



Week of Feb. 11 – Feb. 17, 2009

## **Operation Homecoming**

Operation Homecoming is a highlight in the history of the Air Force. This week, 35 years ago, Air Force airlift began returning American servicemembers being held as prisoners of war by North Vietnam back home to the United States.

Operation Homecoming facts:

- The signing of the Paris Peace Accords on Jan. 28, 1973, ended United States involvement in the Vietnam War
- On Feb. 12, 1973, Military Airlift Command, the predecessor of Air Mobility Command, C-141 aircraft began flying POWs out of Hanoi, North Vietnam
- Beginning on Feb. 12, 1973, Pacific Air Forces C-9 aircraft flew smaller numbers of POWs out of locations in South Vietnam and Hong Kong
- The operation lasted until April 4, 1973
- The first group of POWs released had been imprisoned for between 6 to 8 and a half years. The POWs were released based on their length of time as POWs, with the longest held being returned first
- 597 servicemembers were repatriated during the operation
- The first phase of the operation flew the returning servicemembers to Clark Air Base in the Philippines. The second phase transported the returnees to one of five continental United States bases -- Travis AFB, California; Kelly AFB, Texas; Scott AFB, Illinois; Andrews AFB, Maryland; and Maxwell AFB, Alabama

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