

U.S. - Russia
Joint Commission
on POW/MIAs



Joint Commission Support
Directorate (JCSD)

22 January 1999

MEMORANDUM FOR RECORD

SUBJECT: U.S.- Russia Joint Commission on POW/MIAs, Fifteenth Plenary Session,
November 10-11, 1998

FROM: Mr. Norman Kass, Executive Secretary

The 15th Plenary Session of the U.S.-Russia Joint Commission on POW/MIAs (USRJC) was held in Moscow, Russia on November 10-11, 1998. This memorandum contains accounts of the opening and closing sessions and summaries of the meetings held by the Commission's Vietnam War, Korean War, Cold War and World War II Working Groups.

Ambassador Malcolm Toon led the U.S. Side in what was his final plenary session before retirement as the Commission's U.S. Co-chairman. U.S. commissioners attending the session were: Senator Bob Smith (U.S. Co-Chairman, Vietnam War Working Group); Mr. A. Denis Clift (U.S. Co-Chairman, Cold War Working Group); and, Mr. Michael McReynolds (U.S. Co-Chairman, World War II Working Group). At the close of the session, Ambassador Toon remarked that he viewed the meetings as having been successful and that, as he prepared to pass his responsibilities to his successor, he was pleased the USRJC had regained the momentum which has characterized much of its work.

Each of the USRJC's four working groups reported progress during the meetings. U.S. commissioners assessed positively Russian efforts to respond to a wide range of issues raised during preparatory meetings in Washington in September, 1998. A summary of significant issues by working group is provided below.

Vietnam War Working Group: Much of the group's work focused on efforts to determine the veracity of a report cited in the memoirs of the former USRJC Russian Co-Chairman (the late Dmitri Volkogonov) that stated the KGB was tasked, in the late 1960's, "to deliver knowledgeable Americans to the USSR for intelligence purposes." Former KGB Chairman Mr. Semichastnyy was interviewed by the working group. He denied that a separate KGB plan to procure Americans for intelligence purposes ever existed. He allowed that a few lines on the KGB's desire to access American service members in North Vietnam might have been contained in an annual or semi-annual KGB operational plan. Nonetheless, he could not recall this specifically. In the subsequent work of the group, the Russian Side agreed to continue efforts, which may lead to a clarification of this issue.

The group opened discussions with the Russian Side on access to Vietnam-era materials in the Central Archives of the Ministry of Defense (MoD) at Podolsk. The Russian Side agreed to study the request and respond at the USRJC's next meeting.

Korean War Working Group: A long-standing issue was resolved when the Russian Side presented a collection of some 6,000 pages of documents and 300 photographs from the Central Archives of the MoD at Podolsk. The material describes air combat engagements between Soviet and UN (predominantly American) air forces during the Korean War. Many of the documents describe where aircraft crashed and whether parachutes were seen. In a few cases, photographs of aircraft wreckage and deceased pilots have been obtained. Prior to the plenary session, DPMO analysts were allowed to review the documents and make notes. Preliminary analysis of the notes allowed DPMO to pass information to the families of some missing personnel. A complete analysis of the documents is now being conducted. Information will be provided to next-of-kin family members as it is obtained. In addition to providing further information on the fates of U.S. servicemen, the documents are expected to assist future U.S.-North Korean Joint Recovery Operations.

In a reciprocal gesture, the U.S. Side passed to the Russians approximately 500 pages of information from U.S. archives related to MiG aircraft shot down during the Korean War as well as several videotapes of gun-camera photography. This information complements the 39 rolls of microfilm provided by the U.S. Side in September. Both Sides agreed to continue research and analytical efforts designed to further clarify the fates of missing American and Russian Korean War servicemen.

Cold War Working Group: Of central importance to the continued work of the group is access to the Central Naval Archives of the MoD at Gatchina. Discussions were initiated on access to Gatchina during meetings in Moscow. The principal Cold War analyst in DPMO's Joint Commission Support Directorate traveled to Gatchina following the Moscow meetings to meet with officials at the archives. The meeting was cordial and indications are that access to the naval archives will be granted.

Continuing efforts to be responsive to Russian requests, the U.S. Side passed to the Russians limited information on Soviet soldiers missing from the war in Afghanistan. The U.S. Side pledged to continue efforts in this regard.

World War II Working Group: The Russian Side expressed its appreciation for the death certificates of 89 Russian citizens who died at Buchenwald. The certificates were located at the U.S. National Archives. Both Sides pledged to be mindful of each other's WW II losses as work proceeds and to provide any additional information, which is located.

Next Steps: Expanding archival work in Russia - to include widening the historical scope of work currently being conducted in the Russian MoD archives and gaining access to additional archival repositories - is a principal near-term objective. During the closing plenary session, in response to Russian suggestions that the question of whether American servicemen were transferred to the Soviet Union during the Korean or Vietnam wars be considered closed, Ambassador Toon emphatically voiced his view that in both cases substantial work remained to

be done before the issue could be considered closed. The Commission and staff will thus continue to pursue information related to the possible transfer of Americans in addition to information, which relates to clarifying the facts surrounding specific loss incidents.

Ambassador Toon indicated that his successor, retired U.S. Army Major General Roland Lajoie, would likely plan to visit Moscow sometime after the first of the year to meet informally with his Russian counterparts and begin planning for the Commission's activities in 1999.

**15th Plenum of the
U.S.-Russia Joint Commission on
POW/MIAs**

**OPENING SESSION OF 15th PLENUM OF
THE U.S.-RUSSIA JOINT COMMISSION ON
PRISONERS OF WAR/MISSING IN ACTION
(NOVEMBER 10, 1998)**

General Zolotarev: Mr. Ambassador, colleagues, ladies and gentlemen. Once again we meet in Moscow to determine the direction of our joint work. A little over a year has passed since our last plenum, and during that time the working groups of the Commission have continued their work in accordance with our agreed plan. This is our fifteenth joint meeting, and all participants know very well the problems before this Commission. Thus, let us transition to the status and the direction of our specific key issues for the upcoming session.

1. World War II

The primary work of the World War II section is complete. What is left now is to determine the fates of 39 Americans considered missing. There are four Russian federal agencies (Federal Security Service, Ministry of Internal Affairs, Ministry of Defense and Rosarchiv) helping in the analytical work and the search efforts. The results of our efforts will be discussed in detail during the working group meeting. For our Side, we would like to obtain a list of Russian citizens who died in repatriation camps in the American and British occupation zones in Germany. When we presented this request during the visit to the National Archives in Washington, DC, we were informed that this is possible.

2. Korean War

During this time the Korean War section is studying the microfilm that was turned over from the United States and trying to locate and interview witnesses and participants in the military action in Korea. In total, 350 witnesses were interviewed, including 6 American pilots who participated in air combat over Korea. In conjunction with archival research in

the U.S. and the testimonies of American and Russian veterans, the Korean War Working Group was able to determine additional facts surrounding the deaths of 4 Soviet pilots and burial locations for 19 Soviet pilots and 22 air defense personnel considered missing-in-action in Korea during 1950-1953. Work to locate additional documents and interview witnesses will continue. During our September meeting in Washington, DC, we passed a portion of our unclassified documents that provided additional clarification surrounding the deaths of American airmen in the Korean War. Today we are passing the remaining portion of this document collection. We are hopeful that we will also receive [from you] copies of gun camera photography.

3. Cold War

The Cold War section continues its work in determining the exact location and studying the possibility of salvage from the Pacific Ocean airplanes that were shot down during the 1950s and 1960s. This includes the following incidents: 6 November 1951, 7 October 1952, 13 June 1952, and 29 July 1953. The future of this work is tied for the most part to the American readiness to proceed with the salvage operation. The cost and specifics of this job will be determined after the American Side of the Commission confirms its readiness to undertake this effort.

In investigating the facts surrounding the 8 April 1950 incident over the Baltic, we have advanced the inquiry a great deal. Recently we passed for your review declassified documents that were obtained from the Central Naval Archives in Gatchina ("Search Efforts in the Area of Liepaja" and the *Historic Journal of the Fifth Fleet 1950-1955*).

One of the more difficult, but at the same time more optimistic cases, is the search for the remains of Major Posa, who perished over the Barents Sea on 1 July 1960. Right now there are efforts to locate first-hand witnesses who can provide information as to the location of the buried remains. Until that time, we would consider excavation attempts in search of Major Posa's remains in the area of the Kildin Island to be imprudent. However, we are hopeful that we will be able to locate some kind of information that can help locate the remains of Major Posa. At the present time, we are attempting to locate 17 servicemen who served in the Severomorsk area in 1960. The Russian Side is willing to continue our work in this direction.

4. Vietnam

Working in the aforementioned direction, we have experienced some successes. However, there appears to be a feeling of tension in the Vietnam War Working Group. There is the recurring issue of furnishing information on American prisoners-of-war from Vietnam. Regarding the request of the American Side to provide a document called "Soviet-Vietnam Talks in April 1967 and the Future Policy of the Vietnamese Workers' Party [VWP] on Resolving the Vietnamese Problem," we have provided a written response (dated 4 December 1997, No.A47-545/6) reflecting that, according to Vietnamese documents, during the "dry" season of 1966/67 in Vietnam, 2,000 American airplanes were shot down and up to 250 American pilots were taken prisoner. Since the document is still classified, rendering this information in another format at

this time is not possible. In place of the document requested, we provided a copy of the first part of a memorandum from the First Secretary of the USSR Embassy in the Democratic Republic of Vietnam, M.V. Khorev, entitled "Military-political Results of the Second 'Dry Season' (October 1966-April 1967)," that discusses the question of missing Americans in Vietnam and completely duplicates the information in the classified document.

Two other documents dealing with the reports of the Vietnamese General Tran Van Quang were also requested: "The Translation of the Report of the Deputy Chief of General Staff of the Vietnamese People's Army Tran Van Quang on the Status in South Vietnam" and "Policy Analysis of the Upcoming Operations in South Vietnam and the Requirement for Future Armed Conflict." These documents are also classified and cannot be declassified as a whole; however, we are studying the possibility of developing a special procedure to allow you to become familiar with their contents without turning them over to the American Side.

A determination of the accuracy of the information in the memoirs of the late General D. A. Volkogonov regarding the "KGB plan to deliver to the USSR informed Americans for intelligence purposes" continues to remain an issue. We informed you verbally that no information corroborating this statement has been located and that the Commission does not have the document referred to by the late General Volkogonov. However, since our answer is not sufficient for the American Side, we have invited to our meeting the former Chairman of the KGB, Vladimir Efimovich Semichastnyy, who was referred to in D. A. Volkogonov's memoirs as the author of the document mentioned above. We believe that he will be able to provide a complete answer to this sensational question.

As stated before, no factual evidence exists that American prisoners of war were ever transferred to the territory of the former USSR during the period of the Vietnam War. At the request of the American Side of the Commission, we have carefully reviewed all documentary and oral testimony on supposed transfers of American prisoners of war from Vietnam to the Soviet Union. However, we were not able to ascertain any new information from the archival documents or interviews with individuals. Therefore, the Russian Side proposes to consider this issue closed.

Any other questions can be examined in detail on a working group level when the Vietnam War Working Group meets in session.

With respect to all that has been said, we conclude that the joint work of the U.S.-Russia Commission has been very productive and that our Side did everything possible to answer all of your questions. Thank you for your attention.

Ambassador Toon: General Zolotarev, my colleagues and I are pleased to be in Moscow again for the 15th Plenary Session of our Joint Commission. I appreciate your hospitality and thank you for hosting the session. As we discussed in September, this plenary session will be my last as U.S. Co-Chairman. I am looking forward to productive meetings today and tomorrow. During this time, I propose we focus our efforts on resolving current issues and outlining future plans in our work.

The preparatory work we did in Washington during your September visit was encouraging as has been the work done on both Sides in the weeks since that visit. Based on these efforts, we have every reason to expect this meeting to be a success.

I know I speak for Congressman Sam Johnson, the U.S. Co-Chairman of the Korean War Working Group, who was unable to join us here in Moscow due to prior commitments in his home state of Texas, and for all of us here today in extending our sincere thanks for your help in facilitating the provision of nearly 6000 pages of documentation and some 300 photographs from the Central Archives of the MoD at Podolsk. These materials will enable us to clarify the fates of many American flyers unaccounted-for from the Korean War. Indeed, information we have previously gained through our work in Podolsk has allowed us to clarify the fates of more than 30 U.S. Korean War pilots.

Building on the success of our efforts to locate at Podolsk information on Korean War-era U.S. flyers who are unaccounted-for, we would like to initiate discussions on expanding our work in the archives to include information from the Vietnam War and Cold War time periods. In the working group meetings that will be held later today and tomorrow, the U.S. Co-Chairmen will propose widening the focus of work in Podolsk to include Vietnam War issues. As regards the Cold War, widening our efforts to include access to records held at the Naval Archives in Gatchina is a top priority.

Your meeting in September with American Korean War veteran pilots who were credited with shooting down MiG aircraft initiated several avenues of research, which might lead to a fuller accounting for your Korean War- era unaccounted-for servicemen. To this end, our staff has conducted research in U.S. archives for material on Korean War air engagements, which may be useful to your accounting efforts. On behalf of the U.S. Side, I am pleased to pass to you today approximately 500 pages of materials from our Air Force and Navy archives. The materials, which detail U.S. shootdowns of MiG aircraft during the Korean War, are analogous to the materials you have provided us from Podolsk. I hope they are, in like fashion, valuable to your analytical efforts. We look forward to hearing your assessment of the materials and suggestions for future work in this regard.

In light of the archival work being done by both Sides, we have prepared draft text of an agreement which would formalize our archival efforts, allowing us to plan more efficiently our future work. I would like to present the draft for your consideration. I think the agreement would be beneficial to us both and ask that you respond through our Moscow office with your assessment and comments.

As you know, Senator Smith, the U.S. Co-Chairman of the Vietnam War Working Group, will join us later this afternoon. He will pursue a full agenda of issues within the working group. For the most part I will defer to the Senator on those issues. However, there is one issue, which he will certainly pursue, which I believe has a commission-wide impact and should thus be raised in open session. I refer here to the revelation in General Volkogonov's work that he located a document, which stated that in the late 1960s, the KGB was given the task of delivering knowledgeable Americans to the USSR for intelligence purposes. Upon discovering the document, General Volkogonov spoke directly with Mr. Primakov, then head of the Foreign

Intelligence Service. After a time General Volkogonov received a reply that the plan was not implemented.

We have not seen the document, but, based on General Volkogonov's characterization, I agree that the document is sensational. The seriousness with which this information was met in the U.S. Government is noted in an October 29, 1998 letter from Secretary of State Albright to Foreign Minister Ivanov. In her letter, the Secretary stated, "President Clinton, the U.S.-Russia Joint Commission and I would appreciate your assistance in looking into General Volkogonov's assertions." As Co-Chairmen of this Presidential Commission, I believe we must do everything within our power to investigate thoroughly the information raised in General Volkogonov's memoirs. Among other requests, we have asked, through diplomatic channels, for a meeting with Prime Minister Primakov. I ask that you lend your active support to this and other requests we have made to follow up on this information.

General Zolotarev, let me repeat my thanks for your efforts to further the work of our Joint Commission. I am optimistic about the current state of our work and look forward to our future cooperative efforts.

WORLD WAR II WORKING GROUP (WWII WG)

The World War II Working Group of the U.S.-Russian Joint Commission on POW/MIAs met in the Kostroma Room of the Hotel National. Present for the Russian Side was Co-Chairman Colonel Nikolay Ivanovich Nikiforov, Expert on the Commission and Co-Chairman of the WWII Working Group, and Colonel Konstantin Sergeyeovich Nikishkin, Commission Member and Deputy Director of the Ministry of Internal Affairs, Directorate for Liaison with the Regions and the Public. Present for the U.S. were Michael McReynolds, Commission Member and Co-Chairman of the WWII Working Group, and Dr. James Connell, Chief, Joint Commission Support Directorate-Moscow, who served as translator.

The Russian Side presented information on two American MIAs from a list of 39, and pledged to continue the search for information on the remaining 37 individuals. The U.S. Side then passed Holocaust Death Certificates for 89 Soviet citizens who perished in the camp at Buchenwald. The certificates were found in the National Archives Collection of WWII War Crimes Records, 1933-1950, Record Group 338, Box 161, 000-50-9, Beech Miscellaneous Exhibit #775032.

Dr. Connell then introduced a discussion relative to dealing with public inquiries from relatives of individuals who went missing during WWII and the chaotic post-war period. This includes the millions of Soviets who became Displaced Persons (DPs) and often wound up in the West having lost all contact with relatives behind the "Iron Curtain." Both JCSD-Moscow and Colonel Osipov's Department of POWs, Internees, and MIAs receive a large number of postal letters, e-mail letters and facsimile transmissions seeking help in finding long-lost relatives. He noted that, unfortunately, often we can only refer the relative to organizations in Germany which monitor WWII losses, the Central Archive of the MOD at Podolsk, the Russian Special Archive, which holds the WWII GUPVI POW records, the U.S. National Archives and Records Administration,

and the Library of Congress. Privacy laws make searches other than in telephone directory databases very difficult. The passage of fifty years, the fact that DPs often simplified their last names to conform with the host country, and their efforts to erase the paper trail of their origins and experiences, make the problem even more difficult. All agreed that the Commission should do what it can to assist these relatives and experience in answering these requests should be shared. At some point there should be a methodology worked out to address this all too human problem.

Since many DPs came to America from third countries via Canada, Mr. McReynolds noted that records in the National Archives from INS entry points along the Canadian border might yield some information. Such records are not computerized and research would be very tedious, especially to look for a single individual. All agreed that the Commission and the WWII Working Group should continue to address solutions to the problem of responding to relatives trying to re-establish contact after decades of separation. For now, a kind letter with some modest suggestions for further research may be the best we can do.

The session closed with mutual support for the continued humanitarian work of the Commission.

KOREAN WAR WORKING GROUP (KWWG)

Following the opening session of the 15th Plenum of the U.S.-Russian Joint Commission on POW/MIA Affairs, held at the National Hotel in Moscow, Russia, on 10-11 November, 1998, the Korean War working group (KWWG) meet to discuss past work and desires for future cooperative efforts.

Colonel Orlov opened the meeting by thanking the U.S. Side of the KWWG for documents presented to the Russian Side by Ambassador Malcolm Toon. These documents were collected from U.S. Navy Operational and Aviation Archives at the Washington Navy Yard, the Air Force History Support Office at Bolling AFB, the National Records and Archives Center in St. Louis, Missouri. The documents pertain to Soviet aircraft losses during the Korean War and are a representative sample of the material available in U.S. archival institutions.

Colonel Orlov also expressed his desire to continue assisting the U.S. Side of the KWWG in their archival work at the Central Archive of the MOD in Podolsk, Russia. He stated that the Russian Side will make every effort to accommodate U.S. analysts and make materials available, in particular those relating to the Operational Aviation Group which operated in China prior to and during the Korean War.

Mr. Paul Vivian expressed the gratitude of the U.S. Side for the more than 6000 pages of documents and 300 photographs from the MOD archive at Podolsk which the Russian Side presented during the opening plenary session. .

Ms. Kristan Mack presented Colonel Orlov a letter from Congressman Sam Johnson, expressing his regret that he was unable to attend the Plenum. Congressman Johnson stated in his letter that he is eager to continue our joint efforts in the KWWG.

Mr. Vivian stated that over the past two years 15 sets of remains of U.S. servicemen have been recovered in North Korea through U.S.-North Korea Joint Recovery Operations. He stated that he is confident the documents received from the MOD archives will assist the U.S. Side in locating additional remains during future Joint Recovery Operations.

Having just recently returned from a trip to North Korea, Mr. Blasser stated that until now Joint Recovery Operations in North Korea have been based on second-hand witnesses. These efforts are primarily focused on recovery of ground forces. Mr. Blasser stated that he is confident the documents received from the MOD archive will shed light on the fate of missing U.S. pilots and aircrews. He stated that the Soviet forces operating in the Korean theater of war maintained excellent records. Most of the documents containing shutdown information are accompanied by topographical maps. These documents and maps will greatly assist in the Joint Recovery Operations. Mr. Blasser also expressed the gratitude of American family members and veteran organizations who are eager to receive information relating to the fates of their lost loved ones and comrades.

Mr. Vivian requested that U.S. analysts be allowed to expand the scope and frequency of access to the MOD archives. Currently U.S. analysts are permitted to work only four days a month in the Podolsk archives. The U.S. Side, Vivian noted, would like to expand access to a minimum of two days a week in Podolsk. Additionally, Mr. Vivian asked that the scope of U.S. research efforts be expanded to include the documents and records of the Air Force Operational Group that operated in China during the Korean War. Finally, the U.S. Side requested that the Russian Side increase its efforts to declassify Korean War materials relating to the 64th Fighter Aviation Corps and its subordinate units. Vivian noted that these documents are nearly fifty years old and certainly can no longer be considered sensitive.

Colonel Filippov indicated that he did not anticipate any problems with expanding the number of days and the scope of research conducted by U.S. researchers in Podolsk. However, Colonel Filippov was quick to note that the Russian General Staff is the operational authority responsible for documents contained in the MOD archives. Consequently, all requests for access and materials in the archives must be approved by the General Staff. Colonel Filippov then noted that the current agreement with the General Staff allows the U.S. analysts access four days a month and expires on 4 December 1998. He said that the U.S. Side should observe all the regular formalities in requesting access to Podolsk, that is, the American Side should write a letter to requesting access to Podolsk. The letter should state when the U.S. researchers want to start their research in the new year (January 1999) and for how many days. The letter should also outline which materials the American Side wants to review. The letter should note, of course, that the requests for additional access are for the start of the next calendar year. As for the U.S. request that the Russians speed up their declassification of material, Colonel Filippov stated that this could not take place in the near future due to the complications associated with such work.

Colonel Orlov agreed that the requests for additional access should begin at the start of the next calendar year. He noted that expanding the scope of the archival research , to include the Operational Group, may not come to fruition sooner than February or March due to the work required in locating the associated materials in the archives.

Mr. Vivian then noted his pleasure with the fact that there were no disagreements between the two Sides on U.S. research in the Podolsk archives and emphasized his appreciation for the expanded assistance at the MOD archives.

Mr. Blasser asked Colonels Filippov and Chuvashin if it would still be necessary for the U.S. Side to submit requests monthly to the MOD archives for access.

Colonel Filippov stated that the U.S. analysts must still submit requests for access with proposed dates and materials to be accessed for research; however, these requests could be submitted monthly, semi-annually or annually.

Mr. Blasser then asked the two colonels for a recommendation as to how many days a month the U.S. analysts could request for access to the MOD archives. Blasser noted that the American Side would like to work a minimum of two days a week in Podolsk.

Colonel Chuvashin indicated that he had no problems with the U.S. request. Colonel Filippov's answer was noncommittal, but he indicated that two days a week was probably achievable. He reminded Mr. Blasser that the MOD archives have other responsibilities and patrons at their facilities. Nevertheless, the staff of the MOD archives will continue to cooperate with the U.S. analysts and make every effort to assist them in expanding their access to materials to the extent possible.

Mr. Vivian stated he had two final points he would like to discuss. The first point concerned Captain William Crone. The second pertained to what the U.S. Side can do to further assist the Russian Side in its efforts to account for its missing personnel.

Mr. Vivian reviewed for the Russian Side information recently received by the U.S. Side in reference to Captain William Crone, a fighter pilot missing in action from the Korean War. Mr. Vivian provided a summary of the events and of an interview held with a former Soviet veteran of the Korean War, in which it was stated that Crone was seen alive with three other American service members at a Soviet air base in Korea. Names and addresses of former Soviet security service officials and advisors who served in the Korean Theater of Operations during the Korean War were requested. This information would be used in an effort to gain additional information pertaining to the fate of Crone and other unaccounted-for U.S. service members.

Colonel Orlov with uncharacteristic vigor expressed his view that there was nothing to the story that Crone and other Americans may have been sent to the Soviet Union during the Korean War. On several occasions, Colonel Orlov repeated his belief that "there is no concrete evidence" to support the allegation that Americans were transferred to the Soviet Union. Nevertheless, he said the Russian Side would make an effort to provide the U.S. Side with the names and addresses of the Soviet security service personnel and advisors in the Advisors Group.

Details on the archival materials given to the Russian Side earlier in the day. The documents that were passed were U.S. records on the shutdown of "communist" aircraft by the United States during the Korean War. These documents are a representative sampling of materials available in U.S. archives. The group discussed the desirability of conducting additional research with these documents. The difficulty in correlating shutdown data in the U.S. and Russian records was noted. For example, the time and place that an aircraft went missing are important bits of information. Often several aircraft were lost on the same day, but at different times of the day and in different places.

The Russian Side was pleased with the archival documents it received earlier in the day. It would like to receive the same sort of documents in the future. Problems relating to correlating shutdown losses were acknowledged. Colonel Orlov indicated the Russian Side would attempt to provide more detailed information on their losses in order to facilitate accurate correlations.

In a follow up on successful meetings held in Washington in September, 1998 between Russian members of the commission and U.S. Korean War-era fighter pilots, the possibility of contact with the U.S. veteran pilots in the F-86 Sabre Jet Pilot Association was raised. In conversations with staff members on the U.S. Side, members of the association expressed a willingness to meet with the Russian Side and with former Soviet veterans of the Korean War. The American veterans also indicated that they would like to help the Russians in clarifying the fates of their unaccounted-for servicemen from the Korean War.

Colonel Orlov again expressed his desire to meet with U.S. veterans and thanked the U.S. Side for their readiness to provide access to U.S. archives and assist with archival research.. He had recently attended a meeting of former Soviet Korean war veterans and they too expressed their willingness to meet with U.S. veterans of the war. He said that there were "no" other issues to be discussed and that we should reconvene the next day, 11 November 1998, to prepare communiqués.

VIETNAM WAR WORKING GROUP (VWWG)

Interview with former KGB Chief Vladimir Semichastnyy, November 10, 1998

Representatives of the Joint Commission interviewed the former Chief of the Soviet KGB, Vladimir Semichastnyy, regarding his involvement in an alleged KGB plan from the late 1960s to "deliver knowledgeable Americans to the USSR for intelligence purposes."

Semichastnyy denied any knowledge of the KGB plan that was revealed by General Volkogonov in his recently published memoir. Semichastnyy said that the KGB would not have had a specific plan to transfer American citizens to the USSR. He acknowledged, however, that an objective to access American military personnel in Southeast Asia might have been included as a part of a six-month or one -year plan of overall KGB foreign intelligence objectives. Semichastnyy

admitted that he might have signed such a document containing a brief reference to American servicemen, but he could not specifically recall having done so.

Semichastnyy also revealed what appears to be a previously unknown contact between a Soviet KGB officer and an American POW during the Vietnam War. He denied any knowledge of American POWs from the Korean War having been transferred to the former USSR.

Vietnam War Working Group Sessions, 10-11 November 1998

Colonel Osipov raised the U.S. request for access to the MFA document, entitled "Soviet-Vietnamese of April 1967 and the Subsequent Workers' Party of Vietnam Policy with regard to a Vietnamese Problem Settlement." Colonel Osipov and Mr. Sokolov, a MFA representative, indicated the decision on whether to declassify the document would be made within the next month. Mr. Sokolov also confirmed that there were discussions on limiting release of documents when a third country such as Vietnam was mentioned.

Discussions also were conducted on the long-standing request for two GRU documents ascribed to Tran Van Quang. Osipov noted the two Quang documents are not subject to declassification. He agreed to seek an arrangement with the declassification committee so that Senator Smith and an interpreter would be able to review the documents. This process could take two or three months, Osipov claimed. Osipov refused to provide any information about the documents until the declassification committee had met and approved some form of American access to these documents.

Yuriy Kalinin reiterated many of the previous remarks of Vladimir Semichastnyy concerning the alleged KGB plan to transfer Americans. Kalinin noted that much work remains to be accomplished on the issue of Volkogonov's memoir. He added that the Russian Side would meet with the SVR and get a summary or description of the plan and that the Russian Side would have something definitive within a month. Osipov noted the document, if one exists, likely would not be declassified. Most Russians participating in this session disparaged Volkogonov's account of these documents. They implied that Volkogonov either was mistaken, confused, or lacked candor. They questioned whether the purported KGB plan applied to American POWs in Vietnam, and they suggested that U.S. access to such highly sensitive SVR documents would be no more likely than Russian access to similarly sensitive CIA documents. Senator Smith offered to produce a U.S. position paper on the Volkogonov memoir outlining American thinking on the issues raised by Volkogonov's memoir.

Finally, the GRU representative on the Commission, Colonel Verba, agreed to help facilitate interviews with several GRU officers with whom the U.S. Side has wanted to speak. He also claimed that the *spetsgruppya* had nothing to do with U.S. POWs. The *spetsgruppya* was subordinate to the Ministry of Defense and industry, and, therefore, any *spetsgruppya* information would be located in the MoD archives, Verba commented.

The Russian Side of the Commission was unable to set up several meetings with Russian officials who were requested by Senator Smith. These requests included meetings with the

following: Prime Minister Primakov, Foreign Minister Ivanov, GRU Chief Korabelnikov, SVR Chief Trubnikov, and Petr Ivashutin (GRU Chief during the acquisition of the 1205 document).

COLD WAR WORKING GROUP (CWWG)

The Cold War Working Group was represented on the U.S. Side by Mr. A. Denis Clift, U.S. Co-Chairman; and LT Sergey Sherman, Senior Analyst. The Russian Side was represented by Col Vladimir Vinogradov, Russian Co-Chairman; Mr. Leonid Biryukov, Representative for the POW Affairs from the Council of Heads of State of the Commonwealth of Independent States; Mr. Dmitriy Vorob'yev, SVR; and Ms. Maria Lotareva.

Mr. Clift passed to Col Vinogradov and Mr. Burikov results from work that the U.S. Side performed on locating and interviewing former Soviet soldiers who were captured in Afghanistan and are presently residing in the United States. The U.S. Side was able to locate and interview three of eighteen soldiers. The information collected during the interviews was passed to the Russian Side. Mr. Burikov said the information was helpful.

In addition, Mr. Clift passed to the Russian Side a 5 November 1998 memorandum compiled by the U.S. Joint Staff on additional Russian losses during the Cold War. This Joint Staff review was an initiative undertaken by the U.S. Side earlier this year. Its purpose was to have the Joint Staff conduct another comprehensive review of their holdings for information on Russian Cold War losses that could have possibly been missed during the 1993 Joint Staff review.

Finally, Mr. Clift passed to the Russian Side a 18 September 1998 response from the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) to the Department of Defense stating that the United States did not have any more information on the lost Russian submarine, K-129. Mr. Clift stated that the United States has exhausted its efforts on this issue. He reviewed U.S. actions including provisions of information and artifacts 1991-1995.

Colonel Vinogradov asked the U.S. Side to continue its efforts in identifying additional Russian soldiers from Afghanistan who are living in the United States. In addition, Col Vinogradov passed a list of 21 names of Russian POWs living in foreign countries and asked the U.S. Side to try to locate and interview them [Note: This list includes 18 names previously identified by the Russian Side as soldiers living in the United States]. In addition, Col Vinogradov passed a list of 14 Soviet air losses and 4 submarine losses and asked the U.S. Side to review the Klaus Files at the National Archives for information on these incidents. Colonel Vinogradov asked that the U.S. Side continue to search for more K-129 information. Mr. Clift reiterated that Ambassador Toon had told the Russian Side in 1995 that the U.S. has no more information. He recommended that if the Russians still wish to pursue the loss of the submarine they raise the issue in Plenary Session.

29 JULY 1953 (RB-50): Mr. Clift continued to press Col Vinogradov and Mr. Vorob'yev (SVR) for more information on this case. He stated that there have been numerous reports that lead to

the possibility that some members of the crew might have been rescued. He cited the following statements made by individuals regarding this case:

- The lone U.S. survivor of the crash said that there were Soviet boats in the area that could have picked up survivors.
- In 1994, General Volkogonov stated in a BBC interview that "There were boats in the area. We can't find the logs. This, too, makes me suspicious."
- In 1993, Sergeant Georgiy Kravchenko [who was an AAA gunner on Russkiy Island] said that he saw seven parachutes.
- Col Gavril Korotkov [military intelligence specialist stationed in Vladivostok in 1953] stated that he heard survivors were picked up by Soviet forces and were handled by the security services.

Mr. Clift stated that this is a very troubling case given all the circumstantial evidence and asked for Russian help from Col Vinogradov and from the Mr. Vorob'yev (SVR representative) to determine a prudent course of action to continue with the investigation.

Col Vinogradov and Mr. Vorob'yev stated that they will again review the records of the Security Services and issue their combined findings to the U.S. Side of the Commission.

17 APRIL 1955 (RB-47): Mr. Clift showed Col Vinogradov a Soviet document indicating that in 1955 the Russian Border Guards recovered part of the wreckage of the RB-47 and passed it on to the local GRU representatives. Mr. Clift stated that in 1995 the U.S. Side requested that the Russian Side review its holdings for information on this wreckage, but has not received a response. Col Vinogradov stated that he will work with the Border Guards and GRU representatives to try determine if any information on the recovered wreckage is available in the archives. Col Vinogradov promised to pass his results to the U.S. Side.

GATCHINA ARCHIVES: The U.S. Side asked for access to the Central Naval Archives in Gatchina, Russia in order to research the four Far East shootdowns (6 Nov 51, 13 June 52, 29 July 53 and 17 Apr 55). Since all of these shootdowns occurred over water and the Soviet 5th Fleet was involved in all cases, the Central Naval Archives would be the logical place to locate information. The U.S. Side agreed to send specific information to the Russian Side on the shootdowns (e.g. dates, location, Soviet units involved, Soviet reporting documents, etc.) and the Russian Side agreed to allow U.S. researchers access to information in the Naval Archives. In addition, the Russian Side agreed to set up a mechanism through which certain relevant documents may be declassified in order for U.S. researchers to review them.

Mr. Clift reiterated the importance of having U.S. researchers review Gatchina documents in light of the success U.S. researchers had with the Central Archive of the MOD in Podolsk, Russia. In addition, once the relevant information is passed to the Russian Side the U.S. would like to start sending researchers to Gatchina starting in December 1998.

Mr. Clift then reviewed access to Gatchina with General Lieutenant Gennadiy Zolotukhin, Ministry of Defense, at the 10 November Spaso House reception, and he again reviewed out step-by-step, action-by-action plans with the Commission's Russian Co-Chairman General Major Vladimir Zolotarev at the 11 November Cold War Working Group session. Both officers assured the U.S. Working Group Co-Chairman of their support and cooperation.

PHOTOGRAPHY: The U.S. Side showed to the Russian Side Soviet documents that indicated that, on numerous occasions, the Soviets photographed U.S. aircraft either before, during or after the shootdown. The U.S. Side continued to press the Russians to search for the whereabouts of these photographs since it would be very unlikely that photos of such important international incidents would have been discarded. Mr. Clift reiterated that we should intensify the search in light of the 300+ photographs from the Korean War that were obtained from the Podolsk archives. In addition, the U.S. Side stated that one of the reasons for work in Gatchina, is to try and locate some of the photographs associated with the Cold War shootdowns.

DICKINSON AND MITNIK LETTERS: Mr. Clift asked Col Vinogradov if he had the promised response clarifying his earlier letter to Ms. Dickinson and Ms. Mitnik (family relatives of members from 6 Nov 51 and 13 June 52 shootdowns). Col Vinogradov stated that he did not have the responses at this time, but will try to respond as soon as possible. Mr. Clift passed Col Vinogradov two memorandums outlining the specific questions of Ms. Dickinson and Ms. Mitnik.

POSA (1 JULY 60): Col Vinogradov stated that the Russian Side will pass to the U.S. Side through JCSD-Moscow a list of 17 names identified by Admiral (Ret.) Novyy who might have specific information on the burial location of Major Posa. After the names are passed JCSD-Moscow will work with the Russian Side to locate and interview the identified individuals. The Commission continues to plan to inspect agreed likely burial location(s) in the Spring 1999.

**CLOSING SESSION OF 15TH PLENUM OF
THE U.S.-RUSSIA JOINT COMMISSION ON
PRISONERS OF WAR/MISSING IN ACTION,
(NOVEMBER 11, 1999)**

Ambassador Toon: General Zolotarev, the Russian and the American colleagues thank you for your efforts in making the 15th Plenary Session one of the more useful meetings we have had. Many issues we identified for action during your visit to Washington in September have been resolved. In my view, we have regained the forward momentum that has characterized much of our work. I am pleased that I will be turning over the responsibilities of the Co-Chairman to my successor - General Roland Lajoie - on such a positive note. I have suggested to him that it would be useful for him to visit Moscow soon after assuming his duties as the U.S. Co-Chairman to visit informally with you and your colleagues as well as to become acquainted with the work

of our Moscow office. I am sure that you will have the same warm and cooperative relationship that has marked our work in recent years.

I believe that we have made progress this week in each of our four working groups. Of particular significance is the progress we have made on access to the Korean War -era documents related to our unaccounted-for American and Soviet flyers. We are grateful for the 6,000 pages of documents and the photographs you have provided us from the Podolsk archives. We will begin immediately the process of analyzing the material.

On our part, we are prepared to continue the search in our archives for information on your losses from the Korean War. Our cooperative efforts toward determining the fates of unaccounted-for Korean War-era pilots are being rewarded. They epitomize the value this Commission's work has to both the American and Russian people and serve as an example of the progress we can continue to make in the future.

During our opening session yesterday, I spoke about a draft archival agreement for your consideration . The proposal will formalize our archival cooperation and is designed to be mutually beneficial.

During the opening session I stressed the importance which we attach to the assertion made in General Volkogonov's memoirs. Our meeting and interview with Mr. Semichastnyy began the process of investigating the basis of these assertions. I personally found our meeting of great interest and deeply appreciate your efforts in persuading Mr. Semichastnyy to meet with us.

General Zolotarev: Dear Ambassador! Dear Senator! And dear colleagues! Let me whole - heartedly thank you for being here with us in Moscow, and for the continuation of our productive work. This is a joyful session. We think that the work that has been done in our previous sessions (during our visit to Washington), the work with Jim Connell, and the work today with you, our dear colleagues, underscores the fact that we are on the right path. The most important thing is that our Joint Commission is a healthy organism and that the results of our work will be available to all in the future.

There are problems in our work. However, I would contend that on the whole, with the exception of one or two issues, we are in agreement and are moving forward in our efforts. Here I am referring to the problems in the Vietnam War Working Group. We understand that there is a requirement to get to the truth. What can we promise? We will try to find some sort of mechanism to advance the efforts on this question, while conforming to our own laws. We understand your Side and your urgency to advance this question further. Thank you very much for the memorandum. We will analyze it in order to be able to sign it in the near future. Let me thank you again for your efforts, and let me allow now for a short word from the Russian working groups.

Colonel Orlov: Dear guests! During the period between the 14th and 15th sessions of the Commission, the Korean War Working Group worked constructively and obtained noticeable progress. The work of the Group during this period has developed the following new momentum: The work of the American investigators in the Central Archives of the MoD took on

a systematic character; we started and developed a productive program of document exchange, especially those documents that concretely help determine the fates of specific prisoners-of-war and missing-in-action; a new format in our work was the meeting with American Korean War veterans, and we think that this type of format will continue in the future. As a result of these activities, the American investigators were able to determine approximately 200 possible burial locations of Americans who died during the Korean War. The Korean War Working Group determined that the archival work with the documents from the 64th Fighter Aviation Group should continue. For 1999, the work in our archives has been expanded to 2 days per week. At the same time the American Side has expressed its desire to expand the archival search into the operational documents of the Krakov Group [this was the senior regional Soviet military headquarters] in China. Yesterday we recommended that we close the issue regarding the transfer of Americans from Korea to the former Soviet Union. The American Side would like to continue working on this question. We agreed to continue our work, but under a condition that if we produce negative results, every session should contain a phrase "At the present time concrete facts cannot be determined."

We count on future investigative work in the U.S. and Russian archives and in expanding our work with veterans and witnesses from both Sides. We are hopeful for results.

Deputy Minister Kalinin: Esteemed Mr. Ambassador! Esteemed Gentlemen! During the 15th Plenum, our group has primarily focused on the information that was published in Volkogonov's book regarding the alleged KGB plan to transfer American citizens from Vietnam to the Soviet Union. During this time, in my view, we have determined that a separate plan to transfer American citizens from Vietnam to the USSR did not exist. However, a presumption exists that some fragmented part of an overall KGB plan could have existed; at the same time, not a single American was ever transferred from Vietnam to the USSR. This question is fairly complicated because all of it is based on assumptions and rumors. Even in Volkogonov's publication it is not clear who ordered the alleged transfer of Americans to the USSR. In order to shed light on this issue, we met with the former Chairman of the KGB, V. E. Semichastnyy, who stated during our discussions that a separate plan did not exist, and that he was not aware of the plan that was referenced in Volkogonov's book. I think that we have gained a lot of perspective on the future direction of the Group and how we should proceed, especially with regard to the activities of Foreign Intelligence, the GRU, the General Staff, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the industrial ministries (relating to the workings of *spetsgruppas*), and so on. Of course, Senator Smith's suggestion to prepare a letter to the heads of our government requesting assistance with respect to the documents we are discussing needs to be carried out. We will continue working with Semichastnyy. We now have a specific, definite direction, and if we keep working in this direction, we will obtain a positive result. The most important thing is that there is nothing sensational here, based on the information that we presently have. We can say once again that Americans were not transferred from Vietnam to the Soviet Union. I suggest that there needs to be more active work done with China because, based on the relationship between China and Vietnam at that time, one can conclude that China might have information on American prisoners.

Ambassador Toon: I do not think that we can conclude that such a plan referenced in Volkogonov's memoirs did not exist until we hear those words from Primakov. Volkogonov

refers to a conversation that he had with Primakov at the time when Primakov headed Foreign Intelligence. According to the Volkogonov's memoirs, Primakov told Volkogonov that such a plan did exist, but that it was never carried out. I think we need to leave this question open until we receive a response from Primakov.

Deputy Minister Kalinin: As I stated earlier, a separate plan did not exist. However, it is possible, as stated by Semichastnyy, that an overall KGB plan might have had a certain fragment on this issue, but that is also one version. Semichastnyy stated that he did not sign such a plan and that a separate plan did not exist. However, we are confident that, even if some items were part of an overall plan, they were not implemented, and that Americans were not transferred.

Ambassador Toon: You agree with me that this question needs to be left open until a time when Primakov, himself, can comment on it.

Deputy Minister Kalinin: I think that it is not up to Primakov to comment, but to the service which he headed at that time.

Ambassador Toon: This question is very important for the American people, and we have stated publicly that we are doing everything we can to determine the truth.

Deputy Minister Kalinin: We are likewise under the pressure of the same circumstances, and we are also responsible for what we are discussing here today.

Colonel Vinogradov: I would like to report that our work in the past two days has been very useful and wholesome. We discussed a variety of issues on the Cold War, reviewed documents, facts, and the issue of performing work in the Russian archives. Our American colleagues passed us information on the fates of some Soviet servicemen in Afghanistan. In addition, they agreed to review the information and lists passed by Mr. Biryukov on the Soviet servicemen who fought in Afghanistan. In addition, the Russian Side passed information in attempt to gain more information on missing Soviet citizens from the Cold War. With respect to establishing the fates of American servicemen who are missing as a result of air incidents, the following work was performed: We agreed to continue more intensive research work at the Central Naval Archives in Gatchina. We discussed in detail the necessary requirements to perform the work in that archive, and we utilized the expertise of one member of this Commission, Colonel Filippov. We achieved a mutual understanding of how better to intensify this archival effort. The American Side reacted negatively to our request to continue the work on the K-129 submarine incident. However, we tried to convince our colleagues that would be beneficial to continue this work. Finally, we agreed to review analytically all of our current information (documents and witnesses) that might be able to clarify the answers to the aforementioned air incidents. I thank my American colleagues for their wholesome work and for understanding our mutual problems.

Colonel Nikiforov: Dear Mr. Ambassador! Dear Chairman! Dear colleagues! With the mutual agreement with my American colleague Mr. McReynolds, the work of group was successful. In the upcoming two weeks, we will pass to the American Side information on two persons that was found in our archives. We determined a new avenue to pursue our work, since our previous approach, according to our mutual understanding, was not all-encompassing. We will broaden

our search efforts to archives that might contain some information on American citizens. I would like to thank Mr. McReynolds for giving us information on 89 Soviet citizens who were located in Buchenwald. I am hopeful for future success in our work. Thank you.

Senator Smith: I read in the newspaper that Moscow has not experienced cold weather like this for over thirty years. However, yesterday at the Spaso House, the reception was very receptive and warm. Our meetings and discussions, although they were sometimes heated, on a personal level they were very warm. I was very glad to meet General Kalinin. I would like to address seven points that resulted from our meetings.

1. The Russian Side agreed to try and analyze the reports of 1967 from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs regarding the number of American prisoners who were at that time held on the territory of Vietnam and the recommendations of the communist political government on the question regarding the fates of these prisoners.
2. We have a request to obtain access to two documents that are held in the GRU (Tran Van Quang). These documents can shed light on another document that is known as the "1205." The Russian Side agreed to examine our request to obtain access to these documents within the next three months.
3. With regard to the question in Volkogonov's memoirs on the existence a plan to deliver informed Americans to the Soviet Union, we are glad that the Russian Side has agreed to examine ways in which we can obtain proof of this allegation. The American Side has agreed to provide to the Russian Side a detailed report within two weeks, which will address the reasons as to why the American Side considers the issue of the plan to be of such high importance.
4. Archival work. First of all, I would like to thank you for the documents that were passed to the American Side from the archives in Podolsk on the Korean War. I was glad to learn that the Russian Side will organize, within the next six months, the documents on the Vietnam War that have been transferred to Podolsk. In particular we are interested in the reports of interrogations that were conducted by the Vietnamese Government and passed to the USSR, and also the reports that were compiled by the Soviet Side about shootdowns of American aircraft during the war in Vietnam. Our Side has agreed to provide personnel, technical and financial help for processing these documents in the archives.
5. We are glad that the GRU will review our request to locate interrogation reports, and we have passed a list of names of those individuals who we believe had knowledge of events that were going on in Vietnam at that time.
6. During our meeting with Mr. Semichastnyi, we heard him relate how a KGB colleague of his had a conversation with an American prisoner of war during the Vietnam War. We are glad that Mr. Kalinin agreed to help us determine who the individual was who met with the American, which could possibly enable us to establish the identity of that American.
7. In the future we will continue to help the Russian Side to determine the fates of its missing servicemen. We are ready to help the Russian military with the DNA analysis to determine the identification of those who perished in Chechnya. We will continue to obtain information that can shed light on the fates of missing soldiers from the war in Afghanistan. We will also continue with our work on the missing submarine K-129

during the period of the Cold War. We stand ready to offer any assistance to determine the fates of those who are missing from the plane crash in Angola this past September.

Mr. Clift: We in the Cold War Working Group continue to produce what we consider to be significant results. Colonel Vinogradov alluded to the information that we passed [to the Russian Side] on the missing servicemen from Afghanistan. Likewise, he characterized our work in determining the fates of missing American servicemen during the Cold War as being intensive. We have determined new, concrete steps to be taken in seeking information about the four losses in the Pacific, including the 1953 incident off Vladivostok and the 1955 incident off the Kamchatka Peninsula. The specific goal that we agreed on centers on a work plan that we drew up for continuing research work at the Central Naval Archive at Gatchina. Regarding the loss of the Golf class submarine during the Cold War, I am very familiar with all the efforts that were undertaken by the American Side during 1992 - 1995. At that time, the U.S. Co-Chairman, Ambassador Toon, advised that we have already exhausted all possible approaches to this issue. However, we agreed that we would examine any specific new inquiries that might be posed during the course of our work [by the Russian Side] to the extent possible.

Mr. McReynolds: The work of our group was successful. The Russian Side passed us information on two missing Americans (two out of a list of 39 individuals). We are encouraged by the Russian Side's statement that they intend to provide more information on these citizens in the future. We were glad to pass information on 89 Soviet citizens who died in Buchenwald, to hand over their obituaries. We have been examining the questions posed by the families of missing individuals. Although the majority of our work has been completed, we agreed that another search of the archives might reveal additional information on missing Russian and American citizens. We are glad that this important and humanitarian work will continue.

Ambassador Toon: Dear General! With this we end our subjects of discussion for today. During all the years of my work, I never observed the degree of cooperation that I witnessed during our 15th Plenum. I am glad that I have been able to play a small role in this chapter of our relationship. I would like to say, General that I have thoroughly enjoyed getting to know you and working with you. With this we conclude our work. Again I would like to thank all the attendees for their efforts, cooperation and help, in ensuring a hopeful future.