

Letter - June 18, 2006

My Lady,

18 Jun 2006

I would not buy it at \$39.99. I still waited at \$19.99. But when the bookstore marked down "Vietnam - A Complete Photographic History" to \$9.99 I bought it. That was a mistake, it pulled all of that back up again. It's amazing how much I remember of those time compared to recent years.

Of course the book contained the picture of the Napalm Girl. The one of the young girl screaming as she ran naked down a road with napalm flames and smoke bellowing in the background. The girl, Kim Phuc, was horribly burned but I am happy to have learned that she survived and now lives in Canada.

That picture changed a lot. It brought the horror home to America. Thousands of pictures of dead and wounded soldiers had failed to do that - when it came to shaping American public opinion the fate of individual soldiers didn't seem to count very much. There was plenty of horror to go around - most people just refused to see it. That bothered me - bothered me a lot - and still does. I don't know exactly how I feel about it, maybe call it a standing disappointment most of the time - but occasionally a rage.

The rage comes more frequently now. Now that it's all happening again. Again there is no shortage of horrible things. Again Americans are simply looking the other way. Nick Ut, the napalm girl photographer, we need you again.

I walked out of the bookstore thinking that I had purchased a history book. I was wrong - it's more. This massive volume could well serve as the battle plan for Iraq. I really wish some of the people in charge would read a few chapters ahead. Very bad things lie down the path they are following.

My Lady, I fear this is not much of a letter. It's just me tilting at windmills. I get called unpatriotic, un-American, a traitor, and worse for my efforts. But until another Nick Ut comes along and shines the brilliant light of truth in their groggy eyes, I will continue to shake the sleeping people one at a time and tell them of the horror. Sadly most simply call me a few names and mentally slumber on.

Thank you - thank you - thank you for putting up with my ramblings. I feel better. Maybe this is some of that "communications" stuff the marriage gurus go on about so much - imagine that.

Everyone is going to have to get along without me for a couple of weeks in July - that is everyone but you. You have been so patient while I helped other people. Now it's your turn - or maybe my turn - no, now it our turn. And I can hardly wait. Thinking about you girl.

Love,
Wayne