led to development of a post-hostilities plan to recover the remains of US deceased and to

resolve the status of remaining missing personnel. Planning followed two main channels. One, which led to the formation of a new organization, the JCRC, is the subject of Chapter III. The second, planning for Operation Homecoming and all its related activities, may be seen as the culmination and last function of the JPRC before it was subsumed into the JCRC. As described in COMUSMACV OPLAN J-190, Egress Recap Homecoming, the plan called for processing personnel released by hostile forces as part of the cease-fire and peace negotiations. JPRC was expected to act as the focal point for COMUSMACV intelligence aspects by processing and coordinating in-country debriefings, evaluating information which might shed light on the status of remaining MIAs, DICs, and KIAs, and integrating this information into existing dossiers and ADP facilities.[23] These plans were fully prepared when, in anticipation of the formal signing of the cease-fire, the JPRC was dissolved and its function assumed by the JCRC on 23 January 1973.

CHAPTER III

CONCEPT AND EMERGENCE (U)

JCRC Concept (U)

(U) The transition from the JPRC to the JCRC was gradual rather than clear-cut. The emergence of a new organization was inherent in a series of policy and structure analysis undertaken by CINCPAC beginning in July 1972. All were designed to cope with a post-hostilities situation. In its final months, the JPRC was charged with the task of formulating plans for transferring its resources to the JCRC, and for fashioning its inputs for Operation Homecoming, which became the first important requirement for the JCRC after it was established. Because of all this, it is useful and important to differentiate the JCRC concept from that of the JPRC which preceded it.

(C) The difference between the JPRC and the JCRC rested essentially, though not entirely, on a definition of objectives: The JPRC emphasized assembling, storing, analyzing, and disseminating data of those US personnel who were living or might possibly still be living after initially having been reported missing in action. Subsequent to Operation Homecoming and the return of all PWs under the terms of a cease-fire agreement or peace treaty, the focus was to shift to resolving the status of MIA/BNRs. Of course, the JCRC continued to direct attention "to the identification, location and

recovery of those MIA who may still be alive," but in simplest terms the emphasis was on those dead rather than those alive.[24]

(C) The uncomfortable fact that implementation of the Paris Peace Agreement proved particularly unsatisfactory in terms of the immediate return of DICs in hostile forces' jurisdictions, and proved equally disappointing in arresting suspicions that more PWs remained in enemy hands after all were declared restored to the United States, should not obscure the basic premises on which the JCRC was established. These premises were in the first place an emphasis on recovery of all possible remains related to MIAs in a BNR status, or in lieu of this, accumulation of such data as would assist in determining the fate of MIA/BNRs. Such recovery and accumulation activities were to take place only in secure areas,[25] a restriction which was not expected to be onerous if all parties adhered faithfully to the terms of the cease-fire agreement. Because operations would be conducted in safe areas, casualty resolution (CR) activities would be conducted under American rather than indigenous control. This provision, of course, was directed in the first instance to relieving next of kin (NOK) of their natural disinclination to have a determination of the status of MIA/BNRs dependent upon non-US forces and personnel.[26] Fourth, every effort would be made to enlist the cooperation of friendly forces, former belligerents, and all indigenous populations through a publicity program. Inasmuch as restrictions on disclosure of

information were expected to diminish after a cease-fire, the publicity program would yield significantly greater returns. Finally, JCRC sponsored operations were to be completely overt.[27]

(U) If the JCRC's premises differed from those of its predecessor, so did its definition of "success." The JPRC was geared to the repatriation of MIAs (the emphasis on military personnel being inherent) in captivity, in the process of escape, and attempting to evade capture. "Success" then was the restoration of live personnel, and secondarily, recovery of KIA or DIC remains. The mission of the JCRC, as defined in early 1973, was the resolution of the status of Americans missing in action and of BNRs. Recovery of remains, therefore, constituted "success," and not merely the repatriation of MIAs alive and of PWs. Even a determination that MIAs and MIA/BNRs could be transferred to KIA or DIC status fulfilled the JCRC's mission requirement.

(C) In the course of operations in 1973 it became apparent that defining the mission of the JCRC as determining the status of MIAs and MIA/BNRs was technically incorrect, inasmuch as this determination was the responsibility of the US Army Memorial Affairs Agency (USAMAA) and its counterparts in the other services, and even of the courts. At the suggestion of the JCRC's first commander, Brigadier General Robert C. Kingston, USA, on the occasion of his end-of-tour report in December 1973, the mission of the JCRC was

redefined as "to assist in resolving the status of United States missing (MIS) and body not recovered (BNR) personnel."[28] This assistance was to be made through analyzing all available data on unresolved cases to facilitate an accurate assessment of the circumstances surrounding the loss, and initiating casualty resolution field operations throughout Indochina to locate and investigate crash/grave sites for the purpose of recovering and identifying the remains.[29]

(U) In concept, therefore, the JCRC differed sharply from its predecessor. It comprehended the entire area of conflict. It brought to bear American personnel and resources directly rather than relying entirely on indigenous personnel. It assumed a satisfactory solution to the status of all MIS still alive. It superintended, in theory, the final and most profound function of the war, the recovery of the dead or determination that death had occurred.[30] The defective implementation of the Paris Peace Agreement imposed restrictions which forced the JCRC to retreat, in many aspects, to the constricted scope of operations imposed on the JPRC (such as operating in friendly territory). Such restrictions, married to the awesome task of casualty resolution through recovery of remains, crash site investigation, and data accumulation on MIS and BNRs whose traces in most cases were faint at best, made the conduct of JCRC operations particularly difficult. Pressures generated by the understandable impatience and frustration betrayed by Americans, after all the high

hopes of the peace accords, added to the problem. The gap between the JCRC as conceived in 1972 and early 1973, and as vindicated by subsequent events was a wide one. The process of founding the JCRC, perhaps more than its operation, suggested what this organization was intended to be.

The Founding and Early Evolution of the JCRC (July 1972-March 1973) (U)

(C) Discussions designed to handle the MIS and BNR problem (a problem which no peace agreement, however comprehensive, could resolve) moved into high gear in July 1972. At that time the Commander-in-Chief of the Pacific Command (CINCPAC) invited COMUSMACV comments on a proposal to establish a Joint Information Center (JIC) with responsibility to resolve the status of MIAs and to recover the remains of deceased US personnel throughout Southeast Asia. Subsequent discussions resulted in a proposal to establish a 60-man organization in conjunction with US forces withdrawal from Vietnam. This organization, named the JCRC, began to take shape when the personnel and records of the MACV Joint Center Graves Registration Office (JCGRO) and those of the JPRC were combined prior to 30 October 1972. In November and December a new Conplan (CONPLAN 5119) was proposed for casualty resolution operations under the JCRC. Under CONPLAN 5119, Nakhon Phanom (NKP) was selected as the JCRC's future home base. The JCRC was authorized a staff of 110, and empowered to establish liaison offices at the American Embassies in Phnom Penh,

Saigon, and Vientiane to assist in the coordination of JCRC field team work with the requirements of the Embassies.[31]

(U) The JPRC remained in being until 23 January 1973, when in anticipation of the formal signing of the cease-fire, the JCRC came into being under the command of General Kingston. General Kingston's organization was not yet complete. Pending the execution of JCRC responsibilities in connection with Operation Homecoming, which got underway when the first groups of US PWs were released by Hanoi and the Viet Cong at the end of January, General Kingston temporarily established his headquarters at MACV Headquarters in Saigon. On 15 February, the JCRC was transferred to NKP and came under the operational control of the Commander, US Support Advisory Group/7th Air Force (USSAG/7AF).[32] General Kingston thereupon chose his personnel and issued command guidance papers. From January to March, the NKP contingent grew rapidly from 50 to more than 100, and the staff which was not directly involved in Operation Homecoming (including a two-man team at Clark AB) began the work of evolving a command structure appropriate to the peculiar and, indeed, unprecedented character of the JCRC.[33]

(C) February and March were devoted largely to defining the constituent parts of the new JCRC. Organizational development proceeded on seven separate fronts: (1) preparation of physical facilities at NKP; (2) reorganization of casualty resolution records

and data processing facilities; (3) expansion of JCRC staffing through selection of highly qualified personnel from the four participating services; (4) organization of the field teams to be entrusted with CSI and grave site inspection responsibilities; (5) development of the liaison function at the various American embassies (AmEmb) and in the US Delegation to the Four Power Joint Military Commission (FPJMC); (6) development of a public relations function both in terms of CINCPAC requirements and for the American public; (7) establishing standard operating procedures (SOP) within JCRC itself. Of these, staffing requirements, liaison functions, and the public relations questions posed particular challenges in that, for each, there was virtually no precedent. About 70 percent of the unit's manning came from COMUSMACV; the remaining requirements were forwarded to the various services for action.[34] General Kingston selected each member of the staff personally. Certain positions, including Vietnamese interpreter slots, proved difficult to fill, and there was a need for American personnel with specialized skills which could not be located quickly. Much of January and early February was devoted to a review and expansion of manpower requirements, to getting selected personnel to NKP as quickly as possible, and to meeting space and physical facility requirements for a rapidly growing organization. In a space of two months the number of personnel present for duty jumped from 76 to 117. The number of authorized

positions, however, grew from 110 to 179.[35]

(U) General Kingston met requirements for an elaboration of the JCRC's relationship to other units within CINCPAC and to the several AmEmbs in a series of visits which began 20 February 1973. General Kingston also briefed CINCPAC staff and component commanders in Hawaii. On his return, he visited the 1st Special Forces Group and 7th Psy Ops Group. Both were located in Okinawa, and both were instructed to support JCRC casualty resolution functions as outlined in CONPLAN 5119.[36] After his return, General Kingston visited AmEmbs in Thailand, RVN, and Laos in connection with liaison requirements, and met with the senior military commanders in SEA. The JCRC staff, meanwhile, was updating MIA and BNR data, as well as data developing plans and operations. They were using written command guidance, as well as oral instructions, to develop casualty data, staff operations, and field operations.[37] With the consolidation of all data material within one casualty data division on 5 March 1973, and with the preparation on the same date of a press release announcing that it awaited only the green light from the various signatories of the Paris Accord, the JCRC was fully constituted. This organization pitted a unique capability against an equally frustrating situation.

CHAPTER IV

JCRC ORGANIZATION APRIL 1973 - JUNE 1974 (U)

Command Structure (U)

(U) Under CINCPAC CONPLAN 5119, USSAG/7AF was charged with the responsibility for all CR matters in SEA. The JCRC operated as a CINCPAC organization under the operational control of USSAG/7AF. Coordination and liaison, as required, was authorized between JCRC and PACOM subordinate commands for the support and conduct of CR operations.[38] The command structure established by General Kingston under this authority and concurrently with the consolidation of JCRC functions at NKP in February 1973 consisted of two large subordinate operations (staff and field) plus direct control over four liaison officers at the appropriate embassies. The liaison officers were responsible directly to the commander and reflected the fact that JCRC functions were not only dependent upon AmEmb approval at the outset, but were subject to constant redefinition in the face of even slight changes in the highly sensitive political context. Another officer sat on the US Delegation to the Four Power Joint Military Commission (US DEL FPJMC) and reported directly to the Commander. Liaison functions cannot be described accurately in terms of organization, inasmuch as the Commander himself was also active in direct liaison work. Indeed, the peculiar nature of the operation demanded that most of the JCRC's important requests be handled by the

Commander personally.

(U) Because liaison work, and, increasingly, the exigencies of American public opinion, required that the Commander be absent from NKP for long periods, the Deputy Commander for Staff Operations and the Deputy Commander for Field Operations were expected to shoulder additional responsibilities. The Deputy Commander for Staff Operations was served by six divisions: public affairs, which included the liaison officer in Bangkok; a staff judge advocate; a comptroller; an executive officer; casualty data; and automated data processing (ADP). The responsibilities of the public affairs section tended to gravitate to Saigon, where politics intruded. A liaison officer in Bangkok tended to handle the burdens imposed by the press and Thai government sensitivities. The work of the staff judge advocate proved lighter than anticipated inasmuch as recovery efforts were restricted by political considerations and because Washington assumed almost complete jurisdiction over questions of MIS and BNR status. The comptroller's primary concern reflected the dislocations which stemmed from a rapid initial expansion of the budget in anticipation of large scale operations, and a subsequent reduction when inactivity prevailed. The executive officer was responsible for normal administrative functions, a logistics division, and an operations division.

(U) Two other divisions, casualty data and automated data processing, became increasingly important. The casualty data division

included data analysis, photo interpretation, crash and grave site development, and casualty records. As it became apparent that data inherited from JPRC was neither satisfactory in character, nor particularly accurate in detail, the workload of these subdivisions increased considerably. The problems of the automated data processing division demanded considerable assistance from and reliance on outside expertise. Political restrictions, such as those that hamstrung the Deputy Commander for Field Operations in on-the-spot examinations, tended to increase the burdens placed on the casualty data divisions (the automatic data processing division in particular) in their efforts to extract every possible use from the limited information available to them.[39] Prior to General Kingston's departure in December 1973, several structural changes were made in the Deputy Commander for Staff Operation's jurisdiction. ADP was placed under the CR division and the comptroller under the executive officer. CR and operations were made directly responsible to the Deputy Commander for Operations and not to the executive officer. The operations division was expanded to include a separate plans section and a "memorial activities" section to deal with protocol problems raised by repatriation of DICs.[40]

(U) Under General Kingston, the Deputy Commander for Field Operations was opened to direct access by six divisions: a launch unit, composed of two teams; a control team for Vietnamese operations,

supported by five CR field teams; a similar set-up for Laos and Cambodia, with six CR field teams; the Central Identification Laboratory at Samae San, Thailand (CIL/THAI) supported by eight recovery teams; augmentation CR field teams at Okinawa; and 16 augmentation CR field teams stationed at USMACTHAI. Embassy insistence that the teams work in safe areas eventually precluded any activity for the Laos and Cambodian teams and reduced the role of the Vietnamese teams. The augmentation teams were not required, but their importance was increased rather than reduced as the on-the-spot manning gradually declined. Under General Ulatoski, who assumed command in January 1974, the number of teams was further reduced and launch units were consolidated with the control teams.[41] JCRC was also given control over a Flight Support Section of three US Army U-21 aircraft, assigned to JCRC from the 70th Aviation Detachment. These aircraft met JCRC requirements for communications relay, transport of remains, and other CR-related administration requirements.[42]

(U) From 23 January to 18 December 1973, the JCRC had been commanded by Brigadier General Robert C. Kingston, USA. In the most recent of his four tours in RVN, he had served as Deputy Commanding General, Second Regional Assistance Command, and as Senior Deputy Advisor, II ARVN Corps and Military Region 2. In December 1973, he became Assistant Division Commander of the First Infantry Division

located at Fort Riley, Kansas.[43] From 18 December 1973 to 8 January 1974, the JCRC was commanded by Colonel Vincent A. Di Mauro, USAF. On 8 January 1974, Brigadier General Joseph R. Ulatoski, USA, assumed command.

Structural Changes in Response to Changing Requirements (U)

(U) All mission-oriented organizations are required to rearrange their components to meet new demands; the most successful do so while preserving continuity of function and their own identity. The JCRC changed more than most in the short period since it was formed, and if the gap between potential and performance remained large, the fault might well be placed at the door of autonomous political factors. This section describes in quantitative terms the impact changing conditions had on the JCRC's structure; the ability of the structure to perform successfully within the context of political restrictions and operational demands at any given time will be addressed in Chapter V. This section might suggest, however, that structural changes, especially diminution, made to fit in more logically with current responsibilities, could not always be given priority. Public opinion in the United States took umbrage at any reduction in the JCRC which might be interpreted as a decision to abandon the MIS and BNR search. There was, in addition, always the chance of a dramatic change in political conditions which would demand that the original JCRC mission be implemented in a large way on short notice. The impact of these

conflicting pressures can be seen on five subdivisions of the JCRC: liaison operations; the CR teams; the data accumulation, evaluation, and cataloguing system; the public affairs division; and CIL/THAI.

(C) The liaison offices were the simplest in structure; they consisted simply of officers without staffs at the various embassies and at the FPJMC. But because posting a liaison officer required the consent of the governments to which the ambassadors were accredited, CINCPAC had little leverage in encouraging compliance with the organizational chart established for the JCRC. General Kingston noted in April 1973, a full three months after his organization had been established, that the liaison officer assigned to Vientiane was not allowed to reside there permanently, that he could not get anyone into Phnom Penh, and that Hanoi refused to have his liaison officer reside there. Only Saigon, therefore, had a man in place, and although the JCRC was considered exempt from the 50-man restriction, General Kingston seemed uncertain whether this rule would hold.[44] Instead, the commander made trips almost monthly to handle liaison functions personally, and this practice was continued by his successor, General Ulatoski. Finally, in October 1973, the liaison office in Saigon became fully operational (the JCRC was represented on the FPJMC by the other Saigon-based liaison officer).[45] Hanoi's intransigence was not broken, although JCRC's assignee was continuing his efforts to get there.[46] The American Ambassador in Phnom Penh

continued to advise against filling the liaison slot there.[47] The liaison functions, as originally conceived, were suspended indefinitely in Laos pending further progress on internal political settlement there. Prospects for meaningful, direct JCRC activity, therefore, were dim. In the Khmer Republic conditions made liaison efforts unprofitable. The Indochina JCRC liaison structure, therefore, was virtually limited to a post at the FPJMC and at the American Embassy in Saigon.

(C) The elaborate nature of the team structure reflected an early optimism that the JCRC would command a wide investigatory and collection function in Indochina. General Kingston defined four different teams: field; launch; control; and grave registration. The CR field team was composed of a team leader (officer), radio operator, medic, interrogator, and team member with general functions. This corps might be expanded, if conditions warranted, to include a crash investigator (officer), an area specialist, an explosive ordnance disposal (EOD) specialist, and a grave registration officers' team.[48] A field team standard operating procedure was prepared in March 1973.[49] The launch team was to be capable of onloading the control teams and setting up and sustaining forward operating bases from which field teams were to operate.[50] This concept reflected the view that they were to extract the field teams and provide all logistical support.[51] Inasmuch as large areas would be opened up,

and that in many cases multiple sites might be visited from one advanced location, a "cluster" effect could be employed. The graves registration teams, working as a component of the field teams when required, would be responsible for the final, crash/grave site investigation, would make the final report, and would draw up the presentation which would constitute the penultimate case for a change of status or CR.[52] All teams received intensive training of up to five weeks, with the entire training program repeated as new personnel arrived.[53]

(C) The casualty data division was charged with the responsibility of assembling, correlating, and analyzing available information on MIS and BNR near crash and burial sites. Functions included data analysis, photo interpretation of aerial photos of crash sites, crash/grave site development of areas in which the teams operated, and casualty records or dossiers of those who had been in MIA status at some time during the Vietnamese conflict.[54] During 1973, ADP functions were made a part of the CR division, reflecting the increasing dependence of CR on computer resources as the most effective storage/retrieval method.[55] Unlike the CR teams, the data operation was put into effect immediately, as it became apparent that the data base was not sufficient for mission requirements.[56] After the initial integration of data-related functions into one unit, the structure was maintained. Pressure from NOK for more information, combined with

decreasing opportunities for field research, demanded ever more sophisticated operational approaches to the problem and required an expanded staff as well.

(U) The public affairs officer (PAO) was installed at JCRC on 6 February 1973 after having been briefed at the Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense, Public Affairs, and at the CINCPAC Public Affairs Office in Honolulu. An additional officer space was requested the following month to operate from the Bangkok office of the CINCPAC Public Affairs representative. This was designed primarily to man a CR desk in Bangkok which could handle media and public requests and to serve as a point of contact with the Embassy public affairs staff.[57] JCS approved the slot. The structure was, from the beginning, virtually reduced to an instrument of the Embassy because of the Ambassador's control over press releases and interviews, because of the Embassy's greater expertise in this field, because of the danger to field teams of releasing plans to visit certain sites, and because of the overall extreme sensitivity of the issue.

(S) CIL/THAI at Samae San, south of Bangkok, was organized into an identification laboratory and eight, five-man recovery teams designed to accompany the casualty resolution field teams.[58] It was built around the US Army mortuary cadre from Saigon and included both military and civilian specialists. CIL maintained medical and dental

records of American MIS as well as other records which might help in identification.[59]

CHAPTER V

THE JCRC IN OPERATION JANUARY 1973 - JUNE 1974 (U)

The Parameters (U)

(U) JCRC's access to crash and grave sites was determined by decisions made by four jurisdictions outside normal military command channels: the American Ambassadors in Phnom Penh, Vientiane, Saigon, and Bangkok; the Four Power Joint Military Command; the DRV; and the Government of the RVN. Because of defective implementation of the Paris Accords and because other objectives competed with JCRC's mission, these agencies' decisions tended inevitably to reduce the scope of CR operations. Before studying the CR operations of 1973 and early 1974, it may be worthwhile to review the restraints under which JCRC labored.

(U) Ultimately, the principal reason for the limited scope of JCRC's activities was the obstructionist attitude of the DRV and the PRG. The DRV, whatever the literal meaning of the provisions of the Paris Agreement which were related to repatriation of MIS and BNR personnel, was determined to extract from the United States and RVN additional concessions in return for its implementation of treaty requirements. From January until December 1973, Americans were allowed to enter DRV only twice in their efforts to confirm the deaths of men Hanoi had reported as dead. American officials were taken to the grave sites, but there was no way of determining whether

American serviceman were interred there, and repatriation of the remains was prohibited.[60] During this period, the DRV and PRG strategy was to delay implementation of Article 8B by claiming that construction of cemeteries and memorials for Vietnamese Communist dead in SVN was called for by that portion of Article 8B which dealt with the care of the graves of the dead. Their position, in simplest terms, was that there would be no casualty resolution operations in PRG/DRV-controlled areas of SVN, or in DRV itself, without the construction of suitable Communist memorials in SVN.[61]

(U) The possibility of progress in JCRC activities was given a severe jolt on 15 December 1973 when Communists attacked three helicopters of the FPJMC 20 kilometers southeast of Saigon. The helicopters were carrying JCRC CR teams authorized to inspect two crash/grave sites in the area. One helicopter was destroyed, causing two deaths, including that of an American officer attempting to surrender to the insurgents. Seven members were wounded.[62] Inasmuch as the Communist side had been officially informed of the mission, the ambush was subsequently described as cold-blooded murder by Colonel Tombaugh, USA, the Chief of the US Delegation to the FPJMC.[63] Neither the DRV nor the PRG made any move to accept responsibility for the ambush. Radio Hanoi said that the ambush resulted from US unwillingness to recognize that more than half of South Vietnam was not controlled by Saigon, and that the safety of JCRC teams could be

guaranteed only by cooperating with the PRG.[64] In February 1974, the DRV permitted the repatriation of 23 DICs from graves near Hanoi in return for the release of some 5,000 political prisoners held by the RVN. On 24 March, the Viet Cong announced that no further American MIA searches would be permitted in its areas until American military assistance to South Vietnam ceased.[65]

(U) Measuring the fluctuating degrees of DRV and PRG intransigence was the responsibility of the US Delegation to the FPJMC. It was instructed to give first priority to the repatriation of DIC remains, second to receipt of information from DRV and PRG about MIA believed to have been captured alive, and third to negotiation of entry rights and procedures for ground and air searches of crash sites.[66] The JCRC was expected to support these instructions through the liaison officer assigned to the FPJMC. The relationship between the US Delegation and the JCRC was designed to monitor, on one hand, the likelihood of extracting concessions from the DRV and PRG through presentation of JCRC requests for permission to conduct CR team operations in their jurisdictions, and, on the other, to supply information concerning American MIS and BNR to the US Delegation for their discussions with DRV and PRG officials. JCRC requests to the PRG to examine sites under PRG control were made in June 1973 and in every subsequent month. The JCRC also identified, by aerial reconnaissance, crash sites in DRV and requested permission to visit them.[67]

There was no response. The US Delegation formally renewed its requests on four subsequent occasions during 1973.[68] By June 1974, eight proposals had been forwarded to the US Delegation by the JCRC for CR operations in DRV, and a similar number for deployment in PRG. None were answered by either the DRV or the PRG.[69]

(C) Joint JCRC-USDEL FPJMC efforts in securing further information concerning American MIS and BNRs through DRV and PRG assistance proved equally futile. Prior to August 1973, ten folders containing information on MIS/BNR personnel were developed at the request of the FPJMT for presentation to the PRG and DRV. In August 1973, 35 folders were forwarded to the FPJMC.[70] Doubts about the effectiveness of the effort were expressed by the JCRC in late 1973, but the US Delegation saw value in the approach, whatever the disappointing short-term results.[71] The assistance was continued in 1974.[72]

(C) The breakthrough in negotiations to repatriate 23 American DICs from cemeteries near Hanoi in March 1974 added another dimension to the JCRC-USDEL FPJMT relationship. Plans for the repatriation of DIC remains, which Hanoi had previously acknowledged lay in North Vietnamese cemeteries, had been formulated as early as the spring of 1973, when it appeared that repatriation would be possible in the near future.[73] For reasons which lay outside the scope of this paper (principally North Vietnamese determination to link the release of DIC remains to the release by RVN authorities of Communists in prison),

repatriation was not possible. But early in January, indications of a breakthrough surfaced in the context of US-DRV officials' conversations in meetings of the FPJMC. At the request of Colonel Tombaugh, in his capacity as Chief, US Delegation, the JCRC refurbished those parts of its DIC contingency plan (JCRC OPLAN 1-73) originally published on 25 April 1973 and revised, 1 May 1973. Plans for press statements to be released upon execution of 1-73, and a review of logistical requirements were incorporated in a revised plan staffed at USSAG and dispatched to CINCPAC on 11 January 1974.[74]

(C) Under the revised OPLAN 1-73, the Commander, JCRC, was coordinating authority for the proposed DIC operation, while the Chief, USDEL, FPJMT was assigned the task of negotiating conditions under which 1-73 would be implemented. The plan included the use of C-130 aircraft to transport the remains from Hanoi to U-Tapao Royal Thai Navy Base for transfer to CIL for identification. The JCRC reception team was to include US graves registration personnel, a public affairs officer, and a team chief.[75]

(C) In early February, North Vietnamese delegates to the FPJMT informed the United States that Saigon's progress in releasing political prisoners opened up prospects for the repatriation of the 23 American DICs in two North Vietnamese cemeteries.[76] Although the United States refused to recognize a linkage between the fate of prisoners in Saigon's hands and American DICs in North Vietnam, the

prospect of movement on the issue was encouraging. From 12 February until the first week in March, USDEL FPJMC negotiated with Hanoi the details of the proposed DIC mission. The role of the JCRC in these negotiations was largely passive except that the USDEL requested JCRC assistance in determining the technical feasibility of meeting certain conditions laid down by Hanoi. On 23 February, the USDEL presented a plan for repatriation of the DICs in a one day operation. Based directly on JCRC's OPLAN 1-73, the plan reflected JCRC inputs concerning transport logistics, team composition requirements, relevant credentials for body verification, ceremonial procedures, and public media participation.[77] The proposal was modified to cover two, separate, single-day operations and the ceremonial aspect was reduced. AmEmb decided that remains would be accepted without question on the spot; objections, if any, could be made later.[78]

(U) The two DIC operations, carried out on 6 March 1973 and 13 March 1973, respectively, testified to the effective liaison work between JCRC and the USDEL to the FPJMT. The USDEL's discussions with Hanoi included a half dozen complicated negotiating sessions, each of which demanded JCRC staffing on operational aspects. Hanoi's acceptance of most of the JCRC OPLAN 1-73 permitted CHUSDEL to concentrate on particularly sensitive issues such as the validity of American representatives' credentials, with Hanoi's efforts to secure direct diplomatic recognition, and ceremonial difficulties. The smooth

execution of the DIC repatriation operation demonstrated that the JCRC was prepared, on short notice, to conduct a team deployment within particularly sensitive political conditions and onerous technical and physical restraints.

(C) The relationship of the JCRC to the USDEL to the FPJMC was monitored and supervised by the American Embassy in Saigon. In the first place, USDEL FPJMC priorities were subject to Embassy approval.[79] This directly affected the JCRC, for its CR operations were screened by the Ambassador prior to submission to the FPJMC. General Kingston had noted as early as February 1973 that Saigon and other embassies had "received cautiously" his general plans concerning CR operations in Indochina.[80] Although AmEmb Saigon approved the first CR request forwarded by JCRC to the FPJMC in April, it soon became apparent that there were substantial differences of opinion between the JCRC and Saigon concerning CR programs. One point of contention was the proposed composition of CR teams themselves. Saigon embassy officials were anxious that the teams be kept extremely small in size, remain on the ground for very short periods, and proceed unarmed, relying entirely on popular forces for protection. The JCRC Commander urged that teams be made large enough to cover all crash site contingencies, that they be permitted to carry hand weapons, and that they be permitted to remain in an area long enough to examine the site thoroughly and to examine other nearby sites.[81] The Embassy also implied that some JCRC

selected sites were "invalid." Most important, however, was the Ambassador's apparent interpretation of the Paris Agreement provisions to cover JCRC operations within the 50-man limit. General Kingston strongly believed that this was not the case.

(C) By August 1973, the extremely cautious policy of the American Embassy was obvious. It was based on several considerations: a desire that additional US casualties be avoided; the need for a low US military profile in RVN; an effort to avoid giving the RVN an excuse to violate the cease-fire or to lay claim to areas not already in their control; and that the operations of the JCRC be overt. The Embassy concluded that it should be a firm policy that operations in areas firmly under PRG control be completed before efforts were directed to contested areas. And until the FPJMC had made greater progress in guaranteeing the safety of American personnel in these operations it was unwise to proceed.[82] In line with this, JCRC's request that the AmEmb Saigon instruct the Chairman of the US Delegation to push for FPJMC approval of CR operations in a contested portion of Phu Yen Province was denied. JCRC dropped the effort.[83]

(C) In the wake of the DRV assent to the repatriation of some 23 US DICs from gravesites near Hanoi in March 1974, the JCRC advanced a request to examine a site in a PRG-controlled area of South Vietnam in an effort to keep pressure on the DRV and PRG representatives.[84] This operation related to a downed UH-1H helicopter with six MIAs in the

Quang Tri area. The JCRC also proposed reconducting a CR operation in the Da Nang area in a second attempt to locate a UH-1H helicopter crash site with five MIAs. The site could not be located during an August 1973 operation, but new information had been found.[85] AmEmb Saigon approved these requests.

(C) The relationship between the embassies and the JCRC was also tested by differences of opinion concerning implementation of a publicity program. The problems revealed themselves in similar fashion in the JCRC's relations with Bangkok and Saigon, although the issue at hand was different. In the case of Bangkok, the Embassy was sensitive to any public media release which might suggest that the JCRC was participating in the Indochina theater in such a way as to impinge upon the Paris Agreement. This was particularly true inasmuch as the State Department did not share CINCPAC's conviction that JCRC personnel were excluded from the manpower ceiling established at Paris. The Embassy also believed that the Thai Government was not anxious to have its cooperation with the JCRC publicized extensively. In addition, publicity on JCRC operations was governed by rather comprehensive restrictions established in 1971 by the Embassy in Bangkok. Thus, public information policies prohibited any discussion of the following items in news releases: the number of aircraft assigned to any specific military unit; aircraft designations; stories including quotes by US pilots or other crew members in Thailand; base or unit population

figures; information concerning aircraft accidents; deployment of units, aircraft, equipment or personnel to Thailand; any information considered to be "national" or "international" in scope; initial announcements of significant training exercises; origin of flight of any Thai-based, US military aircraft identified as having taken part in any specific mission; and anything, "regardless of subject, which is likely to cause widespread speculation by newsmen, or which is likely to result in adverse publicity for the US government or any of its components or members."[86]

(C) These restrictions worked a peculiar hardship on an organization in which American public opinion was keenly interested, and about which a well-organized interest group in the United States was understandably deeply concerned. The result, as some frustrating correspondence emanating from the JCRC indicated, was that the mission of the JCRC was not getting the type of favorable publicity which was justified by its activities, and this contributed to the widespread suspicion in the United States that not enough was being done by military authorities in Southeast Asia to pursue the question of accounting for MIS and BNRs. The press releases which survived the test of the "sensitivity list" (or "A to Z list" because there were 26 prohibited elements) were likely, therefore, to be bland, vague, and generally less than satisfactory to the large corps of newsmen in Indo-China who wanted in-depth stories which would meet the considerable

American demand for information about CR activities. As a result, when the JCRC began to forward proposed press releases to Bangkok in March 1973, their content was scrutinized thoroughly before release. The press releases themselves did little to satisfy newsmen's demands.[87] The problem was subsequently to take a more acute form when lobby groups supporting a more vigorous assault on the MIS and BNR question arrived in Indochina convinced that the JCRC was not being given sufficient support.

(C) The relationship between the JCRC and the American Embassy in Saigon was also affected by the public communication issue, but the problems were quite different. Saigon exercised control over the type of public affairs program to be developed in support of the JCRC effort to solicit information on MIS and BNR status Americans. CINCPAC had given USARPAC the responsibility of formulating a program for each country in Indochina which would communicate the MIS and BNR goal of the JCRC to "the entire spectrum of the society, from the itinerant traders and troubadors who go up and down the Mekong River, to the sophisticated media - radio, television, [and] newspapers." USARPAC had given 7th Psy Operations Group in Okinawa action responsibility, and a budget of 1.5 million dollars to get the program underway.[88] JCRC's enthusiasm was not shared by the Embassy in Saigon. The Embassy placed no obstacles in the way of a program to solicit intelligence from RVNAF ex-PWs and from RVN military personnel in South Vietnam.[89]

But, it showed little enthusiasm for either a program publicizing upcoming CR team operations (which the Embassy thought would contribute to the teams' exposure to danger) or to a radio and media program offering cash awards for information on MIS and BNR personnel. CINCPAC, in response to JCRC's request, approved a public communications program for RVN in July, using the 7th Psy OPS and JCRC's PAO staff. The program included advertisements. Little, however, happened. On 13 October 1973, General Kingston vented his frustrations at the Embassy's restraints on the publicity program, noting that the low profile publicity approach denied the JCRC an opportunity to solicit much information on grave and crash sites which, while valid at the time, would soon be rendered useless because of the sites' perishability.[90] He asserted that to date the JCRC's "most significant successes" had resulted from information and assistance received from indigenous personnel. Nevertheless, the public communications program approved by CINCPAC for SVN had never been fully implemented; indeed, delays and bureaucratic shuffling had undermined even a low-level program.[91]

(U) Between October and December, AmEmb Saigon moved cautiously towards a more active policy, reacting in part to General Kingston's observation that the diminution of known crash and grave sites in accessible areas made the use of the media crucial for the continuation of the JCRC operation at even a low level. Thus, the Embassy approved a "low intensity trial program for the MR II areas controlled by RVN."

Even with this, General Kingston noted that "the entire public communications program in South Vietnam" remained "months behind" expectations. Thus, in his end-of-tour report, he proposed the formation of a Public Communications Task Force with representatives of all interested agencies to expedite the approval of JCRC public communications material.[92]

(C) In January 1974, JCRC requested that a "viable nation-wide program" soliciting popular support in accounting for MIS and BNR Americans be approved by AmEmb Saigon. The Embassy replied that it wanted detailed quantitative information on the results of the MR II low level program before proceeding.[93] On 12 March, the Embassy finally granted verbal permission for country-wide implementation of the public communications program on a phased basis. The program was begun 18 March 1974 and in early May, RVN's Ministry of Communications responded to a USIS request to assist the JCRC with country-wide radio and TV spot announcements.[94] This bone of contention between the JCRC and the Embassy was thus removed.[95]

(C) Another issue at dispute between the Embassy and the JCRC involved the amount of publicity which should be given to JCRC CR activities. At stake was the widespread belief in the United States that CR searches were being downplayed. JCRC was anxious to prove that it was operating as effectively as possible within the context of serious restrictions imposed from outside, and to squelch press insinuations that the JCRC was conducting covert operations.[96] Its

pressure on Embassy officials did not produce the hoped-for results.

(C) During the summer, a "point paper" developed by the PAO in Saigon concluded that a "massive public affairs program on successful operations" was "not appropriate at this time." The paper reasoned that while NOK and "sympathetic pressure groups" were increasing their demands for CR results, and that the media in turn was pressing the PAO for information, "considerable publicity on successful operations would lead the US public to think, erroneously, [that] the door has opened to full scale operations," where in fact the eight crash/grave site visits conducted since January were "barely scratching the surface of the overall task." It was important that the American public realize that the DRV and the PRG were placing heavy and debilitating restrictions on the conduct of JCRC operations. If a breakthrough should occur, the paper recommended that publicity be increased immediately and dramatically.[97]

(U) The issue was resolved in part by General Kingston, who delivered speeches to interested groups in the United States in July and in August. Perhaps a more powerful impact on Embassy thinking was the visit to Southeast Asia in October of the large delegation of relatives of American personnel missing in action under the sponsorship of the League of Families. The visit generated immense publicity in its own right and led to statements by DOD officials describing JCRC's difficulties in visiting crash sites because of DRV/PRG

intransigence.[98] In the wake of all this the Embassy came close to approving the press corps accompanying the JCRC CR team in its tragic mission southwest of Saigon December 15, and did approve enhanced media coverage of the proposed operation.[99] The ambush suspended further CR operations, graphically highlighted for the American public the obstacles which compromised the effectiveness of the JCRC, and in doing so virtually resolved the longstanding problem. It was not without significance that Congressional statements related to the MIS/BNR problem issued after December 1973 had moved away from insinuations that US military authorities were not acting vigorously enough.[100]

(U) A third area of some sensitivity in US Embassy-JCRC relations involved the RVN Government. Because the JCRC was barred from CR operations in DRV and, pending clarification of Laotian affairs, from that distracted kingdom, all activity focused on Saigon. This was welcomed by the RVN, which was justifiably anxious to prove that it was fulfilling the stipulations of the Paris Agreement whereas the PRG and DRV were not. From the Embassy's point of view, the RVN's eagerness was potentially dangerous, in that the availability of CR teams for work in PRG zones and in contested areas inevitably opened up the possibility of operations which could benefit RVN efforts to hold, and if possible increase, their territorial stake in the country. The JCRC was warmly welcomed by the RVN; General Kingston met with President Thieu on several occasions and the South Vietnamese "eagerly provided security, helicopter, and ground transportaiton support."[101] From the

Embassy's point of view the situation became more difficult as the number of viable crash/grave sites in secure RVN areas declined. Their premonitions were borne out in the December ambush, which left the impression that RVN had been too free with its assurances of control of certain regions. Worse perhaps was the PRG tactic of pointing to RVN assistance to the JCRC as a reflection of the alleged US abetting of RVN's determination to eliminate the PRG in defiance of the Paris Peace Accords. The Embassy was anxious to deny to the PRG any excuse to justify its own intransigence by pointing to this allegation. For the JCRC, however, the Embassy's caution constituted an additional limitation in the scope of its activities in the only part of Indochina where it was able to implement its mission at all.

(C) By the end of 1973, the JCRC was looking for ways to maintain a creditable CR program within the restraints imposed by the Embassy. The Embassy in turn recognized the obstacles put in the way of JCRC operations by its cautious attitude about JCRC operations in PRG or contested zones, and also realized that American public opinion was unwilling to contemplate the complete suspension of CR searches. Both the JCRC and the Embassy realized in the wake of the December ambush that the PRG could not be looked to to resolve the dilemma. In this context, therefore, the JCRC, prodded by CINCPAC, moved towards the realization that the only feasible solution would be the employment of CR teams composed of indigenous personnel for on-site inspections.

In December, in his end-of-tour report, General Kingston recommended reduction in the number of American CR field teams from 11 to 6.[102] CINCPAC agreed in principle, but postponed a final decision until the new Commander, General Ulatoski, could review the situation.[103] On 12 January, CINCPAC advised that the use of indigenous personnel be increased. General Ulatoski agreed, but stated that US personnel were needed "to maximize results of field operations, particularly in remote areas."[104]

(C) The JCRC was prepared to implement the CINCPAC directive to turn to indigenous personnel in CR operations in high risk areas. The Embassy apparently agreed for reasons of its own (a desire to reduce casualty risks to Americans and to remove the imputation of US forces assisting RVN in expanding its territory). But the JCRC raised a mountain of difficulty when it inquired from the Judge Advocate General what impact the use of indigenous teams would have on possible court action resulting from NOK opposition to DOD determination of MIS status. In particular, queried the Commander of JCRC, would indigenous personnel's testimony be accepted in court?[105] The Department of the Army transferred the inquiry to the DOD because all services were involved.[106] On 9 February, DOD replied tersely that "the proposal discussed in your message is not acceptable and should not be pursued further."[107] CINCPAC weighed in on 26 February "interpreting" the DOD message to refer only to "legal aspects of the subject proposal" and said that "no one concerned

with JCRC policy matters approved or was aware of this response." Thus, the use of predominantly indigenous field teams under certain conditions remained valid.[108] CINCPAC was supported by the JCRC on 2 March when it approved "increased utilization of indigenous personnel on JCRC teams . . . provided there is no degradation in the effectiveness of search operations." It advised JCRC, however, to exercise caution so as to preclude creating the impression that US efforts in CR operations were being reduced.[109] Finally in April, the JCRC's Staff Judge Advocate concluded that the verdict of a relevant court case, permitting the NOK an "administrative hearing prior to the determination" rather than access to Court and determining that the appearance of witnesses was not required, removed any difficulty in the use of indigenous personnel.[110]

(C) With the controversy settled as far as constituent parts of DOD was concerned, there remained the attitude of the US Embassy in Saigon. In discussions with the appropriate Embassy officials the Commander learned that the Embassy believed that the concept of using "all-indigenous personnel" was the "best option" under current circumstances. Conceding that indigenous personnel would be of doubtful value without training, it nevertheless concluded that this was the most practical solution for RVN and indeed for all SEA. Untrained voluntary indigenous operations supported by US technical guidance could be used subject to site accessibility, perishability, and

probability of successful casualty resolution.[111] Complete US teams should be used only under certain conditions: (1) no prior notification to the media; (2) possibility of no notification to the FPJMT; (3) operations organized so that they varied in pattern and lasted no longer than one day. The Embassy apparently did not consider mixed US and indigenous teams as a viable option.[112]

(C) The Embassy's concept of indigenous teams differed quite sharply from that employed in the multi-sided January and February debate within the Department of Defense. A clear contradiction could be seen between the tenor of the message from the JCS ("increased utilization of indigenous personnel on JCRC teams") and the Embassy definition of "all-indigenous teams." Beyond this, restrictions posited by the Embassy on the use of "all-US teams" were such as to compromise any operation's effectiveness, if operations were limited to one day. There was also the legal problem associated with any failure to advise members of the FPJMT prior to launching an operation; the JCRC requested that the Embassy establish an explicit policy on this point.[113] At any rate, prospects for American personnel participating on CR team missions were sharply reduced, and those CR expeditions approved during the spring of 1974 were all-indigenous operations.[114]

JCRC Operations 1973 - June 1974 (U)

(U) Measured by fiscal data and personnel strength, JCRC operations from its establishment in January 1973 until June 1974 followed a steady expansion until mid-summer 1973, a gradual diminution until January 1974, a sharp reduction up to June 1974. Operations thereafter steadied at a level lower than at any time after March 1973.

(C) JCRC was established as a separately funded organization on 24 January 1973. The initial funding was $230,000 for the third quarter, fiscal year (FY) 73.[115] An additional $130,000 was granted for the fourth quarter, FY 73 operations, bringing the total FY 73 CINCPAC authorizations to $360,000. JCRC also received $235,000 for special equipment purchases in April 1973, for a total expenditure of nearly $600,000 in the first half year of operation. From July to December 1973, JCRC operations cost $1,300,000, including $830,000 in purchased services for an underwater salvage operation. This cost removed, the remainder of some $500,000 may be compared to the total operations allocation of $360,000 for the first six months of 1973 (excluding the special authorization for equipment).[116] The proposed budget for FY 1974 of $2.6 million for JCRC operations reflected expectations of expanding responsibilities.[117] Subtracting the special expense of the underwater operations, this worked out to an average of $500,000 per quarter. By the spring of 1974, however, JCRC had experienced an under-expenditure of some $638,000, mostly as the

result of a cessation of CR team operations after the ambush of 15 December 1973.[118] Some $168,000 was retrospectively lopped off the third quarter FY 1974 JCRC budget, and another $460,000 off the fourth quarter budget to balance the under-expenditure.[119] Projected FY 1975 budget requirements ($2.6 million) seemed excessive.[120]

(U) Fluctuations in personnel strength followed a similar pattern. In January 1973 an initial personnel authorization of 45 officers, 63 enlisted, and two civilians, for a total of 110, was established.[121] On 29 January, this was increased to a total of 139 with the addition of four officers and 25 enlisted. On 1 March it was increased again to 154, with the addition of seven more officers and eight more enlisted. The next day 25 indigenous personnel were added, bringing the total complement of 179.[122] On 19 April JCRC requested the addition of 21 military spaces and the reduction of one local national space, for an overall increase of 20 spaces. This was approved by JCS on 12 May, bringing the total JCRC personnel strength to 199.[123]

(C) Because of restrictions on CR operations, JCRC never filled about 20 percent of its authorized slots. Personnel strength in place rose rapidly from 76 in early February to more than 100 in April, and to 136 in June 1973. Thereafter increases were modest: 140 on 31 July and 153 on 30 September.[124] From September 1973 through June 1974, personnel strength remained stable at approximately 155.[125] Of

this number, approximately 10 were assigned to JCRC on TDY status, and between 10 and 15 would be out of the country at any one time. PCS in-country strength was approximately 120.[126] A major reason for the failure of personnel strength figures to decline after December 1973 in line with decreased expenditures was the continuing hope that some dramatic change in the political situation would permit a resumption of CR operations on an extended scale. In November 1973, General Kingston noted that the current level of CR activities in Indochina did not warrant maintaining 11 search teams at NKP, but that no reduction was possible until adequate arrangements had been made to supply units from Okinawa on short notice to expand CR operations. As noted earlier, personnel strength reductions were authorized in the spring of 1974 after training exercises involving out-of-country units had taken place, and after suitable precedents for rapid deployment of back-up units from Okinawa had been established to the satisfaction of the Royal Thai Government.[127]

(U) JCRC operations during the period of this study can be divided into the following parts: (1) methods for soliciting information concerning MIS/BNR-status Americans; (2) CR teams' procedures and operations; (3) data accumulation and organization; (4) CIL operations and determination of status procedures; (5) publicity. Although the CR teams' functions were considered central to the special character of the JCRC, restrictions imposed by political

conditions had the effect of increasing the relative importance of other functions: to wit, increased emphasis was placed on soliciting information from non-CR sources, data evaluation procedures had to be made more sophisticated as the amount of "hard" evidence decreased, explaining JCRC's difficulties to the American public became more important when CR teams could no longer operate, and determination of status procedures was tested more heavily when evidence possibly available at crash and grave sites could not be obtained.

(U) Soliciting Information (U). Soliciting information on MIS/BNR status Americans (CR teams excluded) was originally considered to be almost exclusively identified with a publicity program designed to encourage the local population in all sections of Indochina to come forward with any information possible related to the CR question. Because such activities were not subsequently permitted in DRV, because inhabitants of the PRG-controlled areas could not supply information without inordinate risk, because American Embassy officials considered a large scale publicity program inappropriate in RVN and Laos, and because conditions in the Khmer Republic made implementation of any CR program impossible, JCRC was taxed to develop other information solicitation methods as well. Even in its limited compass, however, the use of the public media to gather information probably remained the most important; high expectations of success were attached to it, and considerable disagreement between the JCRC and Embassy officials

in Saigon, as has already been noted, resulted from it.

(C) Because of "an inordinate amount of bureaucratic shuffling," as General Kingston described it, the CINCPAC approved public communications plan for South Vietnam was not implemented until the end of 1973.[128] In January 1974, a "low intensity program" along lines suggested by the Embassy was begun. It consisted of the dissemination of wallet and wall calendars by the rural development cadre in MR II, South Vietnam, and the dispatch of audio-tape packages containing five radio spot announcements to MR II channel stations. These packages included announcements in dialects appropriate to the region.[129] The program was not a success. JCRC, in its enthusiasm to promote the program, betrayed this by reporting happily that the announcements and information distribution had resulted in one local national reporting that he had buried an American several years earlier. As has already been noted, Embassy officials in Saigon were not favorably impressed, and refused to authorize an expanded program until more results were in.

(U) General Kingston anticipated the possibility of an unsatisfactory feedback from the program in his end-of-tour report in 1973. He lamented the long time required to get the program underway, and noted the lack of compatible psychological operations (PSYOP) programs:

> (U) . . . JCRC Public Communications (PUBCOM) programs were in existence during the SEA conflict and could have expanded prior to the cease-fire and have served as a basis for the casualty resolution PUBCOM program which evolved. This was not done, and much time was lost, during which perishable targets and local population memories deteriorated.[130]

He observed that the use of non-JCRC agencies, including the American Embassy, the Defense Attache Officer (DAO), and the United States Information Service (USIS) to coordinate in-country PUBCOM efforts, had serious shortcomings in that these agencies were concerned primarily with their own operations and gave PUBCOM matters a low priority. They did not, it was obvious, share the sense of urgency which the JCRC felt about its mission.[131]

(C) Frustrated by the slow implementation of the public media approach to soliciting information, the JCRC in 1973 sought new sources. They ranged from a thorough examination of the massive documentation housed in the files of various military units in SEA to exploitation of technical innovations possessing a capability for detecting crash sites. One of the earliest and of unique value was supplied by the release of PWs in early 1973. Thousands of messages pertaining to PW release phases I, II, and III were screened, entered into dossiers, and programmed for computers. Exploitation of military documentation sources uncovered unexpected yields, such as was revealed in a review of the assets of the 432nd RTS film library at Udorn RTAFB or in the microfilm files of Project CHECO (Current Historical Evaluation of

Combat Operations).* The CHECO files yielded information on 324 crash sites.[132] The photographic interpretation branch (PI) furnished a listing of the final 189 crash sites still requiring aerial photographic coverage in early 1974 and CINCPAC requested CINCPACAF, CINCPACFLT, and CINCUSARPAC to provide JCRC the required photographs.[133]

(U) Unfortunately, much information in other sources was difficult to gain access to, either because of the decentralization of military records holdings, or because of defective cooperation on the part of other agencies.[134] This particular aspect was alluded to by representatives of the League of Families during their visit to JCRC in October 1973. On that occasion, relatives of MIS/BNRS were permitted to examine the appropriate files, and on occasion they noted that information pertinent to the CR operation contained in military records housed elsewhere had not reached the JCRC. There was also the problem presented by the plethora of small fragments of information upon which, in the absence of CR operations, JCRC was forced to rely. Digesting data of this type required the development of an increased computer capability; problems which attended this are noted below.

(U) More efficient exploitation of technological advances in detection methods came under review in late 1973. One, the

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*(U) CHECO has subsequently been renamed Contemporary Historical Examination of Current Operations.

"Photographic Superimposition Technique" attempted to make a cranial comparison between a photograph of a reconstructed skull and a picture of the live person taken from the same angle. Another, the "Combustible Vapor Detector" system, was made available by the offer of a special machine by the Andermac Corporation of California. A CIL NCO was dispatched to California on TDY to take a 7-day course in the use of the detector, which was designed to determine the presence of a body in a suspected grave site. A third, the "Soil Sample Test" involved taking aerial photographs of the foliage above a known crash site and trying to correlate color distinctions caused by soil contamination from the wreckage with identified areas of wreckage on the ground. Photographs taken under this experiment proved of little value because of the altitude from which they were taken. In a somewhat more exotic vein, but indicative of the no-holds-barred approach, JCRC responded to a suggestion from a Vietnamese intelligence specialist concerning the use of mediums, which were widely used and believed in by the Vietnamese. Whether JCRC proceeded with the invitation to employ a medium and her two contact spirits was not known.

135

(U) A year of JCRC activity yielded some important experience in detection operations, and these were included in General Kingston's end-of-tour report. These included revamping the system of storing information on aircraft identification by tail number, which is often destroyed in the crash or perishes shortly thereafter. JCRC also

recommended that permanent identification numbers be placed on each individual's belt buckle and inside the head of each boot, that non-destructible identification tags and cards be developed, and that identification slugs to be inserted in an aircraft prior to launch. Identification plates should be steel rather than tin. Finally, the DOD should encourage establishment of a long-term program for training of a limited number of military personnel in all aspects of detection related to combat operations.

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(C) The CR Team Concept in Operation (U). Two months after the JCRC came into existence, and shortly after the organization of CR functions on the basis of control teams, launch teams, casualty resolution field teams, and recovery teams, General Kingston described the prospective operations in a fact sheet requested by CINCPAC. The fact sheet reflected the original JCRC commitment to large scale CR operations in Indochina under the aegis of the Paris Agreement. As the Commander envisioned the process, the casualty resolution staff would develop selected areas in Indochina for search and investigation based on known crash and grave sites. The planning effort, using all available information, would result in an aerial search of the area, if authorized. This would be followed by establishment of a forward operating base, and later the field teams as required. Detailed search and inspection activities would follow, with the results of each mission carefully documented. When this work was complete, the

teams would be evacuated and the forward operating base removed. Ideally, if multiple sites were located in close proximity, a cluster concept could be used in which a number of concurrent and consecutive crash and grave site operations could be examined in a single mission. The various teams could be supplied from a central forward operating base, located if possible near an air strip which could facilitate arrival, resupply, and departure functions.[137] General Kingston visualized plans in which two or three teams would operate out of this type of base for a month, and might even develop other crash sites during the course of its search and examination operations. The forward base itself could be moved thereafter back to NKP or on to another forward operating base location.[138]

(C) As it happened, CR missions proved in practice to be much less ambitious affairs. Cooperation in identifying grave sites had been expected from PRG and DRV, the latter having a reputation for "meticulous" record keeping.[139] The early hope that both the PRG and the DRV would see it in their interest to accompany and assist US CR missions proved illfounded.[140] The cluster concept was never implemented because areas of highest likely concentration of such sites lay within PRG and DRV control, and because single day limits were eventually placed on many CR missions even in areas held by the RVN. Even under ideal conditions CR proved more difficult than expected. In one of the earliest, and one of the largest CR operations, a team

entered a dense jungle on the mountains west of Nha Trang for a two-day inspection of a US helicopter which had gone down six years earlier with four Americans. Led to the site by tribesmen of the area, the team found it impossible to clear a helicopter landing zone in the dense forest. Augmentees were brought in by helicopter drop. A tropical storm harassed the teams, which totaled 29 men. The helicopter was identified, but bodies were not recovered. The operation was declared "successful" based on the criteria that "the site was physically located on the ground and thoroughly searched by US personnel, thereby eliminating the need to return to this site unless new information is later surfaced."[141]

(C) Between May and December 1973, 14 grave and crash site inspections were carried out: Long An (5 - 9 May); Bac Lieu (11 - 19 May); Tuy Hoa (31 May - 4 June); Phu Yen (31 May - 4 June); Phon Loc (3 June); Kien An (3 June); Da Nang (26 June - 1 July);[142] Nha Trang (3 - 10 July); Tuy Hoa (21 - 27 July); Da Nang (8 - 23 August); Saigon (13 - 22 August); Cam Ranh Bay (17 - 24 September);[143] Da Nang (12 - 18 October); and Saigon (15 December).[144] Thirty-one remains were recovered.[145] As of December, only seven crash sites and six grave sites remained in areas of low threat and under RVN control.

(C) Even before the 15 December ambush, restrictions on CR operations were steadily increasing. JCRC's inability to conduct operations in PRG and DRV areas had been confirmed implicitly by the

refusal of either to respond to JCRC requests as transmitted through the USDEL to the FPJMT. AmEmb Saigon became increasingly uneasy about the missions. In October, one CR mission proposed by the JCRC was vetoed in Saigon on the grounds of hazards presented in a contested area.[146] A proposal for a CR operation for mid-January south of Can Tho to investigate one primary and two secondary sites was deferred for the same reason.[147] The Embassy's premonitions having unfortunately been proven correct in December, future operations were postponed indefinitely. Pending resumption of CR missions, however, the April 1973 guidelines which governed their delineation and approval were revamped. Embassy screening procedures were made much more explicit and more elaborate, and more attention was paid to the position of the Thai Government.[148] These, combined with Embassy single-day limits on CR operations, effectively destroyed the possibility of implementing the original concept in the absence of a dramatic and unlikely change in the political climate.

(C) Between January and June of 1974, two new types of CR missions emerged. The first, DIC recovery operations on two occasions at North Vietnamese grave sites, was unique in nature. These two operations were interesting not only in themselves, but because they demonstrated the type of planning required for single day operations of even the most rudimentary kind. Both, significantly, were based squarely on a contingency plan prepared in April 1973 to cover the

possibility of a one-time DRV invitation to enter its territory.[149] The plan was heavily loaded with elements more appropriate for a peace conference than for a CR operation, but the two DIC missions in March 1974 underscored the fact that DRV would not likely ever think in terms of CR operations of any other type.[150] While the two DIC recovery missions raised hopes for possible CR missions into North Vietnam in the future, it suggested that the DRV would prefer to carry out most CR independently prior to the arrival of the JCRC teams. Such was the depressed level of JCRC expectations by early 1974 that even this prospect, which might have been unpalatable a year earlier, would have been relished.

(C) The remaining option was the use of indigenous forces. No CR operations were launched until March, when resolution of the court-related questions concerning the use of indigenous personnel and some relaxation of Embassy opposition to CR missions, as noted earlier, made resumption possible. By this time, several training exercises involving indigenous personnel had been completed; American participation in all aspects of backup operations gave the effort the necessary structure.[151]

(C) In March, three CR missions composed entirely of indigenous teams worked in contested areas. The first mission was not identified with American MIS or BNRs, but was undertaken because of construction endangering the remains. On 20 March, human remains were recovered.

They were determined not to be American. From 27 to 30 March, indigenous personnel returned two comparatively complete skeletons from the vicinity of Nha Trang, and the remains were tentatively identified as Caucasians. JCRC and Embassy personnel remained in a safe area during the recovery, in line with current restrictions. Two other remains were turned in by indigenous personnel; one appeared to meet the description of an American MIS or BNR.[152] Between April and June a C-123 aircraft and an F-100 site were located in MR II, and a C-47 aircraft site located at Phan Rang was determined to be a US Navy aircraft which crashed in 1967.[153] In all cases indigenous teams were dispatched after training by JCRC. Remains of another MIS status American were recovered by ARVN soldiers while conducting an operation near An Loc, and were turned over to US personnel in a ceremony "not construed to have been low key." (It was filmed by ABC.)[154] ARVN units received fragmentary remains of an American near Phan Rang 12 June, and a local inhabitant guided an indigenous team to a site near Da Nang which yielded the remains of one American BNR.

(C) CR teams remained in "safe havens" and provided logistic support to the indigenous units. All this activity demonstrated the usefulness of the indigenous units' approach when US JCRC teams were barred from entry. The MR II publicity program was also considered to have helped. The possible difficulties of relying on indigenous personnel were demonstrated in the dispatch of a South Vietnamese CR

team 16 June to a C-123 crash site in Khanh Hoa Province. On 23 June, the CR recovery team returned with 17 bags of remains. The remains were badly commingled and portions of more than 17 remains appeared to be included.[155] Further examination of the site was seen to be necessary.

(C) When it became obvious in the spring of 1973 that Indochina operations were to be limited to portions of South Vietnam, the JCRC turned to the possibility of underwater searches for the some 47 MIS and 275 BNR status Americans lost at sea because of air crashes. On 30 April 1973, CINCPAC directed CINCPACFLT to prepare an off-shore CR operation. On 18 May, CINCPACFLT recommended that US contract personnel be employed on a provisional basis with any extension of operations beyond a six-week period depending on results. On 5 June 1973, the American Embassy replied that while they doubted the operation would be successful, they had no objections subject to RVN concurrence. A COMSEVENTHFLT OPLAN, dated 14 June 1973, solicited RVN protection, and RVN provided formal approval for the plan.[156] JCRC was asked to provide graves registration personnel as required, to provide information and coordinate on the location of crash sites, and to provide technical information and personnel as required.[157] Cost was estimated at some $450,000.

(C) The Embassy's skepticism was well placed. Fourteen weeks and "well over" $840,000 later the whole operation seemed to "evidence the accuracy of the side-scan sonar in finding metallic objects underwater," but not much else.[158] The operation covered 77 square miles,

located 9 aircraft, of which two possibly correlated to JCRC records. Fragments of one remains were recovered but could not be identified. The operation lasted 82 days and included 140 dives.[159] The final evaluation of the "At Sea Casualty Resolution Test Program" attributed the failure to "imprecise site locations, identification problems caused by debris from a decade of war, aircraft more than 90 percent buried by silting and aircraft disintegration on impact." It was recommended that the operation not be resumed.[160]

(C) Results were apparently not so conclusive as to abandon the prospect of a sea search completely. On 27 April 1974, therefore, an "exploratory" activity south of Phan Rang in Region II was offered to AmEmb Saigon by General Ulatoski. The plan, based on a fisherman's testimony that aircraft wreckage had snagged his nets, called for a small scale clandestine operation by JCRC personnel, with RVN providing protection. Press releases were prepared to meet success, failure, or premature discovery.[161] At the AmEmb's insistence, the FPJMT was not informed.[162] The results of the mission were not known; the restrictions which attended its execution, however, were such as to demand either immediate success or abandonment because of high fears for the security of American personnel. In the context of sea operations such conditions were fully as onerous as they were on land.

(C) Data Accumulation and Organization (U). Realization in early 1973 that the JCRC data base inherited from the JPRC called for

structural reforms was described in Chapter IV. It also led to the establishment of new procedures and new operational concepts within the altered structure. Changes surfaced in several areas of which two were vital: the personnel dossiers on MIS and BNRs were scrutinized and updated; the automated data processing division was established and several new and more sophisticated types of computer-related programs were introduced. The casualty resolution records, inherited from the JPRC, were designed to support the combat zone mission of recovery, as noted earlier. After these were handed over to the JCRC, it was necessary to determine what additional information was required and to prepare requests to the appropriate agencies to obtain this information.[163] This process began 5 March 1973. In April, subsequent to Operation Homecoming, all PW releasee records were reviewed and information compiled which broadened the data base for personnel believed to have died in combat, believed to be alive, to have died in captivity but whose names did not appear on PRG or DRV lists, or to be alive and probably captured.[164] These were categorized. In May, a manual review of personnel dossiers on hand (over 1,000) led to development of a master register of crash sites according to military region in South Vietnam. These sites were plotted on maps and made available to the US Consul Generals in each province. They were also annotated for computer printout purposes.[165] Later in the year, the data analysis branch conducted a detailed review of all individuals

whom the DRV, PRG, Pathet Lao and Khmer Rouge were thought to have knowledge of their having been captured. The final list of 113 individuals (105 military and eight civilians) was forwarded to CINCPAC.[166] As noted earlier, the JCRC also embarked on a long term program to prepare folders for presentation by the US Delegation to the FPJMT to the PRG and DRV with a request for information.

(C) Introduction of more sophisticated computer programming began as soon as JCRC was founded in January 1973. The JCRC Brightlight system designed for rapid recovery of PW information, was converted from the International Business Machines modular data systems (IBM MODS) language on the 360/40 system to common business-oriented language (COBOL) language on the 360/65. In February, the JCRC determined a need for an organic key punch capability, and this was approved. Computer plotting of crash site files began in March. In the same month, COBOL problems were rectified, and printouts for data use were available by 31 March.[167] By autumn 1973, plans were ready for updating and correcting the computer data base so that the computer could be called on to provide a valid analysis and correlation between such items as crash and grave sites, MIA and BNR. General Kingston predicted that in the future the computer would be able "to associate an unknown individual to a universal transverse Mercator map projection, type of aircraft, date of mission, branch of service, or medical history based on one or more known variables."[168] In line with JCRC's

agitation for creation of an expanded and standardized data base common to all services and maintained by the JCRC, two study groups, including one from the Air Force Logistics Command met with JCRC and CIL specialists in September 1973.[169] Although the restrictions placed on JCRC team operations pressed heavily on the organization's capability to identify remains or to account for BNRs, the data portion of the system became adequate for JCRC requirements by early 1974.

(U) CIL and Determination of Status (U). CIL was responsible for the examination of all evidence concerning MIS/BNR status Americans in the Indochina theater and for recommending to appropriate DOD agencies either a change of status or confirmation of status already assigned on a provisional basis. Despite the increasing sophistication of the data accumulation and analysis system, the difficulties faced by CIL proved to be greater than had first been anticipated. For the most part this reflected JCRC's inability to visit grave and crash sites in all but a small portion of Indochina. Inevitably the physical remains, clothing, identification items associated with aircraft, and other records proved much smaller in quantity and much less satisfactory in quality than were required for the determination of status function.

(C) The technical aspects of CIL's function, ranging from posthumous autopsies to chemical tests to bone classification were handled by a small team of specialists. Their specialization in effect isolated

them from the normal aspects of command and control to which other constituents of JCRC were exposed. But CIL's operation was directly affected by policy decisions made at several points during the January 1973 - July 1974 period. The JCRC was launched with the objective of resolving the status of MIS and BNR personnel; that is, of determining whether MIS personnel could be changed to KIA/BNR in the first instance, to KIA body recovered if possible, and, of course, to determine whether MIS might possibly be alive. Determination of status inevitably related itself to a definition of status. General Kingston in December 1973 noted that pressure from relatives and from Washington agencies exposed to their pressure encouraged the appropriate military agencies to list as MIS all those whose remains were unrecoverable, even when, as in the case of aircraft losses at sea, it was obvious that KIA status was appropriate.[170] This recommendation was resisted by relatives, and not until April 1974, when the courts ruled that military agencies retained the right to determine status subject to a hearing in which relatives' interests were represented, was there progress towards rationalizing determination of status procedures and reducing the immense backlog of cases about which CIL was unlikely to be able to change in the future.[171] In May 1974, letters of recommendation that over water/at sea cases be declared nonrecoverable were prepared by JCRC and forwarded to USAMAA. As of the end of June, 53 letters had been prepared.[172]

(C) The mission description assigned to the JCRC when established in early 1973 gave the impression that CIL, on behalf of the JCRC, would effect a determination of status. This was not the case, and as has been noted earlier, General Kingston's recommendation that the JCRC only assisted in making the determination was accepted by CINCPAC. In fact, however, the appropriate CONUS military agencies on whom responsibility for determination of status rested relied almost exclusively on JCRC inputs. By early 1974, it was apparent that even if all over water/at sea cases were declared unrecoverable and, therefore, assigned to KIA/BNR status, there remained a large number of cases in which a determination could be made with a very high degree of accuracy on evidence which, in itself, was less than conclusive. The passage of time, without further additions of evidence suggesting the MIS or BNR case was alive, added weight. The track record, however, proved very discouraging. In almost all cases where the JCRC made recommendations concerning MIS or BNR cases on the basis of improved data base information, USAMAA and comparable agencies in other services almost always failed to accept the recommendation. 173 This situation continued into 1974.

(C) In the long run, CIL's (and JCRC's) status resolution success was inevitably measured in terms of statistics on successful casualty resolution exercises. By December 1973, 11 remains had been identified and two others awaited USAMAA acceptance. In addition,

the number of cases recommended for resolution, based on actual operations and detailed records analysis, was 128. As of December, another 252 cases were pending.[174] JCRC's determination, however, was not always accepted by the appropriate DOD agencies, especially while court cases regarding the competence of these agencies to make a determination were pending. DOD tended to accept CIL's determinations at a rate of some 15 to 25 per month.[175] Thus, by June 1974 the number of cases resolved was only 214 and those pending was 200.[176]

(U) JCRC and Its Public Image (U). The JCRC, upon its establishment, enjoyed the somewhat uncomfortable distinction of being one of the few military operations in Southeast Asia in which a sizable portion of the American public was directly interested. It suffered the considerable disadvantage of visibility without authority, of an attractive and universally popular mission without control over political conditions likely to undermine it, of an immense and relatively well-defined objective without the necessary access.

(C) The public relations section of the JCRC (usually referred to as PUBCOM) was, as has been noted already, a plant of slow growth. Until October, indeed, events conspired to keep the public relations program at an absolute minimum. The level of operations was too low to attract wide-spread attention. The Embassy's opposition to releasing news of prospective operations, to making announcements from crash or grave sites, and to divulging details of completed operations left little

for newsmen to work on.[177] By July, the press corps was insinuating that JCRC was a covert operations, and the Commander urged AmEmb to permit more publicity.[178] He took the initiative by appearing before the League of Families Convention in Washington in July, while the PAO, who accompanied General Kingston, made several presentations to League of Family groups in Ohio. General Kingston also briefed senior officers in the White House, State, and Defense Departments. In late August, General Kingston again visited the United States on a speaking tour.[179] In Bangkok the PAO increased the number of briefings for the media, members of PW/MIA organizations, and others. First hints of an effort to get the media to accompany the CR teams on an actual expedition appeared in JCRC correspondence.[180]

(C) The visit of a delegation from the League of Families Convention in October sharply raised JCRC's public profile. AmEmb Bangkok shouldered the burden of arranging interviews for the delegation with the required complement of American Embassy and military personnel and in adjusting schedules to the visitors' constantly changing plans.[181] An interview in Vientiane with Pathet Lao and Royal Lao representatives introduced the group to some of the unfathomables of eastern diplomacy. On October 20, they journeyed by bus to NKP for a day-long briefing and review of dossiers by relatives,[182] and returned to Bangkok where at last they prepared to return home.

(U) The fall-out from the visit was predictable. CINCPAC informed JCRC that the League of Families was "particularly impressed by the JCRC," but distressed by the lack of casualty data reconciliation between the JCRC and the services.[183] The latter point was true; there is some evidence that the League's impression of the JCRC, or of the U.S. government's policy in general, was not otherwise entirely positive.[184] The League for its part was elated by the disarming, but equivocal statements by Lao officials, and reported upon their return to Washington that the Pathet Lao seemed more concerned than their own government.[185]

(C) The JCRC felt that it was time a much more positive public relations program got underway. AmEmbs Bangkok and Saigon agreed, and the appearance of a long "off the record" interview with Colonel Vincent A. Di Mauro, JCRC Deputy Commander, in the Baltimore Sun and wire services may be said to mark the beginning of a much more open policy towards the media. CBS was permitted to cover the League of Families visit to JCRC headquarters at NKP.[186] JCRC professed to be satisfied with its role in all this activity. CINCPAC was testy, rushing out with new guidelines to save JCRC embarrassment in future confrontations with PW/MIA lobbyists.[187] JCRC, however, proceeded with plans, after gaining Embassy and CHUSDEL FPJMT approval, to take the press along on the proposed mid-December CR team operation near Saigon.[188] This was eventually abandoned, ostensibly for logistics reasons, and, as a result,

newsmen were not involved in the ambush.

(C) Gearing up the JCRC publicity operation revealed some serious deficiencies in the way its representatives went about developing the public image. Draft press releases were particularly uninformative, and the strained definition of a CR "success" led reporters for US wire services in May to report back that bodies had been recovered when this was not the case. Subsequent press releases were careful to define what "success" meant. A long letter from the PAO liaison officer at JUSMACTHAI to JCRC personnel at NKP in the wake of the League of Families delegation's visit complained of the third rate photo coverage and implied that this was only the last in a series of poor performances by the JCRC PUBCOM crew.[189] On the home front, Lieutenant General Daniel James, USAF, from the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Public Affairs Office, did a credible job silencing fears that the JCRC planned to cease operations altogether, but his responses to questions about whether there were or were not PWs still in PRG or DRV hands were less convincing.[190] On the whole, however, JCRC's image improved after October 1973, and its program of educating Americans to the fact that the operation was hamstrung by conditions over which it had no control seemed to have achieved its goal.

(C) From January to June 1974, the more open policy brought good results. The December ambush elicited a tone of strong support in the

United States. After a 14 January AP visit, the wire service carried highly favorable stories on the JCRC.[191] The Royal Thai Government permitted a second CBS television visit (the first had covered the League of Families visit) in January. The two-staged repatriation of DIC remains in March was well covered. AmEmb Saigon released a statement describing the proposed mission as soon as a DRV announcement appeared.[192] The release had been prepared in advance in cooperation with the JCRC PAO officer. Inasmuch as photo coverage in Hanoi was restricted, the JCRC PAO in Saigon performed this function, while his counterpart in Bangkok superintended detailed arrangements for press coverage of the arrival of the remains at U-Tapao RTNB.[193] A steady stream of congressmen, MIA wives, CONUS DOD officials, newsmen, and SEA military personnel were granted interviews.[194] JCRC Commander, General Ulatoski, participated in two news conferences between April and June in which the potentially explosive issue of using indigenous personnel for CR operations was described. Public reaction was more favorable than expected.[195] On 28 June, General Ulatoski described the JCRC's current operations and declared he was pessimistic about prospects for future PRG/DRV cooperation.[196] Candor, and the proof positive from the December ambush that the previous policy of restricting the outflow of information on CR missions had been justified, enhanced the JCRC's public image.[197]

CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSION (U)

(U) While an evaluation of the role of the JCRC in SEA must wait until all the returns are in, the gradual erosion of the Paris Agreement and the consolidation of DRV and PRG power did not afford much optimism for an early and satisfactory resolution to the JCRC mission. In statistical terms it could be argued that the work of the JCRC had just begun; in terms of possible future access to the bulk of the grave sites and crash sites not yet examined in SEA, JCRC's most active period might have passed.

(U) Many of JCRC's difficulties between January 1973 and June 1974 were intrinsically identified with the larger failure of the Paris settlement. It cannot be said that either the DRV or the PRG showed any sincere inclination:

> (U) to help . . . to get information about those military personnel and foreign civilians of the parties missing in action, to determine the location and take care of the graves of the dead so as to facilitate the exhumation and repatriation of the remains, and to take any such other measures as may be required to get information about those still considered missing in action.[198]

This default alone was sufficient to deflate the vision and expectations of those who conceived the JCRC.

(U) All this said, there remain serious questions about the concept, organization, and operation of the JCRC. In a situation which demanded the closest possible coordination of effort between the political

and military instruments of the United States Government, the concept of the JCRC as another military establishment (albeit with a special mission) was inappropriate. As a result, the JCRC and CINCPAC seemed never to have appreciated the essentially political nature of the mission involved, and liaison with Embassy officials became one of the most painful day-to-day aspects of the entire affair. Priorities established through the State Department and priorities assumed by the JCS and its subordinate agencies were never adequately reconciled.

(U) JCRC was probably overorganized. In retrospect, the need was for a coordinator who could summon resources from all branches of the Armed Services for an essentially emergency operation, drawing men on a TDY basis. Instead, several months were lost building the JCRC into an autonomous unit, and it may be that those early months of 1973, before combatants' positions hardened, offered the best chance to obtain (not without exerting some pressure, however) entry into DRV, and perhaps even PRG areas. As it was, the JCRC was not ready to move until May, and when it was ready to do so the Paris Agreement had already been fatally compromised. It may well be also that the JCRC concept of forward bases, "clusters," month-long missions, and rather elaborate resupply constituted a type of overkill which alarmed the opposition unnecessarily. The mission demanded a Red Cross group and got a battalion.

(U) The same tendency towards autonomy and self-sufficiency worked a hardship on JCRC's public image and data collecting functions. The tendency towards secrecy was encouraged by AmEmb Saigon (to protect against additional American casualties) and AmEmb Bangkok (to avoid embarrassing the Thai Government), but JCRC contributed not a little by failing to make clear what it was trying to do and by relying on the weak reed of a PAO liaison officer. The American public wanted to hear about rescue and recovery operations and got (if the briefing material is any indication) hefty lessons on how the JCRC was organized. Press releases drafted by the JCRC were flat and inadequate prior to October 1973, when reforms took place. The JCRC definition of success, although valid enough, was never put in terms the public could understand.

(U) A somewhat similar situation existed in such subordinate functions as data processing and CIL work. Both functions required immense expertise, and the disinclination to entrust these to units outside the JCRC (and perhaps even outside the military) slowed the development of adequate JCRC support function.

(U) By the end of 1973, many of these problems had been overcome. The rather massive organizational framework was in place, and operational momentum was high. Unfortunately, by this time there was less opportunity than ever to perform. As General Kingston noted sadly and perhaps prophetically, "JCRC is not dead. . . . It is champing

at the bit."[199] Political conditions suggested that the JCRC's elaborate organization was not to be fully utilized, and the process of drawing down its resources and of reverting to contingency plans which would rely heavily on spot loans from other units was begun.

FOOTNOTES

1. (U) The Department of State Bulletin, "Text of Agreement and Protocols," 12 Feb 73, p. 170.

2. (C) Joint Casualty Resolution Center (JCRC) Report, Mission Briefing, Mar - Apr 73. (Hereafter cited as JCRC Report) (CHECO Microfilm Roll (CMR) C-003, 121).

3. (C) Fact Sheet of JCRC, 13 Apr 73, p. 2. (Hereafter cited as JCRC Fact Sheet) (CMR C-003, 118).

4. (C) JCRC Report.

5. (C) JCRC Fact Sheet, p. 2.

6. (C) JCRC Historical Report, 1 Apr - 30 Jun 74. (Hereafter cited as JCRC Historical Report, Apr - Jun 74) (CMR C-003, 038).

7. (C) JCRC Report.

8. Ibid.

9. Ibid.

10. (C) Fact Sheet, FPJMT-AD, Subj: US Delegation, Four Party Joint Military Team, 9 Aug 73. (Hereafter cited as Fact Sheet, FPJMT, 9 Aug 73) (CMR TS-220, 057).

11. (C) JCRC Report.

(U) JCRC View-Graph, Subj: Crash Sites in SEA, 20 Aug 73. (CMR C-003, 060).

12. (U) Working paper, Subj: Total Crash/Grave Sites in SEA, N.D. (CMR C-003, 052).

13. (C) JCRC Historical Report, 1 Oct - 31 Dec 73, Table of MIA/BNR as of 31 Dec 73. (Hereafter cited as JCRC Historical Report 1 Oct - 31 Dec 73) (CMR C-003, 031).

14. (C) JCRC Historical Report, Apr - Jun 74.

15. (U) Fact Sheet, AOSOP-OS, Subj: Joint Casualty Resolution Operations, 9 Aug 73. (Hereafter cited as Fact Sheet, AOSOP-OS) (CMR TS-220, 057).

16. (U) The Nation, "Vietcong denies holding Thais to VIVA head," 29 Jul 73, p. 1. (CMR C-003, 148).

17. (TS) Military Assistance Command Vietnam (MACV) History, Jan 72 - Mar 73, Volume II, p. G-5. (Hereafter cited as MACV History) (CMR TS-232, 057) (Material extracted is Secret).

18. Ibid.

19. Ibid., p. G-6. (Material extracted is Confidential).

20. Ibid., p. G-7. (Material extracted is Confidential).

21. Ibid., p. G-6. (Material extracted is Confidential).

22. Ibid. (Material extracted is Confidential).

23. Ibid., pp. G-7 through G-8. (Material extracted is Secret).

24. (U) JCRC, Commander's Policy Number 1, Subj: Commander's Guidance on Casualty Data, 13 Mar 73. (CMR C-003, 048).

25. (C) JCRC Command Briefing, 25 Mar 73, p. 2. (CMR C-003, 066).

26. Ibid., p. 5.

27. Ibid., pp. 8-9.

28. (C) JCRC Historical Report, Apr - Jun 74, p. 1.

29. (C) JCRC Historical Report, 1 Jan - 31 Mar 74, p. 1. (Hereafter cited as JCRC Historical Report, Jan - Mar 74) (CMR C-003, 033).

30. (U) JCRC Report.

31. (C) JCRC Historical Report, 15 Feb - 31 Mar 73, p. 5. (Hereafter cited as JCRC Historical Report, Feb - Mar 73) (CMR C-003, 002).

32. (TS) MACV History, p. G-8. (Material extracted is Unclassified).

33. Ibid.

34. (C) JCRC Historical Report, Feb - Mar 73, p. 4.

35. Ibid., pp. 4-5.

36. Ibid., p. 2.

37. Ibid., p. 3.

38. (U) Brig Gen Robert C. Kingston, USA, Commander, JCRC, End-of-Tour Report (Jan - Dec 73), 10 Dec 73, Command and Control Section. (Hereafter cited as BG Kingston End-of-Tour Report) (CMR C-003, 048).

39. (U) JCRC Organizational Chart, Jun 73. (CMR C-003, 017).

40. (U) BG Kingston End-of-Tour Report.

41. (U) JCRC Organizational Chart, Jun 73.

42. (U) BG Kingston End-of-Tour Report, Command and Control Section.

43. Ibid., Biography Section, p. 2.

44. (C) JCRC Command Briefing, 25 Mar 73, p. 3.

45. (C) Ltr, JCRC-PAO to Chief, Adm Div, Subj: Input for Award Recommendation for BG Kingston (U), 1 Nov 73, p. 1. (Hereafter cited as BG Kingston Award Package) (CMR C-003, 123).

46. (U) FPJMT-ZA, Memorandum For: Col Wallace, LNO, JCRC-LNH, Subj: Stationing a JCRC Representative in Hanoi, 9 May 74. (CMR C-003, 076).

47. (U) BG Kingston End-of-Tour Report, Command and Control Section.

48. (U) JCRC Report.

49. (C) JCRC Historical Report, Feb - Mar 73, p. 12.

50. (C) JCRC Command Briefing, 25 Mar 73, p. 11.

51. (U) JCRC Fact Sheet, p. 5.

52. (C) JCRC Command Briefing, 25 Mar 73, p. 12.

53. (C) JCRC Historical Report, Feb - Mar 73, p. 12.

54. (C) JCRC Fact Sheet, p. 4.

55. (U) BG Kingston End-of-Tour Report.

56. (U) BG Kingston Award Package, p. 4.

57. (U) BG Kingston End-of-Tour Report, Historical Summary, p. 4.

58. (C) JCRC Fact Sheet, p. 6.

59. (U) JCRC Press Release, Subj: CIL Thailand, 102249Z Apr 73. (CMR C-003, 094).

60. (U) Intvw, Lt Gen Daniel James, USAF, Principal Deputy Asst SecDef (PA), by Mr John Cochran on NBC's "Today" Program, 23 Nov 73. (Hereafter cited as Intvw, Gen James) (CMR C-003, 140).

61. (U) CINCPAC Briefing, 13 Oct 73, Commanders Assessment VU Graph, Operations in DRV and/or PRG Controlled Territory. (CMR C-003, 123).

62. (U) Msg, USDAO Saigon RVN to CINCPAC, SecDef, USSAG/7AF, et al., Subj: GVN Statement-Attack on JCRC Team Members, 151037Z Dec 73. (CMR C-003, 103).

63. (U) Working Paper, Chief USDEL, Subj: Plenary Session Statement, 18 Dec 73. (CMR C-003, 076).

64. (U) Msg, FSIS to USDAO Saigon, Subj: DRV Spokesman Statement on Helicopter Incident, 190605Z Dec 73. (CMR C-003, 076).

65. (U) The Nation, "VC Halt MIA Search, Blame US Role," 25 Mar 74. (CMR C-003, 074).

66. (C) Fact Sheet, FPJMT, 9 Aug 73.

67. (U) BG Kingston End-of-Tour Report, p. 6.

68. (U) CINCPAC Briefing, 13 Oct 73, VU Graph, Operations in DRV and/or PRG Controlled Territory. (CMR C-003, 123).

69. (C) JCRC Historical Report, Apr - Jun 74.

70. (U) BG Kingston End-of-Tour Report, Historical Summary Section, p.11.

71. (C) JCRC Historical Report, Oct - Dec 73, pp. 3-4.

72. (C) JCRC Historical Report, Jan - Mar 74, p. 6.

73. (U) Ltr, FPJMT, USDEL to Col Tran Nguyen Do, Chief of the DRV Military Delegation, FPJMT, Subj: General Procedures for Repatriation of Remains of Those Persons Who Died In Captivity, 11 Apr 73. (Hereafter cited as Ltr to Col Tran Nguyen Do) (CMR C-003, 148).

(U) USDEL, FPJMT, Memorandum For: Secretary of the DRV Delegation, Subj: US Proposed Operating Schedule for Repatriation of DIC Remains from the Ba Huyen Cemetery, 6 Jun 73. (CMR C-003, 208).

74. (C) JCRC-OPS, Memorandum For: Commander, JCRC, Subj: JCRC OPLAN 1-73 (Died in Captivity) (U), 12 Jan 74. (CMR C-003, 215).

75. Ibid.

76. (U) FPJMT-NE, Memorandum For Record, Subj: Summary of Private Discussions between Acting Chief DRVDEL and Chief USDEL aboard C-130 Saigon/Hanoi Liaison Flight, 8 Feb 74, 11 Feb 74. (CMR C-003, 208).

77. (C) FPJMT-NE, Memorandum For Record, Subj: Private Meeting Between US and DRV Representatives in Hanoi Regarding Repatriation of US DIC Remains (C), 23 Feb 74. (CMR C-003, 208).

78. (C) Ltr, JCRC-OPS-PLANS to Chief, OPS Div, Subj: Trip Report (U), 7 Feb 74. (CMR C-003, 215).

79. (C) Fact Sheet, FPJMT, 9 Aug 73.

80. (U) BG Kingston End-of-Tour Report, p. 2.

81. (C) Point Paper, Subj: Coordination Difficulties Between JCRC and DAO/AmEmb Saigon (U), Jul 73, p. II-2. (CMR C-003, 090).

82. (U) Fact Sheet, AOSOP-OS, 9 Aug 73.

83. (C) JCRC Historical Report, Oct - Dec 73, p. 5.

(U) BG Kingston End-of-Tour Report, Historical Summary Section, p. 16.

84. (C) JCRC Historical Report, Jan - Mar 74, p. 7.

85. Ibid.

86. (C) Staff Summary Sheet, PAO, Subj: Public Affairs Sensitive Topic Lists (U), 22 Apr 73. (CMR C-003, 109).

87. (C) JCRC Historical Report, Feb - Mar 73, p. 11.

88. (C) JCRC Command Briefing, 25 Mar 73, p. 6.

89. (C) Fact Sheet, AOSOP-OS, Subj: DAO Support of JCRC (U), 9 Aug 73. (CMR TS-220, 052).

90. (U) CINCPAC Briefing, 13 Oct 73. (CMR C-003, 123).

91. Ibid.

92. (U) BG Kingston End-of-Tour Report, p. 5.

93. (C) Msg, CDR JCRC NKP Aprt Thai/JCRC-OPS to CINCPAC, Subj: JCRC Monthly Statistical Summary (U), 040950Z Feb 74. (CMR C-003, 033).

94. (C) JCRC Historical Report, Apr - Jun 74.

95. (C) JCRC Historical Report, Jan - Mar 74, p. 7.

96. (U) CINCPAC Briefing, 13 Oct 73.

97. (C) Point Paper, Subj: Dilemma on Publishing CR Operations (U), Jul 74, p. I-3. (CMR C-003, 090).

98. (U) Intvw, Gen James.

99. (U) Staff Summary Sheet, PAO, Subj: Proposed Press Release/Media Coverage Policy, 4 Dec 73. (CMR C-003, 103).

(U) Msg, CDR JCRC NKP Aprt Thai to COMUSTHAI PAO (SH) BKK Thai, Subj: Proposed Press Release, 070730Z Dec 73. (CMR C-003, 103).

100. (U) Msg, SecState to AmEmb Saigon, AmEmb Bangkok, et al., Subj: Rep Gilman Press Conference on PWs/MIAs, 222220Z Jan 74. (CMR C-003, 052).

(U) Ltr, J. W. Fulbright to DRV Premier, Subj: MIAs, 30 Mar 74. (CMR C-003, 066).

101. (U) BG Kingston End-of-Tour Report, p. 3.

102. (C) Msg, CINCPAC to COMUSSAG, Subj: Status and Review of JCRC Activities (U), 120334Z Jan 74. (CMR C-003, 083).

103. Ibid.

104. (C) Msg, USSAG/JCRC to CINCPACAF, Subj: Status and Review of JCRC Activities (U), 190450Z Jan 74. (CMR C-003, 083).

105. (U) Msg, CDR JCRC to Hq DA Wash DC/DAJA-Litigation Div, Subj: Composition of JCRC Field Teams in RVN, 310930Z Jan 74. (CMR C-003, 083).

106. (U) Msg, DA Wash DC/DAJA-LT to CDR JCRC, Subj: Composition of JCRC Field Teams in RVN, 042200Z Feb 74. (CMR C-003, 083).

107. (U) Msg, CDR JCRC to DA Wash DC/DAJA LT, AmEmb Sgn RVN, COMUSSAG, Subj: Composition of JCRC Field Teams in RVN, 090545Z Feb 74. (CMR C-003, 083).

108. (U) Msg, CINCPAC to JCS, CDR JCRC, et al., Subj: Use of Indigenous Field Teams by JCRC, 262031Z Feb 74. (CMR C-003, 083).

109. (C) Msg, JCS to CINCPAC, Subj: Use of Indigenous Field Teams by JCRC (U), 021717Z Mar 74. (CMR C-003, 083).

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111. (C) Discussion Paper, CDR JCRC, Subj: Casualty Resolution Options and Activities in SEA (U), 11 Apr 74, p. 3. (CMR C-003, 083).

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113. Ibid., p. 3.

114. (C) Msg, CDR JCRC to CINCPAC, Subj: JCRC Monthly Statistical Summary (U), 041030Z Apr 74, p. 7. (CMR C-003, 033).

115. (U) BG Kingston End-of-Tour Report, Historical Summary Section, p. 4.

116. (U) Disposition Form, JCRC-CMPT to PAO, Subj: Operations and Maintenance, Navy Funds, 7 Feb 74. (CMR C-003, 060).

117. (U) BG Kingston End-of-Tour Report, Historical Summary Section, p. 9.

118. (C) JCRC Historical Report, Apr - Jun 74.

119. (C) JCRC Historical Report, Jan - Mar 74, p. 37.

120. (U) BG Kingston End-of-Tour Report, Historical Summary Section, p. 9.

121. Ibid., p. 1.

122. Ibid.

123. Ibid., p. 6.

124. (C) JCRC Historical Report, Jul - Sep 73, p. 3.

125. (C) JCRC Historical Report, Oct - Dec 73, p. 3.

126. (C) Msg, CDR JCRC to CINCPAC, Subj: JCRC Monthly Statistical Summary (U), 040958Z Feb 74, p. 5. (CMR C-003, 060).

127. (U) CINCPAC Briefing, 13 Oct 73, VU Graph, Special Training Exercises.

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198. (U) The Department of State Bulletin, "Text of Agreement and Protocols," 12 Feb 73, p. 170.

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GLOSSARY

ADP	automated data processing
AmEmb	American Embassy
AP	Associated Press
BNR	body not recovered
BR	body recovery
CBS	Columbia Broadcasting System
CHECO	Contemporary Historical Examination of Current Operations
CHUSDEL	Chairman, United States Delegation to the Four Party Joint Military Commission
CIL	Central Identification Laboratory
CINCPAC	Commander-In-Chief, Pacific Command
CINCPACAF	Commander-In-Chief, Pacific Air Force
CINCPACFLT	Commander-In-Chief, Pacific Fleet
CINCUSARPAC	Commander-In-Chief, United States Army Pacific
COBOL	Common Business Oriented Language
COMSEVENTHFLT	Commander, Seventh Fleet
COMUSSAGTHAI	Commander, United States Support Advisory Group, Thailand
COMUSMACV	Commander, United States Military Assistance Command, Vietnam
CONPLAN	contingency plan
CONUS	Continental United States
CR	casualty resolution
CSI	crash site inspection
DAO	defense attache office
DIC	died in captivity
DOD	Department of Defense
DRV	Democratic Republic of Vietnam
FPJMC	Four Party Joint Military Commission
FPJMT	Four Party Joint Military Team
FWMAF	Free World Military Assistance Force
FY	fiscal year
IBM MODS	International Business Machines modular data systems
JCGRO	Joint Center Graves Registration Office
JCRC	Joint Casualty Resolution Center
JCS	Joint Chiefs of Staff
JIC	Joint Information Center
JPRC	Joint Personnel Recovery Center

KIA	killed-in-action
MACSOG	Military Assistance Command, Studies and Observation Group
MACV	Military Assistance Command, Vietnam
MIA	missing in action
MIS	United States missing (American civilian personnel missing in action)
MR	military region
NCO	noncommissioned officer
NKP	Nakhon Phanom
NOK	next of kin
OPLAN	Operational Plan
PACOM	Pacific Command
PAO	Public Affairs Office/Officer
PCS	permanent change of station
PI	photographic interpretation
PRG	Provisional Revolutionary Government of South Vietnam (Viet Cong)
PSYOP	psychological operations
PUBCOM	Public Communications
PW	prisoner of war
RTAFB	Royal Thai Air Force Base
RTNB	Royal Thai Navy Base
RTS	reconnaissance technical squadron
RVN	Republic of Vietnam
SAR	search and rescue
SEA	Southeast Asia
SOP	standard operating procedure
TCN	third country national
TDY	temporary duty
THAI	Thailand (formerly the country of Siam)
USA	United States Army
USAF	United States Air Force
USAMAA	United States Army Memorial Affairs Agency
USARPAC	United States Army, Pacific Command
USDEL	United States Delegation
USIS	United States Information Service
USMACTHAI	United States Military Assistance Command, Thailand
USSAG	United States Support Activities Group

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