

STATEMENT OF FRANK METERSKY

ON BEHALF OF

THE KOREA COLD WAR FAMILIES OF THE MISSING

BEFORE THE

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES

SUBCOMMITTEE ON MILITARY PERSONNEL

UNITED STATES HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

ON

IMPROVING RECOVERY AND FULL ACCOUNTING OF

POW/MIA PERSONNEL FROM ALL PAST CONFLICTS

April 2, 2009

The following testimony will be given by Frank Metersky on behalf of the Korea Cold War Families of the Missing on Thursday, April 2, 2009 at 2:00 p.m. to the House Armed Services Subcommittee on Military Personnel hearing on "Improving Recovery and Full Accounting of POW/MIA Personnel From All Past Conflicts".

The Korea Cold War Families of the Missing fully supports any and all of the changes recommended by the current DASD of DPMO ABM Charles Ray that would dramatically alter the structure of the POW/MIA community, and thereby increase its capabilities to identify 180 sets of remains annually, for all wars combined. This would represent an increase in identifications of 150% per year.

The DASD recommends that the JPAC Lab be moved to the Mainland because of the serious short staffing problems the Lab has never been able to overcome, located in Hawaii. A study requested by OSD/DPMO to address the moving of the JPAC Lab is currently being conducted by the Institute for Defense Analysis, and its results will be available in the next 45 days. The move to the Mainland will allow the JPAC Lab to acquire a level of professionalism that it has greatly lacked for years, which is necessary to reach the DASD's goal of 180 identifications annually for all wars.

To compliment this effort, the DASD has written a new policy paper that redefines the strategy of how to make the best use of all the Government's assets used in the recovery and identification of remains. This policy paper is currently available on the DPMO website.

There is also a DPMO paper which should be available shortly, detailing by percentages how the assets of DPMO/JPAC should be used based on today's realities for each of the past conflicts.

To assure that the goal of 180 identifications take place, we recommend that JPAC be removed from the oversight command of PACOM and that oversight be returned to Army Casualty. PACOM, a War Fighting Command, has shown little to no interest in performance levels at JPAC. It also has appointed incompetent military commanders and allowed an equally incompetent civilian commander to run JPAC.

We further recommend that the current and future DASD's at DPMO be placed in unqualified command of the entire U.S. Government's commitment to this highest of humanitarian missions "The fullest possible accounting of our POW/MIA's from all wars past, present and future". DPMO is fully capable of overseeing all aspects of this mission, since it is its only mission.

If these changes are implemented, the KOREAN WAR FAMILIES will finally have what they have long been lacking:

1. An identification team working full time on the 853 unknowns buried at the Punch Bowl Cemetery in Hawaii. With the new recent advances in scientific

identification, it has been determined that as many as 400 of these unknowns could be identified.

2. A forensic team working full time on the 540 sets of the KOREAN WAR remains that have been warehoused at JPAC mostly since 1993.
3. A full time investigative and recovery team working in South Korea instead of the limited number of operations we have now due to the serious lack of qualified personnel at JPAC. This team should also be there to work with the South Korean version of JPAC (MAKRI) to ensure that no U.S. remains recovered are accidentally disposed of as they have been in the past.
4. A fully staffed JPAC would allow them (who is them?) to conduct recovery of remains operations in North Korea (4,500 or more U.S. remains are located there (where?) when it becomes operational again and not a North Korea or South Korea choice, as it has been in the past. JPAC currently denies this either/or situation as they continue to cover up its serious lack of personnel with a meaningless study of their own.

I have been asked by Irene Mandra, President of the Korean Cold War Families of the Missing to make a statement on her behalf regarding what took place before, during and after her meeting on April 4, 2008 in the office of Admiral Crisp at JPAC in Hawaii. Irene was accompanied by four members of our organization. Mr. Johnnie Webb, the senior civilian at JPAC was in attendance.

One important issue to be discussed, which the Admiral knew would be on Irene's agenda, was our unqualified support for the moving of the entire JPAC Lab to the Mainland because of a long history of its inability to fully staff and maintain personnel in the Lab in Hawaii.

When this issue was raised, Admiral Crisp's immediate response was that she was doing a study regarding the move of the Lab as requested by OSD/JPAC when, she actually was not, as discovered over four months later. To date, the Admiral has never apologized or explained why she misled Irene and DPMO by saying that she was doing the study that is now being conducted by IDA. This scenario confirms why the Lab should be removed from Hawaii and PACOM so it can be restructured.

Is this any way to maintain the trust of the Families?

This Committee has the ability to bring a renewed credibility to the POW/MIA issue by making the changes recommended by the current DASD at DPMO and others. These changes, if made, will dramatically improve the Government's ability to achieve the fullest possible accounting of POW\MIA's from all Wars, past, present and future!

Thank you.