TO: Aiko Iijima, JOICFP
FROM: Perdita Huston, The Global Family Project
DATE: January 10, 1993

Dear Aiko:

I am still embarrassed about our non-meeting in Bangkok. I hope you have forgiven your friend for taking off to the refugee camps and NOT leaving an explanatory message.

When I arrive home, following the eight weeks without a day off, I was not only tired physically, but emotionally as well. The stories that families tell are deeply moving and disturbing! But there was no time to rest: my mother arrive 3 days later from California and, since she does not walk unassisted, the next two weeks were spent catering to her needs. Then last week, the holidays were over and I was finally able to rest. I have been sleeping 10 hours a night. And I realize that the next trip will have to be graced with a few days of rest here and there. I was truly foolish to 8 weeks without rest.

So this week I will begin the numerous thank you letter I have to write to all those, like yourself, Yuriko and Akiko Kato who were to very helpful.

As for the trip after Japan: it was fantastic. I did get a visa to China and was able to interview fairly freely... but was disappointed to see that 50 years of building a strong welfare state is being dismantled by the current rulers who are selling out to the multi-nationals to enrich themselves. Quite unbelievable and even more sad.

Thailand is a story of development gone awry; urban chaos and its social consequences and family breakdown for "consumerism" to the point of selling one's children for a TV and a monthly income from their prostitution. And I interviewed several young women who had been thus sold and were HIV positive. Bangladesh, a sad non-development story, with similar repercussions on family life. There is much violence against women there that one of the only places where widows or divorcees are safe (with their children) is in brothels. There is so very much to say -- I just hope that I am able to be an effective messenger of the stories people have told me.

I have yet to receive back all the transcripts of the Japanese interviews but the transcriber is working on them. (I had to wait to give them to her because the UNICEF monies did not arrive until the end of December!)

Let me hear from you, your news, etc. With warm regards,

PS And please tell Sono Aibe I am indebted to her for your assistance in your absence!