



THE CHINESE COMMUNISTS WERE WINNING. NATIONALIST CHINA TROOPS FELL BACK. CIVIL AIR TRANSPORT DREW AMMUNITION DROP DUTIES. LATER NAME TABBED AS "HARD RICE". THEY HAULED FOOD, MEDICAL SUPPLIES, AND "HARD RICE" TO THE BELEAGUED INTERIOR CITIES STILL HOLDING OUT AGAINST THE INFUX FROM THE NORTH

THE CIVIL AIR TRANSPORT BECAME THE "WORLDS MOST SHOT AT AIRLINE". THE NATIONALISTS FELL BACK. THE OTHER TWO AIRLINES FOLDED. PAN AM'S CNAC AND THE OTHER CATC AIR LINE FOLDED. CATC HAD SOME PILOTS DEFECT AND TAKE THE AIRCRAFT TO THE NORTH. BOTH FLEW MOST OF THEIR AIRCRAFT AND SUPPLIES TO HONGKONG FOR STORAGE. CIVIL AIR TRANSPORT KEPT ON FLYING.

US PRESIDENT HARRY TRUMAN AND CONGRESS REALIZED THAT WORLD COMMUNISM HAD TO BE CONTAINED. THE COLD WAR FACTORS STARTED. GENERAL WILLIAM DONOVAN OF THE WWII OFFICE OF STRATEGIC SERVICES CAME OUT AND REALIZED THAT CHENNAULTS ORGANIZATION WERE MASTERS OF GUERRILLA SUPPORT AND WARFARE. SO DONOVAN ARRANGED FINANCING FOR CHENNAULT TO BUY THE NOW SURPLUS AIRPLANES AND SUPPLIES IN HONGKONG. WHEN THE PURCHASE WAS APPROVED BY THE UNITED KINGDOM EQUIVALENT TO THE US SUPREME COURT, THE US AIRFORCE HAD AN AIRCRAFT CARRIER JUST OFFSHORE HONGKONG TO STEAM IN THAT DAY AND MAKE THE PICK UP. THERE ARE MANY TALES OF THIS. EVEN TO ONE ABOUT A DISABLED ANCHOR WINCH WHICH NO PARTS WERE AVAILABLE. SO THE MEN TOOK A HUGE TRUCK DROVE IT BACK AND FORTH ON THE DECK AND USED THAT POWER TO RAISE THE ANCHOR.

CAT STARTED DRAWING EXTRA SPECIAL PROJECT ASSIGNMENTS. IT BECAME A WORKING ARM TO HELP THE CAUSE AS DIRECTED BY THE PRESIDENT AND HIS ASSISTANTS IN VARIOUS CAPACITIES.

WITH THE KOREAN FRACAS, CAT PICKED UP EVEN MORE ORDERS.

LATER WHEN THE FRENCH WERE CORNERED AT DIEN BEIN PHU, US PRESIDENT EISENHOWER REFUSED DIRECT US MILITARY INTERVENTION. SO USAF C-119'S WERE SUPPLIED TO CAT'S MUFTI CLAD FLIGHT CREWS AND THAT AIRLIFT COST CAT MORE CASUALTIES. ONE WAS ALREADY BECOMING A LEGEND IN HIS OWN RIGHT. POST MEMBER JAMES E MC GOVERN, THE "EARTHQUAKE MC GOON. CAPTAINS SNODDY AND SCHWARTZ DID NOT RETURN FROM A FLIGHT. BOTH WERE OR HAD BEEN POST MEMBERS. OTHERS LOST TOO.

CHENNAULT PASSED IN 1958, AND CONGRESS IN THE LAST FEW DAYS OF HIS LIFE, PROMOTED HIM TO LT GEN USA RET. HE WAS LAID TO REST AT ARLINGTON NATIONAL CEMETARY. THE POST HAD MEMBERS ATTENDING SERVICES.

THE POST WAS RENAMED.

BY THIS TIME CASH HELSETH, WIFE EMMY, AND SON CHARLES WERE SETTLED DOWN IN ENCINO, CALIFORNIA AND WORKING FOR A MAJOR OIL COMPANY IN MARKETING CONSTRUCTION AND MAINTAINENCE COVERING THE SOUTHWEST UNITED STATES.

HE STARTED MEETING WITH THE AMERICAN CHINESE POST - 628, LA, THEN IN ITS DOLDRUMS TOO. ANNUAL DINNERS WERE SCHEDULED FOR CHINESE NEW YEARS. THIS IN TIME BECAME A POWERFUL DRAWING CARD WHICH THE POST # 628 STILL CARRIES ON IN A SPLENDID TRADITION. THEY AWARD THEIR SCHOLARSHIPS AND OTHER HONORARIUMS TO LOCAL CITIZENS AND WORK IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE FRENCH HOSPITAL THERE IN LA CHINATOWN. TWO MD'S AND A DENTIST, HAVE BEEN MAINSTAYS IN THIS POST ALL THIS TIME.

LATER WITH THE FRENCH OUT OF INDO CHINA, THE USA TRIED TO HANDLE A POLICE ACTION. US PRESIDENT JOHNSON AND CONGRESS AUTHORIZED FORMAL TROOP FOR VIETNAM BUT FOR LAOS THEY WANTED A DIFFERENT KIND OF ACTION. SO DID. AIR AMERICA WAS CREATED. CAT MUFTI CLADS WERE ABSORBED AND EXPANDED. OTHER AIR, GROUND, AND WATER OPERATIONS CREATED. OLD WEAPONRY TRIED, GUERRILLA TACTICS IMPROVED. BUT THE VERY NATURE OF THE OPERATIONS REQUIRED "ZONE OF SILENCE" CONTROLS. HIGHLY COMPARTMENTALIZED ACTIONS AND PEOPLE. NOT MUCH ELSE CAN BE SAID. SOME JUDAS QUISLING TYPES TRY.

DURING ALL THESE EARLY DAYS, CERTIFICATED FLAGS WERE GIVEN TO THE FIGHTING MEN. WHEN UNDER UNITED NATIONS CONTROLS, THE US FLAG WAS TABOO. SO WE HAD STATE FLAGS FLOWN OVER HOME STATE BUILDINGS AND SO ATTESTED BY THE GOVERNOR. ONE WAS SENT TO GEN LEW WALT, USMC TO HAVE HIS AIDE HANDLE THE PRESENTATION. THAT WAS ALL RIGHT. SO IT WAS RAISED AND HONORED AT THE MARINES FRONT LINE BUNKER. IT DREW FIRE. SO WE HAD TO CAUTION FOR A REALISTIC TIMING FOR OTHER FLAGS. MANY ARE CARRIED ON THEIR PERSON WHEN IN DENIED AREAS.

MAJOR WARS OF THE FUTURE MAY HAVE TO FALL BACK ON GUERRILLA WARFARE AND TACTICS. FOR IF NUCLEAR WEAPONRY IS USED, MASSIVE ARMADAS AND LARGE CONCENTRATIONS OF TROOPS WOULD BE WIPED OUT. SO IT WILL MEAN SURGICAL AIR STRIKES AND ATTRITION WITH GUERRILLA METHODS. WE MUST BE PREPARED.

THE GOVERNMENT RECOGNIZES THIS. THUS THE "SPECIAL FORCES" WERE CREATED. AIR STRIKE FACILITIES CREATED. AND TASK FORCE TO MEET EMERGENCIES SET UP. COUNTER TERRORISTIC TACTICS FORCES ENERGIZED AND IMPLIMENTED. ALL THIS IS ON GOING. SPECIAL OPERATIONS SECTIONS HAVE MUFTI SUPPORT.

IN THE 1960'S, THE POLITICAL CLIMATE CHANGED IN THE USA. THE WAR IN VIETNAM WAS COOLED, THE LAOS OPERATION PULLED IN THE EARLY 1970'S. AIR AMERICA AND ITS VARIOUS ORGANIZATIONS WERE DISBANDED. USAID, AND THE OTHER GOVERNMENT PROGRAMS WERE LOWERED OR STILLED. THE MEN REALIZED THE POST REPRESENTED THEIR OWN RUGGED INDIVIDUAL IDEALS ALL THE TIME. THEY JOINED. IT GREW. IN 1973, IT HAD 354 MEMBERS BY 1976 IT HIT 1668. BY 1979, IT WENT OVER THE 2000 MARK. FOR 1981, IT WAS AT 2196. THE GROWTH WILL CONTINUE.

DURING ALL THIS EXILE, THE POST COMMANDER AND HIS WIFE, EMMY, KEPT THE POST ALIVE BY VARIOUS MEANS. THE POOP SHEETS BECAME THE KEYSTONE INTERNAL PUBLICATION. THEY WERE OUT OF POCKET FUNDS TO SAY NOTHING ABOUT THEIR TIME. IT WAS A LABOR OF LOVE. A SHOESTRING OPERATION. BUT IT WAS HOLDING THE LIKE MINDED PEOPLE TOGETHER. IT PROVIDES A WORLD WIDE SERVICE THEY SO MUCH NEED PLUS A CENTRAL CONTACT PLACE. FULL BUSINESS METHODS HAD TO BE INSTALLED. THE POST BECAME INCORPORATED. PAYROLLS, MOSTLY TO PART TIME HELP, HAD TO BE MET. STORAGE FOR ARCHIVES HAD TO BE CREATED.

MEMORIAL DIVISIONS WERE FORMED. TOO MANY KIA'S TO HONOR. OUR PERCENTAGE OF CASUALTIES COMPARED TO REGULAR POSTS IS HIGHER SIMPLY BECAUSE OF THE PROLONGED ACTIVITY OVER THE PERIOD OF YEARS. AND SOMETIMES FOR SECURITY REASONS NAMES COULD NOT BE USED. SO ALL BECAME MEMORIAL DIVISIONS. AND GIVEN GEOGRAPHICAL LOCATIONS. SOME FLOURISHED BUT WENT INTO EXILE THEMSELVES AS THE COUNTRY WAS OVER RUN. SOME GO DOWN BECAUSE OF THE "BAD GUYS" TAKING OVER THE LOCAL GOVERNMENTS. OUR TYPE PEOPLE NEED TO MOVE ON.

PRESENTLY WE HAVE 50 MEMORIAL DIVISIONS. FOUR FOLDED WHEN IRAN FELL. SIX WENT DOWN WHEN SOUTH VIETNAM WAS LOST. OTHERS ARE SHAKEY. SOME ARE DOING WHAT THEY CAN IN A SEMI HOSTILE CLIMATE. BUT ALL ARE DOING WHAT THEY CAN FOR THE COMMON GOOD OF THE COMMUNITY AND THE AMERICANS INVOLVED. THEY SUPPORT SCHOOL SCHOLARSHIPS. FOSTER GOOD WILL WITH THE POPULACE. AND SOME HELP THE MEMBERS AS THEY TRAVEL ABOUT THE WORLD, SOME ARE IN SMALL NUMBERS.

IN CONUS, THE DIVISIONS HELP WITH PICNICS, YOUTH ACTIVITIES, AND ESPECIALLY HELP THE FOREIGN BORN WIVES AND CHILDREN LEARN OUR WAYS AND CUSTOMS. THEY KNOW FREEDOM IS EARNED. THEY MAKE GOOD CITIZENS.

DUE TO THE NATURE OF THE MEMBERSHIP AND THE OCCUPATIONS OF SO MANY MEMBERS, EVEN SPECIAL CONTROLS, ABOVE AND BEYOND LEGION REQUIREMENTS HAD TO BE ESTABLISHED. FINAL AUTHORITY HAD TO REST WITH THE POST COMMANDER. HE IS ABLY ADVISED BY COMPETENT VICE COMMANDER - CHINA AND MEMBERS ON THIS. MANY APPLICANTS ARE TURNED DOWN. IN MASONIC TRADITION, NO EXPLANATIONS ARE GIVEN.

THIS IS NOT A CONVENTIONAL LEGION POST NOR OPERATION. WE SERVE A PARTICULAR SITUATION AND GROUP. PROPOSERS FOR NEW MEMBERS KNOW THAT THEY ARE RESPONSIBLE AND MUST PERSONALLY VOUCH FOR THE APPLICANT. WE ARE NOT INTERESTED IN SIMPLE NOSE COUNT FOR MEMBERSHIP. WE ARE PRIMARILY INTERESTED IN THE "WEILDERS OF THE SWORD" AND THE "CLOSE IN SUPPORT" TYPES. CERTAIN OTHERS ARE BROUGHT IN BECAUSE OF DIFFERENT SKILLS, TALENTS, AND DEPENDABILITY AS NEEDED TO KEEP THE OPERATION GOING.

WE ARE COLLECTING MEMORABELIA FOR EVENTUAL MUSEUM, LIBRARY, AND FUTURE POST HOME. WE MEET ANNUALLY FOR REUNIONS. IN OCTOBER 1981, 430 ATTENDED THE AWARDS BANQUET. MANY COME IN FROM OVERSEAS. FOR REASONS. WE HAVE OUR OWN EULOGY FOR MEMBERS WHO ARE CALLED TO DESTINY. FOR SECURITY, WE DO NOT WANT ANY PUBLICITY AND PREFER NO MEDIA REFERENCE WHAT SO EVER.