

about the fate of POW/MIA's because we had no access to the Vietnamese Government, to its military archives or to its prisons. We could not travel to crash sites. We had no opportunity to interview Vietnamese individuals or officials.

All of this has now changed. American Joint Task Force-Full Accounting (JTF-FA) personnel located in Hanoi now have access to Vietnam's Government, to its military archives, and to its prisons. They now travel freely to crash sites and interview Vietnamese citizens and individuals. The extent of United States access is illustrated by an excavation last month that involved overturning a Vietnamese gravesite.

As a result of these developments, the overall number of MIA's in Vietnam has been reduced to 1,621 through a painstaking identification process. Most of the missing involve men lost over water or in other circumstances where survival was doubtful and where recovery of remains is difficult or unlikely. Significantly, the number of discrepancy cases—the cases of those servicemen where the available information indicated that either the individual survived or could have survived—has been reduced from 196 to 55. The remaining 55 cases have been investigated at least once, and some several times.

Much, if not most, of this progress has come since 1991 when President Bush established an office in Hanoi devoted to resolving the fate of our MIA's. Opening this office ended almost two decades of isolation, a policy which failed to achieve America's goals.

It is an understatement to say that our efforts to resolve the fates of our MIA's from the Vietnam war have constituted the most extensive such accounting in the history of human warfare.

There are over 8,000 remaining MIA's from the Korean war. A large number of those are believed to have perished in North Korea, and we have had little cooperation from the Government of North Korea on that issue. There are over 78,000 remaining MIA's from World War II. These are wars where we were victorious and controlled the battlefield. So I find it ironic that we have already moved to set up liaison offices in North Korea when that Government has not agreed to the joint operation teams that have been used successfully in Vietnam. Nor has North Korea granted access to archives, gravesites, or former POW camps. Vietnam, on the other hand, has worked steadily over the last 4 years to meet the vigorous goal posts laid down by successive United States administrations.

In 1993, opponents of ending our isolationist policy argued that lifting the trade embargo would mean an end to Vietnamese cooperation. This is distinctly not the case. As the Pentagon assessment from the Presidential delegation's recent trip to Vietnam notes, the records offered are "the most de-

tailed and informative reports" provided so far by the Government of Vietnam on missing Americans.

During the post-embargo period, the Vietnamese Government cooperated on other issues as well, including resolving millions of dollars of diplomatic property and private claims of Americans who lost property at the end of the war.

While we have made progress, Americans should not be satisfied by any means. But there are limits to the results we can obtain by continuing a policy which, even though modified, remains rooted in the past and is still dominated by the principle of isolation. I think we have reached that limit, Mr. President. It is time to try a policy of full engagement.

Recognizing Vietnam does not mean forgetting our MIA's, by any means. Recognizing Vietnam does not mean that we agree with the policies of the Government of Vietnam. But recognizing Vietnam does help us promote basic American values, such as freedom, democracy, human rights, and the marketplace. When Americans go abroad or export their products, we export an idea, a philosophy, and a government. We export the very ideals that Americans went to fight for in Vietnam.

We justify most-favored-nation status for China for many reasons, one of which is that it allows us a means to interact and to communicate with the Chinese in an attempt to bring about change in China. The same application is appropriate for Vietnam.

Moreover, diplomatic relations give us greater latitude to use the carrot and stick approach. Diplomatic, economic, and cultural relations should flourish, but we retain leverage because Vietnam still seeks most-favored-nation status and other trading privileges which the United States controls.

Establishing diplomatic relations should also advance other important U.S. goals. A prosperous, stable, and friendly Vietnam integrated into the international community will serve as an important impediment to Chinese expansionism. Normalization should offer new opportunities for the United States to promote respect for human rights in Vietnam. Finally, competitive United States businesses which have entered the Vietnamese market after the lifting of the trade embargo will have greater success with the full faith and confidence of the United States Government behind them.

Mr. President, let me conclude by saying that I hope this step will continue this country's healing process. I think the time has come to treat Vietnam as a country and not as a war.

PRINCIPLES FOR RISK ASSESSMENT

Mr. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, I want to talk briefly about the matter

that is currently before this body, regulatory reform.

Very briefly, we have been reviewing some of the principles associated with regulatory reform. I would like to talk a little bit about risk assessment this morning and some guidelines for which the applicability of risk assessment should be used, and why it can be very, very helpful as we address the responsibility of determining which policies make sense and which policies are redundant and costly and inefficient.

If we establish principles for risk assessment, some of the bases for evaluation should include the following:

First, the use of sound science and analysis as the basis for conclusions about risk.

Second, to use the appropriate level of detail for any analysis.

Third, to use postulates, or assumptions, only when actual data is not available.

Fourth, to not express risk as a single, high-end estimate that uses the worst-case scenario.

I think we have all heard horror stories about various cases where applications are promoted and promulgated, and over an extended period of time, when much expenditure has taken place in evaluating the prospects for a particular approval, we find that the agency has evaluated under a worst-case basis. If we, in our daily lives, were to make our decisions based on a worst-case scenario, we probably would not get out of bed in the morning. As a consequence, to reach that kind of an evaluation is clearly misleading, in many cases, to the applicant that never would have proceeded with a request for approval from the various agencies if the applicant had assumed that the agency would come down to the worst-case basis.

Oftentimes the agency will follow a particular line to reach a worst-case basis, and after expending a great deal of money and time, they look at another alternative, but only at the conclusion of reaching a worst-case scenario. So there are other opportunities that should be pursued with regard to that.

Further, some of the other principles for risk assessment would require comparing the risk to others that people encounter every day to place it in a perspective. I could speak at some length on that, but I think that is obvious to all of us.

Further, to describe the new or substitute risks that will be created if the risk in question is regulated.

Use independent and external peer review to evaluate risk results.

Finally, to provide appropriate opportunities for public participation.

So what we are talking about here is improved risk assessment, which helps the homeowners, farmer, small business, taxpayers, consumers—all Americans. To conclude, risk reduction equals benefit.

I thank the Chair and yield the floor.