

DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE
HEADQUARTERS 62534 COMBAT SUPPORT GROUP (PACAF)
APO SAN FRANCISCO 96240



REPLY TO
ATTN OF: CCH

29 September 1965

SUBJECT: Letter of Welcome

TO: Chaplain, Captain, Charles B. Prewitt, 82206A
Office of the Chaplain
Kirtland AFB, New Mexico

Dear Chaplain Prewitt

I have received word that you are scheduled to report to our organization, as my replacement, in December. Welcome to Nha Trang! I have certainly enjoyed my tour here. In fact, I consider it the best of my career so far. When I arrived last December, our unit here was quite small. There were plans for a buildup, which have now been realized. Last month, a second chaplain of the Roman Catholic faith reported for duty. We expect a second assistant to arrive momentarily.

Let me tell you a bit about the base. Nha Trang is located on the South China Sea approximately 200 miles up the coast from Saigon. It was used by the French and Vietnamese as a seaside resort - and was known as the Riviera of Southeast Asia. The beach is beautiful, and swimming is the best I've found anywhere. The only problem is that I've not had time to visit the beach in six months.

For the first six months of my tour, I was the only military chaplain permanently assigned to Nha Trang. Now we have ten chaplains here - two Air Force and eight Army. Currently, the Air Force operates out of a hotel-headquarters and a cantonment area. The Chaplain's office is located in the hotel, and we have a chapel in the cantonment area. There are 14 religious services weekly in our chapel. Our Group commander, Colonel Jones, is an active supporter of the chapel program, and he is anxious to do anything to help us.

I have been selected for the end of tour debriefing program. I may be leaving early in December, in order to stop by PACAF headquarters to brief on my way to the States. So, I may not be here when you arrive, depending upon when you leave the States. The sooner you can arrive, the better, so that we might have a few days together.

Under construction now, and scheduled for occupancy in late November is a new Air Force base across the runway from our present cantonment area. In the plans is a chapel-theatre combination hopefully slated for completion in February. With the difficulty in receiving materials, it may or may not make the deadline. The Second Air Division Staff chaplain shares with us the belief that this will be inadequate for a complete program. He is presently working on plans for a 250 seat chapel to be built in-house, which would be much more desirable. I will get the building sited on the new base, but you will have the responsibility of seeing it constructed during your tour.

Housing at the present time is critical. I have lived in a Villa with eight officers since last April. I believe that the opening of the BOQ's on the new base will relieve the problem, so that when you arrive you will have no difficulty finding a place to stay.

The information that I have indicates that you have a date of rank as Captain of November 1961. So you will be the Group chaplain. Jim Thompson, our RC man, has been in service for two years. He's a fine person - born and raised in Ireland - and very easy to get along with.

If you can think of any questions - let me know. The NCOIC of our office came over shortly after me, so we will be returning to the US at the same time. You will have a new man as your assistant.

Again, welcome to Nha Trang, and I would appreciate hearing from you as to your plans for reporting.

James E. Flinn

JAMES E. FLINN
Chaplain, Captain, USAF
Group Chaplain