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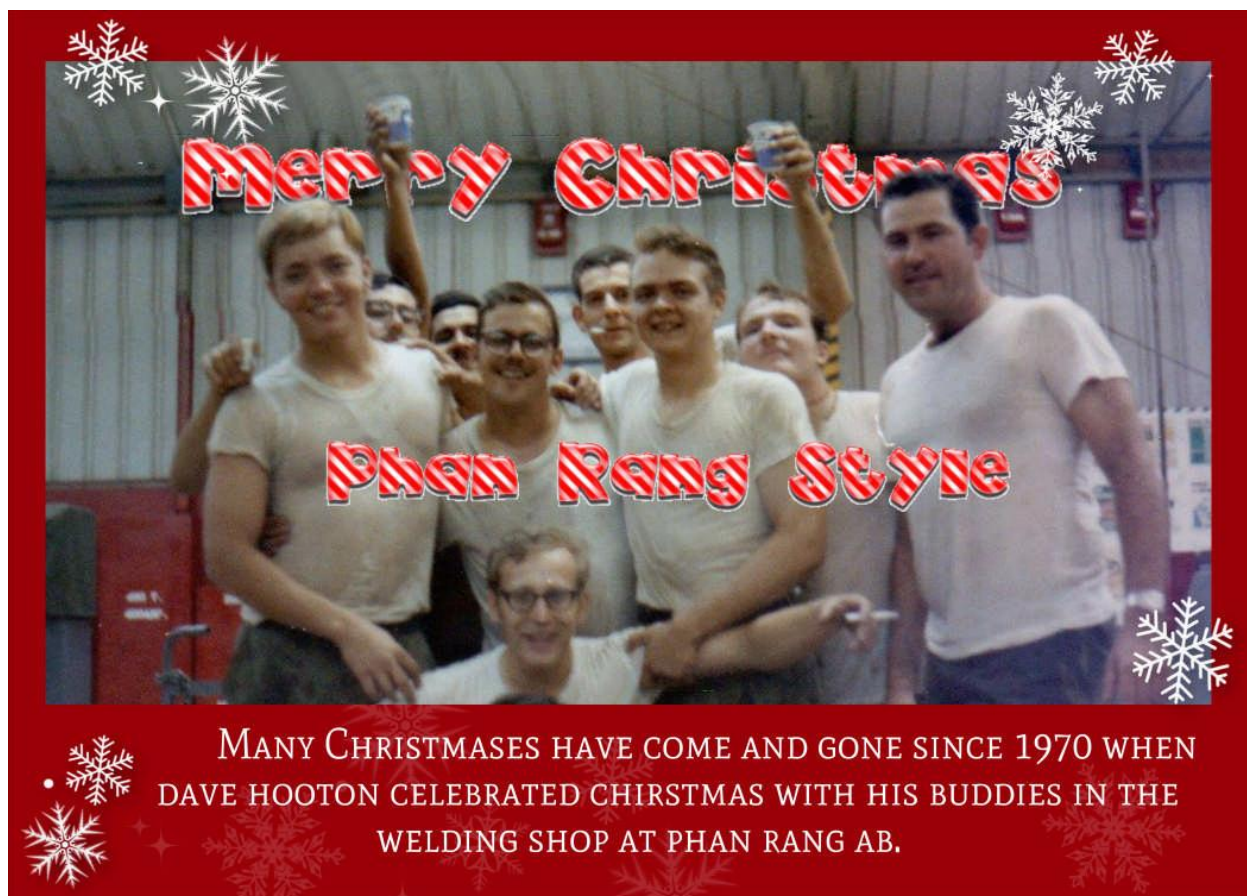
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**Doug's Note**

### **GGOOOOOOODDDDDDDD Morning VIET NAM**

I Just wanted to take the time today to tell all of my Phan Rang Brothers and Sisters how much it has meant to me to have been blessed with the opportunity to "re-connect" with folks that I spent time with so long ago.

Even though we served in different times and did different things we shared the common bond of doing a job that was looked on at the time, with perhaps distaste by others "back in the world ". We gave 100 % and did so with pride, professionalism, and yes a healthy sense of humor. I have been blessed to be in such good company ....**Thank You All and Merriest of Christmas's.** Joe Burkhart from Facebook.



MANY CHRISTMASES HAVE COME AND GONE SINCE 1970 WHEN  
DAVE HOOTON CELEBRATED CHIRSTMAS WITH HIS BUDDIES IN THE  
WELDING SHOP AT PHAN RANG AB.

#### COMMAND YULE MESSAGE FROM COL. FRANK L. GAILER JR.

I feel sure that we can all agree  
that Christmas by mail will never  
replace Christmas at home with the  
family. However, even though we are  
thousands of miles away from  
Christmas as we know it, let us not  
forget the real meaning of this  
season--"Peace on Earth, Good Will to

Men."

*~*

I know each of you join me in the  
fervent hope that peace and good  
will which men have always sought will  
someday become a reality.



We have a difficult task here,  
you all know that, but I want to  
express my appreciation for your efforts in the past year and ask for  
your continued support throughout the  
coming year. I am personally very proud to  
serve with such a group of dedicated  
and capable people and I hope  
that next year will be a time when everyone  
can have Christmas at home.



To each and every one of you, I  
extend my personal wish for a Merry  
Christmas and a very Happy New Year.

**Colonel Frank L. Gailer Jr.**  
**Commander, 35th Tactical Fighter Wing**

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## **DATeline VIETNAM: CHRISTMAS**

**Uneasy World Marks Christmas** (*Florence Morning News, Sunday morning, December 25, 1966*)

## **World Leaders Ask for Peace** By The Associated Press

Christians of the world ushered in yuletide 1966 and this was the scene: A U. S. cargo plane crashed into homes near Da Nang, killing 60 civilians, the second rifle shots and exploding-shells, shaking a Christmas truce in Vietnam, Christmas vacationers surviving the crash of a jetliner in Mexico, Pope Paul VI visiting the scene of a disaster.

And in Merrie England, an automatic stamp canceling machine in a post office making this Christmas 9961.

In Jerusalem, Jews and Arabs agreed to forego border restrictions for Arab Christians to visit holy places. But in Berlin, the Communists blocked visits of West Berliners to relatives in East Berlin — turning back to the cold war status of pre-1963.

Roads leading to Bethlehem were jammed with cars headed for the site which tradition says is the site of Christ's birth.

In the United States, most of the Eastern seaboard was cloaked in a Christmas Eve snowstorm. Travelers clogged transportation facilities and highways.

Sick and wounded servicemen flown from Vietnam had a special Christmas arranged by President Johnson: a greeting from the commander in chief at San Antonio, Tex.

The President himself planned a family Christmas at the LBJ Ranch.

There were appeals from world leaders for peace.

Pope Paul expressed hope for "a miracle of good will" to end the fighting in Vietnam. He journeyed to Florence, hit by floods in November, to celebrate midnight Mass.

Prime Minister Lester B. Pearson of Canada said each individual could contribute peace "through the exercise love and understanding."

In Bonn, Kurt Georg Kiesinger, West Germany's new chancellor, told Germans in a Christmas broadcast that "peace remains the principle word for us." He also renewed his call for an improvement of relations with the Soviet Union and the Communist countries of Eastern Europe.

In South Vietnam, Francis Cardinal Spellman, Roman Catholic vicar of the U.S. armed forces and archbishop of New York, celebrated Mass on a wooden stage covered with jungle parachute for U.S. servicemen in a muddy clearing 11 miles north of Saigon. Also in Vietnam for Christmas religious services is evangelist Billy Graham.

U.S. spokesmen in Saigon reported U.S. Marines fought off an attack by the Communists 17 miles south of Da Nang, shaking up the 48-hour truce that the Viet Cong themselves originally proposed. Closer to Da Nang, Flying Tiger cargo plane plunged into homes of civilians as it attempted to land in heavy rain.

In France, U.S. servicemen took time out from their preparations to leave French soil to carry on a 20-year tradition of passing out toys to children in the countryside. But this is the last year, for President Charles de Gaulle has asked military forces of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization to leave.

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### **Vietnam Crash Kills 125** *(Florence Morning News, Sunday morning, December 25, 1966)*



**DA NANG, South Vietnam AP) —** A four-engine American cargo plane crashed in a populated area near Da Nang Air Base Christmas eve and U.S. authorities said Sunday the known death toll of Vietnamese civilians rose to 125.

An additional 42 civilians were injured, a U.S. spokesman said.

The plane, a CL44 turboprop of the Flying Tiger line, carried a crew of four. The crewmen were unaccounted for hours after the plane crashed in a heavy rainstorm and burned. Observers said the crash was the worst such plane disaster of the Vietnam war.

The plane was flying general cargo from the U.S. air base Tachikawa, near Tokyo, to Da Nang.

A U.S. spokesman said the U.S. 1st Marine Division had taken over responsibility at the disaster scene and a U.S. Army civil affairs company was at the scene to assist. He said Marines were furnishing food, clothing and medical assistance to the Vietnamese village where the plane crashed.

Cause of the crash had not been established as of Sunday morning, the spokesman said.

It was 7:16 p.m. a time when most of the families would have just completed dinner. A Vietnamese interpreter said at least 12 of the thatch-roofed homes were destroyed.

Four hours after the crash the wreckage still was burning.

A Flying Tiger Line spokesman said he didn't know what cargo it was carrying.

U.S. Marine and Air Force rescue teams arrived about half-hour after the crash to help remove the wounded and the dead. Footlights were brought in later as the Americans began a methodical search for additional bodies.

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**Nine Americans Killed By Own Artillery Shell** *(The Daily Courier, Connellville Pa., South Connelssville, Pa., Scottdale, Pa., Mt. Pleasant Pa., Saturday evening, December 26, 1970)*

**By BERT W O.KULEY**

**SAIGON (UPI)** -The U.S. Command today reported 81 Viet Cong and North Vietnamese violations of the U.S. and South Vietnamese Christmas cease-fire. The Communists truce was still in effect.

The command also reported nine Americans were killed and nine wounded when a U.S. 105mm artillery shell hit an outpost in the northern sector of South Vietnam shortly before the Allied cease-fire.

The accident caused the heaviest U.S. casualties in a single ground incident since July. It occurred 11 miles southwest of Hue.

Military spokesmen said U.S. forces, South Vietnamese troops and other Allied units resumed combat operations at the 6 p.m. Christmas day expiration of the Allied cease-fire.

72-hour cease-fire declared by the Viet Cong was still in effect. It started 17 hours before the Allied truce and was scheduled to continue until 1 a.m. Sunday.

The U.S. Command said the Communist violations in the Allied truce period showed a decline from last year's 24-hour Christmas truce when 115 Communist-provoked incidents were reported.

American casualties of four wounded during the Allied cease-fire compared with three wounded last Christmas, official records showed. Spokesmen for the U.S. Command said one of the American wounded came Christmas Day when Communist ground fire knocked down an OH58 Kiowa observation helicopter 70 miles north of Saigon.

Two other Americans were wounded at mid-afternoon Christmas Day when they came under small arms fire while enroute to a position of the 1st Brigade, 5th Division (mechanized), 12 miles south of the Demilitarized Zone (DMZ). The fourth GI wounded during the truce was hit in a-clash in the central region of South Vietnam before dawn Christmas Day.

South Vietnamese officials said 17 government troops, police and civilians were killed, wounded and one kidnapped by the Viet Cong during the truce. Communist losses were placed at 30 killed and one captured.

Communiques from Phnom Penh said Cambodian B28 bombers pounded suspected North Vietnamese troop concentrations 18 miles east of Phnom Penh early today. The bombing rattled windows in the capital.

Lt. Col. Am Rong, the official Cambodian military spokesman, said villagers had given Communist troop positions to the government. The air attacks were against North Vietnamese who earlier attacked government troops near Tuk Kleang, 15 miles south of the capital.

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**Christmas Truce is Ended; Normal War Action Resumes** (*The Joplin Globe, Joplin, Missouri, Monday Morning, December 26, 1966*)

BY ROBERT TUCKMAN

**SAIGON** (AP) - A bullet - riddled Christmas truce ended Monday and orders went out to allied forces to "resume normal operations" in the war against Communists.

In less than an hour after the cease-fire ended at 7 a.m. (6 p. m. EST, Sunday), artillery fire boomed north of Saigon. It could not be immediately determined whether a heavy engagement was under way or if the shelling was a harassing barrage.

In the hours preceding the end of the 48-hour cease-fire there were outbreaks of firefights in the field on Christmas Day and charges from North Vietnam and Red China that U.S. planes flew over Hanoi in violation of the truce. The broadcasts from Hanoi and Peking said one U.S. plane was shot down.

There was no confirmation of this from the U.S. Command in Saigon but. it was reported that American planes flew reconnaissance missions — not bombing raids — over the North during the truce.

The closing hours of the Christmas truce were quiet.

There was no official confirmation at once on a resumption of air strikes on the North but presumably U.S. bombing planes were headed back into action.

Asked if there would be a renewal of the raids, a U.S. military spokesman said. "I have heard nothing to the contrary"



Despite three-score scraps in the field during the truce. The allies withheld any official charge of violations by the Communists.

The Communists, too. Held back on any major outcries of allied violations, although Hanoi labeled one U.S. artillery shelling and flights over North Vietnam as breaks in the cease-fire.

The allies noted 62 incidents during the truce in South Vietnam. During last year's truce, which was 12 hours shorter, the allies counted 84 clashes.

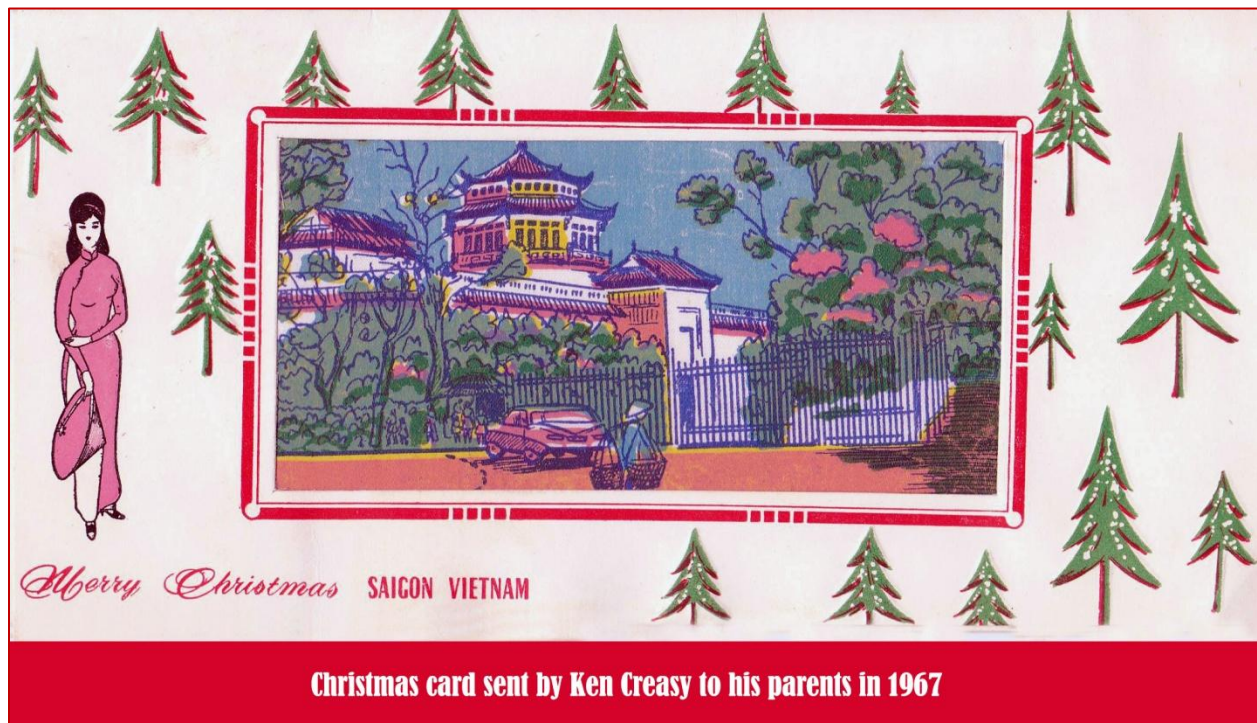
The Christmas truce was the first of three. Another 48-hour halt is scheduled for the New Year's holiday starting at 7 a.m. Vietnam time Saturday.

A four-day truce is scheduled for the observance of TET, the lunar New Year, Feb. 8 to Feb. 12.

As for U.S. flights over North Vietnam, Radio Hanoi said: "in complete disregard for their proclaimed Christmas truce, the U.S. imperialists Sunday sent many flights of aircraft to intrude into the air space of many provinces in North Vietnam "

Peking radio said: "Many waves of U.S. planes intruded over Hanoi and several provinces Sunday while U.S. Imperialism and its lackeys were propagandizing a halt in air raids on North Vietnam."

There was no confirmation from the U.S. Command as the 48-hour cease-fire neared an end. But the command had said that reconnaissance flights would continue during the truce.





## **A 'Damn Proud' Christmas With McCain** (*Pacific Stars & Stripes*, Monday, Dec. 27, 1971)

By GUNNERY SGT. JIM PAYNTER

S&S Staff Correspondent

**DA NANG, Vietnam** — While Bob Hope brought Christmas cheer to the troops in Vietnam with his girls and gags, another man spent Christmas day visiting the troops for his fourth consecutive Christmas, giving heartfelt praise and straight answers to bluntly asked questions.

He is Adm. John S. McCain Jr., commander-in-chief of every soldier, sailor, airman and Marine this side of San Diego.

And, as has been his custom every year since he assumed command in 1968, McCain spent the day talking to riflemen, mortarmen, machine-gunners, helicopter mechanics, typewriter jockeys, cooks and everyone else he could find.

His gruff manner seemed to go well with the men he talked to as he said to everyone he met that he was "damn proud to be associated with such a fine group of men."

McCain began this year's Christmas day visits by talking to the staff officers and senior enlisted men at the Charger Complex, Headquarters of the 196th Inf. Brigade. There he told the men that the South Vietnamese forces are ready to take over the war in Vietnam, but that they still need air support from the United States.

He also told them that, while he was military adviser to Ambassador Arthur Goldberg at the United Nations, he learned that the United States must "be generous, but from a position of power."

"We have been one of the most generous nations in the world," he said, "and we must continue to be generous. But we must be generous from a position of power, or it doesn't mean a damn thing."

From the Charger Complex, McCain and his party flew in helicopters to the 196th's northern artillery compound, where he told the artillery troops:

"One of the finest aspects of my job is meeting people like you. You are the future of the United States, whether you believe it right now or not, and the future is in damn good hands."

As was the case wherever he went Christmas day, McCain seemed to awe the troops—not with his four stars, but with his humanity and humility.

As he walked up to groups of men throughout the day, his first comment was almost invariably,

"At ease, my cigar doesn't smell that bad," followed by "Does anybody know who I am? Well, I'm Adm. John McCain, that's M-C-C-A-1-N, and I'm commander-in-chief Pacific, and I can't do my job unless you do yours. You are the most important men in modern warfare, just as you were in the days of the Roman legions — the man with the rifle on his shoulder. And I'm dammed proud of you.

"We don't need admirals and we don't need generals, unless we have men like you doing their jobs," he said repeatedly throughout the day.

As he left the northern artillery compound, Sgt. Bob Swain shook his head and said, "I'm impressed — and it takes a lot to impress me."

During a visit to Camp Faulkner, he was presented a plaque by the troops.

From Camp Faulkner, McCain went to the area with the smallest number of men that he would visit this Christmas day — Hill 327, formerly headquarters of the 3rd Marine Div. and now the site of a target acquisition platoon.

Then he went to Fire Base Linda, where one GI was overheard to ask another, "What does CINCPAC (Commander-In-Chief Pacific) mean?"

His buddy answered him: "God."

Christmas dinner at Fire Base Maud followed another talk to the troops. Along with the troops, McCain had turkey, dressing, mashed potatoes and gravy and all the trimmings.

Then it was off to Fire Base Birmingham, home of the 1st Bn., 502nd Inf., 101st Airborne Div., southwest of Hue.

As he walked around talking to everyone he saw, wishing them a merry Christmas and shaking their hands, Spec. 4 Mark Miller said, "It's pretty decent of him to spend Christmas out here talking to us. He could be sitting home with his family. It makes him seem like part of us guys."

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### **310<sup>th</sup> SOS Crew Delivers Palletized Yule Cheer** (*Phan Fare, The Happy Valley Weekly, December 26, 1968*)

(The following is a pre-Christmas release-now a fact.)

There is an Air Force C-123 Provided based here that does not know it yet, but on Christmas morning it will be assigned a mission for the day similar to that of Santa's sleigh.

The mission, called "Operation Christmas Cheer," is to airlift and air-drop "goodies" to isolated Civilian Irregular Defense Groups in the Central Highlands (II Corps) of Vietnam.

"All the guys in the squadron chipped in for this one," explained the aircraft commander of "Santa's sleigh," Lt. Col. Frank F. Cannon. "We fly over those camps every day delivering needed supplies and mail. We all wish we could reach out of the sky and shake the hands of every troop down there. Our presents of soda pop and other goodies is our way of saying we appreciate what you are doing for us."

Colonel Cannon commands the 310<sup>th</sup> SOS of the 315<sup>th</sup> SOWg based here. His squadron of twin-engined prop-driven Providers is part of the aerial life-line of the Green Berets. Food, livestock, ammunition, and even vehicles are among the items one can see daily parachuting to earth over a remote camp.

"We'll hit 14 camps altogether," the colonel said. "I had no trouble getting volunteers to go along." Besides Colonel Cannon, the crew will consist of Maj. Vincent J. Caruso, pilot; Maj. Ronald H. Herr, 1<sup>st</sup> navigator; Maj. William R. Quasney, 2<sup>nd</sup> navigator; SSgt. James R. Gathright, flight engineer; TSgt. Leon R. Gibson, 1<sup>st</sup> loadmaster; and Sgt. Manuel Sais Jr., 2<sup>nd</sup> loadmaster.

The all-volunteer crew will forget about sleeping late Christmas morning; take off time is 7:30 a.m. From Phan Rang they will fly to Nha Trang AB where Army experts in parachute rigging will be waiting to load the palletized gifts. Some 90 cases of refreshments will be rigged Christmas Eve by the 5<sup>th</sup> Special Forces. Each bundle will weigh approximately 160 to 180 pounds utilizing the T-7A chute which has a minimum deployment attitude of 375 feet.

Drop locations are An Lac, Duc Lap, Ban Don, Buon Blech, Tien Atar, Plei Me, Plei Djereng, Polei Kleng, Plateua Gi, Duc Co. Plei Mrong, Cong Son, Dong Tre, and Gia Vuc.

Troops at the camps will be tuned to the plane's frequency so they will know exactly what time the pallets will float down. The 310<sup>th</sup> has been primary supplier for these bases since they were established beginning in 1962. Therefore, the squadron air crew feel a strong kindred with the camps.

"Occasionally we land at one of those marginal landing strips," Colonel Cannon said. "When we do we are treated like kings. They are so glad to see an American. This Christmas we want them to know they are kings."

**Hope: Probably My Last Show in Viet** (*Pacific Stars & Stripes*, Monday, Dec. 27, 1971)

S&S Vietnam Bureau

LONG BINH, Vietnam — Bob Hope spent Christmas afternoon with 25,000 sweating GIs at this sprawling U.S. Army post and told them, "I'd rather be here looking at you guys, you Americans, than any other place in the world."

Hope brought his troupe from Bangkok to Long Binh for what he said probably would be his last show in Vietnam. His two other Vietnam Christmas shows this year were at Da Nang and Camp Eagle.

After the show Hope told newsmen that he had heard no word on his request for a visa to Hanoi, and he said he was sending the North Vietnamese another proposal for release of American prisoners of war.

Hope said he wanted to elaborate in writing on a proposition to raise funds in the United States for North Vietnamese children in exchange for the release of American POWs.

He made the proposal Friday to Nguyen Van Tranh, first secretary of the North Vietnamese embassy in Vientiane.

"They seemed interested in that," Hope said. "I want to get it down on paper and embellish on it and say how good I think it would be."

Hope's troupe was scheduled to leave Thailand Sunday. Hope said he planned to leave as scheduled "if nothing comes up," but he added that he would return any time if the North Vietnamese granted him a chance to go to Hanoi and negotiate for the freedom of U.S. POWs.

Hope's Christmas visit to troops in Vietnam was his eighth, and he said:

"It can be and probably will be my last show."

Saturday's show began 20 minutes late because the plane carrying Les Brown and his Band of Renown and some technicians developed engine trouble and had to return to Bangkok.

Brown and the other passengers boarded another plane for the trip to Long Binh where thousands of GIs were waiting, crammed shoulder to shoulder in a circular amphitheater called "The Bowl."

It was a vintage Bob Hope show with Brown's band, Jim Nabors, Jan Daley, the Hollywood Deb Stars, the Sunday's Child singing trio, Suzanne Charny, Oakland pitcher Vida Blue, the Blue Streaks and Brucene Smith, Miss World-U.S.A. — and, of course, Hope's jokes.

But this show brought an unexpected bonus — comedienne Martha Raye, who has done more than her share of entertaining GIs overseas.

She paid a surprise visit to Hope backstage, and Hope brought her out to center stage.

She traded quips with Hope, and then she brought the applauding GIs to their feet when she said: "It's such a pleasure to get back to see these wonderful people and one of our greatest Americans. Mr. Bob Hope."

When the applause died down, she told the GIs:

"It's a difficult war. We all know that. But there are so many people back home besides your families who do love you."

The GI audience gave her a standing ovation when she left the stage.

And when Hope forgot to call Miss Raye out with the rest of his troupe for the show-ending "Silent Night," the GIs let him know about it.

He called her out, and she joined Hope and the other entertainers for what may have been Hope's final Christmas farewell to troops in Vietnam.

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### **Hanoi Dashes Yule Hopes for POWs** (*Pacific Stars & Stripes, Monday, Dec. 27, 1971*)

SAIGON (AP) -- The Hanoi government Saturday appeared to dash hopes for the release during the Christmas holiday period of American servicemen held captive in North Vietnam.

Radio Hanoi said American POWs will not be freed "so long as U.S. warplanes continue to violate North Vietnam and the Nixon administration refuses to take the steps necessary to end the war."

The announcement came shortly before the scheduled end in South Vietnam of a 24-hour Allied cease-fire for Christmas at 6 p.m. Saigon time.



Meanwhile, the South Vietnamese government released 818 criminals and prisoners suspected of Communist activities and reduced the sentences of another 386 as a Christmas amnesty.

The Radio Hanoi broadcast was in response to a declaration made at a Washington news conference Thursday by Secretary of State William P. Rogers that the United States is going to continue air support in Southeast Asia in the face of new military offensives by North Vietnam in Laos and Cambodia.

Rogers declined to say what further U.S. air strikes might be made into North Vietnam itself. There have been 17 U.S. raids inside North Vietnam during the past two weeks.

Radio Hanoi said Rogers' statement was "further proof" that the Nixon administration "intends to continue the war through continued aggression by American forces as well as by continuing the Vietnamization policy under which the Saigon regime and troops continue the war as puppets operating under orders from their American masters."

U.S. B52 bombers kept up their heavy raids in Laos and Cambodia Christmas Day—despite the cease-fire which applied only in South Vietnam. The giant bombers dropped an estimated 1,000 tons of bombs on North Vietnamese supply routes.

A lull in fighting went into its third day in Cambodia with only four minor harassing attacks by North Vietnamese and Viet Cong forces.



**From the Jacksonville Daily Journal, Jacksonville, Illinois, Sunday, December 25, 1966.**

### **My Christmas Prayer**

I pray for peace  
Blessings and honor  
Heaven right earth's despair  
This is my Christmas prayer

For those that grieve  
God will bring comfort  
Laughter will rapture there  
This is my Christmas prayer

See I pray that love will rule and reign  
And I pray that time will rid the pain of this world  
As we learn to trust and care  
This is my Christmas prayer

I pray for you, yes, I know you do  
That your triumph and conquer  
Poses the strength you need to bare  
This is my Christmas prayer

For those in need  
There would be plenty  
And each other's burdens share  
Oh this is my Christmas prayer

See I pray that love will rule and reign  
And I pray that time will rid the pain of this world  
As we learn to trust and care  
This is my Christmas prayer

So let hope fill our hearts, let's let hope fill our hearts  
Shine the light through the dark  
All around the world and everywhere  
I will pray this Christmas prayer, prayer

See I pray that love will rule and reign  
And I pray that time will rid the pain of this world  
As we learn to trust and care  
This is my Christmas, this is my Christmas prayer

See I pray that love will rule and reign  
And I pray that time will rid the pain of this world  
As we learn to trust and care  
This is my Christmas prayer  
This is my Christmas prayer



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## Phan Rang Who's Who

### **PHAN RANG STAFF MEMBERS**

**Joseph Burkhart:** Master of Ceremonies

**Robert Kellington:** Tour Coordinator

**Jack Anderson:** Treasure

**Lou Ruggerio:** Site coordinator/Contract  
negotiator

**Douglas Severt:** Reunion Coordinator

**Ed Downey/Barbara Brandt:** Ceremonies

**Mike Maleski:** Chaplain

### **FACEBOOK GROUP ADMINISTRATORS**

**Douglas Severt, Kenneth Rowsey, David  
McGaughey, Vincent Joseph Miller (Susan  
Anderson-Miller) and Kirk Minert**

**...and the 745 members (and counting) of the  
“Happy Valley” Phan Rang AB Facebook  
group.**

**Doug's Note:** If you should be reading this newsletter, but didn't receive it in your email, but you would like to, you can receive it almost every week if you add your name to the Phan Rang mailing list. If you send [me](#) your email address I will add it and I promise you I will not send anything other than Phan Rang related news. Recently I had to delete about 30 addresses from the mailing list because no matter what I sent to those addresses, it was rejected as spam. I even tried just a one word message and it too was rejected so rather than get so many rejection notices I just deleted those addresses that considered my mailings as spam.

I have to echo Joe's sentiments that appear at the beginning of this newsletter. The people that I've met years after serving in Vietnam and those that I served with are some of the greatest people in this world! I know it's a generational thing because we all share some of the same values and I consider them just like family and I really believe the feeling is mutual. I feel blessed to be a part of this group and I will continue with my efforts to the Phan Rang community. **Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year to each and every one of you!**