

UPTIGHT

United States Army, Vietnam • SPRING, 1970



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.



1st Signal Brigade

From a satellite in orbit 18,200 miles above the Pacific Ocean to a courier on a dusty Vietnamese road, the 1st Signal Brigade passes the word into, out of and within Southeast Asia.

With more than 20,000 men scattered among more than 200 sites in Vietnam and Thailand, the brigade is the largest combat signal unit ever formed and controls the most comprehensive military communications-electronics systems in the history of warfare. Its mission is very simply put: communication.

Since its organization on April 1, 1966, the brigade has fulfilled this mission by planning, engineering, installing, operating and maintaining both the Southeast Asian portion of the Army's world-wide strategic communications system and the extensive area communications systems in Vietnam and Thailand.

All communications entering or leaving Vietnam must pass through facilities operated by the brigade, which consists of six subordinate signal groups, five in the Republic of Vietnam and one in Thailand. In the more than three years of its existence, the 1st Signal Brigade has provided communications of a scope never before achieved in a combat zone. The primary mission is to "keep the shooters talking," but as the last sentence of every signal unit mission outlines, the communicator will "perform as infantry" when required. This he has done admirably.



It's Working

"Vietnamization is working," said Secretary of Defense Melvin R. Laird in mid-February as he wound up a four-day visit to the Republic of Vietnam. During his tour across the Republic, Laird was focusing specifically on the Vietnamization program in order that he might inform the President on the current status of the program. He said his four days in Vietnam had convinced him the Vietnamization program was so solid that no enemy initiative could have a major effect in Vietnam despite continuing withdrawals of American combat soldiers.

The secretary pointed out that by mid-April the authorized U.S. military troop strength in the Republic will have been reduced from 549,500 a year ago to 434,000.

Traveling with Laird was General Earle G. Wheeler, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, who said that while the Vietnamization program is on schedule or ahead in some areas, there will be setbacks. "I know of no war where one side has won all the battles," Wheeler said. "A significant enemy threat remains," Laird admitted, "but we have the strength and several options available to respond effectively to any increase in the enemy threat."

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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

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CREDITS: Front cover—A light observation helicopter heads home after a late afternoon mission. Photo by SP5 Dave Robson, USARV-IO. Study of a Montagnard man. Photo by LT Joe E. Moreland Jr.

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High and Mighty

By SP4 Keith McKeown
USARV-IO

Photographs by
SP5 Mark Jury
UpTight Staff Photographer

The thump of the rotor sounds in the distance and everybody's spirits perk up. Then the Huey comes into view, sweeping across the treetops from the direction of Dong Ha and begins the slow ascent up the mountainside.

The difference in the men is perceptible. A smile here . . . a little faster movement there. Mail, ammunition and hot food are just minutes away, and everyone is ready.

For the men of the artillery battery occupying Fire Support Base Fuller, high in the mountains just south of the Demilitarized Zone, that Huey is a link with the world. Air transport is their sole means of support. If the weather prohibits flying, the men will have to live on C-rations and go without mail for a day.

"We have one chopper a day scheduled to bring in hot food and whatever else it can carry from Dong

Ha," says Captain Earl Weaver, battery commander. "A Chinook brings in larger supplies and water, which it has to lower to us on the helipad since there is nowhere up here to land."

The isolated base has only one pad, just large enough to get a Huey down on.

The weather is a big factor to the men of Fuller. The first order of business for the day is to scan the sky. If it's clear, they know the chopper will be arriving with provisions, mail and a few luxuries.

The Huey is down now, and there is a mass of activity.

"The longest we've had to go without the chopper is eight days," Captain Weaver says. "We had plenty of food and we collected water from the air by spreading out our ponchos on top of the bunkers. Even then, morale remained high. What bothered us most wasn't the food, but not

having any mail for a whole week."

Fire Support Base Fuller is the home of Battery C, 6th Battalion, 33rd Artillery of the 108th Artillery Group. This northwestern-most base in the Republic of Vietnam was carved out of the mountainside three years ago by the Marines. In November 1969, when the 3rd Marine Division was redeployed, Battery C and its 105mm howitzers moved in from nearby Fire Support Base Kate.

"It's lonely sometime," said Sergeant James Bridges, "but we have a lot of simple pleasures like reading and listening to the radio. When the chopper makes it in, we get beer and soda and the cook mixes up a batch of spaghetti and we have a party. Most important, we feel we are doing a job that has to be done. That's our chief satisfaction."

The job they have is a big one. The battery has to provide effective artil-

lery support for the U.S. and Army of the Republic of Vietnam (ARVN) forces in northern I Corps Tactical Zone.

"We have supported almost every unit in the area at one time or another . . . the 1st ARVN Division, the 101st Airborne Division and the 5th Infantry Division," says Captain Weaver.

The Huey is unloaded now, and the crew is getting ready to pull pitch and head back for Dong Ha. When it's gone, the men of Fuller will busy themselves carrying the stores of ammunition from the helipad to storage areas and polishing and cleaning their guns until the brass shines and the barrels gleam.

Then comes the call . . . "Man the

battery." The hill jumps into action for a fire mission. When the day's missions are complete, it's time to clean the guns again and prepare more ammunition for the next mission.

During the off hours, the men work at improving their living quarters, which are small two-man rooms dug into the clay hillside. They have panelled their walls with wood from empty ammo crates, which they scorch for a warm brown look. The ammo crates, sandbags and engineer marking poles have been ingeniously shaped and molded into comfortable, if rustic, conveniences—tables, chairs, shelves and storage bins. At the end of the working day, the men sit on the edge of sheer cliff to write letters, read, talk and admire the magnificent view.

"I never get tired of looking out from here," said battery cook Specialist 4 Clarence Castle. "On a clear day you can see Laos, North Vietnam and the Gulf of Tonkin. It's really fantastic."

In spite of their unusual circumstances, the artillerymen maintain a wry sense of humor about their situation and, according to their commander, feel they are the best battery in Vietnam.

"There is a feeling of togetherness up here, a feeling we are different from other units and so we feel we are tougher," Captain Weaver said. "Also, we have a special relationship with the people who supply us in the rear. We realize without them we couldn't exist."



A few spare moments are spent writing home (left). In order to keep their guns in top working order, battery members spend several hours each day preparing for the firing missions (above).

About once a month, two men from each section of the battery are sent to Dong Ha for two or three days of rest. Often they carry with them cutdown, used shell cartridges which the artillerymen have sanded and polished into gleaming brass ashtrays. In Dong Ha, the ashtrays are engraved with the battalion crest and sent home as souvenirs.

"The men have nothing to do but relax when they go to the rear," says Captain Weaver, "but strange as it may sound, most of them say they are anxious to get back on the mountain when their rest is over. They like it here. It's a rugged life, but it can be enjoyable."

The men get plenty of exercise by carrying ammo and positioning the

heavy howitzers for each fire mission. The men also do calisthenics on their own.

The little things are available also, although sometimes in a rather primitive form. Laundry is either done by hand by the men or sent down to Dong Ha. Garbage is disposed of by dropping it down a chute on the mountainside where it is burned. The men give one another haircuts with a pair of electric clippers and a lot of chopping.

Perimeter security is provided by a company of infantrymen from the 1st Brigade, 5th Infantry Division (Mechanized). The riflemen spend one month on the mountaintop on stand-down before returning to the field. They are replaced by another com-

pany from the brigade.

While at the fire base, the infantrymen sweep the edge of the hill each morning and repair and improve the barbed wire defenses that rim the mountaintop. Half of the company spends each night on guard duty.

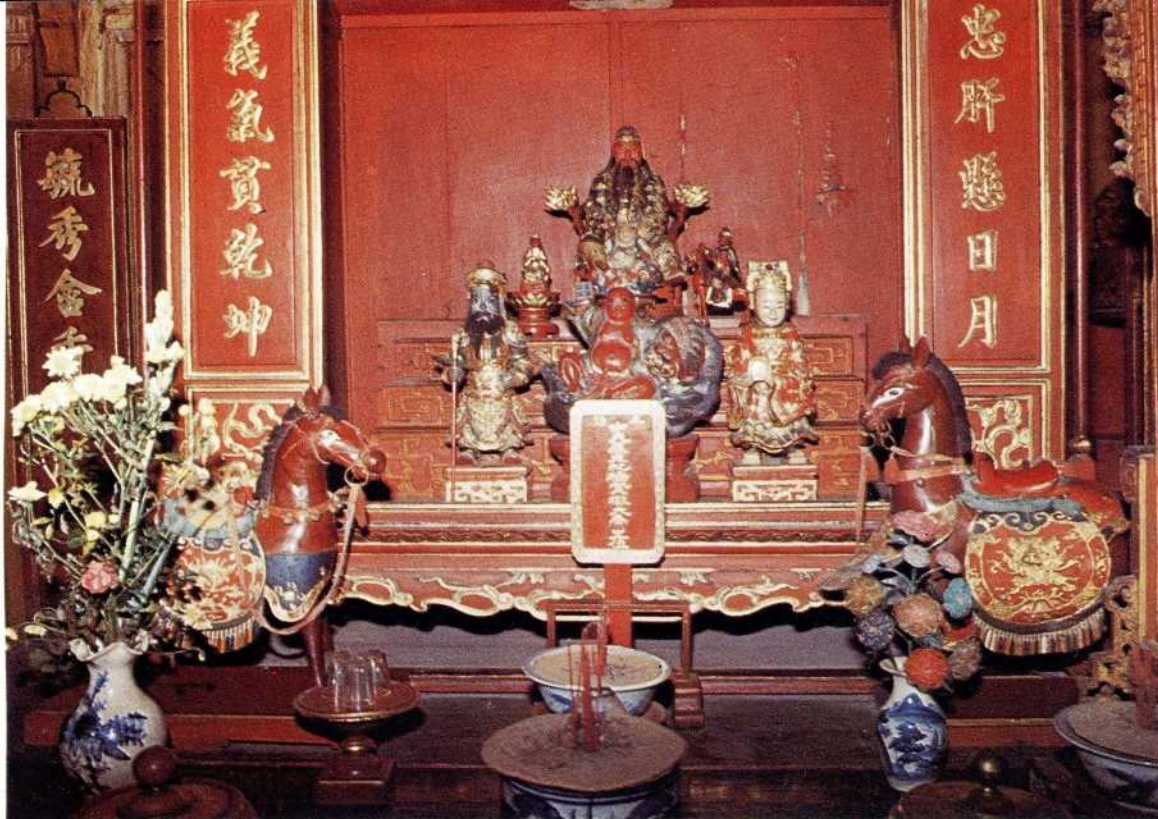
Says one company commander, "They really enjoy it up here. For them, this is a sort of vacation."

The Huey is gone now and the artillerymen get back to work. They are already getting ready for tomorrow and the sound of the Huey climbing the mountain. They have faith. If the hilltop is blanketed with fog, they'll just settle back for another day of hard work.

They know they can hold out longer than the bad weather. ▲

There's never a lack of help around when the daily chopper from Dong Ha arrives carrying hot food, mail and ammunition.





Elegant inlay work exemplifies the patient craftsmanship of this Citadel shrine.

The Center of a Culture

By SP4 T. Jay Williams
XXIV Corps-10

Photographs by
SP4 M. Joseph P. Moore
USARV-10

To most western minds the city of Hue has only emerged into general knowledge since winter of 1968 when determined NVA and VC soldiers held the Citadel for 25 days before being routed by combined forces of ARVN and U.S. soldiers.

However, to those schooled in the history of Indochina, Vietnam as we know it today is the final development in an evolutionary process begun as far back as 3,000 BC, and Hue is one of the later capitals of Vietnam and the seat of the modern dynasties ruling the reunited Vietnam since the early 1800's.

Though the actual city of Hue is relatively new in the history of this country, its development can only be traced through the development of the peoples of the area. Thus, one cannot overlook the Chinese influence which directly controlled parts of the area which is now the Republic of Vietnam for more than 1,000 years, and has exerted indirect supervision for another 900 years.

This Chinese influence was accepted discriminately by the Vietnamese, while they often militantly opposed the political control that came in the same package.

Through 938 A.D., the Vietnamese worked under the supervision of Chinese overlords and provincial leaders and paid taxes to the central government, but a revolution in that year removed the yoke of Chinese rule and marked the emergence of the first independent Vietnam. With the exception of a 22-year interlude of Chinese reoccupation (The Chinese Interregnum of 1406-28), it remained independent for the next 900 years.

But throughout these years, the only thing to really remain constant was the will and character of the Vietnamese people, strongly Oriental yet militantly independent and nationalistic. The actual area governed by the Vietnamese people changed through the years finally expanding to the boundaries of modern Vietnam, both North and South, following

the nam-tien (southern expansion) begun during the Ly Dynasty (1009-1225). This policy of aggressive expansion continued down through Vietnamese history until the southern tip of the Indochinese peninsula was acquired from Cambodia in 1780.

The city of Hue became the seat of the final Vietnamese dynasties after 25 years of bloody fighting which saw the Nguyen Dynasty of the south replaced, then restored with the help of the French.

From the early 1500's, the Ly Dynasty, which ruled for 360 years, began weakening and was eventually ousted and replaced by two dynasties. This separate rule for the north and south lasted until 1776 when three brothers from the village of Tay Son took over both north and south and, in 1788, a new emperor of a united Vietnam was named. However, with the help of a French priest, the last descendant of the original Nguyen family recaptured the throne and restored the dynasty, this time building a new



An ancient arabesque garden path leads to the sight of a tomb and obelisk.

mainder of Thua Thien province.

The French renamed the parts of Vietnam. The separation formed: Tonkin which incorporated Hanoi and north; Annam, from Hanoi south almost to Saigon, and Cochin China, which covered the Mekong Delta.

Because of its miles and miles of fertile land and rubber trees, Cochin China was a very important area for the French. Also, the vast mineral deposits of the north area made Tonkin equally valuable.

But Annam, with its capital being Hue, was not of particular economic importance and was the least directly controlled province. Through the years, this fact has set the people of this area apart.

Within Hue, during the French occupation, life may be said to have gone on as usual. Buddhism had become the official state religion during the Ly Dynasty and it continued to be an important institution, linking the residents of Hue to the traditions and thoughts of the past.

So, with the French exercising real control throughout Vietnam, Hue seemed the final vestige of traditional thought and culture, the only culture relatively untied to the French, either politically or economically.

This fact helps account for the aloofness of modern Hue citizens when compared to residents of other cities in Vietnam. Hue residents consider themselves the only traditional Vietnamese, far above territorial disputes and imperialist aggression. They look deprecatingly at Hanoi, the Communist stronghold, and Saigon, the French-built capital. To them Hue is still the natural capital of Vietnam and the center of Vietnamese culture, though the last Emperor has now been gone over 25 years.

Interestingly, though the city of Hue has always been a cultural and intellectual center, it has never been a nationalistically-oriented city. Of the many revolutionary movements in the past, none have been centered in Hue or even actively adopted by the residents there.

One reason may be that the city is 640 kilometers from the new capital of the South and politically separated from the capital of the North, so there is no strong attachment to a central government. Residents of Hue remain above such considerations, feeling the only important political entity in their lives is their city. In

capital which he called Hue.

Thus, Nguyen Anh became the Emperor Gia Long—Gia from Gia Dinh (the area now called Saigon) and Long for Thanh Long (Hanoi)—and with the founding of this dynasty in Hue, the reunified country was renamed Vietnam (the Viet of the South).

The Nguyen Dynasty, the last in the history of Vietnam, lasted through the Emperor Bao Dai who abdicated the throne at the end of World War II in favor of Ho Chi Minh who appeared to have popular support.

But it was during this dynastic period of almost 150 years that the city of Hue came to be the cultural and intellectual center of Vietnam, yielding much less to the presence of the French and Japanese than any other Vietnamese city.

And the cultural outburst during this dynasty was among the most brilliant in Vietnamese history, stressing as it did the national pride by introducing peculiarly Vietnamese literature.

Architecture also flourished in this period and the Emperor Gia Long began the walled Citadel in 1802. The three-foot thick walls were patterned after those in Peking and the layout of the palace grounds was

copied from the real ancient capital city of Hanoi (Thanh Long).

However, peace was not to last long, and in 1857, the French invaded Vietnam taking the port of Da Nang and pressing south to wrest Saigon from the Vietnamese in 1861. Due to the southward direction of the French imperialism, Hue was not taken, but in 1862 the Imperial City ceded Saigon to the French and agreed to pay a war indemnity.

Then, in 1883, a French expeditionary force took northern Vietnam, and the signing of the Treaty of Protectorate formally ended Vietnamese independence which had lasted virtually unscathed for more than 900 years.

The treaty, while preserving the Imperial families in Hue and the mandarin government, changed the names of the Vietnamese territories and took all but token rule away from the Vietnamese.

The important point for the study of Hue, however, is the fact that the French did retain the Nguyen Dynasty and, though its power was largely illusory, it did serve to give the residents of Hue a foundation for continued national pride which even today characterizes Hue and the re-

this way they seem to personify the popular Vietnamese saying which translated means, "even the king's laws bow to village customs."

Additionally, since the rise of French colonialism, Hue has been the home of most of Vietnam's ancient nobility. Living in comfortable villas on the northern and eastern edges of the city, the nobles set the tone for the city. Every man in the street shares the nobles' reverence for traditional values and places his village above national considerations.

Also, part of the reason for their failure to accept the Saigon regimes, at least at the beginning with the Ngo Dinh Diem regime, was of course the cultural heritage and local viewpoint of Hue citizens. But it can not be overlooked that Diem was Catholic and the center of Buddhism, long considered the state religion of Vietnam, was Hue. Necessarily the emergence of a Catholic leader, supported by the United States, in French-built Saigon did not appeal to the tradition-bound residents of Hue.

And finally, the rapid change in leadership from Diem, who suffered overthrow and assassination in 1963, through seven successive governments to Nguyen Van Thieu, did nothing to strengthen their faith in the permanence of a central government.

Added to the above, there is another factor which serves to separate Hue from the rest of Vietnam, physically and culturally.

The narrow Pass of the Clouds, the Hai Van Pass, just north of Da Nang has effectively separated Hue from the southern provinces, and the mountains to the west have served to shield the city from aggression and from exchange of ideas with the rest of the country. This explains, at least partially the certain mystique of the Hue residents which was even evident years ago when the Emperor Tu Duc said, "The rivers around Hue are not very deep and the mountains are not very high but the hearts of the people will never be known."

Though this feeling of separate identity has made some people respect the Hue citizens, it has also probably caused their violent, almost overnight, involvement in the current war.

"I think the reason the Communists attacked Hue so determinedly and ferociously during Tet," suggested one Hue University professor, "was that they were angry with the city's people



Statues and paintings adorn the Citadel (top and center). Gold inlay creates the stern stare of this Immortal Guardian of Tombs (bottom).



Rich in oriental majesty, the Imperial Throne is magnificent to behold.

for not choosing a side.” It seems the Communists could understand opposition much easier than they would accept indifference.

So Hue was thrown violently into the battle over political control against the wishes of the people and they were forced to take a stand in the war of their countrymen.

That stand has aligned the Hue residents with the others of the South in the fight against Communist aggression, and Tet 1968 was the determining period in the history of Hue, the period when they put behind them their indifference and aloofness, and decided on a firm stand.

It is said that Hue was attacked precisely because of the nonalignment of its population, but if the Communists hoped to sway the city's people toward their cause, they achieved exactly the opposite effect.

The deliberate, pre-meditated terrorism and brutal assassination of key officials and civilians during the Lunar New Year served to swing the traditional fence-sitters of Hue against the Communists, spelling doom for the enemy threat in Thua Thien province.

The residents of Hue embraced the ideals in opposition to the Communists and Hue is now an active city,

militantly against what they consider the vulgar and terror-ridden rule of the Communists.

The toll exacted by the Communists in those 25 days in Hue may never be properly estimated but figures attest to the loss of at least 3,500 people and property damage of over \$3 million.

Walking through town one gets the feeling that Tet 1968 could never be repeated—not because the Communists couldn't or wouldn't launch another such offensive—but for reasons that lie in the character of the residents of Hue.

They are now prepared for an attack—they will not again be taken by surprise—and more important perhaps, they are now committed to the fight, no longer indifferent to the outcome.

On the walk through town, at virtually every street corner stands one of the 18,000 Civilian Self-Defense volunteers, armed with an M16, determined to help stop an attack on the city—his city.

A cautious mood of optimism has begun to pervade the city, becoming more blatant with each passing day. This optimism is grounded in the facts that Hue is again prospering economically, for the first time since

Tet 1968, and the city has survived the portents of doom for the two Lunar New Years since that tragic one.

Physically, Hue has changed drastically in the last few years, especially in the Citadel, but the people of Hue still retain the independence and self-confidence characteristic of their ancestors.

Spreading lazily on both sides of the Perfume River, Hue continues its traditions, but in the atmosphere of the present and future. The contrast is shown by elderly priests in formal habit strolling past the new and modern indoor market, by the ruined yet stately walls of the Forbidden City reflecting the sounds of motorcycles carrying the new generation of Hue citizens, by new modern tractors tilling the land once tilled by hand or water buffalo, and by young Vietnamese women in western clothes mingling with Vietnamese girls traditionally dressed in *ao dai*.

Hue has indeed become a city of contrasts, yet it still remains the Imperial City, at least in spirit. The traditions will never be lost, the people have become true citizens of the Republic of Vietnam. They embrace the past as tradition, but have accepted the future as progress. ▲

A Lesson From History

By CPT Gary W. McKillips

4th Inf Div-10

Photographs by SP4 Wladimir Schachow Jr.

4th Inf Div-10



More than one hundred years ago the famed Indian scout Kit Carson developed an ingenious plan to defeat the Apaches. Using former Apache warriors as guides, he led the U.S. 10th Cavalry in suppressing several Indian uprisings, and in capturing renegade Apache leader, Geronimo. Carson's method of using the enemy in his own behalf established a never-to-be-forgotten legend in the annals of American history.

Today, a daring band of ex-Viet Cong and North Vietnamese soldiers is carrying on a similar legend. Utilizing experience gained from their association with the VC and NVA armies, these Kit Carson Scouts (KCS), armed with M16s instead of flintlocks and traveling on foot instead of on horseback, have proven invaluable in helping 4th Infantry Division soldiers meet and defeat the enemy in northwestern II Corps.

Carson Scouts are the cream of the crop of those who have rallied to the Government of Vietnam (GVN) under the Chieu Hoi program.

"They are worth their weight in gold," said Lieutenant James J. Borgen, Kit Carson Scout Director. "They know

the area and have almost an instinctive ability to determine what the enemy will do in a given situation."

Kit Carson Scouts are selected prior to their release from one of many province and district Chieu Hoi centers throughout Vietnam. After undergoing nine weeks of intensive vocational training and political instruction, potential scouts are interviewed by a team of recruiters—including chief 4th Division scout, Tran Hay.

A former VC school teacher, Hay rallied in January of 1967 and joined the KCS program in August 1968. Since that time, he has served on long-range recon patrols with the 1st Battalion, 14th Infantry, and as an advisor with the 3rd Brigade's S2 section. His superior performance, military bearing and ability to understand the English language caused him to be elevated to the division's premier scout position in November 1969.

Hay well realizes what it takes to make it as a Kit Carson Scout. In potential candidates, he seeks out the qualities he has displayed in his illustrious scout career.

"Experience and physical conditioning are most important," said the slim, wiry Hay. "Also important is a

knowledge of VC and NVA weapons, tactics and methods of sabotage."

A man can acquire this knowledge in several ways. Hay, for example, although a school teacher, learned through a surreptitious observation of Viet Cong methods. He was able to piece together sufficient knowledge to make him an expert in detecting even the most intricate VC plot.

Lieutenant Borger elaborated upon the selection of scouts. "Experience is probably the most important consideration. There are exceptions, but generally if a man was only a rice bearer for the enemy, his value as a scout would be limited."

Once selected, a man goes through a rigorous two-week training period at Camp Enari, the 4th Division's base camp just outside Pleiku. There he studies English and gains a first-hand familiarization with U.S. weapons.

English is taught in a 42-hour block with stress placed on phrases dealing with military tactics and survival. Patrolling and mine warfare are also taught. Particularly interesting to the new scout are the familiarization classes he receives with regard to the helicopter, minigun and other advanced weapons and equipment in the U.S. Army arsenal.

The Kit Carson Scout program originated with the Marines in 1966. Because of its success, KCS has become a fixture with almost all American combat units in Vietnam.

"The record compiled by the scouts is outstanding," continued Lieutenant Borger. "Recently two of them have won the Silver Star—the highest American valor award that scouts may receive."

One of these scouts was Nguyen Thu. His saga typifies the courage and determination exemplified continually by KCS graduates.

Thu, like many of his contemporaries, was acting as pointman. He was assigned to Company A, 1st Battalion, 14th Infantry. While on a search-and-clear mission, his unit ran into an estimated company-sized NVA force. Thu was hit in the left arm, left leg and finally mortally wounded in the chest. Before he died, though, he managed to negotiate a 25-meter stretch of rice paddy and alert his company commander of the impending attack. Then he stamped out a fire, ignited by a mortar, near the commander's position and returned outside the perimeter to make a valiant attempt at rallying the enemy. It was here he died. His final words, "Chieu Hoi, Chieu Hoi," were indicative of the cause for which he fought such a determined battle.

"The Silver Star was awarded posthumously," said Lieutenant Borger. "Such dedication to duty has sold us all on the value of the program. Although four scouts were killed last year, and although all scouts realize they will wind up as pointmen with their respective units, we still get volunteers."

One such volunteer, Tu Duc, offers a contrast in background to Hay and Thu, but has been nonetheless effective in his efforts to thwart the enemy.

Tu Duc was a farmer in an area near Qui Nhon for some 15 years. One night he was "drafted" into the VC Army. The draft notice was delivered in person by a Viet Cong with an AK47. Tu Duc was forced at gunpoint to leave his wife and three small children.

At age 33, Duc was to learn a new trade—a trade he despised, and one which he practiced under the rule of a

Tu Duc, former Viet Cong sniper, checks a map as Montagnard advisor Naytore points to a potential ambush site (below). Tran Con Nghiep, a former sapper, demonstrates his skill for 4th Infantry Division replacements (below right).



people he despised.

After six months of tactical training, Duc, embittered by this form of involuntary servitude, but afraid to die, labored as a guerrilla, ambushing U.S. and ARVN truck convoys and infiltrating villages in the Central Highlands, more than 100 miles from his home.

In 1967, as his hate for the Viet Cong increased, and encouraged by Chieu Hoi pamphlets, Duc left his unit and reported to district headquarters near Pleiku. Soon after he was reunited with his wife and children.

Although content for awhile to return to farming, Duc's desire for revenge increased. "I wanted to fight them (the VC), but I didn't know how." The Kit Carson program provided him with the answer.

In April of 1969 Duc became a KCS. Since then he has served as the point element in a short-range patrol team, conducting short-range base camp patrols. In one operation, he single-handedly uncovered seven NVA mines and booby traps.

"He knows more about this territory than any scout we have," said Lieutenant Borger. "You can always count on him."

Another scout also to be counted on is 21-year-old Tran Con Nghiep. A former VC sapper, Nghiep has provided valuable information with regard to establishing perimeter defenses. In four years as a VC, it was his job to study U.S. defenses and find ways of penetrating them. He did on several occasions. Muscular, yet agile, Nghiep has the

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ability to crawl undetected through the maze of concertina wire that surrounds U.S. bases.

As a sapper, its success or suicide. For Nghiep, the risk was too high, the cause not enough. He too, became a Hoi Chanh and now this KCS graduate puts his skill to work in a controlled classroom situation.

He still negotiates that mangled maze of wire, but this time only for the education of 4th Division replacements.

"Nghiep has made believers out of many of our U.S. troops," said Lieutenant Willie L. Henton, officer-in-charge of the 4th Replacement Training Detachment. "When new troops come in, we have him give a demonstration on crawling through the wire. He strips to his shorts, and using his body as a sensor, snakes his way through the wire and without so much as budging a pebble inside one of the Coke cans that hangs on the wire. When the U.S. soldier goes on bunker guard the next day, he'll do a lot less day-dreaming and a lot more looking."

Kit Carson Scouts earn approximately \$45 a month. They also receive the same benefits given to American troops—with the exception of PX privileges. Food, clothing, medical attention are the same as U.S. soldiers receive. Scouts also receive personalized attention. Division Scout Leader Hay sends out periodic letters discussing problems and keeping scouts aware of new policies and procedures. It is a method of command information and has proved as much a motivational success with the scouts as with American troops.

Another big advantage the Kit Carson Scout has is incentive. As Hay said, "Under VC rule, you work for nothing."

As a Kit Carson Scout an individual has a chance to gain higher pay based on his performance and leadership ability. He can also quit the job anytime he wants. A scout who is not determined and dedicated to the cause, is endangering himself and those with whom he serves. By the same token, if an individual's performance falls below par he is immediately cut from the program.

"That very rarely happens," said Lieutenant Borgen, "Our attrition rate is very low. Those who don't think they can handle the job, usually don't volunteer."

The Kit Carson Scout program has been a huge success. Ask the men with whom the scouts have served. They all agree the scouts have been a tremendous asset. Said one patrol member, "We all have a lot of respect for what they say. If a scout labels something 'number 10,' we won't touch it. It's that simple."

From 1846 to 1848, Kit Carson—trapper, guide and soldier—effectively employed former members of the enemy in his own cause. This ingenious scheme led to numerous decisive victories, and also aided in the conquest of California during the Mexican War. More than 100 years later and some 10,000 miles away, a group of men, in the Kit Carson tradition, are waging a different kind of war. Their success in the Vietnamese conflict made them legendary figures in this most recent chapter in American history.

Vietnam's Talent Scouts

By SP4 Bryan Heliker

UpTight Staff Writer

Five o'clock.

In the A Shau Valley, infantrymen, fatigued and anguished from a tiring day of humping the boonies, wade waistdeep through the rice paddies to reach a landing zone to be extracted from a day-long search for enemy bunker complexes. For them, it's been a humid and seemingly endless day.

Artillerymen stationed near the Cambodian border slosh through the mud left by the afternoon monsoon to reach their big guns to silence Charlie.

Down in the Delta, a helicopter assault team rolls hot with their miniguns and rockets blazing. They receive small arms fire from an estimated company-sized NVA unit who have recently been harassing Allied convoys. But

still they continue to strike at the enemy force.

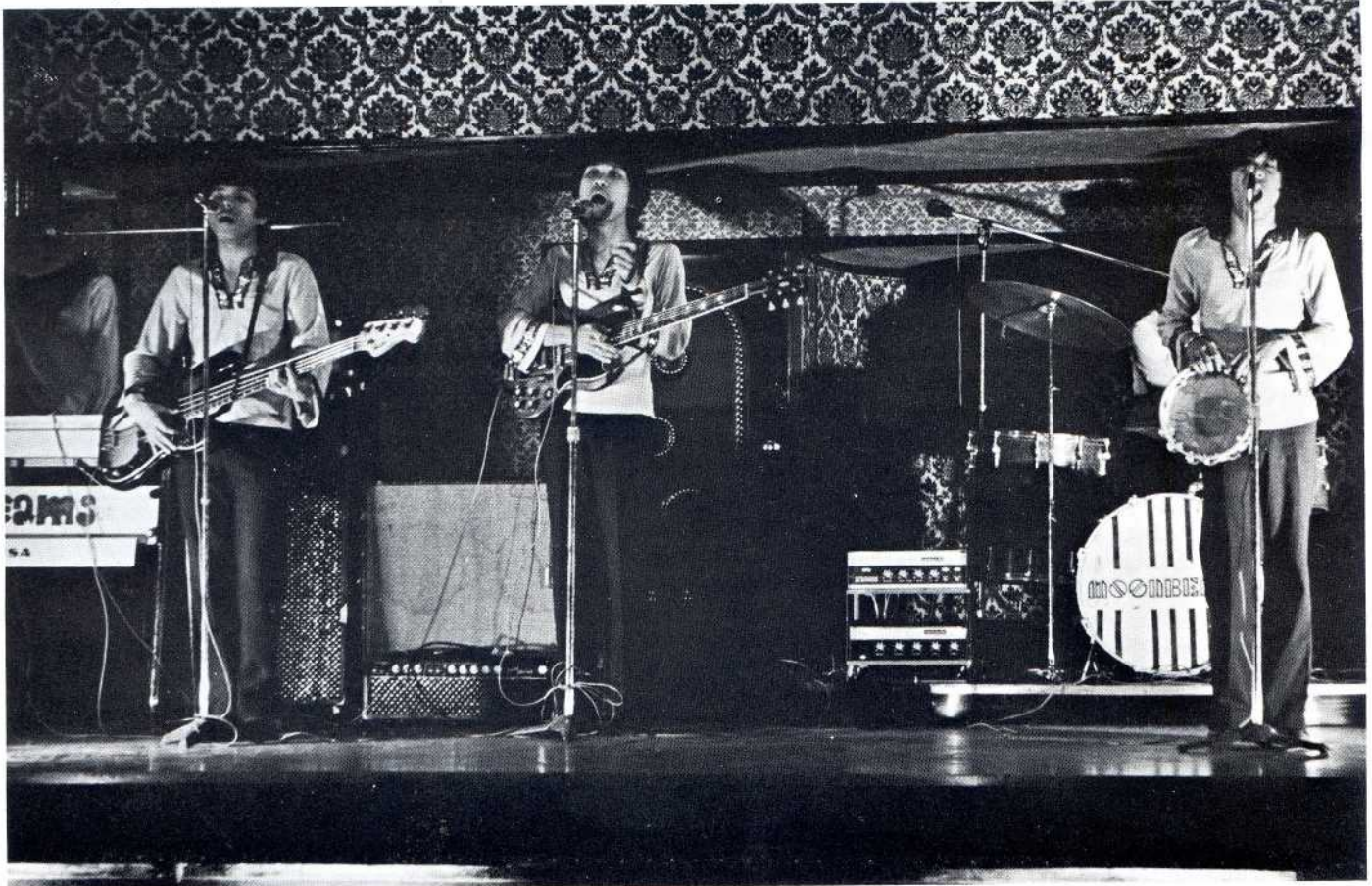
These scenes are all too common for the soldier in Vietnam. From the Delta to the DMZ, the infantrymen and artillerymen at fire support bases to the clerks at the large and sprawling base camps endure the monumental task of supporting a war.

But soon it will be dark and for most of them it will be a time to be free from the thoughts of ambushes, insertions, high explosives and filing systems.

It's about the only time during the day that is theirs to do with as they wish.

Many will go to their local club to while away the hours over a few beers and maybe a steak dinner. They want to forget the drudgery of the long day just past and the ap-

All bands trying for a spot on the Vietnam military club circuit must audition before the Commercial Entertainment Branch of Special Services.



proaching agony of tomorrow while they let their minds be taken over by a pulsating rock band and "real live go-go girls" on stage.

In Vietnam, the Commercial Entertainment Branch of the Special Services handles the auditioning of bands for all the enlisted men's, NCO and officer's clubs in-country. They also audition commercial entertainment for USO shows.

"It is our job to provide the best available entertainment to U.S. and Free World Military Forces in the Republic of Vietnam," said Captain Ronald G. Hill, Special Services commercial entertainment coordinator. "To do this we have an average of more than 3,200 performers representing 26 different nationalities in-country at one time."

Leslie Graham is an Aussie "bird" from Melbourne. She's 21, cute and sings with an Australian band, the Manx-cats. Leslie is easy going and carefree but today she's a little scared. Today, the Manx-cats have to audition to see if they are good enough to play the Vietnam circuit. The members of the group know they're good but will they be good enough to command top dollar in the eyes of the judges? "If I make one mistake, hit one bad note, it might hurt our chances," said Leslie. "Today is one of the biggest days in my life."

The auditions are held every Monday and Thursday at the Saigon USO. The Joint Service Committee, which auditions every group that comes to play for military audiences in Vietnam, is composed of judges from the Army, Navy, Air Force and Marines. They determine the category in which the band belongs (floor show, show band or house band), or they disapprove any band that proves to be unsatisfactory.

"Each band has the option of reauditioning at a later date if they for some reason do not like the category we put them in," commented Captain Hill. "It could be faulty equipment, a singer with a bad cold or just a bad day all-around. So we give them the opportunity to show us again what they can do."

The bands are granted visas by the Government of Vietnam to play for the servicemen. They initially receive a 30-day visa when they arrive in-country and then are granted a 60-day extension visa and a 15-day exit visa.

"Usually a band is booked for a 3-1/2-month period," said Captain Hill. "Then they have to leave the country for at least a week due to the South Vietnamese immigration laws.

"We try to make the best use of this law to review the band's performance after their initial audition," explained Captain Hill, "so we make them all reaudition on their return."

This reaudition is similar to the original audition and can benefit both sides. It can mean a higher rating and therefore more money for the band and it enables the Joint Service's Committee to review the band's performance to see if the band has maintained the high standards set by the audition and the commercial entertainment agencies.

Each of the 57 authorized civilian entertainment agencies the committee contracts with has agents in the

A pretty Australian singer belts out a song as her group auditions in Saigon.



different countries to find talented groups. Each agency assumes the full responsibility for their group after they contract them.

"The agency provides the passports, travel expenses, hotel bills, etc., for their bands," commented Captain Hill. "We deal strictly with the agencies and never deal directly with the bands themselves.

"After we audition and approve a band for the Vietnam circuit, we draw up contracts with the agency," Hill said. "We try to block-book a group in one area for 30 days, but each band makes a strenuous haul of one-nighters."

"The agents deal directly with the 24 Central Purchasing Agents (CPA) located from the DMZ to the Delta. These agents represent all the services and are the booking agents for all the various clubs in Vietnam. There is no direct dealing between the club managers and the performing bands or their agents.

"There is more than \$250,000 on deposit in escrow by the different agencies in our account for these bands,"

mentioned Captain Hill. "So with this money tied up in the bands' performance security bond, the agencies make sure that they are pretty good. This entertainment circuit is one of the largest in the Far East. It's really a big business."

If a club manager or company commander wanted a band to perform in his club or at a party, he would go to the CPA in his area and tell him how much he is willing to spend and what type of band, whether it be hard rock or country-and-western, he wants. Then the CPA contracts the group for that particular performance.

The most expensive band is the floor show—a group composed of entertainers and musicians capable of performing a unique variety act for 75 minutes. They usually receive anywhere from \$275 to \$425 a performance. A show band is made up of a vocalist and at least four musicians who can perform two 60-minute sets. The maximum price for a two-hour show is \$325. The house band is usually a group of youngsters who is just starting out

in show business. They play for three hours for a maximum price of \$185.

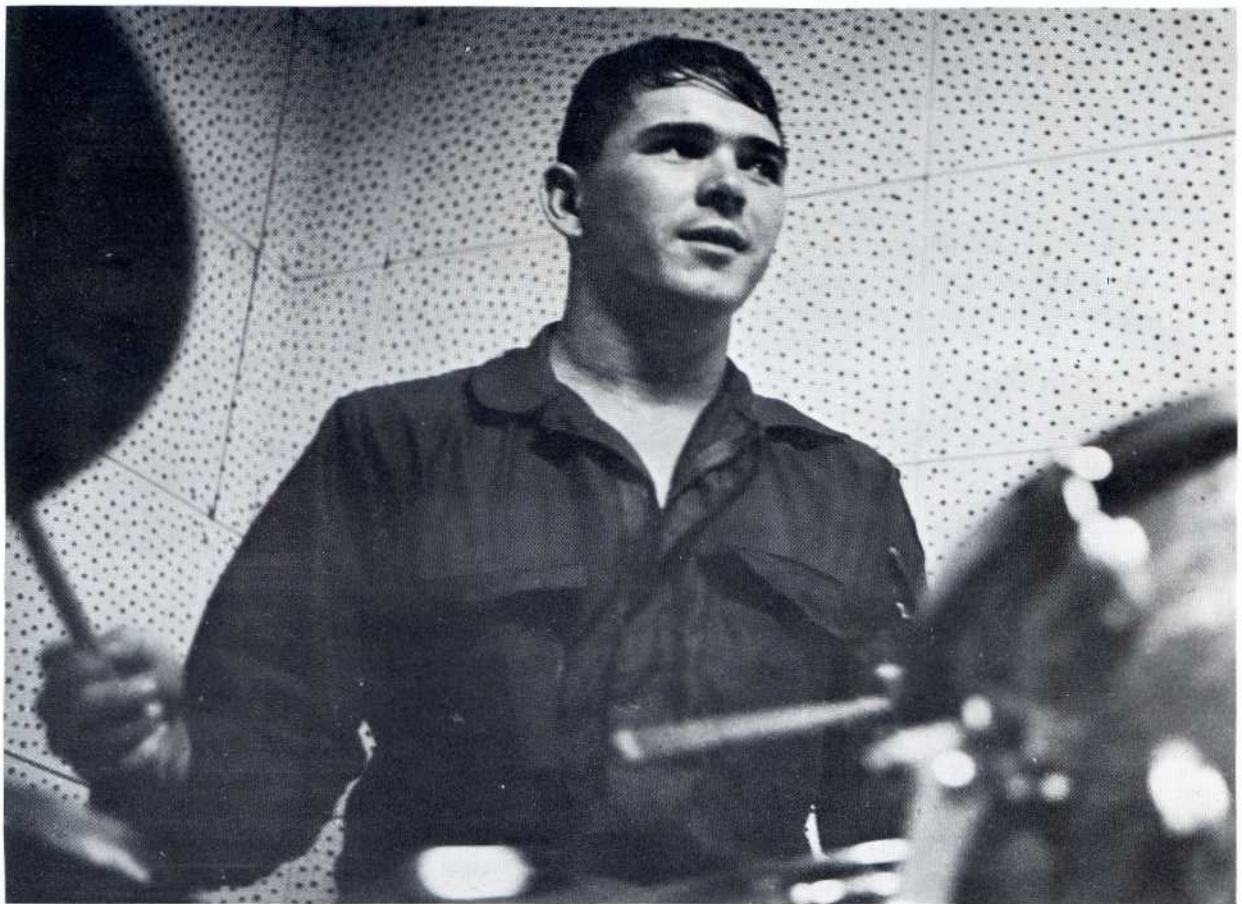
Big name acts with well-known entertainers negotiate a price for each performance.

"We have an average of 250 bands in-country at one time to provide the best quality entertainment possible to the troops," Hill said. "We are here to please the man in the field. Any suggestions they have to make the entertainment the type they enjoy, whether more soul or 'round eyes,' will be appreciated and carefully studied."

In a land where we are so far away from home and our loved ones, there often seems to be no days—only sunrises and sunsets that make the days pass until we can return home to the world.

A night at the club may not be like a letter from home, but don't tell that to a weary soldier who, with a beer in his hand, is intently watching four gorgeous go-go girls work-out to the latest sounds from the world.

He just may give you a good argument. ▲



A drummer works out during a performance.

Brief Bursts — late information affecting you!

THE 'EARLY OUT' SCENE IS BRIGHTER as the Defense Department creates a new category which will give enlisted men headed for vocational and technical training the same break college-bound men get—separation up to three months earlier than scheduled. Involved is training leading to jobs in data processing, advertising design, dental technology, automobile mechanical work, electronics, airline personnel work, appliance repair and similar skills. The early release of men going to college has been permitted since 1959. Two years ago this was expanded to include institutions which awarded an "associate" degree, such as those given at junior colleges. Now the technicians will be able to get the same benefits.

VOLUNTEERS ARE NEEDED to fill more than 90 existing vacancies in the Defense Attache System as the Army continues a world-wide requirement for officer and enlisted personnel in this area. Openings may be available in such locations as Ankara, Turkey; Paris, France; Mexico City, Mexico; Kabul, Afghanistan; Athens, Greece; Brussels, Belgium; Seoul, Korea; Bogata, Columbia, and Tehran, Iran. These openings exist for officers in the rank of major through colonel and for enlisted personnel in grades E5, E6 and E7 with general experience and typing ability. Applicant proficiency in a foreign language is desirable but not mandatory in all cases. Further information may be obtained from Chief, Career Development Office, OACSI, DA, Washington, D. C. 20310.

SOLDIERS WHO PLAN TO FLY commercially while on leave or within seven days after discharge are reminded that it might be worth their while to obtain several copies of DD Form 1580, Military Authorization for Commercial Air Travel. These forms are checked by many airlines to verify an individual's leave status and entitlement to standby (one-half discount) or military reserved (one-third off) rates. They generally are readily available from unit personnel offices.

BRANCH TRANSFERS for officers have been the target of some misunderstandings. In brief, the present Army policies are: Regular Army officers of the combat and combat support arms may not change branches until they complete two years in their original branch. RA officers in the service branches are eligible for transfer upon completion of their required combat arms detail and a minimum of one year in the branch to which initially assigned. Reserve officers on obligated tours normally may not shift from one branch to another. However, those in a Voluntary Indefinite status may switch after serving two years in branch of original appointment. Branch transfers normally are not granted to individuals on overseas orders. However, those going to Vietnam for a second tour may be approved for a branch change to be effective after six months in RVN. In addition, those moving to long tour areas are eligible for transfer after one year overseas. Civil school graduates who have not completed required utilization tours may not switch unless the gaining branch agrees to allow the officer to fulfill his utilization commitment.



Every Minute Counts

By SP4 Keith Pritchard
UpTight Staff Writer

If we can save one life all the while we're here, our time in Vietnam will have been worthwhile," is the unofficial motto and deeply rooted philosophy behind the men and operations of the 45th Medical Company (Air Ambulance).

During the fourth quarter of 1969, the 45th and its five detachments evacuated 23,841 U.S., ARVN, Free World Force and civilian personnel from within II, III and IV Corps Tactical Zones.

"We handle better than 50 per cent of the patient load in Vietnam with approximately 40 per cent of the resources," said commanding officer Lieutenant Colonel Warren Roler. "These fellows have a sincere dedication to saving lives."

A telephone call from a division tactical operations center is received in the radio shack by Specialist 4 John Feaver. Simultaneously he copies the information on a mission sheet and sounds the "horn" alerting the first-up crew.

Each day a crew is assigned to the first-up ship. They remain on call for 24 hours and handle all emergency pickups. The first-up ship is assisted

by a second-up ship when patient load or individual assignments become too heavy. Third, fourth and fifth-up ships provide VIP and patient transfer flights, as well as additional back up protection.

"We have five minutes from the time a message is received to get into the air," said Captain Charles (Skip) Champion, Dustoff Three-Six aircraft commander (A/C). "While I pick up the mission sheet, the pilot and crew chief fire up the ship and the medic readies his equipment for flight. It's a complete team effort. We haven't time for it to be any other way," he emphasized.

As quickly as it takes the helicopter to reach full RPMs, pass a pre-flight inspection and the crew to strap in, pilot Chief Warrant Officer Conrad Graff lifts the ship off the PSP pad, angling it towards the short north-south runway. Swinging the tail to the left so it is parallel with Highway 1 stretching past Long Binh, Mr. Graff drops the nose slightly and the Huey slick slices its way into the air, less than four minutes after the call was received.

Once airborne, Captain Champion

UPTIGHT



A dustoff pilot waits ready to pull pitch as soon as his patient is loaded aboard.

fills the crew in on the mission. "Location Yankee Tango three-seven-two-six, have three uniform sierras, two litter, one ambulatory. Looks like a hoist."

A hoist. One of the most precise and dangerous missions flown in Vietnam today. Once on the scene, the helicopter hovers above the trees, drops a cable with a jungle penetrator and lifts the patient to the ship. During such missions, the ship must maintain vertical and horizontal stability to avoid tangling the cable or moving it out of reach. All this time the ship is an appealing target for enemy snipers.

"We prefer not to begin a hoist mission until we have an aerial fire team covering us from above," said Captain Champion. "The people on the ground also provide flank security. They want to complete this mission as badly as we do," he said, adding, "They want to see their wounded buddies evacuated and then contend with their more immediate problem, the

enemy."

After briefing the crew, Captain Champion radios Xuan Loc Artillery Control, giving the coordinates they'll be flying through and requesting clearance or re-routing. In this instance, Dustoff Three-Six, is cleared direct, but informed that an air strike will soon be put in on the pickup coordinates. Xuan Loc Artillery advises Three-Six to contact the ground troops and have them request delay of the strikes until after the pick up.

Now above the countryside, the ship floats high over rice paddies that gradually dry up and then suddenly sprout a double layer of thick, tall vegetation broken only by scar-like pock marks left by artillery and air strikes.

Sitting next to the open side doors behind the pilot and A/C, Specialist 5 Paul McGinley, the crew chief, and medic Specialist 5 Larry Klemmens sit uneasily, scanning the ground below and thinking about the upcoming mission. "The missions almost

become routine," said Specialist McGinley, "but they're never the same, you never know what conditions to expect," he added.

Twelve minutes out of Long Binh, Captain Champion estimates the ship to be over the pickup coordinates. Mr. Graff swings the Huey into a wide circular orbit while Specialist Klemmens and Specialist McGinley peer into the dense foliage for signs of movement or smoke.

Establishing radio contact with the ground troops, Foxtrot Two-Zero-Two, Dustoff Three-Six confirms the type of mission, conditions of the evacuees and area security, which at the time is good. But then Foxtrot Two-Zero-Two reminds that contact was resumed when the last dustoff ship made its final approach into the area.

Contacting the forward air controller (FAC), who is in a higher orbit above the area, he reports having two Air Force fighter-bombers on station ready to begin their runs before the dustoff is attempted. However, Fox-



Crewmen carry their patient directly from helicopter to hospital as the dustoff touches down.

trot Two-Zero-Two has only one smoke grenade left while the FAC requires them to pop smoke and continue popping until the strike is completed.

Monitoring this conversation, Specialist McGinley tells Captain Champion they have five extra smoke grenades on board and the crew agrees these can be dropped off while making the pick up. A quick conference between Foxtrot Two-Zero-Two, the FAC and Dustoff Three-Six decides to go ahead with the dustoff first.

Maintaining the orbit, Captain Champion asks the ground troops if they have radio contact with any gunships working the area. Before they can reply, a lone Cobra gunship breaks in and indicates he will delay returning to base camp long enough to pick up Three-Six's cover. Coming hard left, the sleek gunship soon joins the Huey's orbit.

"Dustoff Three-Six, this is Two-Zero-Two, you passed directly over us three-zero seconds ago. If you wish we'll pop smoke next time around." Captain Champion responds by asking Two-Zero-Two how far out from the pick up area their perimeter defense is set up. The Cobra, Charlie Horse 46, requests similar information for placement of suppressive fire from the air.

With all efforts coordinated, Captain Champion tells Foxtrot Two-

Zero-Two to mark their location with smoke. The crew anxiously scans the brownish-green foliage for a cloud of colored smoke floating out between the branches. Specialist McGinley is the first to spot the hazy lavender mist rising to the right and in front of the ship.

"Foxtrot Two-Zero-Two, Dustoff Three-Six, we have a goofy grape at nine o'clock, just about one klick. Understand this is your last smoke. It'll be a big help if you can guide us in once we're low level," radios Captain Champion as the ship begins the descent towards the smoke.

Now skimming treetop level, Mr. Graff concentrates on keeping the ship clear of tree branches while staying low as possible. "By flying treetop level we greatly reduce our exposure time to the enemy. It's as difficult for him to see through the trees as it is for us, and by moving so fast, it's hard for him to draw a bead on us," he explains.

Hovering above the acrid smoke, both Specialist McGinley and Specialist Klemmens lean out each side of the ship searching for a sight of the ground troops. "Got 'em, about 15 meters to the right," Specialist McGinley says, "In that clearing. Bring it right, your tail's clear, sir. A little more. There you're right above them. I'm ready to drop the penetrator."

While the cable is out, the ship must

remain as stationary as possible. The pilot fixes his line of vision on an immovable object in front of the ship and concentrates on it. Below the ship, the rotor wash helps part the treetops, enhancing the crew's vision of the ground.

With the ship stationary almost 150 feet above the jungle floor, Specialist McGinley lowers the jungle penetrator, a small metal seat to which the patient is strapped, for the first soldier. He and Specialist Klemmens keep in constant communication with the pilot, informing him how much cable is out, if the ship is drifting and of any obstructions near the tail boom.

As Specialist McGinley lowers the penetrator from the right side, Specialist Klemmens begins dropping the smoke canisters out the other side.

"I'm on the ground now," says Specialist McGinley. It's now up to the ground troops to strap the wounded man to the penetrator. Working quickly they secure him in less than a minute. With a thumbs up signal, Specialist McGinley begins lifting the first man to the ship. "He's off the ground. One-quarter the way up. One-half now. Just below the skids. I'm bringing him in. He's in."

"Medic to the right," says Specialist Klemmens, slowly sliding across the ship to help unstrap the man from the penetrator. Quickly assessing the injury as a shrapnel wound to the right calf and foot, Specialist Klemmens sees the man needs no further attention until reaching the hospital. He then slides him over to the left side of the ship where he will be more comfortable and out of the crew's way.

By now the second man is on his way up. Halfway up he suddenly passes out and drops his M16 to the ground. The four men on the ground who helped secure him scatter in as many directions and hit the dirt long before the weapon hits the ground.

Specialist Klemmens is right along side Specialist McGinley now, ready to swing the unconscious man into the ship. Both gently but firmly grasp him by the waist and shoulders, slowly guiding him into the doorway. While Specialist McGinley unbinds the straps, the medic checks the strength of the man's pulse, rate of breathing and extent of wounds before moving him onto a prone stretcher.

Having hovered above the area for more than four minutes, the crew

Medical Benefits

For You!

begins to show signs of becoming tense until Specialist Klemmens, a veteran of 23 hoists, quips, "Fine day for a hoist. Fine day for a hoist. We're looking good all the way around." Such talk continues throughout the mission to help keep the ship in position and providing each other with a few reassuring words.

As soon as the third man is pulled in, Mr. Graff tips the nose, sets the blades to full pitch and pulls away from the area. Keeping it just above the trees until reaching 80 knots, he then begins climbing and banks the ship a hard 90 degrees before leveling off in the direction of home.

After again checking artillery clearances, Captain Champion contacts a regulating agency for the evacuation hospitals to determine the destination of the wounded men. He is cleared to Long Binh's 93rd Evac.

Five minutes out of Long Binh, Dustoff Three-Six contacts Dustoff Operations giving their estimated time of arrival and contents. Dustoff Operations clears them to land on pad one in front of 93rd's emergency entrance where medics will be waiting to receive the patients.

Coming down the final approach, Mr. Graff brings the ship down the runway, makes a hurried left turn and gently sets down on pad one. While the 93rd Evac medics, along with specialists Klemmens and McGinley, remove the wounded, Captain Champion makes a final check with Operations for any other immediate missions. Receiving a negative response, the ship then moves down to the POL area on the other end of the field for refueling. Completing this, Mr. Graff taxis the ship back to its pad, "Hot-spot 1," less than 45 minutes after the call was received.

"Missions like this occur almost daily for the men of the 45th," commented Colonel Roler. In addition to our company in Long Binh, we have detachments in Lai Khe, Cu Chi, Binh Thuy, Phan Rang and Nha Trang with standby ships at Xuan Loc, Nui Dat, Tay Ninh, Tan An, Saigon and Bao Loc. These guys are always ready to fly."

With the post-flight check completed and the rotor blade secured, the crew of Dustoff Three-Six walks slowly back toward the radio shack and the company area to await the next mission which they know will come all too soon. ▲

SPRING, 1970

One of the major problems in Vietnam besides the enemy, is the increased hazards of health.

Before coming to Vietnam, you had many immunizations. These help protect you against diseases which are common here. Every Monday you take a pill to guard against contracting malaria.

There are other things, however, that you must do on your own to make sure you do not fall victim to illness. Knowing how to preserve your health may well save you from serious problems later.

Water can be as dangerous to you as Charlie. Never drink water unless you know for certain that is potable. Most of the water in Vietnam comes from surface sources, wells, or municipal systems.

Don't assume the water is safe to drink because you see the local people drinking it. They may have built up an immunity to the impurities in the water over a long period of time.

There are many types of illness that can result from drinking impure water. Among these are typhoid fever, paratyphoid fever, cholera, bacillary dysentery, diarrhea, amoebic dysentery and infectious hepatitis.

Water can be purified by chemical treatment or by boiling it. If you are in the field and can't get any potable water, use iodine pills—one tablet per quart of clear water, two tablets per quart of cloudy water. Then wait 30 minutes before drinking it.

COMMON DISEASES IN VIETNAM

RESPIRATORY. Tuberculosis is a common respiratory disease in Vietnam, along with "URI" (upper respiratory infection) and pneumonia. It is contagious, and is caused by bacteria which get into the lungs. If you suspect that a person with whom you have come into close contact has TB, or if you have developed a persistent cough after close contact with local nationals, you should go to your dispensary and get a medical check.

VENEREAL DISEASES. Venereal disease has been a serious health problem for centuries. There are five major forms of venereal disease, all highly contagious, and all present in Vietnam.

If you suspect that you may have any form of venereal disease, go to a medic and have it checked immediately. It is easy to treat venereal disease in the early stages, but if you leave it alone and do nothing, venereal disease can cause you all kinds of grief.

Many common diseases are transmitted by insects. Two of these are plague and malaria.

Plague is contracted by either being bitten by an infected rat, or an infected flea that was living on an infected rat.

The best way to prevent plague is to take your plague shot every six months. Rats usually hang around areas where food has been left, so a good way to keep rats away from your area is to make sure you don't litter it.

Malaria is a disease carried to people by an insect called the anopheles mosquito. Since most people can't recognize this little devil, the only way to be sure that you will never catch malaria is to avoid being bitten by mosquitoes. Since this is difficult, you can still reduce the chances of your getting malaria if you follow these simple rules.

Use mosquito netting whenever possible. Use plenty of insect repellent on all exposed areas of your skin. Keep your sleeves rolled down and your collar buttoned at sunset, during the night and during the early morning hours.

Take your malaria pills regularly.

Heat is a fact of life in Vietnam. There is nothing you can do about that. But you can protect yourself against the five types of hot weather diseases: heat stroke, heat exhaustion, heat cramps, sunburn and heat rash.

If you are a new arrival in Vietnam, you are probably more susceptible to salt and water depletion than a man who has been here a while. Be careful. Take extra salt through increased salting of food at mealtime.

When you think about it for a few minutes, you see that most of the health hazards in Vietnam aren't at all difficult to control. All it takes are some extra efforts by you to insure that you don't become one of their victims.

Where East Meets West

Story and photographs
By LT Joe E. Moreland Jr.
UpTight Editor

From the bustling night life of the world's largest city to the early morning beauty of an ancient Oriental capital, Japan reveals itself as a meeting place for the modern and the traditional, for the East and the West, for the lively and the tranquil. For the R&R traveler, this seat of Oriental tradition is an ideal spot for just about any activity that the mind can conjure.

If there's any problem facing the newly arrived tourist, it's deciding exactly what to do and see during his week's stay. But a brief introduction to the country and some advanced planning will result in a memorable visit.

After an enjoyable six-hour trip, the R&R flight lands at Yokota Air Force Base and your holiday in Japan is underway. A quick trip to Camp Zama and the R&R center follows. Here you will receive a wealth of helpful hints on Tokyo and the surrounding areas. This valuable information could be the key to a successful trip.

Lodging is also available at Camp Zama, but if you're interested in staying in downtown Tokyo, the personnel at the center will be more than willing to help you find the type of accommodations you desire.

Your briefing is over and you're on your way to the modern Japanese capital. Tokyo is the world's largest city with a teeming population of more than 10 million. There are three ways to get there. A bus will take you from the R&R center to downtown Tokyo. You can take a train, but be careful. You don't want to lose any valuable time by making the wrong connection. The third way to reach the city is by taxi. This, however, is a long ride and the cost will approach \$15.

The typical reaction to Tokyo is one of astonishment. This giant metropolis is one of the most modern and exciting cities in the world. In fact, it's world in itself, and it's here that planning pays off. The more you learn about Tokyo, the more you will find there is to learn. The city is an endless maze of culture, tradition, beauty, progress and activity.

Before leaving Vietnam, try to obtain as much information as possible about Tokyo and the surrounding area. Your R&R office should be able to help you. You might also check with a Stars and Stripes bookstore about obtaining a travel guide or some similar publication. By the time you reach Tokyo, try to have a general idea of what

you want to see in the city and in the surrounding area. You can easily spend your entire R&R exploring the city, but you should give some consideration to traveling into the surrounding area. There are many small cities in the immediate area that you can reach by train. A visit to some of these areas will give you an entirely different perspective of Japanese life.

In Tokyo, you will be awed by the fast-paced, futuristic life of the Japanese people. The people themselves are an inspiring group. They are energetic and intelligent. Many speak English and almost all have at least a small reading knowledge of our language. You'll find that the Japanese are fastidiously clean, very kind and extremely inquisitive. Don't be surprised if while walking down a busy street or though a quiet park, you are stopped by a university student who is studying English conversation. The fluency of these students is excellent. Talk with them. It's a good way to make a friend and to help someone who is genuinely interested in learning English.

When you are ready to start your sight-seeing, there are several approaches to consider. One is to take a good map of the city and a tour book and set out alone to satisfy your curiosity. This method usually takes more time than the second way, but can be extremely self-satisfying. If you're time-conscious, you may consider one or several of the many tours available at reasonable prices.

Regardless of the method of touring you choose, there are several places that you will not want to miss. Tokyo has a wealth of parks that are great for taking pictures, meeting Japanese people and, in many cases, seeing historical or cultural centers. A good example is Ueno (pronounced WAY-NO) Park. Take a subway from downtown Tokyo to Ueno station. Then you're about a two-block walk from a 210-acre park where you can easily spend a day.

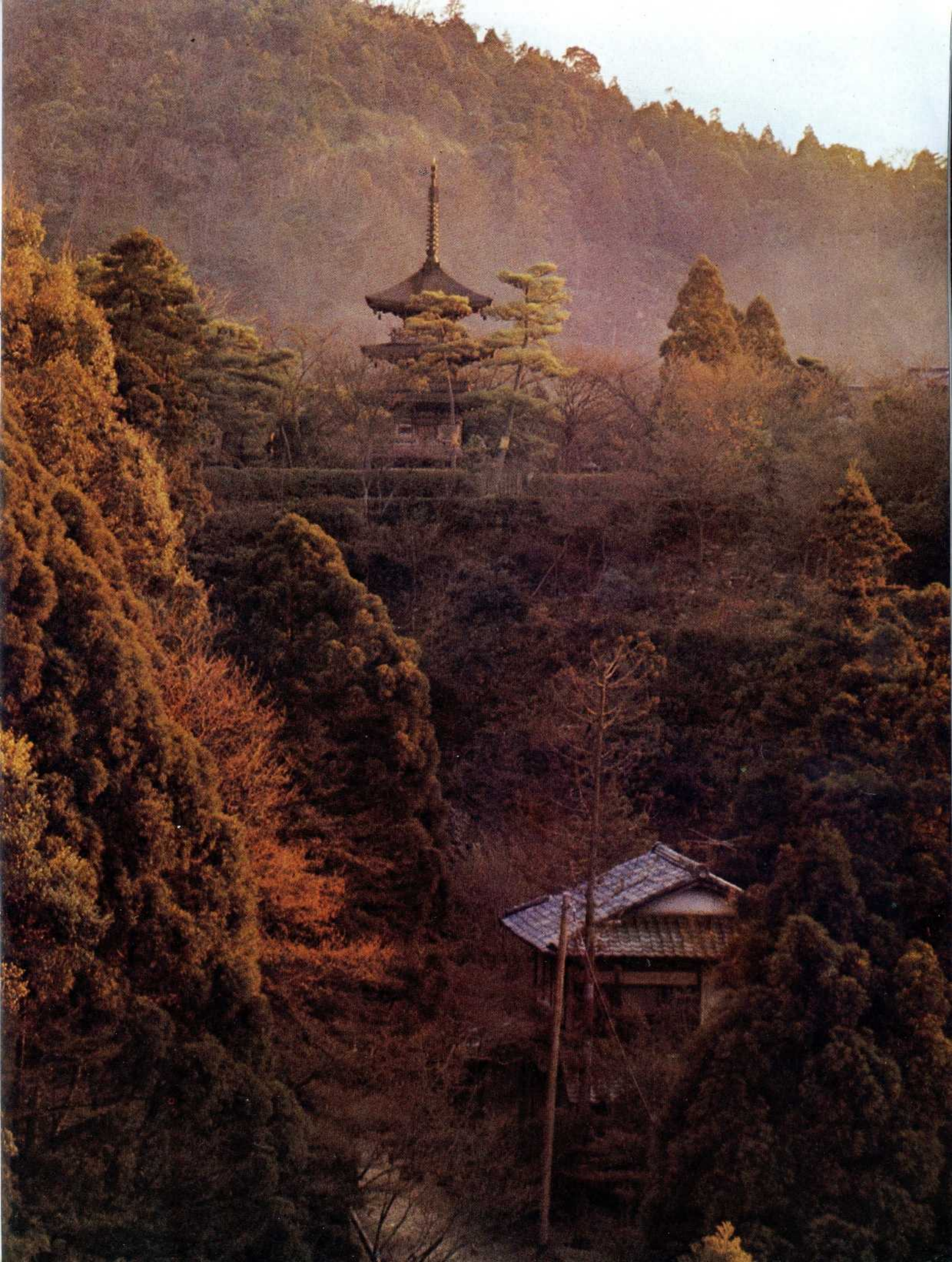
You'll probably want to see Meiji Shrine, dedicated to the Emperor Meiji, grandfather of the present Emperor.

One day while in the downtown area, take time out from the hectic pace of the Ginza and walk through Hibiya Park. Much smaller than Ueno Park, this area is an oasis in the middle of a modern maze of buildings and businesses. Near Hibiya Park is the Imperial Palace, the official residence of the Emperor of Japan. The 250-acre grounds are not open to the public, but at the main entrance the double bridge across the moat surrounding the Palace can be seen.

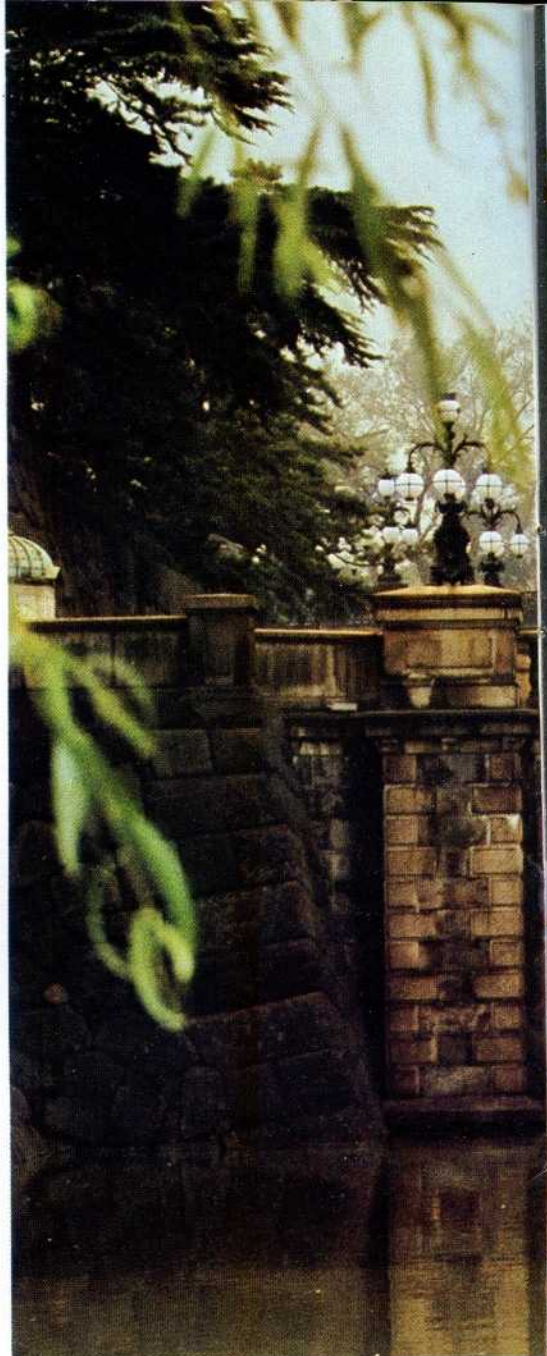
Tokyo abounds with such places. Pick the ones that interest you the most and see them. They are easily accessible by any of three basic modes of transportation in and around the city. All are efficient and must be among the most reasonably priced modes in the world. The taxi is the most exciting way to travel. For 130 yen (about 35 cents) you can travel for about two kilometers. Increases are in increments of 20 yen.

The other two methods of travel are the train and subway. Both systems are very extensive and are economical ways to travel—the train for long distances and the subway for shorter ones. The two systems converge at major stations and connections are easily made. Signs and directions are written in both English and Japanese. The information office or booth at each station will offer color-coded maps, printed in English, of the subway and train systems.

While you're traveling, don't forget the military post



The late afternoon sun makes a beautiful setting for this pagoda in the ancient capital of Kyoto (preceding page). Only steps away from the heart of Tokyo stands the majestic Imperial Palace (right). The Ginza (below) is the center of Tokyo night life. The subway system in the Japanese capital (below right) is one of the most efficient in the world.





and naval exchange systems throughout the Tokyo area. They are generally well stocked with a great conglomerate of items from cameras to clothes. The smart shopper will check these prices closely, since they are very competitive with the prices found on the economy. The systems at the Yokohama and Yokosuka naval stations are particularly noted for their wide selections of stereo equipment. Both have wrapping facilities and APOs nearby.

The Japanese economy is a very sound system based on the yen. The exchange rate fluctuates daily, but the standard rate of exchange at military banking facilities is 360 yen for each American dollar. The PX and naval exchange systems in the Tokyo area all operate with American dollars.

If you're in the market for good stereo or camera equipment, Tokyo is the place to shop. The Ginza—Broadway of Tokyo—is a teeming center of commerce. Here you can find almost anything you could possibly imagine buying. Prices are competitive and a small amount of bargaining is acceptable.

Tokyo can be only a point of departure for numerous other fascinating sites in Japan, however.

For the adventurer, the area within a 700-kilometer radius offers almost unlimited possibilities for observing the Japanese culture. Within this area is Osaka, site of Expo '70. Here the R&R traveler must use caution, planning and good judgment. You can reach Osaka by the world's fastest train—the Bullet—in about three hours. Since the opening of Expo, lodging accommodations in the Osaka area are at a premium. To avoid disappointment, make certain that you have arranged for some type of living accommodations if you plan to stay overnight. If you plan to make a one-day visit, be prepared to travel in a hurry. You'll also need reservations on the super express

train. If you have decided definitely to visit Expo, you should make your train reservations one of the first things on your list.

Moving closer to Tokyo, you'll find Kyoto and Nara. Several travel bureaus offer one-, two- or three-day trips to this area. Keeping in mind the short duration of an R&R trip, this may be the best way to see these historical centers. Kyoto for 1,074 years was the capital of Japan. It represents the center of ancient Japan in art, religion and literature.

Nara, the first capital of Japan, is a cradle of Japanese arts and crafts. Here you won't want to miss Todaiji Temple which houses the largest Buddha in Japan.

The classical cylindrical shape of Mount Fuji can be seen from Lake Hakone. Here again, several tours by various means of transportation are available. The lake is a beautiful resort area and features mountain scenery, hot springs and places of historical interest.

Only 30 miles from Tokyo is Kamakura. The best way to reach this seaside resort is by train. The trip takes about one hour. The area is known for its fine beach and the mildness of its climate. Here you won't want to miss the impressive bronze Buddha, which dates from the 13th century.

A two-hour trip north of Tokyo will take you to Nikko, one of the most beautiful and famous areas of Japan. Here, a one- or two-day tour is usually the best way to see the temples and shrines in this mountain area.

Whether you wish to spend your trip in the heat of Japan's modern-day activity or whether you wish to recapture the beauty and tranquility of centuries of tradition, use your time and money wisely. Careful planning is the key to a successful R&R in Japan. Make the most of your trip to the heart of the Orient. ▲

A swirling religious dance is performed in a Shinto Shrine in historic Nikko.



Soldiers of the Deep

"We float," said Lieutenant David Dowling, construction engineer with the 497th Port Construction Company, Cam Ranh Bay, "that's the difference between us and the regular engineer companies."

The 497th also submerges . . . because the company has a diving section that enables the engineers to develop and extend projects underwater. Floating in the turquoise water of Cam Ranh Bay is a dull gray Navy cube barge with the red and white diver's flag emblazoned on the side. On the barge, one diving officer and six enlisted divers report daily in their duty uniforms . . . bathing trunks.

"It's a great job, out of sight!" said Private First Class Joe Basha, now an OJT diver who recently transferred to the 497th diving section from the 1st Brigade, 5th Infantry Division (Mechanized) where he was a combat engineer.

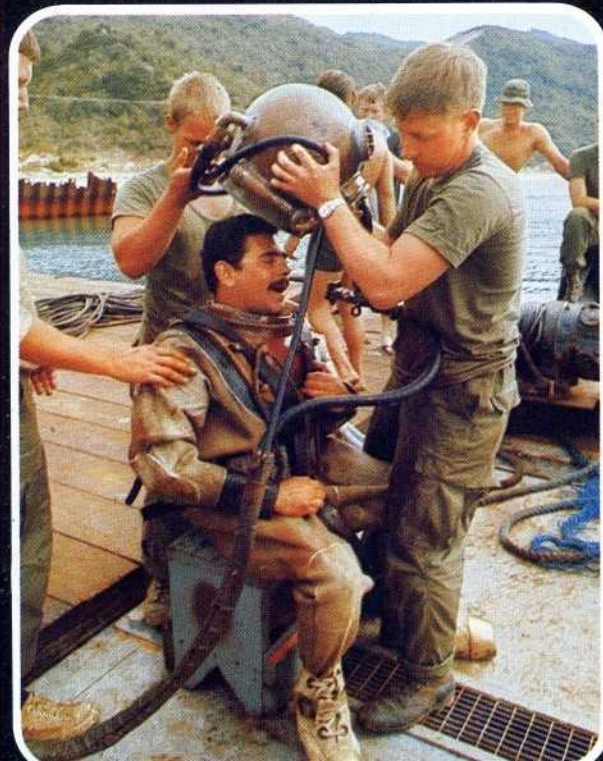
Actually, the OJT is rather misleading, because Joe had his own salvage operation in Newfoundland and was a professional diver before being drafted by the Army. The other OJT diver now in the section is a diving enthusiast who was operating a bridge boat for the diving section and volunteered for the diver's job when there was an opening. The other divers in the section have been through the Navy's 10-week San Diego Deep Sea Diving School or the 25-week Army Diving School at Ft. Eustis, Va.

"Generally speaking, all the divers had experience in diving before joining the Army," said Diving Officer Lieutenant John Fisher, "and they almost all plan to pursue diving when they leave the service; as marine biologists, oceanographers, ocean engineers . . . many times using the GI bill."

Lieutenant Fisher, however, didn't get involved with diving until he entered the Army. "They were really hurting for divers in 1967," he said, "so I became interested in the program and was trained at the Washington, D.C., Navy yard. Then I spent nine months at Ft. Belvoir."

SPRING, 1970





Since his arrival in Vietnam (he's now on an extension) he's salvaged ammo, worked on pier protection, looked for bodies and performed numerous underwater inspections and construction projects.

"Probably the most challenging job was when we laid down 600 feet of sea hose for a POL line," he said. "We were able to use our own ideas and then work out the practical side of it."

Most of the time the divers support the construction work of the 497th.

The diving section played an important part in the 497th's first job in Vietnam: constructing the \$3 million Cam Ranh Marine Terminal Facility. The project began in August 1965, and the company built the deep-water port and a 1,600-foot POL jetty, the largest ever constructed by the U.S. Army. They also completed 25 miles of pipeline that snakes over 60 per cent of the combined Cam Ranh Army and Air Force installation and deposits the petro at three tank farms built by the 497th as part of the facility.

The deep-water port and environs were completed in late 1968 and the 497th Port Construction Company moved to Long Binh where it became part of the 20th Engineer Brigade. The company was assigned the project of expanding the major ammunition port in the Saigon area, as well as secondary projects dealing with installing pier protection systems on bridges.

The divers' working methods changed somewhat from diving in the relatively clear ocean waters of Cam Ranh Bay and the South China Sea. In the murky water of the rivers around Saigon, they had little visibility and many times worked by "feel." In addition, the treacherous currents in the rivers presented more of a danger than the barracuda, sea snakes and scorpion fish of the ocean.

In addition to the bridge, pier protection and ammo salvage operations, the divers were called to salvage a helicopter that went down in the river near Bien Hoa and many other one-time jobs that needed special underwater skills.

The 497th is now back at Cam Ranh Bay where their primary job for the past few months has been the rehabilitation and bulkhead repair of the Cam Ranh Port, another \$3 million job. And in addition to their work on the bulkhead, the diving section is on call to help out with underwater jobs, like when a F-105 overshot the runway at Cam Ranh and ended up underwater in the bay.

The divers also cover the coastal area and have assisted the engineers in building LST ramps, POL and mooring facilities, and construction piers at Qui Nhon, Vung Tau, Nha Trang, Phan Rang and Phan Thiet. They also get numerous calls when a POL line breaks or springs a leak. When that happens, the diver usually has just enough time to check out his tank and regulator before jumping on the waiting helicopter. It's all pretty routine unless the leak is JP4 which can seriously burn the skin. Then the diver must cover himself completely with grease before going underwater.

Between jobs, the myriad of equipment requires con-

stant maintenance. Section Chief Specialist 6 Bill Bliznick runs a tight barge and the divers are usually doubling as mechanics or electricians keeping the diving equipment, compressors, electronics gear, motors and boats in top condition.

There's also time to hone the diving skills and for the less experienced divers to learn from the old pros. Recently, the crew spent the day teaching the new divers the intricacies of the hard-hat deep sea diving rig which they use infrequently, but still must keep on hand for the job that calls for hard-hat diving.

Private Basha was the first to use the rig and it took two divers about 20 minutes to strap on the weighted boots, weight belt, heavy rubber suit and breastplate and helmet. Then he struggled to the side of the barge, with Specialist Bliznick shouting, "Stand up straight, soldier, you're making the suit look bad!"

After walking around on the bottom, he struggled back up the ladder. As soon as the suit was removed, he dropped for pushups—a tradition after the first dive.

The other OJT diver spent half an hour on the bottom while the regular divers used scuba to try and salvage a boat that had sunk nearby. Then the entire crew pitched in and checked over all the equipment, filled the tanks, put everything away. Since it was Sunday they had the afternoon off... so they they decided to go out on the reef and do some "diving on their own." ▲



Major Unit Locations



Battle Report — a quarterly summary of major unit actions



Weary rangers from the 3rd Brigade, 9th Infantry Division take a break from an operation in southern III Corps Tactical Zone.

Combat Operations during the period Dec. 1 through Feb. 28 consisted mainly of daylight and nighttime patrols by U.S. forces highlighted by sharp clashes and bitter fighting.

The biggest story of the quarter was President Nixon's Dec. 15 announcement that the authorized strength of U.S. forces in Vietnam would be reduced from 484,000 to 434,000—a reduction of 50,000. This reduction is to be completed by April 15 and was termed the Phase III portion of the troop redeployment. Major elements of the Phase III redeployment included the Army's 1st Infantry Division and the 3rd Brigade of the 4th Infantry Division.

The quarter brought some distinguished guests to Vietnam. Thousands of cheering servicemen greeted the master of comedy, Bob Hope, and his troupe of pretty girls and entertainers during December. It was the skinned comedian's sixth tour of Vietnam and he reaffirmed the saying: Where there's Hope, there's hope.

The vice president of the United States, Spiro T. Agnew, paid a surprise visit to Vietnam on New Year's Day and visited briefly with soldiers and high government officials to get a first-hand view of the war.

Mid-February found the secretary of defense, Melvin R. Laird, and Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff General Earle G. Wheeler in Vietnam for an appraisal of the Vietnamization program.

Combat units in the III Corps area continued Operation Toan Thang (Phase IV) which began Nov. 1, 1969, and has accounted for 9,570 enemy deaths through the end of January. Infantrymen of the Americal Division continued three operations that began March 18, 1969, in their area of responsibility in southern I Corps. Operation Frederick Hill being carried on in Quang Tien Province, has netted 4,412, while operations Iron Mountain and Geneva Park, both of which are concentrated in Quang Ngai Province, have produced 2,435 and 1,119 enemy deaths respectively, through the end of January.

I CORPS TACTICAL ZONE

Light enemy activity marked the opening days of December with the 101st Airborne Division (Airmobile) Screaming Eagles encountering only brief engagements with the Communists. On Dec. 1, gunships from A Troop 2nd Squadron, 17th Air Cavalry spotted an undetermined-

sized enemy force 22 miles southwest of Hue and reported killing seven Communists. Later in the week, four enemy were killed by gunships of B Troop, 2nd Squadron, 17th Air Cavalry in an air-to-ground fight seven miles south of Camp Eagle. Americal Division infantrymen of Company A, 3rd Battalion, operating 35 miles west of Duc Pho, killed six enemy soldiers on Pearl Harbor Day, Dec. 7, with small arms, automatic weapons and claymore mines. A week later, armored personnel carriers of B Troop, 1st Squadron, 1st Cavalry, Americal Division and infantrymen of Company D, 2nd Battalion, 1st Infantry clashed with an undetermined number of VC in an area 12 miles west of Tam Ky and killed 20 of them.

Dec. 16 found the Screaming Eagles cordoning off two villages nine miles north of Hue and resulted in the detention of 40 VC suspects and the seizing of 11 confirmed members of the VC infrastructure. After a two-hour fire-fight, Americal Division infantrymen of Company, B, 1st Battalion, 52nd Infantry reported killing 12 enemy soldiers on Dec. 20 in the rolling hills 24 miles southwest of Quang Ngai City.

The Screaming Eagles of the 101st Airborne Division (Airmobile) ushered in the New Year with a bang. In northern I Corps on Jan. 3, Cobra gunners from A Troop, 2nd Squadron, 17th Cavalry and Air Force fighter pilots engaged an estimated 50 NVA regulars moving along a mountaintop trail 25 miles south of the DMZ, killing 19 NVA soldiers. On the same day, an NVA unit of undetermined-size made an abortive ground attack on elements of the 4th Battalion, 3rd Infantry, Americal Division five miles south of Duc Pho. Supported by Air Force flare ships and helicopter gunships, the Americal soldiers beat back the NVA sappers, killing 29 before the remainder of the enemy force retreated into the darkness.

An estimated 15- to 30-man sapper unit had planned to start the New Year off right with an attack on the Red Devils of 1st Brigade, 5th Infantry Division (Mechanized). Men of Company A, 1st Battalion, 61st Infantry were attacked in their night defensive positions six miles northeast of Dong Ha. Flare ships illuminated the area and gunships moved in to support the Red Devils. The attackers were driven off shortly after 4 a.m. New Year's Day. Sixteen enemy were killed, two rocket-propelled grenade (RPG) launchers, 11 individual weapons, 59 hand grenades and 75 pounds of explosive captured.

Americal Division soldiers from A Troop, 1st Armored Cavalry combined with Regional Forces and Popular Forces troops to tangle with enemy forces four miles west of Tam Ky, killing a total of 45 enemy troops on Jan. 6. The next day, track-mounted Americal soldiers from F Troop, 17th Cavalry and Company D, 3rd Battalion, 21st Infantry encountered enemy soldiers 14 miles northwest of Tam Ky. After repeated artillery fire from the vehicles the foot soldiers swept the area and counted 39 NVA regulars dead.

Mechanized elements of A Troop, 1st Squadron, 1st Cavalry, Americal Division and infantrymen of Company B, 2nd Battalion, 1st Infantry, Americal Division were patrolling the flatlands five miles west of Tam Ky on Jan. 12 when they came under automatic weapons and RPG fire from NVA soldiers concealed on the opposite side of a 300-yard-wide rice paddy. The Americal soldiers returned fire with small arms and automatic weapons supported by artillery and helicopter gunships killing

eight and routing the remainder of the enemy after two hours. Less than 15 minutes later and about 800 yards from the original contact, tankers of B Troop, 1st Squadron, 1st Cavalry and riflemen of Company D, 1st Battalion, 46th Infantry locked up with what was apparently the main body of the enemy unit. During the two-hour battle that followed, the infantrymen, supported by division cannoners and helicopter gunship crewmen killed another 31 enemy soldiers whose bodies were found on a subsequent sweep of the contact zone. Scattered light action continued throughout the remainder of January with the main combat operations consisting of reconnaissance patrols by U.S. forces in the I Corps region.

The opening days of February found both the Americal Division and the 101st Airborne Division (Airmobile) engaged in brief battles termed light and unrelated. On Feb. 6, Americal infantrymen reported killing 17 enemy soldiers in a number of unrelated incidents. Four days later, the fighting infantrymen teamed up with helicopter crews and reported killing 14 enemy soldiers in 21 unrelated incidents throughout southern I Corps. On the same day, the infantrymen of the Americal Division repelled a North Vietnamese Army sapper attack on the night positions in southern I Corps, killing seven enemy soldiers.

The next day, Feb. 11, Screaming Eagles of the 101st repulsed an NVA sapper unit as it tried to penetrate Fire Support Base Rifle, 11 miles south of Phu Bai, shortly before midnight. The men of the 2nd Battalion, 502nd Infantry hit back with small arms, automatic weapons and artillery fire. A first light search of the area revealed 12 NVA soldiers dead and six individual and two crew-served weapons, 150 satchel charges and 30 rocket-propelled grenades left on the battlefield.

In mid-February, the infantrymen of the Americal Division reported killing 30 enemy soldiers in 20 separate actions within their southern I Corps area on Feb. 15. Gunners of the 23rd Artillery Group were responsible for 16 enemy deaths after elements of the group detected two groups of enemy soldiers maneuvering 10 miles northwest of Quang Ngai City and directed a high explosive barrage into the area.

The remainder of February was filled with small skirmishes and unrelated contacts. In southern I Corps, Americal Division infantrymen and artillerymen reported killing 41 enemy soldiers in 14 unrelated incidents with the majority of the action taking place near Tam Ky on Feb. 19.

II CORPS TACTICAL ZONE

Six weeks of concentrated fighting 15 miles northwest of Pleiku tarnished the Christmas season spirit for mechanized infantrymen of the 4th Infantry Division in perhaps the heaviest action last quarter. However, the comparatively light action which characterized II Corps during the final quarter of 1969 again prevailed in the first quarter of 1970. The majority of the action was still primarily in the form of air-to-ground engagements.

With operations centering in the dense jungles around the town of Plei Mrong, by the end of December, 4th Division infantrymen had killed a total of 212 enemy soldiers, many of whom had to be rooted out of entrenched positions. The men of the 2nd Battalion, 8th Infantry discovered and destroyed three NVA battalion head-

quarters and additional bunkers which housed the regimental headquarters. Often accompanied by tanks from Company C, 1st Battalion, 69th Armor the men of the division succeeded in destroying more than a thousand bunkers in the course of the mission.

In other action during December, men of Company C, 1st Battalion, 8th Infantry, 4th Infantry Division killed four NVA regulars with the aid of artillery support south of Pleiku on Dec. 6. On the same day, four NVA soldiers were killed in separate incidents by helicopter gunships from the 4th Aviation Battalion northwest of An Khe.

Five days later a reconnaissance platoon of the 1st Battalion, 14th Infantry, 4th Infantry Division killed three NVA regulars in a brief fight 13 miles northeast of Ban Me Thuot.

Landing Zone English was the battleground on which men of Company A, 4th Battalion, 503rd Infantry, 173rd Airborne Brigade combined with support from helicopter gunships on Dec. 12 to claim nine NVA regulars while detaining a tenth who claimed to be a sergeant-major of the 90th Sapper Battalion.

A week of relative calm befell II Corps until fighting again erupted in the Central Highlands on Jan. 8. Men of Company B, 1st Battalion, 96th Armor engaged an undetermined number of NVA soldiers for nearly five hours eight miles west of An Khe. The enemy lost 11

men before the contact was broken.

On the following day, 30 huts containing 20,000 pounds of rice were discovered by men of C Troop, 1st Squadron, 10th Armored Cavalry 17 miles southwest of Pleiku.

In unconnected skirmishes Jan. 17, four NVA regulars fell victim to the Fighting Fourth while on the following day the enemy yielded a two-ton rice cache to the alert men of Company A, 1st Battalion, 14th Infantry.

The men of the same battalion continued to have a nose for rice, when three days later they were again responsible for the discovery of five more tons, 16 miles northeast of An Khe. The enemy didn't give it up without a fight, however, but soon fled leaving two casualties behind.

On Jan. 25, elements of C Troop, 1st Squadron, 10th Armored Cavalry of the 4th Infantry Division came under small arms fire and rocket-propelled grenades 14 miles southwest of Pleiku. The enemy lost 14 soldiers in the action.

Light engagements continued to prevail in the II Corps area of operations during the last week of January with gunship crewmen of the 7th Squadron, 17th Air Cavalry taking part in the most significant action. On Jan. 27, while in support of the Fighting Fourth, they claimed five NVA regulars.

An NVA rallier who rallied to the Government of Vietnam earlier in the month, proved his value by leading

These artillerymen protect their ears as their 155mm howitzer pounds away at the enemy.



troopers of Company A, 3rd Battalion, 12th Infantry to their biggest prize of the week. On a mountain slope 11 miles southwest of Pleiku, the former NVA sapper squad leader uncovered a huge cache of arms and ammunition. Included in the find were 130 60mm mortar rounds, 123 rocket-propelled grenade rounds with 114 boosters, 294 Chinese-Communist grenades, 19 cans of grenade detonators, 200 pounds of plastic explosives and 2,200 rounds of AK47 rifle ammunition. The Hoi Chanh didn't quit there. The next day he continued to point out cached enemy arms less than a mile away from the site of the first discovery. Here at the base of the Chou Prong Mountains in a river bed were more weapons and ammunition, including 14 Mauser rifles.

Communist forces, at least in II Corps, must have seen their shadow on Groundhog Day and returned underground for February as action remained light.

With the aid of area residents, patrolling 4th Infantry Division tankers on Feb. 9 continued to find hoarded supplies of enemy rice in the Central Highland's Ia Drang River valley. After stumbling onto an initial cache of 10 tons of rice near a Montagnard village 17 miles southwest of Pleiku, residents directed them to well-camouflaged bamboo and tin storage structures which yielded another five tons.

Shortly before noon on the 12th, however, the lull broke for the Fighting Fourth when five hours of intermittent fighting broke out 22 miles northwest of Pleiku. The armored cavalrymen with artillery and helicopter gunship support unleashed devastating fire into the enemy bunker complex. At the day's end, the enemy retreated leaving 16 bodies and several weapons behind.

Another five-ton cache of rice stored with 1,000 pounds of corn was discovered by a 4th Infantry Division reconnaissance element on Feb. 16.

III CORPS TACTICAL ZONE

During the quarter, the heaviest and most bitter fighting occurred in the III Corps area with all units engaging an aggressive enemy in sharp clashes.

Skytroopers of Company A, 2nd Battalion, 7th Cavalry, 1st Cavalry Division (Airmobile) combined with Civilian Irregular Defense Group (CIDG) soldiers on Dec. 6 to kill 53 NVA regulars in a pair of related battles near Fire Base Jamie, 58 miles northwest of Saigon.

NVA anti-aircraft gunners fired on a pair of C Troop, 1st Squadron, 9th Cavalry helicopters eight miles northeast of Song Be on Dec. 11, triggering fighting in which 72 Communist soldiers were killed.

A combined effort by members of the 1st Cavalry Division, the 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment and the 9th Regiment, 5th Infantry Division of the Army of the Republic of Vietnam resulted in 51 NVA soldiers killed two miles southeast of the Civilian Irregular Defense Group camp at Bu Dop. The fight began on the morning of Dec. 15 when elements of F Troop, 2nd Squadron, 9th Regiment saw the NVA unit, later identified as part of the 7th NVA Division, in the jungle. After hitting with small arms and automatic weapons, the Allied force called in Skytrooper gunships from B Troop, 1st Squadron, 9th Air Cavalry and U.S. Air Force strikes.

Dec. 18 found elements of the 25th Infantry Division mechanized units clashing with an estimated 15-man Communist force in the Boi Loi Woods eight miles north

of Trang Bang, killing 14. Troops of Company A, 2nd Battalion, 22nd Infantry on a track-mounted patrol through the area late in the afternoon engaged the enemy force in a half-hour clash in which the Tropic Lightning tankers were reinforced by artillery and helicopter gunships.

A joint effort by 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment ground troops and Cobra gunships, Regional Force and Air Force fixed-wing craft resulted in the killing of 79 NVA soldiers on Dec. 27. At about 7:15 a.m., a light observation helicopter (LOH) received a burst of ground fire nine miles northwest of Loc Ninh and about two miles from the Cambodian border. Cobras and Air Force jets moved into the area and engaged a force estimated to be two NVA companies. As the air-to-ground battle developed, a column of armored cavalry assault vehicles from the 11th Cav's A Troop and M48 tanks from Company D barreled down Highway 13 toward the fighting, picking up Regional Force soldiers along the way. As the Allied armored column reached the periphery of the battle zone, the RF soldiers dismounted and fought scattered remnants of the NVA force. The Blackhorse tankers and the Vietnamese infantrymen pushed into a fortified 40-bunker enemy complex in the area of the contact. In an after-action combined sweep they found the bodies of 79 enemy soldiers.

Helicopter crews of C Troop, 1st Squadron, 11th Cavalry, 1st Cavalry Division encountered a heavy concentration of enemy forces in the thick jungle 90 miles northeast of Saigon on Dec. 28. A LOH received several bursts of small arms fire while assessing the damage of an earlier air strike. The LOH crew immediately called in artillery support and a U.S. Air Force air strike while the Cobra gunners opened up on the NVA position with miniguns and rockets. After more artillery support and another air strike, an after-action sweep revealed 46 NVA troops had perished.

Early in the afternoon of Dec. 30, a LOH from the 1st Squadron, 9th Cavalry, 1st Cavalry Division, patrolling in northern Phuoc Long Province 80 miles northeast of Saigon, was hit by a heavy burst of small arms fire from an enemy bunker complex. The chopper pilot immediately radioed for ground support as he made a forced landing into the heavy jungle while an orbiting Cobra gunship provided covering fire for his descent. The troop's aerial rifle platoon was immediately combat assaulted into the area and proceeded to set up a defensive perimeter around the stricken aircraft. As infantrymen lay down a base of small arms and automatic weapons fire, the original Cobra, now augmented by other gunships and U.S. Air Force fighter bombers, pounded the entrenched Communist force, giving a Huey helicopter enough time to recover the damaged LOH and its crew. The aerial rifle platoon was extracted from the area, after which helicopter crewmen counted the bodies of 29 enemy soldiers killed in the fighting as well as 19 enemy bunkers destroyed.

Track-mounted elements of the 2nd Battalion, 22nd Infantry, 25th Infantry Division locked up with an undetermined-sized enemy force on Dec. 30, three miles southwest of Trang Bang. An after-action sweep of the battle zone disclosed 22 enemy bodies as well as a light machine gun and an RPG launcher left behind by the retreating enemy soldiers.

January began with a fierce two-day battle on the slopes

of Nui Ba Den with elements of the 25th Infantry Division chalking up 109 enemy dead. On the morning of the eighth, as the battalion's reconnaissance team along with companies A and C, inched their way down the slope, they began receiving small arms, automatic weapons and rocket-propelled grenade fire from the NVA unit's area. Forward air controllers fired marking rounds into the enemy's position and were followed in by U.S. Air Force F4 Phantom jets which pounded the area with numerous bombing runs, after which helicopter gunship crews pasted the enemy's position with rockets and minigun fire. The NVA force withdrew into the caves which honeycomb the mountain, covering their retreat with some CS-type riot control agent. Tankers of Company A, 2nd Battalion, 34th Armor standing by at the bottom of the slope opened fire on the enemy-occupied caves and the infantrymen donned protective masks and continued to press down the hill, engaging small pockets of enemy resistance along the way. The Tropic Lightning troopers battled the Communists for the remainder of the morning and well into the afternoon when the battered remains of the enemy unit fled the contact area, leaving behind the bodies of 62 of their number. On the following day the same units again made contact with the NVA elements. Companies A, C and D of the 3rd Battalion moved up the slope from their camp site in the saddle between the two peaks of Black Virgin Mountain, encountering squad-sized enemy forces. "Drednaught" tank gunners, artillery from Tay Ninh City and surrounding fire bases and Air Force jets pounded the mountainside. At afternoon's end, 47 Communists had been killed, bringing the total for the two days of fighting on the mountain to 109.

On Jan. 5 troopers of the 199th Light Infantry Brigade, on a routine patrol 11 miles northwest of Xuan Loc, found a 1,300-pound medical cache. Men of Company D, 4th Battalion, 12th Infantry unearthed 2,000 bottles of quinine, 250 bandages, 256 syringes, three bottles of glucose, 1,600 pills and other items.

On Jan. 16, 1st Infantry Division gunship crewmen and Big Red One soldiers combined to kill 18 enemy soldiers and found the bodies of 12 enemy killed in actions earlier in the week in a day of sporadic fighting.

The day before, tankers of the 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment and ARVN airborne infantrymen came under a 100-round mortar attack from an NVA unit at Fire Base Carolyn, 24 miles north of Tay Ninh. The mortar barrage was followed by a ground attack by an estimated company-sized Communist force. The Allies returned fire immediately and, with support from gunships and artillery killed 19 enemy soldiers in one hour of heavy fighting. Six AK47 and four RPG launchers were left behind by the fleeing enemy forces.

Toward the end of the month, 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment soldiers battled an undetermined-sized Communist element five miles north-northwest of Loc Ninh, killing 35 NVA soldiers. Action began shortly after 7:45 a.m. on Jan. 21, when armored cavalry assault vehicles (ACAVs) of C Troop, 1st Squadron made initial contact with the enemy force about 13 miles west of a contact of the previous day. For the remainder of the morning and well into the afternoon the track-mounted cavalymen battled the Communist force, until the NVA soldiers fled the area around 4 p.m., leaving behind the 35 killed in the fighting.

On Feb. 1 gunship crewmen of A Troop, 1st Squadron, 9th Cavalry, saw and reported killing 11 NVA 17 miles northeast of Tay Ninh City. With division units reporting 28 air-to-ground firings during the day, the Skytroopers killed 17 more enemy soldiers in other contact for a day's toll of 28.

On the same day in another section of III Corps, "Go Devils" of the 3rd Brigade, 9th Infantry Division, reported killing 15 enemy in seven skirmishes and capturing eight individual weapons.

Throughout mid-February and in the closing days of the month, scattered, intermittent fighting made up the bulk of the III Corps battle action. Big Red One infantrymen of the 1st Infantry Division reported killing 12 NVA soldiers in six encounters on Feb. 13.

Armored and infantry elements of the 1st Cavalry Division and the 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment fought a three-hour pitched battle with a heavily entrenched Communist force 13 miles north of Tay Ninh City, killing 31 NVA soldiers on Valentine's Day.

On Feb. 17, helicopter crewmen of the 1st Cavalry Division reported killing 45 North Vietnamese Army soldiers in an afternoon of intermittent air-to-ground contact in the western III Corps Tactical Zone.

IV CORPS TACTICAL ZONE

The U.S. no longer has tactical units operating in IV Corps. ▲

With the help of a smoke grenade, this Americal infantryman guides in a supply helicopter in dense jungle.



Between Country And People

Story and photographs
By SP5 Gene Cudworth
UpTight Staff Writer

*Spring dies, the hundred flowers scatter.
Spring is reborn, the hundred flowers bloom.
It is hard for me to see clearly.
Old age blinks my eyes.
Aren't flowers dead once spring dies?
Last night, out there in the yard, a plum branch blossomed.*

Rebirth, Man Giac 19c.

Poets search their soul to understand the mystery of nature which returns the dead foliage green again with the miracle called spring. Men briefly give over their daily labors to celebrate the rebirth of the first season, the coming of the new year. And in Vietnam, the people recall the past and voice hope for the coming days as they usher the start of the Lunar New Year, Tet.

In the cool morning streets of Hue a tide of people line the market street, which pulses and edges itself beside the winding River of Perfumes. Scooters, small trams and jeeps clog the thoroughfare with movement. Children jostle each other as children everywhere who expect the gaiety of a holiday. And everywhere there is the sundrenched sight of "Bong Mai," the apricot flower which blooms only at this time of the year. It is the symbol of peace and spring.

In Cho Sam Hamlet in Huong Thuy District, only a few miles from the

bustle of the city that is the bud of Vietnam's history, a woman speaks quietly of her job.

She is wearing black pajamas and has a patch on her shirt pocket which reads, "To Quoc . . . Nhan Dan."

She is an RD cadre member—once known as Revolutionary Development, now Rural Development. Her name is Nguyen Thi Kim-Chi, and she is one of the few female cadre members in Thua Thien Province.

Kim-Chi explains she has been RD since 1965. She is 30-years-old, and a mother of three children. Her husband is studying at a university in France. She talks of RD as a way to support her family and help the country.

RD has been around for several years, but took its present character after the 1968 Tet Offensive. It is still changing, adapting itself to the changing currents of the lives of the people with whom it lives. It is geared to the people. Because its work is

with the people, it is a political organism. But its thrust is in many areas. It is, as Kim-Chi conveys, between the country and the people.

The Vietnamese men and women who are RD act as a team as they move from one village or hamlet to the next, living with the people and their problems, staying as long as their work is unfinished.

RD teams are an arm of the pacification program of the Government of Vietnam. In Thua Thien Province as elsewhere, they work under the province chief and the province pacification council, but are directly controlled by the district leaders. But this is the organizational chart, the plan, the desk paradigm. As Kim-Chi stresses: "To Quoc . . . Nhan Dan." Between the country and the people.

Kim-Chi has been working with the people of Cho Sam since last spring when Team Four first came to the hamlet. She teaches the children of Cho Sam. She likes children. She

wants her eldest boy to be an engineer. She would like her girl and younger boy to be teachers.

Her children stay in nearby Huong Tra District with her grandfather and mother. She tries to see them on a weekend. But she is busy. She teaches all day, she says, and visits the homes of the villagers. She misses her children. Especially during Tet. The RD teams in the province do not go home during Tet to see their families. They spend Tet with the people. It strengthens the people's confidence in the RD team if the team members stay during the coming of the new year. And this is the war RD fights—with the people. And it is no different elsewhere . . . there is only one war in Vietnam.

General Creighton Abrams said once, "Evident in the enemy's operational pattern is his understanding that this is one, repeat, one war. He knows there's no such thing as a war of big battalions, a war of pacification, or a war of territorial security. Friendly forces have got to understand the one war concept and carry the battle to the enemy . . ."

RD carries the fight to the enemy through the people. A team has four basic aims: to identify the VC infrastructure, organize the popular self-defense, organize the election of local leaders and promote self-help projects. There are tasks between the objectives, and there are missions beyond the plans, like teaching school when there is no one else to teach the children, helping the village farming, special construction projects and the like.

Behind the tasks of Rural Development is the belief that nothing can be done in the long-run without the people. RD works for that support, but sometimes the Viet Cong, in cruel ways, make the job easier.

In Thua Thien Province, two years ago, the VC scored a "big victory," in the words of the National Liberation Front, when they held the ancient Citadel of Hue for nearly a month during the Tet Offensive of 1968. They also killed without much regard several thousand unarmed people.

Riding along in a jeep on a choppy dirt road, a few miles from Cho Sam, in nearby Phu Tu District, Nguyen

Ngoc Cu, the leader of all RD cadre in Thua Thien Province points to an area of weeds among the sand and scattered bush. They found two Americans there too, he says. Nearly a hundred Vietnamese, including women and children, were found with the American advisors in their shallow, bitter grave.

Officials may never find all the remains of those that died during the "big victory" in Thua Thien Province two years ago. The people remember, he says. Mr. Cu says no more.

In Nha Tho Dong Chua Cuu, a Catholic church in the city of Hue, a Vietnamese priest consecrates the bread and wine of the Mass for those that died two years ago this Tet. The Mass is one of three held in the church for those souls. Not only Catholics attend. Several women cry without noise.

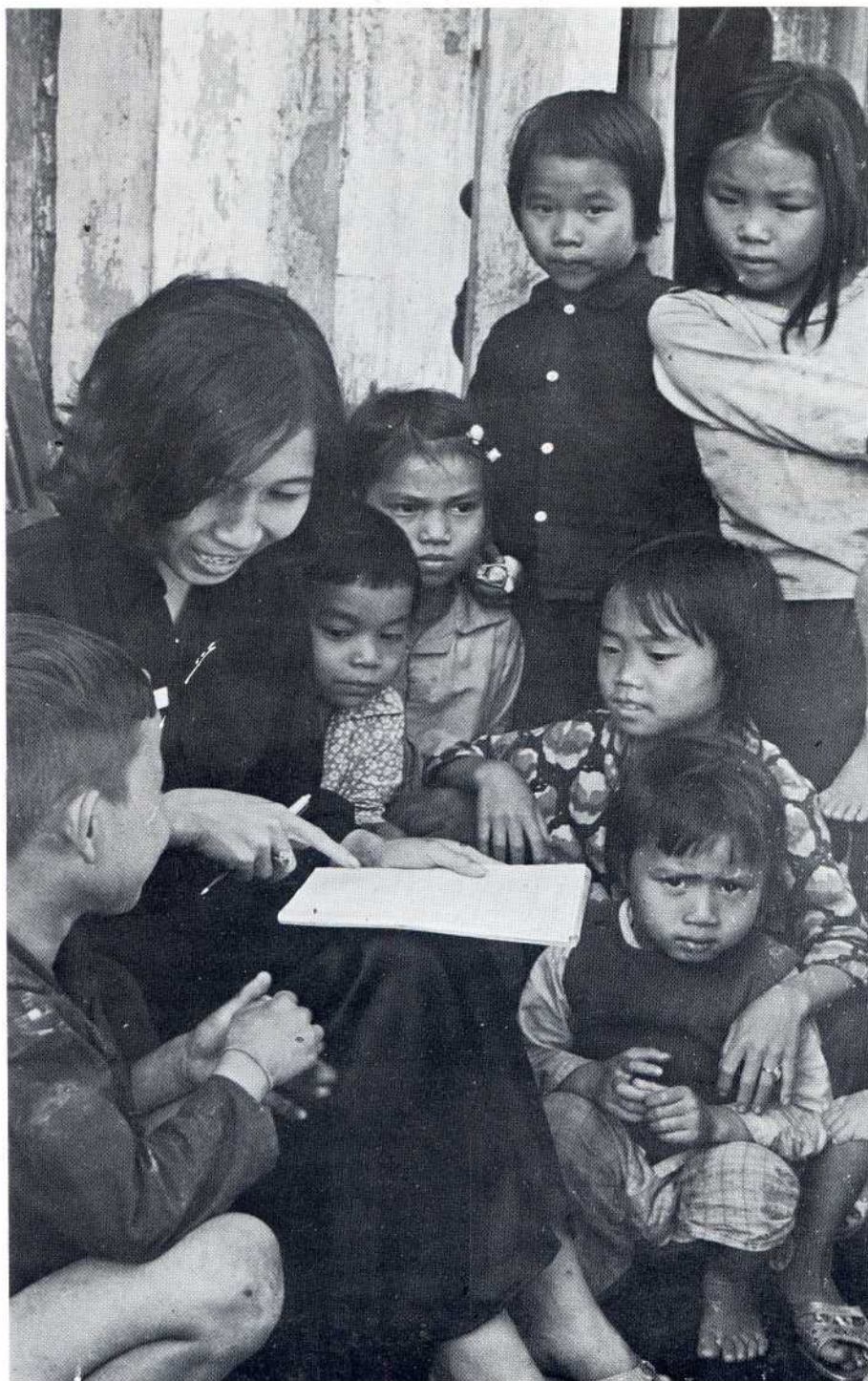
Kim-Chi was not worried about the VC this Tet. The people were ready, she explains. The VC have no friends in Cho Sam Hamlet. The VC may come later but they will find little aid.

Cho Sam Hamlet is in ways a model



Girl receives communion during Roman Catholic Mass offered one day each year in memory of those that died in Hue during the Communist Tet Offensive of 1968.

RD cadre member Nguyen Thi Kim-Chi enjoys a moment with the children of Cho Sam Hamlet in Thua Thien Province.



of RD success. Team Four has been there for nearly a year and has had time to work with the people. Time to build security and confidence among the families of the hamlet. Time now for the children to enjoy the candies and rice cakes of this Tet. Time now to burn the joss sticks for the family ancestors.

It is the family which has always been the core of Vietnamese life, and it is this that makes Kim-Chi a special woman. She is a woman and a mother, yet she chooses to live and work with RD, only seeing her children and family on an occasional weekend.

RD is a job, she holds. She could do other things, but she has friends in RD. She will probably leave RD when her husband returns from the university. And then she will be "just a housewife." She will have a good future. She smiles embarrassment. She is not like Kim Van Kieu.

Kim Van Kieu "the beautiful who is unlucky" as Kim-Chi pictures—is a narrative poem of a lonely girl, studied by all Vietnamese children. She is fated to a sad life. The lines of her future are set. Her role is fixed. Kim-Chi is not like Kim Van Kieu. She "will follow her own way, regardless." She "will keep her ideals."

Kim-Chi departs from the past because she works for a future. She lives away from her family because of an idea. She is a rare product of the times. She does not fire a weapon, though she can. She does a simple thing, teaching children. But in that simple work, she does something that sophisticated firepower cannot do—builds friendship.

It is not enough to say her work is important, or part of the "other war." It is the same war because it is the same people.

RD fights the war differently. Its aims are political not military. And it is difficult to gauge its success or the lack of it, awkward to speak of pacified land, or to computerize the support which the people give the government. RD fights a simple war, and its progress can best be seen in a child's face. This is not very scientific, but then people are not very scientific.

Perhaps in Cho Sam Hamlet, "last night, out there in the yard, a plum branch blossomed." ▲



Door gunner keeps a close eye on a convoy running through the Mang Yang Pass between An Khe and Pleiku.

The Job of Gunner

Rotor wash blasts away the acrid blue smoke from the blazing M60 as the door gunner punches the hedge-row with quick bursts. The Huey, almost standing on its tail boom, skids to a halt in the wet grass—five LRP's leap aboard the bird.

As the hot extraction plucks the small reconnaissance squad from the enemy's grasp, another Huey circles protectively—its door gunner searching the jungle for the NVA company that pursued the LRP squad.

Below, the extraction ship claws for speed and altitude. Home safe. The ships pull alongside each other—both door gunners smile and flash a quick thumbs up.

Born from the womb of the Vietnam conflict, the door gunner combines the romance of the Red Baron, the eye of an eagle and the candor of a soldier whose "been there before."

At Camp Eagle, the 101st Airborne Division (Airmobile) headquarters, Spe-

cialist 5 Roy Slay is proud of the bonds of his door gunner brotherhood. The Texan spoke as he prepared his light observation helicopter (LOH) for a reconnaissance mission.

"On a visual reconnaissance mission, when we fly at low altitudes, our ship is often subject to enemy ground fire," he explains in a matter-of-fact tone. "On board, I have an M60 machine gun, an M79 grenade launcher and a collection of smoke, frag and white phosphorous grenades . . . and sometimes we have to use them all."

"The pilots demand aggressiveness and most of us, whether we were trained in the States or learned on duty, bring plenty of that to the job. We love to fly, and we enjoy doing our work."

Specialist Slay's chopper most often flies White Team missions in which two LOHs operate in a high-low combination. While his craft flies near treetop level in search of clues of ene-

my activity, the sister ship provides cover from above.

"Experience counts above all on this job," he said. The opinion is confirmed by almost all gunners. Of the dozen men in his aviation platoon, the majority are on extended tours or in Vietnam for the second time.

Helicopter pilots confirm the value of experience. "Everyone wants to fly with a veteran gunner," emphasizes Captain Daniel J. Cumbow, a LOH pilot. "Because door gunners on all ships act as observers, in addition to their other duties, they have to have a trained eye. These guys, the good ones, can spot a suspicious looking patch of jungle from hundreds of feet in the air."

Many of the breed are volunteers. "I had heard about the shortage of personnel, and the idea of flying appealed to me," commented Specialist 4 Larry Rogers. A former infantryman, Specialist Rogers is now as-

signed to C Troop, 2nd Squadron, 17th Cavalry, 101st Airborne Division (Airmobile).

Specialist Rogers flies aboard a UH-1H Huey helicopter, one of several Huey models which handle the vast majority of direct support and combat assault missions in Vietnam.

He is up in the morning an hour before most people at Camp Sally, home of the division's 2nd Brigade. As door gunner, Specialist Rogers is responsible for helping his crew chief in a first echelon maintenance check of the aircraft. He must also clean the ship and make certain that the chopper is ready to fly on short notice . . . this in addition to the loving care he takes in insuring his weapons are constantly combat ready.

A large percentage of gunners took their jobs out of an irrepressible desire to fly. Many hope to become qualified pilots in civilian life. Sergeant Duane H. Dalton of B Troop, 2nd Squadron, 17th Cavalry, is one of these.

In 30 months in Vietnam, Sergeant Dalton has been assigned to six different aviation units. He has flown with both fixed-wing and helicopter crews and served in many maintenance capacities, in addition to duty as a door gunner and crew chief.

Sergeant Dalton has already been assigned to his next duty station—the Army Aviation School at Ft. Rucker, Ala., where he will be a well-qualified instructor.

The course at Ft. Rucker runs eight weeks. After the first five weeks of helicopter maintenance training, volunteers for door gunner go through another three weeks of intensive training in weapon and aircraft maintenance and marksmanship.

Training at Ft. Rucker is made as realistic as possible. The door gunner in training knows he will come to Vietnam and he trains in earnest.

Four different types of basic approaches to a fire zone are covered. In the high pass, he practices his ability to "prep" an area before ground troops are inserted. The gunner is required to fire from high altitudes at a relatively low speed. In the low pass, the machine gun's fire must fall with pinpoint accuracy on close-range targets at high speed.

In the miss approach, the gunner practices spreading a base of defensive fire while his ship comes in on a landing approach and pulls out again. The technique is one used when entering a hot landing zone. Most gunners agree that experience is the best teacher in this situation, and

most of them get plenty of that.

Finally, training is also given in the approach to the cool landing zone, where the man in the door must be on the alert for any enemy threat to the troops scrambling off his ship.

One critical skill cannot be taught. Every door gunner is an observer for his pilot. Whether it involves looking for obstructions as a Huey sets down on a landing zone in rough terrain, or locating that suspicious looking patch of jungle from high above on a reconnaissance mission, there is no substitute, once again, for experience.

"We are the pilot's eyes to the sides and rear of the ship," explains Specialist 4 John Walters, of B Troop, 2nd Squadron, 17th Cavalry. "That applies no matter what type of helicopter you happen to be flying in . . . you have to concentrate at all times."

All in all it's a demanding job, physically and mentally. But the men who fly in the door gunner's seat would not have it any other way. As Specialist Rogers puts it, "I can't think of any other job in Vietnam where I could see so much and meet so many people. Even though we're normally assigned to one aircraft, we don't always work with the same crew. I guess I've been almost everywhere in the division's area of operations and



a lot of other places too.”

Very few helicopter crews operate on a set schedule, even for a day. One exception in the 101st is Company B, 159th Assault Helicopter Battalion. Each day, it provides crews which fly on a scheduled “bus run” between the division’s brigade base camps and Da Nang, 60 miles to the south.

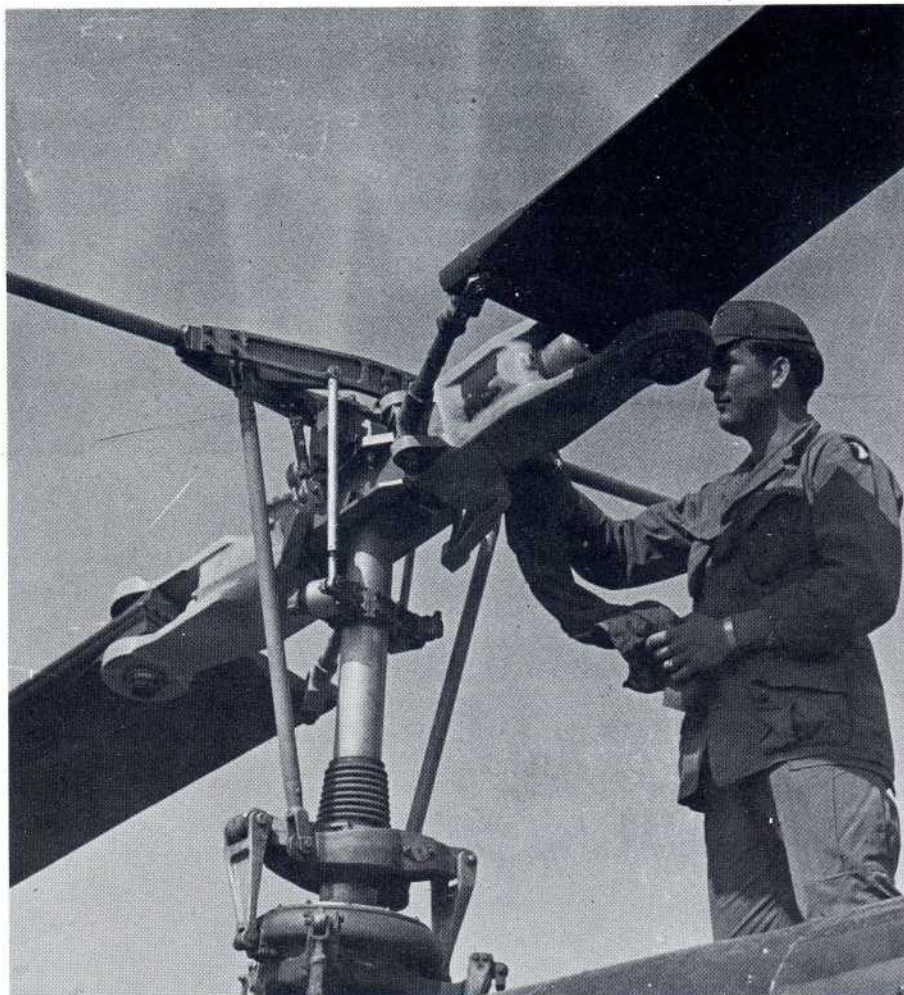
Though the threat to security is not as great for the men on these missions as it would be in field operation, they still have the responsibility for safeguarding their craft and passengers.

And there are frequent exceptions to this, since a crew may fly a schedule one day and then find themselves flying supplies to a remote fire base 25 miles from a “friendly” base.

Despite all the risks involved, which do add to the glamour of the job, the door gunner feels an element of security only appreciated by a man who has fought the war on the ground.

“When I go up in the morning, no matter what the mission is or where we’re going, I know I’ll be back that night to a warm bed and hot food,” added one gunner.

For the men who secure the air arm of the Army combat operations in Vietnam, that one element of reassurance is hard-earned and well-deserved. ▲



Gunner rakes a landing zone with preparatory fire during a pass (far left). Protecting a charging infantryman in a hot landing zone is one of a door gunner's important jobs (left). After a hard day's flying, the gunner must clean up his chopper and perform first echelon maintenance (above).

Combat Art:

Impressions

In late 1969, U.S. Army Artist Team IX spent two months sketching and painting throughout the Republic of Vietnam. The unit then spent three months at Schofield Barracks, Hawaii, putting their views on U.S. Army personnel and materials in Vietnam into final form for the Chief of Military History, Department of the Army, Washington, D.C.

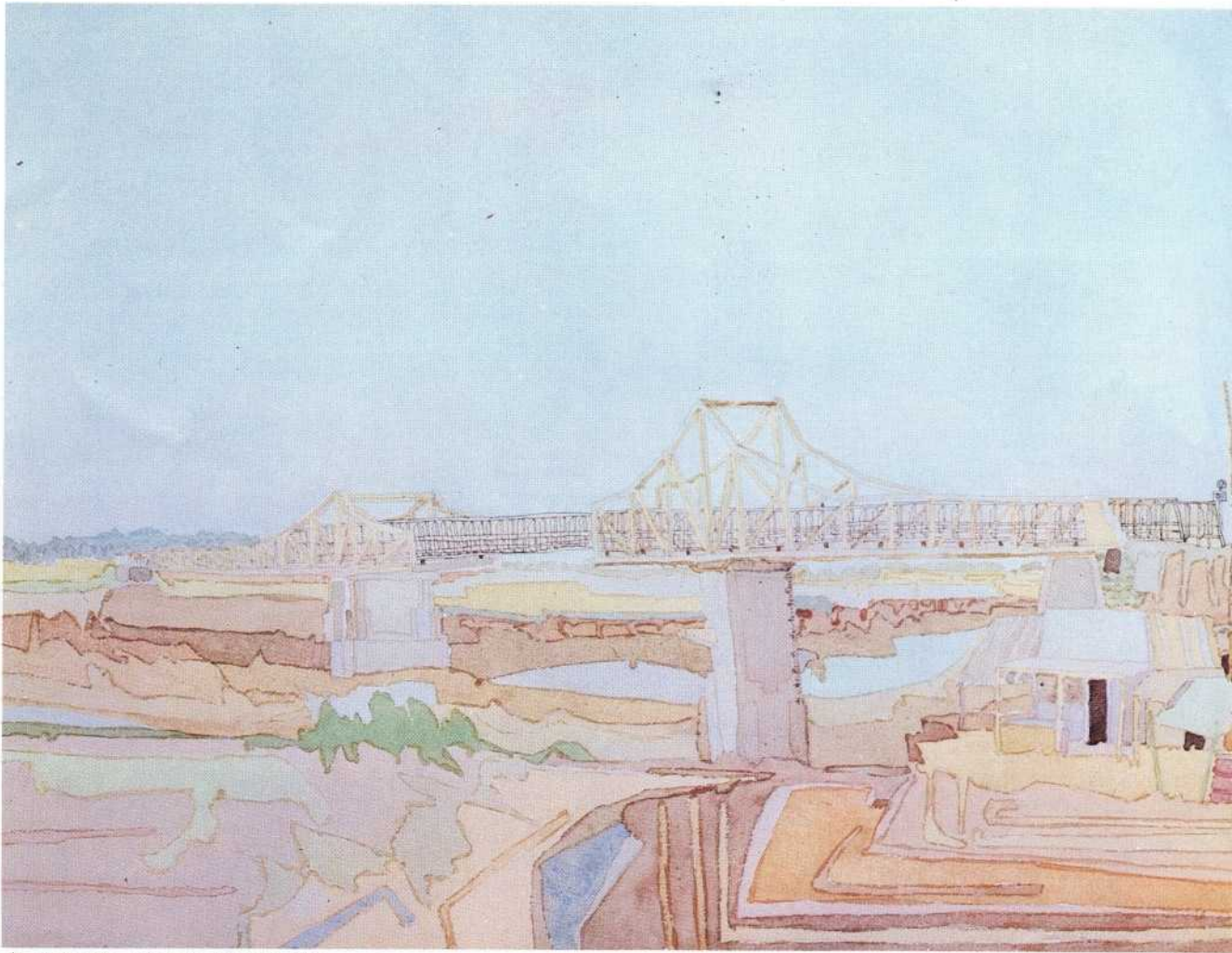
The team was composed of Captain William R. Hoettels, 5th U.S. Army Headquarters; Lieutenant Craig L. Stewart, U.S. Army Construction Agency, Vietnam; Specialist 4 Bruce N. Rigby, Ft. Meade, Md.; Private First Class David E. Graves, 1st Infantry Division, and Private First Class James W. Hardy, Ft. Ord, Calif. Here are some of their impressions.

▼ Dear Folks



▲ Which Way?

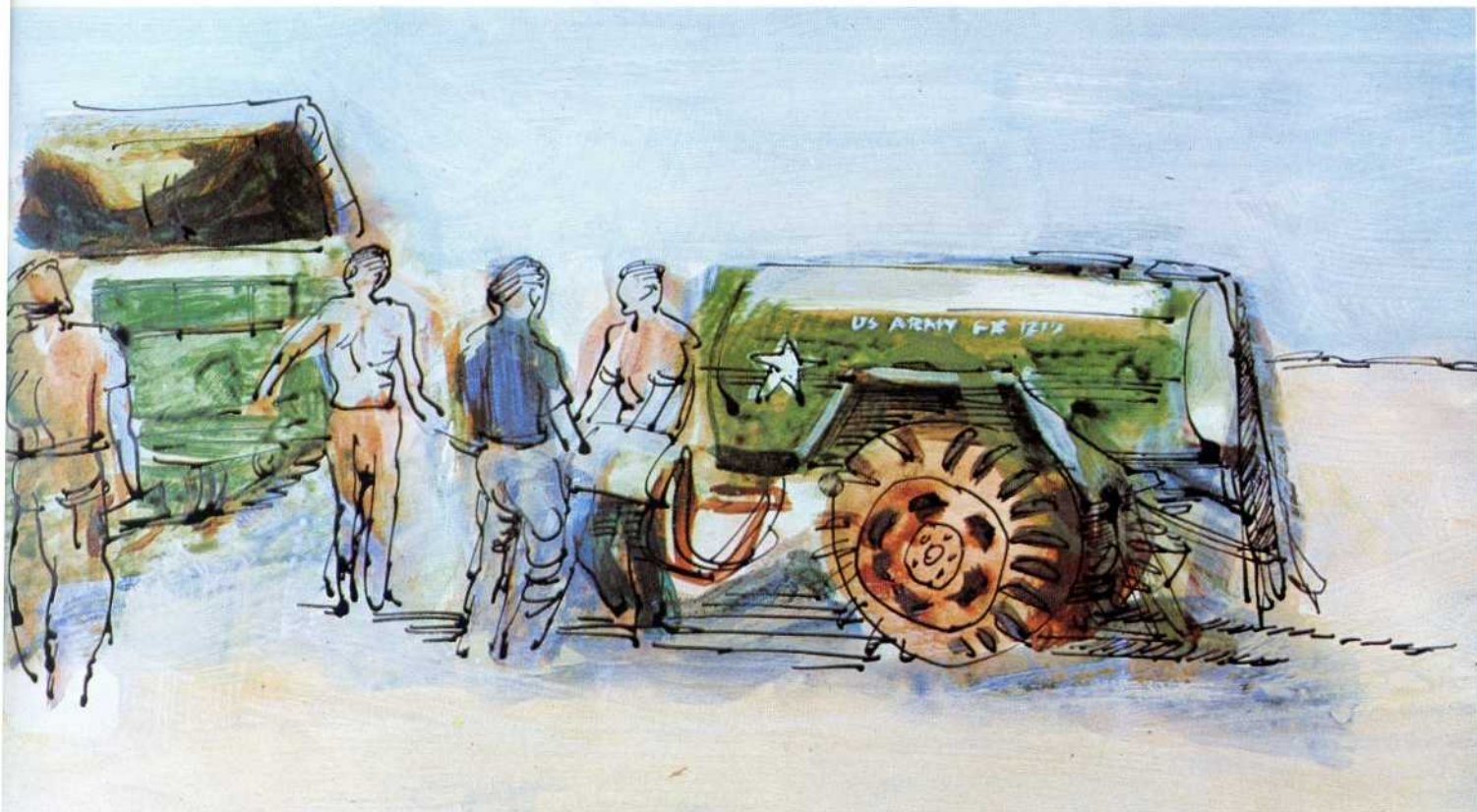




▲ Bridge Over Song Be

APC On The DMZ ▼

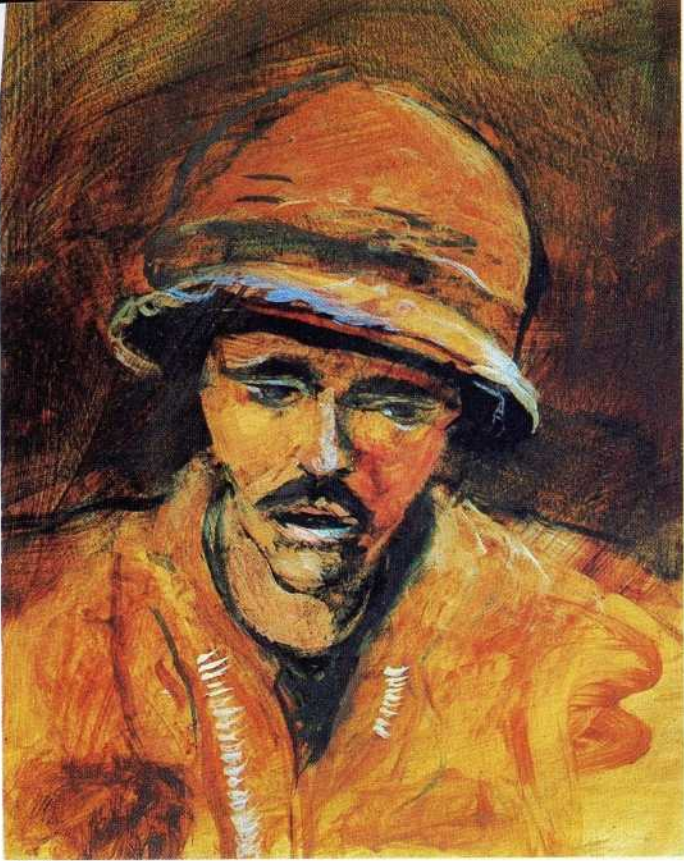




Water Tank ▲

▼ Door Gunner

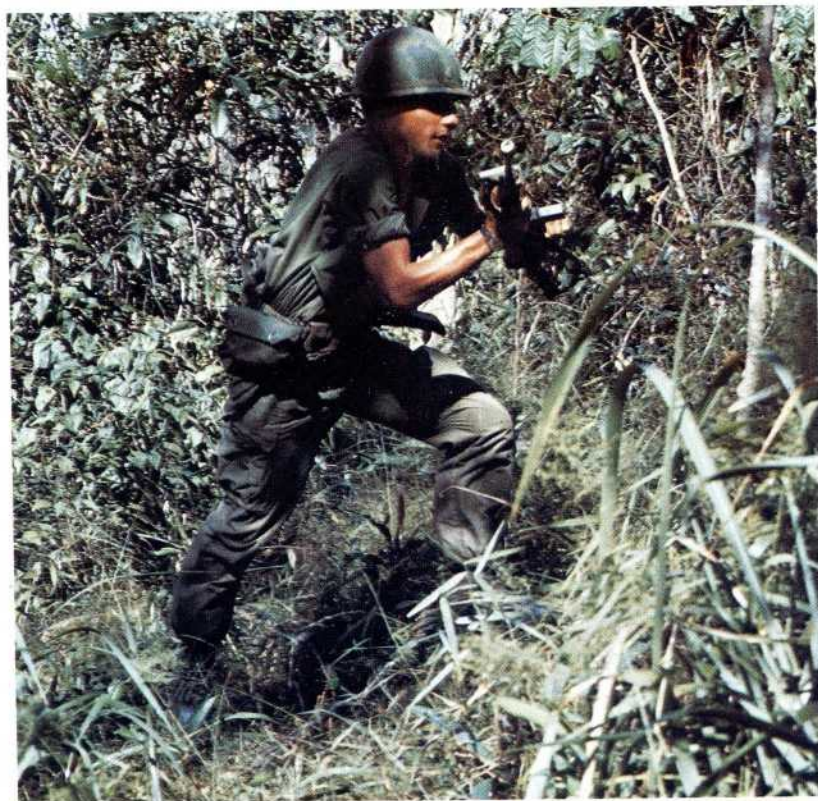




▲ Portrait

A Cold Coke ▼





A waterbag offers a refreshing break (top). Charging into the undergrowth a pointman quickly checks a possible enemy position (above). A keen eye can be a most important asset (right).

The Edge Of War

By SGT Steve Banko
1st Cav Div (AM)-10



The company wound its way wearily through the dense, tangled bamboo jungle. The Cavalrymen had been on the move since early morning and they were getting tired. With backs straining under heavy packs and eyes stinging with sweat, it would be easy for the men to become lax. The hot, quiet jungle in late afternoon has a way of lulling a man into complacency.

At the head of the long, winding column, though, was a man who refused to yield to the elements and grow weary of tramping through the thickets. His eyes were constantly moving, darting over the terrain and searching every leaf and twig from the jungle floor to treetops. Nothing passed his careful scrutiny. He spotted some broken bamboo and to the experienced young soldier, the bamboo told a story. He moved forward even more cautiously, tensing all his senses—scrutinizing the bamboo, listening acutely for an out-of-place sound in the stillness.

The sergeant noticed the North Vietnamese soldier crouching in the

thicket, sent a burst of M16 fire toward the NVA soldier and dove for cover. In an instant the stillness of the jungle was again shattered by return fire from AK47s. Tiny hot flecks of lead cut through the foliage and found their mark. Grenades exploded, sending lethal fragments through the air. The sergeant crawled, fired a magazine, then crawled some more, always seeking a better vantage point. He threw grenades and fired some more. The volume of fire increased as everyone in the company joined the firefight. The NVA soldiers were now trapped between the company's firepower and the artillery which was beginning to pour into the area. Helicopter gunships were speeding to help out with aerial rocket artillery. But the fight would be almost over once they got there. The sergeant had made sure of that.

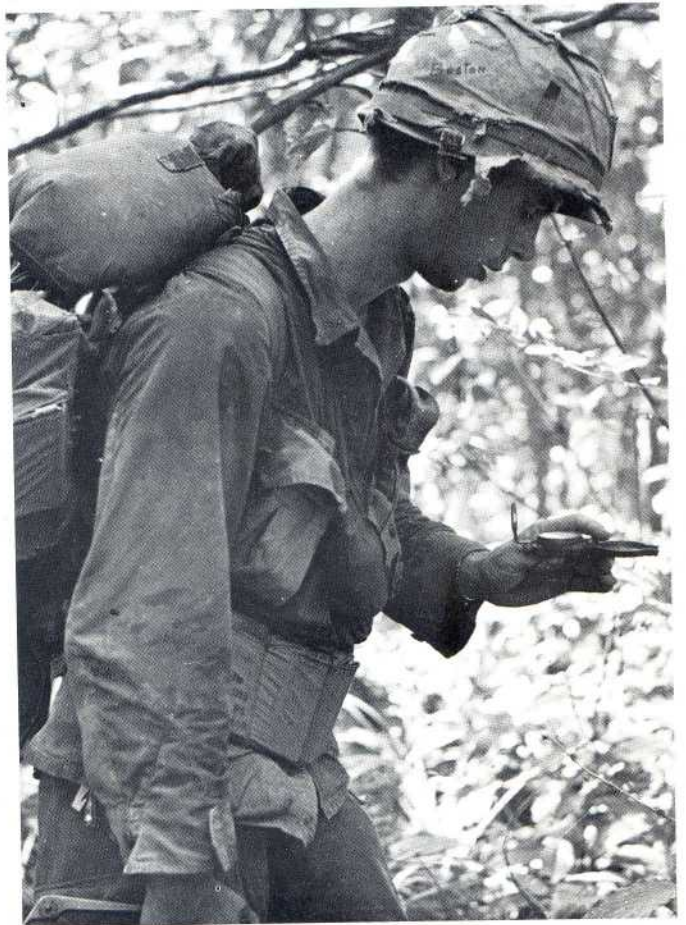
He is the pointman. His war is fought in close quarters and difficult terrain against an often unseen enemy. His war is frequently the 15-

minute war fought without the aid of jets, helicopters or artillery. Before they arrive, the pointman has usually finished his battle. He is the eyes and ears of his company and over a hundred men depend on his senses. He has seen many miles of Vietnam the hard way and is proud of the job he does.

Pointmen are made, not born. No one comes to Vietnam as a pointman. Six months ago the pointman had been a funny new guy at the First Team Academy in Bien Hoa. Walking point was as far from his mind as his DEROS. But he picked up some knowledge at the training school then began the gradual process of gaining experience in the field and learning from the old-timers. At first he relied on his senses of hearing and sight. Each waving branch and every piece of crackling bamboo sent him sprawling. With experience, however, he was able to distinguish between the normal sounds of the jungle and possible enemy movement. With experience, too, he was able to read the



Looking back, a pointman watches as his unit forms behind him (above). A compass is an invaluable tool in triple-canopy jungle (right).



trail signs of the enemy and interpret their meanings. A freshly cut tree, an overturned rock or a micro-thin wire stretched across a path may not catch the eyes of the other men in the company but to the pointman they stick out and indicate enemy mines or booby traps and ambushes. Soon it became old hat. The Cavalryman was a veteran pointman.

The trained eyes of pointman Specialist 4 Bill Meyer detected the faint glimmer of the sun hitting a metallic substance. A search through the brush revealed two rusty SKSs and an AK47 plus what appeared to be an old unused bunker. The cautious pointman inched forward, found trip wires leading to two booby-trapped 82mm mortar rounds and, when the rounds were disarmed, uncovered one of the biggest arms caches of the year in the bunker. His unit, Company C, 1st Battalion, 7th Cavalry, unearthed 50 submachine guns, 500 60mm mortar rounds, 310 B40 and B41 rounds and 86,000 small arms rounds.

The pointmen of Vietnam labor in a job with little glamour. Their hazards are many, their rewards few and their responsibilities great. Many times a pointman's alertness and ability to recognize danger are all that stand between his company and a deadly ambush. But a pointman's duties extend far beyond being the company's sensor. He must also pick a path through the tangled web of jungle, often hacking every step of the way with a machete. He's the company's trailblazer and must lead them to their objective with a minimum of wandering.

Because of a pointman's importance to his unit, a company commander does everything he can to make the pointman's job easier. As Captain Thomas Loomis, commander of Company B, 1st Battalion, 5th Cavalry, put it, "He's my eyes and ears. And we have to have complete trust in our pointman." Most cavalry companies alternate the point elements every day, moving the point platoon to the rear of the formation for a "rest" while another platoon walks point. Individual platoons change pointmen every few hours to insure that the soldier is fresh and alert.

To train new pointmen and keep old pointmen sharp, the 1st Cavalry battalions have begun several "pointmen schools" at fire bases. When mem-



With his squad only steps behind, walking point can be the loneliest job in the infantry.

bers of the 1st Battalion, 5th Cavalry take their turn on base defense at Fire Support Base Vivian, they are taken through a pointmen course set up by Lieutenant Matthew McGough. There old pointmen can get a refresher course on the tactics of the NVA and breaking their ambushes while new men learn about trail markings and jungle indicators. There is also a quick-kill course which is essential to prolonging the life of the lead man. At Fire Support Base Ike, squad-sized elements of the 2nd Battalion, 5th Cavalry assault a combat reaction course which has pop-up targets, simulated booby traps and a bunker complex. "We can tell from this course how each man in the squad is going to react if he comes under fire, finds booby traps or enters a bunker complex, but more important, we can tell how he needs to react so we can help him," said Staff Sergeant John Taylor. But experience is still the best teacher, Lieutenant McGough stressed. "We can throw all the simulated situations in the world at them, but when they get to the bush and under fire is when they really learn."

What makes a man walk in front of his company and lay his life on the line daily? What makes him want to break brush and bamboo, looking for trouble, to lead his company safely

through hostile jungle? To some, the responsibility is a challenge to be met. "When you're on the point, you're the boss. You're the catcher, the quarterback and the coach all rolled into one. You know that the entire company is depending on you and your had better perform," said Specialist Meyer. To others it's just another tough job that has to be done. As Private First Class Dave Roberts put it, "Sure the pointman has a tough job, but so does the RTO and the machine gunner. We do it because we're a team and this team needs a leader."

A pointman is a man alone, directly responsible for the lives of dozens of men. No number of M60 machine guns or rocket-firing Cobras can match a good pointman in protecting a company. He is the man who sees a booby trap before it is set off; who smells danger before it happens; who directs traffic during the first crucial seconds of a firefight. "It's a strange feeling walking point," says Specialist 4 John McCarter of Company D, 1st Battalion, 12th Cavalry. "You know there are a hundred guys behind you but I still always feel alone."

He has an exceptionally tough job but the pointman is an exceptionally tough man. In a hide-and-seek war he is his company's front line of offense. ▲

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-10, 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:

- Madam, I have good news for you.
- Hey, Harry, can you hear me?
- Well, at least she doesn't have sinus trouble.

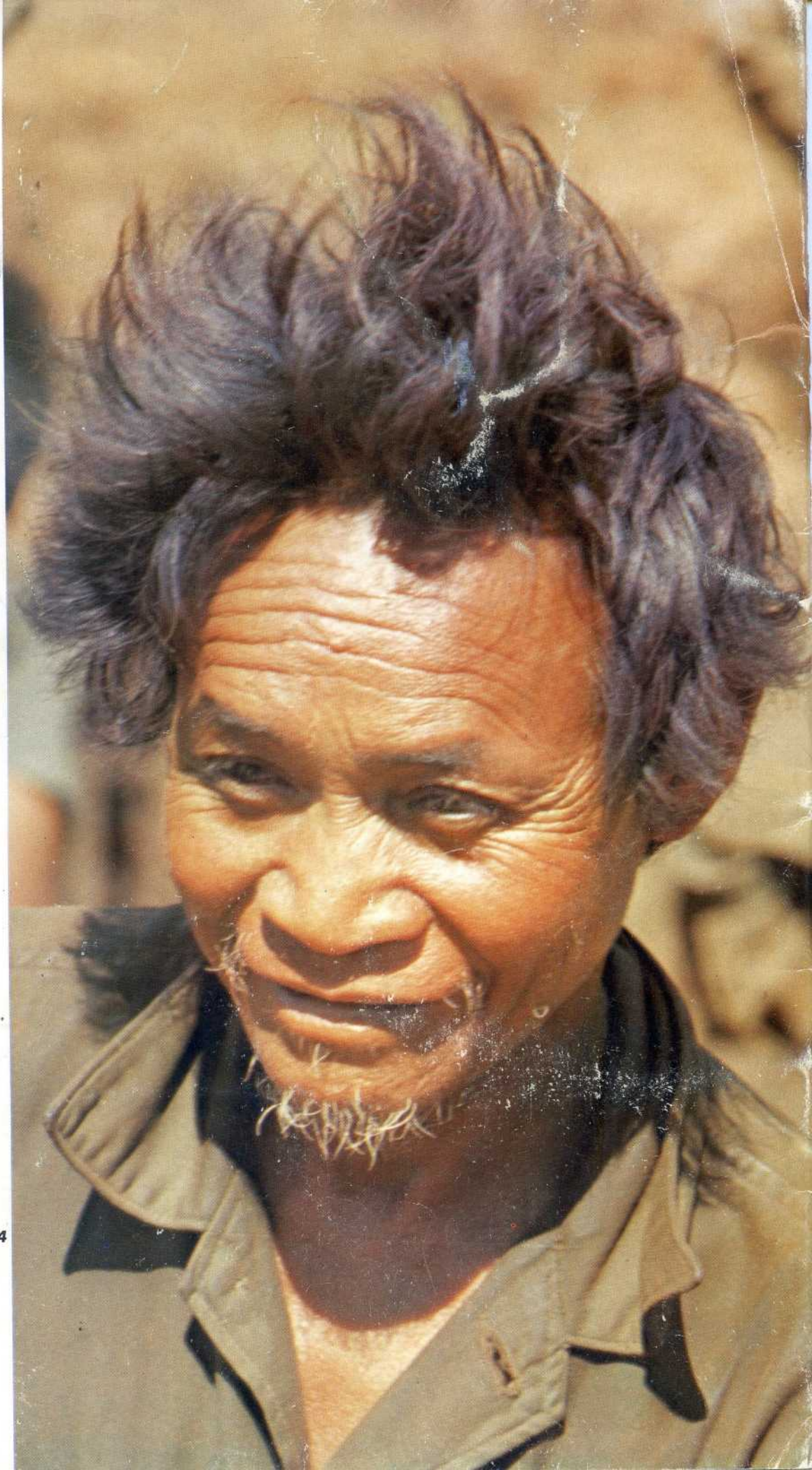


French actress Marie France takes an afternoon off from her busy film schedule to relax and ponder a rose. Photo by Girlography-Around-The-World.

LAST ISSUE'S WINNERS

- "Wish I'd thought of this 289 days ago!"
—SGT William R. Spear Jr., 173rd Abn Div
"While you're up, get me a Grants."
—SSG Tom Kuntle, 1st Cav Div (AM)
"Gosh, Ma, it's great to be home!"
—CPT William Henwood, 5th Special Forces Gp.





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