

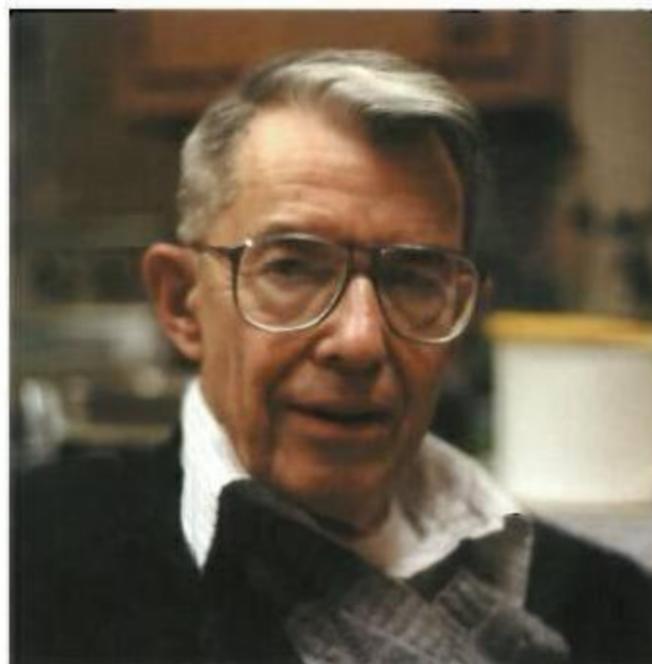
# THE LONG ROAD HOME

## U.S. Prisoner of War Policy and Planning in Southeast Asia

The unconventional nature and unusual length of the Vietnam War presented special challenges not only for captured American prisoners but also for U.S. government officials and agencies having responsibility for the prisoners' proper treatment and safe return. *The Long Road Home* is the first detailed, in-depth study of the Southeast Asia prisoner of war experience from Washington's perspective, and it convincingly attests that the development and administration of policy in Washington was sometimes as problematic and fitful as the course of the captivity itself.

Covering a wide range of topics from the Code of Conduct to legal, medical, and public affairs issues, author Vernon E. Davis describes a constant tension as Pentagon, State Department, and White House officials struggled to reconcile the demands of politics and diplomacy with the increasingly pressing requests of families and needs of the prisoners. Throughout the 1960s the government's evolving prisoner of war organization had to resolve its own internal bureaucratic and interservice disagreements even as it attempted to address a host of policy and planning issues pertaining to war crimes charges, casualty reporting and notification, North Vietnamese and Viet Cong compliance with the Geneva prisoner of war convention, release and recovery efforts, information and assistance for PW/MIA families, and finally repatriation.

The volume begins with a survey of prisoner of war policy prior to the Vietnam War and ends with the protracted peace negotiations and elaborate logistic preparations that brought the prisoners home in the spring of 1973. Several chapters examine the complex, often sensitive issues involved in homecoming and repatriation planning. A concluding chapter offers a useful lessons-learned summation and an update on the MIA subject. Like its predecessor volume on the Southeast Asia captivity experience, *Honor Bound: The History of American Prisoners of War in Southeast Asia, 1961-1973*, published by the OSD Historical Office in December 1998, *The Long Road Home* is based on extensive research in primary sources and is fully documented.



VERNON E. DAVIS received the A.B. and M.A. degrees in history from the University of Rochester. Following service in World War II he joined the Historical Division of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, where from 1946 to 1977 he was historian, deputy chief, and editor. He is the author of the two-volume work *The Organizational Development of the Joint Chiefs of Staff in World War II*. From 1977 until his death in 1996 he was a consultant for the Historical Office in the Office of the Secretary of Defense.

*Jacket photographs:* Ceremony at Pentagon during National Week of Concern for POW/MIA, with "missing men" flyover, March 29, 1972