

North Vietnam Offers to Return Marines Slain in Saigon Pullout

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WASHINGTON, Dec. 30—The North Vietnamese Government has informed Senator Edward M. Kennedy that it is prepared to return the remains of two marines who were the last American servicemen killed in the Vietnam war.

The Massachusetts Democrat's office made public today a letter from Nguyen Duy Trinh, the North Vietnamese Foreign Minister, stating that the provisional Revolutionary Government in South Vietnam had found the place where the two men had been buried and had identified their remains.

In the letter, dated Dec. 19, Mr. Trinh told Senator Kennedy: "We think that there will be no obstacle in your sending of your people to Vietnam to undertake the repatriation of these remains."

From the wording of the Trinh letter, it was presumed in the Kennedy office that Hanoi expected a representative of the Senator rather than an official of the executive branch to recover the remains and return them to the United States.

A Kennedy aide was expected to leave shortly for Saigon.

The two marine corporals, 19-year-old Darwin L. Judge

of Marshalltown, Iowa, and Charles McMahon, 22, of Woburn, Mass., were killed in a rocket attack on Tan Son Nhut Airport on April 28 during the American evacuation from Saigon.

The Defense Department first informed the parents of the two marines that the bodies had been flown to the carrier Midway but then announced that in the confusion of the final evacuation, the bodies had been left behind at the airport.

Through diplomatic and other channels, Senator Kennedy has been seeking information from Vietnamese authorities since May on the whereabouts of the remains of the two marines and requesting that they be returned to their families for burial in the United States. He wrote Mr. Trinh on Nov. 17.

In his reply, Mr. Trinh disclosed that the bodies had been located and said:

"I appreciated your hope that the ending of the war and the beginning of a new era in Vietnam will better promote the building of normal relations between the two countries and that the United States will contribute meaningfully toward healing the wound of war it has caused in our country."