

Majestic Hotel
Saigon, South Vietnam
10 March 1964

Dear Ruff:

Touchdown on schedule with Boh and the ECCOI-V boys breezing me through health, immigration, and customs with impressive dispatch. Immediately saw very familiar faces which indeed was very reassuring.

Explained quietly to Boh why I should not be quartered with him, inspite of my recognition that the ECCOI-V compound may be the most secured spot here in Saigon. Of course, the old cuss did recognize the point immediately. We did spend the rest of the day gabbing away and to date, what I got from Boh may even dispense with a lot of unnecessary travel on my part to verify some of my long-held suspicions of certain deficiencies, etc. Boh's versions on what is really happening out there in the boondocks just confirmed my suspicions. On the strength of Boh's recommendations, several persons (US & Viet) and places must be visited however. I'm looking forward to the projected trip. This morning, I commandeered several of Boh's field clothing and I all set to go.

Boh's contract hasn't been extended or renewed. I found him still enthusiastic with regard to what he has been doing here in the past but at the same time I noted some anxiety from him of "bailing out" Dorothy and finally decide on how best Mama Boh can be attended to, etc. Boh told me several startling things which I do believe must be personally reported by him to people like Ed and others in Washington.

I fully suscribe to Boh's thinking that the VC is not actually out to attain a military victory out here as many would like to think. It would be more logical, based on past events, that the VC is out for a psycho-political take over as they seem to be doing very well. The mere fact that battalion-sized VC units are left unmolested to roam and impress the masses has certain political and military implications of unending significance in this kind of a war. Right now at this time of my writing you, two VC battalions are loose somewhere south of here, parading, and discrediting McNamara's visit.

I still could not understand why McNamara's party did not have in their itinerary an extended visit to the area where these two VC battalions are reported to be "parading", etc.

So, for the present I'm not doing anything to dissuade Boh from making a fast trip over there to visit his mother and get to talk to some people where it will do the most good. Let him tell you the story on how Oggie tried to hustle me off this morning on some ~~xx~~ wildgoose chase up north with Bob Burns and another fellow named Kelly. Perhaps, poor Oggie was trying to impress me!

Am getting quite an earful from Boh about organizational setups, history, the whys and wherefors, and some good and solid background briefings before taking off for the provinces early next week in company of Hudson. Am looking forward to meeting some of your friends.

Hoping that all is well with you, my best wishes and warmest regards.

Handwritten: - actually, 1/21 (Wednesday)