

POW MIA Recognition Day: They Should Never Be Forgotten



Rees Lloyd

By Act of Congress in 1979, the third Friday of September, while not a national holiday, is observed annually as “POW-MIA RECOGNITION DAY.” Its purpose is to remember and honor all those who suffered as prisoners of war, and all those many thousands who were and are still missing in action.

POW-MIA Recognition Day 2019 is Friday, September 20. There will be observances all across the country at military installations, State and national facilities, and by veterans organizations including many of the some 13,000 Posts of The American Legion (see www.Legion.org), Veterans of Foreign Wars (www.VFW.org), other veterans service organizations, and other patriotic organizations.

President Donald Trump will issue a proclamation on POW-MIA Day honoring those who suffered as prisoners of war and those missing in action, and their still suffering families. Many States have such proclamations. (Unfortunately, not including, as this is written, the Left Coast States of California, Oregon, and Washington State.)

Perhaps most poignantly, many of the observances will include members of the National League of POW-MIA Families (www.powmiafamilies.org), which will have its own observances as well.

For them, the families, the wars have never ended. The grief has never ended. The pain has never ended of not knowing what ultimately happened to their beloved family members who went off to serve in defense of the nation, and are still missing in action, their actual fates endlessly wondered about, but unknown.

It is because of the efforts of the National League of POW-MIA Families that, by act of Congress, the now famous POW-MIA Flag, which they created, will fly right below our American Flag on National POW-MIA Recognition Day. It is the only flag which is allowed to be on the same standard as our national Flag. (Congress in 1988 acted to allow the POW-MIA Flag to be so flown also on Independence Day (Fourth of July); Veterans Day; Memorial Day; Armed Forces Day, and Flag Day).

Many Americans if not most – and certainly most immigrants, legal and illegal – are unaware of how many other Americans have suffered as POWs, or were or still are missing in action, as a result of serving to preserve American freedom.

For one reason, many if not most of the media do not report on National POW-MIA Recognition Day; and almost all if not all government schools, under domination of the liberal teachers union, do not teach the children about it. (For example, Constitution Day celebrating the signing of the American Constitution was September 17, and virtually ignored by major media, and in the government schools.)

Regarding POWs, the Congressional Research Service has determined that: In World War II, 130,201 American military suffered as POW's, of whom 14,072 died in captivity; In the Korean War, there were 7,140 POWs, of whom 2,701 died while imprisoned; In Vietnam, 725 were taken prisoner, 64 of whom died at the hands of their Communist captors from torture or disease; In the Gulf wars since 1991, 37 were taken prisoner; none of whom are still in captivity.

Regarding MIAs, the Defense POW-MIA Accounting Agency, reports that some 83,114 Americans are still missing in action from WWII to the present. That is: 73,515 are still missing in action from WWII; from Korea, 7,841 are still missing; 1,626 still missing from the Vietnam War; 126 from the Cold War; and 6 since 1991 in the conflicts in the Middle East.

The Communist dictator Joseph Stalin once infamously observed: "One death is a tragedy; a million deaths is a statistic."

The figures cited above are not "just statistics" for the families of the POWs and MIAs. Nor should they be for us. Each one who suffered or died in captivity, each one who is missing in action—over 80,000 despite the continuing efforts of the U.S. to account for all the missing – is a personal tragedy, a continuing loss, and, continuing grief of families who do not know what actually became of their loved one who went to war for them, for our country, for us, and never returned, disappeared in action without a trace.

Thus, for their families, there has been no closure. They should not be alone.

On National POW-MIA Recognition Day, we Americans, all of us, have the opportunity to remember and honor all of the POWs and all the MIAs, by participating in one of the many observances, or, if not able to do so, to pause in our busy lives to honor and remember them and to stand with their families in their continuing grief and suffering.

May God bless them all; all the POWs, and all the MIAs, and their families. May we Americans never forget them and their sacrifices but always remember and honor each and all of them, and their families. (Contact support the National League of POW-MIA Families at www.powmiafamilies.org).

FOR GOD AND COUNTRY FOREVER; SURRENDER TO TYRANNY—NEVER!

© 2019 Rees Lloyd – All Rights Reserved

E-Mail Rees Lloyd: ReesLloydLaw@gmail.com