



News Release

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IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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SOLDIER MISSING FROM KOREAN WAR IDENTIFIED

The Department of Defense POW/Missing Personnel Office (DPMO) announced today that the remains of a U.S. serviceman, missing in action from the Korean War, have been identified and returned to his family for burial with full military honors.

Army Cpl. John W. Lutz, 21, of Kearny, N.J., will be buried April 13 at Arlington National Cemetery near Washington, D.C. From May 16-20, 1951, Task Force Zebra, a multinational force made up of Dutch, French, and U.S. forces, was attacked and isolated into smaller units. Lutz, of the 1st Ranger Infantry Company (part of Task Force Zebra) went missing while his unit was attempting to infiltrate enemy lines near Chaun-ni, South Korea, along the Hongcheon River Valley.

After the 1953 armistice, surviving POWs said Lutz had been captured by enemy forces on May 19, marched north to a POW camp in Suan County, North Korea, and died of malnutrition in July 1951.

Between 1991-94, North Korea gave the United States 208 boxes of remains believed to contain the remains of 200-400 U.S. servicemen. North Korean documents turned over with one of the boxes indicated the remains inside were exhumed near Suan County. This location correlates with the corporal's last known location.

Analysts from DPMO developed case leads with information spanning more than 58 years. Through interviews with surviving POW eyewitnesses, experts validated circumstances surrounding the soldier's captivity and death, confirming wartime documentation of his loss.

Among other forensic identification tools and circumstantial evidence, scientists from the Joint POW/MIA Accounting Command and the Armed Forces DNA Identification Laboratory also used dental comparisons and mitochondrial DNA – which matched that of his niece—in the identification of the remains.

More than 2,000 servicemen died as prisoners of war during the Korean War. With this accounting, 8,001 service members still remain missing from the conflict.

For additional information on the Defense Department's mission to account for missing Americans, visit the DPMO web site at <http://www.dtic.mil/dpmo> or call (703) 699-1169.

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