

FAMOUS LONG AGO

MY LIFE AND HARD TIMES WITH
**LIBERATION
NEWS SERVICE**



BY RAYMOND MUNGO

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If you were born in February, 1946, how can you be "famous long ago" in 1970? Raymond Mungo was and is because that's the way he wants it. And it's quite a story, told with the gusto of one who had the good sense to drop out of kindergarten.

After nightmares of eternal damnation brought on by his First Communion, puberty came between him and the Church, but "you know all about stuff like that, so I won't bore you with the details." At Boston University he was editor of the *B.U. News*, and really shook that University. Then it all began — when he and Marshall Bloom decided to start an underground press service because they had nothing else to do. But they did have something else to do, at least Mungo did: an invitation to meet the Vietcong in Czechoslovakia. "What a story! Boy journalist sleeps with Vietcong. I told Marshall that damn it I had missed a perfectly glorious trip to California (the Center for the Study of Democratic Institutions was flying me there) on accounta staying in Minn. to fight his losing battles and he had better just hand over his last \$600 life-savings so I could get to Czechoslovakia and by god he did."

Mungo's meeting with the Vietcong is just one of many trips he's taken in recent years, but when he came back the Liberation News Service, unhappily settled in our nation's capital, became really and truly a force in the old world. In its third week, LNS saw its material on the siege of the Pentagon printed in whole or in part in more than 100 newspapers with a total readership in the vicinity of a million.

And a great many other things happened. People came and went, the news service changed, Mungo tore up his induction papers, and finally the news service split into two warring factions with plots and counterplots put into action regularly. Today Mungo and some of his friends live on a farm in Vermont where in the words of Verandah Porche's invocation to this book they are "refugees in winter dress/skating home on thin ice/from the Apocalypse." In Mungo's concluding words, "Though we'll probably never meet, dear friends, *I'm with you.*"