



Rolling Thunder®, Inc.

A non-profit organization for
POW-MIAs and all American veterans

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News Release

Rolling Thunder®, Inc. Meeting With President Obama Seen as Positive Step

May 22 Meeting Discussed Key POW/MIA and Veterans Issues

Neshanic Station, NJ, May 28, 2009 – After initial signals that President Obama would not meet with them, officers of Rolling Thunder Inc., were invited to the White House on May 22 in advance of the group's 22nd annual Memorial Day weekend demonstration to raise awareness of POWs/MIAs and veterans issues. The nearly 90-minute meeting, which included both the President and his aides, is viewed by Rolling Thunder officials as a positive step in getting POW/MIA and veterans issues on the White House's priority list.

Rolling Thunder Executive Director Artie Muller, President Gary Scheffmeyer, Vice President Lynne Jenks and National Legislative Director Ted Shpak met initially with Matt Flavin, who is part of a new Obama-appointed office that will handle military and veterans affairs at a White House level. President Obama then stopped by briefly and Rolling Thunder's Scheffmeyer had an opportunity to describe some of the problems veterans are encountering with the Veterans' Administration, including a large backlog of veterans claims and the long waiting periods to get an appointment with doctors in the VA healthcare system. The President said that he plans on putting more money into the VA to resolve some of these problems.

After thanking the President for what he has already done to help veterans since being elected, and asking that he pass on the group's appreciation to First Lady Michelle Obama for her efforts to support military families, Rolling Thunder officials then continued to meet with Flavin to discuss a series of issues, ranging from the need to continue looking for any live POWs/MIAs, to improper discharge classifications for armed forces returning from the current Gulf War conflicts. The meeting ended with Rolling Thunder donating a POW/MIA flag to the White House.

"We're very pleased to have been invited to meet with the President. We have met with previous administrations and are grateful that our new president has demonstrated, in just a short time, a genuine appreciation of and concern for our military personnel," said Rolling Thunder Executive Director Artie Muller.

"Unfortunately, decades after the wars have ended, we still have thousands of service personnel unaccounted for in Russia, Korea, China, Vietnam, Cambodia, and Laos. And we still have a young man—Ahmad Altaie—missing from Operation Iraqi Freedom. It's as important today as it was 22 years ago when we started our Memorial Day demonstration. We cannot let people forget that there are families who still wait for the return of their loved ones. We appreciate President Obama's willingness to listen to our message," he added.

About Rolling Thunder

Incorporated in 1995, Rolling Thunder®, Inc. is a class 501 C-4 non-profit organization with over 90 chartered chapters throughout the United States. Membership comprises men and women with 40-45% being non-veterans with the balance being veterans from all wars and peacetime. Although many of its members ride motorcycles, a person does not have to own or ride a motorcycle to be a member, just the time and willingness to be an advocate for our troops, veterans, and POW/MIAs. For more information about Rolling Thunder, visit the organization's web site at <http://www.rollingthunder1.com/index.html>.