



TEXAS GENERAL LAND OFFICE
COMMISSIONER DAWN BUCKINGHAM, M.D.

December 18, 2024

The Honorable Antony Blinken
Secretary
U.S. Department of State
2201 C Street NW
Washington, DC 20520

Dear Secretary Blinken:

As Commissioner of the Texas General Land Office and Chairwoman of the Texas Veterans Land Board, I am responsible for serving the brave men and women who have valiantly defended our nation. I am requesting a joint investigation by the U.S. Department of State and the U.S. Department of Defense to locate and return the remains of distinguished pilot and war hero Lieutenant Colonel George Andrew Davis, Jr.

Early next year, my office will open the fifth Texas State Veterans Cemetery in Lubbock, where Colonel Davis's family resides. To honor his heroism and sacrifice, we will commemorate the grand opening by holding a special internment ceremony for Colonel Davis. The return of his remains 72 years after being shot down near the Manchurian border would bring much-needed closure to his family and provide a dignified and honorable final resting place worthy of his service.

Aside from his courageous duty in the Korean War, Lieutenant Colonel Davis began his military career defending liberty in World War II. He joined the U.S. Army Air Corps in March of 1942 and was quickly sent to fight in the Pacific Theater in 1943, first with the 342nd Fighter Squadron, and later with the 348th Fighter Group of the Fifth Air Force. In three short years, Colonel Davis flew a total of 266 combat missions, accrued 705 combat hours, and was awarded numerous medals, including the Silver Star, two Distinguished Flying Crosses, and nine Air Medals for acts of heroism.

Not long after the start of the Korean War, Colonel Davis was given command of the 334th Fighter-Interceptor Squadron at Kimpo Airfield, where he trained new pilots and flew multiple air-to-air combat missions over North Korea. His leadership and experience earned him the Distinguished Service Cross for extraordinary heroism in combat with an armed enemy force, and he became known as the war's *ace of aces*. However, on February 10, 1952, Colonel Davis flew his 59th and final combat mission of the Korean War. Colonel Davis was shot down 30 miles south

of the Yalu River while defending a group of F-84 Thunderjets conducting a low-level bombing mission over North Korea and was declared missing in action and presumed dead. Colonel Davis's valorous actions led to the United States awarding him the Congressional Medal of Honor.

Some controversy surrounds the location of Colonel Davis's remains. It has been reported the Chinese military recovered Davis's body but never returned it to the United States. Furthermore, there have been reports that his dog tag and remains are possibly on display in a Korean War Museum in mainland China.

These rumors are extremely problematic, and if true, the flagrant disrespect shown to Colonel Davis is unacceptable. I'm calling on the United States to use all diplomatic means to demand the Chinese government to permit United States investigators to explore the validity of these claims immediately.

Thank you in advance for your consideration. Please help the loved ones of Lieutenant Colonel Davis finally find closure and allow us to provide him a dignified final resting place where the free men and women of our country can pay their respects to a hero who defended the freedoms we hold dear.

Sincerely,



DAWN BUCKINGHAM, M.D.
Commissioner, Texas General Land Office

- c: The Honorable Lloyd Austin, United States Secretary of Defense
The Honorable Nicholas Burns, Ambassador of the United States of America to the People's Republic of China
Deputy Assistant Secretary Michael S. Chase, Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for China, Taiwan and Mongolia
Mr. Kelly K. McKeague, Director, Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency
Admiral Samuel Paparo, Commander, United States Indo-Pacific Command
The Honorable Denis R. McDonough, United States Secretary of Veterans Affairs
The Honorable John Cornyn, United States Senator
The Honorable Ted Cruz, United States Senator
The Honorable Jon Tester, Chairman of the Senate Committee on Veterans' Affairs
The Honorable Michael McCaul, Chairman of the House Foreign Affairs Committee
The Honorable Mike Bost, Chairman of the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs
The Honorable Mike Rogers, Chairman of the House Armed Services Committee
The Honorable Jodey Arrington, Chairman of the House Budget Committee & Texas' 19th Congressional District (Lubbock)
The Honorable Charles Perry, Texas State Senator, Senate District 28 (Lubbock)
The Honorable Dustin Burrows, Texas House of Representatives, House District 83 (Lubbock)
The Honorable Carl Tepper, Texas House of Representatives, House District 84 (Lubbock)