



CITY OF LODI

COUNCIL COMMUNICATION

AGENDA TITLE: Display of the POW/MIA Flag

MEETING DATE: March 19, 1997

PREPARED BY: Kirk J. Evans, Administrative Assistant to City Manager

RECOMMENDED ACTION: That the City Council approve a resolution in support of flying the nationally recognized Prisoner of War/Mission in Action (POW/MIA) flag at City of Lodi facilities on Veteran's, Memorial, and Armed Forces Days.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION: The City of Lomita, CA has lost many men over the years to war. In honor of all veterans who have lost their lives, the City of Lomita is requesting support from California municipalities for the POW/MIA flag to be flown at city facilities and local post office branches.

Unfortunately, it is against post office policy to display flags other than the United States flag and the Postal Service flag. The City of Lomita is asking for modification to the current federal policy to allow local post offices to display this flag, under the U.S. flag, at their discretion. They are asking the City of Lodi to take a similar position.

According to the City of Lodi Postmaster, authorization to fly any flag other than those specified, would have to be approved by the Senior Vice President of Corporate and Legislative Affairs. However, if the City of Lodi did want to encourage the flying of the POW/MIA flag at the discretion of the post office, it would be best to designate specific days or times during the year.

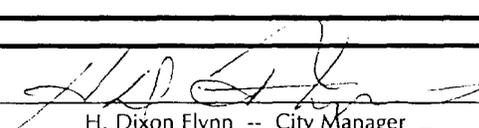
Staff is recommending that City Council adopt the attached resolution encouraging flying of the POW/MIA flag. At this time, it is not recommended that the City request a change of post office policy to fly the POW/MIA flag.

FUNDING: Four flags at \$46.00 = \$184.00
City Manager Account no. 10.0-040.01



Kirk J. Evans
Administrative Assistant to City Manager

APPROVED: _____



H. Dixon Flynn -- City Manager

CITY COUNCIL

DAVID ALBERT
MARGARET ESTRADA
ROBERT T. HARGRAVE
LAWSON PEDIGO
BEN TRAINA



CITY OF LOMITA

FEB 13 1997
City Manager's Office
ADMINISTRATION

KEENE N. WILSON
CITY ADMINISTRATOR

DAWN TOMITA
CITY CLERK

February 5, 1997

Dear Mayor:

We need your support on an issue which we feel very strongly about.

We are in the process of building a new Veterans Memorial at our Lomita Post Office. We will have a total of 75 men listed from Lomita that have given their lives for our country. The bodies of several of these men were never recovered or sent home and their exact whereabouts are unknown. When I approached the post office in regards to flying the POW/MIA flag over the Veterans Memorial, I was informed, much to my surprise, that it is against Post Office policy to fly any flags other than the United States flag and the Postal Service flag.

The City of Lomita is only 1.89 square miles in area. In World War I, while there were only 16 families living in our town, we lost men. In World War II, we lost 43 more men - that was more men than were in the entire 1942 high school graduation class. When the Korea and Viet Nam conflicts asked for more support, we again gave our support and again, we lost another 30 brave young men. All we are asking for is the right to fly the POW/MIA flag below the American flag at our post office where the memorial is located.

On February 3, 1997, the Lomita City Council unanimously approved a resolution urging cities to fly the nationally recognized POW/MIA flag at all city facilities and a resolution urging local post office branches to also fly the POW/MIA flag. We are asking that the current Federal regulation be modified to allow local post offices to display this flag at the discretion of each local post office.

We respectfully request that your city take a similar position to honor the veterans who have lost their lives. We are sure that many of the families still live in your town and what better way to show your appreciation and gratitude than to honor their sons, brothers and husbands for the sacrifice they made for our great country.

Sincerely,

DAVID ALBERT
COUNCILMEMBER

cc: City Administrator

History of The Vietnam War POW/MIA Flag



In 1971, Mrs. Mary Hoff, an MIA wife and member of the National League of American Prisoners and Missing in Southeast Asia, recognized the need for a symbol of our POW/MIAs. Prompted by an article in the Jacksonville, Florida TIMES-UNION, Mrs. Hoff contacted Norman Rivkees, Vice-President of Annin & Company which had made a banner for the newest member of the United Nations, the People's Republic of China, as a part of their policy to provide flags to all UN member nations. Mrs. Hoff found Mr. Rivkees very sympathetic to the POW/MIA issue, and he, along with Annin's advertising agency, designed a flag to represent our missing men. Following League approval, the flags were manufactured for distribution.

The flag is black, bearing in the center, in black and white, the emblem of the League. The emblem is a white disk bearing in black silhouette the bust of a man, watch tower with a guard holding a rifle, and a strand of barbed wire; above the disk are the white letters POW and MIA framing a white 5-pointed star; below the disk is a black and white wreath above the white motto YOU ARE NOT FORGOTTEN.

Concerned groups and individuals have altered the original POW/MIA Flag many times; the colors have been switched from black with white - to red, white and blue, -to white with black; the POW/MIA has at times been revised to MIA/POW. Such changes, however, are insignificant. The importance lies in the continued visibility of the symbol, a constant reminder of the plight of America's POW/MIAs.

On March 9, 1989, a POW/MIA Flag, which flew over the White House on the 1988 National POW/MIA Recognition Day, was installed in the United States Capitol Rotunda as a result of legislation passed overwhelmingly during the 100th session of Congress. The leadership of both Houses hosted the installation ceremony in a demonstration of bipartisan congressional support. This POW/MIA Flag, the only flag displayed in the United States Capitol Rotunda, stands as a powerful symbol of our national commitment to our POW/MIAs until the fullest possible accounting for Americans still missing in Southeast Asia has been achieved.

* MOORE POST 184 * WHO WE ARE * MEMBER BENEFITS *
* ON-LINE MEMBERSHIP APPLICATIONS: (1) (2) *

RESOLUTION NO. 97-34

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE
CITY OF LODI, CALIFORNIA, REGARDING THE DISPLAY
OF THE NATIONALLY RECOGNIZED POW/MIA FLAG

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WHEREAS, there is still over ten thousand veterans listed as prisoners of war and/or missing in action; and

WHEREAS, the City of Lodi is committed to showing our respect and gratitude to those Americans who are prisoners of war or who are classified as missing in action; and

WHEREAS, in keeping faith with these Americans and their families, we continue to remember and commemorate their sacrifices; and

WHEREAS, the POW/MIA flag has been nationally recognized; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the City Council of the City of Lodi as follows:

1. That all cities are urged to follow the example of the City of Lodi and fly the nationally recognized POW/MIA flag at all facilities owned by the City on Armed Forces, Memorial, and Veteran's Days.

Dated: March 19, 1997

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I hereby certify that the foregoing is a true and correct copy of Resolution No. 97-34, which was duly and regularly passed and adopted by the City Council of the City of Lodi in a regular meeting held March 19, 1997 by the following vote:

- AYES: Council Members -
- NOES: Council Members -
- ABSENT: Council Members -
- ABSTAIN: Council Members -

JENNIFER M. PERRIN
City Clerk