

Arlington Cemetery to Host POW/MIA Ceremony Friday

Deputy Secretary of Defense Paul Wolfowitz will speak at a ceremony commemorating National POW/MIA Recognition Day on Friday, Sept. 21, 2001, at 11 a.m. EDT. Due to last week's terrorist attacks, the annual ceremony is being moved from the Pentagon to the Arlington National Cemetery amphitheater.

The keynote address will be delivered by Orson Swindle, a retired Marine lieutenant colonel and Vietnam War POW, who currently serves as a commissioner on the Federal Trade Commission.

"Our nation's commitment to account for our MIAs is part of the spirit of commitment of Americans to one another that has been demonstrated so strongly in the past week," Wolfowitz said. "At a time when our free and democratic way of life is under attack, we will hold fast to our commitment to account for these men who made the ultimate sacrifice to defend our country. We will bring them home no matter where it takes us, and no matter how long it takes us."

Admission to the ceremony will be granted only to those who show their invitation and photo identification or who have already called in their RSVP. Attendees should arrive at Arlington well ahead of the ceremony time to allow time for processing and transportation to the site. More than 1,000 invitations were mailed to MIA families, veterans and former POWs in the Washington, D.C. area.

Those attending the ceremony should park in the Arlington Cemetery visitors' center parking lot. Shuttle buses will transport guests to the amphitheater. In the event of rain, the ceremony will be canceled. Media desiring to cover the ceremony should report to the main entrance of Arlington National Cemetery (Memorial Gate) between 10 a.m. and 10:30 a.m. For more information, media may call Military District Washington at (202) 685-4645.