

MEMORANDUM FOR CORRESPONDENTS

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A Department of Defense team has arrived in North Korea to begin the fourth joint field operation to recover the remains of Americans missing in action from the Korean War.

The American group is comprised of specialists from the U.S. Army Central Identification Laboratory, Hawaii and from the Defense POW/Missing Personnel Office in Washington, D.C. They will conduct interviews with military officials and local residents to determine burial sites for American soldiers. In the three previous joint operations, remains believed to be those of six servicemen were repatriated in formal military ceremonies across the demilitarized zone at Panmunjom. The remains of one of these soldiers were identified and returned to his family for burial in 1996 with full military honors.

At the urging of Defense POW/Missing Personnel Office officials, the North Koreans have invited a small group of family and veteran's organization officials to visit the site of the joint operation. One representative each of the Korean/Cold War Family Association; the Veterans of Foreign Wars; the American Legion and the Chosin Few will depart the United States on Friday, Oct. 10, 1997. North Korean officials plan to host the group for about four days.

A repatriation ceremony will be conducted at Panmunjom on Oct. 24, 1997 for any remains excavated during this operation.