

New York August 3rd, 1959

Dear Elsie,

I arrived at New York City last Tuesday August 3rd.

The next day I have made out my schedule. I have to get in touch with:

- 1) Waldorf Astoria Hotel
- 2) Intercontinental Hotel Corp.
- 3) Waldorf - Hilton
- 4) Your Dad - my acquaintance.

Rham has reserved a room for me in the same house - Rham's land lord is a real "Jew"! I am all right in a small, just for night. I walked from office to office the whole day. On Thursday (yesterday) I called your Dad and as I hadn't any appointments after 4:30 PM I came to E. Rutherford and got a dinner with Dad & your step mother. They are very nice. I feel that your Dad is still stronger than I do. I went to shopping with him. He didn't want me to buy anything.

(2)

We had a wonderful time together. How kind you, & your family. I like your Dad very much - He walked with me to Bus station & gave a bus ticket for N.Y. City. It seems that all people want me to save money to buy other things - but I did not bring much money when I left New Haven & Boston - and I don't care very much about that. I know to whom I should send SOS in case of needs.

So, every thing will be fine -

People from Intercontinental Corp. like to have an idea about the situation of Hotel business in Saigon - I will show them a good plan -

I am really busy, I hope that I'll have time to have a sight seeing - I don't think so,

I try to set down every thing with my people then I come back to E. Lansing.

I don't like very much subway, I prefer to fill my lungs with the air of E. Lansing (almost it's better).

The big Boss of IHC will be back from his vacation on Monday 17th August - I try to meet him before I'll leave N.Y.C.

I have promised to see your family (Dad & Step Mother) once again before I'll leave N.Y.C.

I never thought that I am so busy in N.Y.C. I hope that I shall release ⁱⁿ few days at E. Lansing.

Hope to see you very soon.

Yours truly

August 10, 1959

Mr. Nguyen Van Thoi
c/o Mr. Pham Quang Pham
154 Hicks Street
Brooklyn, New York

Dear Thoi:

Please find enclosed your per diem check for the period from August 16th through the 31st. I know you will need this if the reports I hear about the Waldorf Astoria are true. In fact, I can't imagine that even this will be sufficient to any where near cover the expenses of living at the Waldorf. We figured it out that even with a 50 percent cut, it would cost you about \$10 per day, which leaves a meager allowance of \$2 to eat.

Also please find enclosed the mail which has arrived here for you.

If I had known that you were going to be at the house on Thursday, I would have called. In fact, my guess is that there was sufficient roast beef left over for you to carry back a few roast beef sandwiches to tide you over the next day. I mentioned to my parents that I hoped if you were able to return you would bring Pham with you. They seem to have enjoyed your visit very much. I trust that you enjoyed it as much. I hope this means that my father is now fully recovered and enjoying the company of friends as he always had in the past.

We are looking forward to seeing you next week. If you decide in advance, drop me a line and I will meet the plane.

Sincerely yours,

Elsie Cunningham
Administrative Assistant

EMC:rm



AT THE CROSSROADS OF THE WEST

August 28th 1959

Dear Elsie,

I arrived at Salt Lake City at 5:45 AM today. I have nearly 24 hours "non-sleep" - on the plane I was thinking that E. Lansing and its people go away behind me.

I have met Mr. Prohse - After our talk, I take a time to relax, but I use this to write you -

In this letter I would like to let you know the statement of my expenditures, and as usual I reserve the right to our Project to rectify as its regulations concerned.

I took a taxicab with Son from grove street E. Lansing to Lansing Airport - \$ 2.65

From O'HARE Airport (Chicago) to Evanston (receipt) - 2.00

From Hotel ORRINGTON to Midway Airport (receipt) - 2.75

From SALT LAKE Airport to Hotel - 1.25

From Hotel to Salt Lake Airport - 1.25

\$ 9.90

I hope I shall receive money and the ticket for San Diego by Friday 4th September. I am expecting to go to San Diego the same day -

My address at Los Angeles should be at
BARCLAY HOTEL
103 W. FORTH STREET.

I hope you enjoyed your week end with Chau
at Escudada -

I have met Mr. Byrnes on the plane to Chicago.
He is nice person -

I am wondering why all american people I have
met are so nice -

At Evanston, a Vietnamese told me that she is
living with an American family - Three months have
passed - the American family didn't want to take
money from her - She is a girl of 15 - and this
family said that they enjoyed to have her with
them -

I have travelled nearly around the world
I never met yet such a kindness.

And other boys (Vietnameses) who have paid only
60 dollars a month including room, board & laundry.

The curiosity asked me to get acquaintances with
those families - They are really fine persons -

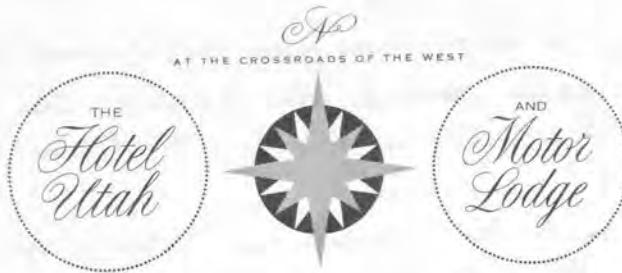
The thing, they are not rich -

Elsie, I love you people & keep my
respect toward them -

Always. Yours

Thor

When you'll write to me please include
Ban & Gui 's address. Thanks'



August 29, 1959

Dear Elsie,

Today I have a full day to work out with Mr. Pronlx. As I told you, I have learned a great deal with him. I enjoy very much to receive his advices - yesterday, I thought that I was going for a sight seeing by Grey Line. But I met a Vietnamese Mr. An who came from Sacramento by car. I never knew him before, but we made acquaintances quite quick, we took a ride together.

I think the management of this Hotel will complement me for the room. This morning I met the assistant manager, he told me that I am his "distinguished" guest. I guess that I don't pay anything. Anyway I will know that when I check out.

This morning when I reconfirmed my plane, the western airline told me that I have a quick stop at Las Vegas. I thought that may be it is worthwhile to spend some more money to know one more city which creates too much noises around the world. So that I have asked for a stop over for 24 hours. and I have paid 2.50 extra. As I will arrive at Los Angeles on 31st August instead of 30th August. I hope you will make sure I don't like gambling -

I don't enjoy very much my stay in Salt Lake City - except to get new ideas from Mr. Pronlx - I should say I do enjoy by that way - but not the way as a tourist -

Dear Elsie, I am a man who has to move out from a spot he loves and every mile I make I feel I run away from that city, from you, from every body. If you were planning your trip few hours ahead, I should cancel my depart for Escanado. In that way I think I will enjoy much more (as a tourist) and I will meet Mr. Pronlx

latee on - how everything has done I just go on to my way home - hoping to hear from you only by mail about E. Lansing----

Nearly a year round has passed, the sceneries of the whole year flew like a flash. Well, it should be like this, isn't it?

I have met Mr. Guypub in town. We have had a quick talk. He asks me my itinerary and says that he will meet me at Los Angeles & Tokyo. So I am not myself everything is OK now.

I tell you good bye now & I will write to you from Los Angeles.

Always Thine

P.S. Did you make a letter of introduction for me to Imperial Hotel?

Can you do me a little more favor?: When you will be free you write to American Hotel Association 221 W 57 Street New York City and ask them to send to you the Contract of Hotel Association of New York City of 1959. Then you ship it to me.

I need the address of Betty (Mar Kua?) - Ban - Thank you very much for that -

September 1, 1959

Mr. Nguyen Van Thoi
The Barclay Hotel
103 West Fourth Street
Los Angeles,
California

Dear Thoi:

Please find enclosed the checks for your limousine expenses to date.

I have reminded College Travel that you need the bus tickets for San Diego by Friday. I am sorry that they didn't give all the necessary tickets to you before your departure and save you the trouble and expense of buying them.

Chau is still in Oscoda with the Coles and will meet Pat and I at St. Ignace on Saturday. By the way, when I mentioned to Pat our visit to her apartment and the discovery of half a pot of rice, she told me that you must have thought you were going to feed six Vietnamese rather than two American girls by the amount of rice you cooked. I suspect that long association with individuals such as I would dim your perception as to how much rice the average American can eat.

I trust that your budgeting will carry you through to Saigon.

Sincerely yours,

Elsie Cunningham
Participant Director

EMC:nn

September 3, 1959

Mr. Nguyen Van Thoi
The Barclay Hotel
103 West Fourth Street
Los Angeles, California

Dear Thoi:

Please find enclosed another copy of the letter to the manager of the Imperial Hotel.

By the way, if you should have the opportunity to spend a few more days in Japan, a visit to the Nikko Kankao Hotel, which is about $3\frac{1}{2}$ hours from Tokyo, might prove interesting. Jerry Turnquist, who is a friend of mine, was managing this hotel for a Japanese concern at last report.

It is finally cool in East Lansing and we now miss the hot weather. Sorry we didn't have a chance to see you off, but I am glad that Mrs. Adamson was able to go to the airport. We enjoyed very much our trip to Oscoda, but unfortunately, the jet planes overhead precluded any peace and quiet.

I trust that you will give my kindest regards to Mr. Waltman, etc. when you get back to Saigon.

Sincerely yours,

Elsie Cunningham
Participant Director

EMC:mm

P.S. College Travel did not send the bus tickets out until this morning via airmail. I hope that they reach you before you intend to leave for San Diego. If not, please refund these tickets for the cash value.

September 8, 1959

Mr. Nguyen Van Thoi
Hotel Barclay
103 W. Fourth St.
Los Angeles 13, Calif.

Dear Thoi:

I trust that your good luck holds and that you can get away from Los Angeles and also that you have the opportunity to stop over in Honolulu. I'm sorry that I didn't take matters into my own hands and arrange an itinerary given the bare outlines of what you wanted. With a few more days we might have been able to clear all this and saved the bother you have now had.

By the way Loc is staying at the Hayward Hotel in Los Angeles. It seems that she did not even know that Kim Sa had already left for Viet Nam but then we hadn't heard from her in some time.

Chau and I had a wonderful weekend in St. Ignace with Pat and her family - we also saw the Grand Hotel, I will send you the postcards when I have a chance. Perhaps after I have showed them to Son.

I can't seem to find the letter in which you mention the business about the Hotel Association of New York and who I should contact if you did not receive their contract.

By the way Ba is asking for another extension - life goes on as per usual but at a much slower pace now that everyone has left town. Phat's address (at least temporarily) is 53 Trowbridge St., Cambridge, Mass. He is now on his way to Washington but it was really a wonder that he got away on Friday - don't believe he knew what he was doing.

September 14, 1959

Mr. Nguyen Van Thoi
Saigon Palace Hotel
Duong Tu Do
Saigon, Vietnam

Dear Thoi:

We have received your informative post cards as you traveled along the way from California to Tokyo. Also, I received your letters indicating the difficulties you had obtaining space from California onward. I am glad that you were able to travel on the first jet and hope that you enjoyed the experience.

We went on a picnic to Grand Ledge yesterday, but frankly it wasn't as much fun as the last one in the spring. We missed the company of yourself, Phat, Son and Loc. Although we enjoyed the pork chops, which Chau prepared, with the red beans and five perfumes, it did lack something.

I shall be moving at the end of the month into a new apartment with Ann Allan, the girl who works for College Travel. Frankly, it is a relief to be out of the house where they are so many restrictions. Since I had been procrastinating for over a year on this move, I am really grateful that things came to a head and I felt it absolutely necessary to move. They did not raise Chau's rent, so I presume that this was a big hint for me to leave. As a matter of fact, unless someone told me about the drinking restrictions, how could you expect people to be so silly in an off-campus apartment.

Things are very quiet and it looks like they will be even more so. At the moment I am trying to figure out how I am going to keep busy after the first flurry of activity accompanying the arrival of two new participants this month. Really it doesn't look like there will be very much to do and I am longingly thinking of a trip to Vietnam.

Sincerely yours,

Elsie Cunningham
Participant Director

EMC:nm

November 12, 1959

Mr. Nguyen Van Thoi
Saigon Palace Hotel
Rue Tu Do
Saigon, Vietnam

Dear Thoi:

I am sorry to hear that you are not getting more satisfaction out of your work since you returned to Saigon, but I know it often is difficult to make such adjustments.

I shall certainly send you an official letter containing information regarding the courses you took while in East Lansing. As a matter of fact, the certificates, which are presented to all participants, were sent to Saigon while I was away on vacation.

I am enclosing the article from last Sunday's paper about the recent hotel show in New York. I thought you might be particularly interested in their comments regarding the status of culinary skills in the United States. You might also want to compare your work of art with the grand prize winner's.

I am expecting my new, green Volkswagen momentarily, and I am in the process of selling my old Plymouth. It will be very pleasant to have a new car.

We are expecting Pham here on Thanksgiving.

I seem to have lost the letter in which you mentioned the constitution or by-laws of the New York hotel association and have received nothing from this organization to date. If you can give me the name of the person or place to contact, I will be glad to do so.

Sincerely yours,

Elsie Cunningham
Participant Director

EMC:nm

December 22, 1959

Mr. Nguyen Van Thoi
Saigon Palace Hotel
Saigon,
Vietnam

Dear Thoi:

Please find enclosed the much delayed certificate which I promised to you several months back.

Son has gone to Chicago but from all reports has missed meeting his boss there, one of the main reasons for the trip.

I am expecting to leave here today for five days at home. I guess I ought to rest during this time as nine new participants are expected on January 2nd. But obviously the holidays are the worst time to try and rest.

Our friend Phat has been very depressed these last few months and in fact has talked about returning to Vietnam several times. He is very homesick. For his own sake, as well as for the sake of the Project, I hope he is able to stick it out until he has his degree.

Sincerely yours,

Elsie Cunningham
Participant Director

EMC:nn

February 9, 1960

Mr. Nguyen Van Thoi
Saigon Palace Hotel
Saigon,
Vietnam

Dear Thoi:

Than was here this weekend for a meeting of all the Ph.D. participants. He brought the rather startling news that a Vietnamese had arrived at Cornell to study hotel management. Can this be? I thought that you rated M.S.U.'s program in this field as the best.

We had the pleasure of the company not only of Than, but Phat, Ky, Toan and Bach-Lan over the weekend. Mrs. Bach-Lan announced her forth-coming marriage to one of the Vietnamese in New York City during spring vacation. It seems that the marriage rate among participants and recently returned participants is very high.

I am about to leave on a month's vacation for South America, and if I can only find my list of Y.W.C.A.'s, I will be all set. After all, who can afford the expense of staying in a hotel for four solid weeks.

As you probably already know, Son will be leaving for Vietnam very soon and in fact, will leave campus one week before my return. He is planning a dinner for Chau and I on Friday evening.

Sincerely yours,

Elsie Cunningham
Participant Director

EMC:nm

SAIGON ĐẠI LÝ-QUÁN
SAIGON PALACE
8, RUE TU-DO SAIGON
SUD VIỆT NAM

PHONES: 503 & 582
CABLE: SAIPAL-SAIGON

Saigon, le 10th Feb. 1960.

Dear Elsie,

It seems that I have forgotten all my friens in East Lansing, please do not beleive that. I never forget them, I never forget you. How could I do that, a year round with somebody I like very much, a year round in an area where I got a part of my knowledge, do human beings so vulgar to be so? If some of them do, they are ~~mixx~~ just some amongst the whole mass. I suppose that I'm not the one who forget easily.

Well, I still keep me busy in my work. Frankly I havenot my own time. While we, it means the hotel, have less business, I run around and around to look for business - but as soon as we get more guests in the house, it keeps me busy, I hang around to watch my personnel - if they will do somethings wrong I think that it will hurt my reputation. I don't know how much it costs my reputation which equals, for the time being ZERO, why do I care of it? I don't know, may be just too much scrupule.

I have received 2,3, letters from you, greeting cards and so on. Thank you very much for that. I have received your attestation saying that I have followed such and such courses of hotel business, but it's not the one our Government needs. It will be a type of Diploma with a big head line MSU and so forth... We say: good wine needs no bush - sometimes it does sometimes it doesn't.

I have worked during the whole TET, as a part of my personnel got their home leave I did take care of the office, my wife took a day to pay a visit to my parents in low and I took care in the same time of our children, one of them got sick during TET, he all right now, so we didn't fully our TET, I was working and thinking the day I spent the TET in ~~Exxx~~ Florida and the meeting we have had together at the Internatinal Center for our TET 1957. I remember that KimChau with her very skilled hand took off a branch from MSU's Green House (she knew that it's forbiden, didn't she?) to make out a blossom tree symbolizing the youth, freshness, purity of Spring in our home land.

Amongst those souvenirs, I feel so lonely, it's still as sweet as a perfume of the past. I think I do write it down in ~~times~~ words, but I have no time yet. We say: souvenir is a poet do not make it a historian, because when I'll write it down as a historian, I should add my own feeling which will be as sad as a regret But never mind it's not been done yet.

By the way, you remember the last parcel post which covers all my cooking equipments, food color, cake decoration materials, the diplomas I got from Cornell and the Culinary Institute, this parcel post I don't have yet. It takes too long time, the shipment.

I have met Pat quite often, usually she has a beer with me at the terrace of my restaurant on Wednesday afternoon when I take a break. During our TET she went to Hongkong for shopping. She told me she has spent a lot of money in HKong and recently she went to Pnom Penh for a week end, she said that she doesn't

she doesn't know how to save money, well she has new plan to visit somewhere else. She just bought a bike, she said that's a type of sport, riding a bike.

I am planning to run full house from now up to the end of this month, and already we have a lot of work for pre-preparation. The lease of our hotel will expire on May, we are not expecting to renew it - there will have ~~new~~ some changement.

Chau's mother came to see me last week, she is so sweet, so nice as her daughter does, she speaks very frankly, she is not well built as Chau does but she is still very strong, I mean by good health.

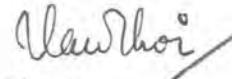
Elsie, I would like to ask you, if you can, you try to manage any way to send to me some magazines about hotel and restaurant, ~~new~~ such as: Hotel managemnt, Institutions.

There were two fellows who got 2 years scholarship from USOM: Mr. TAY and Mr.THA, they came to me and asked me about the matter, I have tried to convince them the high rate of MSU's program of hotel school, it ~~seemed~~ to me that was very hard to our fellows to discuss with USOM's people for any changement of their program. They are not like our friend Mr.Ky who persists to do what he is expecting to have. ^{cause} Any way, I have to tell you that they like me very much, they ~~to~~ see me many times before their departure. We are expecting to get a real collaboration between people in hotel field who have been in USA.

I went to Dalat on Friday 12 Febru. and spent my week end there I paid a visit to Mrs. Son, Son has a wonderful family, his children, very ~~gealthy~~ healthy.

Nearly all of what I have in mind, I will tell you so long for a while, please telling all my friend a warm Hello,

Always yours,


Thoi,

March 18, 1960

Mr. Nguyen Van Thoi
Saigon Palace Hotel
Saigon, Vietnam

Dear Thoi:

It's Doris DeKoning's last day and we just had a farewell party in her honor (cake, ice cream and coffee). Between the ever-changing coordinator (Gabis and then Austin) and now the change in office personnel, pretty soon I'll be the only person who's been here more than a year again - Alice will be leaving when Mike graduates (also she's pregnant) and Nona may leave in June. With the return of Dr. Austin I'm going to bring up the sore subject of my trip to Saigon once again.

Nancy just proved that she can manage quite well without me - at least no major faux pas occurred while I was away for a month - Believe it or not I have just returned from a month's vacation. Mexico City, Panama, Lima, Cusco & Machhu Pichu, Buenos Aires, Sao Paulo, Brasilia and Rio de Janeiro. I am now suntanned, broke and relatively rested. Only wish that I could have had more money and more time.

I hate to be the bearer of sad tidings but the diplomas are still waiting the approval of the Dean (they went their just as I left on vacation but am really waiting for Dr. Austin to request an answer one way or another so that I can have them printed up). It's a long story and goes back to an earlier time as far as the earlier diplomas which were sent to Saigon a long time ago but will never be delivered. There are these times when I must, of necessity, do as I am told - this is one of them.

I haven't seen Chau since I returned but knowing that it is the middle of exams I'm somewhat loathe to bother her. She's going upstate for the week between terms. I don't know how soon she intends to return to Vietnam after completing her degree in June. By the way both Vien and Khanh finished their M.A.s this quarter. Khanh expects to go home next month but Vien will stay another quarter to take some additional courses - Vien's a wonder he's received practically nothing but A's since last summer.

We had Phat, Than, Ky, Toan and Bach-Lan here for the weekend just before I went on vacation. All seem to be doing well including Mrs. Bach Lan who will be married shortly (to a Vietnamese chosen by her 12 yr. old daughter). We had dinner together at my house on Saturday evening and then again Sunday noon - the latter was by far the best since it was the joint effort of Ky and Phat. No problem about hiding the beer!

Give my best regards to Pat and ask her when she's going to write me.

Sincerely,