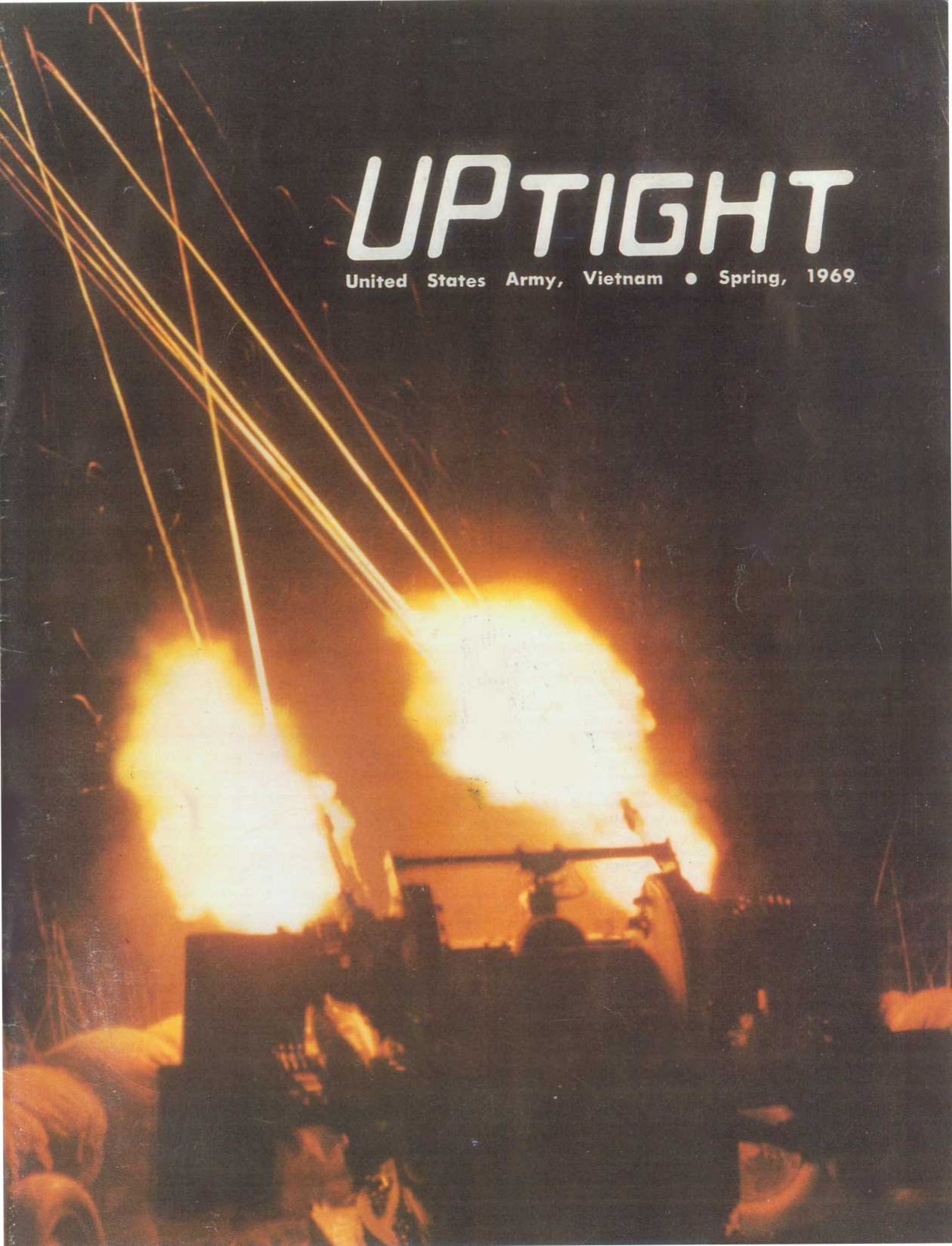


UPTIGHT

United States Army, Vietnam • Spring, 1969



Serving With Pride...

Each issue of UpTight will salute a major unit serving in Vietnam, selected randomly, highlighting the unit's historical background and illustrating the unit patch.



Tropic Lightning

On October 1, 1941, the 25th Infantry Division was born.

On December 7, 1941, the 25th Infantry Division was mature. It had to be. For the 25th was called to defend the shores of Hawaii after the surprise attack on Pearl Harbor. Within a year of that day of infamy, 25th Division troops were on the offensive in the Pacific. From Guadalcanal through the northern chain of Solomon Islands to Arundel Island and Kolombangara the 25th moved like lightning and penetrated every Japanese stronghold. The 25th was Tropic Lightning and thus earned the name it received.

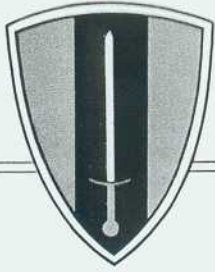
From January to June, 1945, division soldiers fought for 165 days in the liberation of the Philippines, setting a record among Army divisions for consecutive days of combat. After World War II, the Tropic Lightning Division had to occupy a defeated nation. The immense burden of processing thousands of refugees was undertaken. Efficiency on the battlefield was matched by efficiency in occupied Japan.

The men of the Lightning patch remained in Japan until 1960 when they were again called into combat. After the North Korean Army stormed across the 38th Parallel, the 25th Division, along with other United Nations' forces, raced to the defense of the port city of Pusan. It was heroics of Lightnings at Pusan that earned for the division its first Korean Presidential Unit Citation. For three years Tropic Lightning battled seasoned North Korean and Chinese Communist soldiers. In May, 1953, the capital city Seoul, was defended. Again bravery in the face of fierce fighting earned the 25th a Korean Presidential Unit Citation.

In 1954, the 25th was back in Hawaii, the place of its birth. The peaceful years at Schofield Barracks came and went, and by 1963 the division was sending men to Vietnam.

By late 1965 the move-in-force to Vietnam had begun. First was the 3rd Brigade, and by April, 1966 the move was complete. Tropic Lightning was again in combat. The present chapter of the 25th's history is still being written. Since the division has been in Vietnam, more than 188,000 Viet Cong and North Vietnamese soldiers have died at the hands of Tropic Lightning infantrymen, cavalrymen and artillerymen. Ten men have received the Medal of Honor while serving with the 25th in Vietnam. Before Vietnam, 14 Tropic Lightning soldiers received the nation's highest award.

In this struggle that combines battlefield fighting with an attempt to win the hearts of the people, division soldiers have shown genuine compassion and understanding of the problems of a people too long consumed in war. For its unshrinking devotion to the effort in Vietnam and its professionalism on the battlefield, the 25th Infantry Division was awarded the Vietnamese Cross of Gallantry with Palm on January 28, 1969.



Laird



Resor



Leading the Way

The two men President Nixon chose to execute Army policy bring together congressional experience in dealing with military affairs and job experience with the previous administration.

Secretary of Defense Melvin R. Laird brings to his new duties at The Pentagon an interest and expertise in military affairs which dates back to his World War II service with the U.S. Navy.

For the 10 years preceding his selection as defense secretary he was a member of the subcommittee on defense of the House of Representatives Appropriations Committee.

Secretary Laird was elected to the U.S. House of Representatives from Wisconsin's 7th District. He served in the 83rd through 90th sessions of Congress and was elected to the 91st Congress in November 1968.

Manning the post as Secretary of the Army is Stanley R. Resor, who made the transition from the Johnson administration.

Steady, reliable, methodical, a careful planner, are some of the ways associates describe the athletic-looking 6-footer.

Secretary of Defense Laird, announcing Resor's reappointment, said the Nixon Administration wants the Army administrator to stay on to provide an element of continuity in the switch of administrations.

Secretary Resor, a one-time New York lawyer, puts in long hours and demands detailed reports from his staff. He watches the fine print closely.

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UPTIGHT is an authorized quarterly publication of the U.S. Army, Vietnam. Its mission is to provide factual, timely and in-depth information of interest to members of the U.S. Army, Vietnam. Articles of general interest may be submitted for consideration to: Editor, UPTIGHT, Information Office, Headquarters, USARV, APO San Francisco 96375. Direct communication with the Editor is authorized. Unless otherwise indicated, material published in UPTIGHT may be reprinted pro-

vided credit is given the magazine and the author. Opinions expressed in UPTIGHT are not necessarily those of the Department of the Army.

CREDITS: Front cover—U.S. Army leadership in Vietnam is backed by unprecedented firepower. Here a quad 50 machine gun is fired into the night from a landing zone north of Anh Khe. Photo by PFC Richard S. Durrance.

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For leadership in the field
Infantrymen turn to the...

Platoon Sergeant

By SFC Larry Babbitts
Americal IO



Charlie was out there or at least he had been there. There would be no slip-ups now because this patrol was well planned. Soft moonlight accented tiny lines of strain at the corners of his eyes as they probed the darkness for VC.

The nuts-and-bolts of the patrol actually began earlier that day as the platoon sergeant leaned on a damp sandbag next to the bunker's entrance, a cigarette inserted between the thumb and the first two fingers of his left hand.

This evening, again, he would take his men out on another mission. Many of his men were new to the Company, nicknamed "The Gunfighters," 1st Battalion, 6th Infantry, 198th Infantry Brigade. For many it would be their first time out with a real prospect of coming under hostile fire.

Sergeant First Class James D. Winberry, a 16-year Regular Army veteran, moved his hand deliberately from the sandbag to run over his reddish, neatly-trimmed moustache, and continued to plan for tonight.

"I could use the second squad as point," he reflected, "putting them on the left side of the formation. Perhaps the first squad as rear security."

Decision upon decision would have to be made today. Decisions about tactics would have to be checked with First Lieutenant Fred Riegel, the platoon leader, but most of the other decisions were his to make.

Who will go? Who remains behind? What special equipment will be necessary for this particular operation? These thoughts he mulled over in his mind.

"Gene," he said in his soft, native Missouri accent, "tell the squad leaders I'll meet with them here, before chow."

Specialist 4 Gene Whitely, a machine gunner who just returned from the hospital where he went to recover from a light wound suffered two weeks ago, nodded and went down the trail.

"Oh," the platoon sergeant called, "also get me 'Mike'."

"Mike" is a local term used to denote the platoon radio telephone operator (RTO).

While most of the decisions seem small and unimportant, Sergeant Winberry has no margin for error. Errors and miscalculations may cost lives in a rifle company: a fact known only too well to this former Ft. Rucker, Ala., survival course instructor.

Three times decorated for valor, this Americal Division platoon sergeant believes that, "the men must have absolute confidence in me and my decisions. They must know that when I say something must be done and done now, that I'm serious and am basing each decision on my experience and sound advice from higher levels...and from their own suggestions, too."

"He always seems calm," said Specialist Whitely, "and strange as it may seem, I've never heard him raise his voice in anger. All his moves seem to be right, and he seems to know when it's time to play and time to work. Even



Platoon Sergeant Winberry relaxes after completing a successful patrol.

though I was hit last him out, I'd have no reservations about going out with him again."

The last time out, Sergeant Winberry's platoon had one man killed and three wounded and evacuated. A profoundly religious man and the father of two children, Winberry deeply felt the loss of one of his men.

"He's hard, but not cold," stated Captain John M. Plese, Company A commander. "He is capable of hiding his immediate feelings. This is often necessary to maintain morale among the troops, because the loss of a man is just about as hard as losing a member of your family."

"Whenever you lose anyone, it's hard to take," Winberry said, "and you begin thinking about why you're a 'lifer' (career soldier) anyhow. It'd sure be easier on the outside. You get pretty sore at yourself and at the world in general...but then you cool down and remember why you're in the Army."

Winberry, the farm-boy turned soldier, is one of the Army's professionals who isn't ashamed to admit the real reason he and many other dedicated career men stay in the combat arms.

"They need me here. Army life is my life...it's my 'bag'...and in spite of the family separations and other inconveniences, it's a job that must be done, and done right."

Three men came ambling up the hill to the bunker where Winberry waited. Two squad leaders and the platoon RTO arrived knowing that if he sent for them, it was important to be just a little bit early. They obviously were ready.

Some informal greetings and conversation were exchanged.

Then, as the facial expressions indicated it was down-to-business time. Winberry briefly outlined the plans for the evening operation. The conversation continued in short sentences, punctuated with terse grunts of agreement and a few direct-to-the-point questions.

The answers were always given in a voice exhibiting both certainty and consideration for the men.

The red-haired NCO often squinted in the direction of the setting Asian sun, and while sometimes seeming detached, demon-

strated his confidence in the squad leaders by probing for suggestions...and listening to them.

Although he doesn't always use their advice, he weighs it and, more often than not, the subordinate leaders' recommendations are integrated into his plans.

"Anybody got any questions?" he asks, raising himself from his improvised helmet-chair. "If not, have your men ready as soon as it gets dark. Rendezvous will be behind Bunker 11."

Now is the moment of truth for the platoon sergeant. He contemplates the possibility of losing some of his men. He is alone. The decisions have been made, the responsibilities are his. He tweaks his nose, runs his hand over his mustache again, and enters the command post (CP) bunker for a last conference with the platoon leader and company commander.

Winberry lights a short, unfiltered cigarette and puts on the eyeglasses he uses only for reading to check the situation map hanging on the CP wall. He checks for any movement of friendlies and any other changes since he last read the map...less than one hour ago.

"He's one of the most thorough people I've ever seen," said Plese, "he'll check and re-check, and then check again. That's the reason I believe he's had so much success with so few losses."

After entering a few brief notes in his pad, Winberry goes to his bunk and begins to get his things together. His canteens are filled, the rifle inspected, the straps on his field pack and ammo pouches are checked. Satisfied that he is personally ready, he prepares a cup of instant coffee over a B-unit can that he has manufactured into a cook stove.

Half-way through his coffee-break, a squad leader, Sergeant Joseph Simone enters, "Hey, Sarge, I don't think we ought to take George with us. He's leaving for R&R tomorrow." It's a question more than a statement.

Winberry looks up from his steaming canteen-cup, and answers, "He's your man. Whatever you think is best."

As darkness approaches, he dresses for the patrol, carefully ty-

ing the frag grenades in place; another quick check of the weapon and he starts for Bunker 11.

While quizzing the men to be sure they have been briefed by the squad leaders, he scans their equipment. Assured that everyone is ready, he turns and calls the point man to his post.

Another patrol begins.

The patrol moves noiselessly down the slope of a brush-covered hill, past the outpost bunkers and onto a rice-paddy dike. Each man knows his job; each man is confident in the other team members; each man is confident in his leader; and the leader is confident in them.

The point man and the second squad leader know their route, and lead the patrol into the ambush area. It is an area surrounding a road junction and it is covered with small scrub trees jutting out of high grass. It is a known VC infiltration route.

No words are spoken, or need to be. A slight touch on the shoulder or a hand motion by the leader indicates what action must take place.

The men settle down with as little noise and movement as possible and ready themselves in their makeshift fighting positions. Ammunition and grenades are placed within easy reach. Claymore mines are positioned, concealment prepared and the long wait begins.

Nearly nine hours of waiting, poised for battle, watching every shadow and waiting for any movement, leaves plenty of time for introspection and reflection.

After a final, quick check of the men's positions, Winberry crawls behind a hedge, his back leaning against a tree. He scans the area to assure himself that he too has a good field of fire, and is easily available to command should a fire-fight begin.

Any rustle of the leaves would immediately bring a reflex action from him and his men. By the dim light of the half moon, you can see the rifles poised, ready.

Just before dawn breaks, Winberry passes the word to withdraw from their positions and prepare to return to camp. Silently, stealthily, each man protecting his buddy's movement, the withdrawal



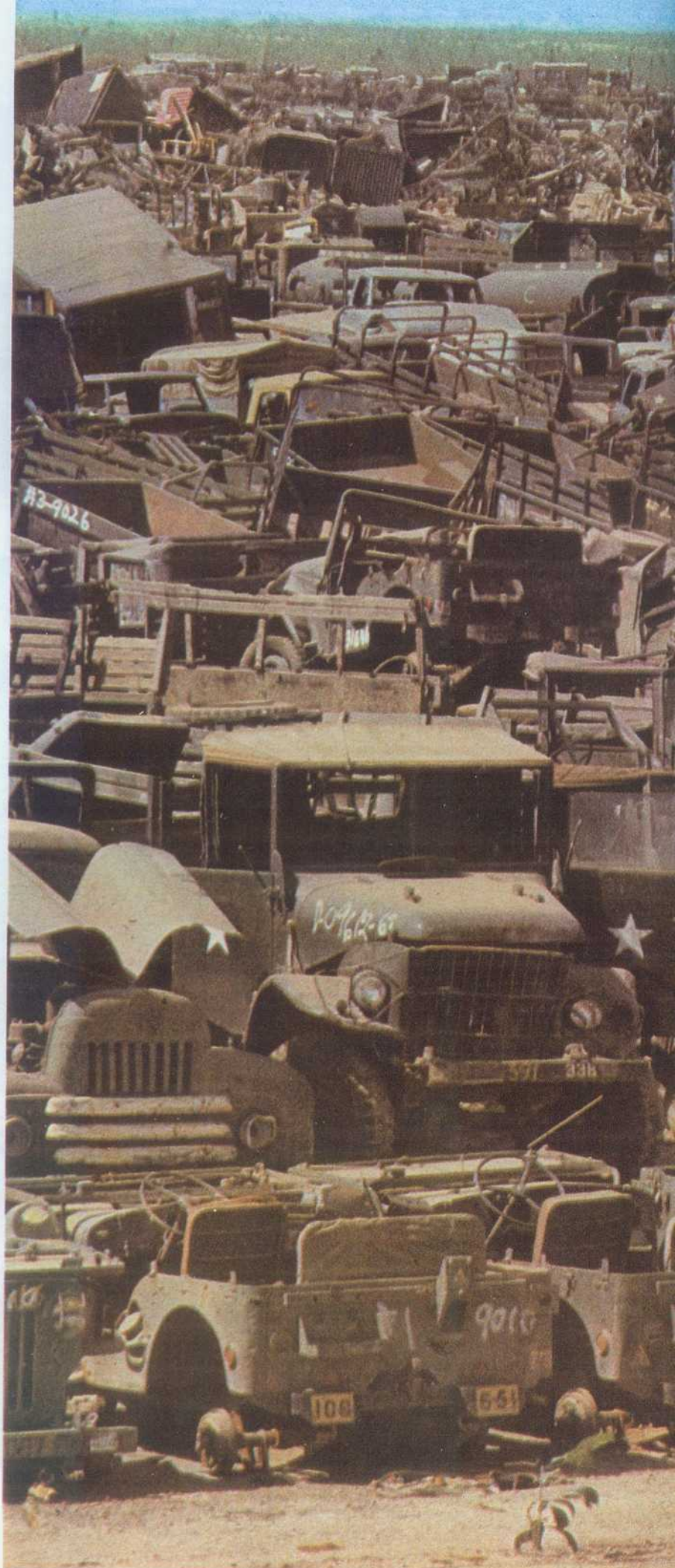
Sergeant Winberry checks map with his subordinates (top left). He talks to a higher element on the radio (top right). He uses a compass to determine direction (above), and points out fields of fire (left).

begins.

By the early light, you can see the look of relief cross the sergeant's face, as the patrol negotiates its own perimeter wire and he shouts, "Okay, light up."

The men grin and strike matches for each other's cigarettes.

"Another patrol over," reflects Winberry stroking his mustache.▲



The World's Largest Salvage Yard

Photos by SP5 David Shaw
UpTight Staff Photographer

Fragments and shells of jeeps, trucks and trailers are piled in an every-which-way heap. Nearby, shell casings gleam in the hot sun, the steel showing through the ubiquitous orange dust.

Here and there, groups of civilians load scrap onto trucks.

Rows of tires bake in the sun, leading to a large pile of tires, looking like so many black doughnuts frosted with sand. A rust-red and gun-metal gray mountain of wall lockers rises in still another area.

The insignia and emblems of several allied nations and the various American forces appear on the equipment.

This is the scene at the property disposal yard at Ho Nai—possibly the world's largest salvage yard. It is 115 acres crammed with 20,000 to 30,000 tons of equipment that has reached the apparent end of its usefulness to the Army.

The jeep, the truck, the armored personnel carrier (APC) that plied the roads, swamps and hill country of Vietnam, now economically beyond repair, lie waiting in the yard for civilian contractors buying scrap metal or old tires.

The Ho Nai yard is the end of the line for a great many items that once saw service in the war. And by the time a jeep or an APC or a wall locker or a gun barrel reaches Ho Nai, there is no doubt that the item has no further value to the Army.

You won't find a workable generator on any of the jeeps in the pile of vehicles, nor many other parts. The equipment that winds up in the property disposal yard has been

checked and double checked to insure that nothing usable is not returned to service.

The yard is the disposal part of the retrograde and disposal program operated by the Army's Saigon Support Command.

And it is the retrograde and disposal program that insures that anything worth saving or repairing is removed from damaged equipment received from the field.

A principal part of the retrograde operation is the "Closed Loop" support program, which is designed to keep a constant flow of critical items going to the men who need them and a counter-flow of damaged but economically repairable priority items on their way to repair shops in the United States, Japan, Okinawa and Taiwan.

"Closed Loop" has a list of more than 580 critical or short-supply items, ranging from engines and generators to APCs. As soon as these items are damaged, they are shipped by the field unit to the Long Binh Depot. Here, they are inspected to determine whether it is economical to repair them. If the inspector at the depot decides that it is worthwhile to send the item off for repairs, it is given a steam cleaning or scrubbing to make it cleaner than it probably has ever been since it arrived in Vietnam, in order to meet requirements set up by the Army and health departments of the countries in which the repair shops are located.

Finally, if the item is small, say an engine, it is packaged for shipment. Larger items, such as trucks and APCs, are loaded "as is" on

trucks. The equipment is then taken to Newport, where it is loaded on ships for transport to the repair shops. Critical smaller items are flown to the shops.

"Closed Loop" items move quickly through the retrograde process, sometimes in a matter of hours, usually in seven to 10 days. But, with a few exceptions, all other equipment that is found to be repairable also goes through the retrograde process and finds its way to out-of-country repair shops.

The exceptions to automatic retrograding are items such as jeeps, whose shipping and repair costs would exceed their value. However, the fact that jeeps are not sent back for repairs does not mean that they are automatically tossed on the Ho Nai scrap heap.

Soon after they have been brought to the Long Binh Depot, the jeeps and other items not shipped out of country are placed in a cannibalization point. Here, any authorized unit in the III or IV Corps Tactical Zones, having been unable to obtain a replacement item through normal supply channels, may strip the needed part from one of the vehicles.

Those vehicles that are not to be retrograded are left in the cannibalization point for about a week and then, usually far lighter than when they arrived, the vehicles are taken to the disassembly point, where last year 2,411 vehicles were taken apart to save valuable automotive parts. If necessary, the parts are repaired in-country or sent to out-of-country repair shops.

It is only after every economically repairable or immediately usable part has been taken from the vehicles that whatever is left is trucked up to the Ho Nai yard.

The retrograde program was begun in mid-1967, when adequate port facilities became available in Vietnam. Prior to that time, the only means of getting equipment back to be repaired would have been by air, a costly operation in comparison with the amount of equipment that could be circulated.

Since the retrograde program began, the monthly tonnage total has been steadily increasing. The January schedule for the Saigon Support Command was nearly 20,000 tons of material to be shipped.

It is difficult to put a dollar figure on the savings that result from the "Closed Loop" program, which ac-

counts for an estimated 80 to 85 per cent of the retrograding that is conducted by the Saigon Support Command, or through the general retrograding of non-critical but repairable items. The retrograde people talk in terms of the number of tons of equipment they handle, rather than the financial savings involved. But it is obvious that if you can repair a \$200,000 item for \$100,000, you are saving \$100,000 minus scrap value by repairing it rather than buying a new one.

The dollar-consciousness comes in at the property disposal yard. After the equipment has been brought there for sale, much of it will be purchased by civilian contractors at scrap value. In one recent month, 10,948 tons of scrap were sold for \$67,160 to contractors from the United States as well as

from throughout Southeast Asia. During that month, damaged equipment once valued at \$6,514,536 was received at the yard.

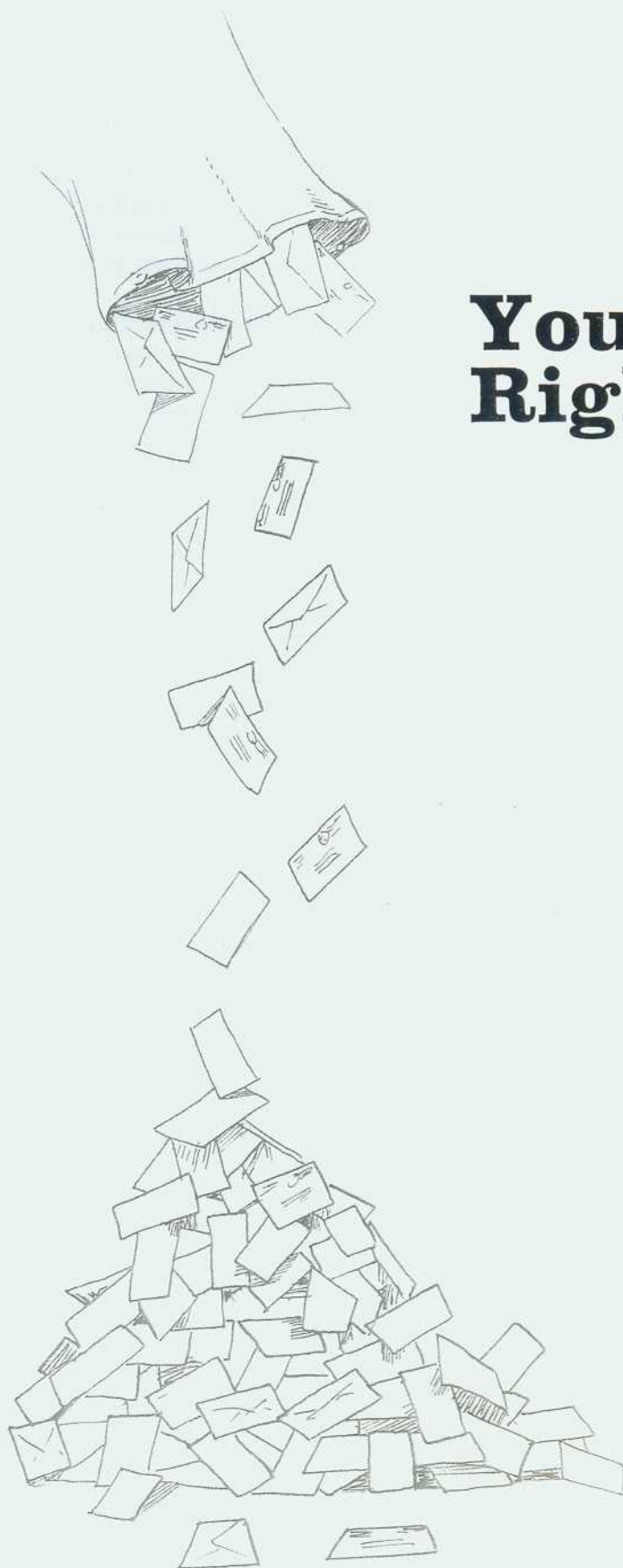
Buying through bidding, purchasers insure that there is a constant turnover in the disposal yard. And in addition to scrap sales, items are re-issued from the yard for purposes other than their original uses.

The retrograde and disposal procedures are unique in that the Army has never in a previous war had such a well organized system for the recovery, repair and return of vital equipment for a second, third or even fourth tour. Nor has there been an integrated disposal system that provided benefit to the Army through payment for scrap material while at the same time cleaning up the battlefields. ▲



Men affix crane cables to an APC which will be transported to the Newport docks (left). Below, they unload tires from a truck bed at the yard. Bulk characterizes even the chains at the world's largest salvage yard (bottom).





Your Right to Write

By SFC Carl Martin
UpTight Managing Editor

Editor's Note: United States Army Vietnam and subordinate units last year answered about 10,000 White House, Congressional and Department of the Army queries. Supplying accurate information to these queries consumed countless hours of research and preparation. Many of those hours were wasted. More often than not an individual can obtain information or a solution to his problem through his unit rather than writing to someone in Washington. And, he can obtain what he wants more quickly. There are, however, situations that warrant contacting your representative in government on an agency at DA. These situations should be dealt with accordingly in a mature manner. But, if you want a fast answer to a problem your local unit is often the best source of information.

Next time you lick the flap of an envelope to send a letter home, ponder the postal problems of the Department of the Army.

Letters? Correspondence? The DA gets its share. About 4.2 million pieces of mail a month is the current average.

The majority is official mail that deals with Army business from units and individuals in the field. Some are not strictly official, nor can they be categorized as unofficial. They may be informal letters that require an official reply from a DA staff agency. Nearly all of these "unofficial-official" letters are from men who are seeking answers to personal problems or information about policy at their unit.

The DA experts who prepare replies to this type mail agree that a soldier is entitled to an answer to a question or help with a personal problem. They also agree that solutions to most men's problems can be

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found at the individual's unit or local command. Indeed, the local level is often the place where DA experts themselves must go to find the answer.

DA officials describe a typical situation like this: PVT Doe of Company X feels he has a problem. It might be real or imagined. In either event he wants advice on how to solve his problem. Instead of checking at the local command, he takes the path so well worn by soldiers over the years—he writes his Congressman. It's a soldier's right to communicate with his elected government representative, as most men are aware. What they don't realize is that very few individuals—whether civilian employees, government officials or others—are familiar enough with the nuts-and-bolts of a military establishment to answer specific questions on its operation.

PVT Doe writes, "Why doesn't the Army issue raincoats to the troops in Vietnam?" The question implies that the Army does not provide gear for protection against wet weather. The Congressman has no answer to "why" but he knows that the Army should supply protective clothing for its troops. There is only one place to go for an accurate answer—the Department of the Army.

DA experts can readily explain that protective clothing and gear is issued to all Army members and is of the best design to help troops do their job. But DA must go a step further. DA must find out why PVT Doe doesn't have a raincoat. Is Doe authorized a raincoat? Or should he have a poncho? The answer to these questions must come from Doe's own unit, where he could have had the answer much more quickly in the first place.

Answering Inquiries. When a Congressional inquiry to DA is based on a soldier's complaint, the case is researched to determine if the complaint is valid and an appropriate reply is made to the Congressman's office. He in turn forwards the information to his constituent. The same procedure applies to all inquiries received from government officials—unless the letter is addressed to the President.

Soldier correspondence addressed to the President is referred to the DA staff agency concerned with the subject of the letter. A reply is developed in the staff agency, and the chief of the activity, or his deputy, generally replies to the individual on behalf of the President. The reply is made directly to the man who writes the White House.

Obviously, all letters referred to DA for reply cannot be answered immediately with a positive solution to a problem or answer to a question. If the case needs research and investigation, an interim reply is made to the soldier advising him that efforts are being made to find the information he wants. If the query concerns policy, a reply is made immediately using information available at the fingertips of the DA experts. More often than not, however, letters ask spe-

cific questions or present problems to which DA has no quick answer. In these situations, DA must contact the soldier's unit or organization to find the answer.

If the man writes to DA asking why his supply room does not have a certain item for issue to the troops, DA must contact the commander of the unit to find out why there is a shortage of the item. In many cases, it is found that there is no shortage—or, if so, it is only temporary. By the time a soldier writes DA; DA contacts the unit concerned; the unit replies to DA; and DA answers the soldier's question, the problem has resolved itself.

My Eyes Don't Match. Not all questions put to the Army specialists are answered by regulations or at the unit level. Consider this one. "I want to join the Army but my eyes are not the same color. One is blue and the other is brown. Can I join up? If not, why does the Army discriminate against men like me?" DA informed the man that the color of his eyes would not prevent him from enlisting in the Army.

Then there was the young soldier who asked to be deferred from overseas shipment. He explained that he had "been married for about three years and I'm still not a father." His letter stated that a few months of stateside duty would be appreciated so he and his wife could pursue their goal of parenthood. DA's answer—the needs of the military service come first.

The mail queries received at DA run the gamut from "why wasn't I promoted to PFC?" to "where can I buy a surplus Army tank?" All are answered. And they are answered personally by the experts.

DA officials determine what agency must prepare a reply. Often local commands or units are requested to provide the information.

Much of DCSLOG's (Deputy Chief of Staff, Logistics) mail follows this line: "Where are my household goods? I have been at my new duty station for 45 days now, and I'm still waiting. What happened?" The request for assistance is passed on to the appropriate office and the individual is advised that a tracer has been sent out to find his belongings. Transportation experts say the same thing can be accomplished by the soldier at his new duty station. And it can be done faster.

No Boots. Many letters channeled to DCSLOG pose questions about supply. They ask about everything from "why don't we have more typewriter ribbons?" to "my outfit needs more 2½-ton trucks. Why don't we have them?" One young man wrote, "I have just been drafted. I've been in the Army for almost two weeks and still have no boots or shoes. With all the money the government spends on equipment, why doesn't the Army have enough boots for issue to recruits?" DCSLOG checked into the man's problem and found that boots and shoes were being ordered for the soldier. He had failed to mention that his size

For You! VA Benefits

was 18EEE. Since footgear of this size is not regularly stocked in the Army's normal inventory, it is placed on a high-priority requisition when needed. It takes several weeks before the item can be issued to the man needing the equipment.

Another agency that gets a considerable amount of mail is the Office of the Deputy Chief of Staff for Personnel (DCSPER). The lion's share of mail received by DCSPER from men in the field falls into three categories—promotions, assignments, and separations.

Letters concerning promotions usually deal with specific situations rather than policy. Typical is the man who writes: "I am a clerk-typist and appeared before the promotion board in my unit. I came out on top of the recommended promotion list among my contemporaries, but I didn't get the stripe. Why?" Experts at DCSPER have no way of knowing why an individual in a unit in the field is, or is not, promoted. They must go back to the man's unit for an answer. More often than not, DCSPER finds that the man did not describe his situation accurately and could have readily obtained the answer had he asked his commander.

Men requesting special assignments upon return from overseas, present a problem when writing to DCSPER. Most men seem unaware that, whenever possible and as a matter of routine, assignments are made to the area of preference the man indicated long before his date for rotation to the States. Extra effort is made to place Vietnam returnees in the Army area they choose.

Usually, a letter to DA asking for a specific assignment area will result in little more than an explanation of the Army's assignment policy and personnel placement system. If the request is made because of compassionate reasons, research is done to determine if the man's problems warrant a compassionate reassignment. Rarely can DCSPER do anything about a compassionate reassignment that cannot be done at the local level and through proper channels.

Whether the mail goes to TAGO (The Adjutant General), DCSPER, DCSLOG, or any of the other numerous DA staff agencies for reply, it deserves and gets a prompt answer. A colonel, whose office processes thousands of inquiries a week, put it this way: "We are in the business of providing a service for the men in the field when they have no other place to go for advice or help. When a man does all he can at the local level to solve his problems, and cannot get results, it is satisfying if we can be of service to him. We go to the source of the problem and establish the level of responsibility for corrective action. The trouble is," he went on, "most of the letter writers seem to have forgotten one of the first things they learned in the Army."

He was referring, of course, to the necessity for following established channels in the chain of command.

SPRING, 1969

Two recent "GI Bills" and their subsequent revisions, have extended a wide range of benefits to veterans of military service after January 31, 1955. These "Vietnam Era GI Bills" extend many benefits for the first time to soldiers on active duty.

- **Educational Assistance.** For each month a serviceman spends on active duty, the Veterans' Administration will provide assistance for 1½ months of schooling or vocational training, up to a maximum of 48 months. Payments range from \$130 a month and up (for full-time study). Payments for part-time study are also available.

- **High School Training.** Financial assistance for high school training, including refresher courses, is provided in addition to the regular educational entitlement, in order to qualify veterans for admission to an approved institution of higher learning.

- **Loan and Loan Guaranty Benefits.** The VA will guarantee loans made by a veteran from a private lending institution to purchase, alter, repair or improve homes; to purchase farms, farm real estate or equipment; or to improve, alter or repair farmhouses or other farm buildings. Under certain circumstances the VA is authorized to make direct loans for these purposes.

- **Disability Compensation.** The VA pays compensation to veterans who are disabled by injury or disease while on active duty and in line of duty. The monthly payments, depending on the extent of the disability, may run as high as \$400. In special cases, the payments may be extended as high as \$950 per month.

- **Medical and Dental Care.** The VA provides hospital or outpatient care for veterans with service-connected medical conditions. Dental care is provided to correct conditions which are service-connected or which existed, but were not corrected while the veteran was on active duty.

- **Civil Service Preference.** Veterans receive additional points on the Civil Service examinations, which are the basis for awarding federal employment. And, when a veteran and a non-veteran have equal scores on an examination, the veteran is given preference.

These are just some of the many benefits available to veterans of service in the Vietnam era. Complete details may be obtained by writing any Veterans' Administration office. In addition, all servicemen receive a personal interview with a VA representative as part of their ETS processing.

A Clean Sweep

By SFC Wilfred Gilleau
82nd Abn Bde IO

A bottle of salt tablets, a towel draped around the neck and a half dozen canteens of water help the infantryman combat the over-bearing heat of the countryside during the dry season. But it's not just the sun or the dust that may get him down.

The men of the 3rd Brigade, 82nd Airborne Division were grouching as they moved across the parched terrain toward the area they were to check out. "Last night we set up an ambush, stayed in position all night and nothing happened," the squad leader, Sergeant Kenneth Grada, muttered to himself. "Then as soon as we get back to camp Charlie starts moving around out there." The other men in the squad were thinking the same thing.

It had all started earlier in the morning when the squad was called in for a briefing by First Lieutenant John Kane, their platoon leader, who told them what had been reported after they had returned from their fruitless ambush. The radar had detected human movement, and there were no "friendlylies" in the area.

"Take your squad out, sergeant, and sweep the area," the lieutenant said. "See just what's going on out there. Maybe Charlie was just passing through. He might have been probing the base camp perimeter, or he might have been hiding something for future operations. I want the answers."

Thus another daily sweep was in progress. Sergeant Grada warned his men for the hundredth time to be especially watchful for any indications of mines or booby traps. Metallic minesweepers were se-

lected for the operation because of their sensitivity and ability to disregard routine foreign matter. TNT, fuses and C-4 explosive—the required material for blowing mines and booby traps in place—were safely tucked away in the squad leader's rucksack.

The men knew this trail backwards, forward and sideways. They could have moved along the path in their sleep. Yet each had his eyes wide open, watching for any sign of enemy activity in the area since the last patrol.

Suddenly, without warning the point man, Specialist 4 Larry Carulla, gave the signal: "Freeze!" Something by the trail just didn't look right, something that hadn't been there when he passed through yesterday.

Cautiously moving forward, Specialist Carulla spied a fine trip-wire stretched taut across the path. Sergeant Grada moved up to check it out.

Carefully inspecting the wire without touching it, he traced it to its source: a well-disguised depression in the ground. With flank security provided, he gently began probing the ground with his bayonet. Soon he struck a metal object. As he deftly removed the dirt and small bushes, the fins of an 82 mm mortar shell came into view.

Rather than attempt to disarm the boobytrapped shell, he decided to blow it in place. Quickly, but with expertise gained from similar situations, he applied a small charge of TNT to the enemy round.

The men found cover a safe distance away. The sergeant deto-

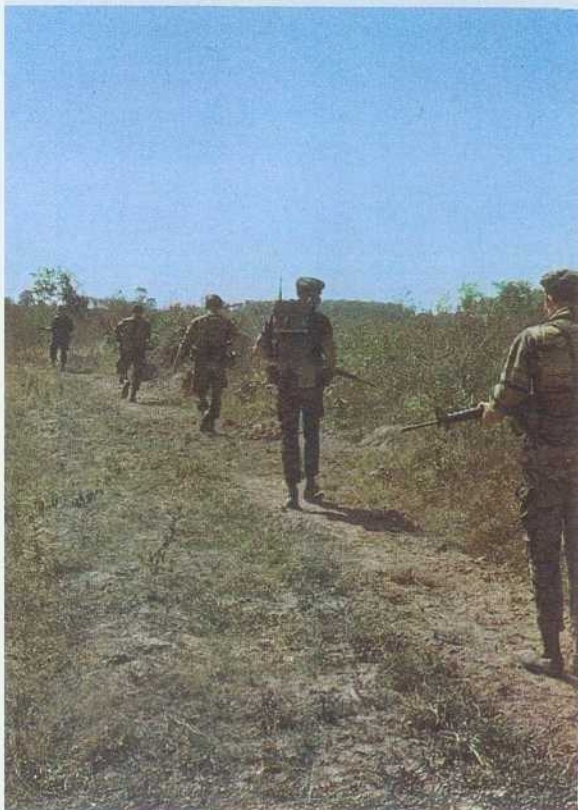
nated the charge, all that remained of the once deadly trap was a smoldering crater. Rubber trees nearby were bleeding from hits by flying shrapnel. The men were glad the point man had stayed alert; otherwise they may have been doing the bleeding.

The infantrymen went back on the trail and continued the sweep. The mine sweeping team was rotated to give the first operators a rest from the steady hum of the mine detectors. The hum varies in frequency when metal is detected, but prolonged exposure reduces a man's sensitivity to sound changes.

Further down the trail the soldiers noticed some footprints that had not been made by American combat boots. Broken foliage also indicated that the trail had been traversed by several people.

As the men crossed a road on their way back to camp, Specialist 4 George Koehler's mine sweeper went wild. The road looked innocent enough, but as Specialist Koehler pinpointed the spot and began probing with his bayonet, he uncovered a 20-pound land mine. With security posted, he and Specialist 4 Donald Woosley attached a grenade and blew it in place.

After returning to camp the men mopped their brows and reported their findings to the platoon leader. They had done their work well, having foiled two of Charlie's death-dealing traps for the unwary. Sergeant Grada reflected that it might be awhile before he complained again of lack of excitement. The other men were thinking the same thing. ▲



Soldiers with metal detectors uncover a land mine at the side of a road (top). Infantrymen walk in a column during a sweep (left). Soldier kneels for a closer look at the underbrush (above).

THE BIG GUNS

By MAJ David L. Stanley
UpTight Editor-in-Chief

Photos by MAJ Donald Blake
USARV-IO Photo Chief

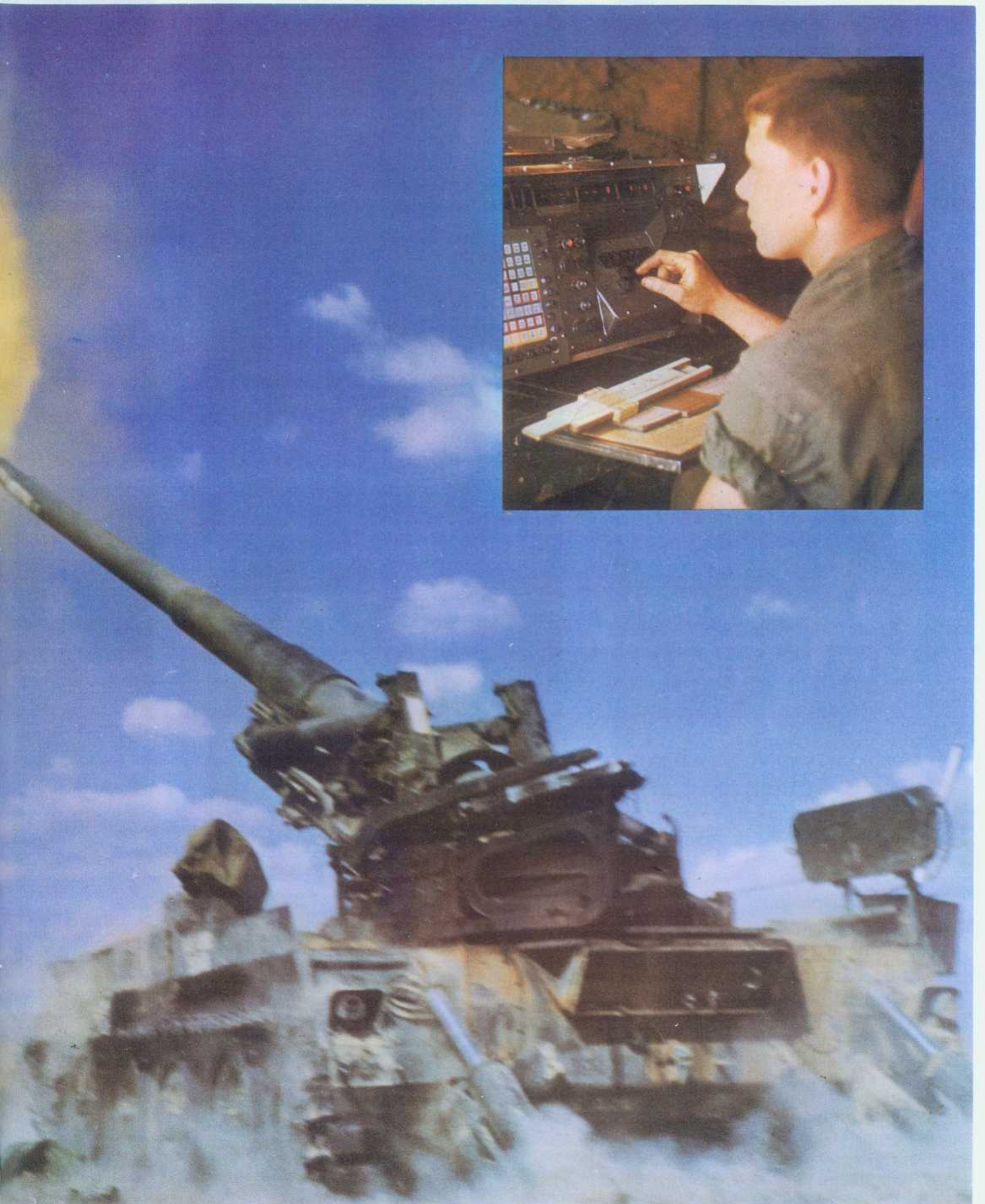
YOU know the blasted thing is going to go off. You know when. In spite of that, when it does, you bounce. So does the earth around you. CAR...RUMP! The sound pierces from ear to ear!

Another 174 to 200 pounds of high explosive is on the way to disrupt Charlie's day...or night. The dust settles for 20 yards around the 175 mm gun—or an 8-inch howitzer—and the gunbunnies hustle up the next round for firing.

For sheer, brute firepower, there's no weapon quite

Belching flame and smoke, a 175 mm gun sends a round on the way. Big gun firing is controlled by computer—called FADAC—in the fire direction control center (inset).







An eight inch howitzer is loaded by Corporal Roy Melton's crew, Battery C, 7th Battalion, 8th Artillery—the Automatic Eighth.

like the Army's 175 mm guns or 8-inch howitzers. Firing their biggest charge—three bags of powder standing nearly as tall as a man—the gunner will yank the lanyard from 50-feet away from the weapon. The 175 sends a round almost 30 miles out to hit a target.

Explained Captain Jesse Marsano, "The 175 has the range, but for accuracy, the 8-incher is the greatest. We don't know why its so good, but it will put round after round into practically the same hole if need be." Veteran artillerymen are also at a loss to explain why the weapon should be so accurate.

The lean, intense captain, a veteran of 26-months in

Vietnam, commands Battery C, 7th Battalion, 8th Artillery. "It is so good," he continued, "that in one case when we had to help out some friendlies that were about to be overrun by the Viet Cong, we were able to fire within 40-yards of the defensive bunkers in which the allies were protected. Charlie never got to the bunkers."

The battery of the "Automatic Eighth" is just one of several composite gun units, able in a matter of a couple of hours to convert from an all 175 mm configuration to all 8-inch howitzers—or any combination in between.



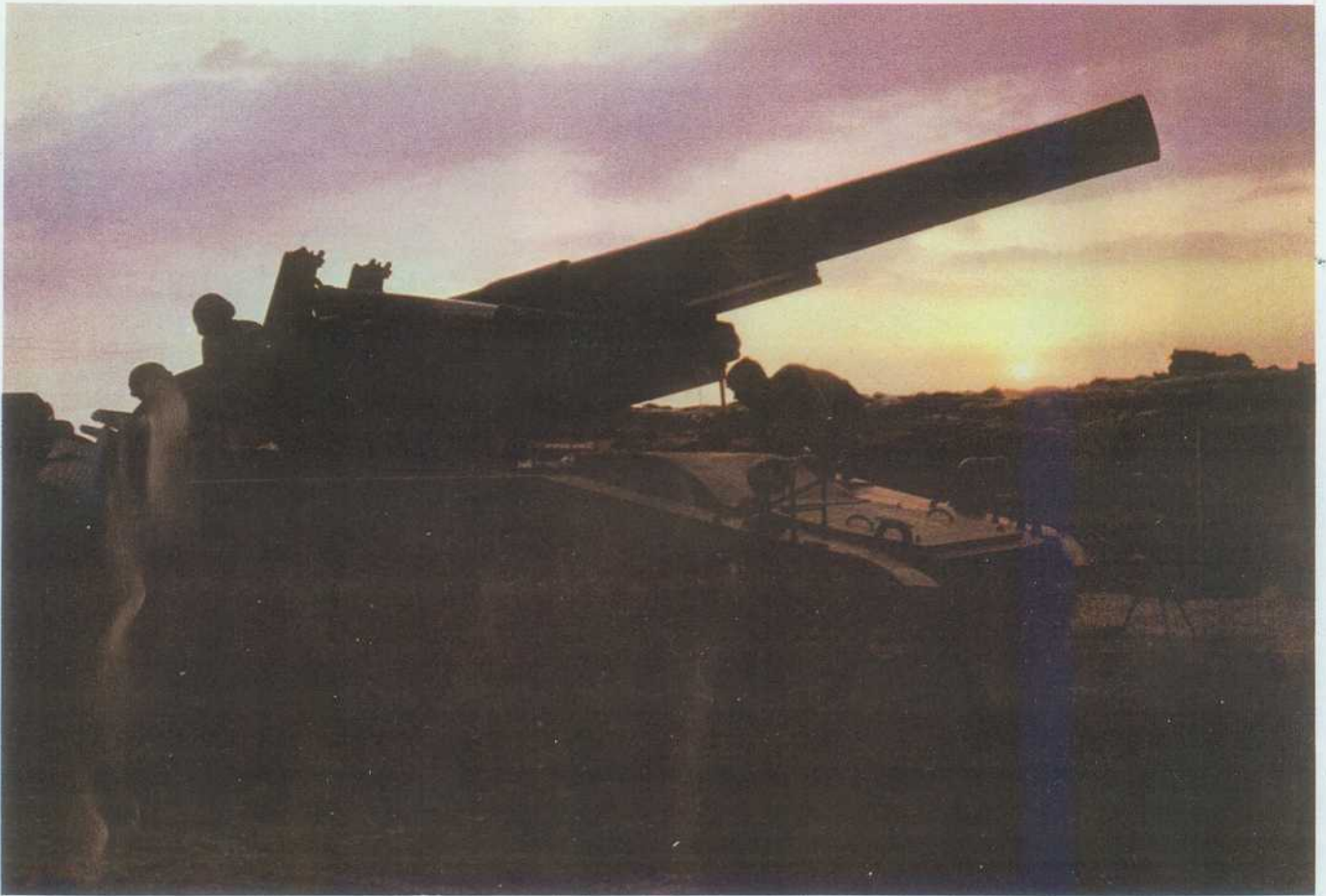
"This helps us confuse Charlie," Captain Marsano explained. "We're pretty mobile—in fact we were traveling 80 miles a day for a while. But we might travel with our self-propelled units configured as 8 inchers. Charlie knows the range to the millimeter, so he may stay just out of 8 inch range. But we change to 175 mm tubes after arriving out our destination. Then we can hit him easily when he least suspects."

The big guns have been slugging it out with North Vietnamese artillery and Viet Cong rockets for some time. The guns move often, when they need to. Charlie battery has been moved from the Delta to

Bear Cat to Bien Hoa within a matter of weeks. Other units, such as Charlie battery, 5th Battalion, 22nd Artillery, moved from Dak To to Kontum to a firebase near the Cambodian border in a few months.

Corporal Roy Melton, a crew chief in Captain Marsano's outfit, typified the pride in his unit. "We can get our gun ready to fire in well under a minute, once we know there's a mission. But because of firing restrictions, we might not be able to go as soon as we're ready."

Those restrictions? A friendly "spooky" gunship flying in an area which may be hazardous if the guns



The sun sets, but the gun crews continue their work of shaking up Charlie.

spoke. Safety restrictions, to see that friendly forces are clear of an area in which the big guns' shells will impact.

"The key word is safety," says Captain Marsano. "This outfit has fired 55,000 rounds without an incident, and it is simply because we adhere to strict safety standards."

Information fed from the Fire Direction Center to the guns is provided by one set of personnel, repeated back by others, thus insuring coordinates are clearly understood, and that no one man makes an error. Even the FADAC—the computer that provides fantastically accurate firing data—is double checked, as men manually plot firing missions. (See "Let FADAC Do It!", *UpTight*, Autumn 1968.)

"Every little thing has a bearing on safety. Ear plugs are nice, for example," said the battery commander. "But our gunners don't wear them when working the guns. The plugs are a hazard to hearing vital instructions. When the gun is going to fire the gunbunnies cover their ears instead."

Gunbunnies are the canoneers.

There's a lot of talk between gun crews about who's

doing the better work...so much, that in many gun units the competition is played down. Such is the case in Charlie battery.

"Sure competition is good, but it might not be safe, and therein is the problem," Captain Marsano explained. "That little extra effort to get more speed might make that numeral 7 into a 9—and that spells wrong target. Or short cuts in preparing powder charges can cause problems. So safety is our big 'thing'."

The gunners look at it another way, too.

"We're part of team, and we can work together till we're doin' it just right," said one of Corporal Melton's crew. "The worst thing that can happen is one of us being moved to another battery of smaller guns, but it's just about as bad to have to switch gun crews or platoons. But working with the guys you know helps you realize the need for doing things right."

It's just another way of being safe.

And so, the big guns speak out regularly—on intelligence firing missions, or on time-on-target firings. But when they speak, it is with authority: CAR...RUMP!

"Shot!" hollers the gunner. The hustle to put out the next round begins. ▲

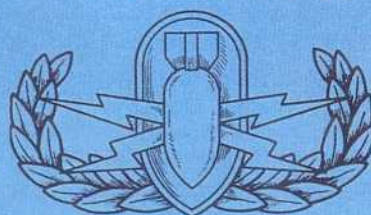


Explosive Ordnance Disposal Badge

The Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) Specialist Badge is awarded to those officers, warrant officers and enlisted personnel who have successfully completed the prescribed basic EOD course of instruction and who are assigned to EOD duty. The Explosive Ordnance Disposal Supervisor Badge is awarded to officers, warrant officers and non-commissioned officers in grade E-6 and above who have 18 months cumulative service in an EOD supervisory position. Noncommissioned officers must have been rated excellent in character and efficiency when recommended for the award. (Provisions of AR 672-5-1 apply.)

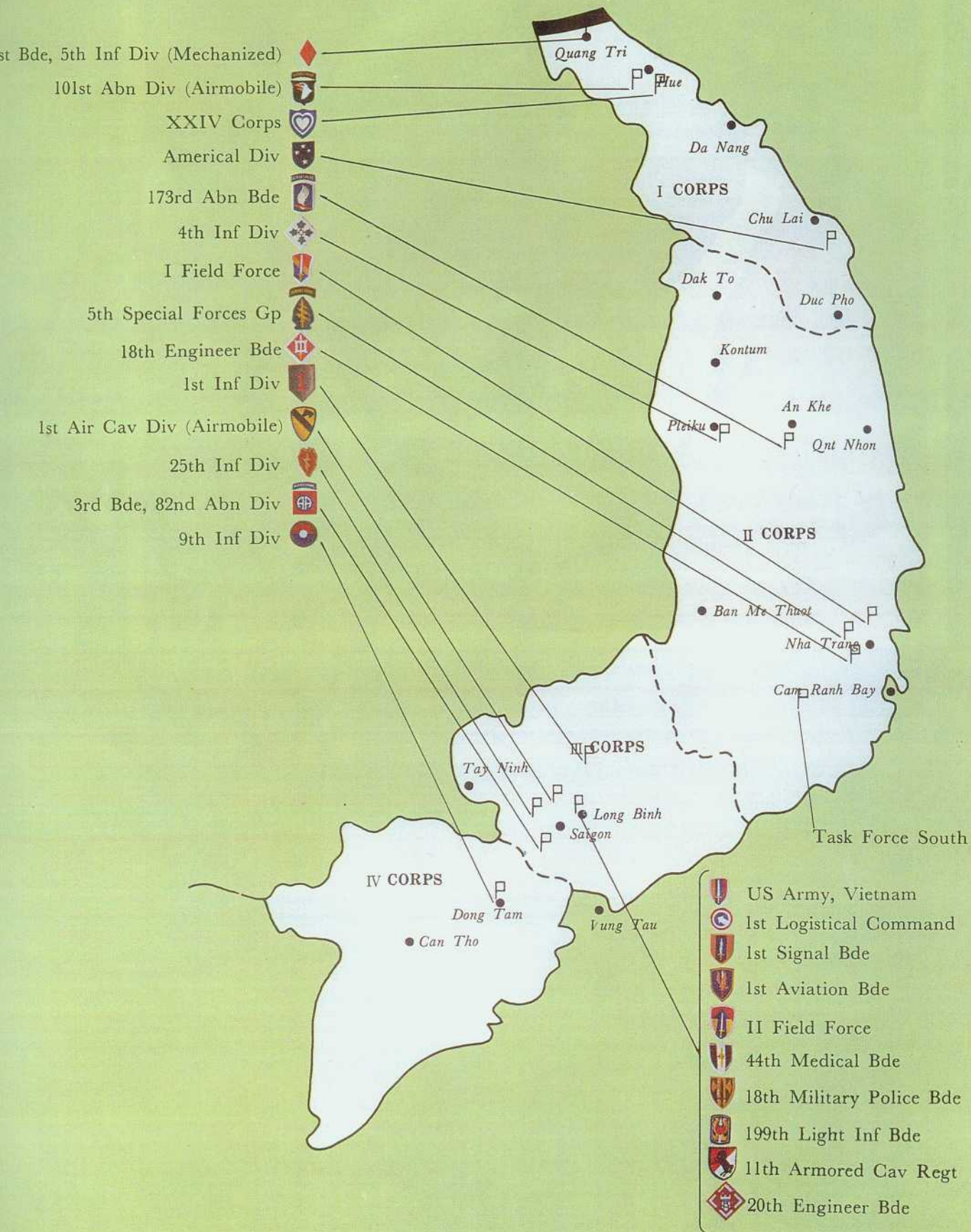


EXPLOSIVE ORDNANCE DISPOSAL BADGE
(SUPERVISOR)



EXPLOSIVE ORDNANCE DISPOSAL BADGE
(SPECIALIST)

Major Unit Locations



Battle Report— a quarterly summary of major unit actions

The thunder of rockets and mortars shattered the final hours of a Communist ceasefire period toward the end of February, marking the first broad enemy offensive of the new year.

More than 100 cities and military facilities in South Vietnam came under Communist attack but American forces quickly repelled and routed the attackers, inflicting heavy enemy casualties.

One major attack was mounted against Long Binh Post, where elements of the 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment, the 720th Military Police Battalion, the 199th Light Infantry Brigade and post personnel killed 131 enemy soldiers. Attacks on 25th Infantry Division camps and fire support bases resulted in 309 enemy dead, while Americal Division soldiers killed 160 in one day's fighting. The 9th Infantry Division killed 109 on the same day.

The new year had got off on a hopeful note with the release of three American soldiers captured during 1968 by the Viet Cong and the escape the day before of Special Forces Major James Rowe, a VC captive since 1963.

Specialist 4 Thomas N. Jones, Specialist 4 James W. Brigham and Private First Class Donald Smith were handed over to a II Field Force, Vietnam team near Tay Ninh City on New Year's Day. Specialist Brigham died later in the month when Walter Reed Army Hospital doctors were unable to cure him of complications from VC surgery for a head wound.

Some of the largest caches of the war were uncovered during December, January and February and sharp fighting resulted as American units sought to stamp out enemy efforts to mount holiday offensives, particularly a repeat of last year's Tet offensive. The largest single rice cache of the war—320 tons—was discovered and subsequently destroyed by 25th Division elements in Tay Ninh Province near the Cambodian border.

I CORPS TACTICAL ZONE

Americal Division units saw a number of sharp engagements, including a pre-Christmas fight six miles southeast of An Hoa. The infantrymen killed 103 NVA and VC. Late in January, division elements set up a cordon about seven miles northwest of Quang Ngai City, killing 46 NVA soldiers in one day's fighting.

During the quarter, Americal soldiers participated in a number of successful operations. Operation Fayette Canyon, begun Dec. 15, approximately 25 miles northwest of Tam Ky, resulted in 322 enemy deaths against only two U.S. fatalities by mid-February. In Operation Hardin Falls, which began on Dec. 2, the mid-February figures showed 70 enemy dead and 17 suspects detained contrasting to only one U.S. soldier killed.

Operation Russell Beach, an effort by Americal ele-

ments, ARVN troops and U.S. Marines, began Jan. 13 and ended Feb. 10, with 139 enemy killed in a cordon on the Batangan Peninsula. Operation Vernon Lake II, begun Nov. 2 west-southwest of Quang Ngai City, had resulted in 385 enemy killed and 143 suspects detained as compared with 23 U.S. soldiers killed.

Americal soldiers also uncovered a number of large munitions and food caches during the quarter and toward the end of December discovered and destroyed more than 350 enemy bunkers northwest of Tam Ky in one day.

Just before Christmas, elements of the division destroyed a 120-hut base camp consisting of a blacksmith shop, classrooms and a hospital ward.

The 101st Airborne Division (Airmobile) met generally light and scattered fighting throughout their area of operations during the quarter. In December, a combined cordon operation in the area east of Hue was initiated by the Screaming Eagles and soldiers from the ARVN 1st Infantry Division. By late in the month, 48 enemy had been killed and 48 suspects detained in the move to route members of the Viet Cong infrastructure.

Operation Nevada Eagle continued during the quarter, resulting in more than 3,000 enemy killed by the end of February.

Red Devils of the 1st Brigade, 5th Infantry Division (Mechanized) also encountered generally light and scattered fighting as they maintained a seal along the northern corps area.

II CORPS TACTICAL ZONE

Paratroopers of the 173rd Airborne Brigade ended three operations along South Vietnam's north central coast that accounted for nearly 2,000 VC and NVA deaths. These were Operations Walker, Bolling/Dan Hoa and Cochise Green.

Cochise Green, centered in Binh Dinh Province, began March 31, 1968 and in 10 months the paratroopers killed 929 enemy soldiers, detained 2,062 suspects and confiscated 122.1 tons of rice. Bolling, in the coastal mountains west of Tuy Hoa, began in late October, 1967, and resulted in 715 enemy killed and 2,498 suspects detained. Walker, around An Khe, left 272 enemy killed and 269 suspects detained as brigade forces supplied security for Highway QL 19 between Qui Nhon and the Central Highlands.

Ivymen of the 4th Infantry Division continued to keep the enemy off balance in light and scattered action during the quarter.

The infantrymen also turned up a number of food and munitions caches, principally in the areas around Dak To, Duc Pho and on the Dak Poyou River.

In the continuing search for the enemy, several cordon operations were conducted by the division elements. In one day's action, 74 suspects were detained

and 24 Hoi Chanhs received.

III CORPS TACTICAL ZONE

Striking hard and often, Skytroopers of the 1st Cavalry Division (Airmobile) made their III Corps area of operations a hot-spot for Charlie during the quarter. The infantrymen scored impressive kill totals, capped by one of the largest munitions cache discoveries in the war. And, after robbing the enemy of his munitions, they turned around and took his food from him—in huge quantities.

Division elements were credited with finding one of the largest munitions caches of the war when they discovered a 30-ton cache in a bunker complex 14 miles southwest of Katum in the third week of January.

A little more than a week later, a sweep by other elements 12 miles northeast of Tay Ninh resulted in the discovery of 50.7 tons of rice one day and another 18.5 tons the following day. By the third day, the division's combined rice haul exceeded 100 tons. Not stopping there, division elements swooped down a week later and captured more than 80 tons of rice about 15 miles north of Tay Ninh.

While causing a ration shortage in the enemy ranks, Skytroopers also were cutting down on the number of enemy who would otherwise be answering mess call. Repeated sharp fighting ran up the enemy death toll. Three days of hard, post-Christmas battling began when the crew of a light observation helicopter spotted about 60 NVA soldiers in what appeared to be an outdoor classroom. School ended early and permanently for 31 NVA soldiers, along with 10 other "scholars" killed by Cobra gunship crews in the action 12 miles east of Katum.

Another 41 NVA soldiers were killed in a 4½-hour

battle six miles northwest of An Loc when they fought with an element of the 1st Infantry Division under the operational control of the 1st Cavalry Division. The next day, 59 enemy were killed in action against elements of the cavalry 22 miles southwest of Phuoc Vinh.

Tropic Lightning soldiers of the 25th Infantry Division saw heavy fighting during the quarter, with some of their sharpest contacts during the week before Christmas.

Just three days before Christmas, 103 NVA regulars were killed when they tried to overrun a patrol base about nine miles south of Tay Ninh City. After the battle, one officer declared that "in my 26 years of service, I've never seen fighting like that. The enemy used every trick in the book against the patrol base."

A few days earlier, NVA soldiers attempted to ambush a U.S. truck convoy moving from the division's 3rd Brigade base camp at Dau Tieng. The enemy hit the 50-truck convoy four miles south of the camp but the ambush was broken and 73 NVA were killed. Still in the week before Christmas, a 7½-hour battle three miles northwest of Cu Chi resulted in 30 enemy soldiers killed.

Tropic Lightning soldiers plowed through a long-time enemy stronghold nine miles northeast of Go Dau Ha during the third week in January, killing 54 enemy soldiers in two days.

Division elements during the quarter also grabbed a number of large munitions and food caches, including a sizeable cache 11 miles northeast of Go Dau Ha and a regimental-size enemy base camp with heavily reinforced bunkers three miles northwest of Dau Tieng.

And then there was the cache that contained 100 loaves of bread, three sandbags of rice, 20 cans of fish, two packages of pastry, five bundles of rice paper, a bag of mixed candies, a bag of mixed nuts, two cucum-



Infantrymen walk through dense vegetation (above). Riflemen assault from helicopter (right).

bers, five bags of fish, VC and civilian clothing and one unplucked chicken.

Action for the Big Red One soldiers of the 1st Infantry Division was characterized by small, sharp scattered actions throughout the division's area of operations. The infantrymen pounced on a number of enemy bunker complexes and uncovered several caches during the quarter.

The quarter opened with fierce fighting when an estimated enemy battalion tried to overrun a division element's night defensive position seven miles west-southwest of Ben Cat.

The 2½-hour battle, which began shortly after 3 a.m., resulted in 44 NVA regulars killed and the attack repelled.

Infantrymen and troopers of the 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment, under the operational control of the 1st Infantry Division, continued to ferret out the enemy, and in mid-January it was reported that elements of the cavalry, in conjunction with Vietnamese units, confirmed that 27 persons detained in a village seal operation four miles southeast of Lai Khe were members of the VC political and military structure.

In mid-December, the infantrymen announced that they had inaugurated a special series of operations near Di An to keep rice in the hands of the Vietnamese farmers who raised it—and away from the Viet Cong.

Toward the end of January and again in the second week of February, the infantrymen smashed large enemy base camps around Lai Khe.

Redcatchers of the 199th Light Infantry Brigade kept pressure on the enemy during the quarter, conducting a number of cordon operations around Saigon.

During the first week of February, Redcatchers teamed up with ARVN rangers, Regional Force com-

panies and National Police units to seal off a 9,000-square-meter area eight miles south of the capital. The cordon was designed to identify and apprehend the VC infrastructure and was one of the largest combined cordons ever undertaken by the brigade.

In an earlier cordon, Redcatchers and elements of the 9th Infantry Division killed 42 enemy and captured numerous weapons and munitions nine miles north of Tan An over a three-day period.

Operating south and southwest of Saigon, brigade infantrymen turned up numerous caches during the quarter and destroyed a number of enemy bunkers and base camps.

Troopers of the 3rd Brigade, 82nd Airborne Division during the quarter continued operations around Saigon, sinking a quantity of sampans and discovering munitions and food caches, along with several bunker complexes.

IV CORPS TACTICAL ZONE

Old Reliables of the 9th Infantry Division continued to inflict heavy casualties among the Viet Cong in the Mekong Delta during the quarter and also uncovered numerous food and arms caches.

January proved to be a month of tough fighting for the infantrymen and supporting gunships. Ending the first week of the month, elements of the division, who were air-assaulted into an area of VC concentration nine miles southeast of Cao Lanh, hit an enemy base camp. The two-day operation resulted in 54 enemy killed.

The Plain of Reeds proved a good hunting ground for the division on several occasions. In the last week of January, infantrymen teamed up with artillerymen and gunship crews to kill 78 enemy in fighting centered nine miles northwest of Tan An. One element of the division killed 25 enemy in a night-long fight that began immediately after their insertion into the area. Less than a week later, other elements hit the enemy 10 miles north of Tan An, killing 50 in two days of fighting.

Near the end February, infantrymen discovered a large munitions cache along the Bobo Canal in the Plain of Reeds, seven miles west of Ben Luc. Part of the cache was hidden in the canal and the rest on nearby grassland. "It took the whole platoon to carry it," reported one infantryman.

Another large munitions cache was found 12 miles northwest of Tan An on the Plain of Reeds by elements of the division, while early in December still another large munitions cache had been uncovered 11 miles northwest of Tan An.

Gunship crews of the 1st Aviation Brigade operating in the Mekong Delta got their share of enemy kills during the quarter as they flew in support of the 9th Division and ARVN troops. The gunship crews killed 37 enemy one day while supporting ARVN infantry in a battle nine miles west of Cai Cai in mid-February. In January, the total enemy kills for one day of operations was 110 VC dead, while another day's work in December resulted in 91 enemy structures destroyed.▲



What it's like on the Reaction Force

**CLERKS ON THE
PERIMETER!**

By SP5 Peter C. Bedard
UpTight Staff Writer



A pair of ears perk up, hoping they didn't hear the alert siren. A pair of eyes glance nervously around the hootch, and the brain confirms the siren as fact.

Bare feet drop into unlaced boots. Flak jackets are juggled around shoulders on the dead run. At the arms room, the line forms, and quickly and smoothly 48 men secure M14s and ammo.

"Fall in!" Then out onto the truck.

Out into the darkness and dampness. Rumble, sway, lurch, stop.

Off the truck, doubletime, an orderly doubletime, to prearranged positions between the bunkers on a section of the perimeter. "Step it up, troop."

Perhaps this is the night Charlie will be out there. So you hustle. You never ran so hard in your life—even in basic. And never before while carrying two cases of ammo and an M14—an M60 if you were one of the "really lucky" ones.

In the dark, you stumble over loose gravel, slish through goo. (Are there really snakes out here?) Panting. How much farther???(Gotta stop smoking!)

Ah, there it is: your position. Catch your breath and scan the area. (Next time, try to get into the second squad. They don't have so far to run).

To your left, there's the squad leader. Up front in a bunker: the lieutenant, intent. Can't see what he's doing.

Whoosh. Bright.??? Ah, flare. This must be the real thing, all right.

God, it's hot.

Naw, nobody out there tonight after all—except the monkeys. And

the (slap) mosquitoes.

The all clear sounds (at last!). Trudge back to the truck. Climb. (Funny, it was so much easier on the way out.) Return. Dismount. It's over—for a while.

* * *

Reaction force is never really over. Every night, as long as the enemy is somewhere out there, clerks and comptrollers, artists and admin NCOs will be infantrymen-on-call, to protect U.S. base camps throughout Vietnam.

During the day, they're "desk soldiers" or "rear echelon types." But the desks and the rears have to be protected, too. The base camps, the operations centers, the supply depots, are as vital to the infantrymen at the front as they are to those who live and work almost entirely within their confines.

And their first line of defense is the reaction force.

The theory behind having a reaction force is quite logical. "On any perimeter-type defense," said Colonel Edmund Castle, former commander of Long Binh Post, "you're thin. You can't have every inch of perimeter fully manned every minute of the time." It would take a division-sized unit—some 13,000 men—to post a soldier at every five meter interval along Long Binh Post's 41.8 miles of perimeter. "But with a reaction force, you have a mobile reserve, ready to counter an attack at any point on the perimeter."

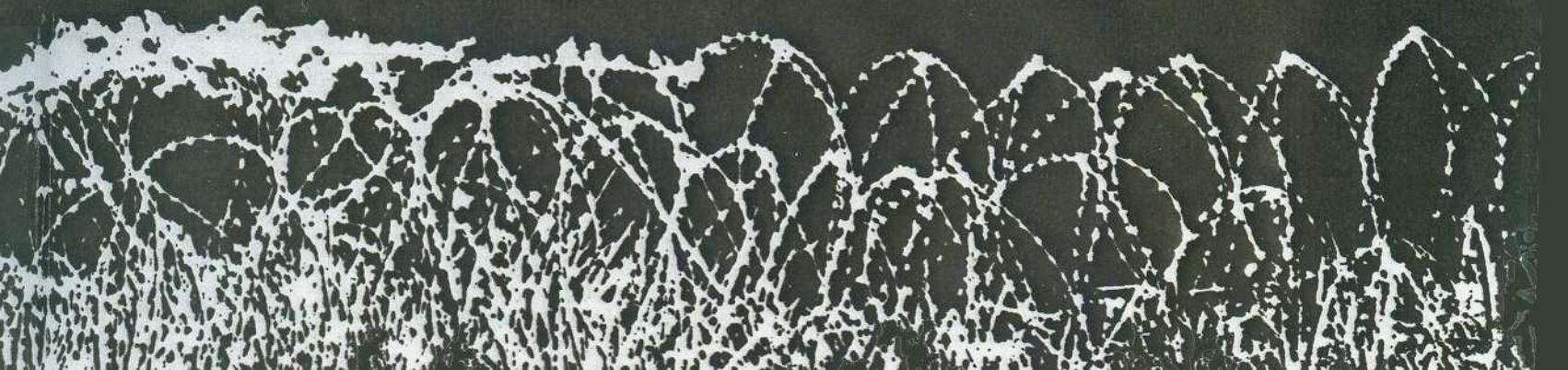
The job of the reaction force is to bolster the defense, hold the line, until the attack is broken, or further reinforcements arrive. The force is ready, too, to take up pur-

suit of the enemy beyond the barbed wire, should the chance arise.

Though their primary duties lie in other fields, the men of reaction force know their jobs as infantrymen. Some have had previous combat experience. All have been through basic combat training. All have had a week of training with an infantry unit in Vietnam before assuming possession of their desks. Weekly training periods emphasize the points which will help the individual soldier in the event of an attack. And numerous practice alerts are held—unannounced—to keep the men on their toes.

How well do these "front-line backup men" perform? Colonel Castle, who has led several reaction force patrols beyond the boundaries of Long Binh Post, will tell you, "You couldn't ask for anything better. Sure, there are jitters and nervousness among the newer men. But we usually have along a few combat veterans, and they help to calm and guide the novices. And the novices learn quickly."

How would Colonel Castle compare these part-time infantrymen with their full-time counterparts? "You couldn't do that without maligning one group or the other. If you said the clerks fought better than the infantryman, you'd be slighting the professional. But if you said the clerks didn't measure up...well, that wouldn't be the truth, either. My view is this: The American serviceman is first and foremost a soldier. Clerk or rifleman—whatever his primary duty—when the chips are down, he'll do the job, and do it well." ▲



TO HELP THEMSELVES

By SSM Clay Lacy
IIFV IO

Every day but Sunday, more than 100 Vietnamese stream into the Long Binh Area Civilian Personnel Office at sprawling Long Binh Post, 18 miles northeast of Saigon. These 600 people a week do not work at the huge U.S. post, but they want to.

Coming from Saigon, Cholon, Bien Hoa, Di An, Tam Hiep and from hamlets and villages throughout the III Corps area, they are seeking a means of livelihood. Their goal is to fill the more than 500 jobs advertised each month by the U.S. Army in the Vietnamese magazine, "Thong Cam," as well as numerous other media.

Many are refugees, uprooted from their native hamlets and villages by the tide of battle with the nefarious Viet Cong and invaders from North Vietnam. Previous training for most is heavily rooted in agriculture.

The problem facing the U.S. Army in 1965 was how to utilize this potential labor force. The solutions desired had to be of benefit to the U.S. Army, but more importantly was the goal of developing a skilled, knowledgeable labor force that could one day work in the nation-building of its own country.

According to Miss Martha Inwood, a government employee, recruiting is the first step. As the recruiting supervisor, she places advertisements each month, seeking electricians, welders, masons, plumbers, heavy equipment operators, drivers, mechanics, carpenters, telephone operators, radio and typewriter repairmen, medical aid men, plus clerks and clerk-typists.

Initial screening of applicants at Long Binh's civilian personnel office determines the prospective employee's English language aptitude, experience, and draft status for male applicants. Job-seekers who successfully meet this initial screening move into the training phase.

The Central Training Institute, Office of the Civilian Personnel Director, HQ USARV, maintains centralized training facilities in Saigon, Long Binh and Can Tho. Instructors from CTI are also sent on TDY to conduct training courses in surrounding areas such as Cam Ranh, Can Tho, Nha Trang, Pleiku, Qui Nhon and Vung Tau, provided equipment and facilities are available and a sufficient number of trainees require the training to support this effort.

The school's output since its inception in May of 1966 has been impressive. The first fiscal year of training, 1967, the school graduated 4,127. In fiscal year 1968 graduates totaled 3,732, while in the current fiscal year 2,639 have already completed courses.

More than 1,000 students during this same period

completed night courses. Emphasis in the Institute's curriculum is on English language training with over half the courses based on proficiency in conversational and written English. The reason for this, a personnel spokesman said is that we don't want just to place a mechanic on the job in an Army motorpool. "He has to be able to communicate, and the English language courses help him to develop that talent." The amount of English taught to a student varies according to the requirements of the job he is pursuing. A secretary, for instance, needs to know more English than a mechanic.

While students are attending school they receive a salary. If they already have jobs, their regular salary continues during the school course. New employees are paid a minimum wage to help cover living costs while attending school.

The Institute is divided into four main divisions. The Skills Division handles hard skill tradesmen such as carpenters, plumbers, electricians, mechanics, and body and fender repairmen. Its main training site is at Long Binh, although skills training is conducted in some of the school's other sites throughout Vietnam.

The second division of the Institute is the English Language Training Branch. The language courses are often taught by Vietnamese who are proficient in English and have the high qualities demanded of an instructor: the art of communication, patience, and a willingness to give the student confidence as he develops his language ability.

The third division is the Clerical Skills Training Branch, where such courses as typing are taught.

The fourth division at the Institute is the Management Division. Here civilian employees slated to move up the promotion ladder into management and supervisory slots are given an opportunity to further develop as supervisors.

At the Long Binh Branch of the Institute, Mr. John H. Shaw directs the training of employees in skills such as auto mechanics, vehicle operation, electronics, typing, forklift operation and medical aid. In the school's surrounding yard at Long Binh, Vietnamese girls and women take turns handling the cumbersome forklifts. Normally a job for men, the women have been trained in these and similar driving jobs due to the critical shortage of men because of increased draft calls in Vietnam.

This shortage is again evident in the automotive mechanics courses at Long Binh. The students look like a high school outing for boys. The institute trains

students from the age of 16 up, but again the lack of draft-age males gives a very youthful air to the mechanic trainees.

But what they may lack in years, they more than make up in youthful zest and eagerness to learn. The students take their training aids, salvaged vehicles, and strip them down to the chassis under the watchful eyes of the instructor. The learning process continues as they discuss each part, its mechanics of operation and how to repair it. The class then rebuilds the vehicle all the way back to the finished product.

Assisting Mr. Shaw at the Long Binh branch of the Institute is a Korean national now working for the Army since 1954. Mr. Won C. Choe has been in Vietnam for a year, and he is a positive spokesman for the Vietnamese people. "The Vietnamese," he says, "are one of the most diligent people in this part of the world. And the tremendous resources of this country have never really been tapped. We are helping now to provide what they are going to need desperately when the war is over—that is trained manpower."

He cites the parallels with his own native land. "Korea was a devastated land following years of occupation by . . . the Japanese and then the Korean Conflict with its wide destruction throughout the cities and towns. Yet, in less than 20 years Korea has now emerged as a thriving, growing nation of industry, farming, and a way of life that offers something for

every citizen."

He adds, "The same progress is possible here in Vietnam. And with the great determination of these people, I'm sure that Vietnam will one day be the pride of Southeast Asia."

In Saigon, the secondary mission of the Institute was emphasized with a bit of a gripe: "It gets frustrating at times when we graduate a man trained as a electrician and then a few months later lose him to some civilian industry. To keep the whole program in perspective includes the realization that this man is now a definite asset to his country as part of the nation-building force." Each trainee, however, is obligated to work three months for U.S. forces for each month of training received.

The Institute is also aiming for more centralized training in the near future to provide a broad base of trained manpower. Eventually, however, it is hoped that the different area civilian personnel offices will be able to conduct their own courses and training, as is done in military installations in the U.S.

Mr. Claude A. Gulliford, Institute director, summarized, "We are building a work force practically from the ground up. But the work we do here now will pay rich dividends not only for the U.S. Army in having trained employees, but also and more importantly, in developing skilled people who can contribute their talents to building their nation." ▲



Vietnamese women attend a class on secretarial skills (above).



Young men learn the mechanics of the gasoline engine (left).

Hong Kong:

Bargain Mart of the Orient

By SFC Stanley S. Johnson
UpTight Staff Writer & Photographer

From the air it looks like all the travel posters—the bright blue of the harbor, the clustered hotels and tall apartment buildings, the freighters, liners and warships riding at anchor, and the Peak you know from such films as “The World of Suzy Wong.” This is it: Hong Kong, the fabled British Crown Colony of the Orient.

Generations of world travelers have come here, attracted by the blend of mysterious East and modern West, the restaurants, the night life and what is probably the world's biggest array of luxury goods at bargain prices.

The principal language spoken here is Chinese, but English, the language of world trade, is widely understood in hotels, restaurants and shops. Ninety-nine per cent of the colony's nearly four million people are Chinese; more than a million are refugees from Communist China. A massive construction program is resettling most of the refugees in tall apartment complexes which dominate the fringes of the colony's major population centers.

A diversity of peoples is reflected in the non-Chinese population. There are close to 20,000 British, and smaller communities of East Indians and other Asiatic peoples, all of whom add variety and a cosmopolitan spirit to the colony.

The guy interested in shopping would do best to visit the U.S. Navy-sponsored display rooms of the China Fleet Club in Victoria, the main city of Hong Kong Island. On display are goods from all over the world—optical products, stereo equipment, pearls, perfumes, silks and suits. The merchants represented here have been

carefully selected on their reputations for reliability and honesty. Prices are clearly marked, and if they don't have what you want, they'll give you a slip which you can take to their main stores.

It will identify you as a U.S. serviceman, enabling you to get what you want at the most reasonable price.

Naturally, you can shop around for yourself—but steer clear of the touts who may even go so far as to claim they are employees of the R&R center. They will try to strike up a friendship with you, then offer to take you to a shop owned by a “friend” where you can get a real “bargain.” Keep in mind that they don't work for nothing. They live off the commissions paid by shops to which they bring tourists—and you pay for their commissions in the form of higher prices.

Like every big city, Hong Kong also has its lawless elements. Watch for pickpockets, and over-eager bar hostesses who specialize in separating soldiers from their money. Avoid any political demonstration which might develop. One last caution: any establishment which has a posted OFF LIMITS sign by order of the British military garrison there is also off limits to U.S. servicemen. U.S. Navy Shore Patrols make their rounds with British Military Police; both have jurisdiction over all U.S. military personnel.

When your shopping is finished, it's time for sightseeing. Tours are available through the R&R center at prices you can't pass up. One of them takes you for the day, lunch included, through the New Territories—so named because they

were the last piece of land acquired by the British years ago. This excursion on the mainland will take you back thousands of years as you pass through walled villages. Life here has changed little from ancient times.

Closer to the colony's metropolitan area are the water tours. On the sunset tour of the harbor, you board a motorized replica of the old Chinese junk. It circles the harbor, passing the waterfronts of both Victoria, on the island, and Kowloon, the peninsula crowded with hotels and smart shops. You'll sail through a floating village, crowded with sampans and junks where people live their entire lives. The cruise continues to Aberdeen, a fishing village, where a floating restaurant and a seven-course Chinese dinner awaits you and your tour companions.

Towering over the island is the Peak, Hong Kong's major landmark. A cable car takes you high on the side of the mountain for a magnificent view of the city, the harbor and the Kowloon Peninsula. Bring your camera for some memorable shots.

After a day of shopping, sightseeing—and of watching the girls in their tight-fitting “cheongsams”—you'll have worked up quite an appetite. Few cities in the world can offer a greater variety of restaurants offering menus from all nations. You can choose your meal from an array of cuisines: French, Russian, German, Indonesian, English, American—you name it. Then, of course, the Chinese restaurants offer all the styles of Chinese cooking which vary widely from province to province.

Following a good meal the night-life beckons along glittering, neon-lighted streets. World famous talent provides Hong Kong's floor shows and music. For a special treat, visit a Chinese opera with dances and costumes dating back through ages of Chinese civilization. But if your tastes are more contemporary, you can swing in the discotheques and jazz clubs on every hand. Then, some men just like to explore the streets and stroll through the late-evening bazaars.



Curio shops and stalls line one of the "ladder-streets" in downtown Victoria (left). Night view of one of the many floating restaurants off of Aberdeen, a fishing village on Hong Kong Island (below). Late evening shoppers browse through a hotel arcade (bottom).







View of Victoria, the colony's commercial center and major city (left). Although dressed in modern clothing, this gentleman uses an age-old method of transportation (below). A young resident of Hong Kong enjoys a cooling drink in an outdoor cafe (bottom).





A sunset glows over Hong Kong Harbor (top). Evening comes and the "water people" prepare for dinner aboard their junks and sampans, where they spend most of their lives (left). The colony's government buildings are surrounded by fountains and flowering trees (above).



My insurance company? SGLI, of course. Why?*

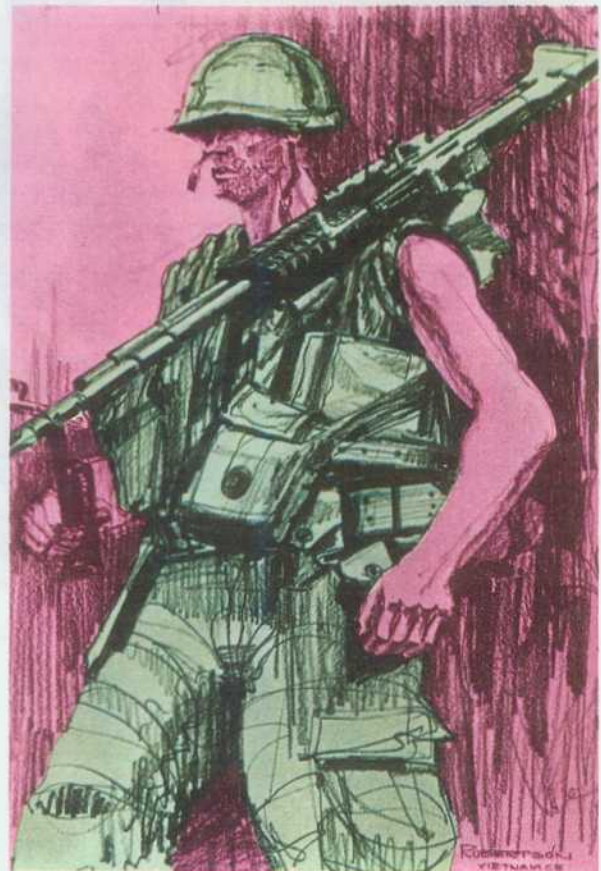
Combat Art: **FACES OF COMBAT**

By SP6 Jerry Robertson
MACV Command Operations Center



▲ Rifleman

▼ Resting



▲ Machine Gunner





▲ Sergeant



▲ Medic

Brief Bursts—

late information affecting you!

ENLISTED LINGUISTS are needed to fill a variety of world-wide positions. Language training quotas are filled by volunteers. Interested personnel should apply for language training regardless of their MOS. Applicants are asked to designate three language preferences and also indicate whether they would accept Vietnamese language training. Procedures for volunteering are outlined in AR 611-82.

A YEAR'S STABILIZED TOUR at CONUS station or overseas area of choice is one of the reenlistment options available to enlisted personnel serving in Vietnam. Medically evacuated personnel also qualify for this option. Reenlistment must be accomplished before return to CONUS, and a vacancy for which the individual is qualified must exist at the station or area of choice.

PERSONNEL TURBULENCE, the movement of personnel in and out of units, is being reduced by the Army's early release policy and tour extensions. Under current regulations, enlisted men returning from short-tour areas with less than 150 days to ETS are separated upon arrival in CONUS. Soldiers in short-tour areas are encouraged to extend their tours to qualify for early release and other benefits. These programs help reduce the number of overseas replacements required by the Army.

PHYSICALLY DISABLED SOLDIERS who incurred their disabilities while on active duty in a combat zone and are no longer capable of being utilized in their primary MOS may still be retained on active duty. These individuals may apply for retention under provisions of AR 635-40. In general, there is a liberal reclassification policy in effect for these soldiers. If there is an MOS in which they may be utilized, to include those which would require re-training, he will be retained on active duty.

EFFECTIVE MARCH 31, 1969, personnel may elect to be processed for retirement at a location of their choice in CONUS. Members who have already submitted a retirement request with effective date of March 31 or later may request a change in location for these proceedings. Previously, soldiers were processed for retirement at CONUS Debarkation Point or at their CONUS duty station.

CIVILIAN CLOTHING is now optional for wear aboard flights to all R & R locations except Hong Kong and Taipei. Military uniform must be worn aboard flights to these locations. This policy became effective Feb. 15, under provisions of MACV Message 041-1233.

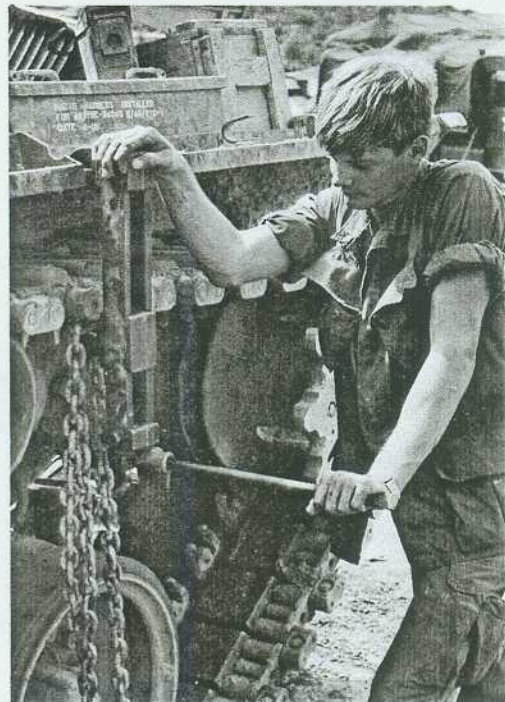
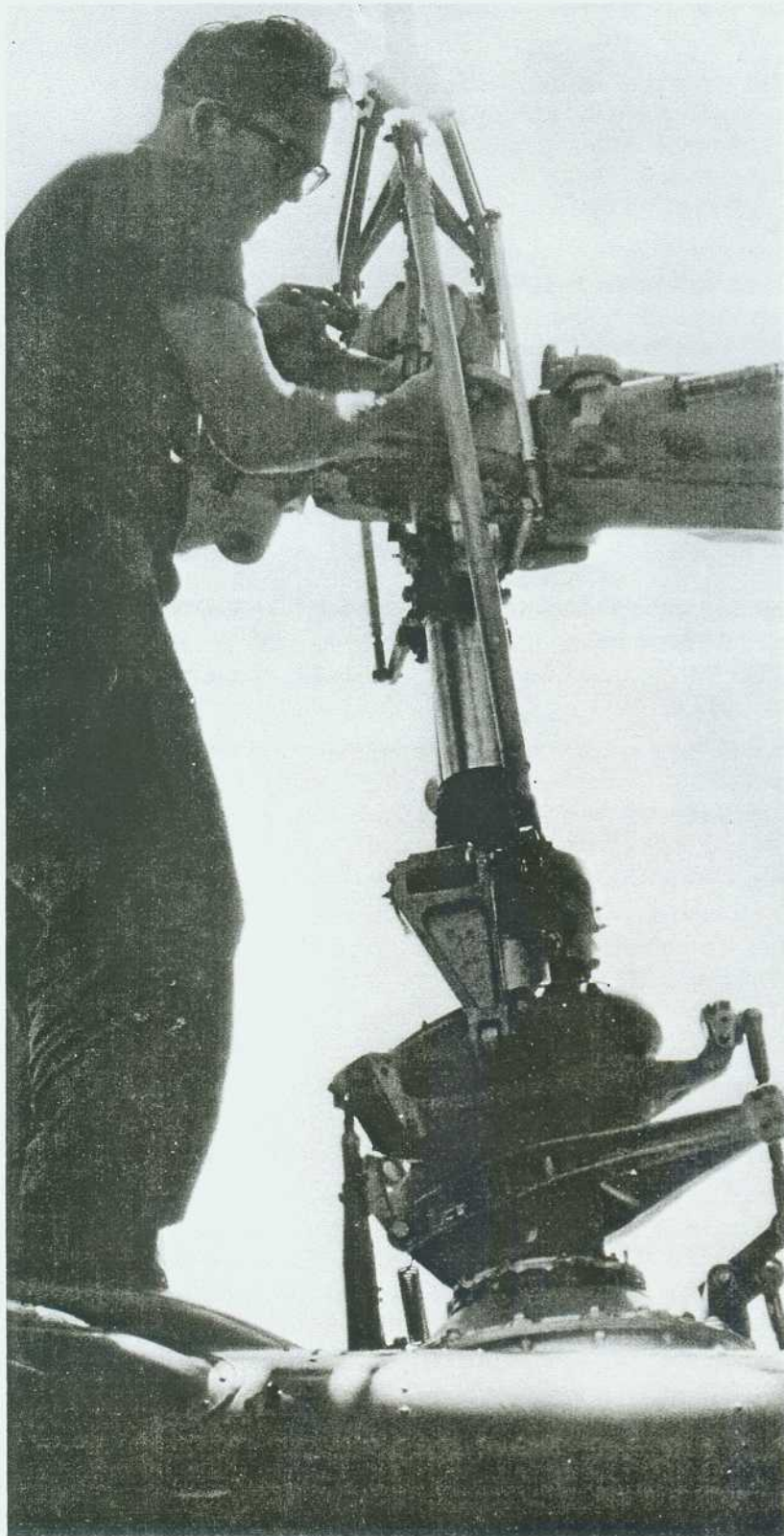
HELICOPTERS IN VIETNAM transported over 170,000 patients during the first ten months of 1968, surpassing the 1967 total by 76,000. Since the start of Vietnam hostilities, 350,000 patients have been airlifted. During the entire Korean Conflict, 25 choppers evacuated 20,000 men.

NCO CANDIDATE COURSE GRADUATES received a rating of excellent after a four-month performance evaluation period in Vietnam. The report shows over 80 per cent performing exceptionally well in grades E-5 and E-6, most with less than 15 months service. To date, about 9,000 EM have completed the course and are filling important positions throughout the Army.

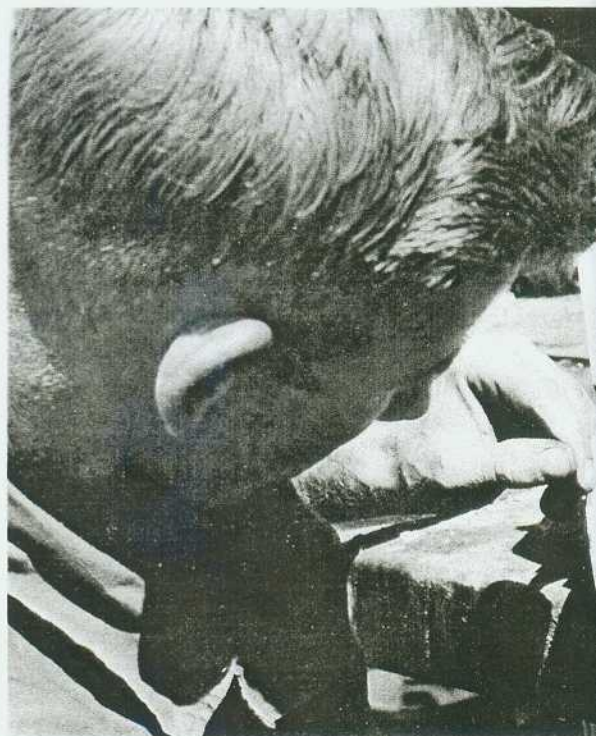
WARRANT OFFICERS AND ENLISTED MEN in grades E-5 through E-9 may apply for direct appointment as commissioned officers in the infantry. Applicants must have completed at least six months of honorable active duty in grade E-5 or above and must not have reached their 28th birthday at date of appointment. Details for applying are contained in AR 135-100 and DA Circular 601-24.

Maintenance on the Move

Contributed by Information Offices of the
1st Cav, 4th Transportation & 5th Inf.



Soldier stands on top of a helicopter while adjusting its rotor (left), while another mobile maintenance man works on a track vehicle (above). Back in the shop, a trooper repairs a ballistic computer (below).



Without those wheels, you just aren't going to move!

So often forgotten in the records of battles are the men behind the scenes who insure our combat soldiers with transportation mobility. Be it in the air or on the ground, in combat or behind the lines, there is always that certain degree of maintenance required to keep our vehicles functioning.

The job of insuring that helicopters are available when they are needed—a desire of every Skytrooper—belongs to the men of the 15th Transportation Battalion, 1st Cavalry Division (Airmobile).

If a ship cannot be flown, it is hauled into a direct support platoon by Chinook or Flying Crane. After the initial inspection, the damaged parts are then sent to the shop platoon. Each shop has its own function, and together they provide all the necessary maintenance for the complete helicopter. For instance, if a tail rotor needs repair, it is removed and sent to the prop and rotor shop. If a radio is damaged, it is sent to the avionics shop. All parts are then brought back to the direct support platoon for installation. Much of the work of the engine shop is caused by foreign object damage. Watches, tools, nuts, and small pieces of wire contribute to the damage being

sucked in by the high velocity of air going through the engine.

Repairmen in the sheet metal shop have a tedious and difficult job in replacing the damaged parts of the helicopter's windshield and body.

Although the number of aircraft served by the battalion represents a remarkable achievement, this is not accomplished at the expense of safety. No matter how minor the problem, the ship is given a complete inspection and if other difficulties are found, they are repaired before the ship is released to its unit. In addition, each repaired part is checked three times by a technical inspector and the ship is given a thorough flight check before the job is considered finished.

The effect of the battalion on the lives of others in the division was summed up by one helicopter crew chief. "We sometimes have trouble with the armaments on the ship," he explained, "especially when dust gets into the moving parts. We also once had the rotor bearing go out in two ships in one day and in each case we depended on the 15th Transportation Battalion to take care of it. If we didn't have them to rely on, we'd be in a fix."

Also maintenance-oriented, the 4th Transportation Command (Terminal C) has one of the most diversified inventories of equipment and vehicles, yet the command's operational posture is never found lacking.

The mental attitude is kept high through overall concern and individual attention. But while constant inspections spot the deficiencies, the operators and drivers of the command's vast array of rolling stock are deservedly credited with making repairs and correcting deficiencies. It is the man on the machine, be it a forklift or a jeep, who really gets the job done.

The command also has one of the most complete and varied inventories of material handling equipment. Forklifts, gasoline as well as electric, are more common around the 4th TC area than the wheeled trucks and other vehicles more appropriate to the Transportation Corps. Dock mules, those interesting little warehouse tractors that are most common at large

stateside airports, are almost as common at seaports in Vietnam. The total of 658 major items listed by the 4th Transportation Command supply section includes wheeled vehicles and all the material handling equipment such as forklifts, cranes, etc. Regardless of the type of machine or vehicle, all have to be maintained on a regular basis. This is the basis for constant inspections and spotchecks throughout the command.

The 1st Infantry Brigade, 5th Infantry Division also functions as a maintenance outfit, supplying tank units and track recovery vehicles, should any armor equipment become disabled.

For months they have been operating the only mechanized brigade in Vietnam right in VC territory on the DMZ.

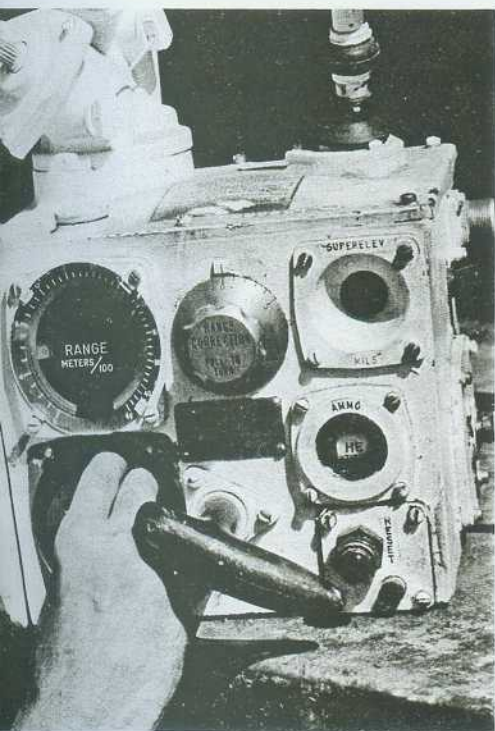
"Suspension systems, torsion bars and broken tracks are all in a day's work," commented Lieutenant William Hawk, shop officer at one of the 1st Brigade's maintenance areas at Dong Ha Combat Base. "Most of that type of work is done at the battalion maintenance shops wherever the battalions are stationed. These are what are called organizational maintenance problems."

Armor's number one problem in terms of maintenance is the mud. The second problem is considered to be the land mines. Minesweepers are not able to detect all of the mines, especially the plastic types which the VC have been using in the northernmost sector of South Vietnam. Most mine damage to a tank is easily repaired though.

Track mechanics of the 1st Battalion, 77th Armor, say that if parts are not available, sometimes they can be made out of other items. For example, the unit regularly makes exhaust pipe extensions for tanks by welding two 105 mm howitzer cannisters together.

The repair work is done by about 35 mechanics at brigade maintenance in Dong Ha and an additional 4-12 at each battalion level who work mostly on organizational maintenance.

Combat troops have learned to appreciate the job being performed by maintenance crews. If it were not for them, mobility might now be at a standstill. ▲



SOMEBODY UP THERE LIKES US

By SP4 Frank E. Fee Jr.
UpTight Staff Writer

The tiny Bird Dog wheeled in and out of billowing black smoke rising from the bomb riddled ground. In the front seat of the plane, the Air Force Forward Air Controller (FAC) peered down through his binoculars at the enemy positions.

As the Bird Dog made its way back into the sun, an F-100 Supersabre darted out from the other direction to drop still more bombs on the enemy.

The FAC, Major John K. Leventis, noted the results of the air-strike and ordered a rocket run for the finale. The fighter pilots acknowledge. Within seconds, tiny eruptions and small flashes could be seen on the ground.

This is the Air Force that the soldier knows best; the pudgy FAC plane and its brace of sleek jets attacking the enemy from above. Yet whether it be a trip to Camp Alpha en route to R&R, a medical evacuation to a rear area hospital, a psyops leaflet drop or the latest weather report, the Army knows it can look to the "men in blue" for valuable assistance.

"You try to get some fire power that will take care of the target," an air liaison officer had said in explaining some of the responsibilities of his FACs.

Major Leventis had done just that shortly after his arrival over the target area, the southern tip of a long, narrow field that the FACs had nicknamed "Lake Michigan."

This was 1st Cavalry Division territory and a unit of Skytroopers was in contact with the enemy just inside the woodline.

"The airstrike was planned back at the division sometime yesterday morning," Major Leventis said, shortly before take-off from the Quang Loi airstrip.

But the planning that went into this FAC mission involved the coordinates of a suspected enemy area and the likely point of contact for the ground troops.

It was up to Major Leventis to find the specific facts of the tactical situation, assess them and decide how best to use the Supersabres from Bien Hoa Air Force Base.

For this FAC mission, Major Leventis had flown from Quang Loi about 30 minutes before the airstrike was scheduled. En route to the target area, not far from Fire Support Base Rita, he had constantly scan-

ned the ground. Tomorrow's airstrike might be decided on what he saw in this area today.

During this time, he also was in contact with the tactical operations center, getting last minute facts on the coordinates of the target site, making sure that the area would be free of artillery and other aircraft and that friendly forces would be sure to stay out of the strike zone.

Arriving in the target area, Major Leventis now was also in radio contact with the ground commander, informing him of what he saw and getting the ground commander's ideas on the fight that was going on below.

The smoke of a previous airstrike was clearing as Major Leventis piloted the Bird Dog in a series of right circles over the target. He let his feet fly the craft as he peered down through his binoculars or flipped radio switches to put him in contact with the unit commander below, the operations center and finally, with the sudden arrival of the fighters, the airstrike pilots.

In a series of terse transmissions, Major Leventis marshaled his forces and gave the plan of attack. The fighters would dive on the enemy from the southwest, coming out of the late afternoon sun. He gave the pilots a quick briefing on the weather over the target and the best area over which to bail out should a plane get hit. The pilots were warned of possible small arms fire.

Major Leventis also prescribed the ordnance to be used, softening-up bombs and then 500-pounders. The fighter pilots were given all the information they needed to make the mission safe as well as sure.

Then Major Leventis was back in contact with the ground, ordering a smoke grenade to be thrown indicating where the Americans were.

A yellow puff of smoke appeared at the edge of "Lake Michigan." But Leventis had seen the friendlies further in the woods than the smoke grenade indicated. He called for another smoke grenade.

"Sometimes they're in a hurry and aren't too careful where they put the smoke," he explained over the intercom.

The second yellow cloud was further in the trees, where Leventis knew it should be. The strike was about to begin.

"Marking target," the FAC announced to the fighters.

The Bird Dog, which had been circling the target all the while was now in the southwest quadrant. There was a slight ascension as Leventis aligned the plane on the route the F-100 would fly in the strike.

After a moment's apparent loss of power as the plane reached the peak of its short climb, it seemed that the floor fell through. There was no horizon to be seen through the windscreen, only ground. The Bird Dog was in a sharp dive, its engine roaring.

All of a sudden, Major Leventis fired a marker rocket, one of many carried by the Bird Dog. Almost before the plane had come out of its dive and started to climb for air space, a cloud of white smoke was



Air Force A-37 drops ordnance on a suspected enemy position (bottom), while a forward air controller (below) views the results (left).



billowing from the ground.

The plane was still reaching for observation altitude when Leventis called in the fighters. Seemingly from out of nowhere, the two F-100s, one after the other, roared in on the enemy.

Two or three more passes by each of the F-100s and the airstrike was over.

And for the FAC, the reconnaissance part of his mission began.

Although the ground troops know the FAC best as the man who handles the airstrikes from above, a considerable amount of the FAC's air time on each two to three hour mission is spent in visual reconnaissance—time spent looking for new targets, watching old trails for signs of recent activity or whatever may be of interest to the intelligence people.

Occasionally, while on the visual reconnaissance

part of his mission, the FAC may sight enemy troops or an anti-aircraft position. He can then request an airstrike through the tactical air request network, a radio system operated by the Air Force. The request will be processed up through Army and Air Force channels and, if the aircraft are available, fighter pilots will scramble from one of 11 major Air Force bases in Vietnam or else divert from less important missions.

Besides airstrikes, the FAC may also call in aerial rocket artillery, helicopter gunships or ground artillery, depending on what he feels will best meet the tactical needs.

The FACs generally are assigned to one area of operations for a considerable time. They get to know the features of an area—the trails, the trees, hills, rivers and fields like "Lake Michigan."



Forward air controller flies an O-2 in search of targets (top). Ground crew pulls maintenance on a tiny Bird Dog (above). Squadron of F-100s races toward a target (right). One of the bombers strikes an enemy location (far right).



"Some days you'll see new trees in the area," said Captain Alfred J. McKeivitt, another of the FACs assigned to the 1st Cav. "Then you call in an airstrike or artillery and the 'trees' move pretty quickly."

Captain McKeivitt added that another "good clue to activity is when you bomb a trail one day and the next day they've got a new trail going around the craters."

Besides working the airstrikes, the FAC is capable of adjusting artillery and often does. Updating intelligence on a certain area also occupies the FAC's air time. As one operations officer put it, "When we think in terms of missions that are performed by the FAC, it would be very difficult to narrow it down because there are so many intangible things that he provides for the ground commanders."

And the same can be said for many other Air Force

activities that help to make the Army's mission successful in Vietnam, such as photo reconnaissance, cargo and passenger airlifts, psychological warfare, air evacuation and medical support.

Because of the nature of the Vietnam terrain and the war itself, nearly all troop and cargo movement is by air, largely by Air Force C-130 Hercules transports, C-123 Providers, C-7A Caribous and C-47 Skytrains.

Whether it be unit movement or travel to and from an R&R embarkation point, nearly every soldier in Vietnam has had occasion to fly with the Air Force. It has been estimated that the average infantryman climbs into a Caribou about 15 times during his tour. Indeed, the first stop for every soldier in Vietnam is an Air Force base, either Bien Hoa, Cam Ranh Bay or Tan Son Nhut.



Another important phase of the Army-Air Force cooperation is on photo reconnaissance missions. Every day, photo recon pilots are flying over and photographing hundreds of miles of Vietnam, obtaining up-to-date photo intelligence on specific target areas and providing ground commanders with information on their specific areas of operation. Just as the FAC relays information on new enemy movement or emplacements, so too the photo recon pilots give the battle planners a firm idea of what the enemy is up to.

Another factor that goes into making up a successful combat operation is the weather. Here again, the Air Force provides an important assist to the Army ground commander.

There is a two or three-man Air Force weather team for each Army brigade in Vietnam, providing up-to-the-minute weather information for its area of

operations.

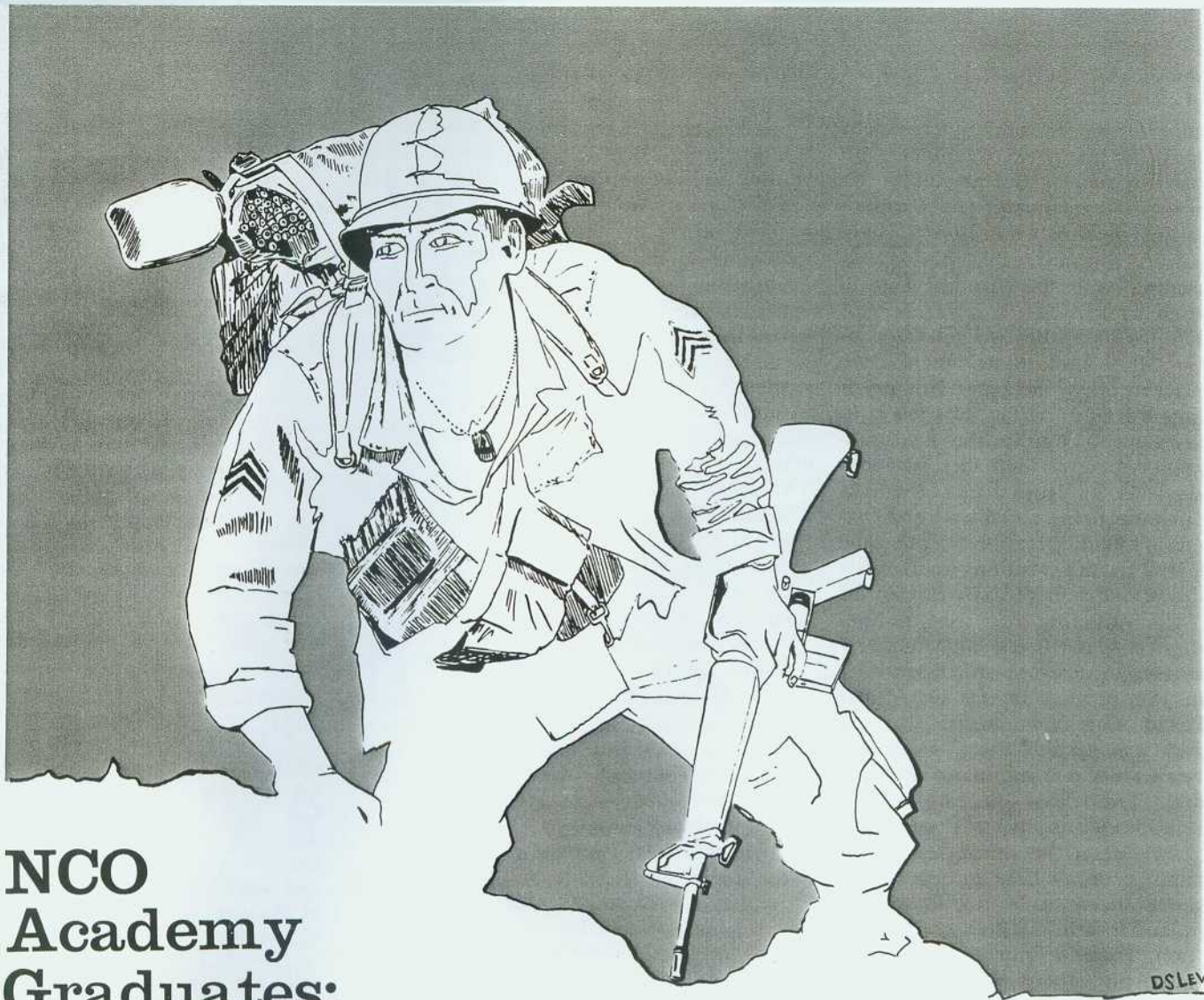
The weathermen's findings are relayed up to their division levels, so that all areas of the division will know what they can expect from the weather in the next 12 to 24 hours—and plan accordingly.

While the infantryman who fights in sun and rain and everything in between may not feel the weather has much to do with his combat operations, Army commanders will know that if the Air Force weathermen forecast storms, the troops had better not count on airstrikes.

The Vietnam war has brought the traditionally close relation of the Army and the Air Force to an even firmer bond. "Airstrike" is part of just about every infantryman's vocabulary and in the largest base camps and the smallest outposts, soldiers have high praise of American air power in all its many forms. ▲



Air Force C-130 approaching a landing strip (top). Soldiers pile into one of the big transport craft (left). Combat control team directs take-offs and landings in a remote area (above).



NCO Academy Graduates:

How Are They Doing?

Experience in the combat zone is the frosting that tops the school. Ask a couple of "instant NCOs" at Fire Base Anzio in the 101st Airborne Division area of operations.

A year ago the Non-Commissioned Officer Candidate Schools at Forts Benning and Gordon, Ga. started producing enlisted combat leaders for Vietnam. Two alumni are almost ready to end their regular tours.

Discussing the course, they said its training was like a cake—it's good, but incomplete without the experience necessary. They termed battlefield experience as the frosting that made them complete combat soldiers. "The Academy is like any other good school that makes

its students think," they said, "the more you learn the more you realize you don't know."

Sergeants Gerald Gregory and Larry Sizemore are graduates of two of the early NCO candidate classes. They've been together from the A Shau Valley to Phu Loc, just north of Da Nang, with the 1st Battalion, 327th Airborne Infantry. Both volunteered for the Army and Vietnam but neither volunteered for the NCO candidate school. Neither regrets having attended.

The course was the personal project of their division commander, Major General Melvin Zais. He is credited with having "sold it to everybody," according to one battalion commander, while he was

Army director of individual training in The Pentagon.

Sergeant Gregory was only 18 years old when he found himself in the first wave of Screaming Eagles assaulting into the A Shau last April. He had reported to Charley Company nine days before being given a squad, then sent to become part of the 1st Brigade blocking force for the 1st Cavalry Division in an effort to stop the flow of NVA pouring in from Laos. He celebrated his 19th birthday with a fire-fight just east of the Laotian border.

Five weeks after Sergeant Gregory reported in, Sergeant Sizemore followed. He saw his baptism of fire shortly thereafter. The bat-

talion was still operating in the A Shau and in heavy contact with Charlie. Sergeant Sizemore remembers his company was being hit hard by rockets and mortars. "We thought they were friendly rounds falling short so we radioed to have artillery stopped. The rounds kept coming. Charlie was firing at us from Laos."

Since then, the two graduates of the NCO Candidate School have been together. Sergeant Gregory is now S-4 Duty NCO. His job is to keep the troops in the field supplied, whatever their tactical needs are. As S-3 Duty NCO, Sergeant Sizemore helps coordinate the battalion's field operations. Both have served in staff positions for roughly the second half of their tour.

Remembering their days on line, they could recall one incident when an NCO candidate pulled through in the pinch. It was last June. Bravo Company pulled forward and was pinned down by heavy small arms and automatic weapons fire. The school graduate, then a team leader, pulled the squad together when the squad leader apparently didn't hear an order from the platoon leader to move the squad forward. Because of the team leader's quick action, the squad pulled out of the situation without any casualties.

All things considered, however, they agreed that experience is the best teacher. The Academy gave us a good notion of what to expect, but practical exercise on the battlefield is really what makes a combat leader, they said.

Artillery adjustment, for instance, is completely different. "We had to learn to do it under pressure. That made it different than a school exercise," Sergeant Sizemore said. "Not only that, I don't remember touching on calling in tactical air strikes and when you're in contact, your life may depend on how fast and how accurate those jets come in."

Map reading and leadership, however, were some of the school's stronger points. "They helped," Sergeant Sizemore said, "quite a bit."

Map reading was a classroom exercise supplemented by practical exercise. Leadership was evaluated

by candidates and cadre alike throughout the course. The course itself was 12 weeks of classroom work at Ft. Benning followed by nine weeks of on-the-job training at Ft. Gordon, where candidates rotated in leadership positions of various levels to determine their abilities.

After getting out of school, the two men remembered running into unreceptive NCOs. "I don't blame them," Sergeant Sizemore pointed out. "If I had to earn my rank through time and service I'd be skeptical too about an inexperienced youngster walking in on me and doing my job—or wanting to do it. After proving ourselves, though, we were accepted."

Lieutenant Colonel Raymond C. Smith, battalion commander, said he was satisfied with the quality of individuals produced by the NCOCS. "I've seen good men all over the U.S. Army," he said, "and those two are just as fine as I've seen at their jobs."

His sentiments were echoed down the chain of command. Sergeant Gregory's platoon leader, First Lieutenant Richard N. Scatterfield Jr, said "he (Gregory) knows his job and handles troops well. I couldn't ask for a better NCO." Another first lieutenant, Sherwood Springs, the battalion signal officer, said cooperation was what impressed him most about both men. "In operations, of course, I have to make sure communications are in. Sizemore makes it easy by keeping me informed on operation plans. And when a radio goes out during an operation, it's my job to give Gregory a replacement so he can get it out there. He doesn't waste time."

In the enlisted ranks, Specialist 5 H.J. Ortega, a youthful-looking medic, remembered Sergeant Gregory and two other men separated from their unit by about 50 meters two days after he reported in. "We were in the A Shau and they somehow got separated and they were taking fire from two sides and they were getting it with mortars too. They pulled out okay, but only after cleaning up with Charlie. They didn't even need my services." Speaking of both men, Irish-born Specialist 4 John Flynn called them "damn good sergeants." He

Opportunity:

Interested in becoming a chopper pilot? A drill instructor? An Army recruiter? Or a disc jockey?

These are just a few job specialties in which you may be qualified to receive training. There are more than 500 Army schools and training programs in a variety of fields, ranging from such leadership training programs as the Noncommissioned Officers' Candidate Course to training in technical skills, such as helicopter maintenance and repair. Among the many training programs for which qualified personnel may be selected to attend are the following:

- **RANGER TRAINING** is offered at the Ranger Division of the Infantry School at Ft. Benning, Ga. This is an eight-week course designed to develop leadership abilities and teach Ranger tactics and techniques and the principles of Ranger operations on all types of terrain.

- **DRILL INSTRUCTOR PROGRAMS** are offered at almost all Army training centers. The program is a reenlistment option for qualified soldiers in grades E-4 through E-7. Upon successful completion of the course, graduates are guaranteed an 18-month stabilized tour of duty. Provisions of AR 601-280 apply.

said they "both know their jobs and they both do them without getting in anybody's way or on anybody's nerves."

Though assigned now to a staff position, Sergeant Gregory still feels he's pulling his share. "Supplies are important," he said, "I know. I've been out there on the receiving end. I know how to appreciate a chopper coming in with ammo and chow right in the thick of a firefight and now I'm the guy hovering up there under fire to kick out supplies to the guys." He also coordinates evacuation choppers for the wounded. "If the wound is serious I can usually get a bird in there in 10 minutes, and it seems

Army Schools Offer Valuable Training

• **AVIATION** is a field of critical importance to the Army, and there are a number of MOS-producing schools offering training in every aspect of the field. One such course, taught at Ft. Eustis, Va., trains soldiers in the repair and maintenance of the CH-47 helicopter. Other courses give valuable instruction in such aviation-related fields as radar operation and flight scheduling.

• **MEDICINE** is another critically important field, and there are a multitude of opportunities here. One of the 'entry' courses to this field is the course in Basic Preventive Medicine. This eight-week course, offered at Ft. Sam Houston, Texas, imparts general knowledge of Medical Service organization, an introduction to laboratory procedures, and instruction in preventive medicine methods. Graduates of the course are awarded the MOS 91S, a stepping stone to further advancement—positions such as laboratory technician, corpsman and radiology specialist.

• **RECRUITING AND CAREER COUNSELING** is one of the most challenging and rewarding fields. A four-week course is offered at Ft. Benjamin Harrison, Ind., as a reenlistment option to qualified soldiers in grades E-5

and above. The course includes training in recruiting and reenlistment procedures, principles of interviewing, and effective speaking.

• **OFFICERS' CANDIDATE SCHOOLS** in all of the combat arms are open to qualified enlisted personnel. Soldiers with a baccalaureate degree or higher from an approved institution may apply for admission to OCS at any time during their careers, provided they meet all other entrance requirements. DA Pam 601-1 has all the information about OCS.

• **THE WARRANT OFFICERS' FLIGHT TRAINING PROGRAM** offers qualified enlisted personnel the opportunity to become helicopter and/or light aircraft pilots. Successful graduates of the course are appointed to the rank of Warrant Officer WO-1. Appointments to WO-1 are also available to qualified enlisted personnel in fields such as meteorology, field artillery radar operation, map reproduction, intelligence, criminal investigation and several more. More information is contained in AR 135-100 and Army Circular 601-13.

• **JOURNALISM** is taught in several courses at the Defense Information School at Ft. Benjamin Harrison, Ind. The basic

course offers training in Army Information policy as well as in applied and photo-journalism. The eight-week course is open to qualified E-5s and below. Advanced courses, such as the Newspaper Editors' Course are offered for senior NCOs. Broadcasting courses train soldiers in all phases of radio and television broadcasting, from writing news copy to shooting motion picture film to directing a television program.

• **UNITED STATES MILITARY ACADEMY PREPARATORY SCHOOL** is a time-tested avenue for enlisted men to West Point. Each August, more than 275 men undergo 10 months of rigorous academic, physical and military training in competition for 170 appointments to West Point. USMAPS is located at Ft. Belvoir, Va. Details are contained in AR 350-55.

Army opportunities for technical training and schools for development of leadership qualities are almost endlessly varied. Some are open only as reenlistment options. Application for admission to others may be made at any time. A complete listing of Army MOS-producing schools, with descriptions and requirements, may be found in DA Pam 350-10, "School Catalog."

like the hotter the area, the more anxious the chopper pilots seem to get in and get the casualty out. Ordinarily though, it will take about 15 minutes to Medevac a man."

Grinning, he added, "You know, I'll bet you a man in the combat zone has a better chance of survival after being wounded than a man on the street back in the world."

Sergeant Gregory has earned two Air Medals and Sizemore claims two Bronze Stars. One of the Air Medals was for the first assault into the A Shau, the other was for a time when a chopper in front of his got shot down. "We hovered above it under fire to check the results,"

he remembered. His craft took two .50 caliber slugs before pulling out. The next day, a platoon from Delta Company was sent to secure the area and free the trapped victims. "They cleared a landing zone and we came in to put them on the chopper for medevac. It was last November just north of Da Nang."

Speaking of one of his Bronze Stars, Sergeant Sizemore said his unit got hit by artillery last August. He was senior radio-telephone operator (RTO) and a round hit in the midst of a group of paratroopers. There was no medic around so he patched them up as best he could until the medevac chopper arrived.

The two have been through much of the same in their Army careers, but their plans differ. Sergeant Gregory hopes to return to the NCO school as cadre. "As a graduate of one of its earlier classes who's seen combat," he said, "I feel I can really help the men scheduled to come here."

Sergeant Sizemore plans to extend his current tour for six months. "Vietnam is my home right now," he said. "You know Sergeant First Class (Vernon) Sizemore, the commo sergeant over at the second battalion? He's my father. I don't HAVE to be here. But I like it. It's home." ▲

Nevah Hoppen!



Only in the strange world of the combat soldier can humor come from sources that one would think "Nevah Hoppen!" If you have some ideas for funny captions for this picture, send them to "Nevah Hoppen," USARV-IO, APO 96375. If we use your idea in the follow-up to this issue's picture, you'll receive personal copies of the next six issues of UpTight (sent to you anywhere in the world). Some of our gaglines for this picture:

- They still taste like ham and limas.
- You say it's your fifth extension?
- Since when have they had C-ration canned rice?

Maria Kords, clad in a gold bikini and gold paint, relaxes between takes during the filming of "For Singles Only," a Columbia picture starring John Saxon and Mary Ann Mobely.



LAST ISSUE'S WINNERS

"Wait till you see B Company—they're riding tricycles!"

—SSG Ray A. Bows, 4th Trans Command

"I knew there was a catch when the CO said he was going to cycle us out of the combat zone."

—SP4 Steven C. Funston, 101st Abn Div

"That's right, we act like we're tourists and ride right into the village."

—MAJ Alan B. Salisbury, 1st Sig Bde



