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dawson--1

january 26, 1965

SAIGON--At the risk of his own life, a 25-year-old father of four children in ~~California~~ ^{CALIFORNIA} has been traveling through Vietnamese villages near the Communist-infested D-Zone in search of news about his brother, a U. S. Army pilot listed as missing in action.

Donald C. Dawson has been traveling through Viet Cong-controlled territory, living in a friendly village only "a mile away from thousands of V. C.", & airdropping ~~his~~ ^{DANNY} thousands of personally signed leaflets attempting to get news of the fate of his brother--18 months older than ~~he~~ himself--who "flew out in his plane one day and never came back."

The 50,000 leaflets--signed "The brother of the pilot"--Dawson offered a reward of ~~1000~~ 100,000 piastres (US\$1430) for his brother alive; 50,000 piastres (US\$710) for the return of his body and 35,000 piastres (US\$500) for an identifiable piece of his brother's aircraft with ~~aircraft~~ ^{PLANE} number on it.

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dawson-2

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"I personally think Danny is alive," his brother explained in Saigon this week. "His wife thinks he's alive. And until I see his body I'll continue to think he is." B Lt. Daniel Dawson, also the father of four children living in California, was listed as missing ~~x~~ in action on November 6, 1964--exactly seven years to the day after their father was lost in a tuna fishing boat.

Less than a month later--on December 3rd--Donald, also ~~x~~ skipper of a tuna fishing boat, arrived in Viet Nam in search of news about the fate of his older brother to whom he was very close.

"I left my wife with ~~four children in Oregon~~ and \$20 and told her to get a job," he explained. "She's now a waitress. I've got enough money to pay the rewards if Danny comes out alive--but other than that I don't have a cent." I leased out my ~~ranch~~ ranch in Oregon and ~~farmed my three or four children out to relatives.~~ He ~~has~~ said he had originally planned to remain in Viet Nam only a few weeks, but recently he has applied for a one-year extension of his Vietnamese visa to remain longer.

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American helicopter pilots with ~~whom~~ whom his brother had worked have ~~person~~ personally advised Donald not to travel in the Viet Cong infested areas he has gone in search of news about his brother's fate.

"But with someone who has so little sense and so much guts, how can we stop him," one astonished helicopter pilot ~~was~~ explained.

Donald himself admits that he is taking great risks of his own life to travel ~~nammmmmmm~~ along the edge of the Viet Cong-infested D-Zone---a stronghold which the Communists controlled for thirty years even under French rule.

"I live in a friendly village only miles from thousands of Viet Cong," he calmly explained. "I live at the edge of D-Zone in a village guarded by only a few home militia---not regular army troops. I've the first ~~xxx~~ American ever to live there or to travel there. The villagers told me that during the French war two Frenchmen came into villa and asked questions like I did. ~~xx~~ They said they shot them.

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dawson--4

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"I hired a Frenchman who ~~French~~ to go into the village with me the first time and he spoke to the villagers in French-- but he would not go back there again with me.

"Only in the last three weeks did I start to go into that D-Zone area. I didn't know if they would let me stay or not. I rented a car to go in, but I got lost and the driver of the car left me ~~by~~ by myself so I had to ~~get~~ ^{take} a sampan out."

The tall American with reddish-brown mustache and beard said that ~~upon~~ shortly after arriving in Viet Nam he printed ~~80~~ 80,000 leaflets telling villagers about the his reward and his hopes to find his brother. American ~~helicopter~~ helicopter and airplane pilots who knew his brother collected donations by placing a jar on the officers club bar which almost covered the \$2300 printing bill.

"I've flown around that area where my brother's plane went down and dropped leaflets there," he explained.

"I've dropped leaflets in Viet Cong villages and along their trails. I stop small sampans ~~in the~~ on the river and give the people thirty piastres (forty cents) to carry my leaflets further upstream. I've plastered 500 leaflets on the side of their boats and farmers around my village take leaflets which they hand to the Viet Cong and tell them I'm waiting in my village for news about my brothers."/>

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"But all these leaflets are not worth the paper they're printed on ~~except~~ unless I sit in that village and wait-- everyone all around ~~near~~ ^{knows} the 'the brother of the pilot' is waiting for some news," he explained.

He said during his stay in the village he has taught for hours 15 children English in the school run by a Vietnamese Roman Catholic priest who has cooperated with him and has at times fed him.

"And I spend hours just ~~sign~~ personally signing the leaflets to be distributed," he laughed. "I've signed almost 50,000 of them by now. We still have 30,000 more to go but we distribute them carefully."

He said that during his stay in the friendly village "I've eaten everything from the intestines of pigs, duckheads, ~~chickens~~ ^{to} and duck feet."

He said he lives in "a bamboo house with ~~in~~ ^{thatch} roof and dirt floor. there's no door and I sleep on a rice mat placed on a slab of wood."

He ~~explains~~ ² explained that "now I'm just waiting. Of course, I hope my brother~~s~~ walks out of the jungle. If not that, I hope the Viet Cong bring out his body--or even let me go ^{up} to get it. I've got the bag for his body, the gloves and the packsack --I've got it all set up--but now I'm just waiting ^{to} to see what the Viet Cong say."