

DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE
6853d COMBAT SUPPORT GROUP (PACAF)
APO San Francisco 96240

20 October 1965

Chaplain, Captain, Charles B. Prewitt
Headquarters 4900th Air Base Group
Kirtland AFB, New Mexico

Dear Chaplain Prewitt

Thank you for your letter of 15 October 1965. I am glad to know that you anticipate leaving the first week of December. Perhaps we will have a few days overlap here so I can brief you on our mission and program.

I got a big laugh out of your statement that you were confused by our organizational structure and the relationship the Air Force shares with the Army. You couldn't be more confused than we are about the very same thing. For the first seven months of my tour here, our Group Commander, Colonel Jones, was the senior officer and Installation Coordinator. The Air Force, naturally ran the show here in Nha Trang. Since then three General Army Officers have arrived to command Headquarters Field Forces Vietnam, and they have delegated the Installation Coordinator responsibility to a senior Army Colonel, Commander of Nha Trang Support Activity. Field Forces Vietnam has two Staff Chaplains, a Colonel and an LC. They have no administrative control over the chaplains here - although they would like to. As it ends up, we Air Force Chaplains go along our merry way taking care of the spiritual needs of the Air Force Personnel assigned. So you can see that the relationship is a bit confused at this point.

Our Group Chaplain Office UMD calls for two chaplains and two services specialists. Jim Thompson, The Roman Catholic Chaplain, arrived in September. He will be here until September of 1966. You as my replacement, and because of your 1961 date of rank will be the Group Chaplain. Your responsibility will be that of Base Chaplain of any installation. You will serve on Colonel Jones's staff and advise him as to the morals and spiritual welfare of assigned personnel. You will supervise the total Base Religious Program, and you will when needed have liaison with our Sister Services Chaplain Program. I have tried to follow the guideline of AFR 265-1 in carrying out our program - in-so-far as they are possible in this particular situation.

Our basic problem here is getting supplies. As you can tell from the Air Force Times we constructed our own chapel in our present Cantonment Area. The completion of the new base across the field will not eliminate our continued use of this area, so I imagine we will have chapel services there indefinitely. We will have a Chapel I and Chapel II situation. As I told you before the second phase of the new base construction program includes a Theater-Chapel combination. We feel this will be inadequate, so Second Air Division Engineers are designing a Prefab type chapel-annex arrangement which will be constructed by in-house resources. This will be your baby.

Regarding your living expenses: Previously we drew \$200.00 a month green across the board. With the advent of Military Payment Certificates (Scrip), many of us have elected to have our entire paycheck sent home to our Stateside bank. You can cash checks for unlimited amounts of MPC at the local Officer's Club. The BOQs should be completed the first part of December. They are permanent type construction - however an open bay interior will be used. I have lived on the economy for the last eight months, and I doubt whether I will be moving into the BOQ before I return to the States. You will however probably elect to live in the BOQ - for reasons of convenience as well as security.

Our Airman in Charge, Airman, Don Farley, will be following me to the states in January. So you will have a new NCOIC/AIC arriving shortly after you do.

I think that you are being assigned to the best base in South East Asia. The men are very responsive to the Religious Program, and you will be richly rewarded for your tour here.

I am enclosing a roster of key personnel and a scale for what a married Captain with over six years of service for pay will receive. You will note that the first \$200.00 of your base pay while serving in Vietnam is tax free.

Let me know if any other questions come up.

Faithfully yours,

James E. Flinn

JAMES E. FLINN, Chaplain, Captain, USAF
Group Chaplain

2 Atch
1 Pay Scale
2 Roster of Personnel