

AIR AMERICA, INC.

DRAFT - July 11, 1967

Mr. Kaenkham Thanee  
28, Mu 8, Tambol Pranprow  
Ampur Srichiengmai, Nongkhai  
Thailand

Dear Mr. Thanee:

We are writing this letter to advise you of certain information concerning your son Prasit which we obtained from Mr. Pisidhi Indradat, one of the aircraft crew members taken captive with him by the Pathet Lao. Mr. Indradat made his way to freedom early this year when the prison in which he was detained was overrun by friendly forces.

According to Mr. Indradat, on the day of the accident shortly after parachuting from the aircraft which had been crippled by gunfire, he was captured by the Pathet Lao and taken to a village where he met three other crew members who had parachuted to the ground: Eugene DeBruin, Prasit Promsuwan and Y. C. To. The following day they were led to a prison where they were joined with your son Prasit. The five were detained together in various prison camps from 5 September 1963 until 30 July 1966, having all escaped once on 3 June 1964 only to be recaptured on 6 June 1964.

On 30 July 1966 the five made a second escape in which they split into three groups. Your son paired with Prasit Promsuwan and planned to follow a nearby river to reach the Mekong River. Mr. Indradat walked by himself for 37 days before being recaptured and imprisoned until his release. He stated he never saw or heard anything of his fellow crew members after their escape 30 July 1966.

We did not make this information immediately known in order not to jeopardize any of the other crew members who may not have been recaptured and also in the hope of obtaining more encouraging news before release of the above.

Mr. Indradat made the following statement regarding your son's physical condition while they were in common confinement:

"Mr. Thanee was very healthy and had a big strong body when we were first captured. His body later became very thin and skinny since he never seemed to get enough to eat. He also contracted Malaria and experienced high fever and chills. His face and body turned pale and yellow.

Mr. Thanee experienced the usual amount of dysentery but it was not too serious compared to the others. He had very bad pain from two decayed lower molars. He could not stand the pain and he tried time and time again to extract them himself, but he was never successful. If he chewed anything for a long time, he would get a severe toothache which would keep him awake all night. On the last day I saw him he also had a high fever and became tired very easily."

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Concerning the general mental attitude of the group Mr. Indradat stated:

"In my opinion we all maintained very good spirits and comradeship during the time of our confinement. We tried to make jokes everyday which diverted our thinking from our plight. However, frequently each of us would drift into a depressed state when we thought too much of our loved ones and homeland. We would usually end up crying to ourselves. No one ever gave up the idea of escape."

We are sorry that above information is not more encouraging but felt we should provide it to you. Any further information will be forwarded to you as it becomes available.

Very truly yours,

Richard A. Coleman  
Personnel Manager