

## MEMORANDUM FOR CORRESPONDENTS

No. 009-M  
January 28, 1997

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The human remains of an American serviceman previously unaccounted-for from Southeast Asia will be returned Wednesday to his family for burial in the United States. The remains have been identified as Capt. James L. Huard, U. S. Air Force, of Dearborn, Mich. On July 12, 1972, Capt. Huard was flying his F-4E Phantom on a tactical mission over North Vietnam. The last contact with the aircraft was at about 7:30 a.m., when it was directed to a target. By 9:00 a.m., at which time their fuel would have been depleted, the crew had not re-established contact. A search-and-rescue operation was mounted for three days, but was unsuccessful. Hostile action in the area prevented any further ground search. In December 1988, the Socialist Republic of Vietnam turned over 38 boxes of remains believed to be those of U. S. servicemen. Among them was an identification card for "Huard James Linton" but identification of the remains could not be made at that time. In 1993 and 1994, joint U. S. - SRV teams conducted interviews with villagers near an alleged crash site and reviewed SRV wartime documents. This information led investigators to conclude that the 1988 remains were those of Capt. Huard. DNA testing of the remains was used to confirm the identification. With the identification of this serviceman, 2,133 Americans remain unaccounted-for from the war in Vietnam. The U. S. government welcomes and appreciates the cooperation of the government of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam which resulted in the accounting of this airman. We hope that such cooperation will bring increased results in the future. Achieving the fullest possible accounting for these Americans is of the highest national priority.