



THE SNAKE  
RANCH  
PAPERS

APRIL 80 - MAY 81

• YOU ARE HERE

LINK00374 RCVD MSG 2300 P  
PTUZYUW RUEACNP8482 0732258-UUUU--RUHGIIW,  
ZNR UUUUU

12

P 130517Z MAR 80  
FM CHNAVPERS WASHINGTON DC  
TO RUHGIIW/FITRON ONE FIVE ONE-  
INFO RHANMHB/COMNAVFORKOREA SEOUL KS  
RUAGAAA/COMUSKOREA SEOUL KS

RT  
UNCLAS //N013217/  
BUPERS ORDER NR 144566, (NMPC 4411A),  
LTJG [REDACTED] /1635, RELODET IN MAR 80. DUTY  
PROPERT CINCUNC/COMUSKOREA SEOUL KS (647655) DUTY JOINT STAFF  
REPORT COMNAVFORKOREA SEOUL KS ADMIN PUR (647655) POSSES, VPLY INST 18110500.  
ADV EXTEND MAY 9181 DEL REP 24 APR 80 SEUL A SUGEN, VPLY INST 18110500.  
EXIST FOR ENTRY AT OR BAG AIR 165 FROM OVERSEAS ELEMENT OCCASIONS OF CONTACT YOUR  
PERSONAL PROPERTY TRANSFER APPROPRIATION HOUSEHOLD EFFECTS ORDERED OF C IMMEDIATELY  
FOR DETAILS DIRHSG, TOUR OF DUTY TO TWELVE MONTHS FOR ALL OTHERS.  
MONTHS ACCOMPANIED BY DEPN OR AT GOVT EXPENSE CONSTITUTES YOUR  
MOVEMENT OF DEPN TO NEW DUSTA AT GOVT EXPENSE CONSTITUTES YOUR  
AGREEMENT TO SERVE ACCOMPANIED BY DEPN TOUR OTHERWISE THE ALL OTHERS  
TOUR APPLIES, COMMAND DELIVERING ORDERS CONDUCT INTERVIEW REQUIRED

PAGE 02 RUEACNP8482 UNCLAS  
BY BUPERSINST 130517Z MAR 80 PRIORITY DELIVERY, ACCT DATA NUCB  
701453,2253 S 000022 A8 UC071707E UC0369507129,  
8482

NNNN

ROUTE 22 ACT VF 157 ADCOP TIME 2  
MAX [initials] INROUTER [initials] @C1 JH XEROX [initials] MRDIS  
OC2

PAGE 01 → 3 MONTHS ADVANCE PAY TOR 13MAR2300Z P 130517Z MAR 80  
→ PORT CALL TO HOME OF RECORD

15 MAY 80

DEAR CAROL AND JEAN,

Well, here I am in lovely rioting Seoul. I am esconced in the dubious luxury of the BOQ, the mama-sans are bustling around, washing things I own that haven't been plunged in H<sub>2</sub>O since I have owned them. Gives me the willies. I am beginning to think that privacy is something nonexistent. Mama-sai is better than an alarm clock. At eight each morning she is in the room picking things up and making a great show of being quiet. The fact that I work nights disturbs her not in the least. I'm glad the language barrier is a chasm so deep, leastwise I might offend her.

I am trying to economize on paper at the moment, as the felons who ransacked my belongings at the Supply depot saw fit to leave my battered Smith-Corona, but make off with all my paper and carbons. And both of my stereos, as well as anything glittery which caught their fancy. The shipping agent says they will settle my claim in as little as a year or two, with perhaps as much as 6¢ on the dollar. Is there no outrage to great in serving one's Motherland? Well, they left me my .357 mag, and I hereby give them fair warning.

Let's see: I'm not sure when I wrote last, but I think it was before I strapped on one of our thundering F-4 Phantoms for a spectacular departure from our grey mobile home. One moment we were perched on the catapult, and then J-79 engines were spewing all manner of hydrocarbons out behind us. Then Bill saluted the Cat officer and the next thing I knew I was squashed by the force of eight instantaneous Gs. We went from a standing start to 200 knots in something less than three seconds. It is fantastically short, yet long enough to think several random thoughts, like "God, No!" Then we were wobbling off a quarter mile in front of a progressively smaller toy ship, arcing up to ten thousand feet, the blue ocean advancing up over my left shoulder as we rolled out over the top. We had some fun on that hop; aerobatics, pulling five-point-three Gs sustained over the top of a loop, swooping through the cloud canyons at six hundred miles an hour.

It was an undeniably colorful way to depart the mighty Large Building 41.

Then the wrap-up for departing Nippon. Many drinks, carefully packing the stereo, so that the thieves might get the goods undamaged. The intermittable bus ride across the Kanto Plain to the airbase of departure. I had flown across the congestion on titanium wings and now the little shoebox cars made us crawl. Then a mystery flight, early in the grey morning, a weather recon WC-135 hauling balls across the unending swells of the Pac. Arriving two hours before we left a day early. The receptionist won't sell the mini-bottles of likker to a returning decorated vet because they don't do that in Sacramento at two in the morning. "Sacramento?" I said wonderingly. "So that is where we are..."

Fighting aboard the only PSA flight out the next morning, roaring drunk on 50¢ beers. I was there in plenty of time for them to loose my luggage.

More airports. The Midwest. Loosing the day I had gained as we raced towards the sunset. Looking blankly at a business seatmate who was bitching about some foul-up in his delicate arrangements to get from O'hare to Detroit Metro. "Travel is such a hassle" he said and I just shook my head. "You don't know the half of it, buddy."

Renting the newest shiney toy from the Hertz people. "Gimme a Camaro" I said boldly. "And charge it." Driving through the depression stricken Detroit evening, speeding of course, hoping for false drugs and the stirred embers

of passion banked a year or more ago. Poking around Jane's house; she ain't home, of course, and the Neighbors take my black uniform for the Police. But it all works out, finally. She is drunk and I am fifty hours into an amphetamine dream. Some fires don't go completely out.

Then the dutifull Son at home. Being shown off. Going through the long list of People You Must See. Buying a couple lots up on Martin Lake, god help me. (Not the prime stuff, you must understand, the ones over across from the Mackinnyres, with HYATT REGENCY SEOUL a sixteenth interest in a lake front lot to provide access. Who am I? I ask wonderingly. And what the fuck is going on here?

Time runs on: I'm in Boston arguing about Afghanistan with some blonde. I'm partly shell-shocked. The evening News sets me off like a grenade. No one understands what's going on, quick, hand me that bottle. Where are the ones who know? The ones I sweated and bitched with?

Then a phone call or five. "Come to Florida." "I can't. Why didn't you say that last week?" "Well, you know." And I don't, and I don't have the precious time. All the lives, all going on, too much to absorb. This one grows pot and does coke; that one is failing of his promise, and he knows it, and drinks. These over here have bought a submarine. Others move to Kansas City. Then the Bay Area as the last sands run out and the flight is leaving. Two more blondes, one an earth mother and the other an heiress. The earth mother shows me her camouflage fatigues from her Vietnam days as a stew on the R&R flights out of country. So heavy with pins and insigniw it can barely be picked up. A green beret so loaded with small brazen pieces of metal it slumps in my hand like a bag of nails. The heiress, going off to examine property in the City, saying "you don't seem to open up. I don't like that." "I ain't got the time, Helen, and I do believe I'm going downtown. Maybe it will be better next time." "I don't think there will be a next time." "No shit."

Finally, the KAL flight lurches into the air. I'm stoned to the bone, saturated with the too familiar strangeness, going to the familiar home of anonymity, and another town of small jap cars and honking horns and green clad asians with M-16s. Leaving the way I came back, and the wing-tip vortex from the 747 swirl in the LA smog like the path I left, the grass by the runway bends and then recovers.

Then the new set of hassles in a military dictatorship, joining the People who Joined the Army. Ration Control, Black Market, armed Communists. I was in the conference building in the middle of the DMZ last week. I stood in North Korea, and the communists peered in the windows to ensure I did not touch the n.K. flag, or curse Kim il-Sung, or gesture in a provocative manner. We motor slowly past the Bridge of No Return, the only path north, and past the stump of a tree that will never again need trimming.

\*\*\*\*\*

Well, looking back up the page I notice that it is tinged with a bit of a black mood. Maybe it is because I leave for work as soon as I hit the bottom of the page. Down the stairs to the Command Bunker. The sun is shining outside, the students are rioting. Will the General take charge today? are the tanks still at the Embassy? Well, these and other question will be revealed in good time. In the meantime, take care of yourselves. Film at Eleven.

Mary-doll pregnant? My, that old world do turn, don't it?

J.R.

THE COMMAND BUNKER  
UNITED STATES FORCES  
SEOUL, KOREA  
18 MAY 1980

Dear Ellen,

Ah! now this is much better....a hefty, man-sized piece of paper rolling through the battered frame of my Smith-Corona. A brand-spanking new ribbon: crisp and assertive, ready to clog the keys with fresh ink. Well worth the walk over to the Korea Area Exchange, and standing in line with those happy folks Who Joined the Army.

I went on watch last night, eager to see what the mail might have brought to brighten the long hours of the Midnight Shift. I began to see the Crisis at the same time that I saw your post-card. I will never be able to say that they did not devise an energetic training program for me.

Any time you see a three star general hanging out down in the Indications & Warnings Center at ten o'clock at night, of a Saturday night yet, a hapless Watch Officer may begin to intimate that perhaps All is Not Well in the Republic. It wasn't.

Before I get to a direct response to the news that you may visit, let me quickly outline what appears to be going on:

As you know, the ROKs have been in a state of Marshall Law since the unfortunate demise of the last President, Mr. Park.

There has been a definite backlash building amongst the Students to the Military takeover, in particular, the ascendancy of Lt. Gen Ohn to Hwan. He, as you may have gathered from the Stars n' Stripes, has also recently grasped the reigns of the KOIA.

The students have been se'roomed with Fear & Loathing. They want Ohn out on his ass. They want an end to M.L. They were prepared to out classes and go out into the streets to demonstrate. (If any of this seems to strike a familiar chord from another decade and nation, I hasten to remind you that the Korean University system has been unfavorably compared to eight continuous encores of Middle English Grammar. It is Spring after all, and the weather has been quite nice...) Any how, that takes us up to last week. The Pigs...I mean, the Korean National Police, were rather restrained even in the face of of some fairly dramatic resistance.

One must remember that the Koreans (North or South) have not been noted for any such restraint, at least in the past four decades or so. There is no Peace Treaty with the North, and each day when the patrols go out the M-16s are loaded for possible Contact.

But they were doing rather well. One of the real Spooks said he had been proud of the Government. But that wasn't the case tonight. Keeping in mind that no less a person than Prez Carter had expressed his disapproval of Gen Ohn's pernicious influence, and that a sizeable number of the Loyal Opposition were getting ready to bail out of the uneasy coalition. The students were meeting to plan new strategy. They were confident of the inviability of

their campus sanctuary.

Just as I was shaving, donning a fresh set of khakis, and preparing to face a long dull night of studying Orders of Battle, the Cops swept in on the meeting. They busted eighteen of the leaders. Three thousand surrounded the campus and began arresting other students at random. Presumably they had a body count to make.

Clearly, the fat was on the fire now. The demonstrations which had shown signs of diminishing were going to be back with a vengeance on the morrow. That is, unless the Governemtn took steps to ensure that no one would be out on the bricks. The predictable happened. We were notified that Emergency Marshall Law (as opposed to just ordinary Marshall Law) was going to go into effect at the stroke of Midnight. It would be nation-wide. It would suspend anything like habeus Corpus. Rumor mongering and non-mainstreamism were punishable by immediate jail terms, open-ended and subject to no review.

The Generals were a dime a dozen through the night. Everybody who had even a vague claim to be a decision maker came in, and their associated power groupies. It was exciting for a while, at least untill it appeared that nothing was going to happen after ourfew. The OINO had been recalled at the request of the Ambassador. By about four in the morning, the Captains and the Kings had the latest information, and had retired to bed.

A couple questions remain. What will the North do? Will they determine that the Time is ripe? Will the majority of the people down here swing away from the Governemnt position, and go into passive (or worse) opposition?

In order to demonstrate my own confidence in the unalterable stability of my own life, I went to the Exchange.

I don't work again untill early morning (the joys of shift wrok) and will doubtless discover that my leasure hours were just enough for catastrophe to incubate.

I looked at your postcard this morning, after I had returned to my humble little hooch. Come to Korea? Sure. I just have begun to get a dose of the Korea Contingency Paranoia. When is Memorial Day? My schedule has me ususally working, but it is only eight hours a day (either early, middle, or all night in a ceasless rotation.)

My enthusiasm for seeing you is tempered by the feeling of happiness I get when I think that I will only be here for a year, and that I have no family to worry about incountry. If I have to throw the thermite grenades in the safe and grasp the runner of the last chapper out of the compound, I don't want to think about T-34 tanks driving through the Housing Area.

I don't think it is going to blow sky-high this month, or next. The E.M.L. declaration (and that environmental morale leave ain't what I mean) says that they will not interfere with civilians of the foreign persuasion. But by the time you get this, we may have sealed things off. Don't know.

I do know that this is all very interesting.

Let me know exactly what your schedule is for the remainder of this lame-duck academic year. Maybe I can get back to Japan on one of the three day breaks they keep promising me but have not scheduled yet. The one factor that is crippling my travels is the three month's advance pay that I took to use as a down payment for the land I bought back home. My paychecks are now merely a token pittance, and they are stalling paying off the travel claim and the TLA. And I got the shipment ripped off to the tune of \$1300 to boot.

So there it is. Three weeks in the new duty station, and the situation is threatening to crumble around me. The only consolation is that the old hands say it is like this all the time. I wanted to go someplace that had some kind of action, but Jesus, between Iran and this jazz there has to be a happier medium. Maybe Thailand is the answer...

Write and let me know what you think.

Take care of yourself,

J.R.

THE COMMAND BUNKER  
UNITED STATES FORCES  
SEOUL CITY  
18 May 80

Dear Spike,

I pulled my camouflage snap-brim low to shield my eyes from the arcing tracer rounds. I lit up a Lucky from the parachute flare that floated down past my vantage point outside the Dog House near the Korea Area Post Exchange. Rok Special Forces Troops rushed past me. The light from the fire-fight was just sufficiently strong for me to make out the eighteen-point headlines of the Pacific Stars n' Stripes. I squinted my baby-blues into a scowl and made out the words:

"Emergency Marshall Law Declaired"

I adjusted the web belt at my waist and read on in the flickering light.  
"Office of Reddig Control Takes Strong Action to  
Quash Non-Mainstreamers."

I turned to the Riot Cop who was next to me, sighting in on the IL-28 bomber that was unloading on the Base Theater. "Say, Bub" I said. "How does this Emergency Marshall Law differ from the old regular Marshall Law we used to have?"

He grunted with pain as the shrapnel pierced his bicep. "Umgh. E.M.L. means we can shoot the non-mainstreamers before the trial, instead of having to wait untill it is over. Saves time, and is more energy efficient."

"Well, you can bet your ass I'm in favor of that. I'm going home to lower the thermostat." I walked off the curb and skirted the kill-radius of the FROG rocket that left a large crater by the Class IV Liquor Store. I had the feeling that something was going on, but I wasn't sure just what. I looked at my Ration Control Card and saw that I still had one more quart of cheap bourbon to last me through the month. I bought a quart of Old Underwear and thanked the Lord that it hadn't been a direct hit.

A platoon of Unconventional Warfare Troops was dragging a student across the road. I looked closely. There was no doubt about it. A non-mainstreamer. They were all over, and they had to be quashed ruthlessly like the cockroaches they were. It was all a conspiracy. All of them, from the Ministry of National Defense right down to my Detailer. If only I had been able to detect non-mainstreamers before I had arrived in Seoul, none of this would have happened.

I took a sip of bourbon and examined my options. I was nearly broke from the three month's advance pay that I had used to buy that land. My paychecks were gutted; just a cruel joke by the Navy Department. The Disbursing Office was stalling my Travel Claim and my TLA. Obviously they were part of this thing. How was I going to replace the two stereos that had been stolen from my Household Goods shipment? The Army had promised to look into the theft just as soon as they had time, maybe next year, and had promised top dollar. Perhaps as much as ten cents a pound, the special rate for electronics. Thank God they hadn't got my weapons.

I rounded



I rounded the corner by the Main Snack Bar and nearly ran smack into a non-mainstreamer. I could tell by his shifty look and jaundiced complexion. I drew my Dan Wesson .357 with the eight inch barrel and ventilated the evil humors. It was blocks to my luxurious hooch. I took another sip and marched on forthrightly.

Overhead a flight of MiG-17s rolled in on the Blue House, followed by two I-Hawk missiles and a couple F-5Es. This could mean trouble, I thought, and lit a Lucky on the parking meter and walked on down the road. The only consolation I could dredge up was that I wasn't stuck out in the clean air someplace, mountains around me, with nothing but caucasians with big tits and round eyes and mountains and trees and that yucky shit.

I scragged a non-mainstreamer who was cunningly disguised as the Mama-san at the Hooch. There was no indignity that they would not perpetrate. I looked the door behind me and turned on Armed Forces Korea Network. They warned me against taking any part in the current destabilization, advised me that my money was worth 2.3% less this month, and returned to the Hispanic Heritage Hour, serving the many Chicanos native to this part of the Korean Peninsula.

I took a last draught of the cheap bourbon and listened to the B-52 Arc Light Raid downtown. It was time for bed. I shot out the light and notched another day on the bedpost.

And that is the way it is on the Korean Peninsula.

Take care of yourself, bro, love

THE COMMAND BUNKER  
UNITED SNAKES PROCES  
SOUL CITY  
19 MAY 1980

Dear Mohammed,

Well, now we have Emergency Marshall Law, quite a different kettle of fish that your ordinary, run of the mill Marshall Law that has been in effect since Park got soragged.

Nothing much happening today. All the Universities are closed, and the dreaded Non-Mainstreamers have been served notice that they will have thier asses handed to them if they try to fuck with the Military.

I was over in the Command Bunker when the play was made. It made for an interesting Mid-watch. ("I was working the Mid-watch out of Indications and Warnings. My partner was Sgt Volsko. It started out quiet, but there was a rumor of some heavy Bunko Activity down at Governmant Center.....")

Anyhow, the joint was crawling with Generals. Tye Three-Star was calling the Four Star. The two stars were running around in their evening dress. The one stars were making phone calls for the two stars. Everyone else was hanging around, trying to figure out what our Host Nationals were up to this time.

Sunday passed quietly, as did the watch this morning. No way to tell how the main players are going to sort it out. The cast of characterxxxxrs doesn't bother me too much, except the one's in the funny uniforms about eighteen clicks up the road.

Got a chance to go up to the DMZ last week, and check out some Godless Commies in the flesh. Creepy. We went and hung around the UN conference table and I walked across the room into North Korea. The Bad gooks were peering in the windows to see that we didn't touch the Flag on their side of the table. Then we went over to the stump of the Tree What ain't Going to be Trimmed again. Eery.

I was in country a week and got ripped off for two stereos. Black Market puts up the prices about four hundred percent. Fascinating Economics. In fact, the market is so good for anything that the Post Office is a nest of thieves. They took 167,000 smackeros out of a registered moeny shipment. They would have escaped scott-free except for an entirely unrelated investigation of some clown who was ordering color TVs under a bougus name. He would swipe them out of the inooming mail and sell them for about 2,100 clams out in the ville. He went back home on leave and purchased a \$100,000 home. He got nailed for one TV when he got back. His penalty was to be reduced one paygrade, and fined \$150 for three months.

Makes you wonder.

Well, I am going to crash, so I can deal with the disintegration of my new homeland on the morrow.

Best to the family,

THE COMMAND BUNKER  
HEADQUARTERS  
UNITED STATES FORCES  
SEOUL  
20 MAY 1980

Dear Dean,

It is Tuesday, and I am drinking a stiff Bourbon. I have earned it, and besides, I still have three bottles to buy this month according to my ration card. You will be able to envision how I am doing by how my typing, erratic under the best of circumstances, disintegrates as we progress through this missive.

I am listening to the Rolling Stones on the portable cassette deck. It is really the only music for a Military Dictatorship. (Sorry...I was just talking to Mama-san about Buddha's Birthday tomorrow. Unless I am mistaken, I think I just told her that all U.S. Forces have the day off. Ah well, I like the language barrier, really. She thinks I'm great because I just gave her a bottle of Tang. No accounting for taste, and boy, any nation that has made Tang a heavily rationed black market item has got more problems than plain T-34 tanks up the road.)

The weather is nice today, and the nice pair (brace?) of pheasants are strolling around outside my window. I am seized by a nearly uncontrollable desire to pull out the Dan Wesson and make them vanish in a cloud of pin feathers. Vaporize the fuckers.

Excuse me. I may be letting my emotions show. Let's see how I'm doing in a couple paragraphs.

So far, this thing sucks. I am back to being just another J.G. in the Joint mother fucking Command. I have been patronized within an inch of my life. Most notably by an Air Force first looie who seems to think that this is a 'remote' assignment in the heart of the world's tenth largest City. He has no conception that remoteness begins about a thousand nautical miles northeast of Garcia Diego, and gets worse the further West you get. Oh well. Worst, the Navy here is mostly blackshoes. The first words spoken to me (besides Welcome Aboard) was "Shave."

You see, wearing a beard offends the Koreans. Only the old and wise can grow the few white follicles that they possess. "But," I said calmly, "There is a thing called 'U.S. Regs' that says I can grow whatever I want, so long as it is neatly trimmed. You see, I am not a Korean. And if they want my help in staving off the Communist Menace they can just dig it or eat it."

"What you don't see, young man, is that you aren't in the Navy anymore. You are in Korea." It got worse from that moment on.

They had no room at the BOQ, of course. The Army has only been here in strength for 26 years, and they haven't got around to fixing that little glitch. They are going to get right on it as soon as we are in imminent danger of being over run, or I get out of country. Whichever comes first.

So I wound up at the Hyatt up the hill. Not too bad: the place was tolerable. What they didn't tell me was that they could only reimburse me \$23 dollars a day, and the room was \$32. I explained to them that it really wasn't my job to subsidize Army Housing, but it didn't seem to get me very far. Just another one of the Good Deals I have come to know and love in my time over in this corner of the world.

After about two weeks they allowed as how they could shoe-horn me into one of the plush permanent facilities, as all the important people had left the country. I moved in, and notified Household Goods that they could deliver my shipment anytime. They said they could get right on it and have the stuff over at the place in as little as week or so. Certainly before Buddha's Birthday. "Swell," I said enthusiastically. "Why don't you fuckers just take your sweet fucking time. I don't want to see my stereo or blankets until I have time to let the silence start to get to me, and I have a nice set of chillblains."

Well, the silence was barely tolerable, and the chillblains are healing nicely. Unfortunately, when my shipment arrived, I discovered that I was not going to be able to listen to all that nice shit I had so laboriously hauled all over the Kanto Plain. Somebody had left the Customs seals nicely in place, removed the top of the crate, and carefully examined everything I own on Earth for items of interest.

Amongst the missing was both of my stereos, earphones, two tape decks, a couple blankets, some Midway lighters, and generally anything that glittered. They took their time and did a good job. I was proud of them. The only thing they fucked up on was not taking the guns, which were in an innocuous box. I was very glad, because if I so much as see somebody looking in my window, I am going to splatter his brains all across the green hill.

So aside from the fact that all the Postal Clerks are under indictment for theft and mail fraud, and that the disbursing clerks haven't been able to pay me any funds, and the job sucks, things are just great. Except for the rioting and the coup, and the nasty assortment of fanatics that live up the road, and the shooting on the D.

In order to impress us callow newcomers to Asia, they drove us across town and up to the Joint Security Area. There we were able to see actual Communists in their cute little sam brown belts and 7.62 mm pistols. They didn't seem very happy to see us, but then I didn't really get off on them, either. We saw the Stump, and the guardposts, and the fortifications and everything, including the caps belonging to the Major and the Lieutenant who are "still on guard," whatever the fuck that means. The Mad Monks told us that the work party was so well disciplined that they never pulled a weapon during the incident. 'Course, the majority was too busy blasting up over the hill to do much about it. And the guys in our guardpost were too busy making sure the thing was photographed for the Permanent Record to do anything. They documented it so well that one of the rear posts with Big Eyes had to call them up and tell them that they had inadvertently left the Lt behind, and that he was still alive.

Naturally, by the time they got back, there wasn't much left of the hapless J.O. "Say, I asked, doesn't this say a lot about our overall Command and Control system? I mean, if somebody kills off the only person empowered to give the order to load n' lock, don't that mean the discipline is all wasted? Can't you teach people to think, too?"

"The Officer's Club is open now, Sir."

I went in and had about four beers, standing stride the military demarcation the bounds the Z. I had already stood in North Korea that day, on the other side of the conference table in the MAC building. The funny thing about the Commies was that the faces on our side of the line looked just as fanatical. Just another bunch of orientals with a passion for wearing uniforms.

Speaking of which, the Coup.

I was doing a training Mid-watch, on a Saturday night. It should have been quiet, so I could practise my Orders of Battle, and answer the phone, and process messages. All that good fun shit. Instead, when I wheeled around the bottom of the stairway to the Indio Center, I saw LTGEN Rosenorans huddled with some of the Embassy types and a couple of the real spooks. The room rapidly filled up with all the power-junkies, flunkies, analysts, and Movers and Shakers. It was a thrill a minute thru the night, as our trusted allies blew whatever claim they had of being a Republic. It was General Chon's play, and it was a great one.

Three thousand Pigs....I mean, Korean National Police, surrounded the Women's College where 78% of the Student Leaders were getting together to plan the next step for the demonstrations. The cops cruised in and only managed to grab 18 of the ringleaders. So then they went outside and began busting people at random to get the requisit amount for the body count.

That was the early story. Then we discovered that Emergency Marshall Law was going into effect that night at midnight. This is not to be confused with ordinary Marshall Law, which we have been enjoying since Park got scragged. This is the big bopper. No warrants, immediate jail terms for gossip, round up the political opposition. Tremendous.

And to think I was there. We don't know what the North is going to do. One theory holds that they are terrified that the South will take this opportunity to move North. I don't think so. I got out my camouflage fatigues (they tried to issue me Army greens) and made sure the weapons were oiled.

Maybe it doesn't matter that I already lost the stereo after all. Well, I wouldn't have it any other way. I'm glad I work in a bunker, shift work in a bunker, and not stuck on some lousey white sand beach with the Doctor's Wind blowing over my darkly tanned body with some Eurasian girl giving me great head while I sip on a Primo.

Say hello to the Boss for me. I tried to call him on the circuit last week but they said he was off screwing the wife and drinking a bottle of drambuie. And if you see LODR Ricker, make sure you tell her that I will never forgive her for passing me in Strategic Warfare and getting me into all this. It is her fault.

Take care,

*JIC*

THE RANCH  
UNITED SNAKES FORCES  
SEOUL  
BUDDHA'S BIRTHDAY  
21 MAY 80

Dear Jane,

Not much going on here except a couple riots, mobilization of the troops, and a Military Coup.

I do seem to have a talent for picking the good ones. Let's see: the City is quiet after the disturbances last week. The imposition of Martial Law seemed to cool the jets of the students, particularly since the Junta closed the schools. They threw a bunch of kids in the hoosegow, and with the elimination of civilian courts, they can keep anyone they want for as long as they want. So Seoul is, for the moment, fairly comatose.

The real trouble is down south. Kwang-ju has been in an uproar for the last couple of days. Some reports are claiming 50,000 people in the streets. As usual, the real reason is not so much that the people down there are pissed off about democratic reforms, but more because they have had their native son 'detained' for questioning along with the head of the other major opposition party leader. The ROKs sent in the Special Forces and the Airborne troops with bayonets. That was about the last the U.S. can figure out. The Commander of the airbase near town sealed off the installation, on the principle that we could more effectively ignore the whole thing if no yanks got stepped on. Our loyal ROK allies have clammed up tight on the matter; so much so that we got some hot intelligence off the AP newswire yesterday.

The key to the matter is whether Labor will support what has been mostly a student lark. Remember when we were having the riots ten years ago? The SDS clowns I knew just kept talking about 'getting the Workers together', convinced that a coalition would bring down Nixon and the entire war machine. It never happened at home, and probably never will. (Unless this little Recession blossoms into something particularly nasty. In fact, a resident of Miami could tell better riot stories than I can.)

It is hard to judge just how bad things are. Everyone has a paranoia that is based on the war. The rumor mill had all the rich people fleeing down to Pusan to take ship for Japan. A shoot-out between the Martial Law Commander and an associate, that left a bodyguard dead. Nothing concrete. It all goes on in Hongul, so the yankees are fat, dumb and happy until someone comes over from the Ministry of National Defence to fill us in the the official line. The people up North still remember us driving our jeeps around Pyong-yang when MacArthur swept all the way to the Chinese border. Down south, they recall the fall of Seoul, the great retreat all the way to the Taegu Perimeter.

I personally am going to celebrate the solidity of my life by going over to the Naija Hotel for a nice dinner and a few drinks tonight. Everything that is going on has been played a couple times since the Armistice. Sigmund Ri and the students had it out in the '60s; the Park assassination should have but the fat in the fire, but didn't.

At the moment, the Government is assuring the Megucks (that is Korean for Gaijin) that all is well; that the tourists should come and spend hard currency in the ginza, and take away the famous bargains by the carload. They sure have them here.

Do you need a real deep sea diving helmet? They have them for one hundred dollars just up the street. Huge brass oil lamps and kim-ochi pots. Custom tailoring and camping gear. Unparalleled shopping this side of Taiwan and the Philippines. Hagglng the order of the day, and for once I am not with my 5,000 intimate friends. I can actually walk away and bide my time, instead of having to shell out the inflated "Meet's In" prices. You would like the color of Itae-won dong, or the frantic bustle of East Gate. If the situation cools off it would be a nice stop on an Asian swing.

I'm going to step out into the nice early summer day, still cool before the summer monsoon brings the hot sticky air up from the tropics with the typhoons. Maybe I can shake some cash out of Uncle Sugar. He should be feeling generous. After all, it's Buddha's Birthday.

Say hello to the fast lane for me. It was like a good amphetamine buzz to jump out in the left side and tromp on the gas for a while. A bit tiring, though. Maybe once a year is all I can handle these days.....

Love,

THE COMMAND BUNKER  
UNITED STEAKS FORCES  
SEOUL CITY  
BUDDHA'S BIRTHDAY  
21 May 1980

9d

Dear Kid,

Well here I am, and there you are. It has been a wild couple months. I was a little shell shocked when I got back home. It was very strange: I mean, part of me was still out in Iran someplace and then there was Grand Rapids, still snoozing along like nothing was going on. The trees and the dogs still the same, Ma and Pa a little greyer, but all in all like time never moved forward.

Hard to figure. Then, I get back here and walk into a government being taken over by the military, things tanse, just as they have been for thirty years. Interesting, but a little fatiguing.

When I was home I tried to do everything and see everybody. A mistake, I think, because I had enough on my own mind without getting all wrapped up in the myriad careers, and successes, and failures. I had about five mad affairs, didn't do too well on the only one I cared about, and generally burned out whatever sparks were still glowing from the back burner of my life in the United Snakes. It was funny, as I had got so many things running along in my mind that I never followed anything to a logical conclusion. Just hopped here and there.

Boston, and Detroit, and Salt Lake, and San Fransisco. Frantic calls right up to the moment I materialized in L.A. for the KAL flight back home to the strangers and the mad honking little cars. I never even saw you or Spike. Oh well, maybe I will live in the Snakes again sometime. Till then, I will just remember the vignettes. Some of them were great, some pathos-filled, and some just dumb.

I am looking forward to unpacking a duffle bag sometime and saying "Well, here I am. The Rolling Stone may cease it's perpetual motion, and the moss grow thlok and green on the upward side." I wonder if that is possible? There was a Jerry Rafferty song (this came up in two seperate conversations, on both sides of the Big Pond) that summed things up rather nicely. We used to play it in the Red Horse Cat House in Cubie Point, down in the wild-west Philippines. The tropical sun would be outlined behind the palms on the green and black ridges. The farmers would be burning off the luxuriant growth and the smoke and the yellow glow of the fires contributed to the thick insmence-smell, and the cold sweating bottle of San Miguel, and the red winking nay lights of the grey airplanes going round and round in the touch n' go pattern. The Carrier looking toy-like in the thicket of masts and antennas. "You know he's never going to stop moving...."

To avoid getting too self centered in this thing, I wanted to say I am tickled by the way you are doing. I'm glad Royal came to you, demadning your talents, and that you are making money from the Art that you love. There is nothing more satisfying. I have a book (somewhere) that should be in gallies now. It was a rare moment to heft



the thick manuscript and wonder at all the words. A marginal novel, I will say, utterly unmarketable in any conventional sense. Still, the satisfaction of getting it together was immense. Perhaps the next one will be better.

And that is why I think you are one of the richest people I know, because you get that good rush right home, at work, on the boards.

So there that is. Here, the Military has taken over the government, has taken over the courts, and shows no signs of letting go. How the people react will determine whether I fly out on KAL at the end of my little year (nearly 1/12th done already) or ride out on a helo with the tanks going in the other side of town. I tend to think that they will take things with typical, chosen stoicism, as do most of the old timers. The incidents and non-incidents are interesting, and the job is at least in the center of things. (in-so-far as any yankee can be.)

They ran us up to the Joint Security Area last week, to Know Our Enemy, and look at him in the flesh. We drove past the old steam locomotive pointed north on the rusty and severed tracks. Across narrow and rickety Freedom Bridge across the Imjin River. From the heights you could barely make out the 40 meter statue of the Great Leader Kim il song, plated in real gold. The giant North Korean flag hung limply from the massive mast rising out of Propaganda village, facing a similarly listless ROK banner rising from Freedom Village. Then into the DMZ, past the land mines and over the great 4,000 meter scar that divides the Republic from the Godless North. We went briefly into the MAO building, and I stepped behind the conference table into North Korea. The communists gazed in the window to ensure that we touched nothing, and the yankee guard were starved and pressed and every bit as fanatical as the funny orientals in the russian uniforms.

We motored slowly past the Stump of The Tree which will not need trimming (in this world, anyway.) The Bridge of No Return, where the POW-packed trucks rolled up in 1954 from the North and the South. The ragged figures received the set piece: "You may now cross the Bridge; Or, you may not cross the Bridge. It is your decision, but it must be made now and it is irrevocable." That day, I think, must have been grey. Last week it was just a tired little single span over a turgid and muddy stream with a guardpost and a truck parked at each end. The Major and the Lt were bludgeoned to death where our bus turned around, and the stump interferes not at all with the view from the guardpost now.

Well, I am going to not think about all that today. It is a long drive by tank, and I must say that the weather is too nice for that. I will go drop this in the mail, catch a bite to eat, and roll downtown for some sightseeing and a good dinner at the Nalja Hotel. This will all pass soon enough. I am a land-owner now, as I trust you have heard (or at least I will be when the next 68 payments have rolled by) and it is nice to play with the type of house to build.

Take care of yourself, kid. Love,

BOQ BUNKER  
SEOUL  
27 MAY 79

Dear T.R. & Paula,

I got your kind postcard last week sometime....or was it this week? Hard to tell with the cities falling and the troops moving about in their fashionable tanks and smashing designer fatigues.

It has been a great crisis thus far. I will recount the various intricacies as soon as I vent some spleen.

This, you understand, is a joint command. I have been 'Standing the Watch' in the Command Bunker this week. The training schedule is a little behind; every time I came in to study there was a new Martial Law Proclamation, or the arrest of an Infiltrator, or the Fall of Hwang Ju. (Look here, Reddig, it is pronounced Kwong-jew, not 'Kwaang.' "But we pronounced it that way for years and nobody minded." "It matters here. You are in Korea") So there I was, flat on my back under the desk at fourteen feet below ground level. I was passing down the watch to the young First Lieutenant who was to relieve me. I was over by the air board, and started in about a long distance flight from someplace up north down to some place near the DMZ.

"So this IL-28 drove on down from UmtuDong to...." The First Lieutenant said boldly: "Planes don't drive places. Boats may drive places, but airplanes fly."

"Oh yeah. So this guy flew down here and drove around for a while..."

That tore it. The young man began to boil. I mean, here he was, straight from a real operational base like Carswell, with B-52s and everything, and this Navy puke is telling him about airplanes. I mean really. We got through two more boards and things erupted. He explained to me that he was in the big old air force, and us ship drivers were incompetent jerks.

Ah me. I am not what you would call a real military type guy. In fact, the bulk of the 'time of my life' out on the Skidway I was moaning and bitching and plotting to get off it. Back to someplace safe, on dry land. How strange to want to break somebodies teeth in defense of the Fleet, and Naval forking Aviation in particular. A scene from Dr. Strangelove flashed through my mind. "Gentlemen, Gentlemen, this is the War Room."

So it was Fear and Loathing in the Bunker. I am in the middle of a six pack right now, recuperating with the stuff I gave up last month so I could give this distasteful job my best shot. C'est la Vie. Been here an unpalatable month, and I am almost hoping the North goes ahead and does it.

Speaking of which, I am at least getting my Slice of History lesson. Things began to disintegrate almost from the first day. Was it only a week ago Sunday that I walked into the Bunker to see the three stars puffing earnestly on their pipes, the CIA hastily phoning the Embassy, the one star going batshit to emphasize their importance,

the power groupies and the analysts frantically blowing smoke into the congested atmosphere. The shit had hit the fan. The ROKs had gone out of control, and the man in the drivers seat, Gen Ohn Tu Hwan had determined the the only thing he could do about the student demonstrations was to come down on the kids, and hard. His troops swarmed onto campus and arrested eighteen of the leaders in what had been unchallenged sanctuary. Then the word swept through the Bunker that Emergency Marshall Law was going into force at Midnight, and anyone caught rumor-mongering or non-mainstreaming was going to pay a heavy price indeed.

Well, the weekend passed in Seoul with nary a squeak from the kids. Downtown, by the trainstation, the black berets wheeled in a show of force, bayonets fixed, and the children shrieked in mook terror, and left the field to the Special Forces. No trouble in Seoul.

But down South there was another kettle of Kimchi altogether. Now, realizing that the Seoul-City folk view the South as a land of rubes, hicks, manual laborers, and genral non-sophisticates, and that the views from Kwaang-jew are likewise ascerbic, it was only to be expected that the E.M.L. wasn't going to be welcomed with open arms. I don't think General Hwan could quite have featured what the complete reaction was going to be.

We in the United Snakes Forces don't have the story in it's complete and unvarnished gory details. The ROKs who work in the Joint Command were cut off almost as thoroughly as we were from the 'full partnership' which is tenuous even in the best of times. One thing was sure! they didn't want us to know what they were going to do, as our old maidish niceties would only interfere in putting down the communist-inspired desire for Democratization with the boot-heels of Mainstream Thought.

The first try at calming the situation, which at first was just a few dozens of thousands of demonstrators, was to drive in the tanks and fix bayonets.

For some reason, this appeared to be counter-productive. Obviously the Non-Mainstreamism was of a most virulent sort. It called for a firm dose of Dr. Ohn's magic elixer. At one point, they were calling for Cobra Gunships to put down a march on a provincial prison. Oh lorsey me. You have read the story in the Stars n' Snipes by now, and my mind couldn't help but wonder at what a decade can bring. In the late Sixties, (by which, of course, I actually mean 71 and 72) this was the kind of crap that enabled Ho Chi Minh to fight the war in the United States, and win it politically. We got all confused and tried to fight it on the ground in his country. Well, you live and you learn.

(I have to note here, I have had a most interesting line of conversation with an individual who shall remain nameless. He was involved in the M.I. assault on the Weathermen and the Panthers in the Bay Area. By now I am sure that you are aware of the once uttered threat to "Blow up some Pig Fascist Military Complex" on the West Coast that gave the Services carte blanche to get into the mass federal assault on the anti-war movement. I was most favorably impressed with the news that- and did this one fascinate me- that the Panthers operated a clandestine manual morse net in the beloved United Snakes....Using Chinese Cypher codes. And the ruble laundering that brought all kinds of neat electronic gear to

the SDS.....but I commence to wander a bit far afield. It is, non-the-less, damned fascinating to hear that all the paranoia fantasy of the times was in no small part true. We were being duped by Moscow and Washington both. It has a certain symmetry to it that I can appreciate as a former Global Analyst without portfolio to the Navy's finest Airwing. Plus I really enjoyed the sotry of the ~~tk~~ SDS co-ordinator with his \$478 dollar Motorola walky-talky being jammed by a room-sized field-jamming device that produced RF burns from his ear to his buttocks.....)

So where was I? railing about a war lost ingominously, or the Air Force? Ah, yes, so there we were in Kwaang-jew City. The rioting spread through out the Cholla Province. The Students (what a catch phrase that is, these days!) were at one point in possession of thousands of weapons, APCs and all the trucks they could drive. They said that if they were denied passage across one of the local bridges one click away from the Air Base, they were going to occupy one of the ROK Army family housing areas. The stories, rumors, of the dead were scraping a half thousand. Certain irresponsible parties announced that the joint ammunition storage area at the Air Base had to captured.

A word of commiseration for Col Custer, the aptly named U.S. Facility Commander at Kwaang-jew. He was about up to his ass in 'gators. The State department had all kinds of things to declair to the hapless man. I don't believe he has had much sleep the last few days. The entire foreign community that got the propensity to move dem happy feet was his personal baby. Of course travel was out off. What of the determined folks who refused to leave their brass and their rugs?

What is a poor career man to do?

So I sat on my ass- quite literally- and watched the thing go down in a flurry of phone calls from Washington to Seoul. "What's going on now?" says DIA. "I'm having a cup of coffee. How about you?"

Literally in the dark. I went down to the Naifs for one of my two days off last month. (Hey, I thought I was on land!) and looked at the Armored Personnel Carriers with the heavy-starched guard in the turret, as immobile as Buckingham Palace and the M-60 light machinegun dead down the centerline. The people cruising by, seeming not to notice. Sends tingles down the spine, you know?

Then the talks began, and a sigh of relief began to settle on the American community. At last, sweet reason. Things had to get better. Oh yup yup yo. A rumor began just about the same time that the Prime Minister (which Cabinet, you ask, after all, there have been two in the last week) went down to open negotiations. This particular one went something like: Wait them out. Then storm the city. Wait till they are tired, and hungry, and the working people are beginning to want Peace, the only thing that really matters in the world. Then bring in a few brigades of selected troopers in the dead of night.

And thus shall order, and the slow process of Democratization be truley fulfilled.

For all the dramatic, but largely boring, responsibilities of Briefing Cyclical Ops, I must say that one evening last week I had the power to kill with just a phone call. But that is a bit dramatic. You live in this fairy-land of rumors and classification for long and it starts

to seem almost like it is real or sumpin.

So long about this morning- the afternoon of which I pulled out my concealed and illegal Browning and contemplated lowering the ranks of the powder blue by one- I walked in to the Bunker about an hour early to try to make sense of all the computer print outs. And it was the second shoe hitting the floor. They were going in, and it was to be the decisive move.

Well, we shall see about that. But Seoul radio announced the city was secured by 0530. Military casualties were described as 'light.' No civilians were reported injured. A few Rebels were killed. (The trusty Watch NOO to my left spoke the wisdom hard-learned in other climes. "A suspected Vietcong is one you shot at. A confirmed NVA is the one you caught in the head.")

Well, my name is Uncle Wiggley.

\*\*\*\*\*

In reference to Paula's kind postal card: I am working the day of the Blow Lunch. In the words of The Firesign Theater: "How can you be in two places at once, when you aren't anywhere at all?" But I sure wish I could be there. Tell my relief that he should sleep in the backyard. It is much softer there, and one is not so liable to be trampled, or otherwise injured.

I am glad Hooch ball-walked the Club. I assume from that cryptic word that the Hooches, both Buck and doting Bride, are not at flight school? Please advise by return post.

I am going to essay the mailing of this missive to Yokohama, on the principle that it should probably be shredded prior to reading. This is easily the drunkest, and bacchus inspired, of my post-ORP letters.

I can't really describe what it is like to lose a family like the you guys. Beel and meel and Jambaux in particular. But that is the way of these things. T.R. made me cry over my stupid dog in Cuba. I suppose I am just a sentimental Mr. Slug after all.

If the Midway don't pull in before coming to the sunny waters off Cheju-do, please forward this out.

Take care,

A hearty congratulations to Scotty for getting rid of Maint. May he stay Dr. Bates for all time.....

THE POSH BOQ  
SOUTH POST, YSAG  
30 MAY 80

Dear Folks,

Got the nice little compendium of envelopes today, with pictures, Family Newsletters, and kind notes from the Gerbers. The Pictures were a pleasant surprise...I had forgotten I had taken the things. Was I really there only a month ago?

It has indeed been a month to remember. The Kwang Ju situation seems to have calmed down, and there are no pressing crisis situations at the moment. I took that opportunity (one never knows how long it will last) to take the Watch Officer's Test today, and I am now qualified to endanger the Peace of the entire Peninsula on my own.

I believe that I will take a cab and go downtown and have some gin and tonics to celebrate. Two weeks ago, the last chance I had to get away for a while, the tanks were parked all over, with the drivers behind the M-60 light machine guns. They are gone now; or at least the vehicles are parked behind the buildings instead of out front.

Got a nice note from Beth Nelson. I am glad that the fall-out from St. Helen's seemed to miss the coastal areas. Can the next decade get off to a more colorful start?

Let's see: I hope both the checks have arrived by now. One should have been drawn on the Navy Federal Account, and the other on the Amex Bank here. I really don't trust the clowns over at the Post Office.

I was concerned when I heard about Dad and the Hospital. I got the letter while I was on duty over at the Bunker, and was only slightly mollified by the optimistic contents. It lead, indirectly, to an interesting near fist-fight in the Indie Center. I was briefing the oncoming Watch Officer, who was an Airforce 1st Looie of tender years and aggressive wit. I described a flight of NKAF bombers as "driving on down South and fooling around." The young man informed me that Airplanes don't drive; they fly. I thanked him for the update and politely inquired as to why the tactical air community always described themselves as Phantom Drivers, or even those legendary F-8 Drivers? He allowed as how He was in the Air Force and not some ignorant Ship Driver. "Ships Drive" he said briskly, and I should know. I agreed that flying a light table at Carswell AFB almost four blocks from the O Club really had taught him a lot about the ways things were over seas (he has been out of the country nearly four months now, and has got things down pretty well....)

I was reminded of the scene in Dr. Strangelove where Peter Sellers shouts out to the combattants in the Command Center "Gentlemen, Gentlemen, This is the War Room!" Anyhow, I am relieved that Dad is back home and on the mend. Sometimes the petty little crap builds up. They have a Major General who drives around the BOQs in the morning to ensure that no ladies have had the temerity to sleep over. Naturally more important than being Chief of Staff..... Ah well.

I know now why my old Boss Vince Frangomene said "Better to get the

Joint Tour out of the way when you are still too Junior to get clobbered."

Speaking of getting clobbered, I am now in the throghs of trying to get my claim against the Movers settled. The burden of proof is naturally on me to demonstrate the exact age and condition of every-thing that was stolen. Could you look around the rat's nest of my papers and see if there is a receipt for any Stereo gear? I have to document it all, and it would prevent months of anguish if I can come up with anything. I can't figure how I didn't bring it along with me, as I thought I was prepared for any contingency. Oh well, I left one of my favorite shower slippers at McClellan AFB when I flew in. These intercontinental moves are so difficult.

Let's hope that the pinched nerve gets unkinked, the world crisis holds off another couple months (eleven and counting) and that the depression fails to deepen.

Gotta run, best to everybody, Love,

THE BUNKER LOUNGE  
SEOUL CITY  
30 MAY 80

Dear Jane,

It is Payday in Seoul. The day after tomorrow everybody will have a whole month's ration tickets to punch. The weather is beautiful, the flies have finally come out, and it looks to be in the 80s. The tanks have been driven around the back of the government buildings downtown, and some of the Special Forces troops have been put back in the ROK army where they belong.

It must be summer.

I am at the moment two days into one of the legendary three day breaks they give us once a month, and I have only had to work two of them. Due to the imposition of the Crisis (or 'Flap' as it is more aptly described) I had to take break time to go over what I should have been learning during the first few weeks. I took the test this morning, and passed. I am now a fully qualified Watch Officer, and thus competent to endanger the peace of the entire Peninsula on my own responsibility.

Things were so bad there for a while that I quit drinking. I am going to remedy that this evening with a trip down to the Naija Hotel for strong cocktails and dining in neo-colonial luxury. All I have to do is not get trapped by the Curfew; but since I can sleep in tomorrow, even that isn't an impenetrable barrier.

The Chinese Vice Premier visited Japan yesterday. That is noteworthy due to the fact that it hasn't happened in 2,000 years. It is astonishing to deal with cultures that have records that go back that far. When I wrote you that self-serving history of my wanderings since dear old Seaholm Gaol, I had to scrape hard for a single decade. China is saying Japan should re-arm (remembering that Japan still had a half million troops in Manchuria in 1945 it is a startling notion) and what's more, the North Koreans weren't going to swarm down over the border and make me get my camouflage fatigues dirty. I do look rather dashing in them, but on the whole, I would just as soon skip it. So maybe I will have a year of peace to shop for brass and clocks.

I hope this finds you in the midst of warm summer weather, tanning, tanning deeply, and enjoying cold drinks on green grass. The news of the auto industry is so grim in the papers; I hope it won't be another hot summer with the Convention coming to town. And our next president, Mr. Carter/Reagan. Oh my.

Enclosed is a snap from up north. I have a hard time believing I was there; but I suppose I must seem sorta chimerical too. My typing is disintegrating, and my body is crying out for a fast cab ride through the wide boulevards to a walnut bar with powerful gins.

Take care of yourself. Speed is Life, as we used to say in San Diego. I miss you.  
Love,



A LATE EVENING  
IN THE BUNKER  
DRUNK ON MY ASS  
SEOUL  
31 May 80

Hello.

I am just back from a walking tour of the City. The guards at the subway ways are more unobtrusive than last week, but equally grim. Last time I ventured forth from the compound, the tanks were parked conspicuously in front of all the public buildings, the M-60, light machine guns right down the centerline, the guy in the turret half out, creased and starched. They put a good deal of faith in being squared away in this part of the globe.

I mention that in the context of the Joint Security Area in the middle of the DMZ, where the yahks were almost as scary as the godless Commies. Don't get me wrong. When I was standing over in North Korea, on the wrong side of the conference table, I felt all the right kind of chills. It is a superb set-piece. But since the Tree Chopping, things are weird. The Quick Reaction Force, which protects each party that ventures into the JSA, has axe handles and helmets.

I would have felt more secure if they had let me carry my Browning.

Anyhow, here I am. I got the pictures I took in Beantown the other day. I opened the packet and flipped. I mean, I was actually there. Couldn't believe it. A candid shot of Jen while she was driving; a minor triumph, considering how gun-shy she is around a loaded Nikon. That's all right. I promise to do it only every couple years. The photos generally were a success. I feel very chagrined to announce that my picture of that uniquely American Drive In Theater near Braintree did not turn out.

Some times you got to step away from the United Snakes to see it in all it's glory.

Boy, I sure can't type after ten or fifteen vodka collins. I guess that will teach me to quit drinking. I was doing so good, too. Sitting around waiting for the other shoe to fall; Kwang Ju in flames, the joke around the Command Bunker was "I'll write you from Pusan if the situation gets interesting." I have a set of camouflage fatigues that I will start wearing just as soon as the roof falls in. And a gas mask. And an Air Force 1st Looie that I want to puoh out.

But that, likewise, is another story.

The only thing about this job that I like is that it is already almost 1/12th over with already, and I have only been here a split eternity. Back in the Fighter Squadron, at least there was always five or six guys you could trust to go out and get fucked up with. Sorta like Ann Arbor, if everybody at the P-Bell had severe jaundice and remedial English. I like the Koreans a lot, but as far as my compatriots in the Bunker go, I would trust them as far as I could lift them with a Claymore. All the Navy types are getting out, and I fear that I will be in that number myself.

The current job is max strange. I sit behind a desk and have Enlisted Swine at my port and starboard. (Not my term, but I find SFC Volsko's dry wit a remarkable tonic in the circumstances.) The Big General Officers come in and ask what is going on. I have a hard time dealing with a certain Major General, who finds time to drive around the Bachelor Officer's quarters of a morning to check who is sleeping with Korean Grils. Or girls, as the case may be.

That is worth a career, ~~xxx~~ for those who continue to think along those lines. Having Joined the People Who Joined the Army, I find the thing a cruel charade at best.

The political situation is at least worth idle speculation. I do enjoy these little international peccadillos. I fear I may have degenerated into a Crisis junky. Watching the CIA swing into galvanized motion over the Secure Telephone. Watching the Analysts and the Special Advisor to the OINC in a tizzy. It does get your adrenaline up.

On the other hand, I certainly had as much adrenaline going in the States. Did I tell you I bought a couple lots up on Martin Lake? Did I say why? (I wish I knew. I look at the 68 payments and wonder. At least it is convenient to nowhere, with no churches and schools nearby.) I managed to thoroughly cream at least four Relationships with actual White Women. One I actually cared about even. (Or at least the distance and the isolation had made it seem important. I got back over here to the beeping little Jap cars and the Ration Control System and all the yellow people and the Mama-san who paws through my stuff looking for things to wash, and went, whoo doggies, what woman in her right mind would maintain the embers through all this shit.)

I just Don't Know.

But in spite of all this drunken self-pity, I think I will survive this one too. What I am having a hard time in figuring is: What Next? I have to care for a bunch of scrub pines for at least the next year or five, and that is a big responsibility. I would like to get back to the Beantown area, but I can't for the life of me figure out what I might do pile up greasy sheeles in the marketplace. I have lost track of the manuscript of my first Novel. ( pay for the course) and am convinced that I could easily starve trying that route again.

Allow me to pause here for a moment; Roxy Music just came up on my portable tape deck (my other two thousand bucks worth of gear was ripped off from my household goods shipment)

Whew. Did I mention that the guy across the hall is a Naxo? I mean, this is funky. Most of the Post Office here is under indictment. When you can't even be sure of your mail, morale plumets. So does your spelling.

The Black Market is an awesome machine. Besides converting my stereo into won, without benefit of cutting me in on the deal, they run a vast profit on things like TANG. That's right, that sleazy orange-colored powder is a hot item. So is Mayonaise, a tightly controlled commodity. The sex, and I confess with a blush that I haven't even been able to get it up for the imitation blonde orientals out in the dark corners of Itaewon Dong, don't look much better than the Phillipines. (Query Bob Reed on that.) The eight dollar imitation antique Tigers are quite nice, though, and my newest one is looking at me from under the near-life sized portrait of

OOPS. Santa Ismerelda is crying out to me from the tape rack. Uno momento, Por Favor.

Ah, much better. Leroy Gomez seems to have a better grasp on this than I do. I used to play him right before getting off the ship in Africa, or Hong Kong, or one of those places. Whatever.

(Re-enter broken train of thought) the USS Yorktown, in full zig-zag paint job, launching an F-4U Corsair. I bought it when I was unconscious at NAS Cubie Point and have been ashamed of myself ever since.

I have a brace of pheasants that live on the green hill outside my window. Mr Pheasant is very proud of himself in his zig-zag paint scheme. Ms Pheasant is very unliberated. I have been nearly overcome with the desire to start blasting away with .357 magnum rounds in the deep inky darkness; the same favored by the black-clad Unconventional Warfare types from the nasty little puppet Dictatorship up the road. (Not to be confused with this nasty little puppet democracy. I asked about two weeks ago: "Say, could you explain the difference between ordinary Marshall Law, the the special Emergency Marshall Law they just declared tonight I was up at the DMZ like I said a couple pages ago, and you would just barely make out the forty meter statue of Kim Il Sung, plated in Real Gold. Whew.)

I'll tell you, it is a good thing that I am such a good citizen.

I hope this has been cryptic n' incoherent enough. The Nazis just came back, and I'm afraid I have to turn down the tunes and stop this incessant banging on the keys. Things could be worse. I have walls now, instead of bulkheads. The same number of Communists are out to get me, but at least I am armed now. I am a fully qualified Watch Officer, competent to get the entire Peninsula into trouble all by myself. The cool night wind is blowing, and if I am not deliciously happy, at least I can open a window. It doesn't even smell like JP-5 outside.

Maybe I'll grow up next year.

Thumbs up & Buns away.

THE BUNKER  
5 June 1980  
Seoul City

Dear

Well, I hope you are settled in there in Steak n' Corn county. I think you picked a fine time to get out of the Motor City. From what I remember about the Ford bennies, I imagine you have a pretty nice house and plenty of projects to keep you busy for the next few years.

Not much going on here except a military coup, rumors of war, rioting, and tanks in the street.

Actually, things have calmed down a bit. That was the picture two weeks ago. I had just finished a trip up to the DMZ to look at the real bad guys when the "good guys" went batshit. The students at all of Seoul's major colleges were out on the boulevards, demonstrating for a faster tempo for democratization. The government handled it pretty well for a while; we were all proud of them down in the Command Bunker. Moderation is not a trait built into the Koreans. The easy pace didn't last. The students produced a couple of the famous Non Negotiable Demands, and the Military clique around LtGen. Ohn do Hwan made their move. I was cruising in for a night shift and I saw a galaxy of stars standing around the Watch Desk. It didn't look good. The Spooks were talking to Washington, the generals were being recalled, and the shit generally went bouncing around the little green room.

The Roks had stormed the Universities, and imposed Double Secret Probation on all the non-mainstreamers. Rumor mongering was punishable by immediate jail terms. Yuck. It wasn't as bad as December, when some trigger-happy ROKs shot up General Wickam's car, but these none the less.

Things were calm for a day or so - the calm that goes right before the thunder storms roll in off Lake Michigan. Down South the folks were determined that it was all a plot (which of course was true) and that the new Marshall Law Commander didn't like them (which likewise was right on.) The predictable happened, and there were hundreds of thousands of people throughout Cholla Province who tore up the City of Kwang-ju (where my squadron used to deploy all the time) and some other little burbs. The ROKs demanded that some of their troops be released from UN control, and we obediently let them go. It was wild for a while. They were using Cobra gunships against rioters, the rioters had grabbed thousands of weapons, and a couple hundred folks got scoraged (depending on who you wanted to listen to.)

Finally, to make the weeks fly by, the Special Forces stormed the town, hurting no civilians (but blowing away a few rioters, whoever they were. In Vietnam the VC you shot at were 'possible', while the ones you killed were 'confirmed'.")

Things are quiet now, the only big deal going on is the Korean Employees demonstrating for a forty % pay hike on base. Yawn. That is easy. The other stuff going on is just the usual: shooting incidents, wierd military activity, and the guards at all the subway stations. The tanks and APOs are still downtown, but they are parked around the back of the

the buildings. People around here are pretty much used to it after the last thirty years of instability. I haven't met anybody who is too concerned about the Military Dictatorship, but then I work sorta odd hours.

There is no mistaking this puppet Republic for the puppet Dictatorship up the road, ho ho ho.

Summer has just broken here; the skies are still clear before the summer monsoon brings the wet moist air up from the Philippines. The Flies are out, the dust is blowing around, and the Special Forces have been put back in the ROK side of the DMZ where they belong.

So life goes on in Americas frontier in Asia. Meanwhile, I went ahead and bought two lots from Beth (Zorn) Nelson up at Martin Lake. They are not real prime; they are over across from the MacIntosh Shack. They are out of the view of those god-awful little shitboxes that the other Nelsons are busy throwing together up by M-32. I was drunk at the time, but Beth assured me that I was also a 1/16th owner in on of her lake-front lots, so I would be guaranteed access to lovely Martin Pond.

I may even succeed in paying for them someday. I'm sure the Maos are viewing the prospect of a geodesic dome of old car hoods with my ancient Delta \*\*88\*\* Mandoraiser out front with no small amount of Desp & Loathing

Love affairs back at home were bewildering. Thank goodness I am home in Asia again.....

Take care of yourselves,



THE BUNKER  
5 JUNE 1980  
SEOUL CITY

DEAR JANE,

I don't really have anything to say in this one; I mean there hasn't been a single change of government this week....well, actually I would be remiss in not describing the new Committee for State Security, which has effectively abolished the old government altogether. But the other one, the legal version, still is around. They don't pay any attention to it. So I suppose you could say that they changed governments after all. It is so confusing. Gen Ohn tu Hwan is the Man more than ever, and he seems to like driving. Maybe that will change in a couple days like everything else. Better than the Free Press in the morning.

I was having a few drinks down at the Neija yesterday afternoon. I was talking to a Country Rock band from Oregon, that was out here to cheer up the troops. They thought Asia was really neat. I asked them where they were going next, and they said the Gulf of Oman to entertain the sailors. I wished them the very best of luck. Their lead singer was a very busy lady. I think they are going to have to put a permanent Marine Guard around her starting at Diego Garcia. She said she was looking forward to it.

Naturally, I got to talking to Wayne, the Seagram's Distributor for Military Sales. He kept putting Crown Russ vodka in front of me, and I kept explaining that I had to go to work in six hours. "Plenty of time!" he said. "Let me tell you how it was coming back from the Chosen Reservoir back in '52!"

It was some hours later that I floated into the green painted Command Bunker, ready to deal with a heavy flying day by the North Korean Air Force, and sundry vital indicators & warnings. I coolly looked over a couple Top Secret Messages, and strolled to the head to puke my guts out.

I really like the night shift.

I could go on with my outrage at the new Base policy of not selling beer during the day (even if you work at night) but I think maybe I will give up alcohol for a few days.....the guy responsible for the Fight against the Curse of Our Overseas Possessions is named MGen (the "Ayatollah") Dohlmeini. He is the same one who patrols the Junior Officers Housing to make sure no overnight guests are present on Post. His latest triumph was busting a Lt.Col. This Army shit sure is strange. There is talk of moving him up to the 2nd Infantry Division, and maybe he will step on a land mine or something.

Hope the summer is plenty of gin n tonics and max sun. I am wearing my Safety Cocktail Shirt from the Philippines to celebrate a gorgeous day.  
Thumbs up, Love,

THE BUNKER  
5 June 1980  
Seoul

Dear Mr. ~~B...~~ and Bill,

Just a quick note from the Front. Dr. Ohn's Magic Elixer has worked miracles with these recalcitrant non-mainstreamers. We are safely back on the track of a Military Democracy, where any Korean Kid who attends the KMA has a decent shot at growing up to be head of the Special State Security Committee, and ruling the Liberalization of the country. Just like back home.

The tanks are parked around back of the public buildings now, nice and unobtrusive, just like the other democracies. There is no mistaking this puppet Republic for the puppet Dictatorship down the road. I confess I had my doubts there for a minute, but the Special Forces have been recalled from Kwaang-jew, and the lucky thing was that not one single citizen was injured in the disturbance. A few non-mainstreamers bit the big weinie, but that is only to be expected.

I was standing out in front of my luxurious ranch-style BOQ the other day, watching the Ayatollah Dohlmeinie drive by in his MGen's staff car, carefully checking the officer's housing to ensure that no females were sleeping over. That is MGen Dohlman's real job; that deputy OINC thing is just a cover for the real stuff. I was thanking my lucky stars that the general had single-handedly made a great move to eliminate the dreaded curse of alcoholism from the Army Compound. It was a small sacrifice on my part to not be able to buy beer during the day, or order a drink at the Club, or go to Happy Hour with half priced cocktails. Just because where I work we are on shifts and don't have weekends or regular hours is no reason we should be having a good time. There are important issues here, and I'm glad the general has the courage of his convictions to stamp out the dreaded Curse of Our Overseas Possessions. The rumors about him and those hooks and private "language lessons" over at Sorabel House are exaggerated, I'm sure, because a guy that moral in public couldn't be a closet coke n' bondage freak like they say. I'm almost positive the stuff about the garter belts isn't true. After all, he is an O-8 for Christ sake.

I would go over to the Commissary and stand in line behind all the Koreans who are using their hard-earned priviledges, but I am sorta pressed for time. I have to be at work early tomorrow. I have plenty of stuff left to buy on my Ration Plate this month. I have another eight ounces of tange, and two more quarts of expensive booze, if I am so fortunate as to be not working some time when the store is open.

I have trained some of the cockroaches here at the Q to do tricks, just like back on the Midway. I have taught them to run from my shoes, and to eat from open containers. They are very intelligent. In fact, if I could train them to wear fatigues, I'm sure they would have brillinat careers ahead of them. Maybe next week.

Well, I really have to be running along. I don't want to miss getting hassled in my living room by some black chick MP with a loaded .45 looking for the Narcotics agent who lives across the hall. When are you

going to be here? K.O.S.,

THE SPLIT-RANCH BOQ  
SEOUL  
6 June 1980

Dear Jane,

Well, I hate to write two days running, but I got your note of the 30th this morning at 0430 when I showed up for work. I read it once, and kept glancing at it from the pile of Top Secret Codeword messages where I concealed it so the Staff Sergeant who sits next to me wouldn't read it. Cameraderxy is one thing, but there are limits....

Anyhow, you touched a couple of responsive chords, and I wanted to at least show up in an envelope at the white house since I am = shackled to this bizarre schedule.

It occurred to me that I haven't had a "weekend" off in nearly three years....saving those periodic plunges into the United Snakes. It is Friday night, and I am going to climb into bed just as soon as I finish this. Somebody asked me if I was going out in the Ville to celebrate the end of the working week, and I looked at him blankly. Huh?

I think I will get out of town in ten days or so, the next time I have two straight days without going down into the underground complex.

But that is neither here nor there.

As a rolling stone myself, I appreciate your feelings to the max. Back on the ship, I was getting to the point where I had convinced myself that all I wanted was a garage and a lawn. Then, back home, big as life, I didn't manage to stay anywhere longer than four days. You have been on the road since 17. You know. What I wonder is if it possible to stop now? I was daydreaming at the desk the other day and I found myself wondering about taking a year job in the Middle East, or going on to Spain for a couple years.

Thankfully, this job is quickly disabusing most of the warm feelings generated by that extended linear family of the Squadron. That was a special deal; shared hardship, strange places to share with ace drinking buddies, and the certain cockiness that goes with all the assorted weaponry laying around. This petty authoritarian jazz on land has jolted me out of the rut, and I can start to think about what to do next.

I noticed you seemed to be doing some pondering along the same lines. I was looking at the sunset over the big communications center on Namsan Mountain a while ago. It was a glorius Korean sunset; the clouds were rose tinged, the air was clear, and not a single insect bothered me. What next, I said to myself, what after the shiney plastic shoes and the fall of governments and the grinding of the great plates of global power?

I couldn't help thinking of the the line in your letter about getting edgy where you are close to somebody. That has been a concern of mine for a long time. There you are, ambling down the road, having a few laughs, and suddenly the fur stands up on your back and the guardposts are doubled and you start laying out extra fortifications. It is just that the laughs get sorta thing sometimes.



I suppose the point of it is, that the wide ocean and the mountains haven't prevented me from feeling pretty close to you. I hope it don't make the fur raise, but with independent rolling stones a certain tactical withdrawel at times is only to be expected. If you weren't that way, I wouldn't think about you so much.

As to Men And Their Games, an intriguing and persistent trait of the sex. I suppose I play them myself; that is, if there were any white women around to keep in practise with. The few that are over here are playing with an unfair advantage. And the Koreans are like the Philipinas; whatever we are as people, we're also those bluging wallets, PX privileges, and a free trip to the land of the Big PX. It lends an atmosphere of cynicism to things that I have found State-side only in places like Piper's Alley. (That was like getting a brisk slap in the face. Is the world really like that?)

Well, this is dragging on too long, and the witching hour is fast approaching. I will soon have to be freshly scrubbed and glib with my summary of the past day's events for the Generals and the Senior Analysts. It is Saturday, though, and perhaps barring another Coup or Invasion, we can watch the cartoons on the Secure Television.

Say hello to Jody for me. Illigitime non carborundum, n'est pas? I wish you were the wind, too, or falling that, just here.

Love,

8 June 1980  
Seoul

Dear Spike,

I haven't got your response to my inspired last missive, written in the heat of actual civil disturbance, only 180 clicks down the road. However, since you are in the same position I have been in for the last couple years, I am going to give you a break. One must make allowances for those who ride the foaming waves, even if some of the seas are a mite narrower and more turbulent than others.

I write from the horns of a dilemma.

Let me briefly outline the circumstances of this thing: I have to make an importance Decision about the next few years right quick. I have to decide whether to let the good ole United Snakes wander down the next decade with or without my inconsiderable talents. I vacillate daily. Because the job stinks, and I loath a simple majority of the people I work with, one would think the thing would be easy. The problem is that I fear I have become addicted to a powerful drug. It has got into my bones, I'm afraid, and there is nothing I can do about it. I am a crisis junky. I have come to enjoy the delicious unsettling experience of having armed people who don't like me running around spewing propaganda. I look at my hands and the growing number of greying hairs on my head agahst. I thought I could handle my crises. I can't be this driven creature with a set of jump boots and two illegal handguns under my camouflage fatigues, can I?

The alternative back to business, or the unsttled life of the country gypsey cum adventurer. Bewtween you and me, the bottom line I hear so much about isn't anyhting like the Real One, the Interface between chow in the wardroom and the circling sharks, or the slaving communists and the total destruction of those chumps in the 2nd Division.

A poerful drug.

Other things tug. I have convinced myself I am in love with a petite blonde back in the Greater Detroit Area. She thinks the military ( and not without good reason, I'm afraid) is ludacrous. I realize that the isolation and the enforced celibacy (the whores are not where it is at, and I speak as a Westpac sailor with two cases of Pacific Basin Drips to my credit) are the root causes of my little aberations. Poingent letters winging across the wide ocean, irrational land purchases. You are familiar with the sytoms.

Which brings me to the nuts and bolts of this thing. If, and I stress the intangible nature of this propositon, I decide to ask for COMIDEAST-  
FOR or something goofy like that for the 1981-82 Crisis season rather than opt for the placid waters of CIVPAV (civilian life and sessions with COMSIXPAOK) I think I should go ahead and get some more land. Tennessee and Idaho are the likely candidates, and as opposed to Martin Lake, and I don't have any blood kin down in the Volunteer State. Therefore, I reiterate a question I thikk I asked last year: What is around Salmon, in the 4-6500 range, and pretty?

I wouldn't mind going halvies on something, as with construction costs, I'm afraid we would be reduced to toiling in the muck ourselves to erect anything. The key to it, as I see it, is to have something concrete in the places where you like to be. Something triangular in nature; Michigan for the late summer and the Fall, Idaho for Summers and Winter sports, and something down South for the retreat from the game winds and the snow drifts.

Financially, I am somewhat constricted for the next five months. I took what is known as a "dead Horse" three month advance payment on my base pay. It will take quite awhile longer to pay back. Thankfully my living expenses are few, and I can even lay away a pittance if I can continue to eschew the night life and the strong conktails. (not buying round after round, and the exorbitant cost of the ancillary Dangerous Substances is a hard economy, but one that has been thrust upon me.) Once over the hurdle of the next summer timeframe, I should be in fat city. The Martin Lake payments are \$220 for the next 4 1/2 years, thereafter I am free and clear up there. I think I could handle another set of modest payments to get a lump sum together- something around four grand.

That is around the Fall, and I should know what I want to do by then. I expect I will be heartily sick of this place by then (after all, I have a good shot at it already) Getting out means the Nav can keep me here till expiration of Obligated Service, which in light of the current paucity of intell weinies of my expertise, is entirely likely. Win, lose or draw, the next year is going to bring changes aplenty. Due to the 'Rents scientific planning, you are going to be looking at, and feeling the cold winds of thirty not long after me. I will be turning those 'middle years' in Asia, and would just as soon have some real assets besides that rolling chunk of cast iron history you put up on blocks for me.

When I saw John on that strange plunge across the Snakes, I was struck by aimless nature of the Valley That Time Should Have Forgot. I'm afraid I am too contaminated by my bourgeoisie upbringing to settle for that. I do like the country, though.

Well listen, this is entirely too convoluted for me to fathom. The summer monsoon seems to have arrived, and if I am to walk the five miles down to the Naja for my big Day Off binge, I had better get a move on. I promise that I will let you know when I make the big decision, but in the meantime, start looking around. I realize the cash flow is tough, but maybe we can scrape up enough to avoid the usury that mortgages mean. (We could possibly work a scam with my VA loan entitlement, which I have not yet used. That would mean I would have to live there...if only for a day, then some bogus paperwork where I would 'pay' you to work on the place, while you would 'pay' me for rent, enabling us both to write off the money, depreciate it as rental property, and enable me to claim trips there as business expense. It is a fascinating racket. Taxwise, I am in good shape, being able to deduct up to \$3,000 for each move, one for this year and next, and all the interest on Martin Lake, which should be about 1200. Your considerable financial expertise can penetrate the fog of the situation. It would be criminal not to take advantage of it.)

I know the accident is cramping your style, so having laid my cards on the table, let me know what is practical and what is pipe dreams. After all, with one burst of temper I could be both married and unemployed next year. take care, bro.

THE SPLIT RANCH  
SOUTH POST  
11 May 80  
Seoul JUNG

Dean,

I recieved your letter yesterday during an extremely slow swing shift. It appears that the bad gooks are all out planting mines (a good sign, from what they tell me) or transplanting rice. They couldn't fly their MiGs due to inclement weather. The circuits were down because the lines that run on the poles outside the Snack Bar caught fire. (!) It is good to know that they have put a lot of thought into what happens when the FROGs start impacting outside the Class VI Store.

The set-up here is surreal. Normal chain of command doesn't exist. Two seperate and autonomous organizations control the Combined Field Army, and the ROK First Army. Theoretically there are liaison units built into the system, but it is a bit disconcerting to attempt to talk to the Yank team over at FROKA and get the Gate Guard, who hasn't the faintest idea where the duty officer is.

That is the command and control in the field. Once things start to narrow down towards the pointy end of the pyramid it gets really wierd. There is a ROK counterpart to each U.S. Officer, all the way up to the CINC, who happens to be Gen Wickham. There are parallel intel outfits; some combined and some U.S. only for the obvious reasons. They are lettered, naturally. I still have not got the Gs, Js, and Cs straightened out in my mind. Some are accountable to each other, some we can talk some things to, and others attempt to invegle themselves into our confidence. The ancillary support commands appear on the wiring diagrams like a plate of linguini.

Currently the fiasco in progress involves the 'O' side of the house. (I like that phrase a lot. That and the term U/I, or unidentified, are really all you need to communicate around here. "Well, sir, we had some U/I activity in an unlocated Corps doing an unspecified evolution but really that is over on the J3 side of the house." Honest. I have briefed items just like that to general officers, and one of the deputy CINCs just nodded and thanked me for the information.) Anyway, the ROKs are hot to have their grubby little hands on an operation like ours, so they have sold the concept of combining everything into a giant unified organization. It was nonsense, of course, but since Carter was going to pull everything out anyway, they went ahead with the program. Now we have a co-equal intell outfit half staffed with ROKs who can barely speak English, and can't be told anything.

I have nightmares about attempting to run an all-source indic center with only a curtain between me and dozens of ROKs eager to use the coffee pot, or the head. It is all a lumbering attempt at international Nice Guyism, a policy which has worked marvels all over the world for us. Thankfully I am just a cog in the machine. I don't have to worry about things like getting frocked eight months early like the two female line officers, or the Joint Service Commendation which I will probably loose for buying an extra jar of mayonaise in a single month.

The above actually happened to some poor geek who toiled here for eight years.

The corruption and thievery has got to be seen to be believed. All the Navy guys here appear to have married Koreans. No big deal. But one of the great features of that is the aspect of family augmentation. The brides family moves in with the happy couple, and magically, the entire crew are now U.S. dependants, entitled to a fair shot at the commissary, larger Government housing, and more sugar. That is all purely legal, so the black market end of things only starts at the far end of the abuse spectrum. Consequently the poor Army greeps have to come down hard and heavy on everyone. You are guilty until proven innocent. I heard that the Korean personnel at the PX have a neat trick of adding on controlled items to receipts after the hapless customer has departed the store.

Three months later, "Now, Mr. Reddig, just why did you attempt to purchase 80 lbs of ground coffee two months ago?" Huh? What are you people talking about?

I am happy I got a chance to see what happens when all the shit is just laying around on dry land, waiting to be misappropriated and malfeasated. I have come to like the Navy more than I ever did. They actually attempted to get us our mail (as I mentioned in my last letter the entire Post Office is under indictment here, and a blatantly illegal search team is stationed at the point of entry for all mail), they understood why people act irrational when the ship comes back in, and aren't quite so bogged down in the sea of ink and paperwork that dogs the landbound services.

I might even stick for another tour, if that lying son-of-a-bitch in the Detaller's office will give me the straight word. Course, I don't expect miracles.

I heard through the grapevine that the Sea Service Ribbon of song and story came through. That finishes off my row, if true. I did get the Navy Achievement thing in a drunken ceremony just before blowing out of Yoko. If the dratted Meritorious Unit commendation comes through, and I avoid getting busted for something strange here and reach the JSC, I will be mistaken in a dim light for a bold deafaring man. I have not shot for record as yet, as both of my handguns are loaded and covered with a thin film of oil under my bed. I will be goddamned if I check the things into the armory, as the only circumstance in which I would need them would be one where I could not get to the place, fill out the paperwork, wait in line, and be written up on the custody sheet. The black clad NK special warfare types will have set up a LZ on the golf course, followed the convenient signs, and sealed off the area long before anybody could wake up and issue the ammunition. Hence, I will just keep a few hundred extra rounds at the Hooh and hope for the best.

Re your comment on the violent neanderthal level crime in Hawaii: What is the deal? Are the streets safe to walk? Who is responsible for it? Are the lovely islands just another seething cesspool of urban sprawl and degeneracy? If so, why? Is high-rise living the only practical housing? What of the soft sea breeze and cocktails?

Changing gears here for just a second, I want to concur with your just anger at the travesty known as "Where the Buffalo Roam." It was my last night in the United States. I was staying at the house of a Pan Am stewardess of my acquaintance. She is looney, and understands the peculiar wired aspect of Going Back Out There for another Goddam Year Goddam It. (She has a jungle fatigue jacket that weighs at least thirty five pounds from the wings, unit insignia, stars, and metal gee-jaws pinned to it. Her green beret more nearly resembles a chain mail cap from the badges on it. She used to fly the R&R hops of legend from places like Da Nang, and Tahn San Ut, and Oan Rahn Bay. She has better war stories than anybody since Ed Marham.) Anyhow, we went to see the San Francisco opening of the film. We were staggering when we arrived at the theater, and then the celluloid abortion staggered me.

I had just finished "The Great Shark Hunt" and was filled to the brim with the vitriol of those days. The idea of Peter Boyle playing The Brown Buffalo was bad enough. Bill Murry, though, and his cutesy little schtick was too much. If I hadn't already been sedated past AMA norms, I'm sure something more than the small incident would have occurred. Turning the Chicano rage into some insignificant hippies ("Hey, don't pick on the kids, your Honor) treating the Revolution like ~~xxxx~~ some sort of college prank, and laughing off Dick Nixon like he was just some Buster Keaton. I was reminded of the opening of Ravel's Bolero, when the evening dressed crowd was driven to madness and tore the last seventeen rows of seats from the concrete floor and hurled them into the orchestra pit. Oh, they got me out of the theater before anything horrible happened. But to see my exam my times, trivialized in such a fashion was a greater crime than I could deal with. Perhaps that is the way of the world, but I thanked god I could go to the source and see that the Doctor remained the giant of my memory. How he came to be associated with the film is beyond me. Murry has joined my private blacklist, and I will never willingly contribute cold cash to any endeavor associated with that pig again.

I am delighted that Romance has bloomed in the garden once laid to waste by the drought of the OPRP. I am back to celebrity, and it ain't doing a thing for my boyish complexion. I am back to incendiary correspondence with that nice lady in Detroit, who is about as fucked up as I am. The week I got to spend with her was as good as the time I saw her after ten years. Still, a man don't live by scribbled notes alone, and the situation is rapidly becoming intolerable. As opposed to the gentle man of letters you recall, I fear the Dr. Slug portion of my personality has run rampant. Will I ever play the violin again? Film at eleven.

Pass along my best to the Boss when you see him. I see he has remained true to form, and ceased writing after two letters. O'est la vie. Maybe when I get back to the world I can entrench, level some decent fields of fire, and forget the negroes, birhtly feathered, out on the perimeter.

Say hello to Mary for me. I will be working the mid watch out of Military Bunko tonight, and must, for the moment, remain

THE SPLIT RANCH  
SEOUL  
16 JUNE 1980

Dear Jane,

Got your letter with flowers today. I could see it; the sun bright and the colors brilliant. Unfortunately, Seoul was grey again. Like your response to the rain in Michigan, I went downtown and bought a train ticket to (hopefully) sunnier climes. Funny thing about rain. It makes everybody think kindly of the harrassed taxi drivers, and I wound up walking the better part of the eight mile round trip to the Japanese-style train station, the bar, and eventually back home.

The megucks operate at a considerable disadvantage when the conditions are inclement. I slogged along the picturesque cobblestones, constantly dodging the umbrella-tips, which due to my outsized constitution in this five foot tall country, were exactly at eye level. Entrapeneurs were selling cheap bamboo bumbershoots made from trashbags at all the subway exits. The troops were gone. Apparently Gen Ohn tu Hwan either believes the situation has cooled sufficiently to remove them, or the rain was taking the starch out.

The Naija Hotel, which I have mentioned a few times, has begun the Cooling Season. It is now legal for them to shut the windows and turn on the massive Korean War air conditioning unit that lives out behind the restaurant complex. It was gasping out a whopping fifteen BTUs. It was humid as only Asia can be. (Well, maybe the fact that the humidity was coming down by the bucket full outside had something to do with it.)

They have roaming patrols back on Base that search for A/O units turned on before June 28th, the arbitrary date that the Eighth Imperial Army has designated as Hot Weather. Likewise, the Heating Season begins just as soon as the snow gets deep enough to make it difficult to reach the oil drums.

(Paranetically, I should add that in spite of my bitching this could all be a lot worse. While taking a shortcut underground last night I stumbled into the Great Patriotic War exhibit. A long line of Koreans were looking at pictures that were aligned against the wall. Everything was there. Doug MacArthur, B-29s, Prisoners, blown up buildings, indomitable G.I.s, the whole thing. All things in perspective.)

I am On Vacation at the moment. I have booked passage on a luxurious Blue Train to Fusan for 1300 today. I will be riding in seat 33 of car six. The chickens will squawk, and somebody out there is biting into his first garlic and outtlefish sandwich of the day to be ready to practise his English Conversation with me at close quarters. The scenery is nice, and I should be at the Hyaleah Compound by dinner time. This little side trip (not to be confused with going to Toronto) is to fulfill a dream I have had over the last couple years. The Midway is going to pull in on the 18th, and I want to be drinking a cold beer as the Grey Lady pulls alongside the pair. The only thing I regret is that my schedule will not allow me to be there to see her leave....without yours truly. There are a couple loose ends I have to wrap up before everybody from my era has departed the ship. The next time I see her it will be like walking into the frat house three years after graduation. Looks the same, but utterly different.

I have been trying to plan my farewell tour out of Asia, and the Military. With any luck the de....I'm sorry, recession, will be over by next year. I am afraid I will have to continue working, as the vast inherited wealth I should have by rights has not materialized. If I can get things lined up so that I don't have to hit the bread lines, I want to go the long way 'round. Hong Kong, Singapore, Bangkok are good stops on the way further East. I have always wanted to hit Johannesburg (if it is still there) and then a hop over to South America. Rio, Costa Rica, then back to the good ole United States. I haven't had the courage to talk to the airlines yet, but I would think the airfare will be two or three grand easy. Still, even the prospect of starting all over again at ground zero isn't that daunting. It will be a dead heat to see if I can save enough cash to make it more than a pipe dream.

Got a spare month or two?

Well, I have to pack. Let's see: bottle of wine, camera, notebook, cheese, spare underwear, air wick room deodorant for intense garlic fumes.....

How did Barb & Arnie like H.K. and dai Nippon? I was drinking with another veteran of the Crown Colony, and I have to get my happy feet back to the Kowloon Side.

(If Reagn does get re-established as the numero uno we are going to have trouble with China...the real one. That is going to raise holy hell over here. Hadn't thought about it before, but once again I see my boyish smile in jepordy of the Washington Follies.)

Smooth sailing. Glad the hair curlers ( a remnant of the MOP power structure) have gone the way of the Buffalo....

Love,





20 JUNE 80  
Not in Pusan Anymore

Dear Jane,

Well, I am home again, as little as eight pounds heavier, and refreshed as only a towering hangover can leave you. I don't have to go to work for another two hours. Ugh.

A split week ago I was walking down to the Seoul Station to catch the 1300 Blue Train South. It was a brisk little walk. Across the base: my Hawaiian safety-shirt glowing as I produced my ID card about five times to prove that I was OK. Out the back gate and past the Embassy Compound. Up past the furniture stores and the music stores and all the way to the plumbing and generator district.

You wind up calling things what they look like out here, since nobody really knows what they are called. Hence things like: 'Telephone Pole Road', or, "go on down to the Stork Sign and hang a right, not a hard right, but you go down through a little Glaza and then turn left at the baby store with the Green awning." It seems to work, but I would like to be able to find out what the real people call them. Anyhow, I could tell as I walked from the plumbing district into the Generator district because that is what the things were out on the sidewalk in front of the little open-fronted shops. Bundles of toilet floats were replaced by ancient electrical dynamos. The buildings got taller and the street grew to ten full lanes of honking diesel-belching traffic.

I plunged on through the crowds of Koreans. Many in sateen fatigues, or tiger print camouflages. Mama-sans with tiny babies bundled on their backs. Old people in traditional dress. Little old ladies in long embroidered dresses covering some sort of gauzey pantaloons. Old men in honorable retirement, with eight or nine long white hairs growing down from their chins. Around a last corner, break right to get around an embattled mother and her three little ones, and there is Seoul Station. Relic of the Japanese Occupation, it stands on the left side of a vast traffic square. Below it all is Seoul Underground Station. Four great rivers of traffic converge on the square, little green taxi fishes darting around the buses. A cuttlefish stand with a charcoal grill smoking in the humidity.

The clock on the front of the Station Building reads twenty after. Plenty of time. I wander down to the far end of the building and into the dim coolness of the American Waiting room. Colonial. This is the way things used to be all over. The 'European Only' areas in Hong Kong or Singapore are all gone. Africa wiped clean of it all the way south to the embattled Cape. Still here in Korea because of us 40,000 yanks

hangin out on the Asian landmass, and the wierd life of the gar-  
rison/hostage army. We are in the process of getting on the wrong side  
of things here. We are perceived to be backing the Generals; and it  
is a fair perception only because it is true. We don't really have  
any choice that I can see. Still, the tide is running against the  
Marshall Law Government and when that goes, well.....

But in the meantime, the American only waiting room is a fine instit-  
ution. You can go in and spent American money in the snack bar and  
not get dystentary. The Korean employee runs out and gets the ticket.  
A half hour before the train is scheduled to leave they bundle up all  
the American passengers and allow you out on the platform first. They  
lead the party down the Pusan train and place everybody on boards, then  
the Koreans can rush out and fill up the rest of the seats.

The Blue Train is the cadillao of Korean Rail. Last time, coming up from  
down South, I road the milk train. The bench seats slumped toward the  
middle, and we stopped at all the hot spots, Dong Dae Gu, Nam Tae Sung,  
the real places. I shared the seat with a gent eager to pratice all  
his ten words of English Conversation. Or Engrish, rather. But in keeping  
with my role as Ambassador of goodwill, I drank Crown Beer and ate  
broiled outtlefish with him. The garlic fumes were heady enough to give  
me a contact high. The Blue train is spotless. The seats are airline  
stybb, and there is a bar car in the rear. It is even air conditioned,  
and the endless loop tape machine plays old asian favorites at about  
one hundred decibles.

I have a window seat in car six. It is very comfortable; or at least it  
is untill a lady sits down with her four year old. The child takes  
one look at my clean shaven meguck face and begins to whimper in terror.  
Ah well. A little girl peeks over the seat in front. I wink at her and  
she plunges down. She continued to peek at me, gravely, for the next  
five hours. The train gives a soft lurch, and we roll out of Seoul  
right on time.

Pusan sits way down the penninsula, fronting on the Tshushima Straits.  
Japan is only fifty miles away, lost in the blue distance. Pusan was  
the great supply depot of the War, when the allies got shoved back to  
a tiny perimter that ran around Taegu airfield, and embraced the Sea of  
Japan on the East, and the Straits on the right. When Doug MacArthur  
made his bid, and raced all the way North to the China border, the  
little area of land we held was packed solid with troops and machines.  
When the next assault comes, that is where the planners think things will  
end. Of course, planners can only think of the last war. I can plan for  
what Asian nation I don't want to be in when it happens.

Korea, incidently, is lush and green and beautifull this time of the  
year. The rice paddies are still flooded. The young sprouts grow in  
precise lines in the irregular shaped empoundments. The dykes wander  
all around, with little paths on the top. Here and there are breaches,  
where the muddy water flows down and innundates the next level in turn.  
The rugged mountains thrust up around Seoul; then plains for a while as  
we run south toward the spine of the country. The little villes are  
clustered in the high spots above the paddies. Water buffalo stoicly  
watch the train rush past. The houses are compounds; living quarters  
and livestock pens encircled with protective walls against the last  
thousand years of invaders from China headed for Japan, or the Shogun's  
Samurai headed north. They are stoic as these water buffalo. They stoop

in the fields, and harvest the rice against the cold winds of the autumn.

The marks of the war are still upon the land. Some of the old brick buildings have scars where the artillery pierced them. The oil storage tanks are painted in camouflage, and the military garrisons are everywhere. One hour south is Osan, the HQ of the air force. I see green phantoms and helos buzzing around. The city is bubbling with construction, the dirt streets being paved, new overpasses and apartment buildings going up in spite of the recent depression. Modern structures rising with hand-tied bamboo frameworks. Young men carrying bricks up long wooden ramps, masons plopping them down as fast as they come up.

The mama-san gets her child to sleep, and finds an open seat where she can relax. With elbow room I slowly nod off as we pass monuments with Hongul inscriptions, little cryptic obelisks halfway up steep slopes, and ubiquitous Christian churches in the small country towns. The clouds break and the sun floods the fields.....

Gotta go to work. Stay tuned for "The Fleet's INN"

Talk to you tomorrow, Love,



21 June 1980  
Seoul

Dear Jane,

As we saw in our last episode, our disheveled hero was terrifying small children and dozing on the posh Blue Train to Pusan...or Busan, depending on which Korean you are talking to at the moment. They haven't quite made up their minds on how to Anglisize Hongul just yet. Instead, they have developed Honglish, a mixture of both. For example, if you were to ask for a glass of orange juice, you would ask "Sil aye hanneda, Orange Juice-u, Nai?"

In any event, the long train kept on arunnin', as I have heard in a popular song, and at length we were running through a series of tunnels which would bring us into The Cauldron. That is the quaint name for Pusan, and it seems appropriate, since the mountains encircle the harbor in a blue ring. The history of the place is fascinating. This is where the famed Admiral Yi fitted out his turtle boats and beat the Japanese nearly a thousand years back. This is a popular folk-story for a people who were under the Japanese military yolk for just about half of this century. The admiral's monuments stand in Seoul, across from the Japanese-built City Hall. In Pusan, he faces the harbor, just up the street from the train station where we glided in right on time.

It was the height of the rush hour and Pusan Station was jammed with folks trying to get home. I went up the stairs and battled the crowd to the gates. They took half of my ticket, I kept ahold of my pack and my hat, and walked down the imposing front steps of the place. The line for cabs was about two hundred feet long. I looked around and attempted to get my recollections together. The ship would be pulling in about ten the next morning. They claimed they were going to try to bring her right in this time, past the breakwater, and tie her up to the pier over at the Korean 2nd Naval District HQ. They had always placed her out among the merchant ships at anchor before, and because of the perilous boating, hotel rooms were always at a premium. I decided to book a room on the economy just in case.

The area by the train station is strangely vacant. Hotels serve the harbor, but they rise next to vacant lots. The rattle of jackhammers and the honking of the cabs and buses followed me down the narrow street. I picked the first one I came to; mostly because I was confident I could remember the name. It was owned by Don Ho's brother, Mr. Sam-ho. I engaged in a fruitful conversation with the desk clerk, the upshot of which was that I was either checking out at 0200, or staying for two days. Neither of us was quite sure, but we smiled and bowed a

lot and we were both happy. I was escorted to room 303, and I dumped my pack and looked out the window. I could see the docks just fine, and the mosquitoes didn't have to worry about screens or anything, so once again everybody was happy. There was a Korean TV in the room, but they were not showing re-runs of I love Lucy or Samuel movies, so I decided to go collect some intelligence out at the local Army Compound. It would be an interesting contrast between the sleepy local crowd and the stampede that would commence as soon as the brow went across on the ship the next morning. The last time we visited Hyaleah I had slept under the pool table. I was one of the lucky ones because Major Bongo had become paralyzed with fear at the prospect of the midnight military curfew, and had commandeered a car in the parking lot, filled it with my trusty Squadron buddies, and driven in pell mell drunken haste through the city to the fleet landing. More than a little fear and loathing ensued when the owner of the car, a hapless Army Captain, discovered the appropriation. Being a sound military man, and not understanding the Needs of the Fleet, he initiated a charge of grand theft auto against the Officers of our outfit. The Naval Investigative Service followed us around the Pacific for six months trying to unravel the case and punish the guilty.

I left the hotel and went forth into the concrete dust and failing light. The rush was tapering off and I found a cab easily. The cabbie engaged the horn, let out the clutch, and off we went.

Pusan is a harbor city. The streets run along the docks in linear slashes. We motored rapidly past the Admiral's statue, honking wildly. We impacted the famous traffic circle around the cryptic horned monument and slashed through the waves of oncoming trucks and buses. I gripped the imitation leather of the seat and closed my eyes. When I opened them again we were just outside the gates of Hyaleah Compound. I thanked Buddha for getting me through another one and paid off the driver. I showed my I.D. card to the gate guard and walked into the race course.

Hyaleah is a thirty year old joke. Once the place had been the Pusan Race Course, where the swells of the 20s had gone to watch the horses thunder around the dirt track. The Japanese had turned the place into an army garrison to support the effort in Manchuria. When we showed up to correct the little misunderstanding with Kim Il Sung, we paved the track and named all the little buildings around it after the great racecourses back home. For example, you might be drinking in the old paddock area and looking at the line of buildings 'Aqueduct', 'Pimlico' and 'Belmont.' It is a small and sleepy place most of the time.

I took my bearings past the sign that said "Keep a good Soldier in the Army. Re-enlist." I saw the captured Russian cannons and made a beeline for the Officer's Club. The back door was open, propped by a fire extinguisher. The balls on the pool table made clinking sounds as a couple of bored looking army types battled for the next round of 45¢ beers. The mahogany bar stretched off into the distance. I saw about eight disreputable figures in flight suits sucking down liquid refreshments and comparing the excellence of the sneakers they had purchased outside the gates. I heard the magic words again.: "Yeah, so CATCO gave me vector

to the boat. No goddamn needles or anything or course. I pulled the power back and looked at the radar altimeter. We couldn't see shit. I waited until we went through a hundred n' eighty and I clobbered the power and we broke out dead ahead the ship at one-fifty, bore-sighted on the fucking helo and headed straight for the island."

"So what did ya do, Bill?"

"We died, you asshole!" I was back in the Navy.

(I just heard on the radio that something we were doing at work last night has surfaced in a ROK press release. They are claiming to have destroyed a N. Korean agent boat last night.....it looks like I am going to have to go in early and figure out to to relate what I thought I knew with what the ROKs claim is true....and around and around we go. If nothing else, this is certainly goofy. I almost wish I was going back to the Indian Ocean with the Boys.)

There was much back-slapping and much story telling at the long bar the evening. The Phantoms had been unable to get under the low clouds that hung over the boat, and after the 60 day inport period, most of the automatic landing systems were uncalibrated and otherwise AFU. So my fighter buddies were forced to 'bingo', or fly in to a land base. They came in fully loaded with missiles, and that had the Air Force all in a tizzy. The poor guys can't really deal with things that don't have a script to it. The Koreans were up tight, and wanted a 24 hr officer guard on the airplanes. Bill and Uncle Walty did the only possible thing. They took their flight gear and went to Pusan for drinks.

Stay tuned for tomorrow's exciting chapter as "The Fleet Finally Get's in After Two Days of Trying to Write a Simple Five Paragraph Travel Story."

Take care. Love,



THE WINDOW THAT T.R. & MEAT CLIMBED OUT

22 JUNE 1980  
THE BUNKER  
SEOUL

Dear Jane,

Can he do it? Can he actually finish this letter? A back-up typist is in the bullpen warming up. The crowd buzzes with anticipation. Suddenly a lightning move to the plate.....

So Uncle Walty and Bill left the airplanes at a place called Chin Hae and came down to Pusan. They left Colonels and Majors shouting into telephones up and down the Peninsula. There was nothing they could do about having loaded missiles on board, and they had been ordered to leave the haze-grey Phantoms right where they were parked. M-16 toting Koreans swarmed out to take up defensive positions. Once the guards were in place it would be worth your life to go near them. Bill shrugged. If they wanted those AIM-9s pointed right across the runway at Base Operations, that was purely up to them.

Uncle Walty was the lucky one. He had taken his wallet on the flight. Bill forgot; after all they were steaming around Okinawa at the time, and how was he to know that a simple hour-and-fourty minute hop was going to turn into a three day, three country excursion?

There is probably nothing quite so grungy as a week old flight suit, and that was all that Bill had to his name. Funny thing about aviating off the big grey buildings. Never can be sure where you are going to wind up. Dad got stuck someplace in Pennsylvania (long time since I wrote that word) one time when they had to fly all the airplanes away from a hurricane. He had to borrow the money for a toothbrush. Walt had plenty of cash for the sundry items, like soap and toothpaste, but unfortunately, they weren't in the world anymore, they were in Korea. Without a Ration Control Card they couldn't even get into the PX. The private at the gate didn't know what to make of these strange hatless creatures in zoom-bags and no hats attempting to talk their way into an Army Base.

I managed to provide the services of my plastic card, which alacazam! opens the door to the treasures of the Army Store. In gratitude, we bought each other ten or so rounds of drinks. I felt warm and tingly inside. These were the first humans I had talked to in weeks. I had given up the States over two years ago, and had gotten that peculiar surrogate of the family in the Squadron. Now I had lost the States, and my other family, and had received an olive drab package labeled "Eighth Army" and still hadn't figured out how to open it. So we gossiped about the Family; who had gone where and done what, the latest lunacy perpetrated by the commanding officer and the XO, where the ship was going to go. It was warm and increasingly drunk.

Since it was, after all, and Eighth Army bar, the help announced they were going to close up at Ten-thirty.

"They are going to have a hard time tomorrow" said Bill darkly. "This sort of outrage wouldn't be allowed to happen anywhere civilized." The only other place in the Pacific with a midnight curfew was the Philippines, and the base opened two after-hours clubs that ran all night. Different organizations. We demanded a dice cup, and each ordered a round for the house. We looked for the highest ranking officer in the place and demanded the honor of gambling for the tab. It turned out to be a quite decent Air Force Colonel. In a show down, he honored us by the purchasing of our drinks.

We still got thrown out of the club at ten thirty. After all, the poor bartender had to beat the curfew or risk getting shot up by the 1st ROK Marines, who had moved into Pusan when the plywood factory went on strike. (Strikes in this country are considered another aspect of the Communist Menace.) So we took the twenty beers we had won (some of the happy winners had decided discretion was the better part of valor since they had to work in the morning) and trudged out front. There was no place to go at that hour, at least not with two unshaven characters in flight suits, and so we decided to have a picnic. The only good place to sit down was the Russian artillery piece out in front of the Club. I got one tire, Bill got the other, and Uncle Wally got to sit behind the splinter shield on the loader's seat.

It was a beautiful night to be sitting on captured Soviet cannons: The sky was clear and the stars twinkled. The sliver of the new moon was rising late. I noted that it was ideal infiltrator weather.

"Are you taking this shit serious? That sounds like the kind of noises a real red-hot career minded Junior Officer might say."

"Yeah. If you know so much about that crap, what kinda gun is this?"

"It is a gas-actuated, recoil-dampened fucking Russian Gun, that's what it is."

"Oh yeah?" said Walt cleverly "Then how about odds on whether that guy over there with the shotgun is going to pepper us with buck-shot."

The Korean Security Guard cruised by silently with his winchester pump shotgun cradled in his arms. Funny thing, when you see so many people running around with guns you start to ignore them. "Ah, it's O.K. I said. "They only shoot the non-mainstreamers around here."

"You mean like Kwang-Ju? Hey, how 'bout one of them ice-cold warm beers.

I think I slept on the floor in a building on base. I awoke to the child-like sounds of Walt and Bill taking showers and hooping it up down the hall. "Ain't no jet-fuel in this stuff! Yee-Ha!"

The intrepid aviators had to get back to the ship to change clothes and sign many papers, as Bill was the new Administrative Officer for the Squadron. The helos would start flying in at eight, and we wanted to fly out and avoid the taxi ride to the pair. No such luck. I was bumped off the 'copter by some Admiral or another, who looked at my hawaiian print shirt and faded jeans with distaste.



At last the helo was gone and the hurricane effect of the wind subsided. Walt and I looked at each other, shrugged, and started to walk out to the gate.

\*\*\*\*\*

I'm going to skip the rest of this; suffice it to say that after a wild ride and a meeting with the staff of the Maritime Sealift Command (who were just as surprised as we were) who were kind enough to drive us from where we were (we didn't know) to where the ship was going to be (nobody was sure) and standing unshaven and wrinkled through a formal military ceremony with bands, admirals, and hundreds of Korean troops ("Walt, duck! here comes the Captain!") I was rejoined with my erstwhile home, large building 41. We hid out for a while waiting for the Players to finish up the loose ends (it was funny how much the dimly-lit steel rooms reminded me of the Command Bunker) and finally escaped to an afternoon of power cocktails and reminiscences (three months really isn't that long.) I got offered a job back on the boat, and in the heat of the moment, I actually felt like taking it. (Could this be the same fellow so overcome with fear and loathing just short weeks ago?)

\*\*\*\*\*

Sometime after the military curfew, I was sitting out on the ledge of the Commodore Hotel, looking down on the city. I could see the lights of a nuclear cruiser, the carrier, and the ships that were strung out on the hook in the roadstead. I was smoking a cigarette when I heard the rest of the liberty party enter the room. It was Scotty, and T.R., and Meat. Snuffy was already passed out. I had left the excitement of the all-night disco downstairs when the waiter mentioned that for only 15,000 won he could get some ladies to sit with the megucks. I recalled a ledge upstairs I had been meaning to crawl out on, finished my complimentary drink (Enjoy O.B. Beer! A headache in every bottle!) Meat had just told me he had broken down and was going to get married the following June.

Chain smoking out on the twelfth floor seemed a reasonable thing at the time.

When the boys arrived, they brought a circus with them. After I had departed, a Korean gent had joined them and ordered a few rounds of drinks. He explained that he had served in Vietnam with the Yanks, and wanted to return some favors. So he was in the room, too, along with the waiter, who wanted his money, which the Korean Gent couldn't seem to come up with. So they commenced to shouting at each other in Hongul, to which T.R. added "Stop speaking Korean! I would like very much to speak Korean, but I don't, and I'm sorry, so stop talking Korean!" The argument continued to rage, and the next thing I heard was T.R. on the phone to the front desk: "This is LODR Brown and I want to speak to the Military Police!" That continued for ten minutes, the American voice demanding the M.P.s, the Koreans shouting, and suddenly two club sandwiches and four glasses of orange-juice-u showed up from room service. Our Korean friend had ordered some food, just in case. The room service chog-ie boy added his soprano to the maelstrom. "Get me the Military Police!"

"Hello, J.R." It was Meat. He had climbed out on the ledge and was admiring the view.

"Extraordinary view, doncha think."

"Tuckin' A"

We turned and looked in the window to the continued altercation. Scotty had dissolved into his persona as Mr. Slug, the irascible curmudgeon. He was shouting at all three Koreans. T. R. eased out through the window. "Nice night for ledge-walking, isn't it?" The three of us were lined up, looking in when the House detectives came through the door.....

\*\*\*\*\*

I mean, it wasn't as bad as when the Korean National Police came into the Pusan Hotel Suite we had last time to inquire as to whether we had any idea of who was dropping the empty quart bottles of likker out the window. We had finished assembling the six man pup tent that Rocket bought downtown, and it was tied more or less to the furniture. Hooch was trussed up in the corner because he had been getting out of hand. "No, Officer, but if we find anybody doing that, we sure will give you a call...."

Still, there is nothing like seeing the Fleet come in. Next time I do see it, they will all be gone, and we can relegate these times the appropriate file in memories trash bin.

Scotty and T.R. saw me to my cab for the ride down to the train. From the hotel you could see the little cars lined up like a model railroad. Back to Seoul, and the Army. As the cab pulled out past the replica of Admiral Yi's turtle boat I could have sworn I heard someone yell "You can just kiss my ....."

(The Koreans are blowing the agent best thing out of proportion. They were claiming on the news yesterday that North Korean MIGs were halfway down the coast, and the war was happening but for the personal intervention of Gen Chahn tu Hwan. Sometimes this all makes me tired. The Midway had the great advantage of being able to go to the crisis and then come right home again. In Seoul, you are stuck with the same one over and over again.)

Anyhow, I hope the sailing is smooth back home. Take care of yerself,  
Love,



The Window T.R. & Meat climbed out of

22 JUNE 1980  
The Command Bunker  
Seoul

Dear Gretch,

Well, here I am again, surrounded by Asians and looney military personnel, communists up the road.

Yawn. Just got back from a great trip down south to meet the ship when the boys pulled in. Got homesick and had to see everybody. The ship is like a small town. Everybody is your buddy, and everyone knows everything about everyone else. I was a hero back there, and here I am just another junior grade loonie, patronized within an inch of my life, embattled by the strict ration control system, shut up by a midnight military curfew, pissed off at the bizarre machine of the United Snakes Army, and in the position that the decision to get out of the Nav will actually extend me here. U-doggies.

Seoul is nice enough, and the Koreans (except for the ones who stole my stereos) are fine people. It is summer, and dry land, and I can't figure out why I am so angry and bitter. It might be combat fatigue, or the close relative thereof which plagued me when I visited the Snakes a couple months ago. Didn't feel at all right. Edgy and nervous the whole time. Almost a relief to get back where the yellow people carry machine guns but make no pretenses as to being the center of the universe. Except the Army, but that is another story altogether.

Got another medal or two, and so could be mistaken in a dim light for an actual bold seafaring man. BFD.

Bought some land up in Northern Michigan. Don't know what I am going to do with it if and when I pay it off. Don't know about me either, for that matter. I want to go home.....to the Midway, for christ's sake. Beat's me altogether. They will be off for the sunny I.O. again right quick, and I will be here for the next year or more watching the infiltration boats, the agents, the weird military activity, and grinning hysterically. I may get some leave in another few months, and I will go someplace even stranger and knock myself out. Oh yup yup yo, as they say.

I see you have an apt. Good move. Still downriver, but then I suppose everything is one way or another. The local river is the Han Estuary and the Imjin, respectfully filled with nasty people swimming south each dark or the moon. Gotta go to work down in the bowels of the Command Bunker. Take care,

June 22 1980  
Yongson Garriesson  
Seoul

Dear Helen,

I am in receipt of your letter of 8 June, a bit delayed due to the fact that most of the personnel of the Army Post Office are under indictment, and I was out of town for a much needed respite.

Once again, I must plead guilty to the full bill of indictment tendered by you. I suppose, looking back over the correspondence of the last year or so, the list of personality characteristics you have enumerated is indeed impressive. I will offer no extenuating evidence on my behalf. I have, however, reached a certain equanimity with myself and am not prepared to commence demolition on what is admittedly a roooooo ediface.

California did not blow me away. The United States did. I have got to the point where my old boss offered me a job back on the Skidway, and I am thinking of taking him up on it. Anything to get away from the Army. It would mean a few more years in Asia. At least I have a good feeling about the work I can do here, as opposed to the sound and fury (signifying nothing) of the 48 contiguous.

I hope you got things squared away for your relatives, and that the oppression of reverse discrimination has proved a transient problem. Truth to tell, though, as a woman blessed by good looks and a quick (if somewhat perplexing) mind, I should think you could move on and do well at virtually anything. I am not in a position to play the trump card of handing in my walking papers, else I would have dumped this excursion into the mandarin ways of the Mighth Imperial Army weeks ago.

Well, this is proving harder than I had expected. I couldn't quite figure out what wasn't clicking there in the Bay Area, but life is too short on the fun side to waste it wondering. I am happy to have had you in my fantasies, and I am privileged to have played a bit part in the tapestry of your life. On the debit side, I have got a lot of venom and spleen that must find an outlet. I don't think we could spend much time together without my pissing you off constantly. It seems like the chemistry. I do know that I don't have the same reaction on other people, so perhaps we should leave it at that.

Thanks for writing. I am a romantic, too, in spite of the bristly exterior. I suppose that is the only reason I keep my head beating against the wall out here.

Take care of yourself. You have a lot to offer, and shouldn't blame anything more than the wind from the East.

THE BUNKER  
SEOUL  
23 June 1980

Dear Folks,

Got the long envelope today with the new, barbarous policies of the American Express, the University Readings, and the family letter. Dad is typing well! I miss that IBM Selectric. Maybe someday I will turn in the battered orange Smith Corona and get one.

Let's see: current events had me down in Pusan to Meet the Fleet when they pulled in last week. I produced a revolver and demanded a day off. They say there is nothing like your first squadron, and as I am likely to have only the one in this line of work, it was all quite an emotional re-union. We had a great time, and I found myself saying the words I never would have thought I would utter: "Gee, I wish I was back in the Fleet."

It was a breath of fresh air after all the petty fogger of the Eighth Imperial Army up here. The Green Machine is a wonderful thing, and well worth a field trip to see in action. Still, when I heard Bill say "Yeah, the Two Wire was busted and they weren't giving any needles and I broke out of the clouds at a hundred and forty feet, dead abeam on the ship, bore-sighted on the helo and the island...." it was enough to make a strong man break down. Somebody was finally speaking English.

I haven't felt quite so homesick as when I was riding the Blue Train back up from Seoul. I gave up Family and friends to come over here, and found that remarkable substitute for it in the Squadron. Then I lost that. So although the work is interesting in it's own way, I would leave this in a heartbeat. To come from the deprivations of the Carrier, and have the Army explain bald faced that you can't turn on your air-conditioner until July 1st, or buy more than 12 ozs of Tang in a single month (while waiting in line behind fifty Koreans to get into the American only exchange) and mishandle the sacred Mail. It seems that each day brings a new little quirk to light. That is all very well for a guy on a one year unaccompanied tour, whose alternative is painting rocks at Fort Bliss. But after two hard ones out there someplace, it just burns.

For all the things we bitched about at sea, I have to admit that they got the Mail all the way to Iran in six days. I talked to people on the ship who wrote me a month ago, and have yet to get the letters. I have mentioned that the Post Office here has had several people arrested. They recovered \$80,000 and four sacks of first class mail from the barracks where they lived. There is a Korean customs outfit down at Kimpo and Osan airfields that works hard inspecting the incoming mail. The fact that the Postal Service told them to knock it off two years ago has had no impact. Foreigners pawing my mail in violation of U.S. Law....endorsed by the Eighth Army. Ah well. When I found out about all this I was tempted to request a congressional investigation. Then I thought about it, the bureaucracy, mostly Korean run, that enables this bizarre circus to continue, and threw up my hands. They can rip off my stereos, ration control me to death.

I will leave this place with no regrets and not a fond backward glance. How about this one: a G.I. marries a Korean girl. He becomes immediately entitled to married housing. She is issued the magic ration control plate that gets her into the system. Her family then moves in with the happy couple. They become dependants under Army regulation. They get ration control plates. They also are entitled to larger quarters, all courtesy Uncle Sam. Then they proceed to utilize the commissary to move controlled items out in town at a neat three time markup. And the active duty troops get to stand behind them in line.

Hoo boy. That is just a single little case, perfectly legal. The wilder stuff only begins at the far end of that fringe.

I could go on, but I think I have vented enough spleen for the nonce. I didn't join the army, and I am pretty happy about that. I am just tired (we change shifts every two days, working slowly around the clock every six days and the old bod just ain't designed for it. You ask "well, why can't we do a week on one shift, take two days off, and then change shifts? It would give the system a chance to get used to things...." "We don't do it that way here.") and one of my hooch mates is entertaining his English Language class in the living room. He gets an extra couple hundred dollars for it. The walls are paper thin. For a guy who used to be able to sleep through aircraft launches five feet away, I sure seem to be sleeping light these days.

Well, I did the greatest thing so far when the Freep got here last week. I hid in my desk, and waited until Sunday. Then I brewed a pot of coffee and Read The Sunday Paper. It was great. A super present, and I thank you knidly. I was pleased to hear that they settled the strike with the papers without interrupting the service. I calculated how much more money a journeyman typesetter makes than a JG. Oh well, I suppose only us incurable romantics would do it anyway.

I miss you,

Love

THE COMMAND BUNKER  
SEOUL  
23 June 1980

Dear Boss,

Just thought I would drop a line and let you know how much I enjoyed seeing everybody back on Fort Midway last week.

Things have been most interesting here, at least from a job standpoint. This appears to be something of a season for infiltrations. You have heard of the agent boat they tried to run in over the weekend. It was straightforward, within the parameters of the operation. A radar station told a ship to hold up and identify. It was near dusk, and the fishing boat didn't see the signal flag. The Koreans, always following the doctrine of measured response, put about eighty rounds of fifty cal over the ship and called in the air force. That was about the time we heard about it.

What was interesting was that an actual agent boat was in the vicinity and got spooked. They spilt off to the north, and it was wild west for the next eight hours. They sunk the thing finally in a tremendous political discussion. The survivors of the cap-sized communist boat were throwing hand grenades from the water at the ROK patrol boat. They dragged one out alive.

That should have been the end of things, but suddenly we were taking a trip to Dr. Ohn tu Hwan's magic land. You may have heard of the many MiG-21's and missile boats that immediately violated S. Korean waters in support. These were not entirely a figment of the Marshall Law Command's Department of Advantageous Information; however, for dastardly communists, they displayed restraint and came nowhere near getting into the action. However, the popular press the next morning was on the record as stating that Dr. Ohn had single handedly averted the anniversary endore of the Police Action, squeaking past only by the narrowest of margins.

There is some evidence to suggest that another land party came south at the same time, and is currently skulking about peaking in windows and non-mainstreaming like crazy.

Which is particularly interesting in light of the fact that we seem to be busily engaged in getting on the wrong side of things up here. Ohn considers us no friend; he knows that we don't trust him, and would like to see him hit the retired list ASAP. For his part, he has been setting up the first disquieting signs of anti-american activity in the South. From the other side, the clandestine voice of the North has been whispering "Gen Wickham did it. He put the troops there in Kwang-ju, he called in the Aircraft Carriers and the deadly B3-A. They are the enemies of democratization, the yanks and the puppet Ohn ring of the Yusin Remnants." I saw a leaflet that depicted the dreaded B3-a, in supersonic configuration, fully loaded with sidewinders.

Ohn has got a lid on things for the moment, but I am betting that

the status whao ain't going to hack it in the long term. I am fairly certain that the responsible opposition is in the process of going the way of the buffalo, and when Ohon goes down, there may be no one left to talk to.

O'est la vie.

The military picture on our 'side of the house' (they have a whole new set of buzz words to learn here) is equally interesting. The wiring diagram resembles a plate of linguini. Some commands seem to operate in a vacuum; there exist separate and not equal serial administrations 1-5, ranging from G (Army) to J (Joint) to O (combined.) There is a list next to the phone saying who you can talk to, about what, including admonitions not to get anybody excited unnecessarily. O-5s are as common as Ensigns on the boat, and when a flap happens I would have to liken it to a clear Western night for the presence of stars.

'Course, you have been to the Big Arena, and this must be small potatoes in comparison. Still, it is fascinating to have a Korean Major General call up on the non-secure line and ask you if there is anything going on he should brief to ROK JCS.

So the circus has it's moments. I like Seoul well enough, and the people are friendly. There is nothing like the comradery of the Fleet though, and since the only people you could talk to about the shop are working if you aren't, there is a distinct void in that direction. It is difficult to talk to the Air Force, who regards this as 'isolated.' I attempted to explain to one that 'isolated' starts out of O-2 range of Diego Garcia, but didn't get far.

I actually found myself mouthing the words "Gee, I wish I was back in the Fleet the other day." Hard to believe. The Navy has been notorious for failing to order in replacements, and the one year tour seems to be averaging something like 14-18 months, depending on how nasty you were on the phone the last time you talked to the detailer. Every watch officer below O-4 has made the move to the door. I have a certain amount of sympathy for the position, and it has been gaining momentum each time something like having my household goods ripped off for \$2,000, or standing in line behind a crowd of Koreans to get into the exchange, or meeting any of the bewildering regulations peculiar to the Eighth Imperial Army.

Well, I have the early shift tomorrow, and should get my beauty sleep. Give my best to the guys, and to ROK ISOS Hubs.

Need a CAG AI?

Best,



LT TERRY ████████, USN  
VS-41  
NAS NORTH ISLAND  
CORONADO, CA 92135

Dear Terry,

Ah, I remember it well; the white sand beaches and the lovely red-tiled roofs. The MexPac.....OOPS, this is a welcome aboard letter. Let me sit a bit straighter here behind my battered Smith-Corona and get down to the business at hand.

Welcome Aboard!

I am your sponser, LTJG J.R. Reddig. I am going to attempt to fill you in on the Command, and the intricacies of moving to the Land of the Morning Calm. Looking at the places you have already been, I will not presume to fill you in on the general Westpac pre-brief. Suffice it to say that regardless of the port calls you have made out here, perhaps even in Pusan, the business of coming in-country will prove very different. Korean life for us Megucks (or Americans) tends to revolve around the major command here, which is the Eighth U.S. Army. The J2 section where you will be working is a joint command subordinate to the CINC, USFK, who is an Army Four Star. Currently this is Gen Wickham, and the J2 is an Air Force Brigadier, BG Bissell. Below that comes the Chief for Intelligence Production, USAF Col Rice. The Chief Analyst and the Chief of the Indic are both Navy Commanders. So much for the simple nuts and bolts; the Navy Shop reports to ODR Ellis, while the Watch reports to ODR McMichael.

We are located on the Main Post of Yongsan Garrison, in the heart of Seoul. You couldn't ask for a better location. Seoul is a vibrant and exciting city, and the shopping here is among the best remaining in the Far East. The J2 (Intel) and J3 (Ops) sections are co-located in the Command Bunker. This is highlighted on the map for your convenience. One thing that has changed is the fact that in-coming POS personnel no longer reside in Faith Hall until assigned permanent quarters. Instead, you can expect to stay at the plush Hyatt Regency up the hill until Housing comes up with something for you.

I don't know if you are married or not, and so I will attempt to outline the situation both ways.

If you are single: The Army will provide space in one of the BOQ buildings, probably on South Post. These are cinder-block ranch-style houses with Korean tile roofs. Interesting places. They usually house up to five officers, and come with kitchens, common living areas, and Army roomates. I am living in one now, and the comfort level is certainly superior to my last residence, the USS Midway. Also part of the package is a base-employed Mama-san which will cost you \$35 a month. As a rule these extraordinary creatures provide outstanding service, washing clothing, and squaring the rooms away daily. You may, of course, elect not to avail yourself of this service (it is amazing where a fish can be hidden.) All in all, this is a fine option. It is not San Diego by

a long shot, but so little is these days.

The alternative is living on the economy. This is quite expensive, for reasons I will enumerate. The Koreans heat their homes through the cold winter with charcoal-heated air blown through the floors. This is a fine, and economical method. The Army refuses to endorse this method for Meguoks just because that method produces lethal carbon monoxide gas. Picky, picky, picky. Therefore, all approved housing must be oil heated. If you think the energy crunch has hit the States hard, you would be astonished at what it costs in the developing world. As an indication, charcoal prices just increased here by a hundred percent in a single month. Of course, being familiar with the astronomical rents in San Diego, you may find it quite reasonable, and well worth the money for the privacy. The choice is yours, and BAQ is available with no problems.

If you are married, and thus in line for a two year accompanied tour vice the one year unaccompanied, the wait for quarters has been running right around a month. This may be improved by the time you arrive, as the Army has just opened a new housing area off post. I understand it is of good quality, and quite comfortable. If you qualify for housing on Yongsan, I think you will be pleasantly surprised by the place. It is a most beautiful base, quite hilly and green in the summer.

Climatologically speaking, Seoul seems to be best in the Spring and Summer. It is cooler than Yokosuka, for example, which is nice this time of year. Unfortunately, it is also considerably colder in the winter. The stories about the retreat from the Chosen Reservoir are all true. So you might want to bring along your winter clothing. At the moment the Summer Monsoon has arrived, so a raincoat certainly wouldn't hurt either.

Since we are talking about the weather (it must be a shock after the year-round mildness of SoCal) I may as well discuss uniforms. Kahkis and Salt n' Peppers are the rule for Summer. I have had no occasion to wear Dress Blues or Whites. Working Blues are the rule for the Winter, of course, and you might want to stock up while you are on a Navy installation. The Army PX doesn't stock much for us in the way of uniforms or insignia, although the tailors out the gate on fabulous Itaewon-dong will be delighted to attempt to create whatever you need.

My sponsor neglected to mention something which resulted in some needless ill feelings on my part when I showed up. The Navy, as represented by ONFK, has flown in the face of Naval Regulations, and decreed that no beards are allowed. Somehow or another it is regarded as an affront to the Koreans, who allow only the venerable aged to grow them. It may not affect you, but there it is.

That transitional paragraph brings me to some of the peculiarities of living with the Army. I was an airdale myself until a couple months ago, and so I am still feeling the loss of my Squadron Buddies in this sea of green fatigues. Some of the rude shocks are outlined in the many pamphlets you will be receiving; primary among them is the Ration Control System.

The ROS is simple enough in conception. The Koreans have a tremendous

desire to own anything American. This, in conjunction with staggering ROK taxes, has led to a huge Black Market for virtually anything on Base. Therefore, the Army devised a system which revolves around the Ration Control Plate. This is a credit-card embossed with your name, serial number, and the type of privileges you are allowed. As an officer, you are entitled to the full spectrum, including Liquor, Commissary, and if you are married, Baby products. You are allowed to spend fixed dollar limits each month depending on the size of your family. If you are single, this amount is \$265. It goes up incrementally to something just over a thousand for a family of seven. Certain items, notably coffee, tang, cigarettes, antacids, mayonaise, and beauty products, have unit limits as well. Within reason the system is flexible. However, woe betide he who violates the rules. Your purchases are monitored by computer, and there are hundreds of people who do nothing but enforce the system.

The Black Market is also responsible for restrictions on high-value items. Anything over \$30 does not count against your monthly limit, but does involve a piece of paperwork which shows up when you out-process. If you cannot produce the item you bought, it is regarded as de facto evidence that you disposed of it somehow on the Market. Personally, I have never even approached my dollar limit, and the system is not as cumbersome as it sounds. None-the-less, it is something to be constantly aware of.

As to your personal goods: if you are single, I would recommend bringing what you need and not too much more. If you bring the entire household, make sure you have everything insured, appraised, or otherwise recorded. Records will help you settle a claim if you are ripped-off as your shipment sits somewhere between Pusan and Seoul. I lost around \$2,000 worth of stereo gear on the move from Japan. It is understandable when you realize the same goods are worth five or six thousand on the Economy. Naturally, I am not saying that you will have trouble on the move. But having been burned myself, I certainly would have done it better if I had known.

POVs: I had a car in Japan, and it was great. If you are going to be here two years, I would say bring it. On the other hand, I am walking now, and Korean cabs are not that expensive. There is a fair amount of paperwork that goes along with it, and the Korean driving experience has to be seen to be believed. The accident rate is about thirty times what it is in the States, so I wouldn't bring the 911S. A big old American car may not go up the sidestreets, but it does demand respect from the cab drivers. They drive on the right hand side of the road.

Travel: I came via Korean Airlines. It was \$340 from LA, and it avoided the demeaning wait at Travis, and the strung-out period of the lay-over at Yokota in Japan. If they will not allow Commercial travel on your orders, O'est la Vie. But I always felt that a little comfort was worth the difference between what they reimburse you and what it costs. The 747 I came on was mostly empty, and I could lay across the seats and sleep most of the way. I also didn't have to talk to the PFO on his first time overseas next to me. Your preference. Please let me know what your arrangements are, as I can meet you at Kimpo International or Osan AB, depending on how you come.

I think I have hit most of the high and low points. The job itself is

fascinating. The events of the last two months have added a certain spice to things, and having just finished two deployments to the Gulf of Oman, I just wouldn't have felt comfortable without a Crisis in progress. Things are quiet now, or at least quiet down here, so I wouldn't worry about bring the family if you have one.

This is about as real an intel job as there is without being on the big grey buildings, and there is no JP-5 in the water. So I think you can look forward to an interesting tour. If you have any questions, don't hesitate to write or call. My adress is (as yours will be)

LTJG [REDACTED]  
HQ, USFK/EUSA, J2  
APO SAN FRAN CA 96301

The phone number of the 24-hour J2 India Watch is:

YONGSAN 293-3609 or  
6729

Best of luck on the move, and again, don't hesitate to call if there is anything we can do to make the transition easier!

Best,

26 JUNE 1980  
SEOUL

DEAR SUNNY AND DAVE,

It had been long weeks in the Command Bunker- yes, I finally reached the personification of that tawdry ol' hunk of our college days and actually work in a Bunker now- when it occurred to me that I hadn't written from this all-new vale of tears. It is a nice bunker. It has fourteen inches of reinforced concrete over my desk and five feet of earth over that. It wouldn't stop a frog rocket or anything, but it will keep all that troublesome small arms from distracting me as I sort important classified documents for immediate destruction, wondering if I can get on the last helo out of town.

Dave, I could never fully relate to your predicament over here until I saw it for myself. Not to be a company man, mind you, but as bad as the Navy is, they have a mechanism for releasing the frustrations of overcrowding and interference in your personal life. It is called Liberty, and they give it to you in some fascinating places. They let you out loose, no restrictions, and I won't see you on the beach, buddy, if you won't see me. Just make the last boat back to the ship. The Army on the other hand, is the most single oppressive thing I have ever seen. They regulate every facet of your life in a most unremitting manner. I live in Seoul, right, not up across the Injin with those poor fuckers in the 2nd Infantry Division. There is an exciting and vibrant city out there, and theoretically this should be a great tour. I am an Officer, and again, theoretically entitled to the perquisites of my lofty rank. Not so fast.

They have a goofey MGen here who drives around the BOQ area to make sure no Korean girls sleep overnight. He busted a LOOL last week for that heinous crime; stripped him of his command and shit-canned him back to the world. Not a bad deal, except for the little detail of ruining the guys career. He prohibited the selling of beer during working hours... except a good portion of the people here are shift workers and don't have normal hours. Well, fuck us anyway. This particular asshole has also gone out to the ville and harassed people for just walking around with the hooks. I am not sure what he expects a man to do on a year long exile over here with no white women, but I am driven to the conclusion that he is a chronic masterbator. I live in a hooch with a couple MP/naros, and a warrent who wears the WWII service medal. It is enough to drive a poor sailor to drink... that is, if you can find somebody to sell you some drink.

It is with no small amount of fear and loathing that I noted that this General Officer is going up to the 2nd ID where he can really get into the morality business. Combat ready? Shit, the Imperial Eighth is going to have it's collective ass handed to it on a platter when it comes down.

That and the corruption of the System of ration control that is making the Korean managers of the machinery rich beyond their wildest dreams...for example, most of the spare cash I had in Japan went into stereo gear, on the off chance that I would ever be on land again and able to set it up. When my shipment was delivered to the palatial shack I currently call home, I discovered that the thieves who work for the cartage company had opened it and stolen everything that glittered, to the tune of about \$2,000 clams. On the black market, which is right where it went, that is worth more like eight grand.

So things started sour and have gotten progressively worse. Every time you turn around there is something new. Ration Control, or Reddig's First Law of the Far East: "If you want to do something it is impossible. When you don't want to do it any more, or don't have enough cash or time, they will make it compulsory."

All that aside, the Korean Problem as it is known (as though the firestorm was some sort of puzzle in the Sunday Times) is indeed a fascinating one. Since the Park assassination last year, there is a whole new set of sub-plots and wrinkles. The current strongman, Gen Ohn tu Hwan, is pissed at the U.S. because we think he is a tin horned two bit dictator. The fact that we are mostly right in that assessment is only the most aggravating point. The Good Dr. Ohn has the lid on things for the moment, but I am afraid it is a stop gap measure. I will probably get out of here without seeing the collapse (I hope) but it will be a most interesting decade. Bad as the oil pinch is hurting the States, it is utterly devastating to the Third and developing worlds.

It would be nice if the North was the only thing to worry about.

Well, the summer monsoon has arrived, and it is a nice day to stay inside and get smashed and write bitter letters. (the unfortunate aspect of it is that I have only myself to blame...I am scheming for a way to get to Thailand for the new Vietnamese War, where I can wear my camouflage fatigues and hang out at the bar of the Bangkok Hilton and view the situation with alarm, a chilly bottle of Amarit Beer in my paw.)

Hope the summer is treatin you all right. Give my best to those deabeatz I am proud to consider my friends. Thumbs up & Bums away,

27 June 1980  
Seoul.

Dear Uncle Jim,

Just wanted to drop you a quick note from America's frontier on the Asian landmass. I appear to be alive and well, and within the restrictions of the Eighth U.S. Army, fairly happy.

Having served with all four of the Services, I must say this has been an eye-opener. (Marine Boot Camp, trained by the Air Force, deployed with the Fleet, and now under the suzerainty of what is known around here as the "Eighth Imperial") I am deeply appreciative that there is a Marine Corps, for I am not the type to leap out of a landing craft and personally race up to silence a machine gun. I am always impressed by the sheer technological expertise of the Air Force (their briefing teams always make us Navy types look a bit shabby by comparison, what with the eighteen acetate overlays, graphs and line diagrams,) and proud to be a part of that strange beast called Naval Air, doing the ridiculous with the antique, anywhere on the planet we can steam to. Now the Army, on the other hand, must have its peculiar strengths somewhere. They just appear to conceal them better than the other outfits.

It has always been my contention that the primary job of the Government is to provide for the common defense, and to deliver the mail. I know for a fact that the latter is beyond the Army, and I am not sure about the former. I would not have missed this up close view for anything. Of course, it is not fair to judge a whole service by this microcosm. We are dealing with an entrenched bureaucracy of thirty years, most of it now Korean run, and by nature based on the Asian model. Which is to say it benefits those who run it. No one stays here long enough to have much impact, and so the Mr. Kims and Mr. Parks just keep the wheels running along the old tracks.

Some criteria might be derived from the definition of 'Corrupt Politician' recently put out by the Martial Law Command: "A corrupt public servant is one who has been elected to the National assembly three times." (I'm not sure that isn't more universal than the Generals meant.)

The Command structure here is a great puzzle. Since the President's decision, since modified, of removing all U.S. combat troops in country, there was a great push to turn everything over to the ROKs. Consequently, we now have a bewildering array of numerical organizations: one through five, by type 'G', 'J', and 'O' (for combined.) Getting the combined staffs off the ground is proving a tough nut. By regulation, much of the J2 operation may not be revealed to our host-nationals. Consequently, the confusion factor over at the big

new white building is substantial. The line diagram of the chain of command closely resembles a plate of linguini. Well, it is nothing if not educational.

The crisis atmosphere of the last month has abated to a large extent. The new Martial Law Command has a tight lid on things. Kwang-ju has been put down swiftly, and if there are hard memories there, no one is reacting to them overtly. It is not a good situation for the long run, however, and I'm afraid we have gotten ourselves in the middle again. The people seem to perceive that we connived in the imposition of Emergency Marshall Law last month, while the Generals seem to believe that we are hostile to them. Both views are justified to some extent, and so we have lost ground on both fronts. The good will of the Korean People remains vast, but finite.

The 25th marked the anniversary of the commencement of the Police Action, or the War for the Liberation of the Fatherland, or whatever it was. Two weeks ago I was hoofing it home from downtown and took a shortcut through the main subway station to avoid the rain. I saw a long pictorial history of the War prominently displayed along one of the tunnel walls. Prominent of course was the U.S. presence. Yesterday, though, I saw a similar exhibition across from City Hall, and I had to search to find an American face. I don't know if it signifies anything or not. I wish I could read Hmong.

To pass some of the dead time here, I am going to the airfield at K-16 tomorrow to investigate getting my basic license from the Army Flying Club. With any luck I should be able to get a good start on it before the winter winds blow chilly and cold. The Summer Monsoon could throw a monkey wrench into those plans though, so we shall see.

A couple news notes: the Constellation was involved in a collision at sea yesterday, and I have a feeling that my old home will be soon underway to the rescue again. Poor old Midway. I miss being on her, and that is startling. I never would have thought I would miss the J2-5 in the water and the 16 hour days. Funny what you can grow to like; but getting underway for a crisis a world away seems to have more adreniline than dealing with the same crisis day after day. The Midway could always turn the rudder and go home.

The other thing is those damned Vietnamese again. I am going to write my Detailer and see if there is anyway to get to Thailand. We should have stopped them before. Perhaps the time or the place, or the people were not right then. But the line has got to be drawn somewhere. The Thais are too good a people to be thrown to the Communists with the once happy Laotians, and the indomitable Montainiards, and the decimated Kmors. But where are we to come up with a carrier these days? Korea needs one in the vicinity, the Iranians have become accustomed to two, poor Connie is out of it for a while, Enterprise still in the yards, and Ranger never recovered from Yankee Station. The thin line gets thinner.

I hope the Family is having a great summer. I understand from Dad that you will be attending a symposium on WWII aircraft. Please pass along my best to Mr. Kelsey, if he recalls the shaggy-haired kid at Pensacola a few years ago. Give my best to everyone!

Your nephew,



THE ESSENTIAL KOREAN CONFLICT:  
A STUDY OF THE YOBO (PROSTITUTION SUBCULTURE)

BASCOM W. RATLIFF

OPT., MSC

ACADEMY OF HEALTH SCIENCES

FORT SAM HOUSTON, TEXAS 78234

TYPED AT GREAT PERSONAL SACRIFICE  
WITH MANY TYPOS BY

LTJG ~~XXXXXXXXXX~~

COMMAND BUNKER, SEOUL

ABSTRACT

THE ESSENTIAL KOREAN CONFLICT: A Study of the YOBO  
(Prostitution subculture)

Yoboism, a unique form of prostitution in Korea, was studied to determine its effects upon the men and women involved.

Findings indicated severe conflicts in the relationship and extreme acting-out behaviors by the participants.

Emotional attachments were formed, marriages were frequently discussed, and pseudo husband-wife arrangements were common.

The difficulties in these relationships resulted in numerous problems for the couples, and proved detrimental to the overall mental health of the subjects.

\*\*\*\*\*

Typist's Comments:

I am going to go ahead and make my own comments in this thing, a liberty not often taken by humble typscriptors.

On the other hand, I am not getting paid for it, (and judging by the numerous errors already incurred in the first two pages, I advise the reader to stand by) and therefore feel entitled to editorialize at will. My comments will always be identified as such, because after all, the good Captain spend a lot of time on this study.

My qualifications include two cases of the Pacific Basin Drips, and over 28 months out of the beloved United Snakes. Did you ever hear the story about the 'Butterfly Boy' down in the P.I. who played around on his 'Yobo' once too often and was greeted by a kiss which held a razorblade? Well, more of that anon. On with OPT Ratliff's fascinating study.....

The Essential Korean Conflict: A Study of the Yobo  
(Prostitution) Subculture

Prostitution as a social problem is becoming an increasingly significant issue among military commands, especially among those forces stationed in foreign countries. American soldiers are often lonely and afraid when faced with a strange culture and become easy targets for prostitutes. In these situations the women<sup>2</sup> provide an outlet for sexual drives and much needed companionship.

There have been several studies of prostitution in the United States<sup>3</sup> and a few which explore professional prostitution in other nations (Esselstyn, 1968; Holzner & Ding, 1971; Iga, 1968; Roebuck & McNamara, 1973; Winick & Kinsie, 1971). Of particular interest is the effect that prostitution has on United States military personnel stationed in Oriental countries.

Stuart Loory (1972) in his discussion of this problem posited that U.S. military personnel working in the Far East developed strong attachments for their prostitute girl friends and married them in some cases.<sup>4</sup> He found that in many Oriental countries, notably Korea, a form of prostitution known as "Yoboism" has flourished. Under this arrangement the woman lived with the soldier for a pre-determined monthly fee and provided him with both sexual and domestic services. Relationships formed under this arrangement often resulted in strong emotional ties, with both the men and women becoming mutually on one another for physical and emotional needs.

The aim of this paper is to elaborate upon the variety of prostitution identified by Loory. A case study approach is taken, drawn from prostitutes and American soldiers living north of Seoul, Korea.<sup>5</sup> While a case study of one town does not, of course, reveal all the contrasting forms of prostitution, it is hoped that such an in-depth study will provide certain inputs and information on the problems arising out of the yobo (prostitution) contract.

---

Footnotes are provided free of charge by the Typist.

- 1) Particularly among Army commands which seem to take a paternal interest in all private activities of the troops, needed or not.
- 2) No shit, Sherlock.
- 3) Wherever that is.
- 4) I bet it was a Federal Grant that helped him figure it out.
- 5) There ain't much north of Seoul, except the slaving Communists, so it is no wonder that most people are looney up there.

### Description of Yoboism

Long term (three to twelve month) co-habitation between prostitutes and soldiers was studied by the Mental Hygiene Consultation Service to ascertain the dynamics of human interaction<sup>6</sup> and the needs served by the arrangement. The women (and men) are referred to as yobos<sup>7</sup> (a Korean term of endearment) and live with the soldier for a specified monthly fee, ranging from \$125-\$250 per month. This amount is usually dependant upon the soldier's rank and the services he desires, but in many cases the woman takes on the role of a wife, and cooks, cleans, and generally cares for the soldier. Reportedly, her manner of providing services tends to be in a passive, seductive manner, in which the soldier is made to feel comfortable and in full control of the situation. When a man enters into the relationship he loses his fear of the environment, and gains a sense of well-being and safety. The soldier, who may have been isolated and lonely, often becomes secure in this relationship. Such security may lead to an unanticipated result on the part of the soldier. He may find himself becoming highly dependant on his yobo. If he is single, this dependancy may lead to marriage, but if he is already married, it frequently develops into an internal conflictual situation where his loyalties are divided between his yobo and his wife.

### Purpose of Study

The following pilot study was conducted to gather information on the Yobo subculture to ascertain its influence on the soldiers and women involved. There was reason to suspect that the relationship caused severe emotional problems for the participants. During the 1976 calendar year it was estimated (from case studies) that nearly 40% of the persons coming to the division Mental Health Clinic (or Hygiene, in Army parlance) were involved in a conflictual relationship with a local prostitute. It is significant that half of those soldiers having these difficulties had wives and children in the United States.

These problems lead to a research effort at examining some of the existing theories and common sense notions about the yobo relationship. Originally the study had begun as an effort to learn the dynamics of the emotional crisis that occurred in soldiers when they were faced with departing Korea. At first, it was simply an interest in the people who came to the clinic for counseling. However, when it became apparent the relationships and conflicts were widespread and affecting a large portion of the troops, it was decided that a study of the yobo subculture was needed.<sup>9</sup> Case files from the clinic and interviews with persons attending a pre-marital seminar lead to the formulation of four general hypotheses:

1. Women enter the relationship because of a need for financial security.
2. Men enter the relationship to fulfill a need for intimacy.

- 6) Sounds like a federal study, all right.
- 7) Not to be confused with the Burger King ham sandwich of similar name.
- 8) As though being in the 2nd I.D. wasn't enough.
- 9) When in doubt, fund a study. 10) Aw, come on.....

3. An emotional investment by both the man and woman in the relationship grows to the point that both become mutually dependant upon each other for love, intimacy, and security.
4. When it comes time for the man to leave Korea, he and his yobo go through a seperation anxiety which leads to aberrant behavior and severe emotional problems in both individuals.

#### METHOD

To test the hypothesis, a total of 340 American soldiers and 130 Korean women, involved in the yobo relationship, were interviewed to ascertain the dynamics of their relationships with one another. Of the soldier group, 42 were seen as clients<sup>1</sup> at the Mental Hygeine Clinic. 35 were referred to the research team by participants in the pre-marital seminar, and 63 were chosen from soldiers who had yobos in the ville. The women were chosen in much the same manner; 18 were interviewed at the Clinic, 35 were referred to us by participants in the pre-marital seminar, and a sample of 77 were chosen from the villiage population.

One problem which may limit the generality of the research was the method of selecting subjects. In most cases the respondent's names were given to the research team by persons previously interviewed, i.e., various persons were asked if they were yoboing<sup>2</sup> or had knowlege of people who were. In this manner, we recieved the names of both men and women who were in a yobo relationship. There was an additional problem in that about a third of the people we approached were reluctant to participate due to the personal nature of the survey.<sup>3</sup> Participants from the clinic were not abnormal, nor were their responses significantly different than those of other subjects.<sup>4</sup>

- 11) Heavily armed, no less. Note the lack of controll group in the study, or the fact that 60% of the persons interviewed at the Brain Shop had problems, but were not involved in the relationship. This would seem to downplay the impact of the hardship environment on all personnel, across the board.
- 12) Sorta sounds like canoeing or camping; or maybe even eating one of those Burger King Sandwiches.
- 13) "Hi! We are the Army Health Corps! Mind if we root around in your sex lives for a while? We promise to put everything back where we found it!"
- 14) As with note 11, I think it as likely that everyone is deranged to an extent. Hell, I'm deranged and I am living in Seoul, where life is easy.

Interviews were conducted by an Army Social Worker and a Korean national who was fluent in both English and Korean. Subjects were asked to respond to questions designed to elicit information on the dynamics of the relationship between the man and woman, general background factors of the participants, and the goals and aspirations that the subjects had for the relationship. All participants were assured of complete confidentiality.<sup>15</sup>

Data was gathered during the months of September through December, 1976. Male subjects were American soldiers assigned to the Northern District of South Korea; female members were residents of the ville adjacent to the army compound. The living arrangement was such that women were receiving financial support from the men in exchange for sexual and domestic services.

### The Study Setting

According to the civil affairs office at our study site there are approximately four thousand (1976) prostitutes providing services to U.S. soldiers in the Northern District.<sup>16</sup> In the village there are some 28 clubs which cater solely to American, and are monitored by the military. Additionally, there are an estimated 20-25 tea rooms and Korean Bars which serve as a meeting place for Koreans and Americans alike. Although the clubs are the only which actively promote prostitution, the other establishments constitute an important part of the "sex for sale" subculture.<sup>17</sup>

### RESULTS

All inclusive, the men were older than the women, and were predominantly enlisted ranks E-3 through E-6.<sup>18</sup> Women averaged just over 24 years of age (range 16-38) and men just over 24 years of age (range 17-54 years.) The bulk of the group was in the age range 20-24; only 13% (17 Ss) of the women, and 23% (32 Ss) of the men were over the age of 30. There were few subjects above the ranks of E-6 (7 commissioned officers, 10 warrant officers, and 16 E-7s and E-8s.)

As expected, from previous studies of Korean-American couples in the Division area (Ratliff et al 1976) the women were single or no parent families (74%) and had less than a high school education (87%) Only six of the women reported previous marriages, but 18% (25 Ss) of the males were divorced or legally separated and 5% (49 Ss) were married. It is interesting to note that of the 42 respondents who were involved in mental hygiene counselling, 24 were legally married to a woman residing in the United States.<sup>19</sup>

- 15) Only disclosures were to the Ration Control, Korean IRS, KOIA special coded entries in permanent Medical Files.
- 16) Services included French and Greek Culture, mild water sports, English Discipline, and laundry no starch.
- 17) "Oh no! Mister Bill!"
- 18) What da ya know, just about the same proportion as in all personnel in the Division!
- 19) No Brain Surgeons were reported (0% or 0 Ss) in either test group.

## FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

All the relationships originated from a financial contract. In exchange for a set amount of dollars from the soldier, usually \$125-\$250, the woman provided a variety of services to include sex, cooking, and cleaning. Primarily though, the women wanted money<sup>20</sup>, the men wanted sex, and the whole relationship revolved around these two factors. Many subjects simply stated that without money or sex there would be no relationship.

The cost of the relationship was partly determined by a man's rank, ability to pay, and his naivete.<sup>21</sup> For example, a yobo arrangement for "private" was generally \$100-125, but for NCOs and officers the price jumped to \$150-225. Additionally, the man was subjected to subtle pressures to purchase clothes, electrical appliances, furniture and Post Exchange and Commissary items (coffee, tea cigarettes, cosmetics, etc.) for the woman. She then sold these items on the Black Market for extra money. When the relationship ended, the rest of goods were sold or traded, a new yobo was found, and a new stock of items was procured.

Many times there was an extra catch to the relationship. During the early stages of the relationship a man found out that his yobo owed a papasan (pimp) money, usually \$200-600. The man was expected to pay off this debt for the woman, and eventually did, either out of a feeling of "responsibility or love." This money was rarely owed to the papasan legitimately.<sup>22</sup> Rather it was a scheme worked out by the papasan and the woman, whereby he collected from the soldier and gave the money to the woman. The woman then had added financial security for when the relationship ended. More than two-thirds of the women interviewed (69%) stated they had used this method to obtain more money from their soldier yobo. Also, nearly all the women voiced the opinion that they would ask for a lump sum monetary gift when their yobo left Korea. There was little doubt that from the woman's viewpoint money was initially the most critical issue in the relationship.<sup>23</sup>

This was further supported by the woman's desire to get married to their soldier yobo. Primarily, reasons for marriage were financial security and increased wealth and material possessions. Love did not play an important part in the relationship for them, and though they often developed an attachment for their soldier yobos, this was mainly due to security reasons.

- 
- 20) Money? Wait a minute...sex for money...we might be onto something here!
  - 21) 2nd Its must have placed at the high end of the spectrum.
  - 22) This is a variation of the famed Badger Game. In the Philippines, it usually goes something like: "You geeve me more Pesos or I put out contract of you, cheep sailor!"
  - 23) Once again, the social scientist has stumbled on a major factor, and then casually passed over it. I would submit that this is not a generalization fit only for a disoussion of Yobolism, but rather a lucid description of most male/ female relationships as they existed even in the west untill the rise of femanism, which puts forth the proposition that women are entitled to starve as much as the men. This may be just another variation on the Badger Game.

### Love and Affection

Although the relationship began on a money for sex basis, it often developed into a more marital type arrangement, especially from the man's viewpoint. For the Korean woman, marriage is traditionally based on other than love and affection reasons. She marries a man who can take care of her, treat her differently, and support the family. Concepts of love, though not particularly important reasons for marriage, could be, and were used, by the women in securing American boyfriends and husbands. They quickly learned that in order to keep their yobos happy and maintain financial security, they had to use the concept of love and intimacy to the fullest. By making the man feel loved and wanted to the fullest they increased their chances of getting more money and/or getting married. Less than a fourth (23%) of the women stated an intimate bond with their yobo; however, 83% of the men indicated these kind of feelings. Married men expressed these kinds of feelings more often and their relationships were patterned after the homelife they enjoyed in the United States. In this sample 43% of the men and 82% of the women indicated a strong desire to marry their yobos.<sup>24</sup>

### Deception in Yoboin

As might be expected, the relationships, with their financial origins and varied expectations, led to many deceptions on the part of both men and women. Men initially thought that they could lie and be dishonest to the yobo and felt little remorse over having short term affairs with other women. Their perception was that they were paying for the relationship and were therefore free to come and go as they pleased with little regard for the woman's feelings.<sup>25</sup> Though this attitude changed as the relationship grew stronger, it nevertheless had a damaging effect upon the initial development of the relationship, especially when the couple began seriously considering marriage.

However, the men were not the only ones who practised this deception. Fully three fourths of the women (compared to 63% of the men) acknowledged that they had sexual relations with other men during the early stages of the yobo relationship. When asked if they thought their soldier yobo was having a side affair, only 26% of the men replied in the affirmative. In a similar fashion, only 28% of the women suspected their partner of being unfaithful. From this it is evident these deceptions were carried off quite well.

One other problem that occurred in the relationship was that of expressed love and emotion on the part of the woman. The women freely discussed the idea of deceiving their yobos by expressing undying love and devotion to them without sincere feelings. Of the total female group, less than a fourth (23%) expressed any strong emotional ties to their yobo. Financial security through maintenance of the relationship appeared the crucial issue.

following paragraphs for amplification of this pro-  
24) ~~Thurdsman's~~ ~~theory~~ ~~the~~ ~~theory~~ ~~of~~ ~~Man~~ ~~as~~ ~~Chump~~  
25) An entirely reasonable proposition, at least prior to effective conditioning. See



Men had mixed feelings. During the first two months of the relationship, the man saw the woman as a purchased service, but after this initial adjustment<sup>26</sup> he became protective, jealous, and took on many husband-like attributes. For him it became a secure haven from the rigors and restrictions of military duty.

### The Conflict

Both the men and the women expressed genuine conflicts over the relationship. Male subjects expressed a high degree of guilt, regardless of whether they were married or single. They felt that the paying for sex initially hurt the woman because it "cheapened" the relationship. As the relationship developed the conflict increased. The men found themselves becoming attached to a "common prostitute" and were made to feel by the woman that any future for a prostitute in Korea was bleak. Men were faced with the idea of "Do I leave this woman that I care about here to remain a low caste whore, or do I marry her and rescue her from the evils of Korea."<sup>27</sup> This conflict heightened tremendously during the soldier's last two to three months in Korea. Most of the soldiers felt severe anxiety about leaving their yobo in Korea to suffer further the fate of prostitution.

Women had equally severe conflicts.<sup>28</sup> The loss of her yobo meant that she had to return to the streets and clubs again to search for another soldier benefactor. This resulted in a loss of income, increased risk of venereal and related diseases, and a dependancy on the street pimps. For the woman it meant a failure in a cultural sense. Since she had lived with an American soldier, Korean men viewed her as an extremely low caste woman, thereby negating her chances of ever having a meaningful relationship, or getting married to a Korean man.

Substantial numbers of men and women had thoughts of suicide when faced with the ending of the relationship. For the men, these feelings resulted from his anticipation of the loss of security and esteem, with an accompanying sense of helplessness and hopelessness. These feelings lead to suicidal tendencies, and extreme acting-out behavior and regression.<sup>29</sup>

Faced with the prospect of becoming a street whore, women played upon the sympathies of the men to gain monetary or other gifts at his departure. The men, feeling guilty and conflictual, usually did leave the woman with monies or gifts to help her until she could find another yobo. In one case a soldier bought his girlfriend a ceramics shop for \$2,000; in another instance a man left his yobo with \$1200 in jewelry; and in a third example the soldier gave his yobo a \$1000 gift, so she could return to Seoul and study art. Although these are the three most extraordinary examples, they none-the-less show the strong attachments that developed in the relationships.

26) Or conditioning by the female.

27) Take two aspirins and a cab ride to Osan. The feeling will pass.

28) Like, "where do I find a turkey to give me over a million or two won a year for doing what I would be doing for free anyway?"

29) Remember, these guys are heavily armed.

30) Undoubtedly the 2nd Lts in the survey.

### Discussion

It is extremely difficult to accurately describe the dynamics and feelings involved in the relationships we explored. There was a high degree of ambivalence, fear, & guilt expressed by the men. They developed strong hostile-dependant relationships with the women and expressed severe anxiety, depression, suicidal ideations (one couple actually agreed to, and attempted suicide by carbon monoxide poisoning), and psychotic symptoms when faced with the prospect of dissolving the relationship. Women subjects went through similar traumas and at least eight of them attempted suicide, three successfully (six of the men attempted suicide, but none succeeded.)<sup>31</sup>

According to statistics on marriages between American soldiers and Korean nationals during the time of this study, it is likely that most marital engagements start as financially based yobo arrangements (Ratcliff, et al, 1976.) For example, 85% of those attending the DISCOM premarital counseling seminar admit to a yobo arrangement. In nearly all yobo relationships, both the men and women form strong attachments with each other, and marriage is discussed and explored even when the man has a wife and family already.<sup>32</sup> Too, the isolation of the man from his familiar American environment coupled with the combat deployed situation of South Korea make him much more susceptible to developing an intimate, secure relationship with a woman.

There was one generalized finding which seemed to permeate the relationship from the onset. This was fear of Korean government officials and local pimps. Nearly all of these persons had had a hand in the prostitution business, and illicitly solicited money from both the women and the men. They did this in various ways. As mentioned previously in the results section, the women coaxed the men into giving them lump sum gifts at the end and beginning of the relationship, and urged them to buy PX and Commissary articles during the relationship. Quite often the women were coerced by the papasan into giving them a percentage of the money and items. If the woman refused, she was liable to be beaten or thrown into jail, or a VD clearing home. There was also a requirement that a woman maintain a valid "Venereal Disease (V.D.) Card." If she had no card, or an outdated one, she was placed in detention at the VD Clearing Home for two weeks, or until her yobo paid the guard (\$20-40) to let her out. Women living with soldiers were regularly rounded up by the police, other minor government officials, and harassed via the VD card or clearing home route. In this manner, the police, pimps, and officials were able to extract money and black market items from the men and women.<sup>33</sup> There was no judicial system through which the women could appeal or counter the actions of these officials. The problem became amplified greatly when a soldier decided to marry a Korean woman. Whether a prostitute or not, she was subject to seizure and incarceration if she was seen with her fiancé, and did not have a valid VD card. This served to discourage non-prostitutes from dating soldiers, and forced the soldier to seek companionship via a club prostitute or yobo, and provided the relationship with yet another unhealthy burden.

31) Statistics from the World indicate that usually men are much more successful than women. This is perhaps significant here.

32) The man for her pudenda, the woman for his wallet and ROP.

33) I knew a sailor who got VD from the same woman three times. When

Implications from this study seem to indicate that the situation is not likely to change. So long as there are lonely soldiers away from home, the yobo subcultures will thrive. Several alternatives may be considered to deal with the problems of loneliness and alienation among American troops. Tours of duty which permit wives to accompany their husbands overseas would be an effective deterrent against loneliness.<sup>34</sup> Too, more command emphasis on counselling soldiers having conflicts would ease the situation, and help them to make more rational decisions about getting involved with the yobo subculture.<sup>35</sup> It is simplistic and erroneous to think that harrassment and punishment will adequately deal with the situation. The real problems are loneliness, desolation, and the need for companionship, not prostitution.<sup>36</sup> Rather, the flourishing prostitution is a symptom of fearful and lonely soldiers seeking friendship in a foreign land. These appear to be the critical problems.

I asked him why he kept going back, he responded, "She is a great lay." who needs logio?

- 34) An added benefit would be the ability of the wives to alleviate the boredom in the POW camps after the war passes over the 2nd I.D.
- 35) It would be a sure fire program, if the counollors were large-bosomed American women. See above.
- 36) This could be an action item for part of the command structure; but on the other hand, what would be do with all the M.P.s and social scientists who enforce the curreant system?

## REFERENCES

Bryon, James H. "Occupational Ideologies and Individual Attitudes of Call Girls." Social Problems 1966, 13, 441-450

Esselstyn, T.O. "Prostitution in the United States" Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science, 1968, 376.

Holzner, Anne S. & Ding, I.K. "White Dragon Pearls in Hong Kong: A Study of Young Women Drug Addicts." International Journal of the Addictions, 1973, 8, 253-263

Iga, Mamoru, "Socio-Cultural Factors in Japanese Prostitution" Journal of Sex Research, 1968, 4, 127-146.

Loory, Stuart H., Defeated: Inside America's Military Machine, Random House, New York, 1973

Ratliff, Bascom W., Moon, H. J., & Bonacci, Gwendolyn, Inter-Cultural Marriage Between American Soldiers and Korean Nationals Unpublished, 2nd I.D., APO 96224, 1976.

Roebuck, Julian, & McNamara, Patrick, "Flecheros and Free-lancers" Prostitution in a Mexican Border Town. Archives of Sexual Behavior 1973, 2, 231-244.

Winick, Charles, and Kinsie, Paul M., The lively Commercial Prostitution in the United States. Quadrangle Books, Chicago, 1971.