

Kontum
2 November 1972

Dear General Healy:

Today is the first anniversary of my coming to Vietnam, working with the Kontum/Pleiku montagnards. Because of a number of personal frustrations arising mainly from the difficult times of this year's offensive, I will be returning to the US very shortly. Unfortunately, my draft board, with which I am on the worst of terms, has made arrangements for my arrest upon return to the US. I am hoping that you will be able to provide documentation of my service over here, in hopes that the past year may be credited toward alternative service, should that privilege be granted me.

A brief chronology of the problem:

- 1964 -- resigned from ROTC in order to devote additional university time to humanities studies.
- 1966 -- joined Naval Reserve Medical Ensign Program during medical school.
- 1968 -- refused promotion offered by USNR because of disagreement with US foreign policy. This disagreement was based on personal readings on the development of the situation, and predated the mass movements on the part of the universities. I was offered a chance to resign from the Navy, and did.
- 1970, October -- Met Dr. Smith and made arrangements to work in Kontum.
- 1970-1971 -- (Nov.-Feb.) On three occasions refused to report for physical exam for induction.
- 1971, May -- Order to report for induction, effective 1 July.
- 1971, June -- Submitted conscientious objector application stating in part: a) even tacit support of the military is anti-thetical to a physician's creed; and b) my intention to go to Vietnam. This application was rejected, unread, on the grounds that, based on a US Supreme Court decision of the previous month, CO applications filed after an order to report for induction may not be heard. I was then assigned to the Navy.
- 1971, July -- Letter to the Chief of Naval Operations stating my beliefs and affirming that, if inducted, I would not cooperate with the affairs of the US Navy. His reply was a CO application to be submitted through the Navy Department.
- 1971, October -- Completion of Navy CO application, including personal interviews with Navy chaplain, Navy psychiatrist, and Navy line officer. All affirmed their confidence in

the success of my appeal, and I received copies of the interview reports of the chaplain and psychiatrist. Both of these documents stated belief in my sincerity. I have not seen the report of the line officer, because I left for Vietnam three days after the interview with her.

1972, February -- Having heard nothing of the application to the Navy, I wrote to inquire. The reply came from my draft board, mentioning nothing of the Navy affair, and was in the form of an order to report for induction. (This was sent to Kontum). I ignored this order, and shortly thereafter, received notification that my name was being submitted to the US Attorney for prosecution. I have heard or written nothing since.

Assuming some rationality remains in the US, I think my chances of a successful outcome to all this are good. I would like to maximize the chances though, as the stakes, for me, are quite high. (If I am convicted of a felony (draft evasion), even if all sentencing is suspended, I cannot practice medicine in the majority of States of the US.) I am requesting documentation of what I consider to be fact; viz.,

- a. Period of service began 2 Nov. 1971
- b. Hardship post with element of risk (Pay: \$300/month)
- c. My efforts have been in US interest here in Vietnam.

Any opinions you would care to express are, of course, entirely up to you, but would be appreciated. The letter should be addressed to:

Local Board #11
Selective Service System
524 Glenwood Avenue
Baltimore, Maryland 21212

If you feel it appropriate, I would appreciate a copy for my files.

As things stand now, I am planning to return to the US, clear my head, put together a syllabus for a training program for medical staff, and return to Kontum in late Spring, 1973.

Thank you again for your help.

Sincerely yours,

Hand delivered to Gen. Healy.
Response: "Get out of my office!"

John W. Taylor, M.D.
Minh-Quy Hospital
Kontum