MERRY CHRISTMAS FROM SAIGON!

Twas the night before Christmas and all through Saigon,
The Buddhists were quiet and so was Johnson.
The filers round the city had been hard with work since
In fear that Uncle Charlie soon would be there.

My nose in her As Pil and I in my cap
And just settled down for a short evening’s nap.
Then out on To Do there grew such a clatter
That I sprang from the bed to see what was the matter.

There on the street ‘midst the trash and the beer
Was a jolly old man and eight tiny reindeer.
He was asking directions, apparently lost
But the cabbie would only argue the cost.

He buttoned himself and went right to work
Cleaned out the PX like a pro
He completed his work in less than a minute
As the PX rarely has anything in it.

Then he jumped in his sleigh, to his team gave a whistle
“Get out of Saigon — It’s not worth a dollar!
But I heard him explain as he rode out of sight:
“Could you believe twenty days?”

And to all a “Good Night!”
CHRISTMAS — ASIAN STYLE:
You can say Merry Christmas in a thousand Asian tongues and dialects. The Birthday of Christ is celebrated in almost as many different ways in the Orient.
Although virtually none of the Asian nations are Christian, most observe Christmas as an official holiday — and some celebrate it with an exuberance almost beyond belief.
To the Asian way of thinking Christmas is a happy day, and such occasions should be shared by everyone regardless of their religion.

In the steamy jungles of Burma little children will go caroling through dusty darkened streets in jeeps and buses.

Indonesians away from their homeland will hum a favorite Christmas tune, mentally substituting a key word: "I'll be dreaming of a rainy Christmas."

In the green-forested mountains of South Vietnam's Central Highlands, a plane will circle over a tiny U.S. Special Forces camp and its powerful loudspeakers will blast "Jingle Bells" at the dozen lonely Americans on the remotest outpost of Freedom.

In South Korea, the Government will lift the midnight curfew for the only time of the year on Christmas Eve, and there will be drinking and dancing and more drinking as an entire nation stays up and celebrates all night long just for the hell of it.

On Tokyo's glittering Ginza, loudspeakers will blare Christmas carols in Japanese, and the cabarets will do a booming business catering to the holiday mood.

Hong Kong's big department stores will have costumed clowns called "San Tan Lou Vin" bouncing children on their knees and listening to their pleas for gifts.

Yes, an Asian Christmas has a flavor and spirit that is distinctly its own.

EDITOR'S CORNER:
Now that we've read how the various countries of Asia celebrate the Christmas season, let's go back and check out that marathon "Ding-Ding" in Korea!!!

Christmas in Korea comes on with a blast like Times Square on New Year's Eve!!!
Christmas Eve is the only night of the year that the Government lifts the midnight to 4AM curfew, and Christians and non-Christians take full advantage of the opportunity to swing.

For the more orthodox, there are traditional evening Church service and then lantern-lit caroling sessions through dark streets and icy weather.

But — for the younger set Christmas Eve begins as students pack tee houses to meet their friends in a Go-Go Rock and Roll atmosphere. After some early evening dining to the strains of the Beatles, the youngsters head for "private parties" featuring all-night dancing and drinking!!!

For the elders, Christmas Eve starts a little later. Dressed in their best, they flock to drinking houses, cabarets and night-clubs for the all-night celebration.

Every hotel for miles around Seoul is booked solid for Christmas Eve months in advance. In a land that has known little of peace and joy and much of suffering in recent months, Christmas Eve is a night to see bright lights and to dance and drink and play till the sun comes up. It's an opportunity, once but once a year, and everyone makes the most of it — it all adds up to a festive good and very merry Christmas day.
Actually, the village of Thon Ha no longer exists. Charlie X just burned it down.

It was his own idea, even if he did have to borrow a light from the Marine Corps. All of which may come as something of a surprise to Hard. As far as Communist soldiers are concerned, Thon Ha is a key meeting place for Viet Cong in northeastern South Vietnam and Charlie X is telling as a soldier in the North Vietnamese Regular Army.

It just goes to show that strange twists this war can take.

Indeed, Charlie X was a North Vietnamese Regular, one of thousands that have slipped through the Demilitarized Zone to help VC guerrillas in hamlets such as Thon Ha, barely eight miles south of the DMZ separating the warring Vietnam.

At this day, Charlie X was leading two companies of glow-faced American marines through some of the most treacherous minefields in this part of the country.

I tiptoed alongside them sharing the prayer that the little prisoner with the wide-set eyes was telling the truth. If he was lying, I was quite aware the next snap would be my last.

If there was one main reason why we were concerned about Charlie X's veracity, it was that he did not switch allegiances as a "Chieu Hoi" - that is, a Communist soldier who surrenders voluntarily. He had to be out and out captured. That is what had happened, about a week ago.

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SAGOLL - Francis Cardinal Spellman, Archivist of New York City, arrived today (Dec 23) to spend his 25th consecutive Christmas with American troops in the field.

Spellman, 77, was greeted by Gen. W. C. Westmoreland, Commander of American Forces in Vietnam. He was immediately taken to the 3rd Field Hospital directly across from Tan Son Nhat Airbase for a physical examination.

"This is routine for a man of his age after a flight," and aide explained.

The Archbishop flew to Saigon from Thailand. He had stopped previously in Frankfurt and Istanbul.

Spellman had little to say on his arrival. "I have to say I will say publicly (from the podium)." was his only comment.

Spellman, dressed in plain black suit and backpack, appeared frail, but in good spirits. Archbishop Spellman has not been in his home cathedral at Christmas time in 25 years, his aide said. He will make 10 stops in Vietnam, including one of the Seventh Fleet carriers deployed in Vietnamese waters.
The 48-hour Christmas truce went into effect throughout Vietnam today but failed to stop Communist gunfire, a military spokesman reported. Just hours before the cease-fire began, Viet Cong assassins marked the birthday of the Prince of Peace by standing over bullet-riddled bodies of two victims and broadcasting a holiday message of good cheer.

The truce, agreed to separately by both the Communist and Allied Forces, went into effect at 7:00 AM today. Just 45 minutes later, Viet Cong snipers fired 10 rounds at the headquarters of the U.S. Army's First Infantry Division at Di An, about 10 miles northeast of Saigon.

The firing, which reportedly caused no American casualties and was not returned, occurred about the time Francis Cardinal Spellman was climbing aboard a helicopter for his first Christmas with soldiers in the field at Long Dinh, just three miles away from Di An.

From the northern provinces, an American helicopter pilot supporting U.S. Marines reported that Communists fired at him well after the truce was in effect.

And Government sources reported the sound of gunfire in Long An Province south of Saigon. There were no immediate details about the firing.

The most serious violations came at Di An.

Today just six miles northeast of Phu Loc in Thua Thien Province, where the ancient Imperial capital of Hue is located and where U.S. Marines had been battling an estimated regiment of North Vietnamese for three days.

A Government spokesman said that a Communist force attacked a small hamlet with rifle and machine-gun fire, killing a Popular Force defender and two civilians. Three other civilians were wounded in the attack, the spokesman said.
Two questions being asked by United Press International:

1. What is the official view of Communist gunfire? Is it considered officially or unofficially as a violation of the cease-fire?

2. What are the rules of the game of cease-fire? What is the point of no return before U.S. troops fire back — or are they sitting ducks despite orders to remain alert?

WASHINGTON

The U.S. State Department said it had no comment to make on reports from Saigon that the Viet Cong violated the 48-hour Christmas truce in Vietnam.

A spokesman said the Department intended to withhold comments during the period that the truce is supposed to be in effect.

(....in other words, no one is going to complain until we find out how many are going to be killed...../end/)

CHICAGO

Retired Admiral Arleigh Burke, former U.S. Chief of Naval Operations, said Wednesday the Christmas truce in Vietnam "is a mistake.

"The other side will take advantage of it and we won't," he said.


Burke, in criticizing U.S. conduct of the Vietnam War, said, "You can't fight a war gently...we should destroy every military target in North Vietnam.

"You simply don't ever win a war or win a wife, by partial measures." Asked whether expanded bombing in North Vietnam might not bring the United States into direct confrontation with Communist China, he said, "If it is. But if we can't win there, we'd better return home and let them have San Francisco.

Burke said the U.S. should not allow North Vietnam "a little bit of the country with no industry, no education, no nothing" to keep the U.S. "off balance.

Burke and Armstrong contend there is a parallel between today's East-West Cold War and what happened during the Punic Wars to Carthage, the ruin of which are near what is now the Tunisian capital of Tunis.

Armstrong said Carthage's fall to the Romans shows that can happen in a country in which there is "internal dissension, appeasement, subversion, and unilateral disarmament."

Armstrong was honored at a reception given by Tunisian Ambassador Rachid Driss.
LOS ANGELES:
Rickey Rooney's sixth wife filed for divorce against the chunky little actor Friday.
Margaret Rooney, 45, said since their marriage three months ago, the 44-year-old Rooney subjected her to "great mental and physical suffering."
Her attorney, Ralph Miller, said she will seek temporary support of $250 a month.
Miller also stated in the suit that Rooney "has followed a practice of hiding and secreting" his assets.
Superior Judge William A. Nunnally issued a restraining order, prohibiting Rooney from disposing of any property and set a pre-divorce hearing for January 6. Rooney's fifth wife, Barbara Anne Thompson, was shot to death last January 29th. Police said she was killed by Yugoslavian actor Milos Vukosovic who then committed suicide.
The first wife of the 5-foot-6-inch Rooney was Ava Gardner. The others in order were Betty Jane Reese, Martha Vickers, and Elaine Abelson, all taller than he and all from the entertainment world.

CHICAGO:
Senator-elect Charles Percy, R-Ill, filed a petition in Circuit Court Friday seeking to open the estate of his slain daughter, Valerie.
Miss Percy, 21, bludgeoned to death in her bedroom on September 18th, left no will, and the petition would allow disposition of her assets, valued at about $50,000. The petition said the assets included cash, stocks and bonds.
The petition named as possible heirs all members of the immediate Percy family except Valerie's stepmother, Lorene. It asked that Robert W. Stilent, Jr., of Centerville, Illinois, be named executor of the will. He is a former business associate of Percy.
Valerie was survived by Percy; his twin sister, Sharon; a brother, Rogers; a half-sister, Gail, and a half-brother, Turk. No arrests have been made in the murder.

PHILADELPHIA:
About 350 persons carrying candles staged a 90 minute demonstration at City Hall Thursday night protesting the war in Vietnam.
The demonstrators, about half of them teenagers and young adults, carried signs saying that "if the war can be stopped for 48 hours it can be stopped indefinitely."
About 10 plainclothes policemen stationed nearby to keep order had nothing to do.

CHICAGO:
Overcoming odds that were 4-1 against him, perhaps the oldest person ever to undergo open heart surgery has made a complete recovery, doctors at the University of Chicago said Thursday night.
John Winifred, 70, underwent the 31-hour operation on September 6th. For 30 minutes during his ordeal, a heart-lung machine took over the function of his heart so doctors could repair it. "baby was given a 50% chance of surviving."
Early this month, the doctors said, "Baby reported for a three-month checkup. Tests showed his condition was good. He was fully recovered from the heart attack that six weeks before his operation had knocked him into a semi-conscious state that lasted until after surgery."
NEW YORK:

Thomas Fichalak of Philadelphia received a special Christmas gift from behind the Iron Curtain Friday — his 22-year-old daughter, whom he had never seen.

Fichalak, 22-year-old assistant conductor of the Chamber Symphony of Philadelphia, arrived in the United States from his native Poland three years ago; six months later his wife, Eva, an Oratorio soprano, gave birth in Warsaw to their daughter, Carolina.

Now, Fichalak joined her husband in Philadelphia a year ago, but was unable to bring her daughter. She left the child in the care of her father-in-law, a violinist for the Warsaw Philharmonic Orchestra.

Reconsidering the difficulty of getting their child to the United States, the Fichalaks took their problem to Samuel Flor, manager of the Philadelphia Chamber Symphony. Flor got in touch with Immigration officials in July, and was notified November that Carolina was on her way.

"This is the biggest Christmas gift any parent could receive," Fichalak said as he hugged his daughter.

WASHINGTON:

The American destroyer zapped by Communist fire off Vietnam was named after five battling O'Brien brothers, who were involved in the first naval engagement of the Revolutionary War.

Navy records show that the battle went like this:

An American schooner commanded by Capt. Jeremiah O'Brien sighted a British man-of-war and chased her into the harbor at Lexington, Massachusetts.

She was in including American's southwest. Alamo, Milton, John and Joseph — brought the ship alongside the British vessel and swarmed aboard and captured her, being "pitchforks and other odd weapons."

PHILADELPHIA:

WINTER IS OVER:

Tommy Donnelly, 7, loved to hear his uncle tell about the exploits of the battleship U.S.S. ALABAMA during World War II. His uncle, Dr. Newton D. Standberg, is a professor at Stanford University in Birmingham, Alabama. The battleship now stands at Mobile as a memorial to Alabama war dead.

Friends of Standberg heard of Tommy's interest in the Alabama and arranged to have the boy commissioned as a "Vice Admiral" on the battleship. They also located the original flag that was flown on the ship and arranged for that to be sent to him. The flag was what Tommy wanted more than anything else for Christmas.

Standberg arrived with the present Thursday night. But Tommy, his little body ravaged with cancer, had died that morning.

Tommy and his flag will be buried Saturday, Christmas Eve.

"It's the original chicken of the sea!"
In the first of the holiday season bowl games, the FEARLESS FORECASTER will give the nod to Oklahoma by 13 points.

NEW ORLEANS

Two Danish freighters are getting into the spirit of the holiday football bowl games.

The freighters tied up stern to stern at City Docks 10 and 11 are named the Alabama and the Nebraska. The University of Alabama and Nebraska meet in the Sugar Bowl in New Orleans January 2nd, 1967.

The Green Bay Packers, Western Conference Champions and favorites to win their second league title in six years, dominated the 1966 United Press International Annual Football League All-Star Team Thursday placing eight players on the squad selected by sportswriters and broadcasters in NFL cities.

In balloting strangely favoring defensive specialists, Green Bay's Herb Adderley and Tony Wilson of St. Louis were the leading choices of the voters.

Adderley, a main cog in a Packers defense which allowed only 166 points for the season, a new league low, drew 41 votes. Wilson, who attracted one vote less than Adderley, led the NFL in interceptions with 10 as he sparked the Cardinals.

Chicago's Gale Sayers, who this season became the first halfback to lead the league in rushing since Steve Van Buren in 1949 as he rolled up 1,281 yards, was the top offensive choice with 39 votes as he captured on of the running back votes. Most all positions had clear cut winners. Bob Hayes of Eastern Conference Champions Dallas Cowboys, and Detroit's Pat Studstill were overwhelming picks.

Hayes nailed down the split end slot with 35 votes while Studstill won flanker honors with 26 ballots. Baltimore's John Mackey won the tight end position handily, receiving 37 votes and easily outpolling Chicago's Mike Ditka and Philadelphia's Pete Retzlaff.

Philadelphia's Bob Brown and Forrest Gregg of Green Bay were heavy favorites at offensive tackle. Brown with 32 votes, Gregg with 25 and Ralph Nealy of Dallas at a distant third with 14 votes.

Defense, however, was a different story with seven players spanning and voted by sportswriters proportions. Bubba Willie Davis, GD (36); Dave Jones, LA (36); Tackle Joe Willie Davis, GD (32); Merlin Olsen, LA (25); Dick LeBeau, Ray Nitschke, GD (22); and Ray Carney, GD (14); Chuck Howley, Dal (19); Bubba Hargrave, GD (41); Dave Wilkins, ST (40); Wilbur Wood, GD and Bobby Boyd of Baltimore.