

105TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

S. RES. 177

Recognizing, and calling on all Americans to recognize, the courage and sacrifice of the members of the Armed Forces held as prisoners of war during the Vietnam conflict and stating that the American people will not forget that more than 2,000 members of the Armed Forces remain unaccounted for from the Vietnam conflict and will continue to press for the fullest possible accounting for all such members whose whereabouts are unknown.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

FEBRUARY 12, 1998

Mr. COVERDELL (for himself, Mr. CLELAND, Mr. SMITH of New Hampshire, Mr. LOTT, Mr. HAGEL, and Ms. MOSELEY-BRAUN) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to

RESOLUTION

Recognizing, and calling on all Americans to recognize, the courage and sacrifice of the members of the Armed Forces held as prisoners of war during the Vietnam conflict and stating that the American people will not forget that more than 2,000 members of the Armed Forces remain unaccounted for from the Vietnam conflict and will continue to press for the fullest possible accounting for all such members whose whereabouts are unknown.

Whereas participation by the United States Armed Forces in combat operations in Southeast Asia during the period

from 1964 through 1972 resulted in several hundreds of members of the United States Armed Forces being taken prisoner by North Vietnamese, Pathet Lao, and Viet Cong enemy forces;

Whereas the first such United States serviceman taken as a prisoner of war, Navy Lt. Commander Everett Alvarez, was captured on August 5, 1964;

Whereas, following the Paris Peace Accords of January 1973, 591 United States prisoners of war were released from captivity by North Vietnam;

Whereas the return of these prisoners of war to United States control and to their families and comrades was designated Operation Homecoming;

Whereas many members of the United States Armed Forces who were taken prisoner as a result of ground or aerial combat in Southeast Asia have not returned to their loved ones and their whereabouts remain unknown;

Whereas United States prisoners of war in Southeast Asia were routinely subjected to brutal mistreatment, including beatings, torture, starvation, and denial of medical attention;

Whereas United States prisoners of war in Southeast Asia were held in a number of facilities, the most notorious of which was Hoa Loa Prison in downtown Hanoi, dubbed the “Hanoi Hilton” by the prisoners held there;

Whereas the hundreds of United States prisoners of war held in the Hanoi Hilton and other facilities persevered under terrible conditions;

Whereas the prisoners were frequently isolated from each other and prohibited from speaking to each other;

Whereas the prisoners nevertheless, at great personal risk, devised a means to communicate with each other through a code transmitted by tapping on cell walls;

Whereas then-Commander James B. Stockdale, United States Navy, who upon his capture on September 9, 1965, became the senior POW officer present in the Hanoi Hilton, delivered to his men a message that was to sustain them during their ordeal, as follows: Remember, you are Americans. With faith in God, trust in one another, and devotion to your country, you will overcome. You will triumph.;

Whereas the men held as prisoners of war during the Vietnam conflict truly represent all that is best about America;

Whereas two of these patriots, Congressman Sam Johnson, of Texas, and Senator John McCain, of Arizona, have continued to honor the Nation with devoted service; and

Whereas the Nation owes a debt of gratitude to all of these patriots for their courage and exemplary service: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved*, That the Senate—

2 (1) expresses its gratitude for, and calls upon
3 all Americans to reflect upon and show their grati-
4 tude for, the courage and sacrifice of the brave men
5 who were held as prisoners of war during the Viet-
6 nam conflict, particularly on the occasion of the
7 25th anniversary of Operation Homecoming, their
8 return from captivity; and

9 (2) acting on behalf of all Americans—

1 (A) will not forget that more than 2,000
2 members of the United States Armed Forces
3 remain unaccounted for from the Vietnam con-
4 flict; and

5 (B) will continue to press for the fullest
6 possible accounting for such members.

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