C: I would like you to describe something about, we were talking earlier you mentioned that in going to Kaison there was a tremendous problem that you were just plain scared and I wonder if you would say something about your own experiences in going to Kaison and what it was like trying to cover the battle of Kaison as a photographer, and if you'd mention this in the beginning of your answer, I'd appreciate it.

A: To give you an idea of the first time I went into Kaison, and for most correspondents or photographers in Vietnam to go in, nine times out of ten you have you going on a resupply plane, or an ammo plane, and the first time I went in I went on an ammo plane which was loaded with rockets and grenades and all sorts of ammunition, and coming into Kaison, in fact at the landing strip, as soon as you start going down a little low, you know, coming down to the landing, machine gun opens up, and this guy was a Vietcong, or a North Vietnamese based right there and he fired on every plane going in. And the holes started popping through the tail end, and in fact, the crew chief was right next to me and he got hit, on our way in. This was, I'd say every other plane got hit, you know, they just got a few holes going in and the planes never stopped moving, which you may know, they just kept on the runway and made a turnaround and you jumped out of the plane, the ammo was thrown out while the plane was still moving to take off to get, because if it stayed on the ground just for a couple of minutes it could've been hit and getting hit, and all the times I'd been there I spent most of my time underground with the CB's, because they're the best . We'd go above ground and you'd be up
for only a few minutes before an incoming would start coming and you'd head right back down below. Most of the correspondents stayed with the CBs, it was a spooky place. Like I said, I'd been on about a hundred and fifty operations in Vietnam, and this was probably the spookiest place, you know, I'd rather go on an operation any time where I knew that I could hit the ground. But even so, Kaison was just so, there weren't any concentrated areas, except the airstrip, all around the airstrip was just unsafe at any time, it was a bad scene.

C: One of the things that is a problem of anyone trying to cover Kaison in the visual sense is getting, much of the battle took place in the surrounding hills. Can you say something about how your chances or anyone else's for getting out to one of those surrounding hills to get photographs of what was going on?

A: Well, some of the things, well, first of all, it was very slim, I don't think that most of the correspondents, number one, would want to go, and number two, I think it would be very difficult to get out there. Again, because you didn't have that many helicopters, you know, not out of Kaison as such, you know, you possibly could go from another direction but out of Kaison to get into these hills it was just practically nil. No chance.

C: When you described a few minutes ago your experience once in trying to get there, could you go over that?

A: There was a helicopter that was in Kaison that was lifting out, and I thought they were going to send reinforcements into a battle that was taking place. So I had jumped on that helicopter, and we went out a few minutes out and the helicopter set down and I jumped out of the helicopter and in the mean time there were wounded, I
think there were three wounded Marines being thrown aboard, including
the one Marine there were about four altogether who was helping them,
and two German shepherds and while they were doing that I was making
pictures of this and I thought that there was, like I say, some rein-
forcements coming and they just started lifting off and I was still
standing on the ground and I was all alone. So I just started
shouting and waving them back and they picked me up and brought me
back into Kaison.

C: Would you say something about, for instance, when you went to
Kaison, did you get orders from AP to go out there, or was it just
common sense, because there was a battle?
A: No, no, this is one thing, and I think the same thing goes with,
I think could speak for most of those organizations, I don't think
anyone could tell you specifically, it's the same thing with Vietnam,
I was asked to go, or I was told to go, but I wanted to go, and I
think that anyone that wanted to turned them down on any battle sit-
uation there wouldn't be any, you know, no regrets,
I mean on any side, I don't think that, there wouldn't be any flack,
they kind of left that up to you.

C: One of the things we talked about a few minutes ago was David
Douglas Duncan's coverage at Kaison, and I wonder if you would say
something about your opinion of his coverage?
A: I think that Duncan, on his photographs, kind of said it. I
think they were the only pictures that come out of Kaison that really
said it; set the mood, and the feeling. They were very depressing-
looking pictures, but that was a very depressing place. I really
respected him and admired him for what he did because I didn't, I
wasn't able to do what he did.

C: One of the things we've talked, learned in talking to some of
the Marines at Kaison is the fact that they didn't feel this tremendous sense of foreboding, they felt that they were secure, and those who knew about this felt ______ secure.

A: No, that's just a lot of______, I mean, right away, I mean, those Marines were more spooked than the correspondents up there. I mean they were like "this" all the time and I think that's a lot of crap, I don't care what the Marines, I was in the Marine Corp myself during the Korean War, and they were spooked when they'd go in, when they'd get out, and when they were there, when they were there. So I think that's a lot of crap.

C: One of the things that, when we talked for a second about this famous photograph of General ______, and I'm sure you've been through this a number of times and seen things in print where you've described it, but I wonder if you would simply describe the circumstances that led to the taking of this photograph in as much detail as you feel like? ______ Context

A: The Loan picture, to give you a little background, AP and NBC TV were in the same building in Saigon, on the same floor, our offices were practically adjoining. And what would happen as the normal thing we would hear something, a little battle taking place or something we'd ask the NBC crew, we'd tip them off about it, and vice versa. They would help us and we would help them. And this particular day I had heard about, in fact I think it was NBC, yeah, NBC had heard about a battle taking place in the ______ area in Saigon which is a Chinese section of Saigon, and asked if I wanted to go along with them. Well, thing is, I prefer to travel with four people, or three other people and myself than alone, and I think it just makes it a little more comfortable. So, it was Howard ______
from NBC who was the correspondent and __________ the Vietnamese cameraman and myself and then the sound man and we had driven, we drove to __________ and you could hear all the shooting, the streets were pretty well deserted, so we parked our car I guess about three or four blocks away from where the shooting was and we'd walked up the street and there was a battle taking place at the __________ pagoda, and it was between the VietKong were inside the pagoda and the South Vietnamese police and army was having a shootout, and there were some people getting killed in crossfire inside and so we were covering this. And to us it didn't seem like, you know, we shot some stuff and so what, it wasn't that big of a deal. So I'd asked __________ and _________ if they were about finished and they said yeah, they're ready to wrap it up, it wasn't much. So we started walking back towards the car, and on the way back, this is about a half a block or so after we had passed the, you know, out of the battle area, we noticed that the guy who was in the picture later, a suspect the VietKong __________ suspect was picked up and they were walking him in the direction we were going. As any good police reporter or news photographer, you would photograph any prisoner, it's just in the states you could pick Baton Rouge or anyplace else, if the suspect's picked up and walked to a van you would photograph it. So we just kept following them again because the suspect might take a sling, might fall down, and it was going to make a picture. So we just followed him on up to the corner, and we noticed the jeep on the side there, and we were getting ready to turn to ourman and all of the sudden to my left was General Loan, he was then a Colonel, the chief of police of Vietnam, of South Vietnam. He came in from the left. Well, I didn't even know who he was, _________ didn't know who he was, we'd never really
seen him before, and he walked over, looked at him without any, you know, reached for his gun, and I seen him reach for his pistol and quite often, you know, covering the war quite a few situations, to give you a little background, with a pistol or police they might threaten somebody, you know, there's a lot of threatening going on putting to somebody's head, so, he went for the pistol, which I tho't was going to happen, and he aimed it, shot him instantly, put his pistol back into the holster and walked away. And at the time that he brought his pistol up I had made the picture but at the same time the bullet went through his head which we later had the Army bullistics people figured it out that the photograph was taken at the time the bullet was still in his head, it was passing through his head, which I didn't even know. And, he started walking away, and he said to myself and standing there, he said they killed many Americans and many of my people, and you know walked away and took off. Well, we found out later, it wasn't 'til about a couple days later, that we found out that the guy was a VietKong lieutenant, and he had killed the policemen from the second story of the building where we, in that area where we were, and they had grabbed him immediately. And he supposedly had papers saying that he was a lieutenant in the VietKong. The picture, I had no idea, like, to me, my own feeling was at that time somebody got shot in the head, so what? In fact I dropped the film off in the office, I didn't even stay to get it processed, I handed it to one of the guys in the darkroom and I said I think I got this guy shooting somebody, I don't know, and I walked out, in fact I went to lunch, to be quite honest with you, you become very calloused over there. And again to me it was somebody getting shot, so what? I mean, values are completely different in Vietnam than here,
you know, going back if I get killed in Vietnam, I was ready, just like everybody else, you see body bags stacked up and you kind of accept the fact that you could get killed. You know, there's no big deal. And, anyway, the picture was released, even when I'd seen it when it was transmitted I didn't think much of it, you know, so what? The telegrams and telexes started, who is this guy, worldwide reaction to the picture, this is coming out of the API, of course in New York, running eight columns across the newspapers in Europe, Asia, and the States, it was just, I couldn't believe it, I couldn't understand why, you know, you go back and my whole feelings of the war at that time, yeah, I was very gungho, in 1966, you know, I tho't we're in there, we're going to show them, well '65, I'm sorry, then '66 and I'd come back to the states for awhile and I started turning my own feelings against the war, if it was the right thing, but then in '68, you know, I was totally out of it, and then we did hear that the picture did have an awful lot to do with America changing its thinking towards the war in Vietnam. And we've heard quite often, in fact, going back to the photograph, the North Vietnamese artists did a whole big thing on their version of this photograph and had a big exposition in Tokyo and other places around the world, sort of some version of this picture. And the same thing, if I understand the impact of modern art I never went over to see it, because I always try to separate myself from that picture, it's kind of become a stamp, and I felt as a photographer, I felt I did pretty good pictures before that and pretty good pictures since that and this was a question of just me being there and photographing something that had happened that any idiot could've done with a camera. And so to me it hurts me more than it helps me. I feel, also, what it did to General Loan,
bothers me an awful lot, I give an awful lot of lectures around
the states and that picture's not in my presentation, it hasn't
been for years, and I never bring it up because again I feel that the
picture, that ______ were two lives destroyed, not just one, I
think I was shooting with General Loan. And, I'd like to talk a
little bit about Loan if we can. I got to, fact I'll tell you
something very funny, when these telegrams kept coming in, they
wanted the story on Loan, who is he, what did he do, a lot of the
editors were asking. So I go out there to the AP to go do a story
on him, and the office said stay away from him, and I said well, I'll
take my chances, and they said they'd prefer that I didn't. In the
meantime I decided to go ahead anyway. And I went to General Loan,
again he was Colonel then, I went to his office and the Colonel,
______ I said I'd like to see Colonel Loan and he said he's very
busy and doesn't have any time. Well, I did this for two weeks
every day I'd go back to his office and I kept being turned down.
So at the end of two weeks the Colonel says go ahead, he'll see you.
So I walked in, this is kind of interesting, I walked into his office,
and I wasn't going to bring up the picture at all, I was just going to
spend about a week with him and do a story on him, and Loan got up
from his desk and put his nose right next to mine, looked right into
my eyes, and said, "I know the Vietnamese who took that picture,"
then went back to his desk and sat down. Now, why he said Viet-
I think he was taking the blame away from me at that time, to say,
he knew it was a Vietnamese that took it. And he sat down at his desk
and then he went on to tell me, he says, "You know," he says, "my
wife gave me hell," he says, "for not taking the film from the photog-
graper who took that picture." I had never brought up, mentioned the
picture once to him, and he said, "She thinks that, she thought that
was all that was on my mind, taking film away from a photographer."

Well, what had happened, he did tell me, he did okay me going with
him for a few days, and we went up to ______ and he was walking there
as a, the people, you know, there'd been a lot of bad things that
were said about Loan about black marketing, everything else, I don't
know that side of him. I know him fairly well as a person, and he
might not be the handsomest guy in the world but he's a polite guy,
he's not a dummy, which he might look like in the picture, some of
his background, he was first in his class at the Air Force Academy,
first in the class at the Army War College, right down the line,
his sister did, I don't know if she still does, taught Pharmacology
at Harvard. His brother is an M.D., you know the whole family is,
he's not a dummy. And, I might be skipping all over going from
place to place but what really irritates me is I won the thing in
world press ________ hauling in the hay for this photograph, I
had to go to Holland to receive this award, a 'big thing, and big
deal over there, and the first thing all the newsmen converged on me
this is not long after the picture and wanted to know why I didn't
stop the General from shooting, shooting that man, you know, it was
an idiotic question. But, in any event, I asked a lot of people
one thing is that say you were the general, or say I was the general
at that time and my people were getting killed and people were getting
killed around me, how do you know what you would've done if the guy
had just killed one of your people, one of your friends, how do you
know what you would've done, how do you know you wouldn't have shot
him? I'm not saying that he did the right thing, or he did the
wrong thing, I don't know how the human mind works, you know, how
do you know what you would've done? And for the guys being condemned,
you know, he was on, he was fighting for the U.S. government as well, they didn't want to fly into America, which they didn't, you know it was just a bad scene, I really feel sorry for this man, and I feel very responsible for him right now for screwing up his life.

C: Let's stop for a second, okay?

A: I thought I was jumping all over.

C: No, I'll tell you, Eddie, that was great, and the way you described that is just fine, so don't worry about it. Some people

yeah, that's fine, it's very coherent, it's of a piece, it's great.

C: I think I'd kind of like to pick up with a couple of things we were talking about, one of the things we were talking about just a minute ago was the explanation of why you wanted to go to Vietnam and I was fascinated with your discussion when you came back with the GI on crutches, and then the The question is if you'd start with a certain answer, why did you want to go to Vietnam in the first place as a photographer?

A: I don't really know why; when I went to Vietnam the first time I did volunteer. Possibly it was because, as a newsman you know you always want to be on the biggest story, just an automatic thing, you know, and probably more than that, I really haven't honestly really thought about it, and when I first went there, I believe it was February of '65, and he only had U.S. advisors and Vietnamese troops there before the Marines had come in. So, I would go out quite often with the Vietnamese and then when the Marines came in I switched, you know, still cover some Vietnamese operations, but basically I moved up to D'Nang and worked with the Marine Corps from there on out for the most of the time. And I had come back, in fact, when I was sent to Vietnam, by Wes Gallagher, then the president of AP, he said it was a temporary
assignment just to see what happens, go on over, take a look around. At that time AP only had one, two, three people in Vietnam and that was Malcolm Brown, Peter Arnett, and ________, and they were the only three staffers and I was the second photographer sent there. And what'd happened, actually, the Marines came in and the thing kept building. Well, I had come home, I think, near the end of 1965, and I really wanted out of Vietnam. I came back, and I couldn't understand anyone; you know, I, one thing that really bothered me, I'd seen, in fact it was a Marine, walking right across the street on 6th avenue and 50th street with crutches, and the cab almost hit him, and kept blasting his horn at him, and you know the kid could only walk so fast. And that bothered me and nobody really seemed to care about Vietnam at all and that bothered me. And I walked into the AP office, and I seen all these slobs, to me they were nothing but slobs sitting there pounding away at their typewriters wearing their nice clothes, nobody cared. They didn't want to hear about Vietnam. And that really bothered me, you know, like, I think the only people who really were concerned about Vietnam because they had their son there or a relative, but that was it, they could care less what was going on, there was a war going on and like I say, nobody cared. And so I volunteered to go back to Vietnam, I felt my place was there, not back in the states. So I went back, and I felt more comfortable in Vietnam than I did in New York, and so I stayed there about, oh I guess another seven months, or eight months, and I was on an operation with Jack Lawrence from CBS and we were penned down in a cemetery, right in the middle of the Vietkong and South Vietnamese troops, I was with the first ________, you know with the first______, and this is about seven in the evening, and we watched the tracers just kick up around Lawrence and myself just outlining our bodies in the sand, and that
really got us spooked, you know, we were pretty well spooked, and I had asked to, I wrote a letter back to the AP asking to return home, which I did about a month later, and again, I thought it was all over, I never wanted to see the place again, and then January 1, in fact of 1968, I was on the plane back to Vietnam again.

C: One of the things you talked about a few minutes ago that fascinated me was the fact that you would refer to the Vietnamese and the Americans in the sense that as a photographer you weren't an American.

A: Yes, exactly. I think this on the Vietnamese Americans as we referred to them, and I don't think I was the only one, I think it was most of the correspondents, like, we would say the Americans are doing this, and the Americans are doing that, while the Vietnamese are doing this. We never really connected ourselves as being American, I'm not sure if we had any identity, I don't know what we were. We know that we're Americans, but we just did not, you know, we were there, we weren't fighting the war, we were covering it. Again, we just never referred to us as Americans ever, you know, it was them, it was their thing.

C: Another thing you mentioned out in the grass that fascinated me, you said that after awhile you came to feel that you could tell Marine officers all about where not to go.

A: Oh, yes, quite often, in fact, I'll give you one example. Again, I had, you know, I'd mentioned before I was in the Marine Corps during the Korean War, I was a photographer, and I didn't know that much about tactics, but I did learn an awful, in fact, going back to the Marine officers, in fact I would be out on an operation with the Vietnamese with the advisors, and sometimes there wouldn't be any advisors, and so I'd be the American, I'd be the advisor, so when the Vietnamese would come to me and say which way do we go, I didn't even know much about Vietnam or which direction. So we'd get a map and try to figure
out which direction we should go. This is on an operation. Well, after a while going out continually, especially when the Marines first came, I had more field experience than any of them, they weren't, really didn't get into anything until a little later on in the year. There was one example, there was a Marine captain, well, I'll give you two, one example was where we'd go to a Vietkong village which was supposedly a Vietkong village and most of the villages have bamboo fences around and wire, and the gate is closed. Well, this one captain he told a couple of guys to go up and open up the gate and I said I think it might be booby-trapped. And he, you know, it was like I was takin', I told him this to aside that I think that they should blow it up or something before they send any people up there. And I was questioning his authority, I guess, and he sent two guys up there and all they did was back off with a __________ both these guys being blown. You know, it was certain obvious things. Another time, that was a Marine captain that time, another time it was the army's 25th division. I went out with them, and again, you know, generally you know what happens on a battle or a particular operation I would generally go up by the point, or up forward, because I'd want to get pictures of them crawling through or coming through an area, so I'd be up ahead of them. That's the only way to get the pictures, if anybody's going to get hit it's at the point first, so then you get your pictures. And so what had happened we were straddling a road, we had troops on both sides of the road in the bush and this one, this was an Army captain now, he said he wanted everybody to go out on the road. And you know, it was dumb, you just don't walk down the center of the road. And so, again, I was up front, and so I just moved back, as soon as they started moving out on the road, and got my cameras ready. It wasn't but a little bit up forward, ______ detonated from trees and the Vietkong opened up and
the whole maybe about thirty people got hit right in front, I mean it was a dumb thing you know you say something to them and right away you're questioning their authority. Some say you learn these things only by going out into the field and I knew more about tactics and weapons, and I didn't make an effort to learn you just learn, you know, it was there and you had to know.

C: What you just said was interesting to me because it brought up something I wouldn't've though to ask you so I'm glad you told that particular story. One other thing that you mentioned outside before that I thought you just could say it again on camera, you mentioned going back to see Loan about a year ago, and would you like to describe that.

A: Okay, I'll go back to the one that. I was in Virginia, doing a story, again, on women Marines and women in the Marine officers school. And while I was there I was working with a friend of mine who I'd known from Vietnam another Marine who had since editor of the magazine. His house was near where General Loan had his restaurant and I said great I'd like to go visit him, so he wanted to come along, and I hadn't seen Loan in a number of years. So we got into the shopping center, in fact, it's in Springfield, Virginia, we got to the shopping center, and there's this small little, very tiny restaurant, and it's a pizza shop more than anything else, pizza and spaghetti and coffee, this sort of thing. So I walked through the door, and right behind the coffee machine peering staring right at me was General Loan. And his first reaction he just got out and said oh, you don't know the problems you've caused me, and I said I know, General, I know, and I said you know, General, you haven't changed a bit, you look just the same. He said well, you sure have, you've gotten a lot older. So he thought it was a little dig at me,
getting back. We went on, in fact, we talked for quite a few hours, and he went on to tell me of his problems of getting out of Vietnam and getting to the states, and the U.S. would not fly him. He said that, after all he had told me about his jobs, he couldn't get a job anywhere, went on to tell me, said, I was over-qualified so then I had to learn how to make pizza.

C: One of the things when we were talking outside about photographing this in the sense that you're unhappy that your best-known photograph "any damn fool could've shot", uh, we interviewed Peter and he said that that particular photograph he'd call super pornography that it does not mean anything, and I wonder if you could say something about what, if anything, you think that photograph means.

A: Well, you know, referring to that picture about pornography, it has been referred to that quite a few times, in fact, going back a minute to Penthouse Magazine the publisher of Penthouse is and a very good friend of mine, referred to that picture as such, he said that's pornography, not the pictures that he puts in his magazine. Well, I don't know, because that particular picture does not, I know what it did, but to me it was nothing, I mean to me it was, you know. Well, let me go back a minute, you know I got a Pulitzer Prize for that picture. And that bothered me because, look, I like the Pulitzer, I'm not knocking that, but what I couldn't understand it because it then again it was explained to me that the Pulitzer wasn't give to the photographer, it was given to the picture, you know, I mean, it takes no talent to take that picture, it really doesn't, it was just a question of being there. I would've like to've gotten a Pulitzer for something that I took a little bit of talent, or if I had seen something different from somebody else in the way I pieced together something, or if I had something to do with it, but I had nothing to do with that picture. I
was there. Another thing, this might be interesting too, is that say in wars or in dangerous situations psychologically, I guess, the camera is a steel wall between me and you, or say, if the bullets are coming, or any kind of situation, I would do things with a camera that I would not do with a normal human being. But I don't purposely do these things, I just do them, you know, this kind of shields me, the camera's like a shield and I will go into situations and unarmed I've never carried a weapon, but I feel that camera's going to protect me, you know, and I think that's part of survival, too, you know, I think that if you worry, that you worry, a lot of people were killed in Vietnam, and it's partly their own fault because they worried about being killed, when they thought about it. I never thought about it once, I was working as a photographer, and I'd do stories once in awhile, but you wouldn't take dumb, foolish chances, that you just felt that, you know, I'm not even supposed to be there, they're not going to shoot me, you know, that camera's going to, I mean, I don't know, they're going to shoot you whether you wear the same uniform, the fatigues, or anything else, there's just a mental thing, we're all hanging out of the helicopter, flying by a high building, or walking to a place where bullets are going, I feel that camera is going to protect me.

C: One of the thing's that's usually a concern of the photographer is whether somebody messes around with the cropping and the printing of the photograph. And in the case of the Loan photograph it's published in quite a variety of forms.

A: There's two ways, there's a full negative that shows the South Vietnamese police on the right hand side walking in the background turning his head back when he heard the bullet being fired. And the only other way is he's chopped out, that's the only two things, he's
left in on some of the pictures and the others he's not. Where he's
left in that's the full negative.

C: One other thing that interested me concerns the possible conflict
or changes of focus, obviously Vietnam has been called television's
war. You were there as a photographer, did you have any sense of
your function being eclipsed by the

A: Yeah; let me tell you what happened. In 1965, you may've heard
of Larry Burrels. Larry Burrels was a Life photographer who was
killed in a helicopter with two other photographers that was shot
down, in fact, it was near Kaison, _____up in that area I think
was where the helicopter was shot down. Burrels, I think, was one
of the finest war photographers, one of the finest all-around
photographers. Larry Burrels, and I in 1965, well, see, when I
first went to television it was silent cameras, tape recorders,
in the beginnning of '65, they had not started taking the sound
cameras out in the field. So they would send a photographer out,
just a cameraman, and that's it. CBS, I think, did one of the first
documentaries on Vietnam, and they had it shipped back to see, you
know, in Saigon, it was at the _______Hotel, it was in this room,
with the CBS people, myself, and Larry Burrels. Opening the film
showed the South Vietnamese interrogating the Vietkong, with the
sounds, the guy slapping him on the face, and those sounds, Larry and
I looked at each other, I'll never forget this, he said you know
we're in the wrong, we're in the wrong business, you know because
they've got the sound, how important that sound is, because going
back into any battle, I'll say three out of four battles with nothing
in still pictures because we didn't have any sound, and so there's guys
running, so what's a picture of a guy running? What's a picture of a
guy crawling? I mean, really, television is perfect, because they can
zoom in, they can pick these pieces out and everything starts running together once the film starts flowing. And so that really, that particular time '65 really put this big question mark. A still picture had to show more than that to have any kind of lasting power or to mean anything on covering the war. It was very difficult, it was, I think, covering the war is very, well, that's wrong, it's easy. I mean, this again is something else, I think covering the war is, I should say, making a great picture is difficult in the war situation, but on the other hand it's easy in terms of there's plenty to shoot, you know, any idiot, there was more photographers who were not photographers who went to Vietnam as adventure-seekers. And so, AP, UPI said sure, we'll give you ten dollars a picture, they don't care who shoots them. So these guys would go out into the field, and they just wanted to get into the battle, quite a number of people like that they weren't much photographers, but they felt they were going to make a big name for themselves, come back to the states and be heroes and make a lot of money. I'm jumping all over, I hope this is alright. This I think is interesting, so a lot of these people got all their front pages with their pictures, who on the wires, now they're back to where they were before they went to Vietnam, they're back into the woodwork. Because covering a war is easy, there are a lot of dramatic situations, a lot of stories, it's not the same in the states, you have to think in the states to get in print. You have to think a little bit harder and the competition's a lot stronger. C: Well, I'm very glad you answered the question the way you chose to because what you said was interesting. Would you say something about what you think are the best photographs that you took in Vietnam? Also interested in what generally, I think people that, there's three photographs that come to my mind when I think of particularly significant
photographs coming out of Vietnam, one was the Buddhist monk, and another was the refugees running after the ________, and of course Loan. You have a different perception of what are the significant photographs.

A: Yeah, there's one, well, there're two pictures that're mine out of Vietnam, my favorite, and one was taken in Saigon. This is again right after the TET offensive and it was the Viet Cong, the dead Viet Cong, lying on the ground, the picture was shot from ground level, and his fist was still clinched. And in the background was a small child, maybe about six years old, somebody else about ten or eleven, a boy about twenty and a man about sixty years old, they were all just looking down at this body. And the way the light was I think this ________. You know, that was my feeling, this was probably my favorite picture out of Vietnam. And the other picture was taken again with the first ____ in this cemetery I was talking about, where there's a big black first cav guy and his shirt is ripped from him and he's clinching a rifle in his hand and the agony on his face, and he was charging towards the helicopter, that was not in the picture. Looks like that particular picture probably is the best picture I would've taken during the Vietnam war. It was outside of _______ with a company of Marines, and we had close to fifty percent casualties, and the first time that I actually seen Viet Cong running all around with their guns around us, and we're on top of the hill and we're being rocketed, and there are dead Marines which are dug into holes, and so I'm lying on the ground with my head sideways, you become closer to the ground this way than if your head is up this way for shrapnel so as I'm lying there there was a Marine about eighteen years old, blonde hair, blue eyes, facing me, just about five feet away, so my head was this way and he was looking right at me this way and all the
time all the operations I'd been in in Vietnam I'd never seen fear on a person's face like I did on his face. I had, like with a 35 mm lens on my side and I slide it off in front of me and I couldn't push the button and so I brought it back again and swung up the second time because this kid, he was almost frozen with this expression. And I tried for three times and I couldn't push the button. And I was thinking, you know, I knew exactly what was going through my mind at that time; I knew that at that time my face looked exactly like his, and I didn't want anybody taking a picture of me. This kid, he left and it was only a few minutes that we were pinned down like that, but I could, that was the only time I've ever seen him, but I could identify him walking on the street today, like that. You know, it just left this mark, but I could see that picture, page one, cover, you name it, I mean I could see it in print everywhere and the impact it would've had but, you know, and I think, this is something else that I think we should talk about for a minute is I think there's a line what you photograph and what you don't photograph. You know, quite often there are photographers, and we'll not name any names, who used to make close-ups of bodies, dead Marines, dead soldiers, this is a lot of bullshit, you know, I mean, that's wrong, I mean they're very gruesome, you know, if you're going to bodies to show numbers of casualties, if they're in body bags and they're stacked up they become just a body or a symbol, that's alright, I don't see anything wrong with that. When you start making close-ups of a person's head half blown off or his arm's ripped off, you know, that's a lot of crap. There were photographers like that, most of those people were the people that went over to make a quick name for themselves and have since disappeared into the woodwork.

C: I guess, in a sense, someone could say that without intending it
you got a better job than anybody ______ when you got the General Loan photograph.

A: Yeah, but, it's not, I don't think that picture is, you know, like we were talking about pornography, I don't think it's worth ______. I really don't. Because, see, I stopped making pictures, this is interesting too, see, there's a sequence of pictures taken, there were thirteen frames to be exact on the camera on that role, and what had happened, to tell you a little bit more in detail, when the Viet Cong hit the ground, moments later blood spurted from his head about, must've been about three or four feet, I never seen, like a waterfountain or a gusher, just shooting straight up, I just turned my back. That's bullshit, you know, I mean, there's no reason to take that picture. I waited til it was all finished, then I backed off and then I showed the body there with the General putting his gun in his holster or something, one of the pictures. Now that was not grotesque, as the other, but I know photographers who would've zeroed in with their color film and you know, I think that's, you know, it's ugly.

C: Well, ______ when he got the unedited NBC footage, cut off some of the spurring of the blood but Peter

C: New Question---??

A: to look at a picture, and so you try to have as many elements in a picture as possible where hopefully a person doesn't have to read a caption; I mean, you know, captions are necessary, maybe that's going a little far out, you know, I mean you have to have some words, but I'm saying, so you're trying to put all these elements in, that one picture should say the same thing as a thousand words below, or five hundred words below it. Like I'm saying, without sound. So you're trying to do that without sound, or without saying something,
and that's hard to do because sometimes, like I'm saying well, maybe a good picture could be, like I said, just a close-up of that Marine's face, you don't need any words for that. That did not happen, it was there, I'm sure there were a lot of pictures that were—a lot of people that were frightened, I was scared, all the time, but I didn't worry about it, and I'm saying that as to show emotion, people who photograph emotion, you know a person's face, fine, like, I'll give you another idea, okay. There's Marines charging into a village. So I was lying on the ground photographing them charging into a village, and what had happened, this is strictly accident, right in front of me a woman and a baby and a man holding a baby hit the deck right in front of me, and the Marines were still charging with their rifles right behind me. Now that said something, there was grass thatched huts right behind the Marines, you know, so you had the different dimensions. You had the family, taking cover, a Vietnamese family, you've got Marines going in with their rifles, and you have the thatched roofs and it told you where the picture was at and what was happening, you don't need an explanation there. But that did not happen all the time, and you know, you don't, you're not doing a feature story on Vietnam you're covering the war, so things have to happen you don't phony-up situations, you know, it has to be there, is it's not there, and like I say sometimes I'd walk on an operation for five or six days and not take pictures. Where television has already ten five minutes blurbs on Walter Cronkite every night for five minutes on that same operation, and I don't have a damn picture. That's what I was trying to spell out.

C: Wonder if you would say something about, in a sense, how the taking of that Loan photograph has affected you professionally and personally, you have already touched on that.
A: I think the good thing, the only good thing that it's done for me is to _______attention to my other pictures. That's it. I won't. I don't generally, this is rare, I rarely talk about the picture, unless I'm asked, I won't, you know, I just say no, but I won't bring it up purposely on any interviews or anything that I've had recently or _______for quite sometime it's never mentioned, or if they have, it's just, you know, I got a Pulitzer Prize, it's just photography. I won't tell anybody what it's for, unless they specifically ask, and again I'm trying to, I don't want to make things any more difficult for Loan, the guy has enough problems right now. In fact, they were trying to export him, ship him out of the country. Well, before that happened, before any of the stories were broke, I gave this story to Arnett, because his attorney, they called me and told me what was happening. I was worried, it's very funny, because the Immigration Department wanted me to stand and testify on their behalf there ain't no way I was going to do it, I was going on the defense side for Loan, because they had asked, they were trying to reach me, if this thing did come up, and I would've defended Loan, I would've gone on his side. So, I don't like to even be, you know, it's over, the war's over.

C: I think that's all the questions that I need to ask, you've been extremely helpful.