

Flying into Crete at sun set the mountains had a deep blue coloration with stark shadowing. We had only an hours wait for a C-130, by 2000 we were on our way to Sigonella ,Sicily. When we got to Sicily we were rounded up and had to wait an hour for a bus to run us to the hotel. It was a local charter bus, and half way out to the hotel it broke down,. After a long day of flying everybody was getting real cranky. I was out of bucks for the room but the finance office in Sigonella cut me fifty dollars for the expense. I was supposed to get up to \$5000/ day per diem while traveling for the government. The Forrestal begged off saying I was not with their command. I'd have to collect as I could along the way. I had no plane ticket once I got to the states.

After we got a new bus we got to the Hotel Bona coursi on Mount Aetna about midnight. We had a wild ride through the rural roads up My Aetna. and the streets in town had no stop signs with a lot of blind corners. By the time we got there we were glad we had made it. There was no entertainment in walking distance, so all us guys decided to crash as the hotel bar was vacant of females. We took turns at the head shared between two rooms and four guys, and marvelled at the Italian bidette. We wished we had someone to put it to use. We were nailed for \$13,50/ man for these rotten facilities. We barely made the towels go around and the A.C. was high enough to cause pneumonia, and the elevation helped make it a cool experience following Egypt.

We left early in the morning and bounced out way through the winding country roads on the side of Mt Aetna. The area is pretty much intact and rural. The homes are feildstone. The people seem to have littâ orchard and livestock operations. The land is black and volcanic, and prtically looks like crushed pumice. We were on a plane early. We got a C141 to Rota, Spain. By now all us travelers were pretty good crew and we had plenty to talk about. We were in pretty good moods considering vending machine dinner followed by vending machine breakfast. The flight to Rota was in something the size of a 707, but laid out like a troop ship. The back had twelve good airline type seats and I managed to weasel into one of them, no body was sick so survival of the fittest. The accomodations again were not too glamorous. The luggage was piled up forward in the middle of what would be first class passenger seatin. The rest of the people had to sit on the red net seatin again. Those were tortorous, the few hours to Sigonella nearly wasted my back as there is no support to the seats whatsoever. It was only a few hours to Spain with the time change. We landed in Rota at 1330. The next flight to the states was not taking off until 3 or 4 in the morning ~~when~~ was the word when we first got there. That meant a 13 or 14 hour wait, and I had no money and was already in wicked shape from the last days flight and hotel room. I was kicking into one of my lack of rest overdrives, and started to appreciate the horror of it all. I changed and cleaned myself as well as I could. We had to leave in whites and mine were all messed up from the moving around. I had two uniforms some work clothes and some civilian clothes. I had almost all of my gear sent from the Forrestal through the Navy supply system. One sea bag was all you got to take off the carrier. The night in the Rota terminal was a real suspense feature, between nodding out on the hard wooden bench, people walked in an out and I started into and out of converstions with people waiting for the plane. It was really a shame the Navy couldn't accomodate us any better. I neede fifty more dollars cash to ride out of there and get a room and there was no one there to fix me up. I had to crash in the terminal. I imagine I got a solid two hours of sleep. I looked forward to the big C-5 and sleeping on cushioned seats. Three and