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1 July 67
USAF Dispers.

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Hi Kay,

A quick note while I'm waiting for the truck to come so we can go out to the village. We're going to Lich's house to try to get it started. Also have to take this salesman from Panang out to collect his bows. He bought 26,500 prastros worth (roughly \$200.00 worth) yesterday but made many enemy's for himself doing it. Will intervene from now on and do business for him. Will not let him out in the village again.

Have some interesting stories to tell you tonight when I get back. Will save them for when I have more time.

Got 2 beautiful letters from you in the last two days. Thank you very much - will comment on those, too, later.

Love you very much, Special Buddy.

How about that! July already.

Love,
Dan

1. 2. 3.
4. 5. 6.

The first part of the paper is devoted to a description of the general character of the country. It is a large, fertile, and well-watered country, with a high degree of civilization. The population is large, and the government is well organized. The country is divided into several provinces, each of which is governed by a local authority. The capital is the largest city, and is the seat of the government. The country is rich in natural resources, and is well developed in all respects.

The second part of the paper is devoted to a description of the climate and the soil. The climate is temperate, and the soil is fertile. The country is well watered, and the crops are abundant. The people are industrious, and the country is well developed in all respects. The country is rich in natural resources, and is well developed in all respects.

The third part of the paper is devoted to a description of the government and the laws. The government is well organized, and the laws are well enforced. The country is rich in natural resources, and is well developed in all respects. The people are industrious, and the country is well developed in all respects.

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1:00
PM
USAF Higgins
Pleiku RVN
3 July 67

Hi Kay,

Let me write you a letter that's worth
while for a change. I love you very much.
Have been running my ass off for the last
3 days and right now am supposed to be
rounding up plywood, tin, crossbows etc for
Lich - also am supposed to go see the
Province chief at 2³⁰ PM about salaries for
my medics - must also drink rice wine
with Ton tonight. - the rat race is here
for sure.

Have just closed my door to all
intruders and will write a letter to my best
buddy and the rest of the world be
damned for awhile.

I have received one beautiful letter after
the next from you lately - don't know when
the last good letter I wrote was but know
it was quite some time ago.

Will briefly recount my adventures to you
since Friday for our "diary" and then try to
answer your question and comment on
your comments.

Friday was interrogated by the Special Forces -

NO - Thursday - and was surprised to know that I am the only one that seems to know what the hell goes on north of us. Seem no one is as close to the people out there as I've managed to get. Was very surprised at this - puts me in a strange position - have never done that OOT bit before. Was complemented but confused by their questions. Made them promise none of my people would get hurt by any information I would give them then or in the future. This they promised. Furthermore made them promise that any information they acted on with soldiers would be with Montagnard "Mike" force or Special Forces only - not Army or ARVN - this they agreed to as well. Have discussed this with Ton & Dick and others out in Plei Brel and they like the idea. Gives them a sense of security to know that we will protect them if they give us information that we can respond to - and with Montagnard troops. Unfortunately they neither trust nor like the Army or ARVN and would not supply information if they

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3 July

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knew that these people would be involved. Enough of that. S.F. intelligence guzzled me for 2-3 hrs and I was like a dried up prune when I got out of there.

Friday a man from Danang - a business man who sells Montagnard ~~artifacts~~ artifacts - crossbows, loin cloths, knives, spears, etc - came up by recommendation L.C. Olson (head of Civic Action) to contact me to buy crossbows. He has many good ideas but is a #10 man - I think a little queer, a little mouse of a man who comes on with too much too fast. Poses as a Montagnard expert but when I took ~~so~~ him out to Plei Brel he upset the yards so much with his bargaining and impatience and down right selfishness, he was damned lucky to get out alive. Went back Saturday and apologized to Ton, Plo, etc and they were very understanding. Will never take another man out to Plei Brel until I study and know him very well. We don't need ugly Americans out there - at least accompanying me. He did buy 26,000 ^{prathes}

(about \$220.00) worth of bows though.

Went out myself Saturday afternoon and bought 30,000 piastres worth of very good bows. Got their price down from 1200 piastres to 900 pi ; from 1000 pi to 700 pi and from 800 pi to 500 pi. Explained I could not sell them at the price they asked - you should have seen me explaining Henry Ford vs. Buick - think I got the point across though - these bows will go like hot cakes at this price - Should be able to Tin all of Pleei Brel, Pleei Sor, Pleei Lung, Pleei Kep and then some.

We got a flat tire Saturday night so John Watson and I stayed at Pleei Brel in Ton's house. I am now Ton's "ama" - father - yes ME! - there will be a sacrifice shortly to commemorate the event. This makes me Brel's grandfather so am out of the woods for sure. Think John Watson will be getting married shortly to Brel, though. Lots of luck, John.

Went to bed at 9³⁰ PM on my favorite cot in Ton's house - slept like a log and

3 July

wake up at 6³⁰ am refreshed. Hitched a ride to the Air Base by lambretta and found a tire, crank, etc - came back to "breakfast" of rice, an egg, onion, salt, and something else mix and water. Ton fixed the flat in the mean time for his "daddy." This is a riot but they are very serious about the whole thing.

Have just been interrupted by John Watson (a very very good man) - seems things are crowding in on me again. Sweetie, I'm sorry but must hurry this letter. Hope to be writing better letters soon.

Anyway - we went down to Lich's house yesterday to drink & talk at his house. Got into religion of all things. Lich does not believe in a god - believes in Montagnards, spirits, his family, his job, no lie, no steal, etc. John has a God who doesn't give a damn. Tried to describe my God to them - about being a God of love, understanding, a personal every minute God, etc - think some of my thinking got through - have given up

trying to convince anyone of my beliefs
— just explain what I think and let it
go at that.

We got drunk last nite on some of
the strongest rice wine I have ever had—
wow — like a liquor but gallons of the
stuff. Barfed all over the place.

Got home about 10⁰⁰pm — very drunk
— went to bed as soon as I could.

This morning was up sharply at 6³⁰am if
you can believe it — picked up my
yard medicos — Binh from Plei Brel,
Hinh from Plei Sor, Mlem from Plei Kiep,
Mar from Plei Phung, Chal & Jui Raklan
(Tich's brothers) from Plei Betel. — carted
them over to class at S.F. — a real
triumph — 3 mos of medical training and
they're all going home to learn.

Had a hung over morning this morning
— am coming out of it now a little.

That brings ~~up~~ us up to date.

A few brief answers to your questions:
No I have not saved any money but
will. Yes, I think I can get Mrs. ~~Lee~~

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Bekel's (spelling?) ring for her, yes, I'll send a crossbow to Betty Shannon, yes I'll send one to the Bonin's but forget the money. Same-same patch (look it up). Yes I love you very much - you're a doll, sweetie. Yes I want some more kids but give me 3 or 4 mos to get acquainted with the ones we have now. Yes, I love you.

Will write a better letter, soon, Sweetie.
Love you very much.

Love,
Dan

P.S. Yes, got both of Nap's letters,
no time to answer

No, have not paid Prudential yet,
but will when have time

Yes, got the pocket books - have
managed to read a few in
my frequent trips to the John
- happiness in Viet Nam is a dry fact.
Love, Dan





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3 July

3 July 67
MACV, RVN
about 11⁰⁰ PM

U. S. SPECIAL FORCES
U. S. Armed Forces - Vietnam

Hi Kay,

Got a chance again to write
forite - just got back from Plei
Brel - have had 3-4 quarts of rice
wine - only vomited once - have a feeling
I am lu bia ma mut (very drunk) but
am able to write nonetheless. Popmuni gi
(excuse me) will get a cup of coffee and
finish this thing. Have had a good day
I think - will talk to you later. Love
you very much. Will tell you about
day's adventure later. — Did not
go to get coffee, fell asleep instead - will
write letter after get coffee - Sweetie, love
you all the time - you're so nice.



11⁴⁵ PM

Hi again - have now watched
my favorite poker game in progress.
drank a few drinks (which I
didn't need) with some A/E
pilots and am now back at
my card table trying to write
a coherent letter. Was a very
long coffee break, for sure.

Don't have your letters here so
can't answer them, will try tomorrow
- have another "day off" - am on call
all day & nite at the dispensary.

- We left John Watson out at Plei
Brel tonight to sleep with Bler - hope
that doesn't shock you. Have avoided
it myself as I have frequently admitted
- although have to confess she is a
beautiful girl for a Montagnard and
(as per Jack Rudy) a very horny girl.
I was slated to be boy friend but have
avoided this by one way or another
- now John Watson has taken my
place and I am off the hook. Now I
am Ton's "ama" - father - so cannot.
This must seem very strange to you
in USA but here is very natural.
Yards feel very casual about fornication
especially if they like you - sort of
a favor they do you. Makes no



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② 3 July

U. S. SPECIAL FORCES

U. S. Armed Forces - Vietnam

difference I say to them I am married and show picture of you and my children. They think you have deserted me because you no come with me. Think it is a very sad thing I no have woman. Cannot understand why I go without one - especially since I am good friend and can have any woman in village if I want. I try to explain custom Amerikai but eh bo towel alone (they do not understand). Have settled for fact I am bald and must be very old - so am father Ton

Towel alone? (Do you understand?)

Enough of this shit.

Have not even touched a woman in so long do not know how they feel - am like I was in seminary - vaguely afraid of women because they are so strange.



Cannot remember how a woman feels
but think they are much softer than
men. Am very drunk - hope I did
not offend you with my talk.

Kay, I love you very much but
feel I am many miles away from
you. Cannot remember exactly how
things were in United States.

Kind people know me here by
reputation but I do not know them
at all. People think I do very good
thing but do not know that I get
more from Montagnards than they
get from me. Am very flattered that
people think I do good job - hope they do
not make me hero when I am not.
I do what I feel I have to do - Do
you understand?

Today went to gravesite where
little girl died and is buried - I ask



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③

3 July

U. S. SPECIAL FORCES

U. S. Armed Forces - Vietnam

Why they no call me - they say they are stupid. Hinh was there (medic from Plei Sor) and he say little girl have cough + fever + die. Pop mun yi. I do not understand but must accept their ways. Bia bia they understand my ways.

Got very drunk as you may see from this letter - vomited many times but am okay now - will go to bed now - maybe speak to you tomorrow.

I love you very much.

Love,

Dan

Toi tạm ba
(goodbye, see you
later, I go.)



5 July 67

10⁰⁰ PM

USAF Dispensary
Pleiku, RVN

(103)

Hi Kay,

It's 10⁰⁰ PM now - have a break in
sec call so thought I'd start a letter.
We have a surgeon here visiting - is doing
a pylorodal left right now so have a
break.

Missed writing last nite - went to bed
about 12⁰⁰ midnite and slept through till 7⁰⁰ AM.
Sorry about that drunken letter the
nite before. Hope I didn't shock you
too much with my comments about
John Watson and Ton's daughter, Blet.
Dr. Gallatin mentioned a few times
before we left W.F. - The rules of
morality here are very different. i.e.
The Vietnamese take stealing, lying and
corruption as a way of life, feel no
qualms about adultery or fornication
as long as done without fan-fare or
upsetting the order of things. "Face" to them
is very important. The Montagnards have
very strong feelings about lying, stealing,
dishonesty of any kind. Also feel very strongly
about "face" but their "face" consists of
being more generous and loyal than you are.

They have very strong taboos about adultery, death, entering a man's house, etc but are very casual about fornication especially. Must learn the rules very soon here or get caught in a maze of one mistake after another. Have managed to keep my virginity by one method or another and do not foresee any difficulty now that I am Ton's "ana" ^(fiancee). You will be interested to know that John did not go to bed with Blex that nite and he, too, may be able to avoid it — but that's his problem.

Picked him up at 7¹⁰ AM yesterday morning and we both went to work as if nothing happened. We have two Montagnard lab techs that John is training. Watson is one of the most talented, positive and even minded people I have met — but not even tempered at all. Blows fists right and left like Mike Conlon. But basically a very happy man — converses freely in Javai and has passed me up a long time ago. Plans on medical school when he gets back to the States. Has a mind like a steel trap and a disciplined mind.

10³ (2) 5 July

used to working as well. John, Lick and myself are damned near constant companions lately. If anything Lick and John are better friends than Lick and I — there is a certain reserve between Lick and I based on his immense respect for my title as doctor. Have been able to leave John by himself out in the village and not worry about him — something I can't do for most of the men I take out. There's a delicate sense you develop after awhile of what should be said, what should be dropped — how much you can push these people into doing — they resist change very much — must suggest something, then let it drop — talk about it later, drop it and finally they will take it on as their own idea — and now you have what you want. Like the medics — have been talking about that for the last 3 mos — finally suggested it again and the response was overwhelming as I mentioned.

8 Wrapped five crossbows last nite — now have to wrap them for mailing and get them

on ~~the~~ their way.

Excuse me - want to watch this surgery. Talk to you later.

Okay - it's 11³⁰ now - watched a mammalization of a pilonidal cyst - a good friend of mine - AIC John McPherson who sells my bows at the Bx - took it wide awake like a good loop.

Have about \$150.00 tucked away in the Montagnard Industries - will get this back easily - we're starting to move now - we're selling them all over the base - John (M.P.) just delivered \$63.00 to me after the surgery.

Just had a visitor - Bob Innes -

2⁰⁷ PM - As you see have been interrupted continuously since I wrote this morning.

Right now there are 3 people in my room asking about arrows. The rat race continues.

Aha - they left. Quickly will tell you went to S.F. for a chat - the school for medics going well - my men need watches

(10²³)

(3) 5 July

which will get from C. A. funds. S. F. wants to get in on the crossbow act - Col Hullar MacLant - wants the credit for the crossbows to go to the Air Force. Can't blame him. Will go slow.

Must get ply wood today, also gravel, also rice & tin if I can. Will have to hustle - time wasting. Also have to see Ray Lo & Damjan sometime this afternoon. Sorry to always be in such a rush.

Love you very much.

no letter today or yesterday - hope one comes tomorrow.

Love,
Dan



(104)

6 July 67
USAF Da Nang
Pleiku RVN

Ki Kay,

Looks like the mail has stopped again - haven't had any for 3 days or so - miss talking back and forth - maybe will have some later on today. Hope my mail is coming okay.

Had a good scrounge day yesterday - got 200# of nails, 2 loads of gravel, 1 load of sand, 36 pieces of plywood wall board, enough tin to tin Lich's house and

3 #100 bags of rice for Lich. Took a little hustling but looks like his house will go up after all.

We celebrated by drinking some more of Lich's deadly rice wine - got fairly well oiled but not stoned like the last time. Maybe I'm getting used to it.

Also bought 6 TIMEX watches for my medics - handed out 2 of them to Lich's brothers - this called for some more drinking - wow! Am fairly well hung over now. Saves on the liquor bill though. Can't remember when the last time was I bought a round of

drinks at the officer's club. In fact only eat 1 or 2 meals a day at the club so this also helps on the grocery money.

And selling bows pretty well now — I think we're picking up momentum slowly. Can visualize a regular turnover of maybe 50 bows a week, then 100, then more. Eventually hope to have them make many other things for sale but must go slowly. Someone who seemed to know said that the yards are at the "cottage industry" stage — same the middle ages when a man planted his field and in his spare time made things for sale. That would put these people back about the time of Charlemagne ~ 800 AD — a few years back economically. Roughly that means they have advanced from no industry (about one year ago) ~ 500 AD to 800 AD in a little over one year. Not bad! Eventually they will free up more and more men to specialize and let someone else plant their fields — when

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6 July

that day comes we'll be near the Renaissance
at least as far as economics goes. (~1200 AD)

Enough of the economics talk.

When I don't get a letter — find it hard
to carry on a conversation with you —
Except I love you — think you know that
already.

Will write later — probably tonight.

Love,

Dan

100

that the same will be made the same
it had no for a number of years (1900-1910)

Chief of the American folk
John B. Smith - got a letter - said it had
to be a very good conversation with you
about a time ago - think you know that
very well

well made letter - probably true

John
Smith

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6 July 67
USAF Dispensary
Pleiku RVN
2 ³⁰ PM

Hi Kay,

~~My~~ ~~the~~ Got an excellent letter from you just now - am much refreshed - thank you. Think I'll take a nite off from my gallivanting around the country side and relax tonite, write you a letter, read a little and go to bed early. I do have lots to do out in Plei Boel but think I'll let it ride - am really hung over and tired. Slept from 12 ¹⁵ this noon till 1 ³⁰ in what was going to be a short nap. My stomach is talking back to me - mostly am tired. Your letter did much to recharge my battery.

Hope the weather is settling down a bit. in Impl. Sounds like you've had a wild time for yourselves.

Your comments on the kids, especially Colleen and Kadea and how they're progressing, Colleen's little problem with the pennies and whether or not to let them have freedom brings me back to reality. Thank you. That's just what I need. Please discuss these problems with me - sometime feel like you people

are on another planet. I agree with your decisions about freedom. Kaala must be really charging for you to feel free to send her across the Letter's street and to the Park by herself. Am proud of her and tell her so please. A little hard for me to give any meaningful advice since I'm so far away but appreciate being included in the discussions. Have patience with me when I get back - am a little out of practice with kids. However have a few special buddies out in the village that am allowed to play with - must be special concession to me because this was frowned on when I first came there.

That couch sound very colorful. Wonder how long it will last this time. Finally got the rocking chair fixed. Remember when I started on that in 1963 - just about this time, too. Does it rock any better than it did? - the (L) rocker was square or something.

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6 July

Didn't even know Erin & Paula had the chicken pot - that's how much in the dark I am.

Could I register a bitch? Okay, just short & sweet. — I WANT SOME PICTURES!! Also would enjoy a CARE package or two. Soap is great and I appreciate your sending it - (got a box of it today) but it ain't the same as a care package. Towel lin? (understand?) Enough of that. Know you're busier than hell and it's very difficult to gather materials, get to the post office, mail it, etc. But would appreciate a package nonetheless. Do Megan & Jeremy have the chicken pot also? There's another adventure I'm missing - you have all the fun.

Am happy you've gotten to know the Almers - could never seem to get so far in knowing those people. May be because of my erratic hours. Tom Kelly seemed to like them very much and

the people previous to us were very close to them.

Agree completely with you, Weezer & Betty A. about letting go of the umbelical cord. These "minor" decisions you talk about are the things that make or break your relations with your kids. ~~there's~~ They're the stuff parent hood is made out of. But ability to communicate with the kids later will be based on this trust & mutual respect we show them now. Well done, sweetie. You're nice.

Mike & Mary Ann will probably be getting in shortly after this gets to you. Hello from me - hope they have a good time. Wish I could philosophize a little with him over a bottle with Ed's help. Have a very good hunting bow already broken down for Ed and the kids - included the shivs, arrows and bow string & trigger. Suggest that this is no toy but a loaded weapon - same same rifle. Once cocked - this is a

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6 July

lethal weapon - used to shoot tigers, elephants, people and air planes (yes!). So respect it. Would also suggest getting a U.S. bow string, a plexiglass trigger, etc if they plan to use it for shooting.

Might even ~~to~~ lead tip the arrows if they want to hunt with it - need to track & sneak up on game with this.

If Ed wants one for each of the boys, let me know - it's my business and ~~my~~ whole sales & retailer so can get beaucoup (very many).

Also have one saved out & broken down for Mike & Tim Conlon if they are interested. Curtie Shannon also has one - slightly smaller but still a lethal weapon & must be so warned before I'll send it. A FAC plane (forward air controller) landed 2 wks ago with an arrow in its tail assembly he picked up somewhere over the jungle west of here.

Glad you like kids again. A few letters back you sounded morbid as hell about them. Was almost sure it was a

phase — glad to know you've recovered again. What would you do without them? — don't think you really be happy as another Marie Perle. I understand that you need stimulation and an intellectual outlet and a feeling you're growing intellectually, etc — but don't think ~~an~~ either one of us are made for this social bit all the time.

Never heard of Fr. Kavanaugh.
Also who are these people wandering around with the strange hats & clothes — really are out of it lately about what's going on in the U.S.A. From where we sit over here, looks like the good ol' USA is going crazy and to hell at the same time. Hope it's just another fad but sounds pretty organized.

We get Look magazine from May now — Time & Newsweek come about 1 week late — newspapers I see maybe once, maybe twice a week if lucky. Looked

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(03)

at the best seller list and haven't heard of most of the books on it.

Will sum up my reaction to your weather news. The coldest, snowiest winter on record, the 2nd worst floods, the coldest, wettest early summer, the worst mosquitoes ever, and the most violent storms including tornadoes in the month of June. You guys have all the fun. Even the monsoon hasn't been very bad here ~~to~~ so far.

Have looked over the selection of single pearl rings & diamonds. Only saw one & the price wasn't on it. Will wait till the selection gets better.

Let me know if Erin liked her birthday present - this is not Vietnamese silk - think it's either Hong Kong or Thai silk - supposed to be the best in the world. Can get you some beautiful material if you'd like and let you make up whatever you like in the States. Let me know.

Couldn't care less if we have the money saved for Hawaii or not - we'll take a loan out as we discussed last.

December from Dr. Bernard and live it up - you tight wad! You only live once, Sweetie. Maybe you'd rather wait till we're too old to ~~afford~~^{enjoy} it, come over to Hawaii by wheel chair and cane.

Some day, sweetie, you and I will have some money believe it or not. But by that time we'll be so old & decrepit that our idea of a big time will be swinging on the back porch swing telling stories. Same - same marshmallows in a piggy bank.

If I want an R&R in October, must apply not earlier than 25 Aug or later than 10 Sept. Should get a date sometime in middle of September. When I get this will let you know. There is a half fare from S.F. to Hawaii & back for wives of Vietnam veterans going to meet husbands in Hawaii (something about the gold drain, etc). Please check into this, let me know how far in advance

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⑤

6 July

you must make reservations, etc. Feel that 10 October - 17 October would be good dates or thereabouts. Don't want an R & R earlier - have seen too many good men (e.g. Greek) go to hell counting the days after their R & R's. Want the rest of the time to be downhill - may even get a trip to Tokyo, Bangkok or Manila after that. I can ask for particular days for R & R and am told usually get what you ask for.

Just finished your beautiful love letter dated 25 June 67 - it was beautiful - thank you very much. These thoughts you and I put down on paper daily should make up an interesting little book for ~~us~~ our family, years from now.

Have just read all of your letters back to June 21 - have been in such a rat race lately that hadn't really studied them as I usually do. They are all beautiful, happy and you. Enjoyed them

very much - especially the descriptions
of the kids. Jimmy sounds like a
good little rascal - would like to
pretend I don't like that but do.
Will not hesitate to spank his butt
literally but enjoy the fact that he's
got enough gumption to need it.

Will sign off now, Sweetie. - This
is my second letter today, believe it
or not. Will pass up the village
route, get some letters written and
some sleep.

Love you very much.

Dan

Sat. 8 July 67
1⁰⁰
PM
MACV RVN

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8 July

Hi Kay,

It's cold here believe it or not - am wearing a jacket and am still chilly. The rains have started again almost continual now as promised. Started 2 weeks ago - can expect them until September now. We did have a beautiful April and June though and I think that's abnormal for this area from what I've heard.

After my demanding letter last week for a care package and pictures, I got your letter dated 28 June in which you told me about sending both. Also this evening received your care package with Colby cheese and sausage; Mom's sausage, candy and soap; and some two more boxes of soap from Mary Whitlock. Am very grateful and so are "my" men - we all had a feast in Bob Reid's place (S/sgt James R. Reid). Find myself spending more and more time with the enlisted men - rarely if ever share anything with the officers in the dispensary. When I want anything or even need anything, these guys trust their asses for me to get it done

and the officers just sit around and listen to tape recorders, play tennis or, in general, look out the window. Consequently when any rounds of beer are in order or a care package from home comes or a case of steaks or chicken finds its way to me, would prefer to share it with ~~me~~ ~~them~~ the men who get the job done. They respond in kind - think we have a very good crew of medics here - I know we can work together and have in the past. Any way - most of your care packages are making good sounds in their stomachs right now - we all thank you very much.

Have wrapped one large crossbow in a cylinder ready for shipping to Ed, another package with a small "pistol" crossbow for me, and one slightly ^{larger} ~~smaller~~ for Curtie Shannon some fatigues, my "Go to hell" hat with many memories, your letters up to end of May, and a special present to me from PSC Duffy that I want saved. Will be sending a collection of Stereo records home in the near future and also more crossbows. Looked into some silk items sold in the PX - decided it is inferior -

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8 July

will go down to my favorite shop downtown Pleiku and get some Thai silk to send you - let you decide what you want to do with it. Have a number of very good slides from Dak Pek - after we get a number of copies of these made for John, Watson, & Roy Worthington - will be sending them along also - may take months.

That ring for Mrs. Breidell will cost at least \$20.00 - checked the price today. Sorry. If she wants to pay that much will gladly send it to her. She can adjust the ring size in the States.

Got a beautiful little letter from Kathy Corlan today - will answer tonight - will send it to ^{your} ~~you're~~ address hoping she'll be coming up with Mike & Mary Ann. Kathy has certainly developed into a young lady. Have missed most of her growing up in my various activities and travels - Hope someday we see more of Mike & Mary Ann and learn their children - maybe we're too late to follow some of their developments - Kathy, Tim and maybe Peggy are already quite grown up.

Received a letter dated 23 June today and another dated 28 June. The good ol' P.O. really does it's best to screw things up, doesn't it?

You described Colleen's missing a daddy and the other kids reactions in your 23 June letter - am anxious for the chance to be a daddy again - every now and then really turns me on. Seems like a long time since I've squeezed ~~them~~^{one} of those guys and talked to them at nite. - something to look forward to, but not too much or the time begins to drag.

Secretly I'm glad there are guys like Rod Dachel around to make husbands like me look good.

Am reading the Ambassador now - the one by Morris West that Bill Kresl objects to - seems very good so far - am about $\frac{1}{3}$ of the way through it. Can it find much to object to so far. Can't remember why Bill objected to it. Just finished that article about Primitive people in Time you recommended - Time just arrived and it

30 June issue

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8 July

the Bx today! - my attention span isn't so hot but agreed with what I understood

Hurray for Erin! - now if she can just bluff her way through long enough to buffalo Megan.

My you've certainly become the philosopher in your old age - enjoy hearing your theories - most of the time when I'm home am so busy talking you never get a chance to say what you think - and by the time I do & you talk, have hammered my idea home so you're unsure of yours. Now's that for an explanation? This Psychology Today you're getting is making your head work - psych is your cup of tea for sure - just lay off the old man when he gets home - at least till I get a chance to adjust.

Thought I'd send along a sample of the Star & Stripes for your inspection. Also am going to send along 2 big folders full of articles I've saved since Jan - suggest reading the accounts in "our" paper - the Star & Stripes and see how they coincide with the report you get in the States.

Have had two days & nites of sobriety. -
same - same vacation. Spent last nite
being quizzed by a full Colonel from the
360th up from Saigon - seems he didn't
know any thing about the Montagnards and
their problem. Of course yours truly was
more than anxious to enlighten him. And
constantly amazed at the almost total
ignorance of people not associated directly
with the Yards and many that are directly
dealing with them. And the yards constitute
 $\frac{3,000,000}{18,000,000}$ or $\frac{1}{6}$ of the total population
of Viet nam and effectively control over
 $\frac{1}{3}$ of the land area of this country. Until
the Yard problem is solved, there will always
be a fatal weakness in the strength of this
country and a foothold for Communist
subversion. Amazing to me that the brass
in Saigon is totally unaware of this - it's
crystal clear to anyone working with the
Yards, such as the S.F., me, Jack Rudy,
etc. Anyway, think this lowly Captain gave
this Colonel something to think about.

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8 July

Fell asleep almost immediately after talking
 with this Colonel — played hooky as planned
 from the villages. Tonite I'm on call and
 can't go. The only trouble is that all I
 want to do is sleep. Will have to get off
 my butt tomorrow and get to work. Will
 dash off a note before going to Tech's house,
 Plii Borl to buy bows; Plii Sar, Plii Phung
 and Plii Kep to present the watches and
 finally end up drinking a large am't rice
 wine somewhere.

Say Kay — will you do me a favor?
 please try to explain to people impatient for
 answers to their letters that almost every
 minute of my day I am tied up doing something?
 I work dispensary, crossbow sales, scrounging
 and local neurotics, alcoholics and liaison with
 the S.F. about training yard medicos, lab techs, etc
 every morning until noon — if not on call, spend
 time scrounging a vehicle, collecting supplies and
 medicine and go out to the villages — usually
 eat "supper" out there, talk politics and drink
 a great quantity of rice wine — usually don't
 get back till 10³⁰ AM - 11⁰⁰ PM, lately if at all —

try to write you, get a bite to eat,
settle down and it's usually 2-4 ^{PM} when
I hit the sack. Have only slept in my
bed 3 nites out of the last 7 - (2 nites in
the village, 2 nites on my examining table
at the dispensary - have to be up and
at 'em at 7 ^{AM} every morning so I lose
my right to roam on my free time. Have
many obligations here as you know and
must deliver most of the time. Consequently
when I do take a "day off" like yesterday
and today usually find a quiet spot and
sack out as long as I can. My carpenters
are very careful to protect me - monitor
telephone calls, see the sick they can and
wake me only when absolutely necessary.
Am watched after so well feel guilty at
times - am humbled by their loyalty and
concern for me - especially since I really
haven't done a damn thing for them personally
- just keep asking them to do favors for
me and sharing a CERE package with
them and beer now & then.

Must be very careful not to take myself

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8 July

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too seriously. This is a small town essentially - find there are many people whom I've never met who know me by reputation. Am very flattered but deep down know I'm getting credit for what other people have done for me. Try to point this out but this just blows up my image more - makes me look generous to boot. Y/O - guess the main thing is that we've got momentum going now and, I think, we're getting something positive done.

Hello to Mike and Mary Ann. - Kathy, Tim, Peggy, Mary, Kelly, Nora and Mike (Pike?). Hope you have a wild good time - wish I was there. Have a good drunk on me, Ed & Mike.

Will call it a note, Kay - It's two o'clock in the morning. Want to write Mary Whitlock a thank you note, also a short note to Bob Bonin & Kathy C.

Love you very much, sweetie,

Dan

(108) 9 July

9 July 67
Sunday
afternoon
USAF Disp.

Hi Ray,

After my marathon Friday mite (wrote 6 letters) didn't write anything yesterday. Again haven't had letters yesterday or today — they're still coming erratically but will probably get here tomorrow.

Had a good day yesterday but again got shot down at Plee Brel after ~~buying~~ buying 40,000 pi worth of bows (roughly \$350.00 worth) — ended up at Ton's house in a pouring rain — stayed over till 4 PM with Tech, John Watson, & 2 new men (Tom Shaw and Larry Diamond — airmen, don't know their ranks, appear to be good men). We set out through the mud and just ~~was~~ barely made it ~~to~~ out of Plee Brel loaded down with 60 Crossbows, medicine bags and five big (correction 3 big men, myself + Tech) in the cab of the pickup. Ol' Charlie Brown made it though. We got stuck going into Tech's road but got out of that, too. Got home in a pouring rain by 5³⁰ PM — slept till 9⁴⁰ AM and have been inventorying the bows with Bob Shultz all morning.

Was touchy and nervous as hell — same same

I am at home at times - remember? - was getting mad at every thing & everyone - when got out to the village relaxed completely.

My headache and aches & pains cleared up and had a good time. The one thing that gets me is the volume of rice wine.

I'm required to drink. Even with turning down half the rice wine offered me - must still take down 2 or 3 quarts in a nite - most of the time consume up to 4 or 5 quarts. Gives one hell of a hangover. The Yards have a custom (maybe same-same taboo) that serious discussion or even friendly conversation should never be conducted without drinking. Have tried to get an idea across out there without booze being passed back and forth and I was told very politely but firmly to save that for mumpai (rice wine drinking). That ended my one-sided conversation abruptly.

Had a new dish - bamboo shoots. Very very good. Same-same sprinkled through Chinese chow mein but this was by the handfull. Tastes like a cross between asparagus and mushrooms. - crisp. Ate like

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(2)

9 July

a pig. also inevitable rice (which I don't particularly care for) something else I couldn't identify and buckets of rice wine.

Forced myself to vomit to make room - am getting in the habit of doing that now - otherwise the hangover next day leaves you stretched out on the bed all day.

Got involved in local politics. Nhuit wanted us to drink rice wine and started preparing it when Ton came storming in - chewed Nhuit out for keeping us at his house when Ton had invited us, first. Also chewed Nhuit out for selling crossbows at his own house instead of Plo's. Nhuit took it humbly as coming from the chief but feel we put everyone in a spot because of my stupidity. Must apologize today if I get a chance. Still seem to be the ugly American even though my intentions are good. Must follow Lich more closely. Have been having too many independent ideas of my own lately - may be good ideas but that doesn't mean they are good for this particular set of circumstances.

The group is getting up outside now
to go to Lech's house and start building
his house. We have an engineer, a
carpenter and many willing work^{ers}.
Hope we can get something done today.

Will write again tonight, I hope if
can avoid the rice wine.

Love you very much, Sweetie.
Hope for a letter tomorrow

Love,
Dan



(1)

(111)

10-11 July 67

12³⁰ midnite

Monday nite

U. S. SPECIAL FORCES

U. S. Armed Forces - Vietnam

MACV

Plukhu RVN

Hi Kay,

Just slept from 6³⁰ till now
and will go back to sleep shortly.

There has been no mail since Friday,
lots of magazines - even got some medical
ones like the Consultant, MD and
2 Life - but no letters. Am mildly worried
especially with news of all the storms in
Myl. Bob Shultz and many others have
not had mail either so will cool it
for awhile.

Have had a very tired, depressing
day so this won't be a very
stimulating letter, I'm afraid. Got a
huge box of soap from Edna
Junior high today - mailed
27 May 67 - think I'll send
thanks with a cross bow - may be
by slow mail so it'll get there
by September in time for school
again.

Packed crossbows and this and that
today - will be sending them out in
a day or two - should cost of fortune



for mailing - very heavy things the
containers - the next bunch I send
will be less exotically wrapped.

Curtie Shannon's crossbow is in
the big box with the hat, my small
revolver - type crossbow and letters, etc.
Haven't found anything appropriate for
~~mother's~~ our anniversary yet, but want
you to know and looking. When I find
something worthwhile will send it along.

Just finished the Ambassador - a
very disturbing psychological novel
about the mess here in Vietnam - I
think a very ~~fine~~ accurate description of
of the confusion here - morally, politically,
etc.

Had a 1½ hour talk with
Col Hullar and Dave Dulaney this
morning in which I outlined my
activities, plans, etc with the Montagnards.
Have been given considerable freedom within



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(2)

10-11 July

U. S. SPECIAL FORCES

U. S. Armed Forces - Vietnam

specified limits, to do what I feel is necessary out there. One new requirement is that I must check in more frequently with Col Hollar as to what is going on out there. Told him didn't want to bug him with unnecessary tidbits since he had enough on his ~~and~~ mind - "Let me be the judge of that," was his answer. He came in to my room last night - had some of your sausage and cheese and relaxed. There is much personal friendship here which ~~for~~ flatters me but at the same time am very aware of the great burden of responsibility he carries pretty much by himself. He has great difficulty opening up to others - may be just a natural difficulty - but also a problem here of people who will take advantage of his confidence to use him and compromise his command. A very sensitive man. Paid me a complement today - can't remember the



words - made me blush for the first
time in a long time. Think I can
do a job for him.

John Watson
Had a long talk with ~~John~~ today
- if he had his way he'd stay out
in the villages all the time. Is
damned near fluent in Jarai by this
time - has great enthusiasm and much
talent - and a Mike Conlon temper.
Must constantly tell him to hold back
- he'll tell a guy off he thinks is a
phony or who makes a stupid comment
about the Montagnards, etc. Have to
constantly warn him that the guy
he is telling to go to hell now may be
the one who can help him scrounge
a few days later. I'm afraid too
many things are still black and
white to him - have definitely reached
my "gray" period myself.

Think I'm about ready for



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(111)

10-11 July

U. S. SPECIAL FORCES

U. S. Armed Forces - Vietnam

another R+R to Saigon. Maybe
will try to get to Ban Me Thuot
soon also - the home of the Rhade -
want to see if there are any new
ideas down there for me to dig up.
The Rhade are closely related to the
Jarai - same Polynesian background, same
type language, etc. a little paler skinned
and not quite so ~~rugged~~ rugged looking
features. They've had the advantage
of 2-3 generations of intensive French
teaching and military training. Most of
the teachers in the villages, including
Kat at Plie Brel, are Rhade.
Want to see if I can borrow Lich
to go down there and look around
for awhile - he's got a fertile
mind and picks up a lot of
things I miss.

Just looked up Dengue fever
in my father's day present - finally
tumbled to what Lich's boy has. Have



been treating him for malaria
and he hasn't recovered. - if it's
dengue fever (also called break bone
fever) then I'm golden. He's got a
huge headache, bones ache, very sick,
high fever - all the symptoms of dengue
fever - also transmitted by our favorite
mosquito (*Aedes Aegypti*) - same one that
carries malaria here. Will check
him tomorrow again - should be getting
well by then if I'm right. Who
would have thought I'd ever have to
remember all these exotic diseases
when I was learning them in back
and preventive medicine. I knew them for
the test but then promptly forgot
them because I thought I'd never
have to use the knowledge.

Not a very stimulating letter, I'm
afraid - miss communicating with
your letters in front of me. Hope



(4)

10-11 July

(111)

U. S. SPECIAL FORCES

U. S. Armed Forces - Vietnam

There's some mail tomorrow....

Butch House (Dr, Special Forces) came over today - wants me to set up a daily medical patrol in September to the villages as a training exercise for the montagnard medics he's training. Will discuss it with Ton soon - think it will work out. - must go slow but think 2 mos will be enough time.

Sweetie, I'm beat in spite of the fact I've had 6 hours of sleep already. Maybe a little depressed but will get over it. Much to do. Fed a little frustrated cannot do it all in one day or even one year.



Love you very much. Oh, yeah - hi to Mike, Mary Ann and all the kids - hope their trip up was okay and you're all

having a mostous good time. Have
a drink for me - can't stand American
booze lately.

Love,

Dan

(112)

13 July 67
MDCV, RVN
12³⁰ noon
Pleiku

Hi Kay,

Have a few tales to tell you — hope I can put it all together before I fall asleep. Have been on the go since 6³⁰ yesterday morning. Am pooped. You didn't get a letter yesterday because I didn't write one — never stopped long enough to do it. Started three times to write and all I got done was Hi Kay — three times. Sorry.

Got three sort of negative letters from you — sorry am being interrupted again — Damn it. Will write this anyway — am choosing to ignore my new visitor — a Charlie Brown — in charge of news releases, information offices. If he's like all the rest, the stories will continue to get as fouled up as they have been since I've been here. Will never be able to read a newspaper or magazine article with any confidence after the way I've seen them messed up since I've been here.

Don't know if I've made any sense so far — oh yeah — Thanks for your letters — got three yesterday marked 3 July, 7 July and 8 July. You sound a bit

frid and depressed yourself. Hope Mike + Mary Ann's visit helps. Think we may be going through another phase in this thing.

About the last 1½ days - have been base psychiatrist for sure. Had two people who wanted to commit suicide, another who was visibly shaking, another who has been drinking 2-3 jefths a day for the last 3 mos and wants help to quit, another one who hates everyone and has been in PACT 18mo without an R+R - got him a standby R+R - spent at least an hour with each one of these guys - came up here very frid last ~~the~~ nite - right into a party for Owen Haddock + Ralph Schowalter - two of the finest boys we have - do the loudspeakers bit from their little airplanes all over this area - get shot at routinely but live a charmed life. Got called out by Col Kullar at 1⁰⁰ PM - they had caught a Montagnard "VMC" wandering around the base - don't know how he got in. Kullar called me down to help interpret for him - we finally decided the yard was either very stupid or scared or both. As close as we could gather he was from Ban Me Thuet or nearby and either Rhade or a southern Jarai. Anyway

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(2)

13 July

at Col Nullar's request, took the poor guy over to the dispensary, fed him supper, gave him a Librium and bedded him down on my examining table. Slept nearby fitfully all night just to be sure. This morning at 5³⁰ pm we fed him breakfast and kept guard on him until Dick showed up about 8⁰⁰ pm to identify him & talk to him. Turns out he's a crazy man who wanders all over this part of the country. Think I've seen him before myself in some of the villages. The OSI people came this morning - handcuffed him and blindfolded him and took him down for interrogation. Guess they're finding out he really is crazy and was just using this as a cover to do V.C. work.

Worked sick call in sort of a stupor and thought I was through. Came into my office to find a T/sgt sobbing away. Told a story of his wife spending all the money, his boy becoming a delinquent and every thing going to pot back home. He's 16 yrs in the Air Force and has somehow

never been separated from his wife before. Talked to him for about an hour and got a compassionate 30 day leave for him (I hope). More damned people falling apart around here than you can shake a stick at. Must be the weather. Notice tho that the tough time is usually about 3-5 mo after being here (remember my problem a few mo ago?). Happens so often to not be a pattern.

Anyway, here I am tired as hell and have to be out in the villages 20 minutes ago. Am going to Saigon tomorrow with Lich and Maj. Keevern. I need another R&R. so will do it this way. We're officially going down to Saigon to sell crossbows and scrounge for Civic action but we can usually do that in a day or two. Will stay until Monday next and be back refreshed I hope. Can't remember ever being this tired but sure I have been - especially in intern ship.

Will close now. Love you very much.
Hope the mail situation improves.

Love,

Dan

(113)

14 July 67
Friday
Dispensary
4 PM

Hi Kay,

As you can see, we didn't get off the ground today. Couldn't get a plane that would carry our 50-60 crossbows and us too to Ton San Nhut - will have to wait till Sunday morning now.

Sent some things in the mail. - most of it regular mail. It came to 10⁰⁰. Found some eggs in the (Helmites?) Arrow ~~stuff~~ holders - suggest soaking the quiver in kerosene when you get them. Sent a large one to Ed. Have 3 more to send. Also two boxes to you. Your anniversary present is in the bottom of one of them - hope you like it - will probably get there middle of August.

Got some sleep finally. Slept from 10³⁰ PM to 1³⁰ this afternoon on my examining table. Feel great. Had a wild discussion among 8 of us about the war, our policy here, Communism vs. Capitalism, sociology of customs, taboos, morals, etc. Went late into the night with lots of beer.

Got a letter today dated 10 July 67

You have been goofing up, haven't you.
No sweat - understand the rat race
you're in. Also know how the P.O. like
to play its games. Suspect I'll get some
for the days in between. July so far looks
like this: 3 July, 5 July, 7 July, 8 July, +
10 July. Not so hot. And three of those
came on the same day.

Mike & Mary Ann should be there
by now. Will say hello for everyone
to Lynn Bechtin when I finally get to
Saigon. Have to inventory the crossbows
in the meantime in the next few days.

Have to run now. Will write tonight.

Love,
Dan

114

15
1 PM
17 July 67
Monday
Downtown
Saigon
"F" Frouge

Hi Ray,

Another quick note - came into Saigon with Tech, Major Howard Steven, an Airman Comeau + 68 crossbows yesterday AM - sold the crossbows in about 4 hrs - big demand here. Stayed with Lyn Bechlin and friends last nite. Took Tech down to "Cheap Charlie" restaurant - ate some more Chinese food - having another little R&R. Today we look for looms, anvil, color fast thread, etc. Slept till 11⁰⁰ this AM after drinking 1 1/2 cases of beer with Lyn and some of the boys here. Got many of the world problems solved. Will try to write later. Am being pushed to go out now.

The letter supply from you has been post to nil in the last week - guess that's why my out put has been post. Must apologize again. This lousy P.O. has to be the worst outfit in the good ol' U.S.A.

We discussed Mike & Mary Ann's visit last nite. Understand you guys

are planning to visit Betty and the kids - should be a good get-together. Also talked about Bob Wilson - Lynn's comment was the same as mine - can't find one little fault in his whole makeup - irritates the hell out of both of us.

Lick is seeing the sights, keeping his mouth shut - hasn't made many comments about anything. He got thoroughly tired out last nite and went to bed about 11⁰⁰ PM - woke at 6⁰⁰ AM this morning. Looks pretty good today. Yesterday was hung over all day from Saturday nite when 2 friends brought jugs of rice wine and got him smashed. Was pretty hung over when I picked him up at 6⁰⁰ AM Sunday morning.

Expected him to get sicker than hell on the plane down but he took that real well.

It's very hot here in Saigon and muggy. Will be glad to get back to Pleiku weather-wise. - it was ~~at~~ about 60° when we left Sunday morning in Pleiku. Lick is dying of the heat here. He's used to the cool mountain country and so am I by this time.

114

2

17 July

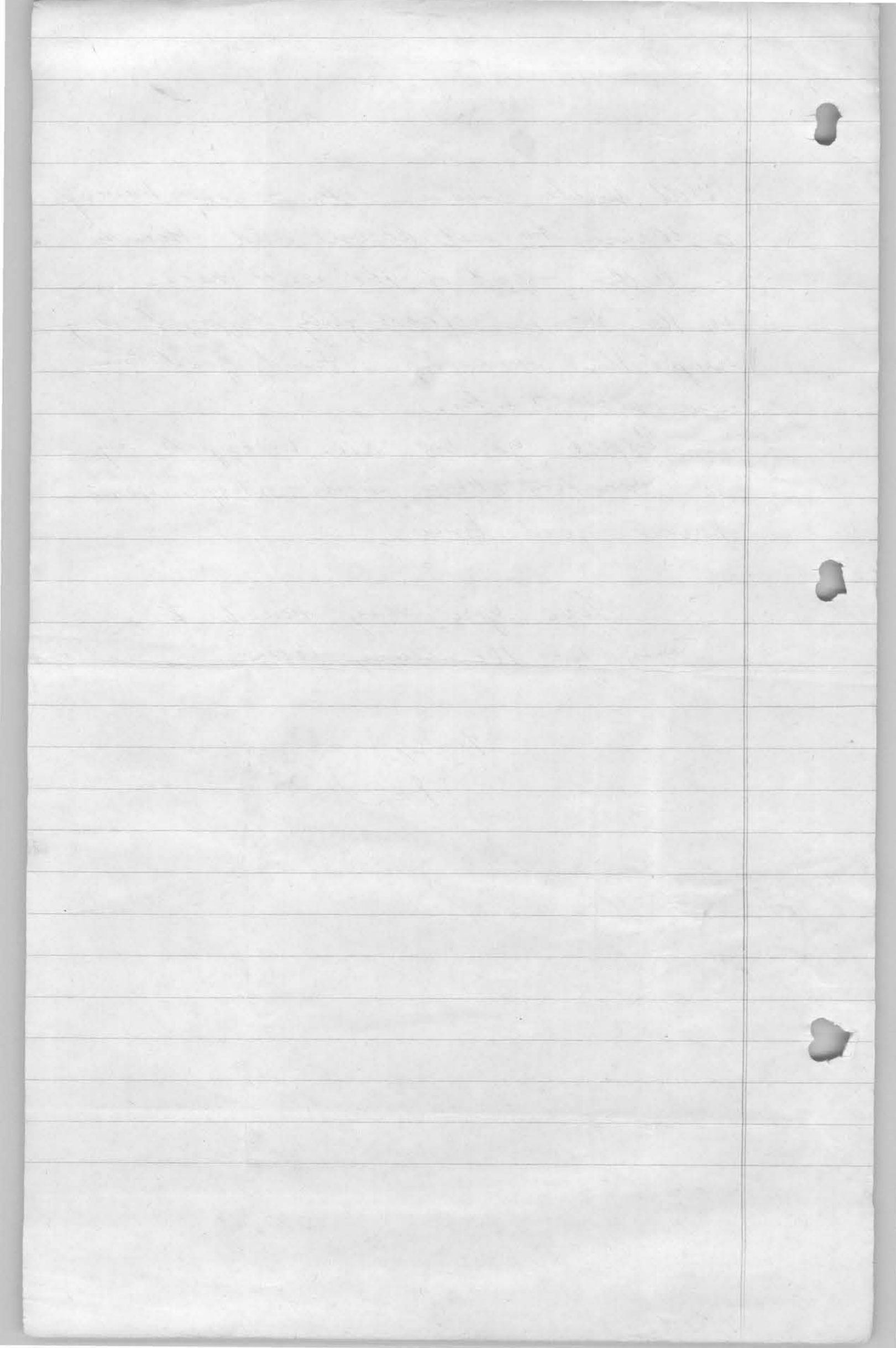
Will write more later - am having a chance to sit down and think a little - out of the rat race on the base. Thoroughly enjoyed my sleep this morning. First good one in over 2 wks.

Expect you're all wrapped up in vacation-time now - hope you have a good time.

Love you very much. &
Sorry for the lousy letter.

Love,

Dan



(115)

18 July 67
"F Troupe
Saigon, RVN
7⁰⁰ PM

Hi Kay,

Have had a good day. A wild day but a good day. Had a fight with a couple of Vietnamese at USAID - probably an international incident but Y/O. Those damned Vietnamese have a warehouse on the docks of Saigon that is unbelievable. They have about 10,000 carpenter kits, 300 \$5,000 looms, literally thousands of rice gardening tool kits, huge crates of blacksmith tools, anything & everything that we can use including lots of jeeps and trucks. Yet they're so busy making lists and filling out forms of that stuff that none of it ever gets out of the warehouse. Instead they just build more warehouses - they now have about 15 of the damned things and yet we never see any of the stuff up in Pleiku. Well, I raised hell - tried to cut through the red tape - took us all morning long - finally started loading the stuff on my self (and Rich and Andy Comeau & Maj Hovorn) - as fast as we loaded, they unloaded the stuff. Finally I got mad a la Mike Carlon and pushed them all

away and finished loading. Didn't know I could get that mad - but we got the job done. Got 10 sewing machines, 25 carpenter kits, 5 black smiths complete outfits - a promise (we'll see) of 1,000 kilos of thread, and a firm promise (I hope) of 5 looms. Also got a chance to inspect their damn warehouse for the first time - now know what to ask for. Next time won't peddle around asking for 5 or 10 of each item - will ask for 50 or 100 instead.

You should have seen the comedy on the way down to the dock. I'm directing a Vietnamese driver who has lived all his life in Saigon how to get to the warehouse and next to me is a Montagnard (Tich) who is translating for me. Talk about the blind leading the blind.

We did the town for Tich again last night - took him to a sin spot - live entertainment dancing girls, prostitutes, the whole bit. He just sat there with his mouth open. Didn't even make a pass. The big city really has him buffaloed. Am sure he'll think it all over when we get back to Pleiku - next time he'll be an old pro. Already knows the city pretty well.

I wish you could be here and share my impressions. The Vietnamese women are truly beautiful - slim, small boned, delicate.

115

2

18 July

When dressed up in their "ao dai"'s, black gloves, sunglasses and riding their motor scooters or on the back of motor scooters are a beautiful sight.

I'm sure if the G.I.'s were ever allowed to know the decent Vietnamese they would respect and admire them as I do ~~for~~ John. By the way, haven't had time to see John this time. - too much running around down here.

Have to be back in Pleiku tomorrow AM - hope we get a plane out in the morning - we have lots of junk to bring back. It's been a good trip - haven't seen Lynn very much - have been put up royally by these people - very hospitable - but I'm usually too tired at the end of the day to drink much past 2-3 AM.

Lien and I have had some good talks - are comfortable being together - we talk when we have something to say - otherwise we just keep silent.

Think he's having one hell of a time, just watching what's going on. - right now he's watching television. Last night we ate a cheeseburger and a milk shake up in the ~~the~~ Ref hotel downtown

while watching "Who's Afraid of Virginia Wolff" of all things. The elevator up to the 5th floor was what really got him - couldn't figure out how we could press a button, the door close and when it opened out we stepped 5 floors up. When explained to him, of course he understood but he still thinks that's pretty swift.

He's meeting prejudice here of course, but is smart enough to take it in stride. Tells me to calm down and not to get my water hot. Have developed quite a temper lately - must watch that - don't make any friends that way.

We're sitting in Lynn Bechler's villa waiting for the down pour to slow up if it's going to. - has been pouring buckets for the last $\frac{1}{2}$ hr - hope it slows down long enough to make it to the USO club.

Am anxious to get your letters when I get back tomorrow. Expect there should be a few. Will get a good mite's sleep tonight I hope and be fresh for the rat race in Pleechu.

Wish you were here, sweetie. Find myself talking to you and pointing things out to you when I see them. Really like this city - so many beautiful things - a capital

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(3)

18 July

city of the world - once called the Pearl of the Orient, the Paris of the Orient - now overcrowded and very dirty in parts but you can see the original beauty still. Palaces, beautiful statues, Hindu temples, Buddhist temples, many oriental beautiful Catholic churches, the Buddhist monks in their saffron robes, the very feminine beautiful Vietnamese women, the strong legged pedicab drivers, the children scavenging in the garbage, the violent traffic with no traffic lights or signals but no accidents or very few, the ugly Americans standing $\frac{1}{2}$ foot above the people, the nightclubs and Saigon tea at \$2.00 a clip for the prostitutes who sit down (have learned not to catch their eye and you can sit all night and enjoy the sights and smells without buying a single drink). It's an exciting city - full of activity and strange sights for this mid westerner (and for Lich I might add) - wish you could see it.

Am running off at the mouth - bought

a few things of course. Think you'll like them - will send them on when I get back.

Will close for now. Talk to you later.

I love you and miss you so much I ache. Miss you, sweetie. Am homesick as hell to come home to you - must get busy again and maybe this will wear off. Am doing fine - don't worry - Didn't mean to let that last part sound that bad.

Love you,

Dan

(116)

21 July 67
MRCV
Pleiku RVN
12³⁰ midnite

Hi Kay,

Just a short note now so I can get this in the mail by 1st PM. Will continue to write after this but want you to know I'm with you, back in Pleiku and the rat race again.

Finished the dispensary at 11⁰⁰ PM tonight - if you will believe that. Missed lunch & breakfast and had $\frac{1}{2}$ hr for supper before running back to the dispensary again for a spinal tap.

Have many things to report to you but want to settle back & philosophize a bit while doing same.

Had a good time in Saigon but very little R+R - worked my tail off instead. Only saw Lynn a couple of times and was too tired to stay up all night and talk. Will go down again soon to get some of the things we scavenged.

Sounds like you're in for a long busy happy two weeks with Mike & Mary Ann. Too bad I can't make it to get drunk and philosophize with those guys.

Had two letters waiting for me when
I got back. Enjoyed them. None
today. Looks like you're on an
every - other - day routine. Know
you're busy but appreciate those
every-day letters even though they
usually come in bunches.

Will throw this in the mail
box and sit down & write a
decent letter.

Love you,

talk to you in ten minutes

Love,
Dan

(117)

21 July
Friday
1⁰⁰
PM
MAEV, RVN

Hi Kay,

Just got a phone call from the dispensary - an American cut his wrists and is bleeding all over the joint - wants an early out from the war - that's the kind of day it's been. As I mentioned $\frac{1}{2}$ hr ago - such call went till 11⁰⁰ PM today and is still going on.

Have had a hilarious time at the dispensary today - will report it as well as I can

Just finished reading all about Viet-Nam in the Newsweek edition you mentioned. Very interesting. Think I'm one of Johnson's boys but would like to see more emphasis on civic action than killing. Don't see how we can kill all 3,000,000 Montagnards any time soon no matter how much bombing we do. Will have to go out in the villages & win them one by one like the V.C do, provide them protection, help educate them, teach them industries, train medics, improve their ~~but~~ health, win them as friends first of the U.S and eventually of the South Vietnamese. A long hard road I'm not sure the

Americans have enough guts for but
see no alternative from my birds' ~~to~~
eye view. Either that or head over
the Montaguard country and —

— sorry, have to run — this guy
apparently did a good job on both
his worst.

— Well carry this down to the
dispensary & continue from there.

— 2 ⁵⁰pm — yes he did — got the medical
~~the~~ nerve, the flexor pollicis longus ligament
and a few assorted veins and arteries on his Rt wrist
Only a small laceration on his left. He'll
have a meaty bunch of fingers for a while
but won't check out this time. What a
windy day! Must have something to do
with the moon.

— and (to continue my lecture) in the process
Jao, Cambodia and So Vietnam do the like. Mind
and Soap. Eventually Thailand will go after
Burma comes in to the Chinese and then
our next defensive position will be the
Philippines, India or Australia. It's crystal
clear to me from where I sit but reading
Newsweek didn't enlighten me a damned
bit. May be the U.S. thinks we're
playing with boys over here — they're wrong.
Soap and his men are tough as nails — probably

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as good as our best in open combat and certainly better than us at their brand of war fare. And they have a dedication that would startle a westerner — can you imagine a guy from Hanoi setting out with two artillery shells on his back walking to Pleiku over muddy roads, bombed, napalmed, strafed, no food, rained on, dirty, few if any places to sleep, hiding in the day time, walking at nite — may be 3 mo of this — arriving — giving his 2 or 3 shells to someone and turning around over the same lousy roads, etc to go back and do it all over again? Hell, even in a battle zone we insist on riding as many places as we can.

Just talked to the OSI man Lee Hitchcock (for the 3rd time tonite) — we've had one hell of a day. Now it's 3³⁰ AM — this rat race has been going on since I got back to Pleiku Wednesday afternoon at 3³⁰ PM — finally arrived in my room at 11³⁰ PM last nite and didn't get unpacked till this morning. Didn't shave till noon — no breakfast, no lunch and 10 minutes for supper tonite — got

interrupted by Col Keller wanting me to talk with Lee Hatcher and leaving about the opium addict that walked in this morning and asked for help. Also had three alcoholic come in voluntarily today for help - the best kind. Also destroyed ~~Bot~~ Bombay after 19 1/2 yrs^{since} - he's been drunk since Dec 1966 - has had many chances and finally used them all up. One of the hardest things I've had to do but was otherwise so sorry one that if we didn't send him out of the service the morale here would really suffer. That's the second man I've sent responsible for discharging - both alcoholic with months & months of threats, pleadings, circumstances, etc. Both master sergeants, too. Both constantly drunk on the job, etc. As long as we played fast and loose with them, they acted as a little more. Here amongst others we generally lowered the boom. Smart thing, thought, it turns out because many other alcoholics (some in their early 30's) are coming in for help now that they know we're playing for keeps around here.

The opium & "pot" smokers were a shocker to me - haven't had one of those yet. All the symptoms of withdrawal - nausea, cramps, running nose & eyes, dizziness, uncoordinated, trouble breathing, etc. Told me his life story in

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21 July

brief - got a V.N girl pregnant, family disowned him, wants to extend in Vietnam indefinitely to get away from it all & be near the cheap marijuana and opium, has been AWOL in a combat zone (desertion), has been drinking heavily ~~for~~ since 13 yrs old - drunk on booze, beer & opium every nite - a large gaping black hole he's been falling into for the last 9 mo - talked to him for a long time - think I convinced him it's not hopeless. However, he will be investigated and the dope ring possibly rounded up. At least 30 other hitmen on the stuff. Probably a V.C trick - they make great defectors or informers because can be blackmailed very easily - and it's a known fact that most of the prostitutes up here are V.C or V.C sympathizers.

It's 4 ^{PM} now - was going to try to get some sleep but looks like I'll have to settle for a few hrs again.

Yesterday when I got back - went to Ton's house - gave him a set of knives picked up in Saigon and had a good chat with him, tick

and John Watson. Think we're
rolling now - we'll see. As soon
as we get the looms up here and
the blacksmith tools should be able
to start quite a factory in Plee Brel
and other villages. Hope I'm not
aiming too high. - we'll see.

Sweetie, am really beat. Must
apologize for not writing more regularly.
If things slow down a bit will get
on the ball. Am tired but hopped
up on the coffee. I've been pouring
into myself. tonite. Will try to read
a little and get a couple hours' sleep.

Love you very much. Hope
my letters are coming through.

I'm horny as hell.

Love,
Dan



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We both seem to need one off soon.
Hope the letters to the kids arrived okay.
Will try very hard to get Erin's present
in the mail tomorrow - hope it fits - it
was the only one I could find.

Have been considering an answer to
l's overwhelming letter - will try to
begin to answer it tonight.

Have now had 3 days away from the
villages and miss it - plan to go out
to Plei Phung and find their
an ya dras (doctor) and ask if he
wants to go to S.F. for the
medic class - also will ask
if Bing (Plei Brel) wants to
go. Hope I can get at least
these two to go.



The potential is there in each of these villages to train a medic or maybe two to learn the rudiments of medical care. The Special Forces (S.F.) have a real good training course for them and I'm hopeful can start with at least two.

As I may be mentioned - the rain is here again - and boy does it ever rain! - sideways, straight down, almost as if you are caught in a flood. - wild! And I like it - the only trouble is that it makes it hard to get in & out of the villages. But so far haven't gotten stuck.

Got our pictures back from Dak Pek - some good ones - will send them along when we get them divided up and copies made of the good ones for



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all three of us.

Your schedule as outlined sounds wild - get tired just reading about it. You certainly are on a merry-go-around, aren't you? Am happy you're back with your friends even though they keep the pace hot & heavy for you. You would have shrouded like a pine down Texas. Ed and Weez make all the difference in the world. Will have to figure out something for their birthdays - maybe can send them some opium or a pig of rice wine - understand opium is cheap over here.



Had all kinds of things to say to you when I sat down - am actually thinking of how to answer Ed's letter. He posed some serious questions - will

give my opinions as just that.
Hope I don't sound too much like a
heretic. Went to Church yesterday and
listened to Father Bartos' sermon on
saints - Can't help being critical even

though I know it's mostly pride.
Haven't thought of birth control, euthanasia,
the Church, etc for a long time mostly
because not involved too much in that.
Mostly my thoughts center around people,
their real values, what is important
for their happiness, what exactly
constitutes a good man vs a Catholic,
Lutheran, Baptist, Buddhist, Anamist,
etc. The purpose of a man's life is
much more simply stated here I think
in spite of the great confusion and suffering
all around us. As I see it, a man
is great or small in proportion to the
manner in which he meets the challenges



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he sees - with what intensity he lives
and with what motive he does what
he does. Very important questions here.
Not so important is whether he believes
in my God or even in a God. Each
man has a God whatever he calls Him
- he may even have a number of God's.
- the central point is → is he true to
himself or is he a phoney. Can he be
trusted or will he try to screw you to
the wall out of jealousy (Americans) or
fear (Montagnards) or envy of your wealth
& size etc (Vietnamese) or for whatever
reason. There is a constant
searching by each man here to
re-examine his own motives but
also to read the next man. As I
mentioned month's ago - at first
it's a great disappointment to
find so many apparent friends
not that way at all - but looking
for glory or a medal or to hear



the next man down to make himself look good, etc. And always here we have the stupid, smiling, well meaning but very arrogant UGLY AMERICAN who constantly fucks things up (I'm not necessarily excluding myself from any of these categories). Can get very carried away with activity here and forget what you're original reason for doing these things was. And to further confuse this "simple" situation — we are all combinations of many motives and we pick and choose the one most acceptable to us and call that our motive.

Have really fouled up that "simple" thought, haven't I. To retread: — a man would be an absolute ass here to think of himself as a Catholic, or protestant or Jew here — he is above all — an American, also Air Force



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it, we lose. As the S.F. Lieutenant at Dak Pek pointed out - if the NVN used any one of the villages in the valley for a mortar attack on the command post, he'll take exactly one second to decide to blow the whole village right off the map - men, women & children. And the Japs know this. Consequently, any sign of ~~1~~ near the village is instantly relayed to the Command post and a patrol is sent out before they get a chance to set themselves up in the village.

Likewise, we have adopted a plan at Plei Boel, Plei Phung, Plei Sor, and related villages about sending a runner over here when they get wind of V.C in any of the villages near by. We'll then relay the message to S.F and have a "Miki" force go out and look around, set up an ambush, etc.



Am getting very windy. Must close
and talk to Ed and Weez.

Love you very much.

Talk to you again tomorrow
Sorry for this very windy,
serious letter.

Love,

Dan

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22 July 67
8³⁰ PM
USAF Dispensary
Sat nite

Hi Kay,

Got 3 very good letters today - last one dated 18 July. The other two had it's date blurred but think it was 15 July - had the pictures in it. The other one was 14 July - also with a picture in it. It's been a long dry spell until this morning when got a fourth letter dated 13 July. Think I'm finally caught up. The pictures were just great. Colleen is very changed - had to recheck the other picture of her to make sure it was really her. The others look very good but approximately as I remember them - Kaila is a doll. Would like a close up of Erin if I could. You can buy a roll of Color prints - don't have to buy slides you know - that would eliminate the problem you were talking about. Of course, ol' buddy, it would cost a little more - but let it all hang out - oops!

Have ten letters in front of me dating back to 3 July that I haven't marked down as answered. Will begin to answer them now so can put them away.

Haven't been golfing at all - not even to practice swinging - will have to learn all over again, I guess.

Has the power been put back for you in the back part of the house. How about the stereo, TV, radio, etc that was broken - did they get fixed? Have two boxes of stereo records to send you soon.

Many good ones - and they are stereo. Not hi-fi. Did we ever get the records back from Joe Mirra? - especially that French talking one with What's-his-name talking. That's a favorite of mine.

You have to be the best washed woman in the world - end all of your letters by saying you're popping in the tub, taking a bath, popping popcorn, jumping into bed, reading the newspapers or magazines or books, etc - You're a riot. When I get home will disrupt all of that nice neat routine - sorry about that.

Congratulations to the Murphy's - don't think I ever did write and answer Kay or thank her for the soap.

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Don't remember the 4th of July at Sheppard
— what did we do? Oh yeah — we
sat in that crowd and watched fireworks
at the parade place — and chased
Megan all over hell. Now I remember.

I'm glad my letter to Ed and Weez was
well taken — meant every word — you're
right — it took a lot of effort and
thinking to write. We think these thoughts
but putting them into words is something
else again.

Will be sending along a few more odds
and ends in the next few days — glad to
see the pipe, P.D.'s and such arrived
okay. About the ao dai — I do need
your measurements, doll — don't know
Twiggy's. May be when that material
arrives (in about a month) you ~~to~~ can
have one made for yourself. You really
look good in your pictures — may be because
they're taken so far away. You can't
believe the lift they gave me. "A picture
is worth a thousand words...."

You sound upset by my drinking and defensive about your own. Am not aware that my drinking has cut down on my effectiveness at work or my ability to perform. Appear at 7⁵⁰_{am} each morning in the dispensary and work like hell until 1-2 ^{pm} each nite. There's can't one hell of a lot to do other than have a few drinks to relax around here. Of course the rice wine routine in the villages is part of the work (I'll bet I can hear the rebuttal from Dad & Mom right now) out there. No one discusses any thing without rice wine out there - part of the social life - an integral part - think I told you my experience with trying to talk politics without drinking rice wine - was cut off politely but firmly and informed this was a matter for "numpai" and was to be discussed apart from that. Am not worried about your drinking - we can both dry out together, okay?

About John Watson - one of the freshest, most enthusiastic and highly motivated

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22 July

men I have ever worked with. Also one of the smartest. No he's not the bicyclist - Is newly married and quite in love with his wife. A young man who knows how to get things done. Is training 2 Montagnard medics in the lab on his own initiative. Has been adopted into the Montagnard families out in the Plii Brel - is Ton's "ana" (son) - speaks damon near fluent Jarai both "correct" and the vernacular. Love these people and his loved in return. Has taken the burden of being the Lone Ranger off me considerably. We work in tandem well - he has the ear of the young men and I talk with the older men due to my rank and "wisdom" (an automatic credit given me because I'm a medicine man, etc). Couldn't care less about his personal sex mores - that's his problem, not mine. Here you look at the man - his sincerity, the reason why he will stick his neck out for these people - he's not out for glory or a medal or

a pat on the back. Doesn't need me to constantly pat him on the back, etc. He's a strong man who attacks a situation on his own initiative, is sensitive to the people - makes mistakes, honest ones - but has the humility and good will to change when he sees he's wrong. His enthusiasm is contagious. He's conscious of the ugly American as am I and is trying very hard to win these people for us as am I without trampling all over their culture and pride. He's one in a million. He has a good heart and that's what counts in my book - loves his God and his fellow man e.g. situation ethics - from strength. His relationship with his wife or girl friends is his problem, not mine. (Although, incidentally, he's been absolutely faithful to her as far as I know since he's been here in spite of a few tight situations he's been in) - I have my own code of conduct which we've discussed before. This is getting very serious all

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of a sudden but your letter of the 6th July was serious and that's the one I'm answering now. About this sex thing . . . — as horny as I am I don't think I could ever go to bed with any of the women here drunk or sober. I'm exactly the same in country (DELOS 22 Jan at the very latest) and haven't been seriously tempted so far. Don't mean by that that I've gone homosexual or anything like that but think that the raw sex act without anything else would feel me with disgust. There have been some sexy gals at times but for this prude that ain't the same as a love affair so have been able to ignore them without too much trouble. Think that without the knowledge of what we've experienced, would have succumbed a long time ago. After that, the stuff around here would be pretty 2nd rate I'm afraid.

Besides, there aren't that many women roaming around the base, rarely if ever go to town, and haven't seen

the inside of a bar or "laundry" in
Pleiku yet nor do I plan to. The
women situation out in Plei Povel
and the other villages you know about
already. So you can see I've got
myself pretty well insulated so far.

John Watson's problems are his problems
—and he's handling them pretty well by
my standards — and they aren't necessarily
his at that. Enough of this.

No body's asking you to change your
or my value system, sweetie. Just
try to be more tolerant of other's
value systems. We ain't necessarily right
for every one — e.g. Buddhists, Mohammedans,
etc etc have a very involved value system
but I don't particularly buy the thing
for myself. That doesn't mean I
have to condemn it, either. John
Watson's value system in matters that
don't affect me, I couldn't care less.
Now if I couldn't trust him when he
works with me, that's another thing
because that does affect me — towel his
man? (understand?). Enough.

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Just read over the last 4 pages - very confused writing - sorry - won't re write - hope you can figure it out for yourself.

Suppose you're wondering how I can be sitting down and writing for so long. Well, I've closed my door to all intruders and I have had a nap on the examining table and am determined to write to the point of nothing to say or sleep ~~with~~ whichever comes first. Finished up at the dispensary at 6³⁰ PM last nite in spite of the fact that I was off all afternoon - have been working like hell here since getting back from Saigon. Went up to MRCV, had a few gin tones, shot the breeze with a few of my buddies and hit the sack at about 12¹⁰ midnite. Woke up at 6⁴⁵ AM and have been going strong ever since. Have arranged a meeting hall for the AA that's starting to bloom again, have almost finished with drawing my opium addict and have been running sick call almost steady up till when I started this letter at 8³⁰ PM.

Right now it's 10⁰⁰ PM and I'm going
to get another cup of coffee. Talk to
you in a minute.

— Now it's 10¹⁰ PM — have a cup of coffee
in front of me — have had half a
Vietnamese pineapple, have my \$8⁵⁰
Japanese Sony radio on to a Taipei
Chinese station and am ready to write
again. Is there really a place called
the USA?

You know, Sweetie — you've been
sort of a lousy letter writer. This month.
No real complaints from me after the
way I've been at times but ^{have} gone
4 days 2 or 3 times this month without
a letter — then get 3 at a time or
4 like today. Adding them all up
like today I find ten letters. Dating
from 3 July to 18 July. and most of
those are short notes which you
apologize for. End of beef.

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Jimmy really looks long and quite a bit thinner than he was. The kids really look good - have their pictures out on my desk now. Have been staring at them off & on since I got them today.

Know how you feel about the clinic - most of them by now don't amount to good friends. Maybe Ruth at the desk and the doctors and Will and Delores but all the good friends other than those are gone by now. Leo Tomnato warned me about that war story bit - will make the rounds with a few stories at first but if I'm smart will soon shut up like he did. Couldn't pry a war story out of Leo if you had to at this point. I'll have my memories and these letters and will know a lot more than I did and that should suffice.

Have happy that Dick Howland and Dan Woodley are still making an effort to keep in touch - like both of them very much. You never did comment on the clinic picnic - did you make

it this year?

Glad Mike + Mary Ann stopped at Sam + Margaret's — they're some of our favorite people. Will have lots to talk over with them when we get back. Will try to write M + M, the clinic and Sam + Margaret tonight.

There's a fellow by the name of Matt (John) Dillon who will be calling you in ~~tot~~ a while — he just left Pleena for home last Thursday — comes from Fairbault — dated Katie Boger at one time I guess — don't get all upset — asked him to call and say hello for me. He was the CO of the Air Police here for a year — a good man in a tough job.

Sounds like Erin + Mike's birthday parties were a success — good — would like to see that group together sometime — it's been at least 2-3 yrs since I've seen all of Mike's kids. We'll have to take a trip when I get back and

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get together with them — maybe impossible if Mike will be heading for Viet Nam after I get back.

You're right — there is a lot of fighting going on up here — and it's a rough variety — this is the hard core No Viet nameses regulars who picked the shit out of the French. All those rough professional "hard core" soldiers. So far it's a draw and, with our superiority in the air, we should eventually win — but they're no push overs. So far it's all up in & around Kontum with only an occasional diversionary fight going on down here. We expect some activity shortly down here (in fact, have had some probing west of here lately) — but again, we're ready for them — it's the waiting that's getting the men — they'd all like to go on ~~a~~ a search and destroy campaign instead of sit here in a defensive posture like we've been doing. We're having some morale problems because of it.

lately but this will all pass over
when the actual fighting begins.
The villages are feeling the pressure I'm
sure but they're used to this and
life goes on pretty much as it always has.
Nothing overtly changed

That's too bad about the Championship
game - can see the looks on all
the faces concerned when they blew it.

There's a gap between Sat AM 15 July
and Monday 17 July midnite - may be
another letter lost in the maze the P.O.
has set up. You're letter of the
17-18th where you reminisce said
what I'm thinking perfectly. Happy
anniversary yourself, Sweetie. We've
been very good for each other, I think.
I know that I can date the start of
my useful life from the time I met
you in the El Paso. Every thing
before that was preparation, a warm up,
a charging of the battery. I was
living in an I worry tower dream land

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full of ideals, bitterness, naivete, and fears of the "outside" world. I had no idea where I was going or what I would do with my life. Had a fear of the "real" world, felt inadequate to meet the challenges of the social world, person-to-person contact — would have much preferred to go into the monastery and hole up for life and live in an insulated world apart from people. — just pray for them and theorize about their problems from my garret or cell. You were and are the key to the door to the world of people. Through you I've come to live with, love and understand PEOPLE instead of books, ideas, theories, etc. There's a big difference. Thoroughly enjoy people and am not afraid of them any more as I used to be. In short, have enough strength within myself (from you, doll) that I can meet people as a free man — not as a scared insecure boy with all sorts of bitterness and theories as you found me one hundred

years ago at least. Somehow you saw more in me way back when (nearly 11 years ago now) than I saw. Am deeply grateful for this - don't know if I've ever said this before to you. You big shit - you never would treat me as the little boy I wanted to be treated as - you always insisted on treating me as a man. You gave me little choice in the matter. Whoever heard of a bald headed little boy anyway? Am in a very sentimental mood, sweeties, and have been for the last few days. Someday will be able to tell you all the things you mean to me - Moon River is playing on the radio, I'm shivering - same - same as when I talk religion - 4/5 it needs saying - if I can get it on paper.

Have answered these few letters in front of me as best I can.

You know, a long time ago I fashioned a general philosophy of life when I was about 18-19 yrs old - based on love of God and my fellow man for God's sake

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and I find it wears like leather. Haven't had to revise it radically. Find it gives me strength and energy when all kinds of people run out of gas around me. Add your influence and love and a little effort and think you and I have a pretty good motor working for us. Am pleased and proud of us and our family so far. We still haven't had any real tragedies - but we've done pretty well with the problems presented, I think.

"Moments to remember" of all things is on the radio at this very minute. How about that for a coincidence. Have goose pimples all over me. Will take a break, have another cup of coffee - I love you, goofie. (It's 11³⁰ PM now - have been at this for 3 ~~hours~~ hours)

Hi It's 12⁴⁵ AM now - Sunday Early AM - got involved in a fist fight between 5 of my best medics and an Air Policeman - seems like a full scale squadron war brewing between the new AP's and my medics - just made the rounds of the

medic's barracks and the AP's shack to see what I could do. All this associating with the airmen is paying off little by little - can talk to them without them saying sir every other word - in fact had to turn down 4-5 beers and my rounds.

To boot, we have some racial tension lately on the base - has also been building up slowly for some time. Have only caught a little of it - but plan to pick Lou Bracey's brains on the subject tonight before I turn in. He's my chief medic on nite shift every other nite - he's on tonight - takes care of me like a wife - feeds me coffee and food all nite - has been out with me to the village - a good man - sat and talked with him about you and marriage, Hawaii, etc - in fact I'm writing you with his pen right now. He's a Negro as you guessed - know him well enough to get the straight scoop from him - or at least an idea. Hell, we don't need the V.C. to drop

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mortars on us - we'll destroy ourselves at the rate we're going. Units fighting, alcoholism, marijuana, opium, racial tension, boredom - we're too small a community to afford all this shit. Col Hullar is worried but is too far away from the problem to really know what's going on.

7³⁰ PM - Well, talked till 5³⁰ PM after trying to patch up the small scale war building up between the Air Police and my medics. This letter started very innocently at 8³⁰ PM last nite and here it is 11 hrs later.

Will talk to you again today.

Love you very much, Sweetie

Dan

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the first of the series of
at the same time the
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(120) 23 July

9⁰⁰ AM
Sunday morning
23 July 67
USAF Memphis
Pleasant RVN

Hi Ray,

Don't know when you'll be getting that long winded letter I just mailed so thought I'd send a short note in case the post office screws up again.

Have received 5 letters in the last 24 hrs - Up till then had received a total of 6 letters for the month of July. This one was dated 19 July so think we're finally caught up.

Started the letter I just put in the mail at 8³⁰ PM last nite - finished it after many interruptions at 7³⁰ AM this morning. Don't even know if it makes any sense. Sacked out from 5³⁰ till 7³⁰ this morning. Had a good talk about Negro philosophy and aspirations with my good friend Lou Bracey for 2-3 hrs in the wee hours of the morning and wrote you between other problems. Think my letter is self-explanatory.

Good luck to Dick in his adventure with school again.

Am still waiting for that long

Thoughtful letter you keep promising
time after time. Actually and much
less paranoid than I was now that
these 5 letters have arrived. You have
to admit that 6 letters stretched over
18 days and some of those coming 2 and
3 at a time leaves a person wondering.
Enough said.

What's this new word "Kibitzing"
you keep using? That's what you
do when you offer unwanted advice
at a card game isn't it?

Will try to grab a few hours' sleep
this morning - sick call goes on
with deadening monotony. Won't be
able to go out to the villages until
Monday afternoon. Have had 2 hrs sleep
in the last 24 - need more than that
- hope call is light today.

Got a good letter from Colleen
today also with Dad's handwriting
addressing the envelope.

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Miss you very much, Sweetie — the pictures really help. Went down to the Bx right away to see if I could get a colored Polaroid for you. They're sold out but will keep trying. Think that's the only way I'm going to get any pictures. Most of my comments have an acid tinge I find. Am not better or angry or depressed. Guess I'm just pooped. A little sleep and I'll be just fine.

Hello to Gretchen & Bill. Does he want a crossword or any nicksack for his library-den?

Must apologize for the lousy letter. Will do better tonight.

Love,

Dan

P.S. Have read over this worst of all letters and must apologize. To philosophize:

for a minute, guess I'm just feeling
sorry for myself. Know you are
doing one hell of a job - keeping the
kids happy and in line, keeping active
and busy - but lately have gotten
the feeling that I'm definitely a
chore you save till 1⁰⁰_{PM} when you're
completely beat - fall asleep after a
few lines and then write a hurried
note in the morning with a promise
of a better letter the next nite that
never comes. Add to that the almost
total lack of letters during this month
as I've mentioned (no fault of yours
as it turns out) and guess I've
allowed myself to get suspicious
and slightly depressed over the whole
damned thing.

Add to that the constant morale
problems we have here, the long long
lines of non-sick sick-call people,
the dope addicts, the neurotics, the
alcoholics, the negro tension and you
can see what frame of mind I've
been in lately. Almost 90% of the

(3)

(120)

23 July

problems on this base right now can be traced to poor morale for whatever reason. We've had attempted suicides, broken fists from smashing lockers and walls, fights, AWOL's, too much drinking, etc - none of which is caused by Charlie - and then the constant news from the states of these hippies, race riots and the ever louder and almost overwhelming criticism of what we're trying to do over here. I believe in free speech - but think the first guy I talk to back in the states that mouths off without putting his mind in gear will get a face full of punches from me or any of the guys here. We're really pissed off at all the nuts at home who just don't know what they're talking about - including Eugene McCarthy, Fullbright, Robert Kennedy and all the way down to the draft card burners & hippies. Sorry to make such an oration about this but needed to ventilate - Thanks for

201
putting up with all my moods.
Will write a fresher, more cheerful
letter latter.

Happiness in Viet-nam is
still a dry fart.

Love,

Dan

(122)

24 July 64
11⁰⁰ AM Now
USAF Saigon
Pleiku RVN

Hi Ray,

Just a short note to let you know I'm okay and thinking of you. Have been working my tail off on the base lately - about 10 hrs of sleep in the last 4 days total. Haven't even shaved since yesterday morning (or was it Saturday morn?). Feel like a real doctor for a change - many injuries (caused by brawls, etc - not by V.C.).

The war about 10-20 miles north of us is really something. Helio copters have been coming overhead from there every 15 minutes for the last 2 days full of dead & wounded. We're kicking the hell out of them but at a fearful toll to us. Many think this is the last gasp, desperate by the Ho Vietnamese to get a victory - they are also fighting like hell up near the DMZ.

Have earned my pay lately - feel good about it but very tired, nerves raw, etc. Wrote the Clinic a very candid letter yesterday - came to my usual book

of slow or light pages. Hope I don't
shock anyone — when I'm very tired.
often say things I don't necessarily
think out before hand.

Love you very much sweetie. Wait
to get this in the mail this
morning. Hope to write again
tonite.

Think about you more & more
lately — thanks for the pictures

Love,

Dan

24 July 67
Saturday
afternoon
1:30 PM
MACV

123

Hi Kay,

No mail for the last 5 days - in fact only 3 pieces of mail and one tape for the last 2 wks - hope this doesn't mean something is wrong back home. Assume it's only the damn P.O. doing their best to wreck morale. Refuse to believe you haven't gotten any mail yet - have unfailingly written every day since arriving from Dak P. - 11 June - that makes nearly 2 wks - time enough for you to get the letters and write in return.

Watched myself last nite and didn't get very drunk at Plo's and Nhuit's houses - John Watson got himself smashed and Lou Brocey did likewise. Felt pretty good this morning - had an inspection by outgoing Col Brannon and incoming Col Baer - new chief surgeons of Vietnam area. The new Col is as good as the old one - both number one men. Col Brannon is going to be the commander of Travis Hospital - asked him to stop and say hello to Bill Lawson and Terry when he gets there.

We talked and talked last night till I was exhausted, believe it or not. They are loosening up - especially Lich. Talked about the eventual solution for the Montagnards - most are convinced their only salvation is to go with the Communists after the U.S. leaves the area. Pointed out to them that we are not likely to leave, any more than we ~~were~~ ~~could~~ have left Korea. A truce might very well be signed but we would stay on as an occupying force. Pointed out that we have a 99 year lease on Cam Ranh Bay and have spent billions of U.S. dollars on Pleiku we are not likely to relinquish. The Yards feel as do the 20 Vietnamese that the vast majority of the U.S. is against the war, that we do not have the moral strength to continue to fight and that Pres. Johnson will have to end the war and pull out by 1968 or lose the next election. You see what all these nuts in America are doing to our war effort? They're just giving the enemy hope to persevere. Actually, if they would just shut up and let us

(2)

173

24 July

go about our business we could probably finish this thing shortly. The only thing keeping the NVN going is the hope that we don't have the guts to keep fighting the war. Once convinced that we will see it through, most of them would lose heart and give up - because they're desperate and losing all the time now. Am convinced in my own mind that all these demonstrations are communist inspired, including R.F.K., Fullbright, Luther King, etc. Am not saying these people are communist - am only saying that they are listening and being influenced by a group that at least have backing from the Communists. Very disheartening for us here to know that the enemy at home is fighting a much more effective war against us than the so-called enemy in front and all around us. I say "so-called" enemy because the V.C. here are actually Montagnards ^(VME) who are being misled into believing they will have an independent country if they join hands with the Communists. Actually they will be victimized worse by these people than they ever were by the Vietnamese.

It's very hard to get this point across to them however. Must read more about the Communist tricks, etc to know how to contradict them.

You must be wondering how safe I am talking like this to these people. Again want to point out a few things: As long as we are here in strength - most Montagnards will not come out openly in revolt. The people I talk with are my friends, have a religious obligation to protect me based on these bracelets I wear and their solemn word to that effect. They must warn me when the time comes that they can no longer talk to me or protect me. This they will do and have done before. (e.g. Plei Bong Bao.) As I mentioned, Ton feels more obligated about my safety than does anyone on this base - I check with him before I go anywhere. Usually Ton goes with me when I go anywhere he feels is not perfectly safe - sort of a safe conduct pass, you might say. In other words, relax. As Leo Tominate pointed out many times - the

③

123

24 July

most protected man in any service or war area is the medic or doctor.

Have read over this letter so far and find out it is very solemn. Pop monyi - ~~but~~ ^{we} had many laughs last nite and much good times. John Watson is a riot when he gets drunk - he's a happy drunk. We sang songs, called each other names, chug-a-lugged Vietnamese ^{rice} wine (like regular booze) beer, and rice wine. Told stories about Jack Rudy, talked about how the cross bow prices were getting too high and would have to cut them down. Discussed building a forge and getting scrap metal from the base to make hoes, shovels, picks, plows, knives, etc ("beat your swords into plowshares" - somewhere in bible) -

Hey, happy day - got your solemn tape and a good letter dated the 17th so maybe things are picking up a little. It's about 8-9^{PM} now - have organized all your letters since last January - read a few of them over for the 3rd or

4th times — have them all in two cigar boxes.
Am having a ball on my day off (spell that
"on call")

About your depression and tiredness — try to
take it in stride — get all the sleep you can
and don't push yourself too hard until it
wears off. Luckily have been through this
myself and find there is another end to the
tunnel. ~~that~~ One day you'll come around
a corner and sunlight will be just ahead.
Damn — that's almost poetry! Maybe I missed
my calling. You're right — the novelty has
worn off and now it's just a matter of
putting your head down and pushing on. It's
called perseverance I think. To get religious for
a minute — found that a chat with the Good
Lord at times gives me strength. Maybe that's
what grace is all about. Remember our chats
about each minute of every day is an opportunity
given by God to grasp and act out as we see
the light and have the strength to do? Well,
that helps me — hope it does the same for
you. Gives me a reason to carry on when I'm
not particularly excited about doing anything but

(4)

(123)

24 July

Curling up in the fetal position & sleeping. Don't push it though, sweetie. As the montagnards say - *biā biā* (little bit by little bit) - things will clear. No big problem figuring out the why of your depression - after the way I behaved early in June - you worked so hard to be brave and understanding - when you found out I was just inconsiderate - your natural reaction was discouragement, anger and depression. Don't worry, it won't happen again. Yes, sweetie, I love you - more than anything in this world - think about you constantly - know what you mean about physical touch - miss that very much. Almost like being back in the seminary again wondering if all those good times lying next to each other in bed or just sitting next to you in the car ever really happened. We have a refresher course scheduled for the fall - don't plan on seeing much of Hawaii.

Colleen is a doll - and so proud of her I could burst. We are very fortunate to have children like her and the others.

Have collected a few things so far that will try to get in the mail this weekend. Have a montagnard pipe given me by Ton, a Malayan

scimitar I got at Dah Pek, some cross bow gifts from my bow makers. Also picked up a present for Erin think she'll like - hope so. Won't tell you what it is - tell her it may come a little late but to be patient if she can.

I received the most beautiful letter I have ever received in my life from a friend today. Ed wrote me a two page letter that brought tears to my eyes and made them well up as I'm writing now. Will treasure this as long as I live. Must sit down thoughtfully and answer it tonight after the confusion around here has died down. Must also write the kids, Bob Bonin (never did answer his letter) and perhaps more. Am really enjoying my vacation with all this time to myself.

Noted my idol Spencer Tracy died - would like to see a write up of his life if you find one - admired him as you know for the man he was. Noted also in Time that Joe Drew (Paulist, one class ahead of me) got himself in a peck of trouble trying to do what he thought was best. A good man - better than most - full

(5)

(12³) 24 July

of enthusiasm and good will. Seems to happen with frequency, doesn't it sweetie. Ft. Gallatin also had a habit of getting in trouble.

- Am going to get something to eat, then will come back and chat a little more with you.

Thanks for your tape - appreciate your willingness to communicate with me even when you're afraid it will wreck my morale. Need to know that we're keeping the lines open. Talk to you later.

Hi, sweetie - it's now 11⁰⁰ pm or so. Had a big dinner but couldn't eat it all - no one here apologizes any more for leaving food on the plate. We all eat as much as we can before we get nauseated, then simply stop. Cramps, diarrhea + nausea + vomiting are a constant companion here so no one pushes the heavy food very hard.

Have just sat here for the last 4-5 minutes just day-dreaming. Guess I'm out of news - will write again tomorrow.

Sweetie, our adventure is now 5 mos old and we're entering the doldrum - count-the-days - stage.

Continue as you have - take each day as a fresh experience and don't look ahead or behind if you can. Each day has enough in it to keep us busy and happy in the knowledge we're doing something worth ~~the~~ while, at least. Let the days count themselves. Perhaps after the R & R we can count in earnest.

Love you very much. Be good to yourself and take care of yourself for me. Miss you very much but that's part of the price of being an American right now.

Love,
Dan

(124)

24 July 67
Thursday
10
7 AM
VSAT Dispensary

Hi Ray,

Have been up most of the nite and spent the rest of the nite sleeping on the examining table as usual.

Have had a wild couple of days - nite before last out in the village - last nite here at the dispensary. Don't know when the rat race stops but am all for it slowing down so I can get off temporarily and get some rest.

Got the black smith tools out to Plei Brel along with ten sets of carpenter tools, some flour and some clothes - bought 66 more crossbows and received a sword as a gift - and then the rice wine began to flow - seems it's been a long time since I've been lapping on the hose - finally left Plei Brel at about 9⁰⁰ PM with a pig (yes!) 2 bundles of bananas, 2 pigs of rice wine, my sword and cross bows and plowed through the rain. Was fairly sober when I left - but by the time I got all my goodies unloaded was smashed. Went to bed after talking very loudly to anyone for about two ~~the~~ hours - don't remember many of the

going to hell — please comment.

Talked, yelled at, and reasoned with a Negro boy till 3^{PM} this morning. Started with him about 11³⁰_{PM} last nite. He's been riding the sick book ~~till~~^{since} he got here in March 67 — many times comes in 2-3x a day. Thought it was time he and I understood each other. Gave him a complete history and physical he's not likely to forget for awhile. He does have disease it turns out — a chronic prostatitis that's giving him fits. — but got into his hide, helped him work out some of his hostility. That's exhausting but very satisfying work — same same Linda Dye. Would have liked to sit down and talk over the problem with you like old times. Instead chatted with John Watson instead about it — explained my philosophy on general practice to him, etc.

Before the above, showed the slides of Oak Pch and saw some of Phil's slides — made some trades. Will send some along now & then for your entertainment — some I have to make prints of to share with the rest of the group.

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(124)
27 July

Broke Phil in on me wine again
after a month's absence - and the
trip I brought in from Rei Rei
the wife before. Had a good talk
with him - a real solid citizen
(also a Negro, did I mention that?)
- have gotten to know quite a few
Negroes very well - find Rodney ~~at~~
to be all wet in his theory of
inferiority. It just ain't so in
my experience. A different culture
and language yes; less education
yes; a sense of frustration, anger
and a desire to trust out of their
ghetto-like existence yes; but
inferior to us in brains and integrity
and emotional stability and in guts -
NO. Have learned some thing very
important here that I hope I never
forget - thanks to the Montagnards.
Look at the man's heart - check him
out for phoniness, lying, cheapness,
his reason for living, courage, etc.
and accept him or reject him on this
basis - and ~~to~~ forget all the labels
of race, religion, politics, etc.
The important lesson I have started

to learn - hope it sticks. Much
easier to do this here I suspect than
back in the states.

Will get this in the mail now.
Am sorry for the two day dry spell.

Love you very much, sweetie.
You're a doll.

Love,
Dan

28 July 67

MAEV

Pleiku RVN

8⁴⁵
PM

(125)

28 July

Hi Kay,

Look at the time! This is the first time in over a month I have sat down at this card table to write a letter. Just came back from digging John Watson out of a ditch out on the perimeter. Am on call so hadn't intended to go out but John would still be out there if someone hadn't gone to get him.

Lick and all the Montagnards were out there huffing & puffing but couldn't budge the truck. The Vietnamese - maybe 50 of them - were standing around

11⁰⁰ PM - anyway, it looked like I could sit down & write - usual interruptions - cross bow buyers, people stopping in to chat - then an airman who severely lacerated his wrist deep to tendon & bone on a landing gear glass - so here I am as usual writing late - and here comes another interruption.

- Okay - another \$35.00 to add to our collection - now where was I.

Oh yeah - these Vietnamese were standing around throwing insults and rock and

spitting on John - some actually came up and started pushing him until the Montagnards showed up - then they withdrew a little and just threw verbal insults instead. John has a temper - nearly hit a few of them but controlled himself. Got a taste of our "allies" for sure. Can't say I'm in love with the little bastards myself - have only found a few Vietnamese that I could like - make a friend of one of them and before you know it - becomes clear why they've chosen you for a "friend" - they want something. Make you feel cheap and like a sucker - have nothing but contempt for the vast majority of them. The Montagnards by contrast don't act this way for the most part - they are open, loyal and honestly friendly to us in general. Overwhelmed me with their affection. Did I tell you about the other nite - cried real tears like a sap - they started telling stories about me as if I wasn't even there - gave me a sword (which I'll send as soon as possible) - wouldn't let me pay for it. They can express affection and say embarrassing things like Cao Cap Conlon lu bia mut - Giang ma al - "I love Conlon with all my heart - my good friend" - that I have trouble saying - same-same Jimi Hurd.

Sunday is going to be a very interesting day for me - this is the day they've

(2)
12⁵ 28 July

Chosen to make me Ton's father
— a very serious occasion from what I
can gather. Will be a Montagnard
sacrifice of a pig and all the drumming
— I am to be out there at 12 o'clock noon.
John Watson, T.I Harris, Lich and
myself are the only ones invited. The
whole village is aware of it and
men from Plee Sor and Plee Phung
are also invited — am a little apprehensive
about what goes on but am game
for any thing.

Had a serious talk with Ton,
Lich + Kien (a very intelligent man
from Plee Sor I suspect is an
important man in Fulto) yesterday
— asked them point blank which way
the Montagnards would go, what would
happen to the Montagnard when the
Americans leave. They said they would
take their land back. I asked if
they would go with the No Vietnamese,
do they consider the No Vietnamese their
friends — they said no, No Vietnamese
same-same Vietnamese. (they call
the No Vietnamese "Viet Minh" — the
name the French gave them). Lich

explained that the Ho Vietnamese stand and lie same as the So Vietnamese, that the Montagnard hates them both - that the only foreigners they can trust are the Americans and the French before us. They feel bad and are confused because the Americans insist on bringing in their ancient enemy the Vietnamese, but at least they feel they can trust certain Americans to help them become strong e.g. myself, John Watson, Col Kullar, Jack Rudy, Special Forces, etc. They are determined to have their own country which I certainly sympathise with - find it very hard to try to talk them into becoming friends with the So Vietnamese but see no other way out for them under the present conditions. A huge frustrating problem that makes me very sad "in my heart" (as they say here) - the only thing I can do ~~it~~ is try to make them strong, train them to be as self sufficient as they can be so when the time comes for a solution (whatever it may be) this generous and honest people won't be exterminated either by pressure politically or a suicidal war. Right now don't really see a solution that will do anything but screw these people.

(3)

12⁵

28 July

Get very involved in this as you know but it's hard not to once you've sampled the goodness of these people.

Have another thing I'd like to chat about. Got to talking to John Watson about you the other day to explain why the women here don't really turn me on. As Ed can tell you, a lot of very good men when they're away from their wives and families for a long time - eventually succumb to the need for physical female-type affection (even though they know it's not real or lasting or even very satisfying). These are not evil men, even dishonest men - they are often some of the best men here as far as the job they're doing is concerned. The Achilles heel of many of these men is the kind of relationship they've had with their wives before they came. They are happily married men - yes - but they can also get along very nicely without their wives - as long as another affectionate pretty girl is available. Their wives function as bed partners, mothers of their children, social assets and if

and then convenient soft shoulder to
cry on — but, by and large, almost
any woman could fill this bill. You
can tell the men who are deeply in
love with their wives here — they admire
the girls and are as horny as hell
(as I am) but that's as far as it goes.
Feel that the difference is that their
wives are extremely important to them — that
the woman they have married makes a
real difference in the way they live their
lives. They could cheat on their wives
and they would never know but they
would also have to go back and live
with this woman and remember their
cheating. It's more than that — (am
having trouble saying this so have patience)
— will change this to the 1st person and maybe
I'll be able to say it better. — find that
none of these women could do what you
have already done for me — opened many
doors of my personality to the light. You've
allowed me to ventilate, empty my self
to you on many occasions (as I'm doing
now) and have been sort of a mirror
of my self without destroying me with
criticism, disgust, laughter, etc. Think
you know most of my weaknesses and
choose to ignore these for my strengths.
A long time ago you made me a man by

(4)

125

28 July

accepting and loving me as no other human being had before — in spite of the fact you knew me better than anyone had ever known me. This love I've tested in many ways as you may remember — took me a long time to really believe a love like yours was possible. Once I was convinced of your love — and I am — all kinds of wonderful things happened to me. Became able to accept other people's affection and friendship without suspicion. Opened up myself to others. Gained confidence in my ability to mingle with others on an equal footing without constantly pinching myself to make sure what was going on was really real. In short, I joined the human race starting from the time I became ~~convinced~~ convinced you loved me. Could not have done this if you had mothered me or I had fathered you — could only have done this if I was convinced you were a strong woman yourself, capable of standing on your own two feet. Did not want to marry a mother or a

little girl. — and didn't.

Now back to the problem I started with — most of the men who have all the trouble here don't have this kind of thing going for them — in fact I dare say most of the married people we know don't have such a thing going for them — don't understand what real love is — we've talked about this before. Some do I'm sure and are just having a little fling for themselves but most don't. Consequently don't think the judgement on their behavior here can be made on the same basis as judgement on mine can be. ~~Is~~ Am I making any sense? Hope so. Wanted to write this down while I was thinking it — same — same diary — hope I'm not boring you.

Haven't had a letter now for five days again. Everyone is complaining about the lousy mail service. Hope yours is better. You'd think they'd make that priority one — it's an important morale factor. Shouldn't really complain — the grunts out in the field don't get mail for weeks on end some time — mostly because they can't be found or move around too fast.

(5)

28 July

125

Have discovered a few more marijuana users on base and have uncovered two of the Negroes who are making all the agitation race-wise here. Another Negro Master Sgt came in today and identified them for me - wants them run out of the service. This is too small a family here to tolerate that sort of nonsense.

One of the things that is really getting to the men here is the confinement, the boredom and the apprehension they have that we are about to be attacked. The best thing for them is a 12 hr or 16 hr day with a day or two in between to get drunk and go to bed. Makes the time pass and the mind busy. The grunts out in the field have better morale than we do in spite of the fact they're under more strain and real danger of being shot - at least they get to fight back, have no time to day dream (day-dreamers often get very dead) and very little time to do any thing but worry about how to get Charlie before Charlie gets him.

My ramming around the village is a good tonic for me — may be why my morale is pretty good generally. Have managed to keep from counting the days like so many do. Will start counting in earnest when October and the R+R comes around.

Just read over your last letter from the 20th July — thanks for giving me those comments about the kids — sounds like you have your hands full keeping up with our 5 personalities. Wait till they hit their periods, first dates, etc — then we'll really have our hands full — am glad I'm getting this thing out of the way now. That was a very good letter, Sweetie. Know how hard it is to sit down and spend the time writing a long "soul brother" letter (am learning the Negro terms, too — have been able to pick a lot of brains over here — men tend to open up a lot better here than they could in the U.S.A.).

Will send along a few slides you may be interested in. — Dak Peh was a real experience. Will tell you all my "war stories" later.

Will close now & get this in the midnite mail.

Love you, doll — Dan