

1. This is to inform you that.....^{GEOFF}....., whether he is your husband, son, sweetheart, nephew, mate, fiancee, pet, old friend, brother, having completed an arduous tour of duty in the Republic of VIETNAM, is leaving our little city of AP AN PHU, situated among swamps, sandhills, rubber trees, jungle and rice paddys.

2. He is no longer the sweet unspilt boy who left Australia fired with patriotism and a zest for adventure, the man with a mission. He is now older, leaner, wiser, water soaked, and slightly crazy, so get the women off the streets, hide all the beer and grog, put a chain around the fridge, and note the following:

YOU MUST IMPRESS UPON HIM AND REALIZE THAT

- a. The house is respectable - he doesn't have to organise some blokes into a work party to paint the place in the Unit's colours.
- b. This man has survived the worst that the Far East has to offer: mud, rain, heat, dust, sand, monsoons, typhoons and loneliness.
- c. He may look strange, and act even more strangely, but after the time he has spent in VIETNAM, this can only be expected.
- d. Pay no attention if he smears all his food, including sweets with Soy Sauce, or mixes raw snails in his potatoes for flavour.
- e. NEVER say anything about powdered eggs, "C" rations, fresh bread, de-hydrated potatoes, milk, ice cream or cold tea.
- f. He will gaze in awe and fascination at blonde haired Aussie girls, blue eyes, trams, sheets (especially clean ones), hotels, and tight sweaters. Remember his only contact with round eyed white women has been via the centre pages of Playboy Magazine, and he will probably think that all girls have staple marks on their stomachs.
- g. NEVER ask him "Does it ever rain in Vietnam" or "Are the women really flat chested", the consequences could be very severe.
- h. He, with his mates, has formed a new language, so to help him out, try and refrain from saying any of the following: CO, RSM, RP, MP, POGO, 28 and 28, GOFFERS, and FIELD PUNISHMENT. If he stands there and mutters "Choy Oy, Uc Dai Loi, Xin Loi, Be Nie, Boom Boom, Number One, Dung Loi, Number Welve" or any other strange sayings, ignore him and NEVER ask him what they mean.
- i. Act as if nothing has happened if he "pees" in the gutter, this is the custom and a common practice in VIETNAM.
- j. If he stands there flushing the toilet, or turning lights on and off, humour him, these are all novelties to him.
- k. Encourage him to drink out of a glass, he has only drank from cans throughout his tour, and when he finishes his drink, he may fling the container over his shoulder and shout "Up the old red rooster!!" Beware, the furniture will suffer, it cannot stand as much as sandbags.
- l. If he heads for the back garden with a shovel in hand, and a strained look on his face, just gently direct him to the nearest convenience.
- m. If he won't get up at a reasonable hour, just stand near him and whisper "Lights on the wire", watch him leap out of bed with a strangled cry and grovel under the carpet.

n. Be careful not to say "I wish it would rain", "You buy me Saigon Tea", or "It'll be on the next Jeparit". He cannot be held responsible for his actions.

o. Force of habit could cause him to denounce all in authority, abuse everybody in sight, sleep with his boots on, and grind cigarette butts into what may be your carpet. Humour him.

p. It is advisable for you to explain to visitors that he has forgotten Australian customs when he searches them, and wanders around the house clad in only a towel or underpants.

q. If he is driving, make it clear to him that in Australia they drive on the left side of the road, and do not blast on the horn whenever they see something. Also explain what a crosswalk is.

r. Keep him locked up as the postman arrives each day. He could become violent, race out, flatten the postie, upend his bag, search him and it, then demand why he has not received a letter.

2. We found after 5 RAR's last tour that most had returned to normality within 12 months. Make him feel important and wanted. Tell him that all cabbies and shopkeepers are not scoundrels, VIETNAM is a long way away, the mosquitoes will not hurt him, everybody loves him, and draught beer is not poisonous.

3. He may not look or act it, but he is your very own. Given time, he will become accustomed to civilised living again. DO NOT send any more letters or parcels to^{GEOFF}....., as this crazy looking, bloody eyed, mud splattered, damp, dishevelled, lovable soldier IS ON HIS WAY BACK TO YOU.

4. THANK YOU AND GOOD LUCK.

J. Lake
CSM C Coy 5 RAR W02

P.S. Hide all your pills, he is accustomed to taking 3 pills a day, your pills could have an adverse affect on him.