

Help Me Get My Husband Back!

(Continued)

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

October 29, 1959

Dear Mrs. Ferguson:

As you know, several times during the past year I have taken up with the Soviet Government the case of the C-130 Air Force transport plane shot down over Soviet Armenia on September 2, 1958. In each instance, the answers have revealed no new facts.

After meeting Mr. Khrushchev in Washington, I again reminded him of the grief and the anxieties of the families of those still missing from this plane, and of the continuing hope held by the families that some indication of the fate of these men would yet be uncovered. I requested him, as Vice President Nixon had done in an earlier message, to ask the appropriate Soviet authorities to look again into this question with a view to providing further information which I could furnish to you.

To my deep regret, Mr. Khrushchev's reply has failed once again to provide any new information. This means that the possibilities of obtaining any information from the Soviet Government now appear meager indeed. In spite of this, I assure you that the Government of the United States will continue to do everything that can be done to determine the fate of these missing men.

I know that there is no consolation that I can offer you in your sorrow, but I want to express to you on behalf of the American people my heartfelt sympathy.

Sincerely,

Dwight D. Eisenhower

Mrs. Loretta K. Ferguson
Route #1
Hamlet, Indiana

The President's letter tells of failures — yet offers hope.

sian border, I became highly suspicious of strangers. After the special report, his mother and I were contacted by many outsiders. There were newsmen and writers who wished to do the story. There were the genuinely sympathetic and the openly curious. There were even those who wished us to circulate petitions demanding our Government sever relations with Russia.

WHOM CAN WE trust? I study each offer carefully, afraid it may be Communist-inspired, and we will harm where we wish to help. It is difficult for us to know where to turn for help. Of course, we have relied on the Government—but without success, as far as we know.

When Mr. Khrushchev, for example, told Mr. Eisenhower he was free to go anywhere in Russia, we asked the President to accept the invitation and take along his own interpreter and Gen. James Van Fleet, who has said his own son is among the 400 U.S. soldiers believed held by the Reds.

On Mother's Day, we wrote the White House again, asking that the nation not forget the men who are serving their country—even as prisoners.

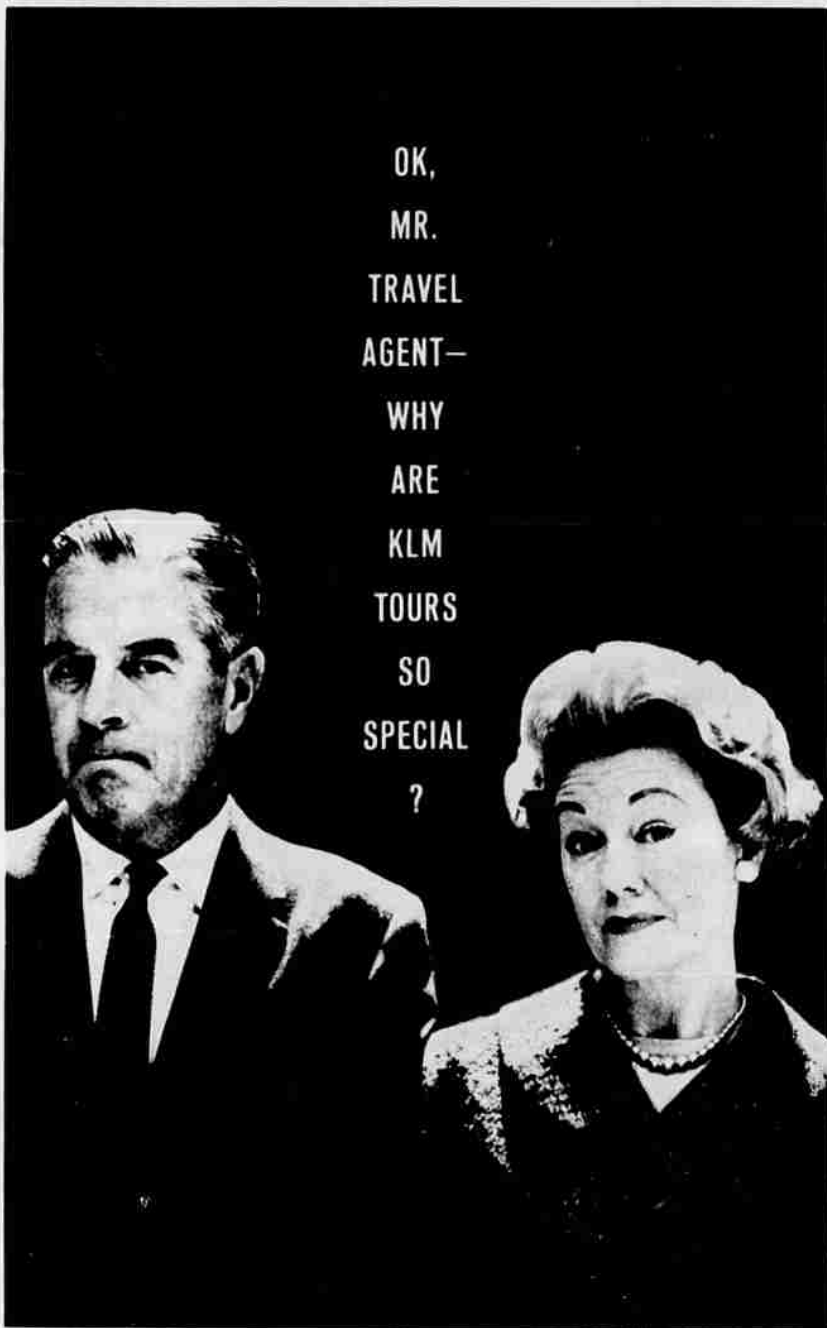
In return, Jim's case has been pursued by the President (see letter above), the State Department, and the Air Force. When Vice President Nixon toured Russia, he also asked Mr. Khrushchev directly about the missing airmen. The replies have never varied: "No information."

The Government has informed me that, in accordance with the Missing Persons Act, Jim's case will be reviewed each year on the anniversary of his disappearance, or whenever further information develops. That means that, unless something is learned about Jim sooner, there will be another official review next September.

It will be meaningless, routine. That is why I am pinning my hopes, despite all previous experience, on President Eisenhower's visit to Russia in June. What else is there?

I still believe Jim is alive. I have bought a home. When Jim returns, we will have our own place in which to pick up the threads of our lives. He will be able to catch up with the family he has missed through scrapbooks I have kept faithfully these long months.

But that is about as much as I can do for him now. His freedom depends on others, and I pray that they will not give up—that they will help me get my husband back.



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