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Abandoned in Place

Lynn M O'Shea

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“Abandoned in Place” provides a snapshot of the Vietnam POW/MIA issue. From the signing of the Paris Peace Accords, in January 1973, ending American involvement in the war in Southeast Asia to the "dysfunctional" POW/MIA accounting effort of 2014. With the period 1980 -1981 a clear line in the sand. As the U.S. government refocused its efforts from the rescue of surviving POWs to the recovery of remains. “Abandoned in Place” painstakingly details the intelligence available in 1980 that led to the conclusion American POWs survived in Laos, six years after the end of the Vietnam War. Using never before seen documents, the author reconstructs events leading up to a CIA reconnaissance mission, doomed from the start, to confirm the presence of POWs held deep in the Laotian jungle. As the CIA team headed toward the camp, members of the Joint Special Operation Command trained for a strike of surgical precision. Its mission rescue the POWs held at the camp known as Nhom Marrott. A lack of political will, bureaucratic failures, and leaks forced a stand-down order, condemning any surviving POWs. The author highlights the post Nhom Marrott government accounting effort, focusing on several specific POW/MIA cases. Crippled by a “mindset to debunk” officials ignored evidence of capture and survival in captivity. They edited witness statements to support pre-conceived conclusion of death and dismissed Vietnamese admissions of capture. This despite overwhelming evidence POWs not only survived but also continued to lay down signals in hopes of eventual rescue. Early Reviews - Col. Don Gordon (USA-Ret) Special Operations Command, J2 Director of Intelligence 1980-1983 – “O'Shea leads readers to form their own reasoned conclusions. She writes the most comprehensive and thoroughly researched compendium, private or government, classified or unclassified, about this complicated and emotional subject. It is an event long needed to be told accurately and with respect for the missing in action and their families. O'Shea is fidelis to that cause. She carefully distinguishes fact from speculation. Abandoned in Place is a meticulously detailed, thoroughly verified, and reliable story, well told. It describes plans to rescue about 35 United States Military servicemen strongly believed held in a prison camp in Laos in 1980. Step-by-step, O'Shea builds a strong case that some US military likely remained under North Vietnamese and Lao control after the war.” Former Senator and Vice-Chairman of the Senate Select Committee on POW/MIA Affairs Bob Smith - “Lynn O'Shea has provided the best in depth analysis ever written and brilliantly combined over 25 years of personal research, evidence and a chronological portrayal of the facts to prove, without any doubt, that America left men behind in Southeast Asia at the end of the Viet Nam War. When we were told that the North Vietnamese, Lao and Viet Cong had complied with the Paris Peace Accords in 1973 and returned all of our men, the evidence shows that was an outright lie and many of our government leaders and the intelligence community knew it.” Dr. Jeffrey Donahue, Brother of Major Morgan Donahue – “Lynn masterfully connects a mind-boggling array of dots to not only affirm the truth of the Indochina POW-MIA issue but also to rigorously convey how and why the U.S. government knowingly left men behind and then covered it up. Lynn has woven together tens of thousands of documents and countless hours of interviews to produce a cogent and unassailable profile of one of the most tragic episodes of modern American history. The how and why have never been so brilliantly researched, documented and conveyed.”

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