

Chapter 4

After two months in the Delta, more than several experiences with the American correspondants, and reading weekly what was being published in the United States about Vietnam, I began my covert war against the press. I resolved to pretend to be a somewhat disillusioned Captain, who was shortly to be leaving the Army after Vietnam for law school. For the first time in my military career, I began to wear my hair somewhat long. Everything I did was to pretend not to be a gungho Army officer, that in reality I really had been all my short career, but to appear somehow credible to them about the war. The next thing I did was to refuse to secure helicopter transportation for them from the 164th Combat Aviation Brigade at Can Tho Army Airfield. I forced them to get around in the Delta by car, bus, or regularly scheduled Air America flights from the airfield. This increased the amount of hassale that they would have in getting around the Delta. My goal was to discourage any of them from going any where they could not get to by themselves and to discourage any of them from coming back to the Delta. General McCown did not tell me to do this. Like an aggressive junior officer in a staff position far above what I was actually ready for in my military career, I just did it to protect the Delta

from the American press. This was my war and it had to be subtly waged.

Can Tho, RVN
1 October '70

Dear Judy,

I received your letter of 27 September today. After two days without a letter I was so happy to hear from you again.

Those pictures were so appreciated. Lately, I had been looking at my pictures of Van and I realized he was not the same anymore. I am just amazed at the little fellow. He has changed so much. When I received the pictures I looked at them for over a half an hour straight.

I received a letter from home today.

I also was able to talk to you on the phone. And the Sol Sanders article in the U.S. News and World Report arrived today. Boy, by 1730, I was walking on a cloud again.

It sure feels good to feel happy again. Over here, being so far away from everything which one is near and dear too depression is so easy to fall into. There are times when I have to make a conscious effort to find something happy. Boy, this job is teaching me self discipline. I'll be ready to be a civilian. I feel I have finally approached manhood. Isn't it strange that I had to come to Vietnam to feel this way about myself. When I said it was going to be a man building experience I had no idea how prophetic those words were. Another significant lesson is that of controlling one's fear. It's always there yet one can not let it become his master.

Don't think about the days until R & R. If anything count the months. Every once in a while I mentally compute approximately how many days I have to go. But I do not make it a habit.

I think we may see some slight movement in the Paris Peace talks. There's been much scurrying back and forth by U.S. people lately and it appears the enemy is trying to steal weapons for a mini offensive sometime in November during the elections. They better hurry up and do something, because they are being hurt faster than they can replace losses.

Rick is right about Van being good looking. He could not help but be anything else.

Well, love its another day gone. In two days I'll be taking another malaria pill. The time is passing somehow. Just endless days and unbelievably long nights.

Write soon.

Love,

Mike

Can Tho, RVN
2 October '70

Dear Judy,

I received your letter of 24 September today. Lately, for some reason, your mail has been arriving several days later than in the past.

I am glad you are making some money. You are probably quite pleased with yourself. I know I sure feel better that you can now support yourself.

This week one of my NCO's is going to Tokyo. I am going to give him about \$250.00 to buy a 35mm camera and a movie camera. I have been carefully researching which one's to buy for my money and the two I have selected are life time cameras of the very highest quality for a moderate price.

This year I have programed my budget to spend about \$1000.00 on the crap that people can buy over here. The rest will go to savings.

I am having second thoughts about staying here a year if I get accepted at Ole Miss. Who knows what I'll do? One thing is for sure, I just do not like being over here one bit. Sure I am proud of being here, but I'll not shed a tear when I leave.

Today, I got another NCO. This time a newspaperman with ten years experience. My section is finally over staffed now. I am frankly building an empire. Now we are working on improving the facilities, like A/C the office, paneling the place, ect. My personal office is already has A/C.

Today, I flew with the General to Soc Trang and in the afternoon to Di An (Z-0n). He made a speech to a graduating class of MAT teams (Mobile Advisory Team). These guys are five man armed peace corps teams. They live in the villages with the people. Village Vietnamese are wonderful people. Just like in America, ubranization does something bad to people.

Well, tonight I had planned to go lift some weights but it has started raining Goddamnit. So I guess I'll go to the library.

I want to come home and never leave again. We have never been separated before until now. Boy, I just do not like it at all. I want nothing more of separations. Additionally, three years of a very quiet life in school is going to be a great reccuperation period after the Army. If anything were to happen to keep me from going to law school I think I would shed some tears. Gosh, I really have my hopes up.

I love you more than ever now.

Love,

Mike

Can Tho, RVN
3 October '70

Dear Judy,

I received your letter of 22 September today. For some damned reason the mail from you has been all screwed up. The letters have not been arriving sequentently.

Well, I have caught a loveable Vietnamese cold and I do not feel very good.

You can tell Mr. Shultz I know the fellow that writes Newsweek's copy from Saigon. He used to work for the Baltimore Sun and he agrees with Vice President Agnew. If his copy is not edited too much in Washington, its probably straight.

I received a letter from the University of Virginia. Maybe it would be best if I stuck to my original course of action after all. I think maybe we could give the south a chance at Ole Miss. If after three years we feel we could be happier in the southwest, we move to Santa Fe. Simple as that.

I sure do want three quiet years of study, and family life, regardless. Please write soon.

Love,

Mike

Can Tho, RVN
4 October '70

Dear Judy,

I received your letters of 28 and 29 September today. I also tried to call you, but you were not in the apartment.

I am glad to hear that I am your kind of man.

Today, I bought a teddy bear and turtle for Van. They should arrive in the mail in a month. And for you, my love, to compliment those twelve silver goblets, a silver wine cooler. Write if you want a punch bowl and cups of silver.

Well, I do not have weekends or time off for that matter. One of Westy's first moves when he came over here in 1964 was to put everybody on seven day work week, whether, or not, there was enough to do. Consequently, the whole situation breeds complacency.

There are floor shows in the Officer's Club about twice a month. I never go out on the town, unless its business. I do not eat out.

I get up at 0630 every morning, take a shower, shave, stagger to work at 0715, leave for lunch about 1145, return to work at 1345, attend the evening briefing at 1730, which lasts until 1815-1830. If I eat in the General's Mess dinner is served at 1900, usually I am out by 2000. Then I come back to the room and write a letter to you. Then its 2130 and I go to the Officer's Club, have two drinks and go to bed. It's incredibly boring. Everyday the same pattern.

As far as my feelings are concerned, I always have the blahs. I seem in a vaccum, lost and unfeeling, not touching anyone or anything, jsut floating aimlessly with no will to do anything but to find an escape. It's day to day misery and they are just a blur. That's the way I feel.

I love you something awful. It's ashame we have to be separated to see the folly of our past relationship. What a lesson to learn from 6,000 miles. However, this will end and we will be older, wiser, and more in love than before.

Love,

Mike

Can Tho, RVN
4 October '70

Dear Folks,

This is in response to both of your letters of the 26th and 27th.

First of all, let me dispell some misconceptions for your Mother that you appear to have about my feeling for my heritage. The south is my home and always will be in my mind. When I made my decision to go to Ole Miss, it was based upon my desire or our desire to give out children a good southern heritage. However, just because I want to keep all of my opitons open by applying to other schools is in no way the result of talking to reporters. I might just want to build up my ego, by seeing if other schools will have me. Please thank the five people for me and please encourage them to write the necessary letters.

I have always been known for aspiring to do far more than whatever materializes. I do not think it is so bad a characteristic, because sometimes the dreams come true, such a becoming the Information Officer of one of the four major commands in Vietnam as a junior captain.

Additionally, I have already written to Judy that I would probably go to Ole Miss regardless. But I am still going to apply to the University of New Mexico, Tulane, and Florida State. I received the University of Virginia application and canned it.

The rules should be relaxed because I am an Army Captain, whose commission required the approval of the U.S. Senate.! The President's son might not have been a Regular Officer in his country's armed forces. If I sound snobbish about it, its because I am snobbish about it.

Please forward the acceptance slip to me when it arrives.

I gave you a misinpression about Cambodia. What I told you was what the commies were doing. Before one can say the situation has gone bad one must also understand what the Cambodians are doing. As long as the rainy season continues the Cambodians have time to train 10,000 men every fifteen weeks in Vietnam. I estimate some 20,000 plus Cambodians have already completed training and will be available for duty one the dry season begins. The dry season is usually when the North Vietnamese move. Whether or not the North Vietnamese can recruit and train enough Cambodians to significantly reverse the course of this war is debatable. Frankly, I doubt it; however, by the Cambodians failing to orgainize their population they will be in for a long war. Make no mistake about it, the North Vietnamese are in desprate trouble, the movement at the Paris Peace talks indicates that. A nation of nineteen million just does not lose 650,000 men in Vietnam alone and not suffer. The south Vietnamese losses have not approached anything like this. Right now the south Vietnamese kill V.C. at an average of five to one.

Mr Sol Sanders article was published in U.S. News and World Report for 28 September. It's objective reading of the situation.

Rick Jones will return from Vietnam in February. Then back to Fort Bliss.

I have a permanant case of the "blahs." Everybody does. I try not to think about it but its always there. I also happen to be working in one of the most impolite rude commands I have ever seen. I do not enjoy one bit biting my lip for some idiot major or lieutenant colonel. I never

liked major's anyway.

I listened to the Ole Miss-Alabama football game today. Ole Miss sounds strong. It was great to close my eyes and imagine myself sitting in Jackson stadium.

Could you please have L.S.U. forward a transcript to: Law School Data Assembly Service, Educational Testing Service, Box 944, Princeton, New Jersey, 08540.

Well it rained all afternoon, just like home.

Write soon.

Love,

Mike

Can Tho, RVN
5 October '70

Dear Judy,

Today, I received your letter of 30 September, and I also talked to you on the telephone. It surely was great to hear your voice again even if it was slightly distorted.

You are not the only one who takes pride ripping off pages of the calendar. I get quite a sense of self satisfaction too. The time just can not go by fast enough. Although the days are a blur sometimes time really seems to drag.

Gooks are funny about racial matters. Even over here the Vietnamese do not like blacks.

Well, today was a fairly productive one. I'll never catch up and get ahead though. There's just too much to unravel. Boy, was I left a rat's nest.

I'll be so glad to leave this Army. The Vietnam experience has been an eye opening one. I surely have no intention of ever voluntarily being separated from my family again. Also, the Army over here is disillusioning. More people are getting out because of poor discipline than you would believe. It is the single most heard complaint. But even if the discipline was first rate, I would not stay. I guess in my dreams I'll always want to ride my white charger with Forrest's calvary; however, age and experience have tempered my dreams with realism. Realistically, the Army has gone to hell.

Well, I think I might go lift some weights. This cold I have has knocked me for a loop. I am really feeling low because of it.

However, everytime I sit down to pen a letter to you it means I am one day closer to law school and you. So usually, at night, I am jumping up and down with glee.

God, woman, I love you.

Mike

Can Tho, RVN
6 October '70

Dear Judy,

I received your letter of 1 October today.

Boy, I feel the same way you do about the loss. However, we must be careful not to become too despondent. The situation might not be as bad as it appears. After all, I was mailed a form letter that was probably mailed to everybody. So just cross your fingers.

Boy I am suprised at my mail. I put a letter in the mail box every morning at 0715. Do not despair love. A few scribled lines screaming my desire for you body are written every night.

I am so happy Van is a happy baby. It gives me a real measure of joy to know he is the way he is. It's been so long since I have seen him or heard him and he has changed so much I can not imagine what he must be like now. Please tell me about him. I have known you for so lone I have solid memories of the more pleasant moments in our marriage, but Van is different. Your memory bank of experience with him is, at this point, fare more complete than mine. I really hunger for news about him.

This January I get another raise. My salary will then go over \$1,000.00 per month over here.

I feel sort of the same way about the Army as I did at the 82nd. The 5/67th was such an idyllic battalion. Never again would the Army ever be as great as those days were. Colonel Milam ran a good battalion. Gosh, I miss El Paso, the clear, cool air, the cleansing wind of the desert. The moon and the stars over the Franklin mountains are fresh in my mind. I can see it all so clearly as I write this letter.

You know I received a very distrubed letter from Mother aobut how I was disappointed in the south, ect.ect. And I should give the south a chance, ect. ect. Well I love the south and all the good it represents. However, I really feel the attraction for the southwest. I do not like being around too many people and the mountains represent tranquility and peace to me.

I really have no idea what I'll do. I receive an application from Virginia and I read it and threw it in the garbage can. I got to thinking aobut the rat race of North Carolina and the people and I do not want to be bothered. I want peace, space, and clear skys that are refreshing. Can the soon over populated south provide this? I doubt it. Well, anyway we'll talk about it on R & R. I am still applying to New Mexico University regardless.

Well, I drank two beers before I started writing this letter and I really overused "I" in it. But it's what I feel today.

Well love, in nine and a half months I am going home. Participating in a war is an unforgetable experience. I just wish that it would end quicher.

Woman, I love you.

Mike

Can Tho, RVN
7 October '70

Dear Judy,

I did not receive a letter from you today, but I did get a MARS call.

Gosh, I feel so horrible about the storage fire at Fort Bliss. You must feel worse than I do because so much of it was yours. Boy I feel so stupid for not having household insurance. You know I had thought about it for quite a while. And if we had moved the storage lot I would have gotten some. However, since they were only going to a warehouse at Fort Bliss and since we would be making only one more move I gambled and lost.

Boy, I feel so bad. The only thing I can say is that some day I'll make it up to you.

Like I had told you sometime before I left for Vietnam, everything was going too well for us. Something had to go wrong and did it ever. I think that life is tempting us.

So many times have I seen my parents think they are getting ahead only to have a major setback befall them. I sincerely hope this will be the last of bad luck for us. We have been so lucky and yet so unlucky. The Army cost me my legs and you your furniture, but because of my stupidity.

God, I want out. I just do not want it. I have given it my all and it has taken more than that. Boy, I feel somewhat bitter again.

When we once again begin living together, we will truly be starting over again with a new life. Almost like being newlyweds again.

Today was MPC conversion day. Since so much MPC gets into the black market the series of MPC is changed on short notice to serve as a deterrent to the black market financing. It was almost a surrealistic experience. You can not imagine the confusion, the long lines, the utter insult to any proud officer the whole process implies. Try as I may I just am not enjoying the Vietnam experience. Maybe as the years go by we will look back on the experience with a slight measure of pride. Right now though I am unhappy with the Army and myself.

Just pay to God that we make it through law school without another major catastrophe. If we make it three years we'll probably be due for another though. The Vietnamese Buddhist ethic is showing through.

I received a letter from Gene Swanson today. It was a bright spot in my day. Another bright spot was the fact my hat, which was lost for two days, was returned by this fat Captain.

Well, I am homesick, tired of the Army, and disgusted with myself. God, I would like to be around you now.

Love,

Mike

Can Tho, RVN
8 October '70

Dear Judy,

Today, I did not receive a letter from you.

Today was a day of all days. We jumped through our ass from 0730 until 1700. I did accomplish a lot and I did get a measure of self satisfaction from it. I still would rather be home.

I am now receiving a Sunday newspaper about ten days late. But then everything is received late over here.

I listened to the President's speech at 0900 this morning. He sure put the North Vietnamese on the spot. He did not offer a damn thing. His position is one of strength. Why should he offer to negotiate much? All he did is make the U.S. feel and appear reasonable in the world's eye. Nixon is great.

Be on the lookout for a *Life* magazine article about pacification in the Delta. It will be published in the next ten to fifteen days. Remember when I told you I had tried to talk the *Time-Life* bureau chief into a Time Essay about pacification? Well, I did not get a Time Essay, but a long article with pictures in *Life*. I am quite proud of myself. I have not seen the copy, but I understand it is quite favorable.

The last two days it rained so much the compound has flooded. Fortunately, our room does not get water in it like many. The latrine backs up and all the shit gets to floating around the room. The smell is awful when one is trying to shave. Eventually, one gets used to this place though. I can not imagine clean sheets, ect. It must be heaven.

The article about the General has been rewritten twice. Soon I'll resubmit it for his approval.

God, woman, I would love to be close to you now. Sometimes I get so depressed because we can not talk or be together. This is going to end soon.

I love you.

Mike

Can Tho, RVN
9 October '70

Dear Judy,

Today is the third day I have not received a letter. Maybe tomorrow.

Yesterday, I wrote that our room did not flood. Well by 0200 this morning there was nine inches of water in our room. All of my fatigues were wet, so I wore shorts and a T shirt to work. After some three hours of bailing out our room the water level is almost minimal now. Every one is praying it won't rain like it did last night.

Here is a recent issue of the DMAC Facts.

Just recently, I have been receiving a publication called the *Saigon Press Review*. It is an English translation of the significant stories and editorials of the some thirty dailies in Saigon. The top flight Vietnamese newspaper editorials are the best summations of what is going on in the war I have read. I am really impressed.

Of course the local "pinko" rag's criticism of the government is about as objective as the "*Berkley Barb*." I am learning so much by reading the press survey. My understanding of the situation is immensely enlarged.

The longer I stay here on "C" row of Eakin compound the more nice people I met. Every so slowly, I guess I am adjusting to this unbelievable place.

To eat one of your specail sandwiches now is my idea of real pleasure. Funny the other things I miss about living with you, besides compaionship are your sandwiches.

The General's Mess really has great cold lunches in a buffet style. I can not complain about the food. I usually have a salad and sandwich at lunch, a heavy meal with vegatables meat, desert, ect. For supper and no breakfast.

My NCO could not go to Japan so I did not get a camera.

Woman I really love you. Life with you is unending pleasure even when you are pissed.

Write soon.

Love,

Mike

Can Tho, RVN
10 October '70

Dear Judy,

I received your letter of 6 October today.

Regardless of the destruction of the household furniture and antiques the loss of our wedding album is a greater loss to me. Maybe the photographer may keep his negatives for a period of time. Cross your fingers. I can replace most of your china while I am over here. The soup bowls and special peices will have to come later, but the main service I can replace.

The money that is received as settlement I want you to spend on replacing your special items. I have three years of schooling left, and frankly I did not know how we were going to afford a house for everything we had. Of course, I am sick about the loss, but in time we'll replace it all with new and better things. Possessions are only relative to the relationship a man and a wife have. Maybe those possessions symbolized all the unhappiness we caused each other at Fort Bliss. I do not know. The only thing I am concerned about is sharing a lifetime, my hopes, dreams, frustrations, with you whom I happen to be in love with. Really, that's all that matters. Maybe an unknown act has purged and cleansed us. Often times setbacks build character and maturity, at least, they have always do so to me. Let's just make the best of a bad situation, forget the past, and build a new life when we are finally together again. I may be made a fool of once, but not twice.

As long as I have you, I WILL BE SUCCESSFUL, that's all that concerns me.

Well, its Saturday night, and I want to go home.

Tomorrow I get to drive up to An Giang Province and take pictures of the General. An Giang is the most pacified province in Vietnam.

Woman, I love you. For some reason ever since we have know one another, every separation we have experienced has always brought a rebirth in our relationship. I believe this last one (if war does not break out again) is the final christening of our relationship.

I love you.

Mike

Can Tho, RVN
11 October '70

Dear Judy,

Today, I did not receive a letter from you.

I visited the province capital of the most pacified province in Vietnam today. One just does not see any scars of war. There are T.V. antennas everywhere and far more cars than I have seen in Can Tho. The city's name was Long Xyuen (Long-Swin). If the city is anything like what Vietnam was before the war, Vietnam was a quiet, tranquil, peaceful, paradise. Long Xyuen is unlike any place in Vietnam I have ever seen. You would really like it. I could easily live forever in that place. It's just so relaxed and tranquil.

In fact the province is going through a period of industrial development now. If times were different, a young American could become a millionaire in ten years here. The place is just crying for managerial talent and capitalism. In three years, I could be making \$50,000.00 per year selling chickens. The opportunities are all there.

Well, I got back to Can Tho, Eakin compound had flooded again. Fortunately, this time none came into our room. We have not dried out yet from the last flooding.

This week has been slow. I have rewritten the article about the General three times. I have finally gotten close, I think.

Tonight, I took another pill and promptly had to go to the bathroom. Boy, those weekly malaria pills are hell. They'll ruin your day.

The longer I stay here the more I feel the Viet Cong are going to lose. Already, the N.V. A. have lost 650,000 men. The N.V. themselves figure their killed to wounded ratio at one to five. That's three times higher than the one to one point five we figure. This means there's a likelihood that, like France in WWI, a generation has been lost, i.e. over seventy percent of all males between sixteen and forty five have been killed or wounded. Their total forces now are 300,000 in Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia. The south Vietnamese have 1.1 million men under arms, Cambodia over 150,000 and growing. There is no way the North Vietnamese can take South Vietnam, now. I believe the President realizes this and he does not have to negotiate a damn thing. We can go ahead and ever so slowly withdraw.

I have memorized the poem, "In Flanders Fields." The last four lines I'll carry with me always concerning Vietnam. They go something like this, "To you, from failing hands we throw the torch, be yours hold it high. For if ye break faith with us who die we shall not sleep though poppies grow in Flander's Fields." I'll never break faith with the sacrifices Moak gave the war, unlike many of our countrymen. The longer I stay over here the more sickened I become with the U.S.A.

Please write soon. R & R is getting closer!!

Love,

Mike

Can Tho, RVN
12 October '70

Dear Judy,

I received your letter of 5 October today.

I find it interesting that you wished everything would burn up when you left El Paso. Funny how you got your wish. Fate is something isn't it.

Also, your comments about all of that furniture symbolizing our past relationship are exactly the same thing I had said in a letter to you. Isn't that a coincidence.

I called you today on MARS and you were not home. That's the second time this has happened.

We have television of a sort down here. We do not have a T.V. in our room, but there's one in the Officer's Club. Unfortunately, so many of these Goddamned idiots smoke I just do not like to be around them.

I can call MARS everyday from 1200-1400. That's the only time I can get Hawaii local. And I can call from my room or from my office.

Today, I received my letter of acceptance from Ole Miss Law School. I am really pleased with myself now. Just one step at the time, soon you'll have that huge house with a swimming pool and all the china and silver you can imagine.

I received a letter from your mother today with lot's of clippings about Ossie Brown and the My Lai trial. One thing for sure he has got an all southern jury almost. The government will never get a conviction.

Mother also sent me a letter. She explained how, being reared in French Louisiana, I had never really been exposed to deep south attitudes and how Ole Miss would be a good education in this respect. I think she is right. One thing is for sure, one can not get anymore deep south than Oxford.

Love, I can replace your china and some of your crystal while I am over here. I had aloted \$300.00 for a tape recorder, but now things have changed. With the money that we receive from the settlement I want you to buy the nice things you would like. Massive investments in furniture can come after law school.

The days pass here one after the other without any particular points of reference. Almost everyday is the same. Funny how one adapts to working all the time. But, I do not think I'll ever adapt to the malaria pills. Those things really make me feel bad for a day. I think the \$65.00 hostile fire pay is more inconvenience pay than anything else.

Being away from you is just no fun, even when you are pissed.

Please write soon.

Love,

Mike

Can Tho, RVN
13 October '70

Dear Mother and Dad,

I am replying to your letters of 5 and 8 October.

Things are going along O.K. for living in the environment of a cesspool. Vietnam means lizards climbing the walls of your room, a weekly malaria pill which gives me diarrhea for two days, filthy sheets, humidity you would not believe, a nocturnal emission twice a week because I am straight, talk of war twenty-four hours per day, incredible loneliness, people pissing and pooping in the streets, working seven days a week, and last of all drinking a couple of shots of whiskey every night. Now do you see why it took so long to get used to this place. It is one hell of a shock when one first arrives.

It's unfortunate we lost everything in the fire, but in a way all of the furniture symbolized the most unhappy period of our marriage. You might say the fire purged us. Frankly, I am glad it all burned. We get to start over again. Judy had said to herself she wished it would all go up in smoke before she left El Paso on the airplane, and sure enough it did. Fate is funny.

Ms. Begue says Van looks like John.

You'll get a copy of the article as soon as it is cleared from MACV-IO. His name is Hal D. McCown. I think his home is in Ruston, Louisiana.

Military history is my love, but I can not make a living at it. And I want a job that is in some area of public affairs. I am sick to death of two-bit politicians who have broken faith with the American fighting man. The 44,000 Americans are not sleeping soundly in Flanders Fields. I do not think about it much because all of the sudden I get mad, like I am right now as I write. Huey Long hated ESSO, well I hate liberal Democrats.

Rick will return to Fort Bliss.

I am so pleased with myself over getting accepted to law school. You cannot imagine how much I wanted it.

I'll probably stay a whole year to save some more money. Not it had not occurred to me it would increase my general knowledge of the U.S.A. to attend Ole Miss. It was a good point.

I would not rear my kids in San Francisco for all the money in the world.

I am returning Joseph Alsop's column with my comments. Anything Alsop writes is true!! He is the best source, along with Sol Sanders of *U.S. News & World Report*.

Tell Richard not to worry. Everything will be O.K. The ARVN two and a half ton truck drivers are far more dangerous than the V.C. They have the same mentality of a fifteen year old idiot teenage driver. I'd love to shoot everyone of them.

Well, I'll be going on R & R in January it looks like. Boy, I miss my family. I am proud to be over here, but I'll be glad to get home. Funny, in the last month for some reason, I felt I have become a man. I guess Vietnam was just one of those tickets my psych needed. Learning to control fear is the biggest lesson. Vietnam teaches you to fear no man if you have a gun. It also teaches one that only one who has served in his nation's forces in a war can truly say he has a stake in his country.

Write soon.

Love,

Mike

P.S. I almost forgot. About the time you receive this letter you may already be hearing news items about the V.C. selling marijuana to G.I.'s for money and to decrease their combat effectiveness, about V.C. penetrating the veterans movement in Saigon, about Red China offering to send troops to Cambodia, but sending U.S. green dollars. Your son is the source. I am wanting to get it cleared in Saigon tonight. I talked an intelligence officer into down classifying some information. If everything comes off all right the story will go to the states. Unfortunately, I could not use information about a Russian submarine visiting Kien Hoa Province to deliver small arms. You would not believe what is going on.

Love again,

Mike

Can Tho, RVN
13 October '70

Dear Judy,

Today, I did not receive a letter from you.

Boy, lately I am beginning to wonder if you are writing. Seems I have been starting a lot of letters this way lately.

Today, I talked to you on the phone. You know when I heard Van screaming in the background I was really tickled. I had not heard him in three months. I was really pleasantly surprised. I like to hear from him.

I told you about the story I was trying to get cleared at MACV-IO. It is full of unbelievable information, like the V.C. selling Mary Jane to G.I.'s, Red China's offer to send volunteers to Cambodia, the V.C. penetration of the Vietnamese disabled veterans movement. It created quite a storm at MACV-IO. I'll tell you if these bastards take too much out of it. If they do I'll never try to help the Army again. The story will go all the way to the States if cleared in present form. Unfortunately, I could not put in the story information about Russian submarines unloading equipment and supplies in Kien Hoa Province.

Boy, all sorts of things are going on over here. You just would not believe it. Anyway, this crusading Information Officer is testing them right now. If I get slapped in the face, screw it.

Here's a new issue of the DMAC FACTS

I seem to have recovered from those damn pills, finally. Boy, they'll knock you on your ass.

I received an admissions booklet from Georgia today. It's O.K., but more and more I think Ole Miss is for us. We'll talk it over on R & R.

In six days I resubmit for R & R. I think the chances are slim of getting home for

Christmas. But maybe shortly, after 1 January. Cross your fingers.
I love you.

Mike

Can Tho, RVN
14 October '70

Dear Judy,

I received the package and your letter of 4 October today. For some reason the letter was delayed.

Thanks for the willingness to do whatever I would like to do. A career in the Army is a possibility; however, I would have to be willing to except some uncomfortable tours and I an not.

If your hair hangs down like an oriental's it will not be a change for me. That's the way all the Vietnamese look.

Yes, I want you to send me some Gator-ade. And you should have heard by now that I have mailed gifts to Willie and Van and you, my love.

Thankyou for the surprise picture of Van. Boy, I really think it's great.

More and more as I deal with correspondants, I realize that there is so much strength of character required to be patient and always polite. Any SOB can show his ass. Only a gentleman can take the bullshit and remain unphased. Of course, any time I get pissed I look at my letter of acceptance to law school and it relaxes me.

Cambodia is in for a long war. The Cambodians have abdicated some portions of the country to the Reds. And the V.C. are organizing guerilla bands. However, the N.V.A. are very weak and the Cambodians are growing stronger everyday.

Your budget is close but you are self sufficient and that was all I was concerned about.

Well, woman today was unbelievable. The ARVN let me down with a correspondant and caused more problems for this guy than you would imagine. I was getting calls from Saigon every hour. So I bailed my counterpart out of trouble like I always do. I am still trying to forget today.

I love you so much. This hardship tour is hell. Three years of law school will be great.

Love,

Mike

Can Tho, RVN
15 October '70

Dear Judy,

I received your letters of 7 and 8 October today. Also, I received the cookies.

The last three or four letters from you have mostly been concerned with the fire. Put it

out of your mind. We will make the best of it somehow. You really must not allow yourself to dwell upon it. We will reacumulate a whole bunch of cook books, silver, and nice things again. It will only be a matter of time. The good thing about the loss is you get to go shopping for almost everything again, and you do love to shop. It sickens me too, and try as I might I'll never forget the nice things we had. But we must look ahead and forget the past, and only retain the lessons of life's experiences have taught us.

As I look at these slides your boobs look bigger. Are you growing or something? I also think Van looks like his father. It's hard for me to remember what Van was like. He has changed so much in just three short months. You know I too have you all's pictures on my desk and I sit and look at them for hours trying to remember what it was like to be together. God, I wish this would end.

All I think about is going to law school and getting out of this place. My counterpart is such an idiot I get very pissed off and want to shoot him sometimes because he will not take care of the correspondants. I really do not care about American correspondants it just my ass when the Vietnamese fuck up. Nice situation.

The V.C. are trying to stir up trouble during the dark phase of the moon and before the November 3 elections. Do not worry about me, everything is all right. I feel safer over here than I would in Scotlandville. Besides over here it's easy to carry a gun or knife, everybody does. Sort of like the Ole West. Carrying a gun close by is comforting.

Well, love last night I did not sleep very well. The night before I did not sleep. Frankly, I just miss your body. My roommates have nicknamed me "straight arrow." You should be proud of that. I even refuse to go down town to eat with them. Mostly because I might have to walk and walking hurts my legs, and because I just do not want to get around Vietnamese women. It would be so easy. I just avoid situations like that.

Please write soon.

Love,

Mike

16 October '70
Can Tho, RVN

Dear Judy,

I received three letters from you today. It sure made me feel great to hear from you.

The last two days have been filled with shit. I'll be so happy to leave this cess pool. Boy, we had a real SOB in the press camp. His name was Mr. George McArthur of the *L.A. Times*. He is about forty-five years old, sneaky, untrustworthy, unappreciative and an ass hole to boot. I was never so happy to see that SOB leave. Then just when everything looked good one of my black NCO's started screwing off. Now I have to assume the role of old Battery Commander again. God, I hoped I would not have to do this again. O' well, I am leaving this goddamned Army and I am never coming back.

You are right about cities. There is only one way to live and that is away from people. After this experience all I want is to get away from people, war, society, and hippies. Are you interested in going to Australia? At least its civilized.

There better be some goddamned Americanism coming back. I want to kill every goddamned hippie I see. I am sick of these punk kids screwing my country up.

Goddamn this place and goddamn the Army. Baby, this Army in Vietnam is so screwed up. Fort Bliss was a straight post compared to this. I am not a soldier. I am a civilian in a green cloth uniform. Boy, my attitude is piss poor.

I want you so much right now. I just need you for some mental support. Please write soon.

Love,

Mike

Can Tho, RVN
17 October '70

Dear Judy,

I did not receive a letter from you today, but you did call.

Gosh, I want to come home and forget this incredible dream. Lately, like the last two days, I have been far more homesick than ever before.

For some reason my mind is attempting to reject what is going on around me. I am really jaded, and zombie-like from my never ending tasks. My predecessor became so tired of correspondants his last couple of months he hardly did anything. I can now understand why he was the way he was. This job saps everybit of one's desire to work with newsmen. There are so many unbelievable, almost insolvable problems, and being an advisor is not easy. It is far easier to deal with Americans.

Well anyway my morning started off like the whole tone of this letter has started. Then during our monthly Review and Analysis staff meeting where everyone gets up and makes a speech about what he was doing, the general complimented me publically in front of the whole staff about the good publicity I was getting DMAC. In short, it was the old Milam trick which used to embarrass me to death. Then my afternoon was very bright. I felt great. And also a work crew came and moved some bulletin boards for me which were part of our plan for upgrading the facilities. I rearranged my office. That made me feel good. Then one of my clerk's told me that he heard the Chief of Staff, an old grizzled Colonel from Georgia, say I was the best Information Officer he had ever seen in twenty-eight years. Well needless to say I pissed in my pants. Regardless, of all of this, I feel, just as the poem "If" says, that good success and terrible disaster are two imposters and must be recognized as such. I'll just keep doing my job the same way. Then at supper the secretary to the general staff told me that General Cushman did not get his "Stars & Stripes" newspaper today, and the SOB wants to know why. So its back

to the rat race and I have a sour attitude again. It just never stops, never. The same old horseshit day after day.

Do not get your hopes up about my coming on TDY in two weeks. Just pray like hell. I sure am. God woman I want to see you again.

I checked on R&R orders today and I will not be coming in December unless I go on leave and possibly buy a round trip ticket to Hawaii for \$558.00. However, I could spend almost twelve days in Hawaii on leave. So we must think about it.

I love you woman and I can not wait to get home and forget this incredible experience.

Love,

Mike

Can Tho, RVN
18 October '70

Dear Judy,

I received your letters of 8 and 13 October today. Right now I am listening to Bob Dylan. I do not know why but his music relaxes me. It always has. It's just not explainable.

I guess the reason I feel like I have a lot to do someday is because when it rains it pours. Then we'll have a period of relative peace. Next week I get to go to Saigon to attend the Information Officer affairs conference.

The reason I canned the University of Virginia application was because I got to thinking about that section of the country. I want three years of peace with my family in a small town. I want to be together in complete happiness. This separation is crap, but I have learned a lot about what I want from life.

I did get a letter off to Mr. Brown in August. I shortened it until it was just a thank you note. At this stage of my final tour I was not about to jeopardize my job by his quoting a letter from the Information Officer of DMAC. I represent a Major General. You can see why.

Canada has recognized Red China to give us an indirect link to the Chinese. It was an excellent move. Especially, since the Russians and Chinese are going to war in ten years or less. It is part of Kessinger's plan.

New Mexico sounds wild with training camps for radicals, ect. How would you like to live in Australia? Everybody who goes there falls in love with the place. Not because the women are great, but because the place is civilized.

I am firmly convinced this rash of bombings has the seal of approval of Hanoi. The N.V.A are trying to make the USA feel war weary and terrified especially now that a cease fire may be close.

Judy, the N.V.A. must get a cease fire in the Delta now!! In six months the V.C. will not control a single hamlet in the Delta if the present rate of pacification continues. However, I

expect a surge of propoganda attacks in Vietnam in the next two weeks. This could be the final surge before the cease fire. Judy, they are so weak, and they are getting weaker.

If we do not get offered a cease fire right after the propoganda surge then sometime before March. Now is an interesting time to be in the Delta. It is prehaps the most interesting time to be in Vietnam since the war started.

Captured enemy documents lately indicate direct ties between the N.V.A. and peace groups in our country. It sickens me. You can expect peacenicks to really get on the band wagon when the cease fire is offered. You might notice which one's speak first, or which groups scream first over the cease fire. They will be obviously on orders from Hanoi.

We need som hard assed judges and district attornies. America will not represent a damn thing if we allow the idiots who were in our government to ever regain control again. Boy, eight years of Kennedy/Johnson and the liberals has brought our country to the verge of civil war. Well, I am just waiting to shoot some long haired punk who trys to harm my family. Then I'll skin him like a deer. Boy, everybody over here is militant about what's going on back home. Really militant!!

Well, I love you dearly. I sure wish I could be with you now. Please write soon. God, this chasity is tough.

Love,

Mike

P.S. Could you buy me a couple of big surfing posters and maybe sone of Bob Dylan. I am decorating my office.

Can Tho, RVN
20 October '70

Dear Judy,

I received you letter of 16 October today. Needless to say, the harsh tone of the letter was depressing as hell. I already felt bad the last two days. I have not re-read the harsh parts and I do not intend to until I feel better.

Being in Vietnam is depressing and when I am depressed I often say I am going to do many things none of which come to pass. As for the loss of all of our things do not think for one moment I am not aware of the seriousness of it all. If I rationalize the loss away by making light of it as you say, it may be because that's the only way I can keep my sanity, or keep control of the enormous frustrations which I feel toward my job, my future career (and the self doubt about law school), and you who one time stopped loving me.

You may have noticed that since your arrival and settling in Hawaii my letters to you have not concerned themselves with whatever real or imagined faults I may think you have from 7,000 miles away. From the initial fussy letters I wrote to you I realized that they were upsetting

you and making your day miserable. I decided then our few precious words of contact through letters or phone mean too much to waste on such trival things. We fussed for ten months and I have no intention of allowing myself or allowing you, or allowing our relationship to establish such bad habits again. I have learned that my life and our lives are far too precious to waste like that. You should visit a war zone someday. One just thanks God for allowing him to live one more day.

Tonight I watched the movie in the General's Mess. Keith Phelps is up here tonight and we are going to Saigion for two nights toworrow.

I am not going on TDY to Seattle, Washington, after all. I really did not think I had a chance.

Well love something great for us happened today. First the state income tax was only \$22.59 and secondly, we have one less day to be apart. I'll tell you when this Johnny Reb comes marching home it is forever. No more wars for me.

I just need to be with you. I feel very lonely without you near.

Love,

Mike

Saigion, RVN
21 October '70

Dear Judy,

Saigion is all right. We arrived here about 1030 today for the Information Officer's conference. Since we were all completed processing in at 1200 we spent the afternoon around town. I called Minh, he is now a 1Lt. He drove us around pointing out all the sights. It sure was good to see the fellow. I feel sure he has got some extra money coming in from somewhere. He has too much for a Vietnamese 1Lt. His wife is working making two thirds more a month than he says he is.

We then went to Maxim's. Maxim's is owned by my secretary's mother-in-law and it is the night club, resturant, thearter of this country! Drinks cost \$2.75 U.S. and dinner is about \$6.00 U.S. The food was just outstanding. I had mushroom soup, lobester, spare ribs, and salad like from Antoine's ans sweet fermented slightly graps for desert. It was just outstanding french food. We then watched one fifth of a long Chinese floor show that was right out of Las Vagas.

For the first time since I have been over here I was relaxed that no one was going to get me in that club. I really felt like I was back home in a top flight night club. It was just great. Boy, I needed a rest from Can Tho. I was going crazy.

We had to leave around 9:30 P.M. And catch a taxi back to the BOQ. Ed Gronert, Keith, and myself really had a great time. Best of all, then we went to pay the bill and everything was free!! My secretary had taken care of us. Boy, was I tickled.

One thing really was on my mind the whole time and that was that you were not there to see it all with me. You would have loved it. Keith does not like to get around me, because I

make him homesick. I just never stop wishing I could be with you and lately its being really strong.

You know being away from you is emotion jarring but I am learning to find at least on good thing in everyday and I am thankful. I am also making every effort to be happy and smile about something at least once a day. It's the only way. Getting complacent and becoming depressed are two of the hardest things to deal with over here. You just would not believe the frustration.

If I could just be with you again I'll be happy. I never intend to fuss with you again though I know some how I'll piss you off. When I get home you can not imagine how thankful I will be to have you in raping range everynight.

Love,

Mike

Saigion, RVN
22 October '70

Dear Judy,

Today was a fairly interesting day in the Information Officer's conference. We listened to speeches all morning and held seminars in the afternoon concerning information policies and programs, ect.

General Abrams spoke for ten minutes as the first speaker. He looked like a sick man. I had no idea he was so sick. He is very short; he was pale as a ghost and had trouble speaking. I really felt sorry for him. He appeared too ill for the job he holds today.

At lunch I had dinner with the MAVC chief of information in General Abrams mess. Baby, you would not believe it. It is just out of this world. It is plush or more pluch than anything I have seen in the states. The assortment of beers was international. I can not figure out why I was asked to lunch with Colonel Leonard. None of the other Corps I.O.'s were asked. I was quite a mystery to me.

After the first day of meetings. I reached the conclusion my press camp and Information Office was doing more different missions with fewer personnel than any other press camp. I am really pleased, but I sure get tired of it.

I came to the conference in hopes of getting some direct guidance on making the ARVN do their job. Unfortunately, these people in Saigion talk theory then fail to back up an I.O. when he tries it.

However, a rumor is going around that I am going to get a new counterpart. Maybe we have finally stirred the pot enough to get rid of Captain Tai.

We then went to the Massachusetts BOQ and had huge steaks for dinner. Ed brought a fifth of Rose wine which we drank with the steak. It was all quite good.

We came back to the BOQ aobut 2100 and I read Mr. Kunslder's interview in *Playboy*. Boy, he is a educated idiot. Then I took two asprin because my legs are hurting and now I am writing to you.

Well love like I always say in every letter I really miss you. Boy, I am hollering and screaming inside to get somehow near to you. This separation is the toughest period or test I have ever been through.

Please write soon. Kiss Van too.

Love,

Mike

P.S. I saw Major Bowers and Major Smith. Major Murphy (USMC) is here also. He works in the command tactical operations center in MACV headquarters.

Can Tho, RVN
23 October '70

Dear Judy,

I returned to Can Tho this afternoon and I am glad to be back in my room again. Saigon was a rest but I did far too much walking and my legs are hurting.

Your letters of 17 and 18 October were waiting for me.

It makes me very happy to know how Van is progressing. I am excited about his doing push-ups and recognizing my picture when you say "Daddy" to him.

You will someday look back on Hawaii with fond memories. I know as much as dislike being in this place I will probably mellow with age until it is fond memory. The loss must be forgotten. It is tragic we lost so many irreplaceable items, but we'll acquire some more and better ones in the coming years.

I received my formal letter of acceptance to Ole Miss today. To attend the summer secession I must be in Oxford at 0830 the morning of 7 June. I will apply to attend other schools, but let me say I am leaning towards Oxford. I was leaning that way long before I ever wrote to you about New Mexico and long before my relatives said anything. Just as your spirit of pioneering has be dampened so has mine. Also, I do not waht to go to school with any radicals there. Our personal sacrifices have been far too many in these years to tolerate som punk telling me it was worthless.

Enclosed are some letters that were forwarded to me. Would you put Mr. McCarthy's letter in a safe place? I am quite proud of it.

I have been readjusting my finances every since I received word of our loss. I have tentatively planned to so the following 1. Spend \$300.00 replacing your china and crystal. 2. Spend \$558.00 for a round trip ticke to Hawaii on New Years and take leave to spend twelve days together, then take an R & R in April for six days. 3. Spend \$315.00 on a specail off from a Hong Kong tailor to buy some five suits, four slacks, and seven hand made shirts, ect. for law school. Then save the rest. No cameras, tape recorders, and just a few souviners of Vietnam. I believe this is the best way. The \$558.00 is a hunk of money, but to see you again it is worth every dime. We always have placed being together over economic considerations anyway.

Well love, it's late: I am lonely for your fine body and conversational ability. Please let

me know about 2. above. Write soon.

Love,

Mike

Can Tho, RVN
24 October '70

Dear Judy,

Today, I did not receive a letter from you.

Well, it was Saturday and for some reason after two days in Saigon it felt like Monday. I sure felt relaxed and comfortable for a change.

Enclosed is a map of Vietnam. When I write to you about where I have traveled you will understand where I have been. I have visited every province except Kien Giang. I have marked the V.C. base areas.

Tomorrow morning L.S.U. is playing Auburn over the radio at 0215. I plan to listen to the game. It sure will be good to hear the roar of Tiger stadium from 8,000 miles.

Well love I must go to sleep if I am going to listen to the game. So this will be short. God, woman I love you.

Love,

Mike

Can Tho, RVN
26 October '70

Dear Judy,

I received your letter of 20 October today and best of all I talked to you on the phone.

My day was really bleak until I started reading your letter. It was the first really comforting letter I have had from you in quite a while. It made my afternoon really bright.

Boy, today started off with my jeep being stolen and recovered by 1000. By late afternoon we had really accomplished a lot. In all I felt decent after 1730.

My stomach is making it alright.

I am refusing to let people get to me. However, I still tell you everything that is bothering me in letters because I feel better when I do.

We are much closer to a ceasefire than you would believe. I am reading accounts of almost complete exhaustion of the North Vietnamese, even to the point of a break down of the communist party apparatus in North Vietnam. It will never recover from its losses of manpower. England and France have yet to recover from WWI.

Now is an interesting time to be in Vietnam. We are ending our involvement here rapidly: however, the south Vietnamese appear able to cope with the North Vietnamese.

Well I can not stand being away from you. I need you to prop my ego up daily. I am continuing to doubt my ability to succeed in law school. I probably will be this way until they put the degree in my hands.

I love you!!

Mike

Can Tho, RVN
27 October '70

Dear Judy,

I received your letter of 15 October today.

I am glad that you have Judized your office. You will feel more a part of the organization since you have put yourself into it.

Tonight after dinner I went to the library. I tried to read *Armor Magazine* and *Army Magazine*. Remember how I used to read *Army* so diligently, well whatever passion there was for it is gone. It was a funny feeling. I thought I would always be interested and now I am not. Whatever it was has now died. Maybe I am maturing.

You are right about being alone not being a happy road. Living alone is just a bunch of crap. Many times I just want to sit down and talk to you.

Let me say a few words about America being defeated in Asia. The author of that peice was an idiot. The American Army was not defeated in Vietnam. Our goals to prevent a Red takeover have succeeded. When we leave, Vietnam will stand probably. We sacrificed 45,000 men in this country because President Johnson refused to act with the boldness necessary. He did not understand the animals who run North Vietnam. Ther is only one thing they understand and that is naked power. And of course the American press has been mollycuddled and had their asses wiped by the U.S. Army. The Information Officers have done their jobs too well. The U.S. Army provided transportation to the television newsmen going to the field that CBS , NBC and ABC could saturate the American public daily with crap. We should not have done our jobs so well.

The press spokesman for the American embassy, Mr. McCrown, in a speech told us he thought maybe 20-30 correspondents in Vietnam out of 300-400 had any ideals or sense of ethics. Many of the free lance young punks have not done any homework or read any books about Vietnam.

As for Canada's actions, the Prime Minister broke the back of the separatists and he showed great courage. However, the liberal news media will criticize his actions for suspending civil liberties to catch some terrorists. I approve of his actions to protect Canadian society. Unfortunately, we in America have lost our will and I doubt seriously we would have the guts to impose the nation's will on our punks.

Quit worrying about Van having to fight. Every generation of Americans has fought in some kind of war. If his country calls him he'll fight and if he lives he'll be a better man and American.

The prosecution has almost proved their case against Sergeant Mitchell. Three people have testified they say him shooting into a ditch filled with women, kids and old men. Maybe Brown can shake their testimony.

Yes, I have been looking very closely at those rings. They are really beautiful too. Don't worry I am thinking of you.

Love to you from your homesick husband.

Mike

Can Tho, RVN
28 October '70

Dear Judy,

I received your letters of 19 and 24 October today.

I can not believe the President of the United States had rocks thrown at him. We are truly a sick, sick nation. Somebody better do something fast, because four million Vietnam veterans are not going to put up with this crap much longer.

Thank you for the pictures. Van has changed so much since those pictures too. I can not imagine him sitting up in a high chair. Boy, that's amazing.

Your brother does sound bitter about service. I guess something about the service turned him off just like it has done to me.

Those cookies were great.

My counterpart was supposed to have arranged an escort and helicopter for Mr. George McAuther of the *L.A. Times*. After telling me everything was laid on, I called Saigon and advised them to send Mr. McAuther down to Can Tho. Well, he arrived and the Vietnamese had nothing laid on. Mr. McAuther writes good stuff from Vietnam, but he is somewhat spoiled. He had the ear of Colonel Leonard, Chief of Information for MACV. So everybody wanted him to get his story at all costs. Well, yours truly bailed the ARVN out by 1830. I became very bitter and I still get rankled over it. Fortunately, my counterpart has been replaced because of this incident. You hit the nail on the head about the Vietnamese. They have relied on the U.S. too long to fight their war. It is time for us to leave.

Tomorrow I have to go to Saigon again for ½ a day concerning public affairs planning for a turnover of Soc Trang Airfield. The Secretary of the Air Force and General Abrams will be attending. It will be on November 4th.

Also, be on the look out next week on the television media for the opening of the Ba Bao canal in the Delta.

Life Magazine supposedly ran an article recently about pacification in the Delta. Would you please be on the lookout for it.

Today, we really made some progress cleaning up the office/hotel. I hung a Butch

Cassidy and the Sundance Kid poster in my office. I also hung a state flag of Louisiana, and a "Endless Summer" poster and one poster that says "This Vacation visit beautiful Vietnam", with a picture of two infantrymen charging. I was quite proud of my people. They really worked out.

Well love good night. Cross your fingers I can get home on leave around the first. I love you.

Mike

Can Tho, RVN
29 October '70

Dear Judy,

I received your letter of 24 October today. Your letter was one of the most comforting one's I have received from you. Boy, it really make me feel great.

As for my changing and becoming more sweet, I really do not think I am that different now, only more mature, more relaxed, more clear-headed about us, more aware of your needs. So if after all of this I am different to you, in your eyes maybe I have changed. To me, I only feel immensely older and wiser.

Tonight, I was in the library reading *Time* magazine and I came across an article titled "The ABCD's of Pacification." Remember when I told you about planting a seed of an idea in the head of the Time/Life beaura chief? Well, your husband really won big on this one. Not only did they buy the idea, but the article is objective. (The magazine has on its cover careatuers of Nixon and Republican candidates.) I am really awed at my success. The right idea in the hands of the right people can have nationwide effect. Your husband got his message to the people at age twenty-four. I am walking on a cloud.

Today, I went to Saigion to attend an Information Officer protocall meeting concerning the turnover of SocTrang Army Airfield. You should be watching the television news on the 4th, 5th, and 6th and maybe the 7th of November. Your husband will have made all the press arrangements.

Boy, I feel so good. A great letter from you, a measure of success in my job and the steady work of old Ed Gronert and my NCOIC SFC Sharpe, have really improved my somewhat always dismal spirits.

Tomorrow, I must escort Colonel Edwards and a representative (CMDR Lorfano) from the Department of Defense staff for public affairs. Ed arranged it all since I could not get back to Can Tho until 1900. Everything is running on a really tight time line schedule and everything is confused as hell. But somehow we'll survive.

Yes, having a mate is great. I miss sandwiches for lunch, clean sheets, clean living facilities, the soft southern quality of your voice, your irrational moments of emotional insecurity common to females, the clean smell of your hair and those big blue eyes looking at me. Well, that is what I miss. After that comes Van.

I am anxiously awaiting those bacon and tomato po-boys, grilled steak, lobster and you.

Love,

Mike

Can Tho, RVN
30 October '70

Dear Judy,

I received your letters of 22 and 25 October today. I mailed letters to your parents and my folks this morning.

I am mailing my article about DMAC to LSU tomorrow. I hope it will arrive in time for their deadline. The copy you received was changed slightly and "anomalous" was dropped.

My office is rearranged now and I am really proud of my troops. Colonel Edwards from the Information Advisory division of MAC-IO arrived this morning for a tour. With little or no preparation time all of them busted their ass and the place looked great.

Yes, maybe it would be best to wait for R & R. The earliest I could get to Hawaii is 21 January '71. Because I am a primary staff officer it is doubtful I could get twelve days leave. I have sounded people out on it and the situation does not look good for over seven days.

Yes, I definitely intend to represent the class those people (terrorists) want to get. I am flatly ambitious as hell to say my piece about the direction this nation is heading. I have a feeling about our future following law school just like I had becoming an Information Officer in Vietnam. I felt as early as January I would go to Can Tho. I do not know why, I just felt it. I feel I may someday work in Nixon's administration after law school. I just feel it, and I want it. A funny sense of timing landed me a job as a Battery Commander and later as Information Officer of DMAC in the most interesting phase of the war. With luck maybe my dreams will become a reality. At least, I am willing to try like hell.

I am preoccupied with you also. You are on my mind most of the time. All I think about is being together again, with me in school, having a really relaxed relationship for three years. That prime rib roast would be great as long as it is rare in the center.

The U.S.A. has quite a background of violence taking place all the time. In fact, I dare say it's as bad as Vietnam. Washington, D.C. Chicago, and New York City, could be V rated hamlets by our hamlet evaluation system.

Are there any dermatologists at Tripler Army Hospital? You might check before spending a whole bunch of money. By being bad as during your pregnancy, do you mean your face has broken out again? If so, woman I think you have a hormone imbalance.

Please write soon.

Love,

Mike

Can Tho, RVN
31 October '70

Dear Judy,

I received your letters of 22, 27 and 28 October. Today was a great day for mail.

....

General Abrams has had his gall bladder removed and he has been very sick ever since. I have reapplied for R & R for 21 January. Cross your fingers. On the 21st I will have six months in country. It is the earliest I may go on R & R. I'll take leave in April or May.

Who is your friend Don Ho? Don Ho you know him.

I force myself to be relaxed and easygoing about my job, mostly because an Information Officer has got to be cool, calm and collected at all times. The slightest misstatement and I could ruin a command of 21,000 people. It's a fine lesson for a kid twenty-four years old. I am really quite proud of myself. Damn few of my Baton Rouge associates have been exposed to as much responsibility as I have in the last two years. I will never be able to repay the Army for the opportunity it has provided me to become a mature responsible man, and leader.

If I took a seven day leave, my seven days would begin from the time I left Can Tho until I returned to Can Tho. Going space available I might end up buying my ticket back or having to take a space available flight two days early from Hawaii. So you see leave is a pain in the ass without buying a ticket.

Well love today is Saturday. Tomorrow I do not have to go to work until 0800. We really have a lot to do; however, my guys are really working out like highly motivated troops should. I praise the hell out of them just like Colonel Milam did to us and maybe his technique is working. My NCOIC told me he wanted to be my enlisted aide when I received my fourth star! (Joke)

I have neglected my advisory role in favor of doing all I can to advertise pacification in the Delta. It has paid off too. The Delta is getting a great press now its only because I expose correspondants to good pacification programs. I bet you did not know that the CORDS headquarters in the other three corps do not have Information Officers assigned. IV Corps or DMAC is the only one and through my efforts its proving that this is our story and Information Officers are needed.

It is appalling that the U.S. government has not responded to the changing nature of this war, or tried to advertise its best success story. So once again like being a Battery Commander of the first towed vulcan battery in the U.S. Army, I am once again in the drivers seat. Only this time it is in a far more critical role.

I'll be glad to sit down and tell you all about the U.S. press in Vietnam. I am also meeting or have met most of the television network personalities and feature writers. Three and a half years from now I'll be meeting them again this time as a civilian in the Nixon administration working for Spiro Agnew, I hope.

Please write soon.

Love,

Mike

Below are articles from the first command news paper that I edited. I instructed my staff that this year we would write and publish articles about the pacification effort in the Delta as it

was obvious the national news media was not covering this part of the war effort. These articles are from the October 1970 issue of *The Delta Advisor*.

COMMANDING GENERAL'S MESSAGE

We are approaching the time of year when we will experience an increased turnover of personnel. During the next three months between 35 and 40 percent of the men assigned to DMAC will be transferred to CONUS and other locations.

We must maintain the momentum of our productive effort here and advance without hesitation toward the goals that we set earlier in the year. Each of us can do a lot to make this transitional period smooth.

Incoming personnel should have the advantage of their predecessor's experience. This means that each advisor must prepare for his successor a description of his responsibilities, his counterparts, his successes and his failures during his tour, together with recommendations for the future. One of the best aids in briefing your replacements is a continuity file.

In addition, a corps orientation is presented each month to all newly assigned personnel. This orientation tells about the facilities and services available in the Delta for getting the job done. There are similar orientations given at division and province level.

The normal tour is so short that the newcomer cannot afford to wait for his own experience to teach him how to do his job well. He must learn from the old hands, building on their success and avoiding their mistakes. Napoleon's adage--"Fools learn by experience. I learn by the experience of others."-- is highly applicable to our Vietnam tour.

Consider how a relay team passes the baton from one man to the next; it's perfectly done, not a second step is lost. Instead a fresh runner with a head start and already going at top speed is well into the next lap of the race. This is the teamwork that I have in mind.

Hal D. McCown
Major General, USA
Commanding

MG TRUONG NEW MR4 CG

By SP4 Larry Coble

Major General Ngo Quang Truong recently assumed command of Military Region 4. The former 1st ARVN Division Commander took the command from Major General Ngo Dau, in a ceremony which was presided over by General Cao Van Vien, Commander-in-Chief, Army of the Republic of Vietnam. The Change of command took place at Region Headquarters in Can

Tho.

After the traditional "passing of the Colors", Major General Truong spoke to the members of the his command that had assembled for the event. He stressed to all MR4 soldiers "That we must overcome hardships to carry out correctly the higher echelon's directives in accomplishing our duty of securing the property of our Nation."

In his farewell speech Major General Dau expressed his thanks to his men who had cooperated closely with him during his service as commander of MR4 and commended them on their good results for the region. He cited military achievements of killing more than 20,000 Viet Cong and capturing nearly 15,000 weapons and tons of ammunition.

General Truong was born in Kien Hoa Provinve, South Vietnam on December 29, 1929. He graduated from My Tho College and entered Thu Duc Officers Canidate School. He was commissioned a Second Lieutenant in June of 1954. His first assignment was as a platoon leader with the ARVN Airborne Division. He spent twelve years within that unit and move up to the position of Assistant Commander of the Division. In June of 1966, as a Colonel, he assumed command of the 1st ARVN Division. As commander of the 1st, General Truong established a record which rated his division as one of the top divisions in the ARVN. While serving in that capacity he was promoted to Brigadier General on February 1, 1967 and to Major General sixteen months later on June 1, 1968.

General Truong is married and has two childern, as son, Ngo Quang Tri, 6, and four year old daughter, Ngo Thi Thu Tram.

Among the honors and decorations held by the General are the National Order of Vietnam, Third Class Army Distinguished Service Medal, Gallantry Cross with Palm at Armed Forces Level (17 awards), Gallantry Cross with Gold Star at Corps Level (7 awards), Gallantry Cross with Silver Star at Division Level (5 awards), Armed Forces Honor Medal Wound Medal (2 awards), Armed Forces Honor Medal, Wound Medal (2 awards), Leadership Medal Staff Service Honor Medal, Civil Action Honor Medal, Air Service Medal, Navy Service Medal, Good Conduct Medal, Chuong My Medal, First Class Order of Military Merit and the Choog Mu Medal (Korean).

Major General Ngo Quang Truong was promoted to the Commanding General of Military Region 4 on 25 August 1970.

FESTIVAL HELD FOR CHILDERN

The annual Children's Autumn Festival was held at the Province Chief's Headquarters, Phong Dinh Province, September 15th. Over 1500 young Vietnamese were present to receive their bag of free candy that was donated by Advisory Team 10.

According to Colonel Hubert R. Jones, Senior Advisor to the 4th Logistical Command, there were approximately 36 separate ceremonies throughout the Delta, wiht the celebration at Phong Dinh Province the largest. Colonel Jones pointed out that the Children's Autumn Festival is considered to be much like Halloween and is celebrated every September 15th.

For the past few years members of MACV Advisory Team 10 have given money for candy and this year was no exception. Donations from the members of the unit began in the

middle of July and eventually totalled \$200. Another \$125 was obtained in a raffle that was held September 1st and this, together with \$150 donation from the Army Calibration Agency in Okinawa, was enough to obtain 2400 pounds of candy for approximately 10,00 children throughout the Delta. The children were sons and daughters of Corporal First Class and below from the 4th Area Logistical Command and those present at the ceremony in Phong Dinh Province were members of the Boy and Girl Scouts.

BINH THUY DOCTOR HELPS SAVE LIFE

By SP5 Edmund Round

BINH THUY (35th Bn-IO)- Little Nguyen Thi Thu Ba of Can Tho has been given a new life thanks to the efforts of Captain (Dr.) Robert K. Ezerman of Lake Dummore, Vt. and the medics of the 35th Engineer Brigade. First examined by Dr. Ezerman during a MEDCAP in Can Tho, Ha underwent successful open heart surgery at the 3rd Field Hospital in Saigon and is now well along the road to recovery.

The 16 year old Buddhist girl was afflicted by mitral stenosis caused by the rheumatic fever that had stricken her as a small child. Mitral stenosis is an ailment in which the heart valve has been damaged and is too small to support life.

"Minor illnesses that you and I would shake off put her in the bed for a week," said Dr. Ezerman. "I don't want you to get the idea that this is a critical illness and that she could have died tomorrow. However, her life expectancy was minimal-5 or possibly 10 years at the most without the surgery."

"I had never met the girl's parents," he went on. "I had just been treating her through the MEDCAP Program. Then, I learned that there was a chance for corrective surgery and went ahead and made arrangements. Through an interpreter, I said to her parents in effect, "Give me the life of your child." They trusted me to that extent without even knowing me. It was a wonderful thing."

Surgery was performed by Major (Dr.) Elias Hanna, staff cardiac surgeon at the 3rd Field Hospital. Called mitral commissure, the operation involves cutting into the heart and forcing the mitral valve to open wider and allow more blood to pass.

Dr. Ezerman views the situation realistically. "You can feel very good about helping this one girl, but there are probably a couple of thousand cases in Vietnam that will never receive treatment."

After a week in Saigon for surgery, Ha returned to Can Tho. A week later, the stitches were removed and the operation judged a success even to the extent that there will be no noticeable scar.

"She's a very brave girl," said Staff Sergeant Banh Hoa Thanh, interpreter for the 35th Battalion medics and the man who accompanied Ha on her flight to Saigon. "Before the operation she felt discomfort all the time, but now she says she feels much better."

Ha is small and shy and speaks through smiles and downcast eyes. "This is the kind of beautiful polite kid you fall in love with," Dr. Ezerman said. Before her trip to Saigon for surgery, she had never been more than six blocks from her home, leading the sheltered life her

partial invalidism demanded.

A DECADE OF SERVICE IN 'NAM

TRA BAY, RVN- Most GI's who find themselves in Vietnam think about a 365 day tour, less if they can get a drop. SFC Jerzy Gruzewski can reminisce about nearly 3650 days in country, almost ten years, when he returned to the States on 11 September.

His first Vietnamese assignment was from 1948 to 1949 when Sergeant Gruzewski was a corporal in the French Foreign Legion. "The Legion was a good army, the best in France, and all its soldiers were very proud. Rank there was very important. A private would never have thought of talking back to a corporal," he commented. He left the Foreign Legion in 1953 and joined the U.S. Army in 1955. He reported for duty only days after an appendectomy.

By 1962 he was back in Vietnam assigned as an advisor to the 9th ARVN Division, then located in Qui-Nhon. He moved with them to the Mekong Delta in August 1963, before returning to the States in December. He tolerated CONUS for just six months before volunteering to come back to the 9th Division in July 1964.

His third tour lasted two years before again returning to the U.S. in 1966. "I didn't like it back there so I volunteered to come back again within a month," he stated. "They assigned me to the 9th Division Training Center here at Tra Bay, and I've been here ever since. DA won't let me extend again, so I guess I'll have to leave."

Both the Vietnamese and American advisors around Tra Bay credit much of building and improvement of the 9th Division Training Center to its present status as best in the country to SFC Gruzewski's effort. CPT Charles Branch, Jr. Senior Advisor to the Training Center, credits Sergeant Gruzewski's success to his fluency in Vietnamese, his understanding of the Vietnamese soldier, and his ability to scrounge materials.

SFC Gruzewski is going to the Army Training Center at Fort Polk, Louisiana. But his next comment was quite predictable: "If I don't like it there, I'm coming back to the ninth if DA will let me."

'COWBOYS' WITH SLICKS AND GUNS

BEARCAT, RVN- A light rain, the last rays of the day's sun lit the evening sky in an eerie glow that almost fit the surroundings.

For the men of the 335th Assault Helicopter Company, stationed in this camp 25 miles northeast of Saigon, their evening had begun. For some, it was a time to relax to forget the events of the previous day. For others, their working day had just begun.

Three platoons of enlisted men and officers serve as the "Cowboys" of the 335th. Their job to support the 7th and 9th ARVN Divisions in combat assaults, is not an easy one. Some dislike the job; others do it, as in the words of one member of the unit, "because it's there to be done."

The unit is divided into two flying groups, the 'slicks' and the 'guns'. In laymen's terms, the 'slicks' are UH1 Hueys, their sole armament M60 machineguns mounted on their sides, used

for troop transportation. Protecting them in any operation are the "guns" of the unit, modified Hueys, armed with rocket pods and mini-guns. This is the firepower of the unit, the "hellraisers", as described by one platoon member.

The 335th has the unique position of being located in MR3, while serving units in MR4. Falling under the supervision of the 164th Combat Aviation Group, headquartered in Can Tho, the unit is sometimes the lost child of the Delta. Originally stationed at Fort Bragg, North Carolina, the 335th moved to Bien Hoa, near Long Binh, in early 1965. Two years later they packed up their gear and moved to Pleiku as a part of the 173rd Airborne brigade, to be moved, though in the same area, a short time later.

In December of 1968, the 335th "Cowboys" moved to their present home of Bearcat, working for the 164th Group.

For many of these men, the night is the time to think and to forget. The early rays of the dawn are but a few hours away.

....
SP5 Rickey Tabor is the first at his ship. "Cowboy 427" is his. As crew chief, it's his responsibility to see that everything is in working order, through a preflight check. Mid-air troubles can be fatal.

Second at the slick's revetment is SP4 Ronald Auger, the ship's "new-bee" door gunner. Though only here for a little more than a few weeks, he's already well on this way to becoming a "combat veteran". Daily combat assaults keep his mind keen. A dull mind is slow to react and that spells trouble in anyone's book. "New-bees" can be dangerous-they can make mistakes, though unintentionally. Sp4 Auger tries to be careful. He wants to make it home the same way he got here, in one piece.

WO1 Philip Miller, alias "Cowboy 14" is today's aircraft commander (AC). Sitting next to him on this flight will be WO1 Werner Ansoerge, another "new-bee". But even Mr. Miller can remember the days when he was first in country. Seemingly for this reason, he's patient.

With the pre-flight checks completed, it's time for the daily test, to start the actual flying day off.

"Clear left, sir."

"Clear right, sir."

"Coming hot."

With these three brisk phrases, the huge blades of "Cowboy427" begin their rotation that today will carry them into combat assaults with the 7th ARVN division. Everything checks out.

The command and control (C&C) ships have left 15 minutes prior to this moment. The formation is now ready to go.

It has been a little more than two hours since the CQ has awoken the crews of "Cowboy" company. The time has passed quickly. But the next hours could feasibly turn into an eternity.

Eight Hueys are flying today, in a 5-3-1 formation; five slicks, three gunships, and one C & C ship. After stoppin off their fuel tanks in Vinh Long, the formation moves on to one of the 7th Division's fire bases to begin their days work.

The "back seat"- - the division's representative on the C & C ship who calls most of the shots- has passed the word and it's time to move out.

Throughout the day "Cowboy 427" in the second position in the formation, flies 12

insertions. Though suppressive fire is used on the treelines on some of the landing zones, "Charlie" doesn't answer back today. But no one forgets that he's still out there.

Formations' advance eyes, spots three Vietnamese running for the cover of the grass hut near on of the "LZ's". To the ship's veteran sporter, their actions look suspicious. One of the gunships is poised, ready for the word to open fire.

But in this occasion, the word never come. These people are "pacified."

With the scheduled insertions complete, the "Cowboy" formation breaks off for Dong Tam and a well-deserved break. Shutting down the engines, the eight ships stand by for any other unscheduled missions.

One hour passes and the word finally does come through. But this is the word they've been waiting for. It's time to go home.

It has been a relatively quiet day for "Cowboy 427". Other days have not been so quiet.

Chapter 5

Can Tho, RVN
1 November '70

Dear Judy,

I saw this card in the PX and I could not resist it. The gator's expression sums up my everyday feeling towards Vietnam.

I did not receive a letter from you today and I could not call on MARS. My counterpart's (Lt. Tri) wife had a baby girl one month ago and according to ancient Vietnamese custom no one can see the baby until it is twenty-eight days old, twenty-nine if it is a boy. Then they invite everybody over and have a party. Well, Ed and I did not eat anything just drank beer. It was all very interesting.

Lt. Tri is unbelievably poor. The decorations on the walls of his apartment were *Playboy* nudes. *Playboy* nudes are one thing the Americans will leave over here. The

Vietnamese woman don't seem to care, but the Vietnamese men love women in *Playboy*. Isn't it a strange mark of our involvement in Vietnam.

Well today was really a slow day. I really had little to do and most of the day Ed and I talked about our wives. I do not care what anybody says. A man misses his wife and her gifts. If this separation is not bothering him, he is laying some bitch. Simple as that.

By the time that you have received this card the elections of 3 November will have been completed. I have not told you, but the V.C. were supposed to go into a strong high point of attacks this week preceding 3 November. We have all been carrying our rifles and I have scoured up some grenades. The high point will have been completed by the time you receive this. Thus far, the V.C. have achieved none of their objectives and their attacks have been few and very weak. We actually over reacted by carrying our weapons around Can Tho. It is hard for me to convey to you how secure this place is, but 1 November is a Vietnamese national holiday. Same, Same, 4th of July! GVN flags are everywhere in the city. Just like back home in the states. So these people do have some nationalistic feelings. I am actually more afraid of the Cowboys than the Viet Cong. So do not worry. I was a little scared before the high point started because all the intelligence reports were indicating urban massed attacks; however, I gave the V.C. too much credit. Judy they are just not that strong. Without a map I can not explain it to you. Just believe me I am safe, and do not worry.

Amazing how the time is passing day after day. I think that mostly awards from Vietnam are just awards for surviving incredible loneliness. Some people like it over here; however, I don't. If you could be with me and I were working in An Giang or Go Cong provinces I could easily stay two years. But alone, six months is even too long.

I love you.

Mike

Can Tho, RVN
2 November '70

Dear Judy,

I did not receive a letter from you today. Today, I was going to call you on my lunch hour, but the malaria pill made me feel so sick I lay down to rest and fell asleep. I'll be glad when I do not have to take those damn pills again.

Today was a fair day. I made a disturbing discovery. I had been planning press coverage for the Soc Trang Airfield turn over and I kept thinking it was tomorrow. In fact I have been thinking for three days it was tomorrow. About 1000 I came to the realization that the turn over was Wednesday and not Tuesday. Boy, I felt so disoriented. One gets this way here. The days just have no meaning.

Lately I have been thinking about going on extended leave to go to law school and keeping my commission. We would get to do lots of traveling on Uncle Sam. Please write to me and tell me how you feel about it. I can not live with the information policies of the DOD. I know I could never remain in the Information Career field. I flat believe in censorship. I also

know I could never accept the low standards of discipline in the line units. If I did make a decision like this it would be with the attitude that it was a job not a passion. I would then retire at twenty years with a solid pension a new career in front of me with the potential to make big money in civilian law. Also I would only be forty two. Financially we might be better off in the long run. And the problem of family, Richard, where we live, ect. are automatically solved. Love I just do not know tonight.

Well its late, I love you far more than you know. And I wish we could be together. Write soon.

Love,

Mike

Can Tho, RVN
3 November '70

Dear Judy,

I received your letter of 28 October today. I tried to call you; however, nobody was home.

This note will have to be brief because it is already 1015 and I must get up at 0400 to go to Soc Trang Army Airfield turn over.

I watched *Easy Rider* tonight. I did not particularly enjoy it, but the scenery of the desert, Louisiana, and New Orleans made me remember my home. I guess that's why I watched it.

Cross your fingers about the bake off. It sure would be great to win all that cash.

Your boss must be awfully proud of you. You can stay away from all the engineers for all I care.

Nixon had the democrats on the run. Nixon and Agnew are really putting the blow torch to their ass. He is great. I'll vote for him for God.

I can not wait to meet my son again. He will be so different.

The MACV regulation has been changed and now I can get 14 days leave for sure. If I do get the leave would you please discuss what kind of arrangements Mr. Shultz would allow. Maybe you could work every other day or a half a day or something. Anything, just so I can spend some time with you.

Pick out the picks of your silver you want and put numbers besides the items in decreasing order of preference. I'll spend #100.00 on it if you can decide what you want.

I received a post card from Chip today. He is in Germany, lucky devil.

I did some quick mathematics today. After graduation from law school I would have only fourteen years to a twenty year retirement. Considering I would probably live thirty more years after retirement my total retirement checks would add up to a quarter million dollars. After retirement and being settled in a civilian firm, I could afford to buy a home worth at least \$100,000.00 and pay it off with retirement checks in fifteen years. We'll talk about it on R & R.

Good night love. I sure wish I was crawling inbetween clean sheets with you, rather than those clammy ones I am getting ready to get into. Separations are cruel.

I love you.

Mike

Can Tho, RVN
4 November '70

Dear Judy,

I received your letter of 29 October '70 today. I tired to call again, but I could not get through to the MARS station here in Can Tho.

Well today was the day Soc Trang Army Airfield was turned over. I had to escort the press from Saigon to Soc Trang. I was really fascinated watching the television news media work out. I met Mike Horwitz of ABC news, and Gary Shepard of CBS news, who was there with his television crew. T.V. news casters are human. We give them far too much credit for being experts on whatever they are reporting. I could easily do Shepard's job. No sweat.

All of me would like to live far away from people in the country. Maybe three years in a quiet solitude and I'll be ready to take on the world again. By then maybe I will be recovered from the Army experience. Today, I got pissed again and now I am sure I am going to get out of the Army. The Army is so screwed up, I can hardly believe it.

My roommate, Jerry Jackson, of Denver is going home in two days. I can hardly believe it. Seems like I just got here and met him. I will give him your telephone number and if he passes through Honolulu he'll call you.

You have far more sense than Martha Mitchell.

I could easily be a failure, if I ever gave up my dream. I have felt a failure before as a jump school drop out and I am absolutely terrified of failing again.

I do not know who stole my jeep. Some idiot drove it down to the U.S.O.

Well good night love. I love you.

Mike

Can Tho, RVN
5 November '70

Dear Judy,

I received your letter of 31 October today. And also I was able to finally talk to you on the telephone. Boy, I sure was glad to hear from you and to hear your voice. I want to come home so much, but for now at least we must wait.

How do you like our paper for this month? I took some of the photo's and wrote the C.G.'s message. As you can see, pacification is the Delta's big story. This place is improving at a fantastic rate. At least the nation is being up graded. I also selected the "skin photo;" however, I did not write the caption.

I am not surprised the doctor told you your skin problem was psychosomatic. I always thought it was either that or a hormone inbalance because of pregenancy. Really, it is hard for me to imagine what you must have gone through to cause you to unknowly attack what you pride

the most. I am an insensitive person. I really never thought or dreamed that the woman I married could have problems like that. It's just hard for me to accept weakness in myself, or in the one I love. I always expect people to overcome their weakness and drive on, because I have been fortunate enough to come from a family that taught that kind of hard-headed lesson. Also, I have been kicked in the groin several times and came back stronger than ever. Please try to understand this about me and I'll try to be more aware of your needs.

I had a very interesting talk with one of my roommates, tonight. He and his family are buying silver in Switzerland in expectation of a coming depression or runaway inflation. He placed in prospective Nixon's roll back policy of our involvements in other nations. We just can not afford it. The number of paper dollars to gold dollars has doubled to 25 to 1 in the international market. We are on the border line of a devaluation of the dollar (due in March) and we are no longer the strongest currency in the world. The West German Mark is. If his conclusions are true then we are on the verge of one hell of an economic slowdown. American's are just spending too much money in the international market. The change of leave policy is one reason. Now a guy can go home to the states for 14 days. The U.S. just does not want its money in foreign banks. Sound ominous does it not? Daddy has said we were on the verge of a depression for quite awhile.

In this situation as an R.A. officer I would never be cut from the rolls. At least I would have a job, and could attend law school, also. And in the long term economic vacuum of the U.S. Army the U.S. economy would have a chance to settle itself out.

So you see tonight I am considering again staying in the Army. Colonel Edwards, my immediate superior in Saigon, wants me to get into the information specialty program, which means an Army financed M.A. in journalism. So you can see Love, I am in a deep quandry. If the economic picture was good, maybe now would be the time to leave, but if it is bad as it appears and as bad as preliminary signs indicate it is in the U.S., maybe the Army is best for us at this moment in our lives.

I have only received one letter from Fort Bliss. And you know what it said. I have procrastinated on the itemized list because frankly I have little idea of what I had or what it cost. My books were the only major item that I can remember. Until I can get to a book store, I am pissing in the wind.

I sure wish I could be with you now. Woman I am just a dead may without you.

Love,

Mike

Can Tho, RVN
7 November '70

Dear Judy,

I did not receive a letter from you today. I was not able to write yesterday because we had a major security violation by the A.P. and U.P.I. wire services. I was up to 2300 preparing

information for a briefing for the General.

Well my long haired, blue eyed, big boobed honey, I can not wait to get home and satisfy your most base desires. You know, pure hednestic pleasure. I am very pleased that your complexion is clearing up with the new medicine. You should take as little as possible though You may build up an immunity too quick to the dosage you are taking.

Our annual general inspection will be on 14 January. I plan to go on leave immediately afterwards. I also plan to take fourteen days. I'll then take R & R in early May. Everyone is expecting charter R & R flights very soon. They will be less expensive than the present prices. At all costs you must keep your job so see what you can work out with your boss. If he won't hear of it. I'll still come; we'll at least have the nights.

Hey, watch my son and those goddamned prunes. If he understood what was wrong with your feeding him, he would probably cuss like a sailor.

Yes, there are days around here when I feel I must support the worries of that damn information office on my shoulders, and I too want somebody to lean on. Separations are just plain crap.

....
Today, in the *Stars & Stripes* an article told of a case which was thrown out of court by a twenty-eight year old military judge because the regulation was too vague. The Pvt. was charged with "passing out" communist literature without permission of the Army Post. I tell you love, we do not have much time left. Somebody has got to reorder the thinking of our jurists and do it fast. Obviously, I can not accept such a sorry state of affairs in the Army. I would only eat my guts out over it for twenty years. As a civilian I could do more anyway.

We have less than 100 more days before we see each other again. I am really up in the air with anticipation just thinking about it. Please write soon.

Love,

Mike

Can Tho, RVN
8 November '70

Dear Judy,

I did not receive a letter form you today, however, I was able to talk to you on the phone.

Baby, in eighteen days, I'll be all of twenty-five years old. I can hardly believe I am going to be that old. As I approach my first one quarter century of life I view it far more form what is to come in the future and not what has happened in the past. At this age I find my controlling thoughts are being guided and directed by the past; however, they are free of many of the limitations, I hope, of our backgrounds.

I really am anxiously looking forward to the next twenty-five years together. There will be frustrations, disappointments and tests. However, there could be affulence, joys of parenthood, and a close mental and physical communion with you. I guess I am really looking

forward to it. There are so many mountains to climb, som much to see, to live, to paretake of and generally to sample the nector of the experiences of an inquistive relationship such as ours can generate.

You know there have been times in my short life when I truly care not what happened to me. These depressing experiences were in each case unwanted assualts upon my very carefully structured self image. And that self image was never really based on really firm ground although by every reason it should have been. However, now as I view myself and the future, I feel at least capable of handling in a better way than my past models any new momentarily impossible mountains to climb in my path.

You know I really miss the comfort you provide my ego. When you are with me, I find it easier to accept criticism from others. Over here, I go to extreme lenghts to prevent any criticism of the job I am doing. In fact sometimes its down right hilerious what I do. For example, for the last two months everytime *The Delta Advisor* was distributed to the General's Mess I ususally disappear for a day or so. You know, just laying low. I also avoid the telephone like the plague. I can not stand to hear it ring. Maybe if you were around I would not act so goofy. I think though, my mind is crying for solitude somewhere. One just can not get away from people over here. They are everywhere. And of course everybody wants the Information Officer to publize what this or that organization is doing.

Well love today I pumped so weights, did some swimming and I feel very lean and muscle bound again.

I have an idea for a hell of a depressing story story. Whether I'll get around to it or not nobody knows, even me. It would be all about an average young Lieutenant who gets blown away by a land mine.

....

If you have been tickled by this letter of my intermost thoughts from Can Tho City, Republic of Vietnam, on 8 November the year of our Lord one thousand nine hundred seventy, well I will have succeeded in making us both a little happier, because now I am smiling.

Love,

Mike

Can Tho, RVN
9 November '70

Dear Judy,

I received your letter of 4 November today.

Well love, your husband has really done it this time. The lead story aobut Hai Chanh exposing insurgency operations has already been aired on Paul Harvy today. I was getting phone calls from the American Embassy, Joint Public Affairs Office, and the CORDS Information Office in Saigon. My ass is completely clear so it appears. I followed the required clearence procedures rightr down the line; however, everybody is all upset because of what the article says.

Next time, I do not think MAVC-IO will be so willing to clear information for us. Well, one thing is for sure your husband has made everyone aware that the Delta Information Office exists. I put us on the map with this one. You will probably be reading about this in the newspapers soon.

I really do not consider myself a crusading newspaperman by any means; however, I must say I am so tickled over the success of the story I can hardly stand it. I smiled all afternoon long after getting a hold of my fears. I still think I'll hide tomorrow morning to get away from the phone. I really feel like a mysterious kid that just stole some cookies right under his mother's watchful eyes.

Enclosed are two stories which the A.P. and U.P.I. broke twenty hours before the operation jumped off. Keep them with this letter please. For those of us who may be presented the opportunity to publically speak about their experiences with the press, this incident will be one of them.

Well love, I may be jaunty about my future in politics. I really have a sixth sense that as soon as one politician stands up and says, "I was there, while the punks were in the streets," one hell of a lot of veterans and influential former officers are going to say, "hey, that guy is talking to me." O well, I am dreaming again.

I may be optimistic, how can I be anything else. I really feel like there is a world to conquer one way or another, and all one has to be is opportunistic enough to take advantage of life's dares we are presented with.

I love you and can hardly wait to take advantage of you.

Love,

Mike

Enclosures

INVASION

(AP) Saigon, November 6- - A large south Vietnamese Task Force numbering thousands of troops pushed into southeastern Cambodia Friday morning in a new offensive aimed at choking off North Vietnamese infiltration into the western Mekong Delta.

First reports say no significant contacts.

The new drive raised South Vietnamese strength in Cambodia to more than 16,000 troops.

It was the fourth new offensive launched into Cambodia in the past two weeks aimed at blocking North Vietnamese supplies and reinforcements from moving into the southern half of South Vietnam.

My Comment: This story was on the wire about 1300. Copies of this story were sent to the CG, G3 and G2.

(UPI)---Several thousand south vietnamese troops smashed across the Cambodian border at dawn today near the Plain of Reeds in a joint operation with Cambodian troops aimed at clearing out a new Communist build up in the former sanctuary.

The new drive, launched from the 44th Special Tactical Zone Headquarters at Moc Hoa, involved six battalions of south Vietnamese troops that aimed at linking up with four Cambodian battalions across the border.

Details of the push were not immediately available, but a military source believed they would trap a sizable communist unit in the area.

The Plain of Reeds has long---(Garbled)--areas to South Vietnam government forces. Located immediately west of the Parrot's beak, it is a vast swampy area covered with a heavy growth of tall reedy swamp grass.

Newsmen were alerted for it only Thursday afternoon and were given forty-five minutes to report for transportation taking them to the operations area.

The drive was expected to be a lengthy one, lasting ten days or more, and south Vietnamese troops were expected to probe far into Cambodia south of the capital of Phnom Penh.

The new operation was launched less than two weeks after south Vietnamese 5th Infantry Division unit pushed into the rubber plantation area some 125 miles east northeast of Phnom Penh in an effort to clear communists from that area as well. In addition south Vietnamese 18th Infantry Division troops launched a major sweeping operation around the town of Minat about ninety miles east northeast of Phnom Penh.

Early attention in the war has turned from the battle field to the --(Garbled)-- tables with a series of high level announcements on ground and air developments.

Can Tho, RVN
10 November '70

Dear Judy,

I received your letter of 3 and 5 November today.

I am really being very pretentious when I say I am going to work for Nixon. First things first. I must graduate from law school first. At least dreams are what I have now.

You know love these three years in the Army have matured me greatly. I'll tell you why. The new Staff Judge Advocate is a resident of Baton Rouge. He graduated from University High, L.S.U. and L.S.U. Law School. We are the same age. I have seen more than he has this three years. Once again, I hope I am not patting myself on the back, but these three years have roughed us up enough to have to mature fast. I can feel it and sense it, too. Almost like I am in my late twenties rather than being the second youngest member of the General's Mess.

I hope you enjoy sailing. I am sure you will. It is great fun.

I do not know what my mother is writing about my going to Princeton and Tulane, although I have submitted a request for application forms from Tulane, New Mexico, and Florida State.

....

I am happy your face has cleared up. How the hell a beautiful women like yourself can

get so mentally screwed up to unconsciously attack the quality you are most proud of is beyond me.

Forget about my going to school on extended leave from the Army. I am already making arrangements to take my resignation physical. Just think, in only seventy days, I'll be submitting my resignation. Oh, how I have waited for this moment. One thing is for sure I have no intention of expending my life's energies in Uncle Sam's beauracracy. My life is far too short to accept the frustration I may possibly hav to deal with. I just want a fairly quiet very lucrative law practice.

Yes, I love soldiering, but the kind of soldiering I love is old fashioned, outdated, and will probably not be seen again unless we fight another crusade like WWII. I will always, deep inside, feel a spirit of communion with the soldiers of the Greek phalanx, the Roman Legions, Genghis Khan's hordes, grizzled grenadiers of Napoleon's legions, cavalry men of Forrest and Patton, and the 82nd Airborne Division "Sky Soldiers." I gnesss I would always be willing to fill a soldier's grave for one cause or another.

Now I have a family, and my physical abilities preclude me from ever achieving my dream of being a hell for leather cavalry regimental commander.

Love,

Mike

Can Tho, RVN
11 November '70

Dear Judy,

I received your letters of 6 and 7 November today.

You are so right aobut our not having any way to go but up. After this year of pure crap just living together in a grass shack would be better.

You know I am really lost without you. I can not read a book or any long magazine articles because my attention span is so short. I think about you, home, my job, constantly. Because the job is relentless ans seems never ending it is on my mind. I have noticed as I write letters to you now I sometimes leave words out of sentences or write the wrong word far more than I think I used to. I guess I just need your stabilizing influence and some time to rest.

I have applied for fourteen days beginning 16 January, and not only that I me a man today who can get me a flight to and from Hawaii free on that leave. I am really pleased at the opportunity to save \$500.00.

Van is just like his Dad. He loves to be hugged, and kissed. Like father, like son.

I submitted a letter to the University of New Mexico today. You know love I am really torn between the south and the southwest. Part of me says give your homeland a chance and then another says remember the clear air, the mountians, calm people, the wide open spaces and the great hunting. We really must talk long and hard about this.

I have been talking to my Vietnamese secretary about the differences between husband

and wife relationships in America and Vietnam. You just would not believe how lucky you have it love. The Vietnamese women is completely submissive slave of the husband. In fact, he can even go out on her and they will not make a fuss because they feel if they do the husband will leave them. She could not believe that I had on occasion helped you clean the house. Boy, that really shocked her. About the only liberated women in Vietnam are the silicone breasted whores downtown. In fact if Ms. Loan would see me on the street she would not speak to me because a good Vietnamese woman is not supposed to know any U.S. soldiers.

Well love, every night I sit down and write three or four long pages to you and lately all the letters I have received from you are one to one and a half pages. I really like to hear more about what you are doing.

I am mailing a new PACEX catalog to you in those bundles of clothes. See what you like and maybe I can get it for you.

Love,

Mike

P.S. Could you check and see if there are any SCUBA diving trips out of Honolulu in January. And also if one can spearfish.

Can Tho, RVN
12 November '70

Dear Judy,

I received your letter of 8 November today.

....

Do not dwell upon how miserable you right now. It may seem worse than it actually is. There is really not a lot that you can do about the situation other than learn from it.

I know how you feel about wondering whether you are sane or not. This separation bugs me the same way it does you. The next thing you can do is quit worrying about me. Vietnam wives age fast while their husbands are away, mostly from unnecessary worry. I am completely safe right where I am, and if it consoles you any I do not take chances. Being old is only a state of mind. We need to get together again to invigorate each others minds again.

You are right about Van having to make some adjustments; however, he is very young. He will not even remember my ever having been away. I am not worried about the adjustment he will make. He is a happy child.

I really can not imagine Van communicating, kissing, pulling down a crib bumper to see you. He must really be changing and progressing fast.

Tonight I watched *Bloody Momma* with Shelly Winters. God, it was gross. The American people are watching pure horse dung.

Well love, I really had a hell of a morning. I was going to take my resignation physical and my jeep was stolen again. I almost lost my temper. I got so pissed I was ready to go AWOL

and forget it all. Boy, I had really had it with the U.S. Army. Well, anyway the jeep showed up about 1315 and by 1400 I had settled down enough to be coherent again.

I can not wait to come home. It looks like my leave has been approved for 16 January-30 January. All I plan to do is swim, relax, and hug you until you are fed up with my hanging on you all day long.

Love,

Mike

Can Tho, RVN
13 November '70

Dear Judy,

I did not receive a letter from you today.

I declined seven days of R & R for 14-20 December today in favor of a fourteen day leave in January. It turned out my R & R for December was approved, but I have made it this far and right now waiting two more months is a drop in the bucket. It will also mean we will only be apart for less than 100 days again because I'll be coming home again in late April.

I bet you did not know the General's birthday was 26 November! I do not know how old he will be, but I'll be twenty-five.

I think about you and Van all the time. I have now been separated from Van more time than I have known him and when you write about him I really have little remembrance. It is almost as if I have no real memories other than his birth to have a grasp of. You, my love, are different. I can remember you quite clearly in all your moments. I can remember our moments together clear as day. I guess its the only thing keeping me straight. I have made it almost four months now and two months is really a drop in the bucket now. I am absolutely positive had our relationship continued on the course it was headed at Fort Bliss, by now I would have probably been living downtown with a silicone breasted Vietnamese. Really, it is my hope, and a fevert one at that, that we will never again do what we did to each other those ten months. And this hope keeps me straight. Funny, I never knew why I was being a straight arrow until now. Different men have different reasons. Some say love, others say self respect, others its a fear of V.D., but mine is a strange one, just plain old hope that our relationship will be better the next time we are together. I am not willing to do anything to jeopedaize this possibility for our happiness with each other.

By the time you receive this letter I will have returned from a night gunship mission over the U-Minh forrest. I really am looking forward to it. I guess I am really a soldier at heart.

You'll hear about it in my letter of 16 November.

I mailed some clothes today to you. You can expect them in six to eight weeks.

Please write soon. I love you.

Mike

Can Tho, RVN
14 November '70

Dear Judy,

I received your letter of 9 November today, and I got to talk to you on the phone. So my day was a big one.

I just spent several hours in the library reading a long article about the Army, Vietnam, the Army's future, and the overly complex weapons systems. In all I think the author hit the different nails squarely on the head. I am really glad that at last somebody is writing about the real problems of the Army and not trying to unnecessarily kick the Army in the groin. The article is in the November issue of *Atlantic Monthly*.

Van is standing up now? Is he starting to drink from a cup? Gosh, change is coming fast. I'll hardly know him when I see him again.

Hey, I am really glad you like the wine cooler. I was concerned whether or not it would be of appropriate size, but as you indicated my fears were groundless.

I am glad you told me about all your hang ups of jealousy, and insecurity. Funny how this separation is helping each of us get our thoughts and minds reorientated to the more important aspects of living together than being so stuck on ourselves as individuals.

Like I said last night, by the time you receive this I'll be back from my mission over the U-Minh. I am really jumpy about going; however, it's probably just because I do not know what to expect. It will probably end up being a milk run.

Be careful in Hawaii love. It sounds like you are in more danger than I am. Won't it be nice to get away from people like hippies and other long haired idiots.

I am really looking forward to January, because after the fourteen day leave everything is downhill. I love you.

Mike

Can Tho, RVN
16 November '70

Dear Judy,

Today, I did not receive a letter from you.

Well love, my night mission over the U-Minh forest was a failure. We flew down to Ca Mau about 1500. We had to be there early to put in a last light strike; however, there was not a mission for us so I shot my rifle at birds and ducks in the rice paddy. I did not kill any.

We laid around until 1900 when we scrambled for a strike down around V.C. lake. Well, one Cobra developed a mechanical problem and flew back, then we lost our tachometer and we flew back. We called for maintenance to send another Cobra down and another tachometer. By this time it was 2300. The Navy "Seawolves", i.e. Huey gunships, scrambled to take over our mission and one of their engines blew up while it was hovering over the field. Fortunately,

nobody was hurt.

About 2400 we gave it up and flew back to Can Tho. Thus, ending my quest for a story form the "night package" to Ca Mau. Flying at night in a gunship is really weird. One has to wear a forty-five pound "chicken plate" over one's chest. By the time you get all strapped in you really feel heavy. Anyway, I got a real kick out of it all.

Tomorrow morning, I meet, none other than Martha Ray for an interview. You know there are times when I really enjoy my job. Sure have a lot of opportunities to meet lot's of people. So I hear LTC Ray, U.S.A. Nurse Corps is a real foul mouth. She will probably be scagey looking too.

Well love, your better watch out when I get home. I am going to tear you limb from limb with wild desire.

Well, I am going to try to find a Christmas present for my family and yours. I received a card for my birthday from your folks.

I love you and am anxiously waiting to be together again.

Love,

Mike

Can Tho, RVN
17 November '70

Dear Judy,

Today, I did not receive a letter from you.

Well, I did not get a chance to meet Martha Ray, but I did see her and watch her drink tumbler's full of vodka and quine water. She is really old looking, almost like someone's grandmother. She is quite a character. A good old L.S.U. D.Z. type, just one of the boys, and impossible to gross out.

I discovered some weeks ago that the Delta did not have a *Stars & Stripes* bookstore. I have taken steps to try to get one down here. If I succeed I'll really be jumping up and down. It will be another major accomplishment none of my predecessors thought of. I have high hopes. We really need a bookstore.

We have been moving some bunks around and rearranging the press camp again. I am really having to work my mind to find things for my people to straighten out or make more shipshape. Everything we are doing is on a one time basis. We have to straighten out the mess my predecessor left me.. So many things only have to be completed one time. As more and more things are completed, we are running out of things to improve and we'll soon only have our job. And once we reach that point I am going to try to publish a magazine this spring.

Today, my problem child received only an oral reprimand for his disrespect to my assistant. When I heard about it, I almost lost my temper for the first time since I arrived. I really felt a surge of feeling that was with me for ten months at Fort Bliss. Fortunately, I

suppressed it and rationalized it away with the thought "I have eight more months of this B.S., then I'll not deal with another troublesome troop ever."

Gary Shepard of CBS News aired a film strip about a pot party in the 1st Cavalry Division. He really socked it to the Army. Really though, the Army deserved it, so I am not upset about it at all. My superiors are all upset, sending classified messages back and forth about it and so forth. I was kind of disappointed that Gary was the one that did it, but I guess I am learning about the news media.

The ARVN units are starting to ambush at night more and more. If they'll do this they'll win the war quickly. The other night a night ambush killed a thirty-five year old N.V.A. Captain who was a company commander. He was carrying documents naming every member of his unit. His company was 100% N.V.A. and consisted of thirty-two men. We though his unit was fifteen percent V.C. and had sixty to seventy men. Maybe we are succeeding a little.

Well my secretary says I am "Beacoup-Yea" which means "horny as an old goat" in Vietnamese. I am really dying to get into your drawers.

Love,

Mike

Can Tho, RVN
18 November '70

Dear Judy,

I did not receive a letter from you today at noontime and I am not especially busy this afternoon, and I am going to Saigon this afternoon for one day so I am writing a letter now, while I am on company time.

I actually accomplished some work this morning. The afternoon has really been slow, obviously.

Babe, its only fifty-nine days until I'll be seeing you and Van again. It has been such a long, long time since we have been together. Separations are incredible experiences. I guess one gets so used to depending upon a wife or husband, whatever the case, that maybe we really do not understand who we really are. One thing is for sure I am learning who I am. But being over here, I feel so lost about the course I am taking. I guess its because of my environment right now. Once I have returned to the world and become a thinking civilized human again, I am sure I'll be the same ole Mike again. Only a year older and incredibly wiser.

You know I had heard so much about Vietnam before I came over here that my stereotyped notions were 180 degrees out from reality. Every once and awhile I say to myself "Mike you are really in Vietnam; you are really in the Orient." Is not that strange? Now that a full one third of my time here has passed, I guess I am finally settling down now. God, those first months were a shock.

We have a new roommate now Tom Lytle and I moved down to the bottom bunk. I was really looking forward to that, but now its come and gone and I really did not think about it too

much anymore. Now I am looking forward to my birthday on 26 November. Then it will only be four weeks to Christmas and twenty-three days after that is when I see you again. I try not to think about things too far in the future. If I break them down into thirty day blocks, I am O.K. Right now July '71 seems a long long way away; however, it will rush upon us in a storm about next February.

You know I was carrying my acceptance letter to Ole Miss around with me everyday. Well, the time seemed to be going to slow so I put it in my drawer and now the time is really moving out again.

This coming Tuesday I finally take my resignation physical. And shortly after that, like about fifty -five days, I submit my resignation. Can hardly believe it.

Well, love my mind is in a shambles over you. I am sure that when I get home I am going to have quite an adjustment to make mainly getting my mind off of your body. Please write soon.

Love,

Mike

Saigon, RVN
19 November '70

Dear Judy,

I spent the day in Saigon today working on the layout of the newspaper. I personally laid out page eight. I really learned a lot about the operation, which was why I came up here.

I have to send two men up here for seven to eight days monthly to do the layout, so I think I need to know what they are doing.

I stayed in the Astor Hotel downtown for \$7.00 per night. My editor had rented a double room. Love, I want you to know that it was the closest I have ever felt to being a human again since coming to Vietnam. The room had television, clean sheets, a tile bathroom and even a bath tub, which I immediately jumped in. It was just heaven.

I had dinner last night in a French restaurant called "La Docti Vita." With wine, and everything. And it was just great. I am really getting spoiled for French cuisine. As you have tired to beat into my head the French possess a rare art. Well, I guess I am finally being made a believer; however, love the food is not as highly seasoned as in Louisiana.

I spent the day at a MACV headquarters. The place is a zoo, a jungle, a really surrealistic place where people work from 0700 to 1800 everyday and literally have to make work for themselves because there is not enough work. I am so happy I am where I am.

Can Tho is not the cleanest place in the world, but at least I have my own office, with lots of responsibility, a daily challenge, and I am in a very interesting job, in a very interesting place, during a very interesting time.

God, I want to come home. I am really just up in the air on a cloud ninety percent of the time thinking about you and Van and what it will be like to be with you again forever. These

separations are just plain bullshit.

This December issue of the paper is a Christmas edition. I think it is really going to be a hit. We broke up the traditional pattern of front page and instead put a Christmas wreath on the front page and the front page news on the last page.

It's kind of fun to play with a unit newspaper. I am learning so much about journalism, and newspapers, and correspondents. I can never repay the Army for what it will have taught me.

I am possibly going to receive another journalist soon. If I do I am going to try to publish a magazine next spring; however, we just have to wait and see how this works out.

Well love, I am lonely as hell, disgusted because fifty-eight days is so long to wait to see you again. God, when will this year ever end. So much time has to pass by before we can be together again.

Love,

Mike

Can Tho, RVN
20 November '70

Dear Judy,

I received, at long last, when I returned to Can Tho, four of your letters were waiting for me. The pictures were great.

Gosh, my son is no big now. I am missing far too much. Families should be together during these times.

This letter is going to be short love, because it's already 2330.

I will answer your letters in depth tomorrow.

I received letters from Mother and Dad today. Jimmy is going back to Thailand in January. He will really like the place he is going so I am told.

I have so much to tell you about this war, about everything. God woman I just want to hold you close again. I feel myself getting like Colonel Milam, just completely and totally appreciative of his spouse.

Love,

Mike

Can Tho, RVN
21 November '70

Dear Judy,