

c/o Religious Studies Dept.  
Vietnam Course-RS155  
Dr Walter Capps  
UofC Santa Barbara, Ca  
Coleta, Ca 93106

Dear Sir;

I met one of your former students Scott Gutterman UCSB 89, while I was in Vietnam. He spoke very highly of you. I am a Vietnam Veteran, I started three tours to VN during the war, finished one and was shot out on the other two. I was back as a tourist trying to make a documentary on the war as seen from the gun barrel level, and wanted to revisit some old battle fields. Due to several things I was unable to get back into the highland battle fields. I shot up four cassettes of videos. They are not of professional quality as I am not a professional. I could have done a better job but I was sorta disgruntled because they wanted so much money to let me go back to some of the areas that I served in.

Most of my time was in the central highlands working with the Montagnards or hill tribes. Their real names are Dega. The French dubbed them Montagnards which means mountain people in French.

Dega are a minority race in Vietnam, and have long been oppressed by the Vietnamese. They were alined to fight for the American Special Forces under the pretext that they were going to get Autonomy. They are the best jungle fighters in the world so they were a very valuable asset to us.

After the fall of Siagon most were exterminated using nerve gas that they dubbed Yellow Rain.

March 1987, 200 made it to Greensboro, NC after fighting out of Vietnam, across Cambodia, then spending 2 years in a refuge camp in Thailand. They left Vietnam with 4,000.

October 1992, 398 of the little people surrendered to the United Nations Peace keeping force in Cambodia and were relocated here in North Carolina with the first bunch that made it out.

They fought their way almost into extinction rather than surrender to the communists. Now they are being acculturated and taught how to be Americans. God what a waste. It would be better if they could teach us how to be Dega.

I am looking for some one to edit and reproduce my tapes at a reasonable price.

If you would like a copy I'll send you one as soon as I get them reproduced.

Sincerely,

  
H. Dale Jennings

DEGA (MONTAGNARD) IV

For years the guns of war gave you no rest  
You fought with America's best  
Your fight was for liberty  
You fought along side men like Howard and Zabatoski  
When I arrived to Vietnam I was young and green  
I wanted to be on so bold and mean  
But you took me under your wing  
Taught me jungle combat  
Saved my life  
I'm grateful for that  
In battle  
I saw the enemy's guns cut your numbers down  
But, you wouldn't give em no ground  
You fought all the way  
No one could ever make you bow down  
You were promised help but, it never came  
To our Generals you were a shame  
But, in public they speak highly of your name  
Cause you fought all the way  
Once you were many, half a million strong  
The Dega a proud people that could do no wrong  
After the many battles there were only a few  
God! it's a shame what politics can do  
In the Valley of the Manh Canh (pronounced man can)  
We were badly outnumbered  
Fighting was furious but, you never ran  
You fought all the way  
I saw their eighty twos blow holes in your sides  
You showed no pain  
You never cried  
I saw Dega tears only in a mother's eyes  
Her son was wounded and died  
Your yearning for freedom wouldn't let you yield  
Then we left you standing alone on the battle field  
Twenty years you waited for our return  
Though you were sick, hungry, and near out of ammunition  
You wouldn't surrender  
Your fight for freedom got the whole world's attention  
One thousand miles on foot, across three countries without any rest  
Welcome to America  
I pray that the birds of peace will let you build a safe nest

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