

DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE
HEADQUARTERS UNITED STATES AIR FORCE
WASHINGTON, D.C.



REPLY TO
ATTN OF: USAFMPC (AFFMSC)
RANDOLPH AFB TEXAS 78148

22 November 1968

Dear Air Force Next of Kin

In 1966 and 1967, attempts were made to forward Christmas packages to missing and captured personnel in North Vietnam. However, the attempts were unsuccessful and all packages were returned to the senders. A similar effort is planned for this year. Instructions are being sent to the primary next of kin only.

The Post Office Department, in cooperation with the Departments of Defense and State, has been trying to establish a route for the packages which is acceptable to North Vietnam. Thus far, inquiries requesting that country's concurrence have gone unanswered. A message is now being sent to North Vietnam through an intermediate government stating that Christmas packages will be forwarded unless we are otherwise advised. Under these circumstances, there is no assurance that the packages will reach their destination, but we consider it worth trying again.

Attached are the instructions you should follow in mailing your package if you decide to send one. We are also including the postal tags and stickers you will need for the inner package. It is recommended that items of great value not be included in your package.

New Subject: Letters to Missing and Captured Members Via the Camp of Detention Address. In the past few months, a number of letters mailed to our personnel in North Vietnam were returned to the next of kin, along with a statement in French to the effect that they could not be delivered. It is apparent that the letters were misrouted. We have been assured that the problem has been corrected but, to be on the safe side, we suggest that "North Vietnam" be added under "Democratic Republic of Vietnam" when you use the "Camp of Detention" address. For example:

John James Doe
Camp of Detention of U. S. Pilots Captured in the D.R.V.
c/o Hanoi Post Office
Democratic Republic of Vietnam
North Vietnam

We feel the addition of "North Vietnam" to the address will insure that future letters are correctly routed.

possible on any information concerning their release. Returnees will be advised of the current address and telephone number of their next of kin. They will be assisted in making telephone contacts if at all possible. Released prisoners will return to the United States by aeromedical aircraft to the major Air Force hospital nearest their next of kin, if possible, depending on medical treatment requirements. After medical clearance is given, the returnees will be questioned to obtain information about missing members and known prisoners who have not yet been released. The time required for questioning will depend upon the length of captivity and the amount of information possessed by the returnee. We will pass this information to the concerned next of kin as quickly as possible. The length of hospitalization will be determined by medical personnel in each case.

We anticipate that the returnee will be placed on convalescent leave after completion of medical evaluation. A normal duty assignment will then follow. It is possible in some cases that questioning may continue after the returnee and his family are again settled. If prolonged medical treatment is necessary, the returnee will be transferred to a hospital closer to the home of his next of kin, provided that the required treatment is available there.

The following Foreign Broadcast Information Service Report pertaining to a Radio Hanoi broadcast is quoted for your information:

"Hanoi in English to American Servicemen in South Vietnam at 1300 GMT on 6 December 1968 carried the following announcement: 'As Christmas and New Year are drawing near, our daily broadcast to American Servicemen will release recorded messages from captured US pilots to their families back home.'"

As has been done in the past, we will immediately notify the family of any Air Force member who is allowed to send such a message and provide them with a transcript. A tape recording of the message will also be furnished if one is received.

The Air Force Accounting and Finance Center in Denver has asked us to remind you that the withholding of income tax from the pay of missing and captured members is not mandatory. We suggest that you discontinue the deduction and invest the tax money in the Uniformed Services Savings Deposits Program, savings bonds or some other investment program. By doing this you will receive interest on the money and still have the principal to pay the tax when it becomes due. The member has until the 15th day of the third month after return to military control to file his tax returns.

We will continue to keep you apprised of any new information we may receive. Even though we have no new developments to report from the

We join with you in the hope that next year may bring an honorable end to hostilities in Southeast Asia and the swift return of American prisoners of war.

Sincerely

J. G. Luther
J. G. LUTHER, Lt Colonel, USAF
Directorate of Personnel Services

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1. Instructions for mailing packages
2. PO Form 2922
3. PO Form 2966
4. PO Form 2972