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20 Jan 67

Travis AFB

Lawson's House

(0)

Hi Ray,

Well, I've finally settled down to write. The big dinner, etc with the Peta's just fell through. Bob just called and said he couldn't make it. When you say you live in San Francisco, you can mean you're 2-3 hrs away. Hayward Calif. is about 75 miles from Travis and both are about 45-60 miles from San Francisco and yet people from both places say they're from "San Francisco".

Many thoughts which are mostly confused now - will try to put them on paper as time goes on

I'm right now being entertained
by two boys - Mark Lawson 9
and John = 10 1/2 - Bill + Terry
went to a party and I elected
not to go. Am going to write a
few letters and go to bed early.

Had a long nite last nite as I
mentioned on the phone - many
interesting and friendly people.

There's a common fraternity here
with all of us going to Viet Nam
- and the booze really flows.
Nothing else to do and get too
lonely just sitting in the room.

Got a free ride from Sacramento
to Travis - will stay here till
I leave tomorrow. I've had enough
of the running around & have very

20 Jan

little desire to see any more
of the "big city". Besides I
don't think I could stand
another nite of drinking.

It's good to hear your
voice — you sound good and
steady again. Am still numb
myself — I think when all the
excitement of the flight over and
getting situated in my work there
is over — then it'll hit me.
Right now things are confused
and new. Half the time I'm not
sure where I'm going when I
ask for a ride. So far everything
has gone well though — and I
still have \$10.00 left.

Looking forward to the letter

from Colleen - also from
you (sorry about that.)

We've already said most
of the news on the phone. When
these letters will start saying
something is after I've left
the U.S.

Love you

Will write a letter to each
of the three oldest now

Love,

Dan

①

24 Jan 67

8 AM Tuesday

①

on way to Okinawa

Dear Kay,

Just lost a whole day as notice
the difference between the two dates
- here and on the card from Hawaii.

The Sun finally caught up with
us after all those hours. Have
been in the air almost 14 hrs now
- left Travis at 1 ³⁰ AM Monday and
now it's almost 8 AM Tuesday!
- it actually 14 hrs later. Figure
that out if you can - I'm having
a little trouble.

The big blue Pacific is unbelievably
BIG and BLUE. NOT a speck of
land anywhere since leaving Hawaii.
We're flying at 35000 feet - above
the clouds but can see for a long
way on each side and all there is

is blueness. Can see plainly
the curve of the earth's surface.
Am developing a new interest in
geography, etc - even more than I
had before. Picked up some beautiful
maps of the U.S., China, Korea, Japan,
Viet Nam, etc. Hope to get more.

Talked for a long time to John
and Mary - they seem, if any thing,
even friendlier than before. We
don't seem to have lost any thing
by not seeing them for so long.
Never called the Flagg's. Bill Lawson
and Terry were very very warm and
helpful. They felt bad about keeping
me so late at their house that I
missed my first plane. It turned
out okay tho. Got to see a nice
day in California for a change.

1 (2) 24 Jan
The kids were out without any
bits at all playing football. I
guess I could get to like California
after all.

Mentioned the strange people I
met in Sacramento? Hundreds, literally,
of lonely women with husbands gone
and no family or friends. Many
divorcees also. First time I've been
propositioned by anyone. Happened
twice one nite. Amazing! But your
little boy came through - situation
ethics and all.

Can't take too much of that book
at a time - can read 10-15 pages then
have to put it down. Plan to read
it 3-4 more times. Looks like I've
got a solution to many of the
frustrations and questions I had
in practise. Have to agree with

Gallatin that this will be
the new morality — the only sane
approach to all the gray decisions
that have to be made. As Fletcher
points out — this is no excuse for
license as was supposed — in many
ways it's tougher to proceed on
the philosophy than the old formula —
for every situation method we were
taught by the nuns & priests in
school.

I'm glad you're using the
radio. Keep challenging your mind
with books and people — don't
crawl into a hole, please. If we
both keep looking outward — we'll
be stronger and more complete for
the experiences we have in the next
year. If we turn inside ourselves

1 (3) 24 Jan
it could be disastrous for both
of us.

I'll try to communicate what I
see and learn. It's hard for me
to put many of these things on
paper now but as time goes on
should get easier.

Not long till we land at
Okinawa now - probably refuel
there - may get a chance to walk
around. From Okinawa I guess
we ^{go} directly to Saigon. The other
flights took in Bangkok also but
I guess we won't. Probably spend
a few days in Saigon getting organized
- we'll see.

That's all for now. Love you
very much. You're always in my
thoughts as I see these new

things - would like to have
you ~~back~~^{here} to comment on them.

Love,

Dan

P.S. HELLO COLLEEN. WILL
WRITE YOU A LETTER
LATER. THANK YOU & FOR
YOUR LETTERS (I won't get them
until I get settled in Plucka
I suspect).

LOVE,
DADDY

HI KAELE. HI ERIN.

YOU'RE NICE,

LOVE

DADDY

HI MEGAN.

1 (4)

24 Jan

P.S. Just got an announcement from the pilot that we're just south of Japan. Passed Iwo Jima on our right about 15 min ago. I missed it. About 45 min to go and we'll be in Okinawa.

Love,
Dan

24 Jan 67
6 ³⁰ PM

Dear Kay,

I'm standing in the officers Club in Ton Son Nhut right now just outside of Saigon. Quite a change - the wild west all over again.

Sorry to take so long to send these. Will write again tomorrow.
Love Dan

I have just got the
 from the fact that we are just
 south of Japan. I am sure
 from our own eyes about 1000
 up. I would not. About
 of course to go and we will be in
 a moment

Your
 (handwritten signature)

24 Jan 1907
 1/2
 1/4

I am sorry to hear
 that you are not
 just what you need
 a change - the best way to
 over again
 I am sorry to hear
 and the best way to
 over again

①

25 Jan 67

0040 hrs.

(that is, 1240 ^{PM})
Ton Son Nhut

Max Kay,

②

Many thoughts as I sit in
the busy control room of the
supply headquarters for Viet Nam.
Much activity all around me.
Will get back to this after I tell
my story now that it is fresh.

Imagine the dirtiest, muddiest,
smelliest place in the world full
of unshaven, tired men and that's
where I am right now. Much
like I was after that one week
trip to Canada years ago.

Arrived here about 3-4 PM in
70° heat with 90-100% humidity.
Couldn't land right away because
there was an attack on Ton Son Nhut
at the time. We circled for about an

hour and then landed amid
guards and many fighter-transport
landing & taking off. All in a
fine cloud of dirt & smuck of
dirt. Lined up for 2-3 hrs while
we were checked in - then sat on
our asses while they figured out
a way for us to get to our
final destination. Some people
have been here 3-4 days waiting
for a flight. One fellow from
New York showed me how to
catch a cargo plane out of
here and that's what I'm doing
this time of nite - the plane
doesn't leave till 6¹⁵ AM but if
I lay down to sleep will never
wake up in time.

Many observations I hope I
can get down on paper

25 Jan

First off - the people of Veet
am are unbelievably small.
Average man is - fully developed -
about 5 feet at most - majority
are smaller. The women are also
small - but small in every
way. Must weigh less than
85 pounds. I'm a giant in
comparison. Very solemn and
dignified people but I understand
you can't trust them. The
women are small-boned and
very graceful and beautiful -
in a way. Figure they have
worms, are anemic, have ~~the~~ TB
and a venereal disease - then
start from there.

Have to describe the Officers'
Club while it's fresh if I can.

Picture a room just a little bigger than our 1st floor plan full of 200-300 males. Along one wall is a bar like you see in any Western — a board, a few Vietnamese barenders but no mirrors, etc. Along one wall is a bandstand with a wild DD 5-some who can sing & play anything thrown up to them — but loud — LOUD with a wild beat. Along the wall opposite the bar are slot machines — one arm bandits — in constant motion. Mingling among the patrons (whom I'll describe later) are these pretty tiny Vietnamese girls with their long trousers covered by a

distinctive dress ² (3) ^{259m} which you've
seen in the papers. They look
like children - and almost sweet
smile. Sexually they turn the
men on like their younger
sisters would. I'm told that
the gals down town have adopted
the Western sedgy ways and they
are able to arouse the S.D.'s
much better. The 200-300
men are right out of the wild
west - noisy, boisterous &
physical. Most of these men
are Captains - Majors who fly
every day. In constant danger
so that the officers' club is the
safest thing they know (Even tho
it was bombed last week - no real
damage). Friendly they are. Also
noisy so you can't hear your-

self think. I had no trouble
getting to know many of them
but I'm neutral - I'm a
doctor. The band was the
best I've seen since Ruggie
Garcia or Doc? at Diamond
Jim's. With a girl who could
dance I would have gone all
nite. Instead got to talking
with a Lt. Colonel about situation
ethics of all things. Some good
comments - he was trained by
the Jesuits in Boston.

Hope I've described part of
the show. Many beers so
don't know for sure. Am
now going to sack out in one
of the chairs here so don't
miss my flight to Plover
Will write again soon.

Love you very much,
P.S. Need a shower badly. Dan.

H

8

(3)

25 Jan 67
Pleiku V.N.
11 ³⁰ PM wed

Hi Kay,

Things are really moving fast here for me. Slept on a couch last nite and caught a flight out of Saigon by hook & crook - a new record for getting out of that town, I'm told. Flew in the cockpit w/ the pilot, co pilot, navigator & engineer. Quite an experience for me. Finding out the way to do things here - just ask around and be there when things are happening. Had to get out of that hot, muggy, filthy town - otherwise would have sat around rotting for 3-4 days.

Now I'm in God's country.
Temp is 60° here, cool - clean air

and this base is beautiful and friendly. Construction going up all the time - NEW and a lot of imagination.

Contrary to what the newspapers say - Pleiku is the nicest base in Viet Nam - clean, running water most of the time, a nice clean officers club, a fairly complete dispensary and very warm open people to work with. The morale here is the best of any place in Viet Nam. Have already met about 25 people and have only been here since 9³⁰ this morning. I'm beat tired though. It's been a rough trip - especially last night and those days at Travis. - somehow I don't seem to get

3 (2) 25 Jan

The right kind of sleep on the floor or on a makeshift bed.

I guess I'm spoiled - may be will get used to it.

Am living in a 3-man room - very nice - much better than I expected. Everything is wet here but not nearly as bad as in Saigon.

We'll be going out to the villages to take care of the people but there's no real danger. The Montagnards are very friendly and honest. The Viet names (not the VC especially - but all Vietnamese) are lazy, dirty, stealing people and most are disgusted with them. The ^{of the L&D's} opinion here is that if all the people

were like the montagnards there
wouldn't be a problem over here and

the war would be over already
about 7-8 villages around Pleiku
I guess. Also will be running
a dispensary here with 2 other
doctors. Have met them and they
seem very nice - will reserve any
firm opinions about any thing for
awhile.

Am really beat tired, Roy - Sorry
I don't have much to say but
am confused by all I've seen -
may be as time goes on I may be
able to describe things a little
better.

Love you very much.
P.S. No mail here when I arrived -
may be tomorrow. Dan

Thursday
26 Jan 67

Pleiku, V.N.

Dear Kay,

(4)

no mail yet. Could use some. First day of work today - saw about 10 people is all. Doesn't look like much work demanded yet. Will go out to a montagnard village Saturday and look around. Don't worry, it's safe.

Am going out to a Capt Jack Rudy who's been here for about 7-8 mo. - Is a big chief among these villagers. Actually he's a lawyer but helps these people with their problems. He's working to get them some independence from these bastard Vietnamese.

B52's dropped some bombs about 20 miles from here yesterday AM. Don't know if they hit any thing - hit the ground for sure.

The big disappointment so far is that it looks like I'm not going to be overwhelmingly busy - time will drag. Maybe when I get involved in the villages things will

improve a little. Maybe I can get the BLC to contribute some medicine once in a while.

There's a BX here that now & then gets a good shipment of cameras, tape recorders, etc. Nothing today but that's okay since I'm broke.

Much flying in and out going on at the flight line. - went over there to look around. Actually there's at least 3 other Army bases here which makes ours fairly secure. Camp Holloway over the hill about a mile gets probed 2-3x a week and a mortar attack takes place every now & then there but we're pretty safe here. That attack you heard about 7 Jan 67 hit Camp Holloway - 5-7 killed and 8-10 wounded. A few shells were lobbed into our small base but the only casualty was a guy that got

his back wrenched ⁴⁷ diving ^{26 Jan} into a
bunker.

Very friendly bunch here as I mentioned.
This is the smallest and best Air Force
base in Viet Nam. Everything is new
and ~~is~~ improving every day. May be as
it gets built up here I'll get busier.
about 300 officers all told. Used to be
only 70 officers on the whole base 6 mo ago.
Everyone's bitching because ~~it~~ we're getting
so big noone knows anyone - but compared
to Tan Son Nhut this is heaven.

Dust everywhere - we wear fatigues and
boots all day - noone feels very clean.
Can take a shower every day so that helps.
Also have a nice place to sleep. Have been
catching sleep on floors and chairs and on
top of luggage till I got here - yesterday
slept from 2 PM - 7 PM, got up for supper
and had a few beers - went to bed at

about 11^{PM} and slept till 6³⁰^{AM} when
I woke up by myself. am finally rested

Will buy a beautiful camera as soon
as I can find the money — will then
send you some pictures of this place.

Don't expect the Sheraton-Ritz but actually
it's very nice if you have to be in
Viet Nam.

All the magazines and literature is
2-3 weeks late — except Time magazine
which is printed on a silk-type thin paper
somewhere in the Orient

There's a crowd here now so will
write later.

Hope I get some word from you soon.
Boredom may be the main problem here.
Would give a dollar for a 5-pack of cigars
with a plastic tip. Haven't seen one since
~~Okinawa~~ San Francisco.

Love
Dan

P.S. My address:

Capt Daniel C. Conlon
333 Cmbt Spt Gp (PACAF)
APO San Francisco 96295

27 Jan 67

Friday

8:30 PM

(The 96295 locates

Plenku for the postoffice)

(5)

Dear Kay,

Got a piece of mail today! It was a calendar & Season Greetings from Dorothy Scaller - postmark date 14 Dec 66. Hope you're writing. Feel a little like I'm talking to myself day after day. Figure I've written something like 20 cards & letters and not even a suggestion that I'm getting through. Makes me realize just how isolated we are here. Enough of the tears.

Had an eventful day today. Worked the dispensary by myself all day - one of the other MD's went to Tokyo for a week and the other one was at meetings all day. Their names are David Dulaney and Al Alsenborg. The dispensary is fun if crude - seat-of-the-pants medicine that would make Don

Woodley shudder. There's a film
of red dust on ~~every~~ thing including
the 'sterile' surgical equipment.

The masks are so dirty we just
don't wear them - a waste of time.

We wear muddy, dirty clothes all
day although we have running
water & change clothes every day.

Have a Vietnamese mamma san
who cleans our clothes, presses them
and lays them out on our beds
daily. Makes our beds, cleans the
room, etc every day and even shines
our boots. All for \$5.00 a month
apiece. (There's three of us in this
room) A mamma san is a woman
with children. A baby san is a
woman without children even though
she may be married.

Got my first taste of the

5-12 2:15 pm
montagnards today. Went out to
a village to see a sick "old" lady.

She looked to be about 70-80%
but was really somewhere in her 40's.
I think she has the mumps but
looks too sick for that. They
live in incredibly filthy "hooches" -
a long - one room house on stilts
that chickens + pigs run around in
- a fire burns constantly for ventilation
and the people wear loin clothes.
They are very friendly and seemed
to accept me well. Have to remember
they live in terror of the Viet Cong
at night and we really can't
protect them. Their weapon is the
cross bow - a powerful weapon that
can go through a man at 150 yards
and very accurate in their hands.
Looked over three of the children
in the hooch and they seemed to be

in good health at least externally.
There were three women passing
this child from breast to breast
— they all stay ~~to~~ nursing by
continuous stimulation — no other way
to preserve milk I guess — so they
do the thing that's most sanitary.

The young girls have no clothes
above the waist until their puberty,
then wear a cloth over breasts until
married. When married the old man
knocks out their front teeth so they
won't be beautiful any more, then
they go bare breasted again.

at least 10 people in the hooch
when I was made a member of the
tribe. Now sport the typical brass
bracelet that many of the G.I.'s
that have been to the village sport.
~~Now~~ ^{Have} to not been made a chief yet
but expect will soon.

There are about 9⁵ Montagnard²¹⁸
villages here - belong to the JARAI
group in case you're interested. By
the way that book 'Green Beret' was
fairly accurate in describing these
people. All except the filth. ~~It~~
Haven't tested their rice wine yet
but will tomorrow when I check
out that lady again & the mumps.
Drank their water though, so should
shortly get the trots. Bet you're
wondering I'll come home with a
koin cloth on.

Haven't seen a cigar I like since
leaving San Francisco. Consequently
have started smoking Soleros again!
15¢ a package. Sorry about that
but there's very little else to do
here.

Met the priest here yesterday. He's
a Dominican from Boston - typical.

Irish priest — a frustrated Irishman
— would go back to the old god
any time. He's counting the days
when he can get out of here. I
don't like him. Mentioned I was
reading Situation Ethics and he
condemned it out of hand — although
admitted he'd never read it. Looks
like a long year as long as this
guy sticks around.

We haven't seen U.S. green dollars
or coins since coming here. They
gave us "funny money" — military
script — when we got to Saigon. Don't
want this ^{U.S.} money to get into
circulation in Viet Nam black
market. In fact we can't even
pay the Vietnamese in funny money
— have to pay them in Piastres or
"Dong" as they call it. 118 piastres

5 (4) 278th
or done are worth \$1.00 U.S. green.

Haven't seen milk except one
sour glass since San Francisco.
Our milk bill will go up when I
get home - can guarantee you.

Will try to describe the base.

There's a concrete runway by
which planes come & go. Fighters,
propaganda planes, cargo planes,
reconnaissance, helicopters - a constant
stream of them - going in & out.

The fighters are out every night all
night long - sleep during the day.
B 52 strikes within hearing range
every AM ~ 4-5 AM. Around
the flight line the whole base
works - it's the reason for our
existence & the V.C. ~~do~~ would love
to get rid of it. It's our life

line to the outside world.

This is the remotest (although
nicest) base in viet nam except
for the Special Forces (Green Beret)
A & B camps.

However, we're not unprotected.
Around us on all sides but one
are about 5 separate Army
camps — something like 15,000
Army people plus ~~that~~ ~~that~~ out
1500 troops. We also have the
silly Vietnam Army "protecting"
us. Trouble is that when there's
any action, you can't find them.
15 ~~ARR~~ ARVN (army of viet nam) troops
will stand around watching one
of their buddies dig a hole, etc.

We also have spies, counter intelligence,
psychological warfare men, etc
crawling all over this base. They

5 (5) 21 Jan
are right out of the spy stories.

Party like hell, live in the
villages, have many girls, etc.

Very friendly people but professionals
in their jobs and make no mistake
about it.

The dispensary is about 4 blocks
from the flight line and is
very secure. We live in an
even more secure place called
MACV (Military Assistance Corps Vietnam)
which we share with all the
real pros. These fellows are
picked out to advise and help
build up the area. About 300
officers - most are Majors & up
(probably 200 of them are this way)
The NCOs are usually at least
Tech Sergeants or better - most
have 17-19 years in. Also have

many warrant officers - an almost exact race in the service except here. All these men were picked because they were the best in their fields. Feel real complimented to be included in their conversations. Then these are the REAL HEROS - the helicopter pilots, the fighter pilots, observation men etc - also the pick of the crop. Fitzgerald was of this caliber I'm sure.

Haven't even thought to check out a weapon yet, that's how insecure I feel. We have bunkers everywhere along all the buildings but no direct attack on us as yet. The Army act as a buffer for us, thank God. All except one side - that faces Cambodia - Just got a tour from a map

and this is ⁵well defended. The
only real danger ^{278m}is at nite and
that would be from mortars
- the VC is so off balance locally
that they couldn't mount a full
scaled attack here.

In short, am safe. I know
you don't believe this because all
the guys have told their wives the
same thing and none of them believe
it either. However, it's true.

By the way, if you'd like
maybe let Ed & Dad read some
~~of~~ of these letters. May be
interesting to them to get the
straight poop instead of that
superficial stuff they read in the
papers.

Love you very much. Can't
wait for that first letter. I
bug the hell out of the mailman
3-4 x's a day.

Am going back to join the
drinking. No Saturday - Sunday
weekends here apparently. Have to
check the calendar to find out
what day it is.

The work isn't really hard,
though. Just different. I'm
getting lots of sleep.

Love,

Dan.

P.S. The reason I couldn't get any
information about this place is
that everyone here now ~~was~~ was the
first one here. The replacements are
just now coming in. Saigon thinks
~~that~~ we're somewhere near the moon.
I wouldn't trade this for "seclusion"
Saigon on a bet.

Love Dan
How are the kids?

Hi again

(6)

28 Jan 67

12³⁰ AM

SAT

We were just kicked out of the officers club where we were playing Lyet's dice - a great game. Was playing with
① a special agent who never wears his uniform and had to leave for Pleiku village ^{at 11³⁰ PM} because of fear of V.C. snipers taking pot shots at his jeep. I just did surgery on his buddy who went with him.
They've made it every other nite so don't sweat it too much tonight.
Pleiku village is technically a "loyal" Vietnamese village so no sweat.
However it's an R & R center for the V.C. ("Charlie") so you never know what's going to happen. The V.C. like to keep Pleiku quiet and safe for them

so there aren't too many accidents
here. If there would be any trouble
out boys would bomb hell out of
the town and that would spoil
their fun.

② A telephone man who is
responsible for setting up communications
to Saigon, Can Rank Bay, etc

③ Two pilots who have a day
off tomorrow.

④ A fourth guy who's job
is classified and every one gives
him a hard time because he never
wears a uniform and yet claims
he's a major in the US Air Force.

As you can tell by the many
corrections - I've had a lot of
booze to drink. Taught a guy how
to drink out of the back side of
a glass to get rid of the kick ups -
a medical triumph for me

10-2 28 Jan
My roommates are all sacked
out so think I'll go to bed, too.

Live on top bunk amid clean sheets
— isn't that nice.

Love you very much. The
Vietnamese girls haven't turned on
my "on" button as yet. Very
small as I mentioned before. They all
walk around like their feet hurt.
They're for hire any time I'm told
but some how sex still means
more to me than that.

Love, Dan.

~~Hi~~ HI, COLLEEN. THINK OF
YOU ALL THE TIME. GET
YOUR MOTHER TO SEND A
PICTURE OF ALL YOU KIDS
AND MOM TO ME.

LOVE, DADDY.

My roommates are all excited
to have 3/11 to be 100%
there on top of the world. I think
that's what we need.

Love you very much. The
Vermont State House is being
very nice. I hope to get
smaller in 2 weeks. They all
walk around like they just lost
their pants and they don't hold
but some are not all there.
I hope to see them that
love you.

Hi HI, Green. Think of
you all the time. Get
your mother to send a
picture of all you kids
and mom to me.
Love, DADDY

29 Jan 67

Pleiku AB

9⁰⁰
PM

Sunday PM

(7)

Dear Kay,

Sorry I didn't get to write you yesterday but will explain many things I've seen and done since my last letter. Will try to capture some of this on paper now before it slips away. Am very tired - no sleep since Fri-Sat night's sleep

Went to a Montagnard village yesterday about noon to see the old lady. No fault of mine but she's well now. Went with Jack Rudy - the Judge Advocate or base lawyer which ever you prefer. He's quite a guy. Requested some sheet metal for the Montagnard kitchen and for PLO - more about these people later. Jack is a big chief at this village - the

The name is Plei Brill. Want to hurry
up and change an impression I gave
yesterday that these people are dirty.
Those that are are dirty because of
the constant dust + dirt around them.

Must take any chance they get — no
running water or wells — they bring
water in in gourds from a near by
lake. They simply don't have soap
+ water available. However, must
sweep their houses constantly and
do the best they can to keep neat.
I may repeat my self many times
but would like to get these things
down on paper for later on. ~~the~~

Anyway, we came back later in
Jack Rudy's Honda motor cycle
for the sacrifice the Teacher + Plo
were planning for us to thank us for
the sheet metal.

We started out at Plo's house.

Jack has ¹② worked out a ^{29 Jan} deal with
he whereby Plo hires 6-7 men to
make their famous crossbow - each man
making a part - then Jack buys the
crossbows from Plo and sells them
on the base or in the U.S. by mail.
~~at~~ ^{with} The profit Jack makes he buys
soap and candy, etc - even blankets -
and hands this out to the natives.

A great idea that seems to me to be
a positive contribution. He's sold
about 500 of these crossbows already.
I bought one today - \$10.00 - and it's
a work of art. Made from mokagony
and beautifully hand tooled. Arrows are
bamboo. Plo is making a special small
one for me as a gift.

To digress a little. These are the
friendliest, most honest and honorable
people I have ever met. Put us to
shame in many ways. They have great
courage and, if they like you, will

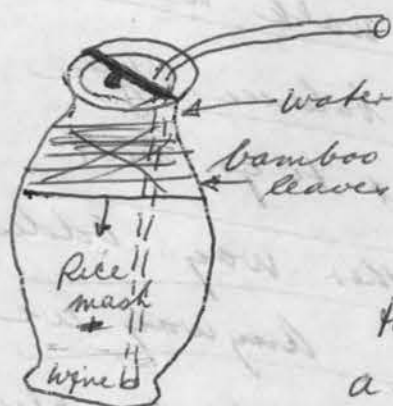
do literally anything for you.
They have magnificent posture &
carriage - walk with real pride.
They laugh & sing constantly. Look
everyone straight in the eye and
study you carefully. Any suggestion
of dishonesty they detect immediately.
They are also very courteous to everyone
- I saw men today ~~to~~ Is I's - (another
story maybe later) unwittingly break
hundreds of taboos and yet they
never flinched but smiled very
openly and forgave us (I'm sure
I'm still breaking many taboos altho
Jack has carefully coached me on
many of them e.g. don't put your
hands on children's heads, don't even
touch the children unless the parents
or the child comes to you first, etc)
because they knew we meant well.

Back to my story.

T (3) 29 Jan

Jack Rudy and I returned for the
the giving sacrifices about 3 PM by
moto scooter - a wild ~~ride~~ ride for
about 7 miles down dusty trails. I
had my pockets full of medicine and
he had his full of Cigars, candy, tobacco,
etc.

The sacrifice consist of killing a
chicken after drinking 3 levels of
rice wine, then eating this boiled
along with a hot sauce (very good)
and boiled Clams. To explain a
"jig" of rice wine. They have a
big jug standing about 3 feet tall



much like the diagram
below. On the bottom
is the wine of
varying proof and age.
We had the best wine

they had - came out like
a milky substance - like
skim milk. They tapped
it just for us. about 1-2 mo old.
They fill the top with water up to

the rim and then place a piece of wood across the top with a stick hanging down in the middle. Drinking a "level" consists of sucking on the straw until the level of the water is under that stick hanging down. That's a hell of a lot of wine! This wine is something else again. It gives a person a special clearness of thought, almost a euphoria - so much so that by the time I went to bed I was speaking their language pretty well! But it does something else to the coordination. Couldn't walk without falling down. No ~~to~~ balance. You know where you want to go but your body goes another way. Oddest feeling in the world. Anyway we both drank about 6-8 levels plus a bottle they siphoned off while we

7 (4) 29 Jan
ate the chicken and clams +
+ stuff. We got smashed but
didn't know it. I barfed all over
the place which pleased them
mightily (if you vomit and/or get
smashed this pleases their gods very
much - their gods must still be
smiling today.) Jack acted as
our interpreter and did a hell of a
job. The Montagnards I met were
all very intelligent and extremely
eager to learn - They picked out
brains dry as dust they could. They
were also very informative about them-
selves, their patrol for all Vietnamese,
etc. After a while I got so I
could talk a little on my own
- Some of them knew a few
American words and knew French
very well so I could get along

a little bit.

I've got to take a break -
I'm exhausted. Will pick
this up later.

Jack has a 50 page language
book he's compiled - the language
has never been recorded officially.
He hopes to publish a dictionary
sometime. Also is going to write
a book when he gets back - ought
to be a dandy. - best seller for
sure if it can pass the censors.

I know how to count laterally

now: ~~SA~~ SA = one
DUA = two
CLOW = three
BA = 4
MA = 5
NGM = 6
JU = 7
PAN = 8
DUAPAN = 9
PLO = 10
PLOS = 11
etc
DUAPLO = 20
DUAPLOSA = 21
etc.

Now about that

FENEKAE = Thank you.

7
29 Jan. '67

Pleiku AB 9 PM Sunday

Dear Kay,

Sorry I didn't get to write you yesterday but will explain many things I've seen and done since my last letter. Will try to capture some of this on paper now before it slips away. Am very tired---no sleep since Fri-Sat nites.

Went to a Montagnard village yesterday about noon to see the old lady. No fault of mine but she's well now. Went with Jack Rudy--the Judge Advocate or base lawyer whichever you prefer. He's quite a guy. He requisitioned some sheet metal for the Montagnard teacher and for Plo-- more about these people later. Jack is a big chief at this village--the name is Plei Brill. Want to hurry up and change an impression I gave yesterday that these people are dirty. Those that are are dirty because of the constant dust and dirt around them. Most bathe any chance they get--no running water or wells--they bring water in in gourds from a nearby lake. They simply do not have soap or water available. However most sweep their houses constantly and do the best they can to keep neat. I may repeat myself many times but would like to get these things down on paper for later on.

Anyway we came back later in Jack Rudy's Honda motor cycle for the sacrifice the teacher and Plo were planning for us to thank us for the sheet metal.

We started out at Plo's house. Jack has worked out a deal with him whereby Plo hires 6 or 7 men to make their famous crossbow--each man making a part--then Jack buys the crossbows from Plo and sells them on the Base or in the U S by mail. With the profit Jack makes he buys soap and candy etc.--even blankets--and hands this out to the natives. A great idea--that seems to me to be a positive contribution. He's sold about 500 of these crossbows already. I Bought one today--\$10-- and it's a work of art. Made from mahogany and beautifully hand tooled. Arrows are bamboo. Plo is making a special small one for me as a gift.

To digress a little. These are the friendliest, most honest and honorable people I have ever met. Put us to shame in many ways. They have great courage and, if they like you, will do

literally anything for you. They have magnificent posture and carriage--walk with real pride. They laugh and sing constantly. Look everyone straight in the eye and study you carefully. Any suggestion of dishonesty they detect immediately. They are also very courteous to everyone- I saw men today-G I's(another story maybe later) unwillingly break hundreds of taboos and yet they never flinched but smiled very openly and forgave us.(I'm sure I'm still breaking many taboos altho Jack has carefully coached me on many of them e.g. don't put your hands on children'd heads,don't even touch the children unless the parents or the child comes to you first etc.) because they knew we meant well.

Back to my story.

Jack Rudy and I returned for the Thanksgiving sacrifices about 3 PM by motor scooter-a wild ride for about 7 miles down dusty trails.I had my pockets full of medicine and he had his full of cigars,candy,tobacco etc.

The sacrifice consists of killing a chicken after drinking 3 levels of rice wine,then eating this boiled along with a hot sauce(very good) and boiled clams. To explain a level of rice wine. They have a big jug standing about 3 feet tall much like the diagram. On the bottom is the wine of varrying proof and age. We had the best wine they had- came out like a milky substance-like skim milk. They tapped it just for us. about 1 or 2 months old. They fill the top with water up to the brim and then place a piece of wood across the top with a stick hanging down in the middle. Drinking a "level" consists of sucking on the straw until the level of the water is under that stick hanging down.That's a hell of a lot of wine. This wine is something else again. It gives a person a special clearness of thought,almost a euphoria-so much so that by the time I went to bed I was speaking their language pretty well. But it does something else to the coordination. Couldn't walk without falling down. No balance. You know where you want to go but your body goes another way. Oddest feeling in the world. Anyway we both drank about 6-8 levels plus a bottle they siphoned off while we ate the chicken and clams and hot stuff. We got smashed but didn't know it. I barfed all over the place which pleased them mightily(if you vomit and or get smashed this pleases their Gods very much-their Gods must still

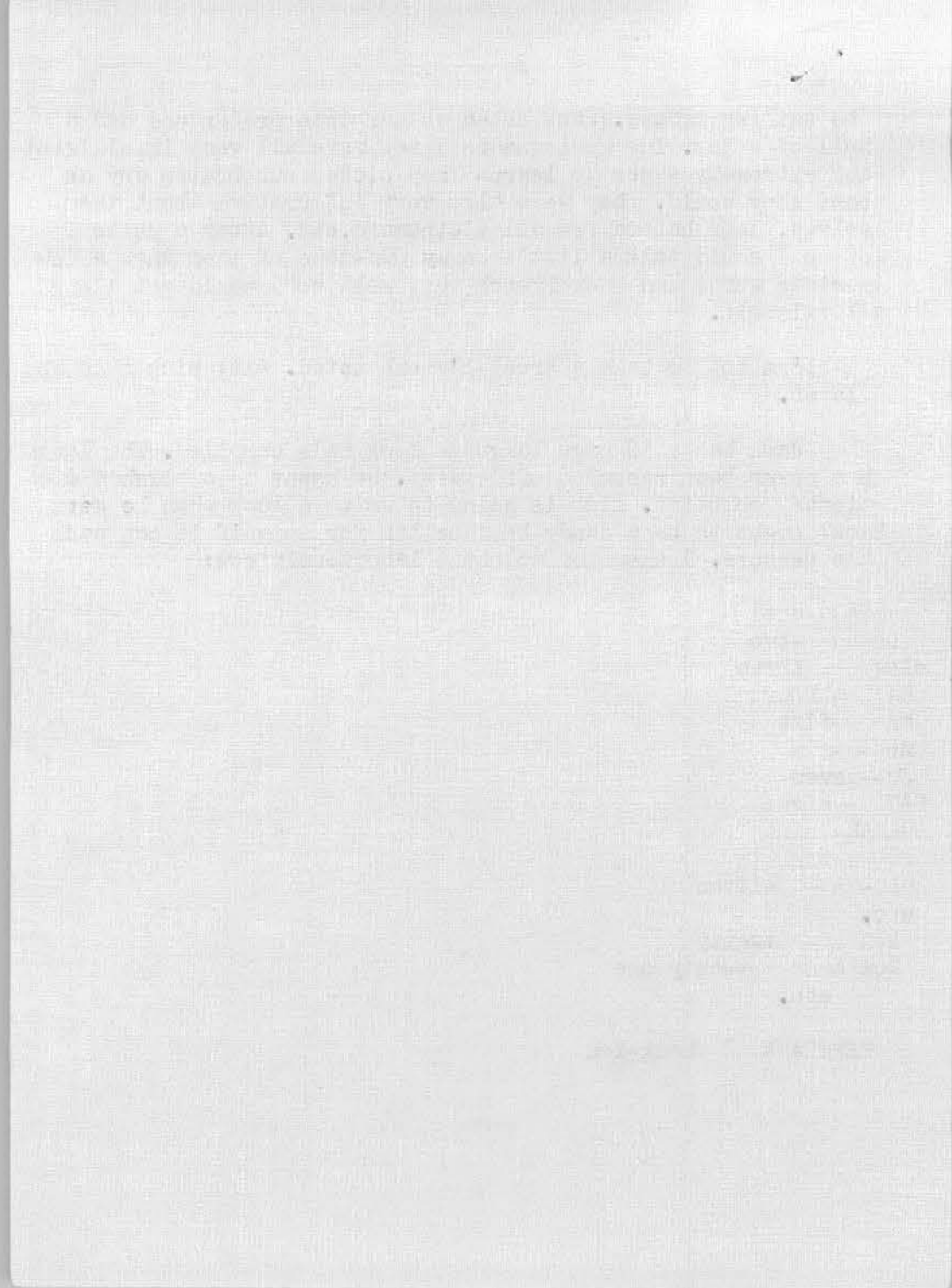
be smiling today). Jack acted as our interpreter and did a hell of a job. The Montagnads I met were all very intelligent and extremely eager to learn- They picked our brains dry as best they could. They were also very informative about themselves, their hatred for all Vietnamese, etc. After a while I got so I could talk a little on my own- some of them knew a few American words and knew French very well so I could get along a little bit.

I've got to take a break- I'm exhausted. Will pick this up later.

Jack has a 50 page language book he's compiled. The language has never been recorded officially. He hopes to publish a dictionary sometime. Also is going to write a book when he gets back- ought to be a dandy best seller for sure if it can pass the censors. I know how to count laboriously now:

SA---one
 DUA-- --two
 clow---three
 BA----four
 MA----five
 nom---six
 JU--seven
 PAN----eight
 DUAPAN- nine
 PLO---ten
 PLO-SA---eleven
 etc.
 DUAPLO---twenty
 DUAPLOSA---twenty one
 etc.

FENEKAE---Thank-You



(5)

30 Jan 67

1:30

PM

lunch Monday

(8)

Dear Kay,

The lights went out last night before I could finish your letter - we have many problems on this small base - electricity fails frequently and our hot water supply is temperamental at best. Sorry you didn't get a letter ~~last~~ yesterday.

I received my first letter from you today - a great thrill believe me. Sorry you sound so depressed - "When rape is inevitable, relax and enjoy it...." - it works for me. Can't let your emotions run you or you're whipped. I

think most of the men here
feel this way and consequently
this base is the friendliest, most
optimistic and spirited one in
Viet Nam. a real pleasure to
know them & work with them.
Your words about the kids
really hit my "on" button. It
doesn't sound like much to you
I'm sure but I treasure every
word out here in the boonies.

I thought you'd enjoy this
Polaroid picture taken of me
out in a Montagnard village ~~the~~
yesterday. We're standing in a
shed because it's raining cats
& dogs. The Montagnards love
their children very much and this
may be my way through to these

8 (6)
people eventually. 30 Jan

Had a briefing by the commander
Colonel Bonneau today. He's all
in favor of "civic action" as it's
called. Encourages going out to the
village & helping. Yesterday I
saw enough pathology to fill up
2 mo of practise in Implo and I
was only there 3-4 hr and only
saw about 50-60 people. And
that doesn't count their malaria,
the, worms & anemia that all of
them have.

The trouble is that there is
very little we can do that's permanent
— many of the club feet, thyroid
goiters, parotid tumors, cleft palates,
rotten teeth, etc I saw would require
a full size hospital & a surgical

~~the~~ Kam) plus a clinic like the
BLC working nite & day. There
are 200,000 Montagnards in the
area (800,000 in all counting Cambodia,
Laos, etc). I found a Montagnard
"doctor" in a Special Forces camp
yesterday and loaded him down
with medicines and showed him
how to do a few things. Will
be back next week to see what
happened. Maybe if he's any
good I can work through him.
You see, eventually we're going to
leave this area and these people are
going to revert right back to form.
They go bare foot so get hook worm,
they don't cook their food very well
(although they did for us) usually.
No written language. They are
basically a non-specialized civilization

— no shop keepers, ⁸ (1) no ^{30 gun} barbers, no
& lots, no lawyers, doctors, dentists, etc

They have banana trees, Tara plants
(like a very hard potato) pineapples,
hot plant, tobacco, rice, poppies
(for opium), papy a trees — then
chickens, cows (held in common by
the whole community), pigs, cats,
dogs (both of which they eat) — all
on their property. This is why

the Vietnamese despise them and
call them "mois" (dirty little savage)

The Vietnamese have a policy of
extermination in action here. They
would like to completely destroy
these people — "the mountain people"
(Montagnards). And they may very
well succeed much as we succeeded
in destroying the American Indian.

You see the Vietnamese are
a "civilized" race much as the
Chinese are. (The Vietnamese are
basically Chinese in origin, whereas
the Montagnards are Polynesian
in origin - mixed with other races
I'm sure. They even worship
stones just as the original
Hawaiians did) By the mere
force of evolution the Vietnamese
may very well win out. One
thing may slow them down and
that's the fact that they are
lazy and loaded with graft. An
honest Vietnamese is a rare
commodity around here - and I
think a basic weakness in their
structure. There's no foundation
of trust among themselves so no
worth while project can be started

and seen through ^{30 Jan} without graft
and corruption and just plain
laziness fouling it up.

I'm sorry I'm so wendy. As
time goes on, I'll slow down a
bit but right now there's an
avalanche of new information coming
to me that I'm trying to sift through
and study. Nothing is black and
white here and I mean NOTHING.

Will sign off now and talk to
you later - will get this in the
mail before another day goes by.

I love you very much, Sweetie.
be strong for me - and you'll
see, it'll all work out for the
best. God bless you.

Love

Dan

P.S. Thought you'd be interested
in some of the propaganda that
keeps we keep throwing out planes
at the V.C. Don't know what it
says.

Love you very much

Dan

30. January '67

1:30 PM Lunch

Dear Kay,

8

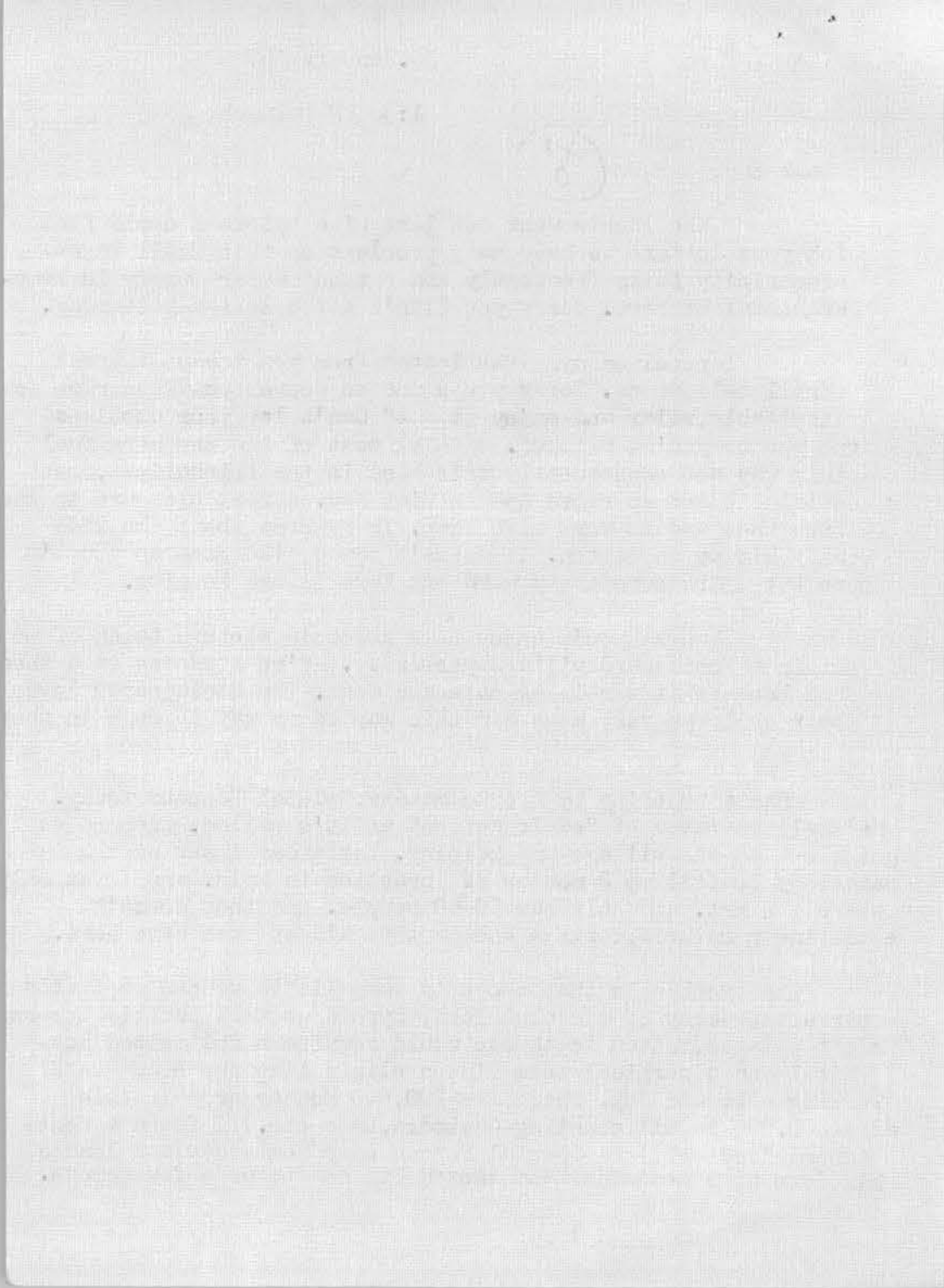
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I received my first letter from you today--a great thrill believe me. Sorry you sound so depressed--"When rape is inevitable, relax and enjoy it----" Can't let your emotions run you or you're whipped. I think most of the men here feel this way and consequently this base is the friendliest, most optimistic and spirited one in Viet Nam. A real pleasure to know them and to work with them. Your words about the kids really hit me on button. It doesn't sound like much to you I'm sure but I treasure every word out here in the boonies.

Thought you'd enjoy this polaroid picture taken of me out in a Montagnard village yesterday. We're standing in a shed because it's raining cats and dogs. The Montagnards love their children very much and this may be my way through to them.

Had a briefing by the Commander, Colonel Bonnaux today. He's all in favor of "civic action" as it's called. Encourages going out to the village and helping. Yesterday I saw enough pathology to fill up 2 months of practice in Mpls. and I was only there 3-4 hrs. and only saw 50-60 people. And that doesn't count their malaria, worms & anemia that all of them have here.

The trouble is that there is very little we can do that's permanent--many of the club feet, thyroid goiters, parotid tumors, cleft palates, rotten teeth etc would require a full sized hospital and a surgical team plus a clinic like the BLOOM*LAKE working night and day. There are 200,000 Montagnards in this area (800,000 in all, counting Cambodia, Laos etc.) I found a Montagnard "doctor" in a Special Forces camp yesterday and loaded him down with medicines and showed him how to do a few things.



Will be back next week to see what happened. Maybe if he's any good, I can work through him. You see eventually we're going to leave this area and these people are going to revert right back to form. They go barefoot so get hook worm, they don't cook their food very well (although they did for us) usually. No written language. They are basically a non-specialized civilization--no shop-keepers, no barbers, no tailors, no lawyers, doctors, dentists etc. They have banana trees, tara plants (like a very hard potatoe) pineapples, hot plant, tobacco, rice, poppies (for opium) papaya trees--then chickens, cows (held in common by the whole community) pigs, cats, dogs (both of which they eat)--all on their property. This is why the Vietnamese-despise them and call them "mois" (dirty little savages). The Vietnamese have a policy of extermination in action here. They would like to completely destroy these people--"the mountain people" and they may very well succeed much as we succeeded in destroying the American Indian. You see the Vietnamese are a "civilized" race much as the Chinese are. (the Vietnamese are basically Chinese in origin, whereas the Montagnards are polynesian in origin--mixed with other races I'm sure. They even worship stones just as the original Hawaiians did.) By the mere force of evolution the Vietnamese may very well win out. One thing may slow them down and that's the fact that they are lazy and loaded with graft. An honest Vietnamese is a rare commodity around here--and I think a basic weakness in their structure. There's no foundation of trust among themselves so no worth while project can be started and seen through without graft and corruption and just plain laziness fouling it up.

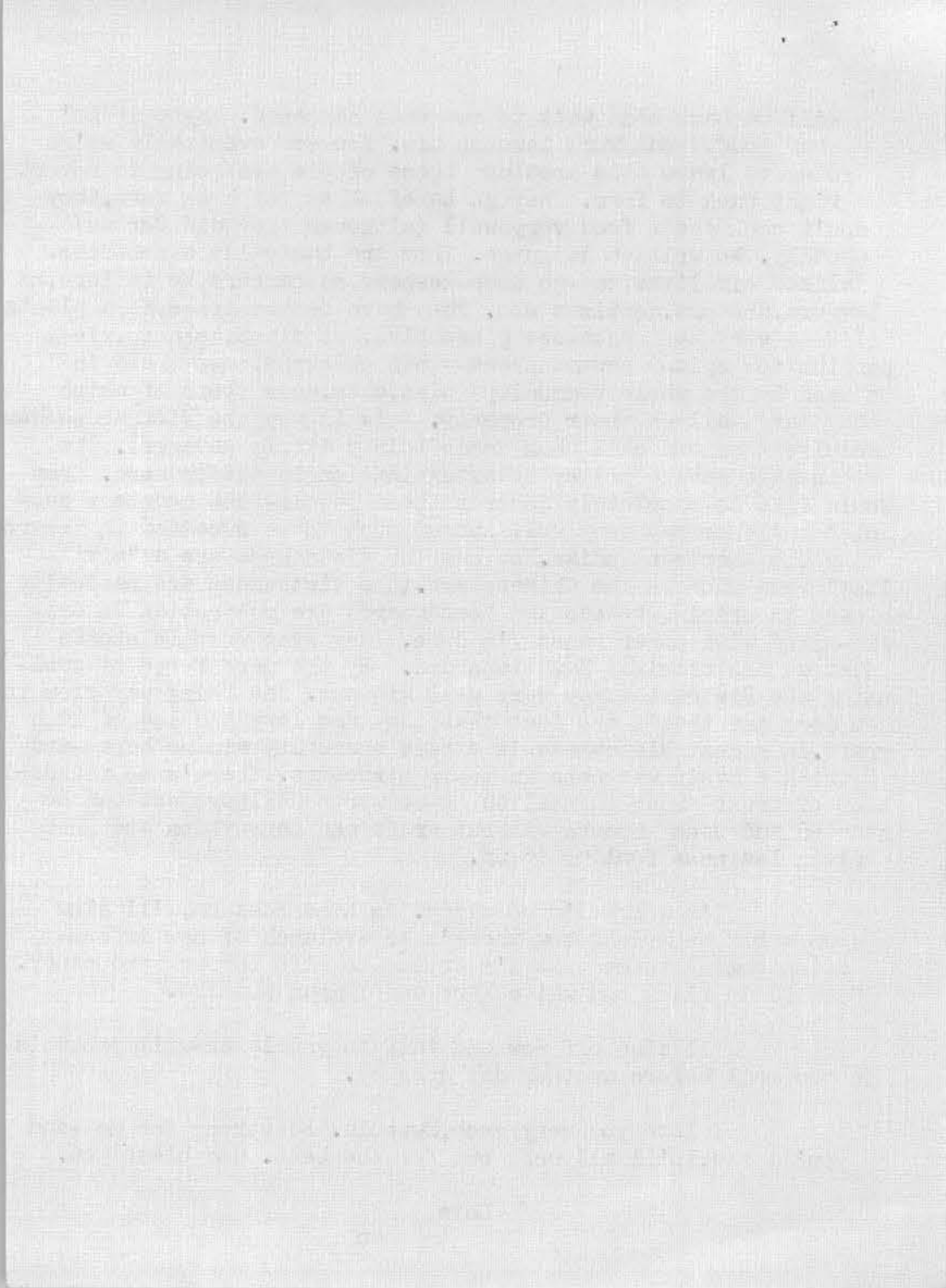
I'm sorry I'm so windy. As time goes on, I'll slow down a bit but right now there's an avalanch of new information coming to me that I'm trying to sift through and study. NOTHING is black and white here and I mean NOTHING.

Will sign off now and talk to you later--will get this in the mail before another day goes by.

I love you very much, Sweetie. Be strong for me--and you'll see, it'll all work out for the best. God bless you.

Love

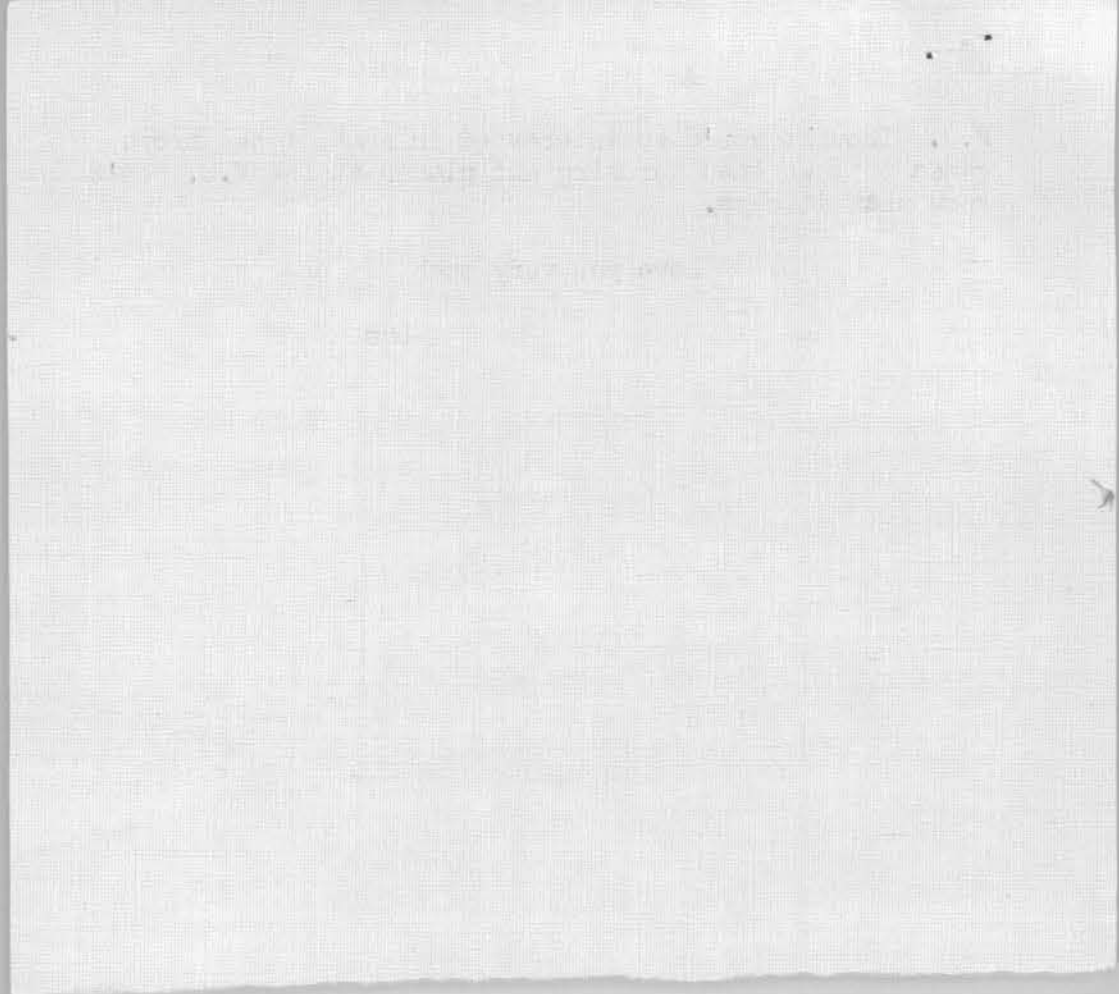
Dan



P.S. Thought you'd be interested in some of the propaganda that we keep throwing out planes at the V.C. Don't know what it says.

Love you very much

Dan



30 Jan 67

4¹⁵ PM

Plucker dispensary

①

⑨

Dear Ray,

Just got the good news that
I OWE! the U.S Air Force 120.00
for the month of January. This means
that I won't have any money to work
on the Month of February (we are paid
once a month) and will be getting half
a check on the ~~month of March~~ 28th
February. You'll be getting your
\$700.00 by mail soon - possibly when
you get this letter. It costs about
\$100.00 to live here & meals, etc so
would appreciate it if I could write
a \$50.00 check on your account to
see me through. I can scrounge
through on that I think. The foul
up happened because we got paid

\$322.00 on the 16th of January. This plus the \$700.00 allotment and assorted income tax & social security deducted make up to 120.00 too much money.

Did you get paid by the clinic yet? If not, get on their tail and make them send you the check due you. Also check on the income tax return we have coming - it should be a dandy.

I'm assuming \$50.00 is okay with you and am proceeding on that assumption (to use an Air Force term)

Am sitting in the dispensary with nothing really going on. They had an emergency landing on the flight line but no one hurt apparently. There's a plane landing or taking off constantly harassing the V.C day and nite out there. We're a

small base but ^{30 Jan} busier than hell.
Finally getting the message about
supporting the primary mission. The
only reason why Pleiku AB is here
is those planes and every thing is
geared to keeping planes, pilots and
control tower operational. And the
V.C know it. Had another aborted
attack on the flight line perimeter
two nites ago but no casualties.
We've got our little island secure
as hell. and highway 19 to the
coast (about 125 miles of road) is
guarded by three divisions ① the
45th division on our end ② the 1st
Cavalry at An Khe ③ the Korean
ROK division at Qui Ghan. The V.C
are constantly kept off balance by
our probing attacks but they're not

giving up by a long shot.

Word has it that another division
is coming in for an operation
of search & destroy to abort an
expected build up west of here.

In short, we're on the offensive
but he's a tricky SOB and well
dug in - it will take a long time.

Plicky^{AB} is one year old today.

Happy birthday. Many of the
originals are leaving one by one
and have a few war stories to take
back with them. Most of which
won't be believed I'm sure.

Have picked up a few myself
in my short time.

Will tell you a little that I
don't think is classified. Saturday

9-③

30 Jan

afternoon, as I started to tell
you in my last letter, Jack Rudy
and I went back to the Montagnard
village - Plei Blell - for the
Thanksgiving sacrifices in our honor.

As we were going through there was
a large bus full of Vietnamese "good"
guys. They have a neat trick of taking
a Montagnard hostage and saying,
"You V.C." "We shoot" - then they
proceed to steal of their fruit and
chens, etc until they have enough.

If the Montagnards resist, they shoot the
hostage or take him in for questioning
and no one ever sees him again. Mind
you, these are the "good" guys - the ones
we're trying to win this war for.

The Montagnards can't fight back
because the Vietnamese government won't
arm them - except a few Special Forces

that are closely supervised.

Consequently the Montagnards have formed an underground called the Fulrou (phonetically spelled) movement and have stashed guns & weapons all over these mountains. Someday, and maybe soon, there's going to be a hell of a war inside the big war up here. The only trouble is that some very nice Montagnards are going to be hurt. And, as I mentioned before, they ^(11:25 PM) are bound to lose it because they simply don't have the support. U.S. official policy is to support the Vietnamese and whatever the Montagnards do against them will force the U.S. to help the Vietnamese cut them down. This is a very dirty little war indeed. As the Montagnards know, they're damned

9 (4) 30 Jan
it they do and damned if they don't.
By the way, the V.C. are much more
sympathetic to these people. At least
they pay (in stolen U.S. currency) for the
rice and fruit and animal they take
from the Montagnards. What the
M.'s would really like is for every-
one to please leave them alone and
let them live their life in this beautiful
cool mountain country. These are the
original people. The Vietnamese are merely
displaced persons from North Vietnam
after the fall of Dien Bien Phu (the
French were thrown out of Viet Nam then
and the country was divided). Those
that chose to leave came south along with many V.C.
infiltrators. There is some small arms fire down
by the flight line so we may have
a mortar attack tonight and an alert.
May have to cut this letter short and
start a fresh one tomorrow. No danger.
I'm up in MACV - if we get attacked
and they make it up here it will

be a miracle. They will have to
plow through the whole 15,000 U.S.
Army troops as well. Not likely.

About this trip to the village
for the sacrifice in our honor —
first we get smashed on rice wine
and cigars & cigarettes — then we
start out on the ~~second~~ way to the
second party. Well Rudy smashed
up his Honda, cut himself all to
hell and did something to my left
middle finger I'll remember for a while.

Anyway we walk (sort of) to the
Kachers ^{Khat} house and get involved in
another sacrifice and more wine.

As the evening wore on more &
more men assemble and Rudy ~~to~~
points out leaders from many of
the villages nearby. Finally a
tall man ^{for} (about 5'9in - 5'10in —
the average height of these people is only
about 5' - 5'2in), about 45 y.o. old

(⁵ ~~the~~ Life expectancy ^{30 yrs} of these people is only 35 yrs old) came in and sat down in a corner. Eyed me very carefully as I accepted my second bracelet and met me with a piercing stare and only a trace of a smile — these people generally are very gregarious and smile constantly. Rudy tells me he is the chief of the seven villages around here. He doesn't say a thing for 2-3 hrs as the conversation goes on & on with everyone talking at the same time like a bunch of Italians. Meanwhile more & more men come in — no women, no children except my buddy GIR (pronounced gleeel) 10 yrs old and as smart as a whip. He's teaching me ~~Tutuan~~ Montagnard slowly but surely. 19.4-0 (no sweat).

After a while I noticed this guy is talking more & more and the rest of the troops are quiet and listening

attentively to every thing he says.
He must have talked for about
an hour - getting louder and louder
until he's finally yelling. The
gist of the thing was that they
had had enough of this Mickey
Mouse and he thought it was
time to do something about it.
All of a sudden the meeting
broke up and I was lifted carefully
up and taken down a trail to
King's house (GIR's father). Here
Jack & I were carefully undressed,
our valuables hidden except Jack's
.38 which he insisted on sleeping
with and we were literally hidden.
At about 3⁰⁰ AM the base got
an attack to mortars and small
arms and there were some shots
in Plei Brill as well. We were
thoroughly awake by this time
but Y-O - no sweat. We were

hidden and ⁹ perfectly safe with ^{30 Jan} Montagnard guards all around the area. Jack & I hitched a ride the next morning back to MACV - by 9³⁰ AM I was at Mass like nothing happened.

The next day we took a ^{Plein} ~~Phien~~ ^{Pheng} convey out to the Special Forces Montagnard village which is really impressive and impregnable - punji sticks, barbed wire, mines, etc. Met a Montagnard "Doctor" who seems to know something at least and gave him all the medicine I had. - Taught him how to take care of the common things at least - will check in a week to see if he's actually treated any of these people - or sold the medicine on the black market. Also want to see their water source

and his "hospital." May be able
to wrangle up a well digging team
from the 295th engineers with
the Judge's help (Jack Rudy).

Will describe the "hooches" some
other time.

As you can see, we've had
a busy weekend. Am exhausted.
Have a very good hooker in Jack
Rudy. He has 2½ months to go
here - should be able to pick his
brains many times before he leaves.
Hope to be able to do something
really positive without interfering
with their beautiful way of life
before I leave.

Love you very much. Can't
tell you how much you're letter
did for me.

Dan

HI COLLEEN. WILL WRITE YOU
A LETTER SOON. DADDY

30. January '67
4:15 PM Pleiku Dispensary

Dear Kay,

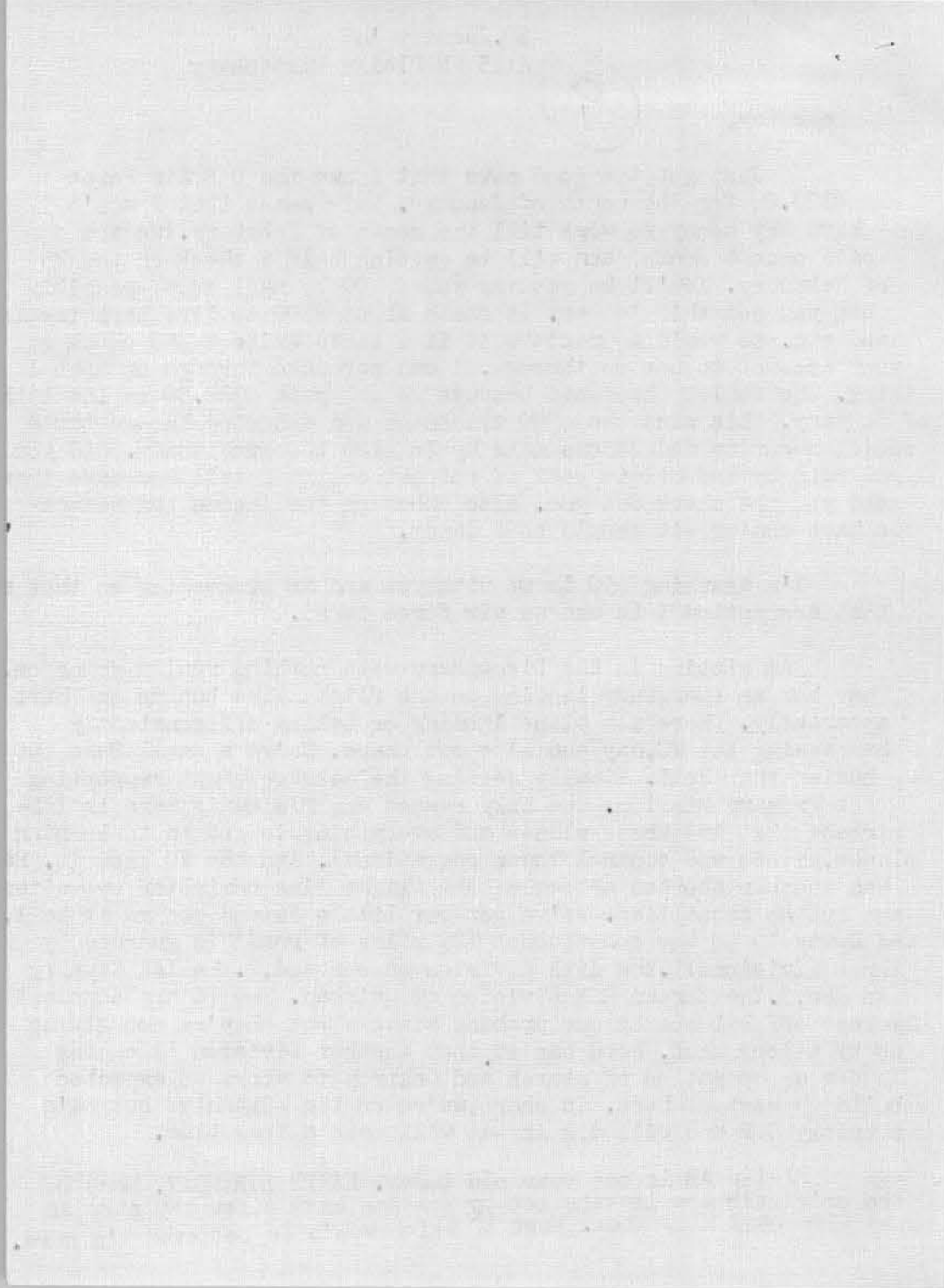
9

Just got the good news that I owe the U S Air Force \$120.00 for the month of January. This means that I won't have any money to work till the month of February. (we are paid once a month) and will be getting half a check on the 28 of February. You'll be getting your \$700 by mail soon--possibly when you get this letter. It costs about \$100 to live here (meals and etc. so would appreciate it if I could write a \$50 check on your account to see me through. I can scrounge through on that I think. The foul up happened because we got paid \$322.00 on the 16th of January. This plus the \$700 allotment and assorted income tax & social security deductions make up to \$120 too much money. Did you get paid by the Clinic yet? If not get on their tail and make them send you the check due you. Also check on the income tax return we have coming--it should be a dandy.

I'm assuming \$50 is OK with you and am proceeding on that & that assumption (to use an air force term).

Am sitting in the Dispensary with nothing really going on. They had an emergency landing on the flight line but no one hurt apparently. There's a plane landing or taking off constantly harrassing the VC, day and nite out there. We're a small Base but busier than Hell. Finally getting the message about supporting the Primary Mission. The only reason why Pleiku is here is (the airbase that is) those planes and everything is geared to keeping planes, pilots and control tower operational. And the VC know it. Had another aborted attack on the flight line perimeter two nites ago but no casualties. We've got our little island secure as hell. and Hyway 19 to the coast (about 125 miles of road) is guarded by three divisions: 1. the 45th Division on our end, 2. The 1st Cavalry An Khe, 3. The Korean ROK Division at QuiNhan. The VC are constantly kept off balance by our probing attacks but they're not giving up by a long shot. Word has it that another Division is coming in for an operation of search and destroy to abort an expected build up west of here. In short, we're on the offensive but he's a tricky SOB and will dig in--it will take a long time.

Pleiku AB is one year old today. HAPPY BIRTHDAY. Many of the originals are leaving one by one and have a few war stories to take back with them. Most of which won't be believed I'm sure.

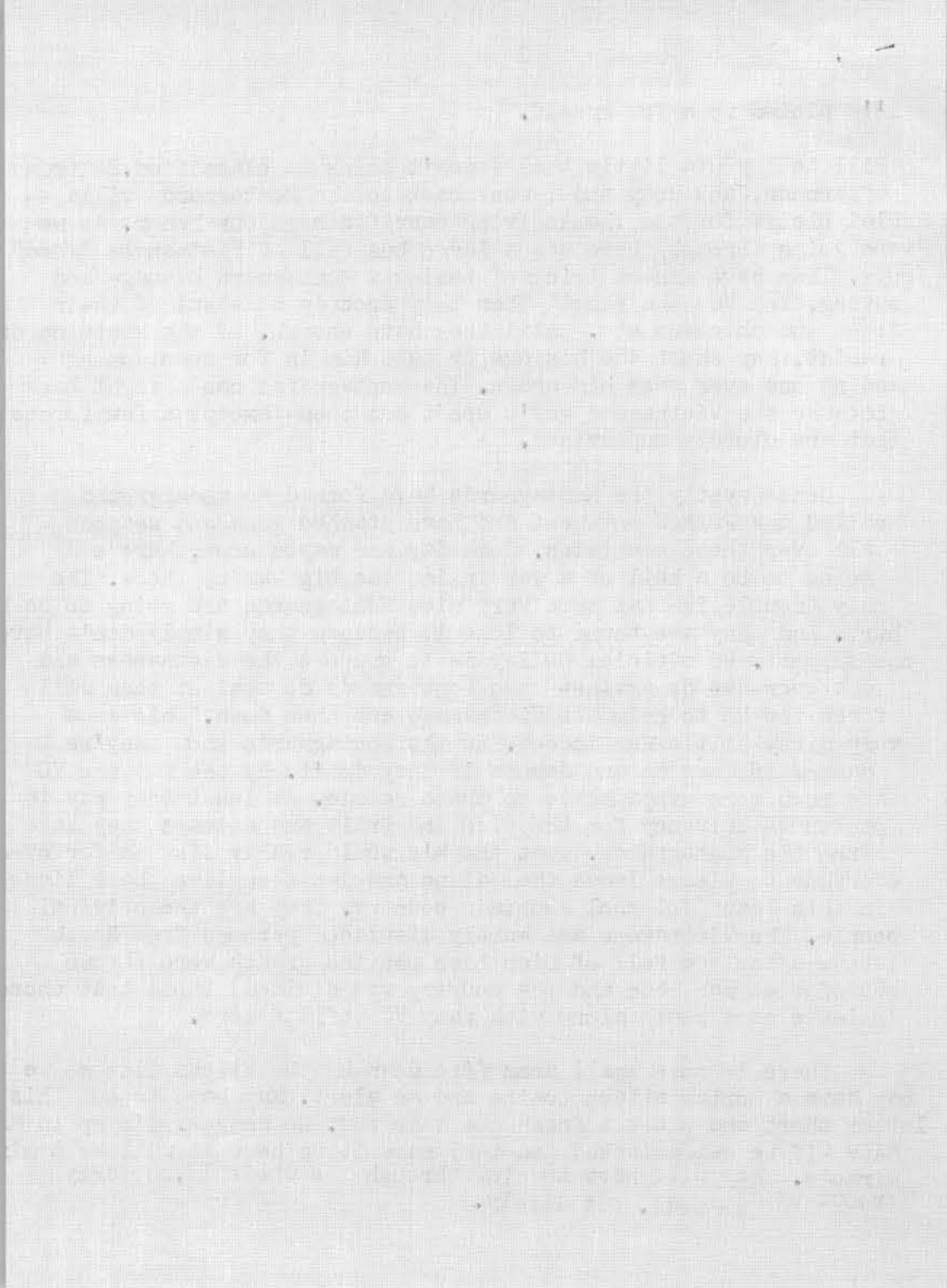


I've picked up a few myself.

Will tell you a little that I don't think is classified. Saturday afternoon, Jack Rudy and I went back to the Montagnard village- Plei Blell- for the Thanksgiving sacrifices in our honor. As we were going through there was a large bus full of Vietnamese "good" guys. They have a neat trick of taking a Montagnard hostage and saying, "You VC -- We shoot" Then they proceed to steal of their fruit and chickens etc. until they have enough. If the Montagnards resist, they shoot the hostage or take him in for questioning and no one ever sees him again. The Montagnards can't fight back because the Vietnamese gov't won't arm them--except a few forces that are closely supervised.

Consequently the Montagnards have formed an underground called the FULROW movement and have stashed guns and weapons all over these mountains. Some day and maybe soon, there's going to be a hell of a war inside the big war up there. The only trouble is that some very nice Montagnards are going to be hurt. And they are bound to lose it because they simply don't have the support. US official policy is to support the Vietnamese and ~~whatever--and do against~~ the Montagnards do against them will force the US to help the Vietnamese cut them down. This is a very dirty little war indeed. As the Montagnards know they're damned if they do and damned if they don't. By the way the VC are much more sympathetic to these people. At least they pay in stolen US currency for the rice and fruit and animals they take from the Montagnards. What the M's would really like is for everyone to please leave them alone and let them live their lives in this beautiful cool mountain country. They are the original people. The Vietnamese are merely displaced persons from North Vietnam after the fall of Dien bien phu (the French were thrown out of viet nam then and the country was divided) Those that chose to leave came south along with many VC infiltrators.

There is some small arms fire down by the flight line so we may have a mortar attack tonite and an alert. May have to cut this letter short and start a fresh one tomorrow. No danger. I'm up in MACV--if we get attacked and they make it up here it will be a miracle. They will have to plow through the whole 15,000 army troops(US) as well. Not likely.



About this trip to the Village for the sacrifice in our honor. First we get smashed on rice wine and cigars and cigars. Then we start out on the way to the second party. Well Rudy smashed up his Honda, cut up himself and did something to my left middle finger that I'll remember for a while. Anyway we walk-sort of- to the teacher's house and get involved in another sacrifice and more wine. As the evening wore on more and more men assemble and Rudy points out leaders from many of the village nearby. Finally a tall man (about 5 nine or ten) The average height of these people is 5 one or two) about 45 years old (the life expectancy is only 35 yrs.) came in and sat down in a corner. Eyed me very carefully as he I accepted my second bracelet and met me with a piercing stare and only a trace of a smile--- these people generally are very gregarious and smile constantly. Rudy tells me he is chief of the seven villages around here. He doesn't say a thing for several hours as the conversation goes on and on with everyone talking at the same time like a bunch of Italians. Meanwhile more and more men came in--no women, no children, except my buddy GLR (pronounced GLEEL) 10 years old and smart as a whip. He's teaching me Montagnard slowly but surely. Surely eg. Y*O (no Sweat)

After a while I noticed this guy is talking more and more and the rest of the troops are quiet and listening attentively to everything he says. He must have talked for an hour--getting louder & louder until he's finally yelling. The gist of the thing was that they had had enough of this Micky Mouse and he thought it was time to do something about it. All of a sudden I was lifted carefully up and taken down a trail to Hing's house (GIR'S father). Here Jack and I were carefully undressed, our valuables hidden except Jack's .38 which he insisted on ~~keeping~~ sleeping with and we were literally hidden. At about 3 AM the Base got an attack of mortars and small arms and there were some shots in Plei Brill as well. We were thoroughly awake by this time but "Y-O"--no sweat. We were hidden and perfectly safe with Montagnard guards all around the area. Jack and I hitched a ride the next morning back to MACV by 9:30 and I was at Mass like nothing happened.

The next day we took a convoy out to the Special Forces Montagnard village which is really impressive and impregnable---

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pungi sticks, barbed wire, mines etc. Met a Montagnard "Doctor" who seems to know something at least and gave him all the medicine I had. taught him how to ~~care~~ for the common things-- will check with him in a week. He could sell the ~~market~~ medicine on the black market. Also want to see their water source and his "hospital" --may be able to wrangle up a well-digging team from the 295th Engineers with the Judge's (Rudy) help. Will describe the "hooches" some other time.

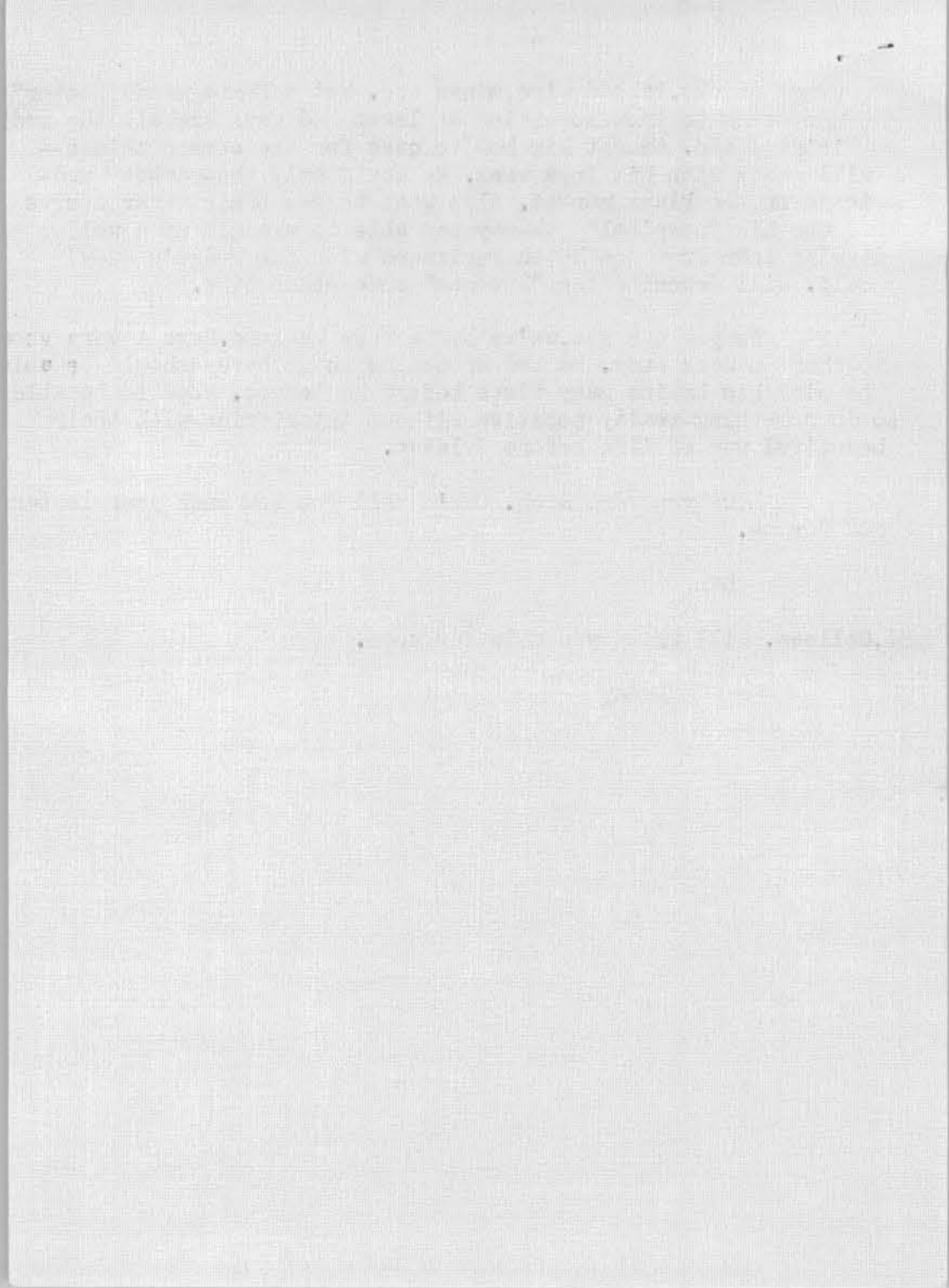
As you can see, we've had a busy weekend. Have a very good teacher in Jack Rudy. He had $2\frac{1}{2}$ months to go here--should be able to pick his brains many times before he leaves. Hope to be able to do something really positive without interfering with their beautiful way of life before I leave.

Love you very much. Can't tell you how much your letter did for me.

Dan

HI, Colleen. Will write you a letter soon.

Daddy



12⁰⁰ AM

midnite

Pleiku

31 Jan - 1 Feb

+ Tues - Wed

(10)

Dear Kay

Just a short note before I go to bed. Drank beer all night with some free lance correspondents. ^{Johnnie} talked my usual brand of philosophy. These are strange people by the usual standards. Most correspondents sit in Saigon and pick up the local gossip and Air + Army releases on the battles in Viet Nam. These guys actually sit in the trenches and go into village and get shot down in helicopters, etc. 500 correspondents in Viet Nam and about 450 of them sitting on their asses in Saigon. Anyway, we went into a Montagnard village - my home away from home - Plei Bie. saw my old woman who is up + kicking - she forced me to take a bunch of bananas which she needs more than

I do but would be an insult if I didn't take it. Also was given a cross bow - no 10 (values go as follows)

- ① no. 1 - very good or yam doi
- ② no. 10 - not so good
- ③ no. ten thousand (sand) - very bad or bo yam (no good)
- ④ no. ten thousand 50 - not even on the shit list.

- These people watch very closely - they accept my small efforts to help - but have been hurt many times and are cautious about accepting someone new - a good quality I think.

Anyway - the correspondents went out with us to Plei Brel and had a good time taking pictures. I got a look at their water source - Very good - comes out of the clay ^{rock} at several points about 50-75 feet below the village level. There is a beautiful, jungle actually chasm that this falls into and the water is filtered and ~~sweet~~

10 (2)

31 Jan 1974

Sweet and cool. Here they bathe.

Women in a sheltered area, men up on a separate level with the best stream and children all around.

Jack Rudy has built them a stairway down to the water hole - before that this was almost inaccessible.

No letter today. Missed this very much. Must write every day and send letters airmail if at all possible. Feel I am talking to you every day and need an answer even though it's a few days late.

Work at the dispensary is interesting but these Montagnards have really turned on my "on" button as you've probably gathered. Please send those pocket books I had laid out. Especially would appreciate Tom

Dooley's books. He apparently had
an insight into these people that
few have.

Went to Pleiku today to bring in
the Montagnard teacher - Kat - to
fill out some more papers. More Vietnamese
harassment. Will also have to send
LICK - Rudy's interpreter to Saigon
and may be eventually to the U.S. to
escape the Vietnamese. They want him
to put him in prison "on suspicion".
Last time for 9 mos. ^{no charge yet.} He's too smart
Knows English, Vietnamese & Montagnard
- they want to get rid of him because he
knows too much. A good man - he's teaching
me also. a dirty little war.

Will go to bed now
Am learning a few words but languages
come very hard for me.
Love you more than I can say

P.S. This poem from a ^{Dan} correspondent here in Pleiku, please
Love Dan

12:10 AM ---Midnite Pleiku
31 Jan-1 Feb. 1967

10

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4. No. ten thousand 50--no good at all

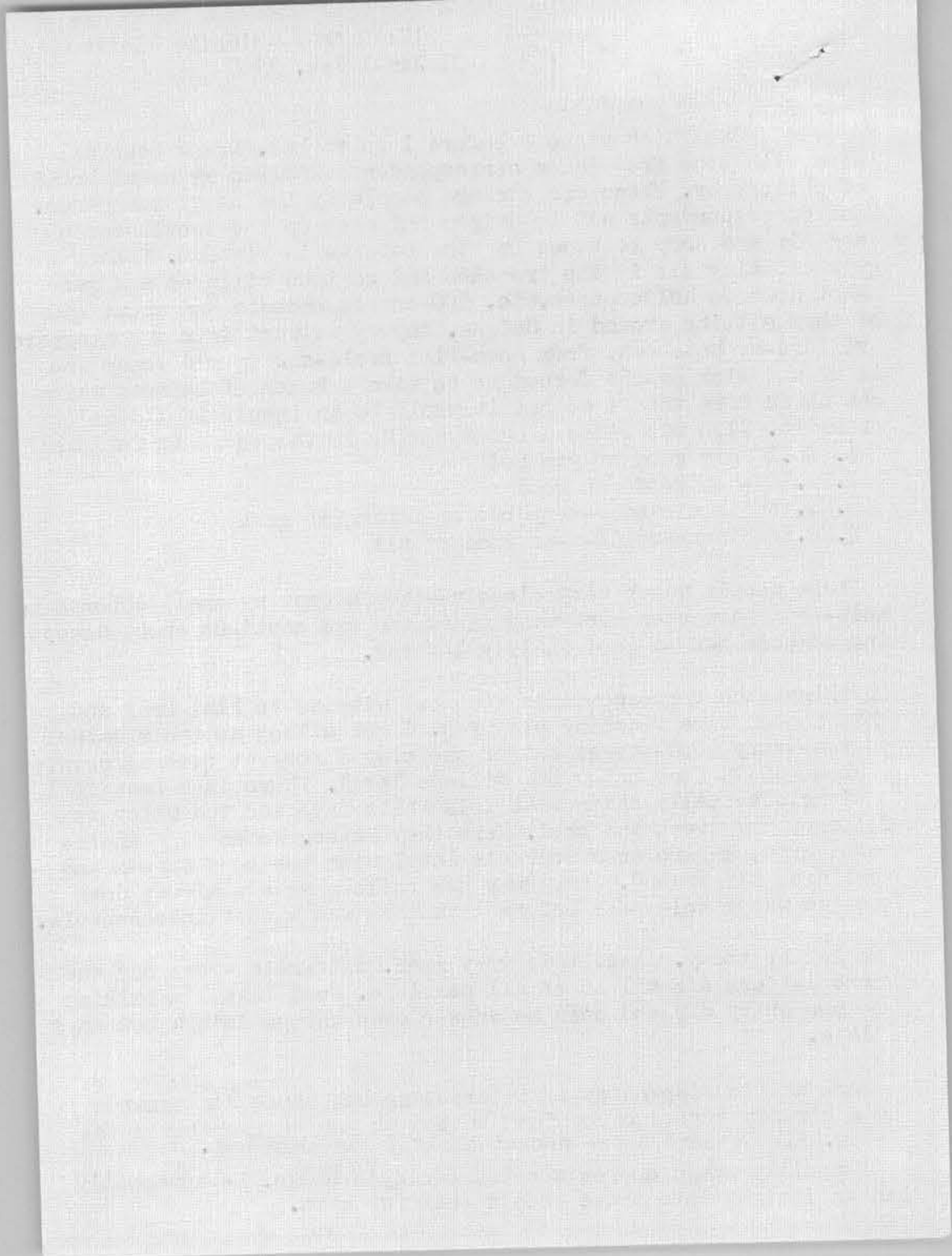
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This poem from a correspondent here in Pleiku, please save.

Love, Dan

