



COMMANDING OFFICER
U.S. NAVAL MOBILE CONSTRUCTION BATTALION
FIFTY-EIGHT
FPO NEW YORK 09501

Familygram
15 November 1969
Davisville, R.I.

Greetings:

This is the final Familygram and "Blaze" you will receive from me. As I'm sure you already know, the battalion will be decommissioned on November 17.

It's sad to see the unit disbanded and our Seabees scattered to the four winds. But there is a brighter side too. Because of the progress being made in "Vietnamizing" the war, because of the conditions on the battle field and the enormous amount of work that your Seabee and the thousands like him have accomplished, the Department of Defense is able to reduce the number of battalions needed to support combat operations.

Some of our men are being returned to civilian life sooner because of the decommissioning. Most have already been given new assignments. We have handled each case on an individual basis. Every possible consideration was given to your Seabee to try and see to it that he received orders to the duty station he desired and to make the transition to a new job a smooth one.

The battalion was together socially for the last time October 30. Special Services provided the funds for the battalion party to say "thank you" in some small way to our Seabees and Seabee families for their outstanding service and support of the "Great FIFTY-EIGHT." I only regret that every member of the Fifty-Eight family could not attend.

A special note of praise is in order to all our "Fleet Seabees" who have worked so long and selflessly during these final weeks of our existence as a unit. Our Personnelmen, Yeomen, Disbursing Clerks, Supply Clerks, Hospital Corpsmen and all the battalion's administrative personnel, did an outstanding job making these last few weeks easy on the rest of us.

We recently received a farewell message from our Seabee Boss, Rear Admiral J. V. Bartlett. He said: "As you prepare to retire your colors, the Seabees the world over salute a proud and "Can Do" organization. Throughout your history which includes valiant

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World War II service on Guadalcanal, Vella La Vella, and Okinawa plus three full, eight month deployments to Vietnam, the Seabees of NMCB-58 have won deserving fame and praise.

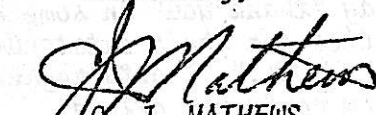
"In Vietnam your trademark of excellence ranges from the Mekong Delta, to your direct support of Combat Operations along the DMZ. At Hoi An, the 7000-man Republic of Korea Marine Camp, one of your proudest and speediest accomplishments, remains today a symbol of remarkable professional performance. As well, your construction achievements in the DaNang complex, in Quarry operations and in Civic Action, highlight a most successful history.

"From the entire Seabee/CEC family a sincere "Well Done" to the Great 58."

Since the battalion was called back into service in March 1966, your Seabees have spent more than 575,000 man days in Vietnam and have contributed over seven million hours of construction support to our forces there. They have amassed a truly impressive record of "Can Do" accomplishments. I too must echo Admiral Bartlett's "WELL DONE."

The men of the "Great FIFTY-EIGHT" can hold their heads high and walk with pride -- they have borne the heat of the day and the loneliness of the night; they have worked and suffered in response to our country's call. MCB-58's deeds are history, but she will always live in the minds and hearts of the men who made her the "Great FIFTY-EIGHT."

Sincerely,


C. J. MATHEWS
Commander, Civil Engineer Corps
United States Navy



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