

SAIGON VIETNAM
27 DEC 1967

DEAR SON,

I'M SORRY I HAVE NOT BEEN ABLE TO ANSWER YOUR LETTER AND THOSE OF YOUR CLASSMATES SOONER, BUT I HAVE BEEN A LITTLE BUSY. HERE IN VIETNAM WE WORK

EVERYDAY, WE ONLY TAKE OFF ON SUNDAY TO ATTEND MASS. HERE IN SAIGON THE WEATHER IS VERY NICE, DURING THIS TIME OF ⁷ OF THE YEAR THE CLIMATE IS SUNNY AND DRY, AND OF COURSE DIRTY.

A VERY STRONG BREEZE BLOWS AND THE TREES LOOSE ALL OF THEIR LEAVES, JUST LIKE DURING THE FALL BACK HOME, ONLY HERE IT IS MUCH WARMER.

I AM VERY GLAD TO KNOW THAT YOU ARE DOING WELL IN SCHOOL AND THAT YOU ARE STUDYING ABOUT CAMBODIA, LAOS, NORTH VIETNAM AND SOUTH VIETNAM. WHEN WE STUDY ABOUT OTHER COUNTRIES IN THE WORLD, IT HELPS US UNDERSTAND OUR OWN COUNTRY BETTER. AND WE CAN REALIZE HOW FORTUNATE WE ARE TO LIVE IN THIS GREAT COUNTRY OF OURS. WE CAN ALSO UNDERSTAND THE GREAT ADVANTAGES AND OPPORTUNITIES THAT WE ENJOY BY BELONGING TO THIS GREAT COUNTRY. WE MUST NOT FORGET THAT WITH THESE GREAT ADVANTAGES AND OPPORTUNITIES WE ALSO HAVE GREAT RESPONSIBILITIES, TO OURSELVES AS INDIVIDUALS, TO OUR LOVED ONES, TO OUR COMMUNITIES, TO OUR GREAT COUNTRY, AND TO ALL THE PEOPLE OF THE WORLD TO SHARE OUR GREAT ADVANTAGES AND OPPORTUNITIES. THAT IS WHY YOUR DAD AND THOUSANDS OF OTHER SOLDIERS ARE OVER HERE, TO INSURE THAT YOU AND YOUR CLASSMATES AND ALL CHILDREN THROUGHOUT THE WORLD CAN TAKE ADVANTAGE OF A GOOD EDUCATION AND ENJOY THE OPPORTUNITIES THAT CAN ONLY BE FOUND IN A FREE COUNTRY. I HOPE AND PRAY WITH ALL MY HEART THAT THE TIME WILL NEVER COME, WHEN YOU WILL HAVE TO BEAR ARMS AND CROSS THE SEAS TO A FOREIGN LAND TO DEFEND OUR FREEDOM AND OUR HERITAGE. BUT I KNOW THAT IF AND WHEN THE OCCASION ARISES FOR YOU TO FULFILL THIS GREAT RESPONSIBILITY, YOU WILL DO IT PROUDLY AND HONORABLY, LIKE YOUR DAD AND MILLIONS OF OTHERS BEFORE ME.

WE ARE NOT CALLED UPON TO FULFILL OUR RESPONSIBILITIES ONLY DURING PERIODS OF CONFLICTS. AS GOOD CITIZENS OF THIS GREAT COUNTRY WE HAVE THE RESPONSIBILITY OF DEMONSTRATING THAT WE APPRECIATE THIS GREAT COUNTRY OF OURS AN EVERYDAY ACTIVITIES BY TAKING ADVANTAGE OF THE OPPORTUNITIES THAT WE TAKE FOR GRANTED AND SO MANY HAVE FOUGHT AND DIED FOR. YOU SON AND YOUR CLASSMATES HAVE THE RESPONSIBILITY: TO STAY IN SCHOOL AND STUDY HARD, TO THE BEST OF YOUR ABILITY, BECAUSE OUR COUNTRY NEEDS YOU AS ENGINEERS, DOCTORS, LAWYERS, ACCOUNTANTS, CHEMIST, ECONOMIST AND MANY OTHER FIELDS THAT REQUIRE MANY YEARS OF EDUCATION. OUR COUNTRY DOES NOT NEED ANY MORE THIEVES, MURDERERS, DOPE ADDICTS, BEATNICKS, DRAFT ~~DOXXERS~~ CARD BURNERS AND PEACE DEMONSTRATORS. OUR COUNTRY NEEDS PEOPLE THAT ARE WILLING TO LEARN AND TO WORK HARD TO BETTER THEMSELVES BECAUSE WHEN THEY BETTER THEMSELVES, THE WHOLE COMMUNITY BENIFITS AND WHEN THE COMMUNITY BENIFITS, THE WHOLE COUNTRY PROGRESSES. AT TIMES IN OUR COMMUNITIES THE UGLY HEAD OF RACISM AND DISCRIMINATION RISES, DO NOT ALLOW SIMPLE DEMONSTRATIONS OF IGNORANCE TO DETER OR DETOUR YOU FROM THE PATH OF BEING A GOOD AMERICAN. PEOPLE LIKE OR DISLIKE OTHER PEOPLE FOR MANY MANY REASONS AND THIS IS THEIR RIGHT AS AMERICAN CITIZENS. THIS IS YOUR RIGHT ALSO. BE ALWAYS COURTEOUS AND RESPECT THE RIGHTS OF OTHERS, THIS IS THE FOUNDATION OF OUR FREEDOM "THE BILL OF RIGHTS". IF YOU DO NOT TREAT OTHER PEOPLE WITH COURTESY AND RESPECT YOU CANNOT EXPECT TO BE TREATED WITH COURTESY AND RESPECT. BE COURTEOUS AND RESPECTFUL TO EVERYONE REGARDLESS OF WHAN CHURCH THEY ATTEND, REGARTLESS OF THEIR SOURCE AND AMOUNT OF INCOME, BE THEY STREET CLEANER, SALESMAN OR BANK PRESIDENT, REGARLESS OF WHERE THEY WERE BORN, MAYBE THEIR SKIN IS DARKER, LIGHTER, THICKER OR THINNER THAN YOURS, THIS HAS NOTHING TO DO WITH THEIR CHARACTER, THERE ARE

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GOOD AND BAD PEOPLE IN ALL RACES, COLORS AND CREEDS.

OUR COUNTRY HAS DEVELOPED AND PROGRESSED THROUGH THE EFFORTS OF PEOPLE OF ALL RACES, COLORS AND CREEDS.

THE CREDIT FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF OUR COUNTRY BELONGS TO ALL OF US AS AMERICANS, THERE IS NO ROOM FOR SECOND CLASS CITIZENS IN OUR COUNTRY. THOSE OF US THAT FEEL THAT WE ARE SECOND CLASS CITIZENS ARE DEGRADING OURSELVES. AND THOSE THAT BELIEVE ~~THEY~~ THEY ARE FIRST CLASS CITIZENS, LACK THE INTELLIGENCE TO UNDERSTAND THE FULL MEANING OF "CITIZENSHIP".

I HAD BEEN PLANNING TO TELL YOU SOME OF (THESE) THINGS PERSONALLY SON, BUT I BELIEVE THAT THIS WAY IS BETTER, BECAUSE YOU CAN READ IT TWO OR THREE TIMES UNTIL YOU UNDERSTAND IT COMPLETELY, AND IF YOU HAVE TROUBLE WITH A WORD YOU CAN LOOK IT UP IN THE DICTIONARY.

I AM GOING TO ANSWER ALL OF THE LETTERS OF YOUR CLASSMATES, BUT IT WILL TAKE A LITTLE TIME, AND I WILL MAIL THEM ALL AT THE SAME TIME.

I HOPE WITH ALL MY HEART THAT THIS LETTER FINDS YOU IN THE BEST OF HEALTH AS IT LEAVES ME FEELING JUST FINE. I HOPE YOU HAD A VERY MERRY CHRISTMAS.

KEEP UP THE GOOD WORK IN SCHOOL, IF YOU CONTINUE WITH GOOD GRADES MAYBE WE CAN TAKE A TRIP TO DISNEY LAND NEXT YEAR, HOW ABOUT THAT?

THANK YOUR TEACHER FOR ME, I APPRECIATED ~~THE~~ EVERY LETTER VERY MUCH. THAT WAS VERY NICE AND THOUGHTFUL OF HERE.

I LOVE YOU VERY MUCH SON AND I AM VERY PROUD OF YOU

LOVE
DAD

WRITTEN BY:
S.B. SANCHEZ
CRD ~~XX~~ VI
APO SAN FRANCISCO
96307

TO:
MR ROBERT R SANCHEZ (MATHIS, TEXAS) HIS ~~XX~~
EVEN YEAR OLD SON.