

IWCS and the 1st Signal Brigade

My Memories of the Early Days

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Background

In early 1965 the Department of the Army saw the need to create a major headquarters in Vietnam and Thailand to control the growing communications systems. The IWCS had been approved in principal and was being funded for final contractual action. The US Army Strategic Communications Command (STRATCOM) was directed to establish a major headquarters in Vietnam with a subordinate headquarters in Bangkok.

STRATCOM South East Asia

In September 1965 I was part of a small team sent to Saigon to establish STRATCOM South East Asia. The team included Colonel Henry Schneider, Major Albert Cervini (later LTC) and me. Major Cervini arrived in country a few weeks before the others. His mission was to obtain a location for the headquarters. He obtained a cluster of four houses near the Tan Son Nhut Air Base, just off of Plantation Road. Major acquired a desk for Colonel Schneider but only folding field tables for the other members of the new headquarters. He also acquired an SB-22, 12-line field switchboard.

Colonel Schneider was the first commander of STRATCOM SEA and I was the Operations Officer. Lieutenant Colonel Harold J. Crochet was the first commander of STRATCOM-SEA Thailand.

Arrival in Saigon

When I arrived in Saigon I was met by a representative of Page Communications Engineers and I was taken to the Miami Hotel in Saigon. For the next three days, and before I reported to Colonel Schneider, I traveled with the Doug Carter, Page IWCS Project Manager, to various headquarters to obtain approval of the IWCS Phase II plan.

Early Days in STRATCOM-SEA

During the first few months we began to work with and I became acquainted with the Phulam facility and the 11th Signal Group, which became the core of STRATCOM-SEA.

In late 1965 Colonel Schneider was returned to the states for medical reasons and Colonel Bryan Cowan (later BG) replaced him as Commanding Officer, STRATCOM-SEA.

Billeting Arrangements

Major Cervini and I were originally billeted in a local hotel near the central market in downtown Saigon. In this area there were four hotels being used by the military. One

housed a medical facility. Shortly after I arrived in Saigon the Officer billets were becoming in short supply and we were offered an allowance to move to the local economy. We obtained billets not too far away where we had private rooms with bath. There were four STATCOM officers in these billets. There was no potable water but there was running water. Rainwater was collected and stored in a tank on top of the building. We had to adjust our bathing habits since the water in the morning was cold while by late afternoon it was warm, having been warmed by the sun during the day. The small compound also had room for us to store our jeep over night. Later we received a Ford Econovan from Page for transportation.

Hotel Bombing

About a week after we moved out of the military run hotel, a hotel across the street was badly damaged by a car bomb. The car did not get past the protective barrier but did do major damage to the building. There were no serious casualties. The concussion also broke windows in the hotel that we had formally lived. We had moved just in time

Telephone calls from Major Paige

Major Emmett Paige (later LTG) was the IWCS Project Manager for the US Army Communication Systems Agency (USACSA) at Fort Monmouth. We had worked together on various programs for several years. Emmett wanted to be able to contact me via phone. We were able to get a phone line extended to my room. Emmett would call about once a week at 3:00 AM. This is when he could get a circuit to Saigon. We conducted a lot of business this way. Major Paige had a very successful career. He retired as a Lieutenant General and was the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Command, Control, Communications, Computers, and Intelligence.

General Lotz Weekly Staff Meeting

Each Week Brigadier Walter E. Lotz (later LTG), MACV, J6, held a weekly staff conference. Initially Colonel Schneider and later Colonel Cowan and I were invited to attend. General Lotz's office was very small. As the junior officer at these briefings, I had the job of closing the door. I will never forget the sign on the back of his door. These were words that General Lotz lived by.

**Every man has the right to his own opinion,
No man has a right to be wrong in his facts.**

I never forgot this expression and tried to make it my own motto. General Lotz passed away in 2000.

Initial Equipment Arrives to Support IWCS Office

In November we began to receive equipment that we had placed on the Page contract to support our office. We received the first of two Xerox machines in Vietnam; the Page office received the other one. Along with the Xerox machine we receive dozens of boxes of Xerox paper and a viewgraph projector. We also received the materials to make transparencies. In those days you had to expose film on the Xerox machine and then develop it in a large jar known as a "pickle jar".

1st Lieutenant Bill Cleverly

I first met Bill during my 1963 trip to Vietnam. I visited the 39th Signal Battalion when 2nd Lieutenant Bill Cleverly was introduced to me as the Backporch Tropo expert. I was very impressed by this young man's knowledge of the AN/MRC-85 tropo equipment and tropo systems in general. In 1964, at a conference in Bangkok on tropo systems in Southeast Asia, Bill represented the 39th Signal Battalion.

One of my first personnel acquisitions was 1st Lieutenant Bill Cleverly. Bill was extremely knowledgeable of the Backporch tropo system and was extremely helpful in the management of the IWCS system.

Bill was reassigned to 6 STRATCOM Headquarters in mid 1966. He left the service in 1967 and joined Page. Bill was tragically killed in an automobile accident in the early 1970's.

Bob Hope Show

There was no war without Bob Hope. He brought his show to Vietnam in the fall of 1965. We were able to go to the show at Tan Sun Nhut. This was one place where the officers got the back seat and the enlisted men sat up front. We heard everything but we had trouble seeing all of the beautiful ladies with the show. This is the time that we wished that we were privates and could have sat up front.

Trip to the Big Squirt Broadcast Station

During the winter of 1965 I traveled to Hue to meet Guy Warren, Page manager of the Page Field Office in Honolulu. Guy was a retired navy Captain and had run the Page Field office for several years. We were to visit the Big Squire broadcast station that Page had built in 60 days. I had traveled my scheduled military aircraft while Guy, who was considered to have a rank equal to a General, had traveled by a special twin-engine military aircraft. We were to be by the Nick Karim, the Page site manager of the Big Squirt site. Nick arrived with a carryall and we left for the site. I sat up front with the Nick. I was armed with a pistol but the clip was in my pocket. After about twenty minutes, the Nick said, "Look under your seat and take out the sub-machine gun, sometimes they shoot at us in the village just ahead". I took the machine gun, which was fully loaded, and prepared to use it if necessary. On this day there were no shots fired either going or coming. We had an otherwise uneventful trip that day.

Trip to Hawaii

In December 1965 I attended a Communications Conference in Hawaii. This conference covered many aspects of the communications requirements in Southeast Asia. I led a group that created the multiplex plan for the Wetwash submarine cable system. This cable system was to interconnect the coastal ports from Da Nang to Vung Tau and extend on to Thailand.

During this trip I purchased a small TV for use in Saigon.

Grenade Attacks in Saigon

While we were in Hawaii there were some grenade attacks in Saigon. When we returned there was a dusk to dawn curfew. There were concerns that the VC would throw grenades at military vehicles. We then modified all of our jeeps so that the rear

seat faced to the rear. When we traveled by jeep there were always one or two officers sitting in the back with cocked pistols in their hand.

At about the same time, three STRATCOM-SEA enlisted men went to get a beer at an off-limits hut about 100 yards from the headquarters. While they were there a grenade was thrown over the wall and all were wounded. They all received a Purple Heart, but they could not sit down for several days. I don't know what they told their families about their wounds.

Airborne Signal Officers Arrive

During the latter part of the year we were informed that Colonel Robert D. Terry (later MG) would be arriving soon with a team to create a Signal Brigade. We understood that this team was all tactical, airborne Signal Officers and many were from the 18th Airborne Corps. We also knew that Colonel Terry has been selected for promotion to Brigadier General. From our prospective, these were all tactical communicators and were not trained to run strategic communications. In our mind career military officers were in two basic categories, tactical and strategic and neither were well qualified to do the others job.

Colonel Terry arrived a short time later and brought with him these tactical, airborne Signal Officers. They always dressed in fatigues and combat boots while we strategic communicators wore khaki and low quarter shoes.

Signal Brigade Planning Office

Colonel Terry created a planning office and his team began the planning of a Signal Brigade that would report to the Commanding General, US Army Vietnam and the Commanding General, US Army Strategic Communications Command. I occasionally attended Colonel Terry's once a week evening review meetings. On one occasion Lieutenant Colonel Ken Martin, visiting from USARPAC, accompanied me. Naturally we were the only ones wearing khaki and we sat in the back of the room. During the presentations, Ray gave the room a very close inspection and then leaned over to me and asked, "Where are the parachutes?"

Trip to Hawaii with Col Terry

Sometime in February 1966 I was notified that I was going to accompany Colonel Terry, and several of his team, to USARPAC in Hawaii. I could not understand why I was going since I was not involved in Colonel Terry's planning effort and I had had limited contact with him. *My job was not to question why but to do or die.*

On the plane, about two hours out of Honolulu, I was summoned to join Colonel Terry. I was puzzled. Colonel Terry asked me to create an organization chart for an IWCS Management Office. He gave me a pad and I went to my seat and began to develop the organization. After a while I went back to him and showed him the chart that had a proposed staff of approximately ten officers and 14 enlisted men. Colonel Terry reviewed the diagram for several minutes and then said that it was good and he would create the office when we returned to Saigon. He then told me that I would give a briefing on this office while we were in USARPAC. I was delighted at his decision and I gave the presentation on the IWCS Engineering and Management Office and its mission.

My New View of Colonel Terry

I realized that Colonel Terry knew a lot more about me than I knew about him. I saw him as a careful, thoughtful man that was easy to talk to. My opinion of Colonel Terry changed radically during this trip. I now realized that he would rely on we strategic communicators to do the job that we were trained for and he would provide excellent guidance, support and direction.

IWCS Engineering and Management Office Created

Immediately after we returned to Saigon, the IWCS Engineering and Management Office was created. We moved into an adjacent two-story house as our headquarters. This was on March 1, 1966, one month before the Brigade was activated. We were the first unit under the command of Colonel Terry.

We began to obtain personnel. One of the first was Master Sergeant Caffery. I had known Sergeant Caffery in Japan and he was one of the best. We also obtained Master Sergeant Ruffin who I had also known in Japan. With these two sergeants we had a strong foundation. Additionally we later obtained SSgt Tanabe, a good Hawaiian. These three sergeants provided a major backbone to the IWCS Engineering and Management Office.

Over time we were able to obtain a few desks for the office. These desks were locally made and were copies on the typical government issued metal desks. They had been made out of scrap metal, the tops were uneven and the drawers would stick, but they were better than nothing.

1st Signal Brigade

On 1 April 1966 the 1st Signal Brigade was formed commanded by Colonel Terry. Colonel Thomas W. Riley was his deputy for the US Army Vietnam (tactical elements) and Colonel Bryan Cowan was his deputy for STRATCOM-SEA (strategic elements)

We had come to realize that that group of airborne troops were highly qualified, highly motivated and excellent people to work with. All of the hard work of Colonel Terry and his airborne troops paid off.

I think it was about this time we began to wear fatigues and combat boots. We were very proud to be associated with Colonel Terry and his team.

IWCS Briefings to Colonel Terry

Shortly after the creation of the IWCS Engineering and Management Office, Colonel Terry directed that we provide him with a weekly briefing each Thursday. We were well qualified to provide the briefing but our physical facility was extremely limited. We didn't even have a chair for the colonel or places for others to sit. Our resourceful sergeants found a chair for the Colonel. As I remember it was an old executive chair. All of the others at the briefing, usually about 20, sat on the boxes of Xerox paper. The lectern was fabricated from the cardboard carton that the Xerox machine was shipped in. With our Xerox machine and our "pickle jar" we were able to make viewgraphs that were projected onto the white wall.

These briefings were prepared for about 20 to 30 minutes if there were no interruptions or questions. Of course that never happened and typically the briefing would last from

two to three hours. Colonel Terry asked many questions and we never had any problems in providing an acceptable response. One noticeable characteristic of Colonel Terry was his understanding and careful thought before he responded to a presentation comment. I was able to tell when he was thinking about something so I would be silent until he said to proceed.

The briefing was always accompanied by viewgraph presentations. We had the good fortune to have three young, bright 2nd Lieutenants, in our group, one of which was an excellent cartoonist. We tried to have three cartoons in each briefing. I remember one well. We were moving the two 120-foot tropo antennas, over road, from the port at Da Nang to Pleiku. In order to do this Colonel Terry had arranged for an infantry unit for security and an Engineer unit to make sure that the roads and bridges were adequate. One bridge had to be reinforced to support the weight of the trucks. Our cartoonist was at his best. His cartoon showed a broken down bridge with a soldier in a hard hat trying to hold the bridge up. You could read his name on his hat. The name was of the Engineer Officer that was working with us. On the road there was a crane that was trying to hold up the broken part of the bridge. On the side of the crane were these words, "Terry Construction Company." There were smiles and chuckled all around.

Of course we briefed on the status of IWCS installation but we also had to cover the status of defense plans for the IWCS sites. During one briefing I had to tell Colonel Terry that we had done nothing on defense plans for the previous week. I had my concerns and I was not sure how Colonel Terry would respond. Once I told him this information he ask, "Why?" I told him. I do not remember the reason but I remember with absolute clarity what happened next. Colonel Terry asked who had made that decision. I replied that I had. There was a long silence. Colonel Terry, as was his custom, thought long and hard on our actions and rational. It seemed that the silence was forever but finally Colonel Terry said, "Good decision." The colonel had lifted a thousand pound weight off of my shoulders and the briefing continued.

Site Defense Plans

Prior to the creation of the IWCE Engineering and Management Office there had been no consideration for the need to defend IWCS sites. On the original Backporch System a number of circuits were provided to the PT&T for long distance service. This made it possible for the Viet Cong to communicate through the commercial system and it was generally believed that they would never attack a communications facility. This was demonstrated once when the Viet Cong passed through the Pleiku Backporch site to attack aircraft on the adjacent airstrip. There was no attempt to do any damage to the communications facilities.

Colonel Terry did not share this view. He directed that we create defense plans for all of our IWCS sites on a priority basis. He arranged for ARVN troops to be stationed at Pr'Line for around the clock protection. Pr'Line was the only IWCS site that was on an isolated mountaintop.

Barney Banks Page Engineer

I cannot overlook the real bright spot in the IWCS Engineering and Management Office, Barney Banks. Barney had worked for Page for many years and had been in Vietnam

since about 1963. Initially he had his wife and daughter living there with him. As things began to heat up in early 1965 he sent his family home.

I knew Barney well from my visits to Saigon in 1963, 1964 and 1965. Barney was a superb engineer and a joy to be around. I made a strong request to Page to have him assigned as the Page representative in my office. Barney moved in shortly after the IWCS Management Office was created.

During my trip to Vietnam in 1964 I was with a group of Page employees in a local establishment in Saigon. Major Emmett Page was also visiting Saigon at the time and he was in the group. Late that evening we decided to surprise Barney Banks. We all went to Barney's house where he and his wife, Betty, accepted all of us as if it was all planned in advance. This was a delightful evening.

Barney was a very good friend of mine and I was sorry to hear of his death about 20 years ago.

Kidnapping

During a visit to Okinawa in 1963 I had met Captain Charlie Cox. Charlie was with the STRATCOM Pacific Field Office and he had considerable experience installing communications equipment in Vietnam. He was later stationed at Fort Mead, MD and reassigned to STRATCOM-SEA Thailand in 1966. I knew that he could be of much greater use in Vietnam than in Thailand. We found out that his plane to Thailand would be stopping in Saigon. I directed Sergeant Caffery to go to Tan Sun Nhut and get Captain Cox with all of his baggage. I guess you could call this kidnapping but I thought if he never got to Thailand we would have a good chance of keeping him. Now the problem, I had to tell my boss, Colonel Terry. I went to the Chief of Staff and told him. He said that he had better tell the boss. After a few minutes he returned and said that Colonel Terry had only one question, "Was Captain Cox any good?" I replied that he was one of the best. This was relayed to Colonel Terry and then the Chief of Staff said that there was no problem and that he would take care of the paper work.

More support from Colonel Terry

A few weeks later, as I was leaving the military dining room at the Hong Kong Hotel in Cholon, I noticed several duffle bags of newly arrived officers. I noticed that one was Major Dick Talley. Dick had been my replacement in Japan and we both served in Washington in 1964-65. Dick was a skilled linguist who had learned to read and write Japanese. Dick was assigned to a Vietnamese training facility in Vung Tau. I went to the Chief of Staff and requested that Major Talley be transferred to the IWCS office. The Chief of Staff asked if he was any good. I again replied that he was one of the best. About two weeks later we had a new member of our team, Major Dick Talley. By this time Dick had been in country about three weeks and was already able to converse in Vietnamese.

Theft of Communications System Control Center

DCA established a headquarters in Vietnam in May 1965. The IWCS system included two sophisticated Communications Command and Control Centers that were under construction at Tan Son Nhut AB and Korat, Thailand. In early 1966, as the Control Centers were under construction, DCA took control of this Tan Sun Nhut facility. The

DCA commander was Lieutenant Colonel Al Redman (later BG). I strongly opposed this take over but the decision was made at a level higher than mine. I think my opposition was more selfish than what was the best group to operate the Control Center. I had conceived and designed the center I wanted it to remain under Army control. Al and I were very good friends even though I believed that he was the motivating force behind this “theft”. In the long run I think the DCA takeover was in the best interest of the war effort. I was able to see major portions of the Center operational before I left Vietnam.

Details of these control centers is described in an article, “*Communications Command and Control Center*”, published in the IEEE, Transactions on Communication Systems, Vol. Com-18, No. 2, April 1970.

Trip to Thailand with Colonel Terry

One day in the spring of 1966, Colonel Terry, Major Al Cervini, Captain Charlie Cox and I took a trip on an L-23 military aircraft to the 1st Signal Brigade subordinate headquarters in Bangkok. This was Colonel Terry’s first trip to this headquarters. We arrived late in the afternoon and were greeted by Lieutenant Colonel Crochet. We went directly to a hotel, cleaned up and changed into civilian clothes so we could go to dinner in a local restaurant. Colonel Crochet told Colonel Terry that he needed to call Colonel Cowan in Saigon. We then went to the headquarters so Colonel Terry could make the call. Colonel Terry made the call and we could hear one side of the conversation. It went something like this.

“ We just got here and we have a few days of work.”

“No I can’t. We have a lot of work to do.”

“This is going to take a few days.”

“It will just have to wait.”

“I don’t know, let me give it some thought.”

“You really mean I need to be there tomorrow?”

“OK, I will leave early in the morning.”

This is not verbatim but you can see that Colonel Cowen requested that Colonel Terry return to Saigon the next morning and from what we heard Colonel Terry reluctantly agreed to return to Saigon. What was all of this about? There was a ceremony scheduled for the next day where Brigadier General Lotz, JUSMAG J6 would be promoted to Major General and Colonel Terry would be promoted to Brigadier General. We then had a wonderful dinner of Kobe steak. We were all delighted that there would be a promotion the next day. Colonel Terry and the team returned to Saigon the next morning.

From now on in this article I will refer to our commander as General Terry.

Trip to Washington

One day in the spring of 1966, General Terry informed me that I would accompany Colonel Riley on a trip to Washington. It has been so long I have forgotten the purpose of the trip. Both Colonel Riley and I were delighted since both of our families were in the Washington area.

A few days later General Terry told me that I had to brief Brigadier General Norton, USARV (no relation) on the IWCS. The briefing was scheduled for the same morning that Colonel Riley and I were scheduled to leave for Washington. I informed General Terry that I would have someone else give the briefing since I had to be at Tan Son Nhut early that morning to check in and have my baggage checked. There was no hesitation, the General said that I would give the briefing and that Colonel Riley would check me in and check my baggage. This is the only time that I know of where a Colonel was the aide to a Major. I gave the briefing and I arrived at Tan Sun Nhut in time for our flight.

On my return I visited the Collins Radio plant in Richardson, TX. I had visited the plant before and knew several of the engineers. I was given a tour of the plant where the first six AN/TRC-32's were being fabricated. This was especially interesting to me since I had been involved in the original concept of the AN/TRC-32. The AN/TRC-132 was a quad diversity AN/TRC-90.

General Terry's Weekly Staff Meeting

Every Saturday morning General Terry held a staff meeting. His major commanders and staff gave briefings. I attended these staff meetings and had the joy of sitting back and listening to the briefings without having to participate. Some of the briefers were very good and some left something to be desired. I knew a few of these staff members and commanders from previous assignments.

One officer in particular stands out in my mind. I had known him in Japan and remember his promotion party when he was promoted to Major. He was an outstanding officer and avid golfer. One weekend he won a magnum of bourbon in a golf tournament. The Signal Officers at Camp Zama Japan were a close group and several of us decided that he needed help with the magnum of bourbon since he very rarely drank. We were not that pure and we went to his house to see if we could make a dent in this magnum. We did. Who am I talking about? In Vietnam he was Lieutenant Colonel Robert R. (Bob) Myer, commander of the 69th Signal Battalion. His fatigues were pressed and his boots were shined. During his briefing he looked as if he had just stepped out of an Army recruitment ad. His presentation was perfect and he answered all of General Terry's questions. In contrast some of the other briefers were not nearly as well polished. It is no surprise that Bob Myer continued to excel and he retired as a Lieutenant General.

Trip to Pr'Line

During the early spring of 1966 I made a trip to Pr'Line. I flew to Da Lat and was met at the airport by Ed Hahn, the Page site supervisor for Pr'line. The two of us then drove to Pr'Line. Ed was unarmed and I had a 45-caliber pistol but the clip was in my pocket. There was no concern for our safety since Da Lat, a resort town, was considered safe haven for both sides. The Pr'Line site was under construction and there were Vietnamese Army (ARVN) troops that were stationed there for protection. The ARVN troops had their families with them and they had built individual huts on the side of the mountain. This was an uneventful trip. This was not the case a few months later.

Sometime after I made this trip, General Terry arranged for an infantry unit to be stationed in Da Lat to provide protection for the Page work crews as they made the daily trip from Da Lat to Pr'line

General Lotz trip to Pr'Line

General Lotz, JUSMAG J6, made several trips to Backporch and IWCS sites. He never took a military representative, he always insisted on Barney Banks. One day General Lotz took Barney on a trip to Pr'Line. At this time Pr'Line was still under construction. They traveled in two choppers, one a gun ship. The trip was uneventful until they tried to leave. The gun ship started to take off but, because of the limited distance and extra weight, it crashed. There were no serious injuries so Barney, an avid photographer, took nearly 100 pictures. When I arrived at the office the next morning at 7:00 AM, Barney was already there and had placed dozens of pictures on my desk that he had developed and printed over night. He then proceeded to describe the pictures and the events of the previous day

We Did Have Some Free Time

Most evenings we were able to go out to dinner in one of the many fine restaurants in Saigon. The best restaurants had the benefit of the many years of French influence. On one occasion we were in a very small restaurant that was crowded and we had a table near the small bar. A group of about four or five came in and went to the bar. We could see them clearly. All were in civilian clothes except one, who was the ugliest woman I have ever seen. She was dressed in fatigues and combat boots and was wearing the insignia of a nurse Lieutenant Colonel. We didn't think much about this uniform except she also wore several rows of combat ribbons. You do not wear combat ribbons on fatigues. We were puzzled until I finally recognized this lady, the angel of the military, Martha Raye. Very few know of her contribution to the war effort in Vietnam. I found the following in a tribute to Martha Raye.

She spent as much as six months of the year in Vietnam for nine straight years. During those nine years, she traveled to the most remote locations to visit troops and often did more than entertain. She also put her skills as a nurse to use treating patients and even assisted in surgery. While visiting a Special Forces camp in Soc Trang in 1967, she spent her performance time in the operating room instead of on stage. After 13 straight hours in surgery, she went through the wards talking, joking and comforting the soldiers.

There were two hotels restaurants in Saigon that we frequented, the Rex and the Brinks. Both of these hotels had an open-air, rooftop restaurant. From these roofs we could view the war across the river. We could see the tracers from the gun ships as they fired on the Viet Cong. We could see a fireworks display every night.

During those nights that we did not go out to dinner or when there was a dusk to dawn curfew, I stayed in my room and enjoyed TV. Yes, we had TV in the middle of a war. There was a navy Constellation aircraft that broadcast three hours of old American TV programs and three hours of Vietnamese TV programs each night. One of these programs was "Combat", the old TV program starring Vic Marrow.

Career Discussion with General Terry

Near the end of my tour in Vietnam, I was summoned to General Terry's office to discuss my future in the Army. I believed that I had done a good job in the brigade and that General Terry wanted to give me some guidance and possible assistance. As we

began to discuss my future I informed him that I had 18 years of active duty service and that I planned to retire in two years. I think that he was somewhat surprised at my intentions and he asked me why. I told him that I had two sons, one 15 and one 13. I told him that if I stayed in the Army that I could expect no more than two or three years in the states and then overseas again either with or without my family and my most important duty was to my children. My oldest boy had had some trouble while I was in Vietnam and I had to be there for both of them. As typical with General Terry, he thought about what I had said for some time and again said, "Good decision."

To make a long story short, my son had a problem, met an understanding police officer, had a three-hour private discussion with our minister and received strong support from his mother and me. After this event he began to do better in school, went to James Madison University and got married in his second year. He had to get a job to support his new wife and at the end of four years he received a 3.94 grade point average and a full four year fellowship to Ohio State University. He graduated with a PhD in music and now teaches computer science at James Madison University. His younger brother saw his brother's trouble and did not repeat the process. He attended Virginia Polytechnic Institute and is now a guru with a local software development firm.

When I look at my sons today I know that I made the correct decision to terminate my Army career after 20 years of active service so that I could be a full time father.

Final days in Vietnam

I remember a visit from Major Paige to the IWCS Management Office in early 1966. The men in the office made a scrapbook for me prior to my departure. In that book is a picture of Emmett with the following caption, "*So, if you STRATCOM guys don't shape up I'll blow the whistle on all of you.*"

In September 1966, a couple of weeks before I left Vietnam, my replacement, LTC Patrick J Kearins, arrived and assumed command of the IWCS Management Office. Pat was tragically killed in the early 70's. At his burial at Arlington Cemetery I met my old friend, brand new Colonel Emmett Paige. I had not see Emmett for four or five years.

As I left Vietnam, I had mixed feelings. I was very glad to get back with my family yet I was in some way not ready to leave. My year in Vietnam will always stand out as the greatest year of my professional life. I worked for the finest officers that I had ever known and I had a superb team to do the work in the IWCS Management Office.

The members of the IWCS Management Office as I remember them were:

- LTC Patrick J. Kearins, Commander (my replacement)
- Maj. Tomas P Pomeroy
- Maj. Dennis S. Scott
- Maj. Richard P. Talley
- Maj. Charles H. Stevens
- Capt. Leroy R. Buckman
- 2nd Lt Vytautas Veleckis
- 2nd Lt Anthony Barbuzanes
- 2nd Lt Donald C Pike
- CWO Joseph Wisniewski

MSgt Caffery
MSgt Ruffin
Sgt Tanabe
Sgt Stenmitz
Pvt Almy
Pvt Jarvis
Pvt Silvio
Pvt Freeman
Pvt Mashburn
Pvt Turner

After I Left Vietnam

I left Vietnam in September 1966. On Thanksgiving Day 1966 the Page work crew was ambushed on the way from Da Lat to Pr'Line. Eight Page employees and one brigade soldier were killed and 11 men were wounded. Ed Hahn, the Pr'Line site supervisor, was not injured but his assistant was badly wounded in the legs and it took two years before he was fully recovered. Even with the tragic deaths of Page employees, Thanksgiving Day was the only day there was no work at Pr'Line. The next day the work resumed in full force. **To the credit of Page, I know of no Page employee that did not complete his work commitment except for the eight that died that day.** I had the good fortune to have Ed Hahn work for me for a couple of years after I retired. Ed passes away in 2001.

In Conclusion.

I have had the privilege of working for some fine individuals in my adult life. **The one individual that stands, out head and shoulders above all of the rest, is Major General Robert D. Terry.**