

I received two letters from you today and we talked on the phone. I am going to answer the last six letters I received from you in this letter.

Oh, please address my letters, MACV Tm 96 (I) not (PIO).

What is going on in Saigon? The same thing that is going on in New York city. I do not worry about it so you should not worry.

I have not been keeping up with the book reviews. Really I just do not have time for too much intellectual simulation.

Most of the news from Vietnam is crap. Do not pay any attention to it. Yes U.S. troops of the 25th Infantry were guarding Saigon. We were determined to prevent any propropaganda attacks and we did. The only incident was a single M70 40mm grenade round fired harmlessly at the U.S.O. in Saigon. Really a big joke.

I wrote my folks last night that I was becoming very proud about being a veteran. I guess we are both getting a real taste of pride. Life is made of sacrifice. Now that I am in Vietnam I can not imagine living my life without having experienced it.

I am very happy that you are finding yourself during this year. We are both profiting from this experience.

Look Magazine will not be brought to my house. It is a "rag." *Look* published an article about why Vietnamization would not succeed a month or so ago and it was grossly inaccurate. I refuse to tolerate it.

Your brother's letter of 31 October is interesting. Sounds like he is really going to raise some stink. It will be the only way to motivate the Army beauracy. More power to him. He is really doing us a favor. It is not strange that the movers methodically took advantage of my ignorace. It is almost a crime. Well, good luck to Don.

For veterans day we worked from 0800 to 1700(you know the holiday schedule). The U.S.O. is for everybody.

Yes there are days when I go through the same thing you do. Only by the greatest effort can I get my chin off the ground. I do not cry. I only mope.

As you look at that silver be thinking aobut all that you want. Someday, I am going to buy it.

....

I will probably always be riding off on some white charger against dreamy foes and slay them by the hundreds with my sword "Excalabor." However, I must grow up, face my responsibilities, and seek our happiness together. If I were single and physically fit, I could easily learn to love killing gooks. After all, it is the ultimate human contest between men, mortal combat.

....

I showed my secretary the pictures of Van and she thinks he looks like me, that he is very fat (Vietnamese babies are skinny), and that he has beautiful eyes. Seh also thinks you are beautiful. I tease her unmerifully aobut her beliefs in Chinese medicine. You just would nto believe now primative the pracitice of medicine is. The doctor has already told her she is going to have a girl for sure. She really believes it.

....

Yes, my football jacket was in storage I think. The storeroom items I do not remember.

I am going to order gifts for you family and mine through PACEX. So do not mail them anything.

Love, I can not thank you enough for those books by Churchill. I have anxiously wanted this set for years. I msut read them while I am here.

I received the application forms from Florida State. First, the cirriculum is not a board as Ole Miss, and it costs much more. There are numbers of Harvard trained professors too. Really, I am having my doubts. Though I am glad I found out about it. None the less I'll probably submit my application.

I received my first letter from Jimmy today. I seemed excited to be going to Thialand.

Your birthday card to me was great. I really liked it.

You know will I was in Saigon I had to pick the skin picture again for December. I choose a picture of some young star that looked just like you. She even had her clothes on, too. My PFC journalist did not like it because there was no skin, so since I am aiming at his mentality she was not chosen.

Looks like the bookstore is going to fall through. There jsut is not any building space to set it up in Can Tho. O well, at least, I tried. I may trot out the idea out again in six months.

....

Well love, I am lonely again. Dying to be with you and mentally screaming to emotionally tie our personalities together again.

Write soon.

Love,

Mike

Can Tho, RVN
22 November '70

Dear Judy,

I received your letter of 17 November and the cake today. Thankyou for the cake. It sure is good. I'll be eating on it for quite a while.

Hey, Australia sounds great. It just sounds very tranquil and peaceful. They must have some common sense.

I do not know yet whether or not I am willing to give up the American Dream yet however. I am still an American and I feel I do have a stake in the system. If after three years of civilian life and schooling, we feel that American is still going downhill. We can still leave. I am anxiously awaiting the elections of 1972. If big labor pulls a another strike just before the elections then as they did this year, Nixon may lose. I can not imagine another liberal democract in the presidency.

Today was a province senior advisors meeting. It lasted all day. Ambassoder Colby spoke at dinner tonight and his picture of the coming few years really is bright. We jsut may pull this effort off.

More and more I realize we were led by such completely historically ignorant generals, and of course there was that idiot McNamera running the show. For the life of me I can not understand how he could make such pronouncements about the war when we were clearly losing. Did you see the A.P. story by General Walt in which he said the U.S. generals underestimated the V.C.? My point is that we do not pay generals to make bad decisions, either they make the right ones or they get fired. In battle or in war when men's lives are at stake mediocre leadership is unacceptable.

Mr. Franklin left today. It's hard to believe he is gone. He had four months to go when I arrived in DMAC. Now I am becoming an old hand here. I now know most everybody, and I guess I have made an adjustment of sorts to this place. In just two short months, we'll be together again. It's hard to believe.

And do you realize when I leave Can Tho for leave my resignation starts through channels. That's unbelievable. We have waited so long.

This place is such an education. I have learned an unbelievable amount about military science, tactics, analytical techniques to determine where problems areas lie in big organizations. I do not say much. I only listen.

Well, love it's starting to get late again. I was going to take some time off this week and I never did get a chance. Really my days are filled. I hardly have any spare time and I have much more work to do.

Love,

Mike

Can Tho, RVN
23 November '70

Dear Judy,

I received your letters of 17 and 19 November today.

First, let me tell you that I received my leave orders for 16-30 January today. Obviously, it is definite.

No, I do not have a new secretary yet. She is five to six months along. She and her husband time this baby to coincide with Tet leave so I'll be without a secretary for six weeks. She'll work right up until the time she has the baby.

....

Yes, we'll both be raving idiots when we meet again. Ultimately, we will settle down enough to talk to each other again.

I feel the same way you do about going crazy sometimes. I do not think we are really insane. When we are together again I am sure we'll get all our shit together again.

Martha Ray was the same one you were thinking of. She is an Army Nurse. She is really old looking and she can out-drink almost everyone. She drank vodka and quinine water by the tumblerful. She is also foul mouthed as I am. So that's Martha Ray. She really is personable too.

.....
Hey, with all this talk of not doing well pschologically you sound like you are dwelling on yourself far too much. Really you must be stronger emotionally than that statement. It just does not sound like you. Of course, that's ole Mike coming through again with absolutely no understanding or acceptance of weakness. At least I caught myself this time.

This year in Hawaii is not easy for you, but remember love you bit the bullet by your own choice. You will be a better person for the experience. Prehaps, the biggest lesson we are both learning is that our levels of tolerance to miserable situations is being raised by a quantum jump.

Hey, troop- - start taking your birth control pills now! That's an order too!

Love,

Mike

Can Tho, RVN
24 November '70

Dear Judy,

I received your letter of 20 November today.

.....
Yes, I was happy to hear SSG Mitchell was found innocent. Mr Brown really did win big on that one.

I just received word today of the commando raid on the Hanoi Hilton. President Nixon is absolutely great. He is a leader. It really raises my morale unbelievably to know we have a man with real guts as the President.

Captain Levy, who is the SJA here, was luke warm on the raid. So I started really shooting some pointed questions at him. As an educated lawyer he could not cite me sources for his opinions or even debate with me using potent arguments.

Well, I just got a phone call fro George Esper of A.P. and I released some information regarding a helicopeter crash which was only releaseable by MACV-OI. Boy, I really screwed up this time. I can only hope that Esper does not quote me attributing the information to DMAC. Well, I just got it straightened out. Ole George is going to attribute the information to the ARVN!! What a joke. At least the ARVN are good for something. I just hurriedly called the MAC-OI duty officer and gave him all the details to comply with the regulation. So I'll be out of the office tomorrow. You know, I am going into hiding for two days.

Gosh, woman I really love you. I jsut can not wait to get back to Hawaii and to see you again. Please write soon.

Love,

Mike

Can Tho, RVN
25 November '70

Dear Judy,

I did not receive a letter from you today.

Boy, today was a hell of a day. I just did not want to go anywhere close to the office.

Whimsical generals drive my up the walls.

I was really ready to give it all up. I went into hiding this morning by driving out to the hospital to see one of my troops. I spent the morning out there!

Tonight I watched the movie *Chisam* with John Wayne. It was really good. It was filmed in New Mexico. New Mexico is so wonderfully open, spacious and airy.

All the criticism of the raid into north Vietnam reminds me of straving dogs after a bone. Ever seen a straving dog? There's a look of panic in their eyes.

Well, tomorrow is the big day and I ahve to spend it without you. God, woman what will it be like to be together again? Try as I may to remember you the time and the distance are robbing me of knowing you and my son.

Jimmy mailed me some books today. I really am getting too much to read. I barely have time to write any letters at night much less read.

Well love, its very late. I am really beat, and all I can think about it meeting you at the airport.

Love,

Mike

Can Tho, RVN
25 November '70

Dear Judy,

Today, I did not receive a letter from you. I tried to reach you by MARS and you were not home.

Not much happened today. I listened to the L.S.U. Alburn football game this morning from 0215 to 0500. It was broadcast live from Alabama. It was great to hear the roar of a football crowd and listen to the Tigers beat the hell out of a fine Alburn football team. I became very homesick and depressed again. Because I want to go home and see a good college football game with my family.

Tonight a Phillipino Band played in the Officer's Club. One of the members of the band impersonated Johnny Cash and he was really great. He sounded just like the great "Cash."

Lately, I have really had a sloppy attitude towards my job. I guess I jsut want to come home. It is extremely difficult to get motivated. Fortunately, I have some outstanding people working for me so at least somebody keeps me straight.

I am really thinking about coming to Hawaii for fourteen days over New Year's. Even if

it costs \$558.00 I am going crazy in this goddamned war and I need your body and conversational ability to get me thinking straight again. If I can get home in January April is only ninty days away and July is only ninty days from April. After waiting almost six months to see you three months will be nothing. I am really getting my hopes up that the Chief of Staff will let me go for fourteen days. I am jsut plain unhappy without you.

Boy, I'll tell you one thing never again will I ever let our relationship get screwed up like it did at Fort Bliss. Our lives are jsut too short. After all we have only fifty more years to really love each other and that's not long enough for me.

Love,

Mike

Can Tho, RVN
26 November '70

Dear Judy,

I had planned for you to fly home with me when I returned to Hawaii on the way to Travis; however, it appears you have already decided what you are going to do. You can use the money in the Southwest National Bank to fly from Travis to Baton Rouge. I'll pick up the car in Oakland and drive it home from there if you are in such a hurry to leave Honolulu.

....

Obviously, this is not a very happy Birthday because I am somewhat put out with your decisions for the future. I could write reams about it but I am not.

Yes, I'll be happy as a young buck in rutting season to see you again. It's hard to believe so much time has passed and that we have so long to go, before this experience is over.

You know there are many things I see and feel over here about the war, the military, the Vietnamese, and idiot field grad officers that really get my spirits down almost instantly if I think about it. Consequently, I jsut do not think about it. I just force myself to think of you or someother pleasureable memory and I am far less jumpy. Maybe this is the most valuable lesson of Vietnam.

The Thanksgiving dinner in the Mess was excellant. It really tore me up though. All I could think aobut was being together, and how this was my last Thanksgiving away from home.

I hope Van's constipation will pass soon. Poor kid, I bet that really hurts. You are writing about how Van talks to your engagement ring. Is he really starting to try to talk. I can not imagine him now.

Your last two paragraphs of you letter were just out of sight. I am so depressed just this minute because I want to be with you now that I am headed to the officer's club to down my sorrows with liberal doses of double shots of burbon on the rocks.

Your comment about "wanting more than anything to make me happier than I've ever been before," is like a light at the end of a long tortuous tunnel these three years of service have been. I guess we have have finally both realized simultaneously that we both despretely need

each other to daily face the jungle we live in today.

Woman, I love you.

Mike

Can Tho, RVN
27 November '70

Dear Judy,

I received your letters of 18 and 23 November today.

Yes, we do get *Look*. I immediately went to the library to get the 17 November issue but it was not available. I am sure the issue would have disgusted me throughly.

You know love my opinion of the news media gets lower day by day. The only thing that is different about my opinion of the news media now is the fact I have more ammunition with which to explain my position. Really this is a black period of American journalism. I mean really black.

Unless one has been over here a person has absolutely no understanding of this war. In fact any kind of notions one has about this war, this land, and its people are only swallow opinions which parrot the usually inaccurate news feature stories from Vietnam unless this place is seen first hand. Often times American soldiers are assigned in positions which prohibit them from seeing the big picture of this war. Gene Swanson is a typical example. Hw was an American soldier in an American unit with a mission of killing the V.C. This is only one minor aspect of this war. His opinion of the Vietnamese people is only one of complete hate. After all a soldier must be able to hate before he can kill easily.

Unfortunately, one of the great failings of the government in this war was its failure to articulate all the different types of wars that exist in Vietnam. Define them clearly for the American people and the American soldiers so not man could possibly misunderstand his role in this many faceted war.

I am only now beginning to grasp a significant understanding of what is really going on and its only because I am in contact daily with the people who are setting the pacification Vietnamization policies in the Delta. Also, I have had an opportunity to hear Ambassador Colby speak once a month about how Vietnam is doing with its internal political situation, which is really isn't that bad.

Unfortunately, the news media is not allowed to get close to these sessions because they would only prostitute them.

Judy, we have a hell of success story going on in Kein Hoa Province, where the V.C. movement started. I ahve been sending correspondeants there and in the face of steady progress in pacification the feed back I get is that Kein Hoa is (1) all V.C. controlled which is untrue; (2)that we are barely above water which is untrue; (3) that the situation is really hopeless anyway; (4) that all Vietnamese do not like the present regime. This is the typical story in the face of startlingly successful story which is growing daily. Someday the American press is going to pay a price for what they have done, and you can bet I am going to be right there collecting for

every G.I. that's died over here.

You know this year's election was hailed as a great defeat for President Nixon. The more I think about this the sicker I get. By all rights, the President's gain is equal to that of Kennedy in 1962 and that was hailed as a great personal triumph for Kennedy. This is just one example of a party line being decided on and adhered to by some historically ignorant journalists.

Yes you are so right something is desperately wrong with our country. Even Keith Phelps believes we should give up and go home because we have torn up this country and the U.S. and caused so many refugee problems. After 44,000 K.I.A.'s we just quit. Unbelievable!! Even I have read enough history to know the emotional reaction to such once the realization came to middle America that we quit would be worse than you and I can imagine.

You are not the only one getting excited about coming to Hawaii for fourteen days. It's occupying seventy-five percent of my thoughts daily. Love it's only fifty days away right now. It's out of sight.

I would be delighted to meet all those people again, but first love I want to be alone with you for sometime before I allow anyone to intrude.

Please let me know what the answer was about taking a boat back to that States.

....

I may not think that you have a lot of sense sometimes, but then you think I am pretty inhuman at others, so maybe it's a Mexican standoff. Through it all we still have each other and need each other for mental, emotional, ego and sexual support. I guess that's what marriage is all about. You have become the air that I breathe now. Let's not foul it up for each other like we did at Fort Bliss.

Please write soon.

Love,

Mike

Can Tho, RVN
28 November '70

Dear Judy,

Today I did not receive a letter from you; however, we spoke together on the phone twice today.

....

Judy, you sounded like you really wanted me close on the phone today. I could just sense it. I felt so bad because I could not be there to somehow attempt in my usually bungling way to make you laugh again and take strength from me.

Love and marriage are the most amazing experiences. Junny how we have become so dependant upon each other for emotional support. The days just pass here and I try to pretend you are close, but somehow 6,000 miles is just too much distance and I feel very much alone. I need to talk to you. I need to get away from hard heads and listen to your soft voice in the

middle of the night.

I really do not understand how professional soldiers accept the separations. Well, I guess I do understand, they go out on their wives. The guys that play it straight really just do not like separations. Most of them are not career soldiers for that reason.

Can you believe its only forty-nine days and we'll be together again. Even if its only for a short time at least we can live and love like we should have been doing for three years before this Vietnam business.

The last three days I have been having dirreaha again. I have no idea where I caught it. It just strikes every morning about 0630 when I have a full face of lather and I have to run to the tolit. Then I have to search for tolit paper, napkins, hand towels or maybe occasional tolit paper. Such is life in this unbelievable place.

....
I think this Tuesday I can finally began taking X rays and lab tests for my physical exam that must be submitted with my resignation.

Well love, its late. I feel like my last letters have upset you unduly. You must believe that I truly love you and need you. God woman I can not imagine living without you and you can not imagine how despreately I want this incredible experience in loneliness to end.

Please write soon.

I Love You,

Mike

Can Tho, RVN
29 November '70

Dearly Beloved,

I received your letters of 23 and 24 November today.

....
The new government policy of paying taxes on your move is just one more example of the serviceman getting a screw job by the government. I am gland we only have on more move to make with Uncle Sam.

Well, the last two lines of this letter you begin with "Dear Old Goat." I guess something I have said has given you a case of the ass.

Judy, I am sorry I have harassed you so unmercifully in my previous letters. I hope you took it all with a grain of salt, but I have an intuition that you did not.

As the wife of a Regular Army Captain you will not beg for your deposit to leave the apartment early, nor will you go around asking people to live in their homes. I will support you with what you need.

To take some pressure off of you right now, I want you to put aside the business of the claim for our goods and not work on it again until after we have seen each other. We have two years and there's no need to daily remind yourself of that disaster. Break your problems into

— small units and take them one at the time.

Really, love, I want you to stay in that apartment.

....

I have a picture of you in my room and everybody comments about how good looking you are. Guess, I am really a lucky guy to be married to a beautiful intelligent, fine, motherly, _____ woman. You can also cook too, which is a priceless asset.

Of course supporting my wife is no mean trick because of her desires for silver, rings, wigs, clothes, and cars, but if I did not want the very best of everything, I really would not have so much to work for.

....

Things are never as bad or as good as they appear initially love. You must say that to yourself over and over again. And if it really looks bad I'll be there to help you out as best I can.

I truly love you with all of my being.

Love,

Mike

Can Tho, RVN
30 November '70

— Dear Judy,

I received your letter of 26 November today. I was delighted at the whole tone of your letter. You seemed so much happier, sure of yourself, and at least assured that your future course of action was going to work out.

....

Is not this world small? Who would ever believe we would meet Sue Ann McKinney again. Sue Ann never impressed me as being either nervous or pessimistic. Of course, you did not act very relaxed a month or two before I shipped over. No doubt about it, hardship tours are just tough. Civilians just have no conception of what being in the military means. I can not understand your trying to sell Sue Ann about being a military wife. It sounds like you do not want me to get out of the service. Frankly, I am going to miss the service. Hopefully, a career in public affairs and law will offer as much challenge as the military. Of course, I have been extremely lucky to be assigned the jobs which require maximum effort to keep my head above water. It's going to be hard to accept less responsibility in civilian life, almost like a void.

I wrote a major staff paper today which recommended replacement of my counterpart, Captain Tai. My secretary was really shocked that I would do such a thing. I explained to her that in war mediocre performance of duty is unacceptable, especially, in the area of public information in Vietnam. The staff responsibility for the image of the ARVN is too important to allow an incompetent to continue. Then I told her that it would not matter if Captain Tai was my friend in war only performance matters. She was really surprised at the American ethic of either put out or get out. She really thinks I am a slave driver.

Your Thanksgiving meal really sounded out of this world. The food here is O.K. But it is really institutional quality. You are a good cook and I am very proud that you take pride in the art.

I was really tickled at your expression of delight "Oh Happy Day" because now you could start taking the pill again. The time is really flying now. It's going to be great to be together again.

Yes, Thanksgiving 1971 is going to be different from 1970. Van will be getting into everything, Shane will be underfoot. The weather will be cool, hunting season will be on. Football games will parade over our black and white television one after the other and with all of this we'll eat together and truly give thanks that life can be so wonderful.

Love I am giving some thought to trying to get an L.L.M. if my grades are high enough after my J.D. It only requires twenty-four more hours. With an L.L.M. I can teach the law, and being able to teach in a university gives us a mobility not characteristic of all jobs. Really the world is too big to settle for too long. Of course, there's no telling what my attitude will be after three more years in a university. We just take each day as it comes. After all, the day you are living is the most important day of your life.

Yes, law school does mean a lot to me. If I had not been hurt in jump school, I would have been one of those volunteers to raid the P.O.W. camp, but since I can never physically ever lead troops in a ground gaining arm in a crusade, I must find another way to serve my country, and find a measure of self satisfaction. One thing is for sure, never before has our country in its history needed men of character in its judicial system. The Warren court almost destroyed the U.S. To correct the situation is a worthy mission.

When I come to Honolulu, I would really like to visit Pearl Harbor. So let's make plans to do it. Son Van will have visited more battlefields in his young life. Someday he'll make a fine soldier.

This SJA captain from L.S.U. is really something. I caused quite a storm at dinner tonight at the "tail table" in the General's Mess when I announced to a young lieutenant that he was being paid to work twenty-four hours a day seven days a week if required of him. Ole Captain Levy chimed in with something like "your from L.S.U. you are not supposed to think like that." I almost told him I would love to see him stand up in front of troops and order them to do something. Love, there's just no comparison in our maturity. I am so fortunate to have worked for LTC Milam. That Battery almost broke me, but I became a man at a very early age. Frankly, I do not think Levy will ever have it. Then it dawned on me that people as immature as he is are causing all the problems in the universities. I owe the military far more than we ever lost in the fire.

Well love, tonight I am really talkative. I am just writing paragraph after paragraph as I feel them. Sunday afternoon I read a chapter in the Harbrace Handbook on paragraphs. A good paragraph should be fifty to 250 words long and that there are seven methods of developing them. I typed the seven methods on a small card. I carry this card with me so as I write anything I practice the different techniques to learn them. How could I have ever been so foolish as to not study my English lessons better? Now I must relearn them.

I love you and need you to build up my ego when it falters as it does occasionally. Soon we'll be together for a brief period to recharge our batteries, and thrill to the special feelings that

only a man and woman in love can share.

Please write soon.

Love,

Mike

I have selected the following articles from our command newspaper, *The Delta Advisor*, for the month of November. When we received all four thousand issues in the office the day before we were distribute them, SSG Matt Glasgow, after reviewing the front page, sounded an alarm. In the caption under the picture on the top right portion of the paper were the words "225th NVA Squadron" referring to the South Vietnamese Air Force Squadron that assumed the responsibilities of the U.S. Army's 121st Assault Helicopter Company at the turn over of Soc Trang Army Air Field. This could have been a major embarrassment. SSG Glasgow and the staff spent the night with black felt tipped pens marking out "NVA" on all four thousand copies. Distribution was made the next day and not one person said anything to me about the black mark on the front page of the paper. I did not tell General McCown what had happened.

Commanding General's Message

November is the month when all of us think about Thanksgiving, family reunions, and football games. In Vietnam, each of us is separated by thousands of miles from those memories which we hold so dear. Aside from these memories, Thanksgiving for every member of DMAC should have special meaning.

Today, we are assisting a developing nation to secure the same blessings of liberty that we give thanks for on Thanksgiving day. This is an unselfish task and each of you should take pride in the part you are playing. On balance the Delta is making steady and substantial progress in both the security and development fields and at this point in the campaign, time is no longer on the side of the enemy.

On Thanksgiving Day you families thoughts will no doubt be of you. Because of you, the American Serviceman, have always been ready to physically place yourself between your nation and her enemies, your nation will think of its sons on this day, and give thanks that men such as yourselves stand guard on the frontiers of freedom.

HAL D. McCOWN
Major General
Commanding

VNAF Vietnamese Soc Trang

Delta army airfield sets precedent

SOC TRANG- The first Vietnamization of this country's U.S. Army operated airfields went into final stages here with the recent transition from American to VNAF air-controllers.

Although ceremonies have marked past stages, and are planned for the official turnover, this latest change was effected without fanfare. Full responsibility for the facility's 350 daily take-offs and landings is expected to be placed in Viet hands within a few days.

According to informed sources, the development of the Army air base to VNAF control is a 'massive leap' in the Vietnamization process, and foreshadows similar steps soon to be taken throughout the country.

Termed smooth and efficient by observers; the project went into planning several months ago, on-the-job preparation for personnel started in mid-July. By early October the oldest aviation unit in the Mekong Delta, the 121st Assault Helicopter Company, had been replaced at Soc Trang by the 225th VNA Squadron. Major General Hal D. McCown during ceremonies there praised the departing unit for "a job well done," and commended the members.

Still working with the VNAF aviators is another element of the 13th Combat Aviation Battalion, the 336th Aviation Squadron dubbed the "Thunderbirds". The Company Commander, Captain Reginald E. Deal, commented on his unit's part in the turnover preparations.

"All the American personnel were volunteers in the program, as were the Vietnamese pilots. They worked side by side in a 90-day program.... There was no special schedule instituted, really my men just performed their daily jobs seven days a week with the Vietnamese taking an active part."

"For the first 30 days of the program there were set teams with one American pilot working together with two Vietnamese pilots. All of the Viet pilots had previously undergone intensive aviation training, as well as in English (the internationally official air-language), so there was no real language barrier."

"Following that schedule, the Vietnamese were assigned to spend the next three weeks flying combat support missions before starting to fly in actual combat-assault operations.

"It was interesting to see the feelings of comradeship that developed between the men of the Vietnamese Air Force and their American instructors..."

Captain Charles Hart, the "Thunderbirds" executive officer said the program had gone quite smoothly, with very few even minor problems arising, and cited what he felt were the reasons for the success of the program:

"The most important thing was the love of flying that is common to both groups. The second reason is that when the Vietnamese can take over, we are that much closer to going home."

Ironically, the airfield was initially built by Japanese occupational forces late in World War II, and was used to launch strikes against American and allied forces during the remainder of the war.

This next story contains information that would find itself being repeated on Paul

Harvey's Radio Program. However, it was properly cleared before we published it, but it still caused me to have to answer inquiries from Saigon mentioned in the letters this month.

Hoi Chanh Exposes Insurgency Operations

By SSG Matt Glasgow

CAN THO(Special)- "Fifty-five percent of all money used... by the VC comes in the form of U.S. green dollars, sent from COSVN and changed into piasters," a disillusioned former Viet Cong magazine editor has told authorities here according to reports made public recently.

Two, separate, correlating nine-page statements gave new insights into; the results of Red Chinese offers to send 'volunteers' to RVN during US operations in Cambodia, Viet Cong influence in recent demonstrations by disabled war veterans, and medical evacuation of enemy wounded into North Vietnam.

He also described a sagging VC morale, influence, and deteriorating conditions within VC ranks in the Mekong Delta.

"... Red China had offered to send volunteers to South Vietnam after the U.S. and ARVN operations in Cambodia began," he said in one statement. "The head of COSVN sent a hurried message to Hanoi to tell the Chinese that 'COSVN could hardly feed its own men, much less Chinese volunteers'; COSVN instead requested financial aid.

"Red China started sending financial aid in the form of US green dollars to COSVN," he alleged.

The ex-V.C. termed cooperative, intelligent, and knowledgeable by interrogators, also stated:

"In May '70," according to the source- who's name is being withheld, "the medical officer was ordered to send all 'A' and 'B' class (seriously) wounded to Cambodia for shipment to North Vietnam. The higher ranking cadre were to be flown. .. And the lower ranking were to be taken. . by truck." He gave the reason for the movement as "to ensure better medical treatment." An earlier report, believed to be unsubstantiated, of this procedure was made to military authorities when an NVA officer defected last month.

The propaganda chief indicated that, after discussing it with his wife, they both turned themselves in to the 9th ARVN troops because he "was tired of lying to his people," during lectures he was required to present on the "the many VC victories and the tremendous strength of the Viet Cong," during which he said he felt he had "lost face. . . because many of the people knew differently, or at least suspected (he) was lying."

Hinting at discord within the movement, he said:

"There were no problems between low-ranking VC and NVA but the higher ranking Communists often dispute among themselves concerning military tactics."

"The NVA do not agree with the guerilla warfare tactics use by the V.C..., but the VC insist that these tactics are absolutely necessary to secure victory."

"The morale of the (VC) cadre was very low... many stated that there was no hope of success..." he said, then added, "how were they expected to increase VC control of the rural if they couldn't control what they already had."

In what he described as an attempt to augment diminishing forces, "A letter was sent to

all cadre that had deserted, asking them to come back to the unit..." He indicated the measure had not been highly successful.

Also reported was a 'Military Proselyting Section' in charge of "Seeing that the VC imported marijuana from Cambodia and that it got to distributors (who) sold this marijuana to US soldiers.

"It was an effective tool of the political cadre who said it reduced discipline and fighting spirit in the US troops, "He added that the importation "was a form of revenue."

Beginning with the Viet Minh in 1947, he joined the Viet Cong ten years ago and became a probationary Communist Party member for a year before being accepted into the party in 1962. His decision to leave the insurgent ranks, he said, was also influenced by pro-communist villagers who mad remarks to the effect that they wished the GVN would pacify their respective areas; and by his own convictions that the communist goals could never succeed.

Members of his committee received one liter of rice and four piasters per day for food, he related, but also said that three months out of the year they must provide their own food. "Low level cadre received 60 piasters, middle level 150 piasters, and high level cadre 200 piasters per month for pay."

A military spokesman declined to comment on the relative improtance of the information, but said:

" The fact that this particular high-ranking individual rallied from a (VC) controlled area is indicative of the success of recent operations there, and may well be the start of even greater numbers of prominent Viet Cong to rally from the region."

CAI-SON PILOTS NEW AQUA FILTER

CAN THO- Bringing water to the Mekong Delta, at least on the surface seems a lot like bringing coals to Newcastle.

With much of the country under water most of the year, there is water for washing, water for irrigation, water for swimming, even water where it isn't wanted. Yet there is a water shortage; except in the ubran areas there is little or no water fit for human consumption.

The answer to this problem recently came in the form of a simplified purification system and, as often is the case, tehe installation of the system was dignified by a ceremony.

Help at the Cai-Son Refugee Village in Binh Dinh District of Vinh Long Provice, the ceremony marked the opening of the Slow Sand Filter Water Purification System the first of its kind in Vietnam.

"This is a first step towards combating the contaminated water situation in rural areas of South Vietnam," according to Mr. Willard C. Johnson, a CORDS Sanitation Advisor.

Discussion of installing the system in the Delta began in June and was originally proposed by Mr. W.D. Savies, Chief of Environmental Sanitation for USAID Public Health for all South Vietnam. Difficulty arose in trying to persuade the various provice chiefs throughout the Delta as to the feasibility of the system but in July, the Province Chief of Vinh Long expressed interest in this project. He promised to provide the manpower and the materials to build the Sand Filter if CORDS would provide the technical assistance.

The project began in the middle of the month, and by September 22 was ready for operation. The Province Chief contributed materials and labor as promised, and the Ministry of Health and CORDS/Public Health Division of the Military Region 4, provided pipes, pumps, fittings, chlorinator and technical knowledge.

For communities that have a population of 4,000 or more, the Department of Public Works in Saigon, will now provide, on request, a water filter system through the Director of Public Water Supply. The Slow Sand Filter System is ideal for the hamlets and small villages which do not have a population of at least 4,000 because in many cases throughout Vietnam, the source of water is limited to the rivers and canals.

The Slow Sand Filter is an excellent method of water treatment for rural water supplies. If maintained and operated properly, it can be expected to reduce the bacteria count up to 99%, reduce turbidity up to 90% and will reduce and remove taste and odors. The filter requires minimum operational and maintenance skill and requires minimum maintenance operational cost.

The Slow Sand Filter Water System is 15 by 15 feet, and will produce 9,000 gallons of purified water per day.

Numerous new requests from throughout Vietnam have been received by CORDS asking for information concerning the filter system.

Presently a Slow Sand Filter System is being placed in Dalat and two systems are in the planning stage in Dinh Tuong Province. Dr. M.M. Shutt, Director of Public Health for Military Region 4's sixteen provinces is "very excited" about the project, because "it will play a very significant role in the Pacification Program."

"There are few other investments of effort that will play as much in health benefits as this rural water supply is a basic requirement of healthful environmental control measures against the transmission of most intestinal disease, which often constitute the major public health problems in rural areas", he said.

Mr. Johnson, who coordinated all activities on this project between CORDS and the Province Chief of Vinh Long stated:

"We feel this will be a tremendous boost to the Pacification Program because it requires community development, it is something people want, need, and are eager to have because they can see the end product - good, clean water. It'll make it easier for people to identify with their government because they are being helped by their government- and this is what Pacification is all about."

PORTRAIT OF A 7-MOUNTAINS REFUGEE

By SP4 Larry Coble

SEVEN MOUNTAINS- An old farmer, wrinkled and brown from his 65 years of trying to scratch a living from these rugged Chau Doc mountains, stood and quivered under the burden of his age.

His dirty, worn shirt and shorts spoke of his livelihood and his income; but the sad weary eyes did more to tell his story. He is a refugee.

His family stood, and sat, around him in respectful silence as he spoke; addressing a representative from the "New Life Development" branch of CORDS in Chau Doc Province. With a quiet dignity he explained his problem and indirectly, those of other nearby peasants from villages with names like "Co To, An Tuc, and O Lam."

His plight was one many people go through during wars. He told of the strife in his small community that followed when VC main force units turned his land into a specified strike zone and of his reluctant departure. Behind him he left a home and a field full of freshly planted rice, he said.

His new home became Tri Ton, and a temporary facility provided for him and his impoverished family by the Social Welfare Service. And he was given money, not a great deal of it-- but enough to live on.

"Many of the people around 'Nui Co To' mountain are farmers; they have no skills and can't find work," commented Gary Bishop, War Victims Advisor for the province. "Government funds are made available to provide the necessities."

"These families have to exist, and they are given money for food. Too, this means more commercial sale of rice on a local level and will add to the economy."

The temporary shelter and government money will continue to come for as long as it is needed. Eventually resettlement in either his old home, or in a new area will come. In the meantime there is the uncertainty, and the waiting.

"The people came out of area in April, just before the clean up began on the VC sanctuaries on both sides of the Cambodian border. Hopefully they will be back in their homes very soon.

"Plans have already been drawn up for the return of the people to the villages around Nui Co To, even though the mountain is still held by the VC," Bishop said.

The ARVN 9th Division has undertaken the painstaking task of reclaiming the most heavily contested of the Seven Mountains. The Social Welfare Service is standing by to help move the villagers when the operation ends.

"Many of the people will have to rebuild their homes because they have been destroyed or damaged. Again government funds will be made available to assist them to rebuild.

The farmer stood looking off at the mountains between he and his home, hope and hopelessness conflicting upon his face. Although his needs are being provided for, his only expressed desire- which he put emphatically- was to go home. After more than a half century of prideful independence, as a farmer, he wanted nothing he could not work for.

Asked how he could possibly make the long journey, he pointed a gnarled finger at his bare feet and said, "Walk!" The look in the man's eyes said he would make it.

ENGINEERS RESTORE VITAL ARTERY, BRING NEW FUTURE TO OLD VILLAGE

THUONG THANH DONG-Of the 2,100 farmers and peasants who once lived in this typically agrarian village near Can Tho, only a handful remained- hte obstinate, the determined and the defiant.

As in many other regions of the Mekong Delta, the merciless terrorist attacks and brutal fighting of Tet 1968 forced many of the villagers into exodus. Behind them they left friends, ancestral lands, and the much-reserved graves of forebears; in front lay the chaotic life of the refugee.

Near the end of the week-long battle, a retreating enemy destroyed the community's only land-link with the outside world- a three mile span of roadway jutting from National Highway 4.

After the turmoil, Regional and Popular Forces joined with ARVN combat units to bring security to the area, but the loss of trade related to vehicle traffic forced still more of the people to emigrate.

Reaching local markets in nearby Can Tho became virtually impossible, requiring nearly a full day of traveling alternatively by foot and sampan. As the village slowly died of financial strangulation even those who braved the Tet attack were gradually surrendering to what appeared inevitable.

Recently, help came to Thuong Thanh Dong just as unexpectedly as had the enemy of two years ago. A DMAC advisory team leader, Captain Robert Neilan, discovered the plight of the dwindling village. Shortly after, his plea for assistance brought 34th Engineer Group plows, culverts, work crews, and road building equipment to the scene.

"You wouldn't believe that road," exclaimed a plow operator. "Three Bridges had been blown away and 20-foot banana trees had grown in the road. It looked like it hadn't been used in ten years."

After detonating landmines "in-place", the crews graded the road to the first of the shambled bridges. Opting for culverts to replace them brought a surprise to at least one of the engineers.

"The people watched us assembling the culvert sections at first, then the next thing we knew they were pitching in and helping us put them together. The next day they were out there again, giving us a hand putting the finished sections in place," said the NCO in charge. "I just can't get over it, the way they came to help without anyone even asking."

Already the flow of people has been reversed, those who once fled are returning. It will be some time yet before the community will resemble its former self; the scars of war heal slowly, even psychological ones. But here, as in thousands of Delta hamlets like this one, the efforts of advisory teams are producing tangible indications of a better future for the Vietnamese people.