

DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE
56TH WEATHER RECONNAISSANCE SQUADRON (MAC)
APO SAN FRANCISCO 96328



5 June 1970

Mr. and Mrs. Lloyd J. Washburn
75 Main Street
Middleport, New York 14105

Dear Mr. and Mrs. Washburn,

I want to take this opportunity to introduce myself as your son's new squadron commander. Your son, Larry, has been assigned to our Doppler Shop where he will make a personal contribution to the success of our squadron's mission.

Our mission is to provide weather information for use by both military and civilian agencies. For instance, the wind and weather information that we obtain is used by both civilian and military aircraft crossing the Pacific. Our weather data enables meteorologists to forecast future weather conditions. Sometimes these forecasts include severe weather warnings which save millions of dollars in American and foreign property and often lives by allowing us to prepare for these impending storms.

We fly WC-135B and RB-57F aircraft. The 135 is a modification, for military use, of the design of the famous Boeing 707. The WC-135's that we use have been modified for meteorological research. The RB-57F was originally a small two-seated bomber. It has been modified so extensively that it can hardly be identified with the original model. These modifications include the replacement of the original engines with the more powerful fan-jet engines and the addition of two smaller engines. This added power, combined with a much larger wing, enables this aircraft to operate at very high altitudes providing wind information previously unobtainable. Our missions fly south to the Philippine Islands and north to Fairbanks, Alaska. We are very proud of our unit which has always accomplished its mission safely and professionally.

We are stationed at Yokota Air Base, which is located about 30 miles west of Tokyo. Yokota offers a modern 20-lane bowling alley, a gymnasium, a theater and a hobby center composed of a woodworking shop, lapidary shop, photo laboratory, automotive shop and much more for your son's use in his off-duty time. All of the men are encouraged to attend religious services of their faith and the social activities scheduled by these various church groups. High school, college level, graduate school and vocational courses are offered to all personnel through the Education Center.

The Yokota Service Club provides a varied social and recreational program. They also sponsor weekly tours to scenic and historical spots in Japan at no cost to the individual. Tokyo is always a highlight of these tours. It is now the world's largest city and is quite westernized in many respects. A large percentage of the Japanese people speak English, so there are relatively few problems when touring within the Tokyo area.

A news story will be sent to your hometown newspaper describing your son's new assignment with the 56th Weather Reconnaissance Squadron. We know all of his friends are interested in where he is and what he is doing.

I want to assure you of my interest in your son's military career, not only his professional advancement, but also his personal well being. May I urge you to correspond frequently with him, for it has been my experience that letters from home make a particularly important contribution to individual morale.

Sincerely,


TEDD L. BISHOP, Colonel, USAF
Commander