

TO ALL VIETNAM MISSIONARIES

MAR 8 1965

Dear Colleagues:

FILE *Miss King Acl 3/1/65*

I have just arrived back from Dalat where there was the regularly-scheduled meeting of the Dalat School Board. The minutes of that meeting will be mimeographed and sent out to all parents and interested parties. However, I wanted to get this letter off to you at the earliest possible date, in order that you might be informed of some very important decisions which were reached.

May I first give some explanatory background. You have received a letter about ten days ago signed by Messrs. King, Sahlberg, Evans and myself. This told the conclusions that had been reached by the four of us after consultations here in Saigon. Everyone has been watching the developments in the situation here very closely. Mr. King was scheduled to return to Saigon on the 23rd, but found it impossible, so requested that I meet him in Hongkong on the 24th. He shared with me his findings regarding the possibilities of alternate schooling arrangements in the Philippines, in the event it should become necessary to evacuate the children from Dalat. For a number of reasons such arrangements did not seem feasible, and so this possibility was dropped. Mr. King questioned me closely about the unstable conditions here as evidenced by the attempted coup on February 19th, and then further shakeup in the military leadership on the 21st. I explained to him the conditions that had prevailed here in Saigon during that week-end. I also told him frankly I saw little hope of any true stability being maintained within the government and military forces here in Viet Nam.

Mr. King had consulted with a number of people. Through a very unusual circumstance, he had met a gentleman who, a few hours before, had been in Ambassador Maxwell Taylor's office here in Saigon. This individual was the representative for an agency which has a contract with the U. S. Government to provide transportation for supplies and equipment. The Ambassador had just ordered carriers, both ships and planes, to begin moving out all supplies stocked by the supporting units. It was said that the Ambassador had indicated that because of the confusion caused by the many recent up-heavals in the governmental structure here, it was almost impossible for the U. S. programs of assistance to function.

Mr. King had also talked with Mr. John Bechtel who was in charge of the children's hostel in Hongkong prior to World War II. Mr. Bechtel urged Mr. King not to delay too long regarding the children at Dalat. He said, "We closed the hostel in April 1941. Pearl Harbor was not until December. Some thought we were hasty, but" he said, "it's better to be eight months early than one day late."

With all of this taken into consideration, Mr. King told me that he felt we should work out some immediate plan for moving the children from Dalat.

I conveyed all of this information to the School Board. Before entering into any discussion, we spent time in prayer, taking time for every member of the Board to pray earnestly for God's direction. The decision which the School Board reached was that we recommend to the Foreign Department that immediate

March 1, 1965.

steps be taken to move the children of the Dalat School to Bangkok. There are two possibilities. Our first preference is to move the entire school and staff, with minimum essential equipment, and set up our own school on a temporary basis. Preliminary information indicates that we can secure rented quarters that will be adequate for both a hostel, living quarters for the staff, and sufficient space for classrooms.

The second possibility is to establish a hostel and enter all the children in the International School of Bangkok. The School has already assured us that they can absorb our entire student body without any serious difficulty.

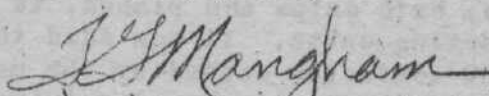
I know this will come as a real shock to most of you. Gene Evans leaves tomorrow with Elmer Sahlberg for Bangkok, where they will be following up every possible lead, and if suitable quarters are found, will place an option. We have requested the Foreign Department to send their decision to us by cable. We would hope that the move can be made within the next two or three weeks.

Perhaps many of you parents will wish to make a trip to Dalat. This will be possible. You will understand, of course, that the entire staff will be extremely busy. So if you go, be sure and give all assistance possible, and place no unnecessary demands on anyone there. The children were informed Sunday afternoon. You all can be very proud of the way they reacted after the initial outbreak of tears expressing their disappointment.

There will be additional information which we will pass on to you as soon as we have any definite word. Also you will be receiving the School Board minutes in the near future.

May the Lord grant all of the necessary grace and assurances of heart as you face this unexpected development.

Sincerely yours,



T. G. Mangham, Jr., Chairman.

TGM/c