

Call from Bangkok - 10/30/75

rough first copy

Dr. B: Everybody got in safely.

Mr. M: We received the news from the State Dept. early this morning. There have been no TV pictures yet.

Dr. B: The folks arrived right on the dot - 4:00 o'clock. Everyone they expected was there. Our people are all well. In better condition than we thought they might be. Betty has absolutely no word of Archie, or anyone else. She made all kinds of inquiries everywhere, but no results.

There was a mob of people at the airport - all the news services were there. The TV crews, and all the wire services. They intended to have a 10-minute interview, but it must have lasted 45 minutes. We were in the VIP area, which was good - it gave us an opportunity to meet with the folks.

The 2 Filipino men were met by representatives of the Philippine government - the Canadian ambassador was there - the American Ambassador was there - Mr. Twining is going to interview the group tomorrow - making arrangements for medical checkout. We think everyone is in remarkably good shape

We were a bit concerned about Dr. Phillips, but he's doing fine - is good.

What has the news said?

Mr. M: It said 14 people were released - 9 Americans among them. CBS called our office here early this morning and told us that all of our people were included in the group. I had already received a call from Mr. Sieverts about 6:30 a.m, ~~so we~~ The news has given only bare details so far. I understood that Henry Paasenon are deluged w/calls. The news services are trying to get thru to Bgk to call you folk and to set up phone patches between the people out there and the children here in the states - that sort of thing.

Dr. B: The Phillips' just talked to their children. Betty was trying to get thru to hers. We w/try to do it tonight.

It would be good if you could get thru to Cal. to their children and tell them to be standing by for the call.

Mr. M I just talked to Loretta and I'm sure they w/be standing by.

Dr. K: 14 persons, including 5 ^{by} ~~four~~ and the missionaries who have been held in prison camps in N. V-N since March arrived in Bkg Thursday Octo.30 at 4 p.m. Dr. and Mrs. Richard Phillips, Rev. and Mrs. Norman Johnson and Mrs. Betty Mitchell of the C&MA and Mr. and Mrs. John Miller - Wycliffe Translators and daughter Luanne - appeared in good physical health as did all the others. Dr. Nathan Bailey, Pres. C&MA, Dr. LLKing, VP for the Div of Overseas Ministries the ambassadors of the US, Canada, Australia and the Philippines - a large group of newsmen, TV cameramen and missionary friends, Mrs. Mitchell's daughter Geraldine, were present when their UN chartered DC3 arrived from Hanoi. It was a very moving occasion as the repatriates moved from the aircraft .
The questions of the ever-persistent press corps and flashing cameras to the VIP

Here the UN High Commissioner for refugees, who had negotiated their release w/the Hanoi govt. also had thoughtfully had arranged a brief period for selected persons to visit . Immediately following this, the TV corps were able to photograph a series of parties.

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They had existed under conditions - an adequate diet - hard work malaria and physical illnesses that had depleted their health. The last part of their detention was spent in Hanoi under a kind of false arrest - they said they were well treated and well-fed. It was not until 2 days ago that they were informed that they would be repatriated on 10/30. There had been intimations - like injections, and vaccinations which tipped them off that something was afoot. It encouraged them that it might be for their release.

last

Dr. B: The/time spent in Hanoi - the did get extra fine treatment and were given several sight-seeing tours. The zoo, and other places.

Mr. M: Did they have any contact w/church people in N.V-N?

Dr. K: None whatsoever.

Dr. B; They requested permission to visit Tin Lanh, but this was denied them. What churches they did see was somewhat surrepticiously (?), because when they were transported they were not supposed to be looking out. They passed a number of churches w that appeared to be Roman Catholic and evidently deserted. In the interrogations, they told them that they had absolute religious liberty in N-V-N, but the interrogators were well-schooled in the propaganda line and took the human stance - religion not really necessary - the sufficiency of man, etc. tho' they had religious liberty.

Our missionaries did not get the opportunity but encouraged everyone.

A line for an article - not Mrs. Johnson - but Mrs. Phillips.

Not somehow - but triumphantly.

When they were sent off from Hanoi it was w/a great deal of fanfare. Newsmen, pictures, etc. When they arrived in Bkg they had a large delegation - a triumphul entry.

Dr. K I remember she said when they were captured and were being marched out of Banmethuot, was when the thot came - not somehow but triumphantly.

Mr. Aikman of TIME is an evangelical person. warm-hearted Christian - here and covered the whole thing. He spent time w/our people. He wanted to interview them to see if there was a story. To see whether there was anything different from the normal.

Dr. B. said I don't know if he got anything or not. LLKing said he had when he left - he didn't give further explanation.

All kinds of pictures were taken by a very good photographer - tell Bob Cowles we w/have the pictures to him on Monday.

Mrs. Mitchell thinks she would like to go to Penang rather than come home right now.

I told her whatever she wanted to do would be OK.

Mr. M ~~Mr. M~~ Would she want to come by Europe?

Dr. K: She would like to.

Mr. M: I talked w/John Amstuts - Phillips children are there - he said they are prepared to receive the Phillips there if they ~~wax~~ want to come and visit their children or whatever arrangements - they w/work it out.

Dr. K We w/tell them.

We are flooded out out here - really in bad shape - water over the floor of the dining room. Water over the courtyard - the whole city in a mess.

We are staying at the guest house, however.

Tomorrow the US embassy is preparing visas - passports and taking care of all these thing.

Mr. M Do you have a projected time for departure from Bkg for the people?

Dr. B Not yet - it looks as tho they w/be here till Saturday. What happens then we don't know. They are will enuf to travel and I assume when things are ready, they w/get on their way.

Mr. M Did Johnson get thru to their children in Ontario?

Dr. K No - the Candaian govt requested the Ambassador to stay w/him-they're staying at his home. I have their phone # and they can get it.

Mr. MKing I have the phone #'s of all of the others.