

10/3/97

7:50 pm

We left Portland Sat pm by van around
4:05 pm - (Messimeefy)? 2 hour drive

There was 7 of us S.B., Estelle Louie, Paul
Dubé, Peter —, Rachel Tillet Ross +
Ray —. I'm sure I'll learn the names
as the trip progresses. We arrived at Lagan
around 6:00 pm - went to TWT to check in
our bags etc. We had drinks in the lounge -
I had an "Octoberfest" chug & met
myself out something except me I was not
hungry.

I introduced myself to S.B. and told
him about my Romatic's business - fish health
in aquaculture and advised him that she was
French - he said great "we can help her".
I also answered questions he had about me
when I told him I was from the US he
he mentioned people like Jean Evans, Tim Saffers
Dennis Mitchell - & asked if I knew them
I stated I had

Someone I ended up telling him I was
brought up in the minority in the IS but as I
was brought up protestant - he laughed & said
"how'd you end up with us" - I don't think
he's going to leave for me alone - Since this is
a French Spanish delegation & most French are
Catholic -

I'm on TWA FLT into New York
right now the weather is a little choppy
it's raining and dark. I couldn't really
do anything - still not hungry.

on the way down to Boston Richard let me
read her Vietnam Tourist book.

It certainly doesn't make Vietnam sound
inviting. It said things like it was very
noisy because of the number of people living
in the city and they started to do things at
5:30 AM and cars & trucks have no mufflers -
It also said there were no traffic
rules & one had to walk slowly to cross
the street in order to create a presence.

F + said trip like - the city (Ho Chi min)
suffered from air pollution - after reading all
the "news" things I wonder if I made the
right decision / we are circling New York

Probably won't last for another 20 min or so.

Very turbulent since now - my knee is
feeling rather stiff

will most likely go through Customs at
JFK / this should be interesting since never
go through Customs before - as a civilian.

Rachel Tubert Ross bought all kinds of
goods - her mother packed most of her
stuff - she's a black marketeer dream.
she has a whole bag of "bottled water"

all kinds of candy, C.D.'s, Mugs, etc.
we're landing -

2:58 Am.

I'm on the end of the second stage of
flight - we are just 40 minutes from
Vancouver where we will stop briefly.

The plane is gigantic there are over
400 passengers I'm seated in the middle

row and almost middle seat - its hell
when I need to go to the bathroom. Luckily
I've only gone once. We had a champagne
dinner in flight - I did not have Clarys
I had 7-up and ordered the Chicken Teriyaki
which was very good. They handed out
hot hand towels at the beginning of the flight
I didn't know what to do with them - but
everyone - mostly Chinese passengers used them
to wash their hands & face - first first then
hands. Some just hands like myself.

I'm sitting next to two Chinese men on my left
and a very nice Chinese lady on my right.

We have all slept most of the trip. I have
not spoken to anyone except to an Asian de gustis
from the Chinese lady about an overhead light
and ask her where she was going -

Big surprise - Hong Kong ...

The air on the plane is not very good
I've sneezed a few times. Choking
oh yes - the plane has a small flower
pattern like curtains - teal green

It contains - a pair of teal socks - for slippers
a tube - a little tube that looks like a
huge lipstick tube but is actually a toothbrush
and a small plastic comb.

It's been a pretty smooth flight so far they
showed two movies, the first "Batman +
Robin, the second starring Betty Moller - I fell
a sleep and didn't get the title. All announcements
we made first in English then in Chinese.

We are about to land - I will write more
on the third stage and longest one

3rd stage or 5th

We've been in the air over 6 hours

and have past the international date line - we lost
Oct 4th. We travel at an altitude of 34,000 feet

Air speed around 500 mph we have over 4,000 miles

to travel yet. We have a big screen T.V. in

front of us - this gives us all the air statistics

we're various times while we're eating, after movies

+ shows. They had reports of Spin city and

Friends mixed in with some Chinese oriented

8 hours

We have been fed twice so far the first meal was a choice btw chicken or Lasagna - I chose Lasagna it wasn't all that good - but not terrible.

We just had a snack around midnight Hong Kong time. I've set my watch to the time of destination - it seems to help. Often the stewardesses will come by & ask what we want to drink - so far I've chosen 7-up in Perrier.

The television keeps giving stats & Sep in the place of origin it is 9:02 AM - that doesn't make sense to me but there I'm not making sense anyway.

I have slept for at least 2 or 3 hours on this trip

I called Deb in Vancouver during our 1 1/2 stop over. It was good to hear her voice and hear that the "boys" were doing well - she also said that Bill was disty to PBS on his way from New Foundland and says our trip was big news. I passed that on to S.B. Rachel & Estelle didn't get off the plane when we did - I guess they were sleeping / I later saw Rachel & I just hung up for talking to her - she had been pruned - I wonder what that was about?

we're all scattered throughout the plane so we
don't get to see each other let alone talk
to each other. The lady next to me is very
friendly and tries to talk more in a while but
knows very little english. She turned her head
180° to face me when she saw me writing in my
journal. We usually turn ~~to~~ trip to the "toilet"
at the same time. She is in the aisle seat so
when she goes - I go two rows back that way.
Our blankets are in Bag 50 for.

The movie has started on Bottom + Back again and
Sweet's else - I fell asleep... There's a movie playing
now with Tom Conroy - I don't know what it is
all show etc are subtitled in Chinese characters it's
actually pretty neat - I mean my hard phones to hear
the movie but most people just set back and read the
sub-titles - that is if they watch it. Most of us
are either sleeping or reading or perhaps listening to music.
well by way of all water more later

(They have different logos on the chairs)

Biodon Hick Time - I had to write this before
I forgot - we just finished watching a Hong Kong fashion
design show "1996" - very bizarre the models rarely
smiled and the designs were more along the lines of
shiny plastic looking tessing and alot of black
in all shapes + designs the clothes were very
different from what you might see at a fashion
show in the U.S - not too different alot of
fashion - but once in a while it is - I have never
seen anything like this - very very different

I somehow lost my eye glass case - I'll look
for it when we land. parts of this stage
were very bumpy - but not too too bad yet
we land in another 4 hours. (The midgets
are in row.) The lady next to me gave me
an Endorsim ginger Candy - I took it and
popped it in my mouth - I now know why she
has been coughing the whole time! - I did not
cough or choke - I did well - I had to swallow
quite frequently but it wasn't too bad -
I think I could get use to that - she gave
me an extra one - I'll try to save it

for hours. I finally figured out that by the time
I arrive in Hong Kong I will be around 6:30pm
at home - Not sure when I'll arrive in
Vietnam but will want to call central there - So
probably around 8:00pm or so USA maine time.

I want to use the bathroom about a 1/2 hour ago and had to
go way to the back of the plane - The balance got real bad
I would have liked to have been found in the bathroom
all brought up. - by the way I fell up the out door stairs
the day I left - I'm all black & blue on my side
and my wrist is sore. I'm already thinking of the
trip back - Somehow I think I'd be able to tolerate
it better. As Vietnam gets closer I feel a bit
edgy ~~but~~ can't wait to get into my own room
and really relax etc.

They keep showing these commercials for the Mandarin
Orient Hotel Group - a woman bathing in a huge circular
old fashion tub w/ flower petals all over and huge
colonial looking hotels and big swimming pools.

Sail Osaka 97 - crew must be made of mostly
young people btw 15 + (25)? Sail from Hong Kong to
Japan - Sail boat race - Outward Bound on a spruce

Should be young students getting trained in preparation
for the race - hardest part is climbing the rigging
there were huge boats participants from 18 countries

Cutty Sack Trophy 36 member crews

Capt Greg Tomison "It Fung" - Did boat's name

We will be landing in a few minutes

Was looking forward to omelets but got
noodles instead - that was okay was

disappointed my butt was hurting and
my stomach was turning (post) patience is
indeed a virtue old Chinese saying he'ka!

9:30th H.K. Time

Still travelling its been over 24 hours we're on the
last stage Hong Kong to Vietnam - we were
given alot of extra paperwork to fill out
on the flight. They want to know everything we're
taking into country from newspapers to comics
& currency. We need another photo once we
arrive - I have 1 but don't bring it
with me after all. Paul Claus didn't
have to declare travel checks - hope not
anyway - things should work out fine

It will just take longer for me to get to my
hotel. Believe it or not two sisters are on the
plane - one wonders what they're doing - going to
visit me or a. They keep glancing at me every
once in a while - maybe I should at least say
hi to them - oh well we'll see what
happens later. I lost my last chance at
breakfast as I had to fill out all that
red tape stuff before we had it's a 2 1/2 hr
flight from Hong Kong. I dug out the disposable
camera and took 3 or 4 pictures for the plane
while leaving Hong Kong - hope they come out.
This is a smaller plane but the colors are
brighter like light blue and it's a bit brighter &
nicer. Seat has its own t.v.

Poor Rachel has to declare all that "stuff"
her mother packed for her - I can see her over
on the other side of the plane trying to think
what all she has - maybe she just has
writing camp for all that writing.

10/5/97

We arrived in Vietnam at 10:35 or 9:35 Vietnam time. As the plane was making its approach to Ton Son Nhut airport I looked out the plane window - to try to get a glimpse of something familiar - but it was 30 year ago now. I could see sand and lots of muddy streams - green rice paddies old burnt out buildings and many dirt roads.

I had never been to Saigon but I did recognize Ton Son Nhut the old military Quonset huts and storage sheds were still standing they were now covered with rust and you could tell they'd been there for many years - some old still used Camo flight helicopters were sitting off to the side and one or two little Shacks that housed Vietnamese guards were visible. I know the weather would be very hot - enough to take your breath away. I warned my fellow passengers at my luggage. We stepped off the plane 30 years ago we called a plane "Freedom Bird" as soon as we stepped out into the air it was

had heavy breasting air - just as I had
remembered it. We took a shuttle for a
short ride to the air terminal where Customs
and many Customs agents were waiting
for us. Luckily they had a special table
for the France Phos delegation and they
treated us very friendly and ushered us through
the next border which was passport & visa
checked officially by a Vietnamese officer
after this we went through two more
places where we had to present the same
materials / but we never did have to get our
pictures taken again so we were told we
would have to do on the plane side in.

The heat was sweltering - inside we had
air conditioning but as we moved outside
to go through yet another check point and get
a bus into the Continental hotel it got
really bad. We were all dressed warmer
than necessary - long pants for the U.S. - the
temperature upon arrival was about 90° F

We finally found a bus/van that had been delegated to take us / as we were walking outside the airport building to our last check point there were hundreds of people lined up on both sides of the walk way - they were being held back and controlled by the police. We were told that these people were here to welcome us the FFA delegates to Vietnam - They seemed to be watching us closely waiting for some sort of opportunity to get to us or our luggage - not to mention I sensed there were a desperate people. We were finally all squeezed into a small bus with all our luggage and we started driving off. The streets leading to Saigon were full of people on mopeds / bicycles etc. there was hardly any vehicles on the road. It was clearly a war ravaged country with burnt buildings, debris all over not clean but the people were clean and well kept. They had taken over the side walks as store fronts and living spaces, there was dilapidated buildings and thousands of people everywhere you looked. Oh yes there were no

traffic rolls a lane our bus driver drove
cautiously home by home when he thought
others should know we were there.

We arrived at the Continental hotel
I didn't realize that Paul Dubé was not
sure whether we all had forms or not - I was
told as we were waiting in line for our
forms at the hotel desk with no passport - luckily
we were all assigned forms.

on the way to the hotel our guide said
we all needed to give him our airline tickets
so he could confirm our flights back - I was
very leary of doing this - but Paul said go ahead
he'd be responsible - I handed my in reluctantly
S.B., Estelle + Richard did not so they
were not sure when they were leaving.

on top of this the clerk told us we had to
give him our passports and we would get them
back later. About this time I really started
to worry - here we are in a country we
had been at was with totally at their
mercy - believe me I was not used to

this feeling - he gave us a form to fill out
when we gave him our plane tickets. I
didn't realize that on top of everything else on
the form we had agreed to attend a reception
at 7:30 pm that evening. Everything was written
in French. ~~but~~ we also had agreed to
go on a tour of Ho Chi Minh City at
11:00 pm it was now noon - we all
went to our rooms took quick showers
and came back for the tour the tour took
until 4:30 - it was a very interesting tour
and experience, we got to see the food
markets, the museum, a buddhist temple
and artist at work making wooden prints
etc using egg shells - we were all dragging
our butts by the end of his tour and we had
2 hours to rest & then go to the reception
6 of us made it I was just too tired.
we were surrounded everywhere we went on
the street by people trying to sell us things
for grams to T-shirts and children begging
it was constantly around us.

Well it is now 10:01 pm - I have
Complained about the Security of my room as
I have a balcony outside and a door w/a
push lock and a window right next to it.
They have assured me it will be safe...
I am taking their word for it because I
have to.

I called Dee today - it was good to hear
her voice it was a link to the world

I am still not sure why I'm here but
perhaps it will come to me eventually.

I met some important business people tonight
& today for Montreal, the wife of the President of
the Dominican Republic & others I've passed
out US\$ & mild cuts. Tomorrow there
is the first day of the conference - finally done to
business - it's very difficult when you do
not speak the language - luckily some speak
English and I have Rachel Talbot Ross to
confer with.

I'll write more tomorrow.

By the way the showers are strange

They operate with a flexible nozzle that
you pick up & use - it swims in water.
Also the card key to your room opens the
door but also turns on the electricity in
your room so long as the card is placed in the
slot - when you leave you take the card to get
back in your room & the electricity goes off
will change until tomorrow.

My knee was swollen alot today must have been
the altitude they when fly etc.

Good night it's around 10:10 AM Sunday at
home.

10/6/97

11:35 pm

I have to take time to write down the events of
the day even though I'm dead tired - if I wait
I will forget - don't even know what
day it is. Well anyway the day began when
we all met for breakfast downstairs at 8:00 am
I had two pieces of toast which we put in a
small electrical oven & toasted ourselves and
a cheese & mushroom omelet - which was
fried over a hearty element w/ a small pan.
and some coffee. The seven of us plus Tony of
John Hult joined us we talked about our
plans for the day and discussed what meetings
were happening and who should attend what
we ended up going to the North American delegates
meeting Tony + Richard + John Hult attend another
meeting with Vietnamese officials.

Our meeting consisted of about 30 delegates each
explaining in French why they had come to the
Summit I was really glad when S.B. ~~was~~
said he would speak in English.

His was the only presentation I understood.
This mostly lasted until 12:45 & we went
to the upper level of the hotel (majestic) on the
10th floor was open air loft & lounge lounge
was seated inside with air conditioning we
must have had 5 or 6 courses with Beer,
wine - orange juice, water (bottled) etc.

Our table was out of view of what was happening
that is we could not see the speakers or the
entertainment - this was okay because we all
talked to each other and I couldn't understand
what the speakers were saying anyway.

A young man who was an artist and a
business entrepreneur in ASEAN had about one
month delegate city to Vietnam and told us
S.B. was going to be there. He met us on
top of the roof and he was an old friend or
acquaintance of S.B. S.B. invited him to
lunch with us and he stayed and we
arranged a time to view his art gallery
and furniture shop around 4:30 pm.

We left the majestic around 2:30 and

took a taxi back to the Continental.

taxi rides are really exciting and a bit dangerous it seemed only because we were used to writing in larger vehicles.

Paul + Ray walked around after we were dropped off at the hotel - I went upstairs to my room - I looked up writing post cards but realized I didn't have all the addresses. By the time I figured that was 3:30 and time to start getting ready to meet everyone downstairs for a tour of the art + furniture shop of SBS first.

We took two taxis + headed for the shop the furniture was all made w/old nails or glue it was all expertly pieced together and was top quality and simply designed it was oak wood + teak. Ray also had had painted + several pillows, decorative coasters + bed spreads.

S.B. bought a table cloth and ordered napkins to match - I almost bought a pillow with a hand painted figure on it but I decided against it.

after going over on him in his shop we went
to the art gallery - The art was made on
wood & was found in wood it was very
unique and S.B.'s friend said they were
silly in Hong Kong and San Francisco,
S.B. bought a party. By the time my
leg was swelling and bothering me because of
water. We finally got two taxis back
to the hotel. We then went to our
rooms to get ready for the reception at
7:30 it was 5:30 pm. The taxi I rode
in had a wet road sign and my pants ended
up getting wet - I was glad to get to my
room to change and rest until the
reception in our hotel at 7:30 pm
I called Deborah at 7:15 pm she was getting
ready to leave for work around 6:50 am I
needed to know if I could take a taxi to Bengdill
at the same time as I had a swollen knee
and sore throat. She was just being for work
when I called & told me I could take the taxi
but Bengdill would not help my sore throat.

d lay up and propped up my knee to
relieve until it was time to leave for
the hospital. I spent most of the evening
today with John Helt and Tony &
found Rachel who was excited because she
had met a Vietnamese woman who taught at
the University and the woman was interested in
exchange programs for students and also faculty.
We will tell this lady tomorrow to
follow - up.

We all decided to go out to a Vietnamese
restaurant near the hotel. We walked
about 4 or 5 blocks with women & children
following us begging for money. One little girl
carried her brother who was disabled - he
had no legs and showed no signs of life - he
must have been 4 or 5 and she and 8 or 9
other kids had been begging all day and it
was now close to 9:30 pm. She must have
carried him on her back all day & night.
We finally found a restaurant - (the one we
wanted to eat at but ran out of food.)

went 10:00 and eat a real lunch @ Supper
we had 5 or 6 courses - fried Sea food
Shallots on the half shell, rice and shrimp &
Soup. eat was good they come with Sweets &
Spices plus we had about 3 beers a piece.
San Miguel & tiger beer.

but then walked back to the hotel with our
entourage of begging children we were
all very glad to get inside the hotel

There are many more details to write but I
have to be at breakfast at 8:00 Am

It is now 12:05 and will write more
tomorrow.

(The following has been excerpted from
D. Loring's Vietnam journal entry for 10-7-97)

We came back to the hotel around 3:00pm +
got ready to go on a private tour at 3:30 -
this tour was arranged by S.B. with his air gally
friend who rented a Van + transported us to
the "War Crime Museum" they had
discreetly changed the name to "War Memorial Museum"
This is where they have the actual Trucks, guns,
bombs, planes - artillery on display they have
pictures of inhumane treatment Vietnam suffered
at the hands of the Americans - mutilated bodies
and have a prison on site - the museum was
built on the site of the old US ISA site
They had a big display with the words
"Agent Orange" on top and Dioxin kills
underneath - I took pictures and asked
Richard to take some also - all I could
think of is the devastation this stuff causes
and here was a prime example - we are
faced with the Dioxin issue in Maine - I
thought it was very relevant,
There was a section on weapons only + then
there was another section on the NVA

The war was real 30 years ago, it was ^{believably} ~~unbelievably~~
 what it did to the Vietnamese people, ~~themselves~~.

It killed around 4 million of them - the population
 now consist of ^{just people} 80% of the ~~population~~ ~~was~~ ~~under~~ 50 population

no children. We hardly saw any old people
 I heard someone compare the devastation to the holocaust
 it might also be compared to the Native American
 genocide, the worst place in our own country and
 that Hitler used as a model for his own program.

There are so many ways to view the Vietnam
 war for different perspectives. Some who served in
 Vietnam - don't agree we should be here, some believe
 in what was being done (like myself) Some Vietnamese
 wanted us here, others did not. I loved write
 all night also too. 30 years later there are
 over 6 million people living in Ho-Chi-min
 City every one of them struggle to survive
 every day - they seem to be very ~~entrepreneurial~~
 In distress & heart people. They live &
 work in the streets - there is no big
 money here - if one decides to do
 anything it certainly would not be for the money

now the Sun went out ~~and~~ the sky off
down the road - how long down the road.
I feel a sense of guilt and shame that we
came over here and devastated this country and I
was part of the devastation. I realize that only now.
What doubly shames me is that as a Native
American I was part of this. I joined the military to
escape poverty - I accomplished that. ~~I~~ truly
believe during my time in Vietnam that I was doing
the right thing not just for myself but for my
country. (I feel ^{compare my participation similar to big} ~~bad~~ I ~~was~~ a member of the
U.S. Army doing South West Mission on wounded
Korea on top of the battles when the U.S. mistreated
Native Peoples)

I need to analyze this more - to sort out
my feelings I think that when a person
lives in a war they become desensitized to
specific things - death, dying, begging children
the human condition in general

The museum visit did start me thinking about
the past & the effect the past has had on the
present.

our next stop was across from the American
Embassy where helicopters transported the last of
the Americans out of Saigon & Vietnam,
I understood they are renovating this building as the
Americans have purchased it - (let me be the Sunday
again?) we were inside the newly built post office
This building was completely renovated by the French
after the war. It was huge inside reminded me
of a train station with international phone
booths on one side and tables like a bank would
have in the middle + cashiers behind glass.
it's interesting to note that stamps here are
NOT self sticky, one needs to use glue to
stick them down. glue is usually found off to
the side in a little bowl with a pin brush
in it. The group went inside the Notre Dame
Cathedral - try to choose to wait in the US.
By this time I was really feeling under the weather.
When we got back I decided to skip supper &
go to my room & try to recover by morning
so the aquaculture meeting is tomorrow & I
don't want to embarrass myself by chiding in

few of energy. (like I did today)
I got to my room around 5:30pm and
went to bed - I'm up now writing this
it is now 1:30 Am - I will try to get
some sleep - I am still hazy and confused
and I had 3 beads + my nose is running
like crazy - Enough! Will write more
tomorrow.