

5 JUN 1972

Mrs. Sue B. Flesher

DATA

Dear Sue:

Thank you for your recent note and enclosed letter from Bud. I certainly appreciate your thoughtfulness in sharing it with me. I had hoped to be out your way soon and see you again, but my schedule keeps me busy and just doesn't permit it at this time.

I must agree that the California League's newsletter covers a multitude of subjects, but unfortunately very little on CONGRESS-RECAP. I understand, however, that subsequent to your letter, you have talked to Lieutenant Colonel Archie Gratch at Randolph. As you know, Sue, he is certainly one of our most knowledgeable Air Force officers in this area. I trust that he brought you up-to-date and answered your questions. If not, I suggest you contact him again.

Incidentally, it is my understanding that the Air Force has tentative plans for a series of briefings at several Air Force bases later this Summer, to which all families will be invited. This should be a fine opportunity to catch up on what is happening as well as getting answers to individual questions.

It was nice hearing from you, Sue, and please let me know if I can be of further help.

Sincerely,

Blind copy to:
Col Gratch

(Signed) BGen Daniel James, USAF

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Enclosure is correspondence from Joe McCain & GenJames' ltr to him of May 25, 1972

DATA

22 May 1972

Gen. Daniel James, Jr.
OFFICE ADJUT. GEN. OF THE AIR FORCE
THE PENTAGON
WASHINGTON, D. C. 20330

Dear Chappie,

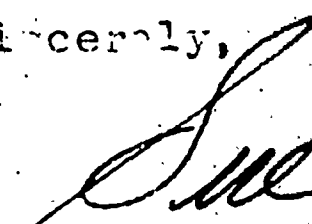
I am enclosing the only information I have received regarding the Air Force CONGRESS-RECAP Program since it was first mentioned at our National League Convention in Washington, D. C. in October 1971.

If you can make "heads or tails" out of this newsletter from our Northern California National League Coordinator, you are doing better than I! I cannot rely on this type of "reliable information" since it will be the most vital program in my life soon.

I would sincerely appreciate being briefed on the implementation of the CONGRESS-RECAP Program by an official member of the project. Is there anyone I can contact in the program?

Thank you for all your kind consideration.

Sincerely,



Sue B. Flesher

P. S. I thought you might like to read a copy of my latest letter from Bud.

NGAY VIET (Dated) 22 March 1973

Dear (the) ... Received ...
I am pleased to ...
I hope you will ...
I will have my approval ...

CHI CHÚ (N.B.):

- 1. Phải viết rõ và chỉ được viết trên những dòng kẻ sẵn (Write legibly and only on the lines).
- 2. Gia đình gửi đến cũng phải theo đúng mẫu, khuôn khổ và quy định này (Notes from families should also conform to this proforma).

In view of recent events and several requests ...
held a family meeting of all Northern California members ...
to all of you the events that took place in Washington D.C. at the May meeting ...
Only 3 No. Calif. members attended it. This just might be our year after all and ...
if it is we had better get our heads together and think about just how we are going ...
to unite to make sure there is a strict accountability of the men when they are ...
released. Let's not let another Korea situation arise if it can be helped by ...
prior preparation. Plus what about rehabilitation of the men and their families ...
Each Service seems to have some plan about this but just exactly what no one knows ...
for sure. We do have a committee formed in the National League which is ...
headed by Irene Powers. One member of it is Betty Waggoner of Reno, Nev. I wish ...
if she can come and give us a report and also this will enable us to give her our ...
thoughts to carry back to their June meeting in Washington. There are a lot of ...
things to discuss also so even if you are sick of the whole thing, please try to ...
attend so that you may listen to what has been going on at the National level and ...
various states and then give your viewpoints. I will control the meeting and everyone ...
will have a chance to state his or her own view on any subject. I beg you all to ...
remember that we are all emotional about our own situation and things can get out ...
of hand quickly. Let's keep it cool. Nothing is to be gained by anger with one another. ...
Besides one thing I have discovered at the wife's Retreat that no matter how our ...
opinions differ, down deep we love each other. Just let someone from the outside ...
pick on one family member and see the wrath that occurs in other family members in ...
defense of the picked on one. No one but us can possibly understand the agony each ...
of us bears in our own different ways. Now is the time for us to come together and ...
plan for the future.

The meeting will be held at Travis AFB in the Officers Club. This is the most ...
location I could figure out for all the families. It will be at 2:00 P.M. in the ...
Travis Room on June the 4th, which is a Sunday. The Club serves a Champagne Buffet ...
consisting of Steak, Egg (Champagne of course) etc. from 10:00 A.M. until 2:00 P.M. ...
for \$1.95. At 5:30 P.M. they serve their Sunday Buffet which includes a variety of ...
dishes (30 different kinds of salads) for \$.25 per person. So if you get there early ...
you could have lunch and after the meeting you could have dinner.

Now on to other reports— The wives had their second Retreat in April up in the ...
mountains at a place called the The Community of the Great Commission. Very nice ...
place. Our two great Chaplains from Moffett Field, Chaplain Berger and Chaplain ...
attended. Two Air Force psychiatrists also attended. Phil Metzger, a Psychoneurologist ...
from the Navy POW Research Center at San Diego came and participated. We had a total ...
of 14 wives. Four of whom were from So. Calif. It was evenly divided 7 POW wives ...
and 7 MIA wives. This Retreat was much different from the first one because of the ...
difference of the psychiatrists. The first one we had Dr. Berger, a lovely lady ...
psychologist who sort of reinforced us and gently led us out of our bitter shells. ...
The psychiatrist were another story. One of them was a bum. He upset several ...
wives, I was one of them. The other one was a more mature individual who has told ...
us since that he learned a lot from all of us while there. So I'm still not sure ...
whether it was a good experience or not for all the wives. I do think we learned ...
a lot about each other and about our selves and perhaps in the long run maybe we ...
will be better off knowing. My conclusion is that if we have another one, we will ...
ask Dr. Berger to attend and perhaps one psychiatrist. I do think it is good for ...
the service psychiatrists to see us and we are glad to see them as well as because ...
this one experience shows us that some of them are good and know and how it ...
going to help the men when they come home. They will be dealing with ...
men and we need to be able to do that. I will be having ...
situation ...

quickly.

The Sacramento group have moved to an office at McClellan AFB. New phone number is AC 916-929-0509. Address is Bldg. 2053 R St., McClellan AFB, Calif. 95652. Hours are from 9:00 A.M. to 5:00 P.M. Monday thru Friday. Mrs. Carolyn Stallcup, sister of Stan Olmstead MIA, will be our office manager. VIVA will donate from their profits for her salary. Things will be much more under control with one person being there all the time.

VIVA has put three wives on their Board of Directors, Mrs. Connie Hestle, Mrs. Elaine Pyle, and Mrs. Shirly Stavast. There are funds available to help you get started in an office in your area or for other worthwhile projects. They also provide free bumper stickers, brochures, pins, matches etc. VIVA's address is 10966 Le Conte, Los Angeles, Calif. 90024. Their phone number is AC 213-473-2901, ask to speak to Carol Bates.

Several groups of people in the So. California area have gotten together a thing called 100,000 in May. They are trying to fill the L. A. Coliseum as a special Memorial Day salute to all servicemen and women, POW's and MIA's. They believe this will show the Communists that Americans care. It is being sponsored by the L.A. County Board of Supervisors, the L.A. Memorial Coliseum Commission, VFW, AMVETS, DAV, American Legion, Fighter Pilots' Assoc. and the Air Force Assoc. It will be held on Monday, May 29th at 5:00 P.M. They will have a lot of entertainment and Celebrities. Martha Raye will be Grand Marshal. If any of you will be down there or feel you would like to attend they are giving out tickets and have housing reserved at hotels etc. You can telephone 213/395-3457 or 451-2177 for further details. Our own Tom Strotman, who works in the VA office here, has been actively involved in the planning of this.

I hope you all heard that President Nixon met personally with Maureen Ann, (husband MIA in China), Sybil Stockdale, (husband POW No. Vietnam), and Phyllis Wianti (husband POW in No. Vietnam). They were assured that the blockade of No. Vietnam will not be lifted until the men are released. The wives were selected by the family members who attended the May meeting.

I have been receiving newsletters from other State Coordinators so will send me of ours to them. Makes for better communication between the states. Most of the Western States believes that the next general meeting of the families would be better off held in Denver or Omaha. My personal belief is that I feel it would be more productive held in a more stable atmosphere and only the serious would attend however don't suppose our Eastern Establishment will be fair enough to consider our opinion. Idaho has just passed a POW-MIA scholarship bill which apparently is more comprehensive than that of Washington's since it provides for budgeting costs of tuition, fees, books, equipment, supplies, housing and subsistence. Sounds a hell of lot better than any of the bills going up in the California legislatures. We have three going up here by Burgener (SB15), Assemblyman Deddek (AB 47, and Assemblyman Chacon (AB144). Chacon's is up now, it provides free tuition and an allowance for books. The other two provides just free ~~tuition~~ tuition HOWEVER Chacon's bill is limited to California servicemen. "California serviceman" means any person who, at the time of his induction into the armed forces of the United States, was a resident of California. In my case my son Robert, who is a native born California, would be denied the benefits of this bill because his Step-Father is a legal Mass. resident. This would hit most of the POW-MIA families in this state so unless reciprocity is worked out with the other states it actually would benefit very few of us who intend to remain in this state. Suggest you all write letters to the above three on this matter. Just address them to the State Capitol. They will receive them.

John Burton also has two bills concerning POW-MIA. One is to extend the Power-of-Attorney which were cut off on most of us in the early days. Robert ones have been rewritten so they are good if the man becomes POW-MIA. The other one is to extend the Power-of-Attorney so they are good if the man becomes POW-MIA. The other one is to extend the Power-of-Attorney so they are good if the man becomes POW-MIA. The other one is to extend the Power-of-Attorney so they are good if the man becomes POW-MIA.

one company... a day... certain for money withdrawn... Also a little late

Concern for POW's of San Diego has begun marketing a new POW bracelet which is similar to the VIVA bracelet. Most of the Western State reports are that none of them are going for this. The feeling seems to be that VIVA has done alright so why duplicate the effort. Wyoming even went so far to ask some searching questions of Concern concerning what they do with their money? Seems the Pony Express ride nicked them for some money that was not returned to them. Maybe its all blown over by now. Just goes to show that people trying to work under severe emotional distress will take their feelings out on one another. Its a shame but purely human.

Maureen Evans, our Western Regional Coordinator, reports that there is a bumper sticker that can be ordered from Iowa State Coordinator that says "Dying to Vote in '72"
POW MIA
It is white with red and blue printing. She believes that it costs \$5.00 per 100. Order from Box 638, Waterloo, Iowa 50704. The name is Mrs. Charles King.

Wyoming Cares POW-MIA put out a strongly worded letter to all State Coordinators and a list of suggestions. Some of the suggestions were pretty good. I will bring them to our June meeting. Some of the strong words were unpalatable as far as I am personally concerned. I've had two letters from them. Mr. Leo R. Sanchez is the State Chairman and not a family member. Here is a direct quote:

Those of us who have no one in Vietnam but work for this cause cannot understand the apathy in some of the families. As Sgt. Dan Pitzer said in Laramie, Wyoming, September 12, 1972 (? must mean 1971) "...If the families are not working, then they don't care about their men." Out of 13 state coordinators we have talked to only one is not seeking a way out. We fail to understand why each family is not standing on their roof still screaming their frustration and anger to the world. As with most movements a minority does the work while a majority complains. He goes on to say "Don't be haughty because you have relatives who are POW/MIA." Don't make the mistake in believing you are the only people concerned.

I wonder if I can offer up my ulcer to Leo in place of standing on roof. I don't think my lungs would have lasted for five years of screaming. Like I said before, only another family member understands the silent screams going on inside. I know some of our volunteers get impatient with us and our attitudes at times and I'm sure we give them good reason however I don't think they should judge us until they walk in our shoes (stole that one from our Indian brothers). We all know that some of us can take public display a lot better than some of us. God made us all different and we should be thankful for that. What a boring place this would be if we were all just alike.

It's time to nominate a new Regional Coordinator and a new State Coordinator. Anyone out there ready to volunteer? Think about it. Hopefully this will be the last go around.

Santa Clara Co. POW-MIA League are still doing a great job for us in spite of the fact that they are losing Bonnie Duck, who has been the powerhouse over there. She is moving to Arizona. Thanks from us all, Bonnie. A job well done.

Hope that I have covered all the news and hope I have inspired you to come to the meeting to mull it all over. Know it's a long trip for some of you however some important points may be made and if it's something you don't agree with, who's to blame. The Rehab program and the program for the MIA families who will face the KIA status alone is worth putting in your two cents about.

My love to you all.

Eldora