

Monday, February 12, 1973

CLARK AIR FORCE BASE

For the first of America's returning POW's - freedom at last - as you have heard by now. They arrived today at Clark Air Force Base in the Philipines - one hundred forty two, in all; where they, of course, were given a welcome - one that was also intensely emotional.

Hundreds and hundreds of Air Force personnel and their wives and children - forming an unofficial welcoming party. Chanting over and over; "welcome home - welcome home." Displaying signs such as; "God loves you - we love you." Cheering each man as he came down the ramp.

Number one on the list - Navy Captain Jeremiah Denton of Mobile, Alabama; who served as official spokesman - for the first of three plane loads of men released in Hanoi. "We are honored," said he - "to have had the opportunity to serve are country - under difficult conditions. We are profoundly grateful" - he continued -

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"to our Commander-in-Chief and to our nation for this day."

And then he added: "God Bless America."

*The spokesman for the second plane - Air Force
Colonel Robinson Risner of Mammoth Springs, Arkansas.*

*The prisoners reaction to freedom - said he - "almost too
wonderful to express." "On behalf of the other men" he went
on - "I'd like to thank the President and the American people
for bringing us home again."*

*Next - Navy Captain James Mulligan of Pensicola,
Florida; who thanked not only the President - but also -
said he "our families - for making this wonderful day
possible." "It has been our privilege" - he added - "to
serve American these many days."*

*Later on, the arrival of the first plane load of
prisoners who had been held in South Vietnam. In contrast
to those held in the north - appearing generally weak and
haggard. Some laughed - some cried. Army Captain George
Wanat speaking for one and all - when he said; "It's been a
a long time."*

FAMILIES

Meanwhile, the joy expressed at Clark Air Force Base - was spilling over into hundreds of homes here in the U. S. Wives and Children, Mothers and Fathers, family and friends - all watching on TV - all rejoicing at the sight of their loved ones once again; and then better yet - talking to them once again by phone.

Mrs. Marion Purcell - the wife of Lieutenant Robert Purcell - telling her husband; "I saw you on TV- you were beautiful." The first word from seven year old Cam Lurie - to his father, Lieutenant Colonel Alan Lurie; "Hi Dad, when are we going fishing?" Mrs. Leah Black talking to her son - Sargeant Arthur Black - for the first time in seven years; whereupon she exclaimed that she was "way past cloud nine!"

PENTAGON

At the same time, a special message to the returning men - from Defense Secretary Elliot Richardson. "Everyone involved in operation homecoming" - said he - "is ready to do everything possible to assist you and your families. You can also be certain" - he continued - "that we will not rest until all those still held captive are safe - and until we have achieved the best possible accounting for those missing in action."

Richardson adding: "We are glad to have you back! The prayers of your nation continue to be with you!"

SAN CLEMENTE

Through all of this, President Nixon was attempting to maintain a low profile - as he had earlier said he would. The President restricting himself to a few brief remarks - almost incidental to a scheduled picture-taking session. The returning prisoners had "made peace with honor possible" - said he. Adding that their ordeal - "was not in vain." He also called on fellow Americans - to greet the returning men not with fanfare, [REDACTED] but with quiet respect."

And then a telephone call - from the same Colonel Risner I mentioned earlier, he was calling - he said - to thank the President for "getting us out of North Vietnam." Colonel Risner also quoted as saying: "All the men would like to meet you personally - and express their gratitude for what you've done." Whereupon the President replied - that "nothing would mean more to me." The President also calling this - "one of the most moving experiences I have ever had."

CAIRO

For the second straight day - rioting in Cairo.

Today's violence coming about - when police attempted to prevent a student march from Cairo University to the center of town. Students from nearby Ain Shams University then joining in. Officials later reporting "large numbers" of injured - mostly police.

All this - we are told - a direct reaction to Egypt's continuing policy - of "no war, no peace" - with Israel.

TEL AVIV

Reverse side - Tel Aviv - a report today that Israel had rebuilt all its British made Centurion tanks. General Haim Domi saying that said tanks - have now been equipped with American engines, transmissions, and so on; with the result that today they have more speed, more firepower, more reliability, more efficiency - and about twice the previous range. General Domi adding, in short they are better than any Soviet made tank presently in Arab hands.

Equally important - we hear - the experience gained in producing "upgraded Centurions." General Domi saying this has moved Israel a step closer - to manufacturing its own tanks; to becoming, as he put it - "militarily self-sufficient."

BELFAST

In Northern Ireland - another threat of a British Army crackdown. Protestant leaders were thus copying today - the previous actions of IRA terrorist groups. Ordering their members to go underground; also, setting up a dual command structure - in order to assure immediate replacement for jailed leaders, if and when.

PARIS-BONN

The world's major money markets were closed today - in the face of another global dollar crisis. For Americans traveling in Europe, though - the worst had already begun. Many hotels, ~~and~~ restaurants and other businesses - shaving as much as they could off the value of the U.S. dollar; in West Germany, for example - an average cut of about four per cent; in France - up to thirteen percent.

This - coming in the midst of international crisis talks. U.S. Treasury Undersecretary Paul Volcker - conferring in Paris with the finance ministers of Britain, France, ~~and~~ Germany, and Italy; later flying to Bonn - for additional talks with Japanese fiscal experts.

SARASOTA

From Sarasota, Florida comes word today - that death has claimed one of America's great journalists. David Lawrence - the founder and editor of U.S. News and World Report; also a syndicated columnist - and a friend of mine for more than fifty years since World War I.

David Lawrence scoring his first news beat - on the death of Grover Cleveland - while still a student at Princeton. This enabling him to get a job - with the Associated Press in Washington. Within six years - he had his own column. As noted ~~in~~ in "Who's Who" - the "first Washington dispatch to be Syndicated nationally by wire."

That same year, he also founded the magazine - that would someday become U.S. News. Merging it some twenty years later - with another of his creations, World Report. The resulting publication - eventually building a circulation of nearly two million; much of which was credited - to his own regular signed editorial comment.

The views he expressed - well, he was Wilson

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Democrat - a friend of Woodrow Wilson, accompanied him to the Versailles Peace Conference. He devised an ultra-liberal stock-bonus plan, thereby allowing his magazine - to become employec owned. A Liberal-Conservative he never lost his faith in the U.S. - perhaps best expressed in a column just a few years ago. "There's a lot that's wrong with America" - said Dave - "but nothing that can't, in due time, be cured; if the majority of the citizens - make up their minds to act together.

Now -the final entry. David Lawrence - age eighty-four.

CLEVELAND

Cleveland, Ohio - the chief of U. S. Naval Operations - guest speaker at a meeting of the American Bar Association. Admiral Elmo Zumwalt telling how he was photographed a few weeks ago - kissing Admiral Arlene Duerk, the first woman ever to achieve flag rank. Zumwalt going on to say - he later received a letter from a former Assistant Secretary of the Navy. The latter saying he never thought he would see the day - "when the Chief of Naval Operations would kiss an Admiral."

Zumwalt adding, however - he quickly replied with a letter of his own. The Navy Chief telling his ex-Supervisor: "Dear Boss, you should have recalled that nobody reaches the place I'm at - without kissing a lot of Admirals."

WALDORF

*The newest chief at the Waldorf in New York -
twenty-eight year old Leslie Arp. That's Mrs. Arp -
the first woman chef in the Waldorf's forty-two year
history; who also calls herself - "a very strong women's
liberationist;" explaining, in part - her new profession.*

*"It always seemed very strange to me" - says Mrs.
Arp - "that women were at home cooking and weren't
getting paid for it." So, ^{she} finally took it upon herself - she
goes on - to bring about as she put it "more of a blending
and melting in this area."*

*Mrs. Arp specialized in fish dishes - such as
snails and red sauce, poached bass, lobster newburg and
coquilles Saint-Jacques. And which of these is hardest to
make? None - says Mrs. Arp. With the ego typical of fine
chefs - adding, in effect: "Once you've made one - you've
made them all."*