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Central Intelligence Agency



Washington, D.C. 20505

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27 December 1991

The Honorable Bob Smith
Vice Chairman
Select Committee on POW/MIA Affairs
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Mr. Vice Chairman:

In response to your letter of December 12, 1991, concerning the possibility of US POWs/MIAs in the USSR, let me assure you that the Agency is actively pursuing this issue. A senior officer of the Interrepublic Security Service (ISS), the successor organization to the former KGB Second Chief Directorate, advised the Agency on 3 December that the ISS had undertaken "an exhaustive search of available information and resources, and had come up with no indication of such presence in the USSR past or present." On 6 December the ISS passed us a written "official" response. Following is a translation of that response:

"At our request, an investigation was conducted in Kazakhstan concerning the supposed presence of an American military pilot in the village of Saryshagan, Dzhezkazgan Oblast, as presented in the newspaper 'Kommersant' (no. 42, dated 4 November 1991). The pilot was reportedly taken prisoner during the period of war in Indochina.

As a result of the investigation, which included questioning long-time residents, no information was obtained about the presence in that region at any time of an American pilot.

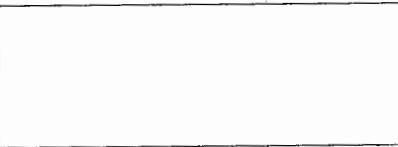
On our part, we also do not have any information about American military personnel located on the territory of the USSR who were missing in action during the course of military activities in Indochina."

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The Honorable Bob Smith

Regarding alleged statements by retired KGB General Oleg Kalugin, reported by Australian television, that he had been involved in the interrogation of Americans in Vietnam during the 1975-1978 period, we have tasked [redacted] to ask the ISS and the Russian Republic Federal Security Service to confirm the remarks attributed to Kalugin and provide details. [redacted] has also been directed to seek guidance from those services as to how a similar inquiry can be put to the military intelligence service, the GRU.

The [redacted] have been asked for any information they may have on Soviet and/or East European incarceration or interrogation of POWs/MIAs from World War II, the Korean War, or the Vietnam War.

We will keep the Committee advised of any additional information that results from our discussions with the Russian and East European Services.

A copy of this letter is also being provided to Chairman Kerry.

Sincerely,

[redacted]
ROBERT M. GATES
Director of Central Intelligence

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