

# Enemy Uses 'Human Shields'

DA NANG (USMC) — North Vietnamese and Viet Cong forces resorted to using Vietnamese civilians as "human shields" in a last ditch attempt to overrun Hoi An defenders in the two-day battle Jan. 30-31.

With the arrival of Korean Marines to bolster the Vietnamese Army units came the end to the two days of terrorism in the Quang Nam provincial capital. Elements of the 51st ARVN Regiment drove an estimated 400 NVA and VC from the city as the Hoi An defenders manned

well-fortified positions in preparation for a large-scale counter attack.

The attack opened Jan. 30 with a NVA pre-dawn mortar attack on the 102nd ARVN Engineer compound. Both the ARVN and their MACV advisors repulsed the attack and halted the enemy's initial advance. In the afternoon, VC forces captured and occupied the Engineer compound, a Vietnamese hospital and other parts of the city.

Elements of the 4th ARVN Ar-

mored Personnel Carrier troop bore the brunt of the initial attack. But, with the help of their Australian Army advisor, the Vietnamese were able to withdraw to a defensive perimeter and fight off enemy efforts to overrun them.

Following a night of sporadic street-fighting and heavy mortar attacks launched by both sides, MACV advisors, in coordination with ARVN commanders, called in extensive air strikes on the VC and NVA positions.

Early Jan. 31, the enemy

troops countered with a massive push through the city — using Vietnamese civilians as shields from small arms fire. The villagers, realizing their predicament, quickly scattered, leaving the enemy exposed to withering ARVN machine gun and rifle fire.

The defending forces then received unexpected reinforcements from the 2nd Republic of Korea Marine Brigade. The Koreans, supported by three tanks of the 1st Marine Division's 1st Tank Battalion, were out on a routine search and destroy pat-

rol when they received a call to Hoi An to bolster the already-rolling ARVN offensive.

Upon entering the city, one of the Marine tanks was struck and set afire by a NVA B-40 rocket, but the remaining two tanks moved into the city and directed their fire on enemy bunkers and reinforced positions.

By evening of Jan. 31, ARVN troops had completed the sweep of the city and eliminated all enemy resistance. More than 100 NVA and VC died in the two-day battle for Hoi An.

## Major's 'Dream' Fulfilled

DA NANG (USA) — ARVN Major Le Van Can used to do a lot of complaining — he was tied to a desk and he wasn't getting any action.

Right now he's not complaining. He's had plenty of action.

Major Can, the officer-in-charge of the I Corps Tactical Operations Center (ITOC), took command of all troops in the I Corps headquarters at 0330 on 30 January.

A 40-round concentration of 82mm mortars was crashing down and the VC were storming the compound.

The major showed the style that won him eight personal decorations in 12 years as a combat leader.

Before the explosions stopped, he had the ITOC people outside, positioned and pouring rifle, pistol and carbine fire into the VC. He was mounted on an armored personnel carrier directing the fire on its crest of machineguns.

The VC penetration lasted only a couple of minutes.

But Major Can had a VC battalion on his hands and he didn't have enough force to drive it away. The VC made no more attempts to penetrate, but they secreted themselves within 100 meters of the compound and made things hot with small arms, B-40 rockets and M-79s.

At dawn a reaction force — half the ARVN 21st Ranger Battalion, a half troop of the 4th ARVN Armored Cavalry, some Marine Amtracs and some Marine MPs — was on hand to deal with the VC.

Major Can was back at his desk with high powered reinforcement: Lieutenant General Hoang Xuan Lam, I Corps' commanding general. He had raced through fire-swept streets to give a big hand.

General Lam is the ultimate authority for clearing airstrikes and artillery strikes in the I Corps Tactical Zone. He waited until civilians had streamed away from the VC positions.

Then he turned to Major Can's advisor, U.S. Army Major P.S. Milantoni:

"Milantoni," he said, "bomb here. Use big bombs."

He tapped the map with an ebony swagger stick.

"General," said Major Milantoni, "that's pretty close."

"Bomb," said General Lam.

Major Milantoni called the direct air support people. They're in the same building and they objected, too. "That's too close," a watch officer said, "you'll never get a clearance for it."

"General Lam just gave it."

(Continued on Back Page)



WHO CAN I TURN TO? — A small boy orphaned by the war only musters tears as he sits alone with all that is left.

(USA PHOTO BY Pfc Harry Guy)

### In Chu Lai

## New US Hospital To Treat Viet Civilian War Casualties

CHU LAI (USA) — As part of a \$7.3 million program for South Vietnam, civilian war casualties in the southern I Corps will soon be treated in a modern 300 bed hospital located in Chu Lai in the Americal Division area.

built by a civilian joint venture construction firm — RMK-BRJ. Based in Saigon, the company consists of four construction firms specializing in military development throughout South Vietnam.

Mr. Pete Bergen, project engineer for the Chu Lai office, said that, "construction began at the 15-acre site on perimeter road January 15th and the projected date of completion is during May."

"The hospital will be of the round-wall type quonset construction and the facility will have its own sewage, power and water treatment plants. The six operating rooms and the intensive care units will be air conditioned and the hospital will have its own PX and laundry,"

he continued.

With its own helipad and in close proximity to Highway 1, the new hospital will serve injured civilians from several provinces. Six wards and several post operative rooms will provide modern and efficient processing of patients during their stay at the facility.

Major Joseph S. Wood Jr., Chu Lai base development officer, said, "The plan is to treat serious cases requiring specialized care here in Chu Lai and then return them to the provincial hospital for rehabilitation.

In the near future, Chu Lai will be the middle link in a unique chain of hospitals giving intensive care and treatment exclusively to civilian war casualties.

D69NP610889

## Support Troops Fight VC

DA NANG (USMC) — Supply clerks, forklift drivers, bakers and mechanics doubled as infantrymen during the Tet terrorist period while U.S. Marine Force Logistic Command (FLC) reactionary forces killed 30 enemy northwest of Da Nang.

Reactionary units from 1st and 3rd Military Police (MP) Maintenance and Headquarters and Service Battalions conducted patrols, search and destroy missions and sweeps against concentrated enemy action which began, Jan. 30.

After the Da Nang air base was hit by enemy rockets, Lieutenant Colonel T. R. Hill, commanding officer of the 1st MP Bn. in charge of Camp Books defense, alerted the reactionary units.

The 3rd reaction platoon of Maintenance Battalion was trucked to the north end of the airstrip as a blocking force to seal off escape routes if the attack came from the north.

The second platoon shortly after dawn moved east of the field towards Combined Action Platoon (CAP) Echo 3. After setting up outside the CAP unit, they came under scattered small arms fire.

The 1st MP reactionary unit had been dispatched at 5:30 a.m. At 6:30, heavy contact was made 800 meters south of the Da Nang river bridge. The Viet Cong were in a small village and tree line less than 200 meters away. In the following three hours two MP's were killed and six wounded. Enemy losses were 30 dead and an undetermined number wounded.

Both corpsmen and the battalion sergeant major were injured while carrying wounded Marines to safety. Contact was broken when the MPs began laying down a heavy base of fire and a HUEY gunship opened fire.

The MPs were relocated during the morning on the road from Gate 4 to the Cam Lo bridge. There, they joined units from Maint. Bn.'s reserve unit and "D" Company, 3rd MP Bn.

On Jan. 31 the Viet Cong moved into Nam-O village north of FLC. Army of the Republic of Vietnam Rangers were assigned to clear the village with FLC's unit as blocking force. They held their position from midmorning until late afternoon, killing one enemy and wounding two.

On Feb. 2 and 3, the VC after reportedly suffering heavy casualties, withdrew from Nam-O.

Maintenance Battalion units have also ran nightly patrols since the initial attack through an area bordering the air base.

The Chu Lai hospital is being

## Editorial

**A Life Saver**

(MACV) — "Defensive driving, defensive driving, defensive driving! Darn defensive driving! I've driven in the Army and for long distance movers for 8 years and never had an accident yet."

How do you prevent hitting a child who runs out in the road from between two cars? How do you avoid smacking a cycle or pedicab that swerves diagonally across the front of your vehicle? How do you stop before you run into that Renault that braked to a halt in front of you without warning?

"You gonna tell me it's defensive driving?"

Sure, what else can you call it? It's giving way in time to avoid a tragedy. It's watching all around and concentrating on your driving so you're in control at all times.

"Aw, most of it is just instinct, reflexes and experience."

Is that right? How do you rate driving conditions here?

"Never seem anything like them. With the war and all, people seem to forget about what's happening around them when they get behind the wheel."

That's what I mean. When people don't notice what they are doing, instinct doesn't help. Staying alert and being cautious is much better.



"Yeah, well I'll buy that, but many times it isn't the driver's fault. The vehicles here get a lot of pounding and aren't as good as in the states."

True, but regular, thorough checks at motor stables and before you take off from the motor pool everyday can prevent a lot of grief. You should let them know whenever something doesn't seem right with your vehicle.

"But they'll take years to repair it and then what do I do?"

What do you do? Whatever you do, you'll be alive. Bad brakes, a blow-out, any number of mechanical "misfires" can wipe you out or somebody else.

If you really need a vehicle for something, 90 per cent of the time your motor sergeant will fix you up.

Then, too, since you mentioned not being in the States, remember there's no AAA or handy wrecker service just around the corner over here. A lone, broken-down vehicle on the open road is awfully tempting to "Charlie".

"That's why I've got a 'shot gun' along."

Well, sometimes the shot gun might be out-gunned. But that brings up another point. Passengers and "shot-gunned" can help you drivers a great deal. They can keep their eyes on the road and let you know if something unexpected comes up, like a car trying to pass on your 'blind' side.

"Okay, so I buy your spiel, what do I get out of it?"

A good chance of avoiding an accident and getting home alive.



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**Just In Case You Have Not Heard****Wise Buys For You GI**

I was new in country and eager to please, So I bought from street vendors, squandering my "P's". As I grew "shorter", I also grew wise. And I found the PX had excellent buys. The brand names I saw were familiar to me And just about all had a good guarantee. In comparing the prices with a Stateside store, I found back-home costs were generally more. So I bought a projector, Hi-Fi and TV, Jewelry for my wife—a wrist watch for me. And, lest I forget, let me make a confession, I bought the kids' gifts at the PX concession. Then, like lightning, a new idea dawns: I invested my savings in government bonds.

(MACV)

**LSU Supports Vietnam GIs**

SAIGON (MACV) — It is the policy of the MACV Observer to acknowledge from time to time the many thousands of letters received each week by General W.C. Westmoreland from the folks back home who support the fighting men in Vietnam.

Recently, 3,500 students of Louisiana State University signed a petition which read: "We the undersigned citizens of the United States, urge the administration and the Congress of the United States to stand firm in the war in Vietnam.

"We further urge that the combined diplomatic and military strength of the allied forces be used to insure the defeat of Communist aggression and to pursue a policy of PEACE THROUGH VICTORY IN VIETNAM."

**VA Acts Against Discrimination**

WASHINGTON — Veterans Administration has taken four steps to assure nondiscrimination in the sale of 14,200 repossessed houses the VA currently has on the market throughout the country.

A mid-January VA announcement said metal "VA For Sale" signs are being altered to include such statements as "no discrimination" and "anyone can buy."

Moreover, VA will put in newspaper advertisements and other public listings a statement that "VA properties are available to qualified buyers or renters without regard to their race, color, creed or national origin."

Another safeguard set by VA is a three-day waiting period after public listing before it accepts the offer most advantageous to the government.

VA also is tightening up its dealings with sales brokers who handle VA listings by requiring them to certify in writing every six months that they will not discriminate in sales or rentals of VA properties. (CD)



"Oh, I stopped the paper... since we got the new disposal unit I don't need it anymore for the garbage."

**'No Freeze' Says Dept. Of Defense**

WASHINGTON — "There is no freeze on discharges and retirements in any of the services," the Department of Defense said the last week in January, replying to rumors following the call-up of certain reservists. At present, there is no authority to extend enlistment contracts for enlisted men.

Referring to the status of regular officers, DOD said all services use a selective involuntary retention program.

There is an individual determination as to whether a regular officer's request for voluntary retirement or designation will be accepted or deferred because his services are needed. The same applies for voluntary retirement for Reserve officers.

Reserve officers' requests for release from active duty are being approved unless the officer has not completed a term of active duty to which he is obligated or for which he consented.

The call-up of certain Ready Reserve units of the Air Force and Navy and the Air National Guard was taken as "a precautionary measure to strengthen

our forces" following the capture of the USS Pueblo by North Koreans on January 23.

Although there was no call-up of Army and Marine Corps Reserve units, procedures on exemptions were spelled out should the situation change:

If Army Reserve and or National Guard units are called to active duty, exemption policies are covered in AR 601-25.

If any Marine Corps units are called, the Marine Corps will decide at that time who, if anyone, will be exempt. At this time, no one would be exempt.

For the services — Navy and Air Force — involved in the recent call-up, "all high school students are exempt."

In addition, the Air Force is looking into all other possible exemption areas.

In the Navy, high school graduates or drop-outs are scheduled for call-up. College students can be deferred until the end of their current semester, quarter or trimester. College seniors can request an additional quarter, semester or trimester if this would permit them to graduate.

**Police Recruiting At Military Bases Pays Off**

WASHINGTON — The month-old cooperative effort by the Defense Department and the police to help fill some of the 15,000 vacancies in state, county and city law enforcement agencies is paying off, according to Pentagon officials running the program.

Complete statistics are not available as yet to prove their point because the program is relatively new and a lot of servicemen make arrangements to join the police on their own, but many officials say almost half of the 400 vacancies in the nation's capital are now being filled by men leaving the service.

In the case of the District of Columbia police, the Army leads with 92 volunteers, followed by the Marines with 67,

Navy 20 and the Air Force 4.

"We have even been able to fill the one vacancy for a police officer in Window Rock, Ariz.," an Army personnel officer pointed out. Window Rock is a Navajo Indian reservation.

The program is going on at bases all over the country with some police recruiting in their local areas and others sending teams to all the major military installations.

An early release of up to 90 days is authorized by the Department of Defense. Although the program is aimed primarily at servicemen in the U.S. nearing the end of their enlistment, Pentagon officials say those overseas can make application by writing to the police department they wish to join. (Pacific Stars & Stripes)

# NVA Trapped By Korean Infantrymen

SAIGON (MACV) — Elements of the Capital ROK Infantry Division made contact with an enemy force Jan. 23 in the vicinity of Phu Cat, 14 miles north-

west of Qui Nhon.

Reacting swiftly, the Koreans quickly deployed six companies in an encircling maneuver and trapped the enemy force in a cordon. The Republic of Korea troops were from the 1st Regiment, Capital ROK Division.

Before nightfall on the 23rd, two platoons of tanks from the 1st of the 69th Armor — normally attached to the U.S. 4th Infantry Division — had deployed into the cordon from positions along Route 19 to the west. In addition, two platoons of mechanized infantry in armored personnel carriers from the 1st Air Cavalry Division deployed into the northwest portion of the cordon from northern Binh Dinh Province.

Gradually tightening the circle through the next five days, the Korean troops fought the enemy during the day and maintained their tight cordon at night to prevent an enemy escape.

The citation noted six major operations in which the division has participated since moving to Ba Gi in 1966. It is credited with killing nearly 2,000 Viet Cong and capturing another 1,300 enemy along with numerous rounds of ammunition and weapons.

General Coa Van Vien, Vietnamese chief of staff, fixed the symbolic braided cord around the shoulder of Brigadier General Nguyen Van Hieu, commander of the 22d, during the ceremony which took place at the division's headquarters.

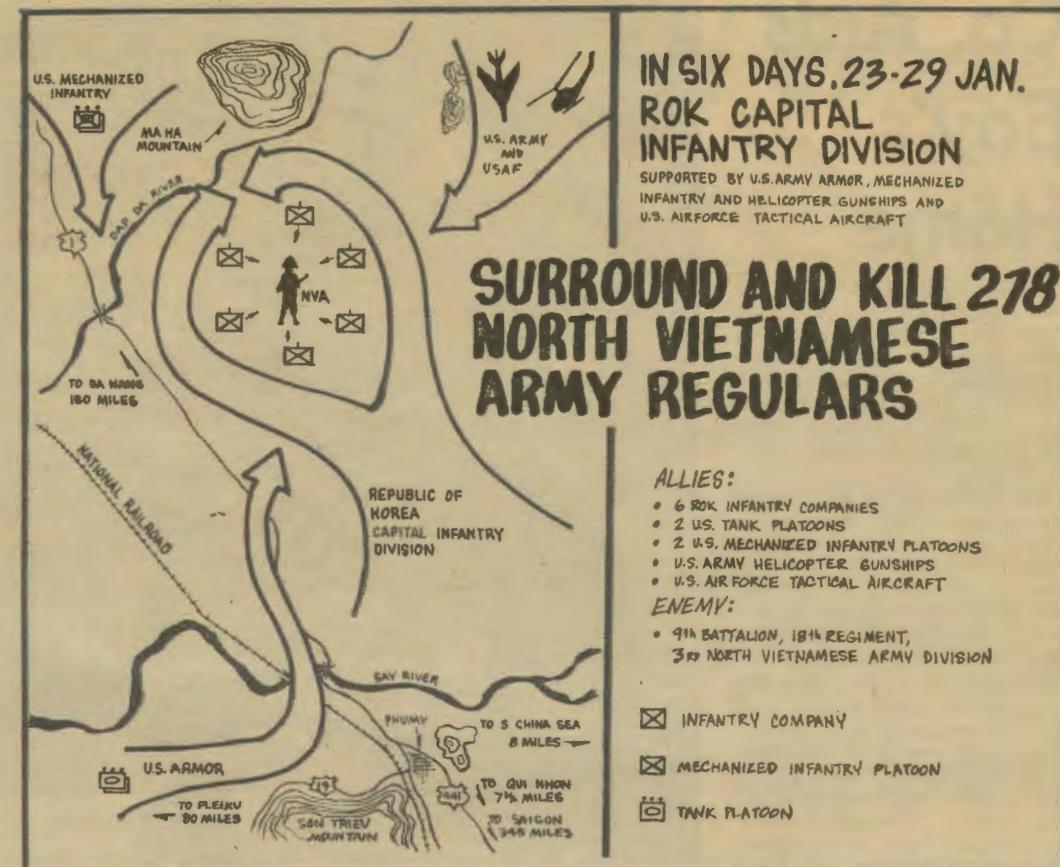
Three U.S. advisors to the 22d also received awards during the ceremony. Colonel Ernest S. Ferguson and Captain Joseph D. Hindsley both received the Vietnamese Gallantry Cross with Silver Star while Captain Samuel E. Simmons received the Staff Service Honor Medal, 1st Class.

First formed in 1959, the division moved from Kontum to Qui Nhon in 1965 and moved to its present headquarters a year later. Its mission is to provide security for Binh Dinh, Phu Yen and Phu Bon Provinces in Vietnam's II Corps Tactical Zone.

While killing the 278 enemy, the Korean forces suffered 11 killed and 25 wounded. The kill ratio for the engagement was 25.3 enemy to 1 Korean.

## Six Courses Taught At Combat Training Center

DONG DA (MACV) — One of the most diversified missions assigned to any group of advisers in the U.S. Military Assistance Command, Vietnam, is that pursued to the members



## In Bien Hoa

# Buddhists Use Civic Action

LONG BINH (II FF) — Three schools, a day nursery and a public first aid station — all under Buddhist supervision — are either completed or nearing completion in and around the city of Bien Hoa.

Two schools in Tam Hiep village are being financed with

funds donated by members of the sect and built through professional and volunteer labor.

The III Corps office of Civil Operations and Revolutionary Development Support (CORDS) is also assisting and has provided enough cement so that the day nursery in Bien Hoa can be completed. The nursery will be available to mothers who are working so that their children will have proper care during the day.

One of the schools, at the Vien Giac Pagoda in Tam Hiep, will soon be adding a two-story dormitory to allow 500 orphans to attend school. When this building is completed, the school will expand from its primary grades to reach a "middle level" — comparable to a secondary education in the United States.

At the Phat Lich Pagoda, also in Tam Hiep, a public first aid station is nearing completion. In helping to staff this center, the Australian Medical Team at Bien Hoa Province Hospital is

training 30 people in the techniques of first aid. More volunteers will be instructed so that immediate first aid can be given when it's necessary.

These projects will be serving all faiths and will be staffed with monks and other members of the religious order. Although those who are not monks will be working for low wages, the monks accept only token payment "because they feel they are giving to this project," said James E. Gwynne, assistant senior province advisor.

"The significance of this active role by the Buddhists," says Mr. Gwynne, "is that in the past they stayed within their own areas. They carried on teachings, read scriptures and performed their religious ceremonies in the pagodas."

"Now, the monks and members of their order are turning their energies to the world and involving themselves with the social welfare of their fellow man as well as continuing their religious practices."

## Village Builds School

DA NANG (USMC) — A new school was recently dedicated in the nearby village of Hoa My. It's a two story, buff-colored building that will accommodate nearly 300 students.

The school was built by local villagers with support from U.S. military forces in the area. The project's director, Reverend Hans Josephsen, called on the military for help.

A 1st Division Protestant Chapel Fund accounted for \$1,000. Navy Seabees of Mobile Construction Battalion 1 poured cement for the foundation and the second floor. Air Force units contributed scrap metal and lumber valued at \$3,000.

Two civilian organizations were also instrumental in building the school. They were the World Relief Commission, which contributed "Food for Work," and the United States Agency for International Development, which pledged construction materials.

Because of space limitations, attendance at the school will be restricted to students from poor families and refugee children.

The villagers, however, have a long range plan that would lift that restriction. They plan to eventually enlarge the school to a structure three times its current size.



IT'S MINE — A young Vietnamese girl clutches a paper-wrapped gift which she received at a party given by the 4th Infantry Division at the village of La Som.

(USA PHOTO By Sp4 Ron Uszak)



A young girl leads the band.

## Co. Aids Boy's Home

VUNG TAU (USA)—For the some 100 boys at the An-Phong Boy's Home here, life has been better since the 330th Transportation Company of the 34th General Support Group has been giving them a helping hand through its Civic Action Program.

The boys, from 10 to 16 years old, all have come under Father Nguyen Van Qui's supervision voluntarily, and are free to leave at any time if they desire. Most, however, stay on and are involved in the work that keeps the home operating.

For the past few years the company has given them a hand with their laundry and bakery. Most of the men of the 330th have their laundry done at the Boy's Home, which brings in extra money. Through a very meaningful and conscientious civic action program, the 330th contributes money to the Home with which supplies are purchased. A combination of these donations plus profits have helped to make the Boy's Home almost self-sustaining.

Father Qui of the Redemptorist Congregation feels that his Home is doing quite well, although there are many necessities that they still need.

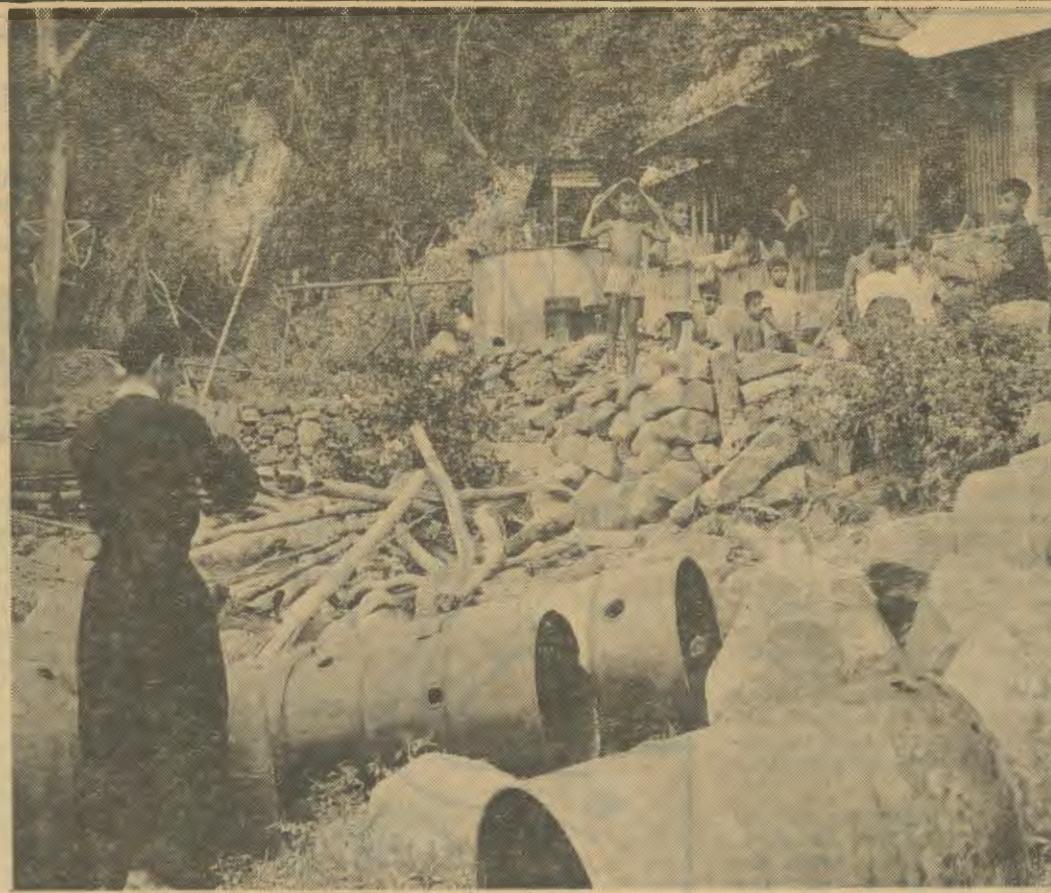
## ROKs Join US Marines

DA NANG (USMC)—A "new" Marine unit recently arrived for service with Marine Aircraft Group-16 at Marble Mountain air facility near here.

An aviation detachment of the 2nd Republic of Korea Marine Brigade arrived with their O1-E "Bird Dog" (O1s) observation planes.

The following morning the O1s were calling in artillery fire and air strikes on enemy forces near Hoi An.

The unit started its tour in Vietnam at Cam Ranh Bay in 1965. They have been stationed at Tuy Hoa and Chu Lai before coming to Marble Mountain. During 1967 the detachment flew more than 1,000 missions, supporting more than 18 major operations.



Father Qui looks over the Boy's Home's present location.

### Through Self-Help

## Viets Learn Needed Skills

LONG AN PROVINCE (USA)—In just a few weeks' time a U.S. Army engineer battalion has helped villagers construct a village office, a bridge and a school in the hamlet of Rach Kien.

Members of the 46th Engineer Battalion (Construction), 159th Engineer Group, 20th Engineer Brigade, moved into the village in late December.

The project, 'Task Force Builder', came into being in response to requests by province officials. Work is carried out under the supervision of Captain Michael Miller.

The purpose of the 'self-help' project is to work alongside the Vietnamese and to assist them in developing needed skills. To achieve this, the Vietnamese government is supplying one person for every American worker.

Most of the Vietnamese workers are women.

"We didn't realize that we would run into a situation of this nature," commented Captain Miller.

"The women work hard. Per-

haps this is because their men are either in the Army or working in the fields. The women seem to know that through this joint effort, their children will have a better life."

Originally the project entailed three schools, a village office, dispensaries and a maternity ward.

The overall project was scheduled for two months' work, but the engineers' efforts have proven so successful that they have been extended in their jobs until the end of 1968.

"We don't mind the extension at all," stated Specialist 4 David A. Hegner. "We actually feel that we are doing a job with a purpose, a lot of it . . . one which will help these people immensely."

The projects are divided between squads. Eleven men work with their Vietnamese counterparts at each site.

"I was very surprised," said Sergeant Jerry W. Minches, "at how easily these people could pick up the ideas of our ways of construction. One of the few men we have working with us picked up the art of bricklaying in two weeks. He is very accomplished at it now."

With Rach Kien being in the Delta region, accessibility to the area is a problem. Most of the building sites are not connected with roads. Sampans are employed to carry cement blocks, lumber, cement and sand into the area. Once the material arrives, the workers must mix cement by hand. Dirt for the foundations must be brought in from 15 miles away. And there is too much water in the region for a good soil base for foundations.

The site's locations also present a problem in security. To cope with this, American and Vietnamese units stationed in the area are assigned to protect the work force.

But lack of knowledge of the Vietnamese language has not been a hindrance. "As in any country," stated Specialist 4 Meninrad Fillop, "you learn a little of the language by being around the people."

The building construction is accomplished with prefabricated materials prepared by the 46th Engineer Battalion at Long Binh and trucked to Rach Kien by

## Farmers' Dreams Fulfilled

DA NANG (USMC)—A U.S. Marine is helping two Vietnamese rice farmers fulfill their ambition to become mechanics by teaching them about engines and vehicles.

Sergeant Jerry Wayne Crady, assistant shop chief of the 1st Marine Division Service Companies' motor pool, explains the progress of his two pupils.

"Only one year ago," stated the sergeant, "Nguyen Thien and Nguyen Ninh were rice farmers at nearby Red Beach. Now they are well on the way to becoming second-echelon mechanics.

"When we requested two men from the Industrial Relations office last year," stated Sergeant Crady, "We weren't sure what we would get. But now that they have been with us for almost a year, we're glad that we asked for them."

The two Vietnamese did not have any mechanical experience when they began working in the motor pool, but have been taught by the sergeant through the on-the-job training method. They first began learning by washing vehicle parts and watching the Marines reassemble the parts.

"They are a real asset to our shop," said Sergeant Crady, "and have earned the title of being the 'fastest wheel pullers' in the motor pool.

"The only thing they refuse to do," the Marine concluded, "is take a break. They're the two hardest-working guys I've ever seen, and they are learning every day."

Ninh and Thien each earn about \$54 monthly—high by Vietnamese standards—and receive annual and sick leave in addition to other benefits.



Women work with the engineers mixing cement.



One man, employed by the engineers, became a bricklayer.

# USN, Californians Team-up To Aid Village

NHA BE (USN) — The band of Vietnamese children, wearing tattered, dirty clothes, accepted the gifts with a squeal, a simple smile or just a look of awe.

The children are from Tan Thanh village, a poor settlement in the Viet Cong-infested Rung Sat Special Zone, a 400-square-mile mangrove swamp that lies between Saigon and the South China Sea.

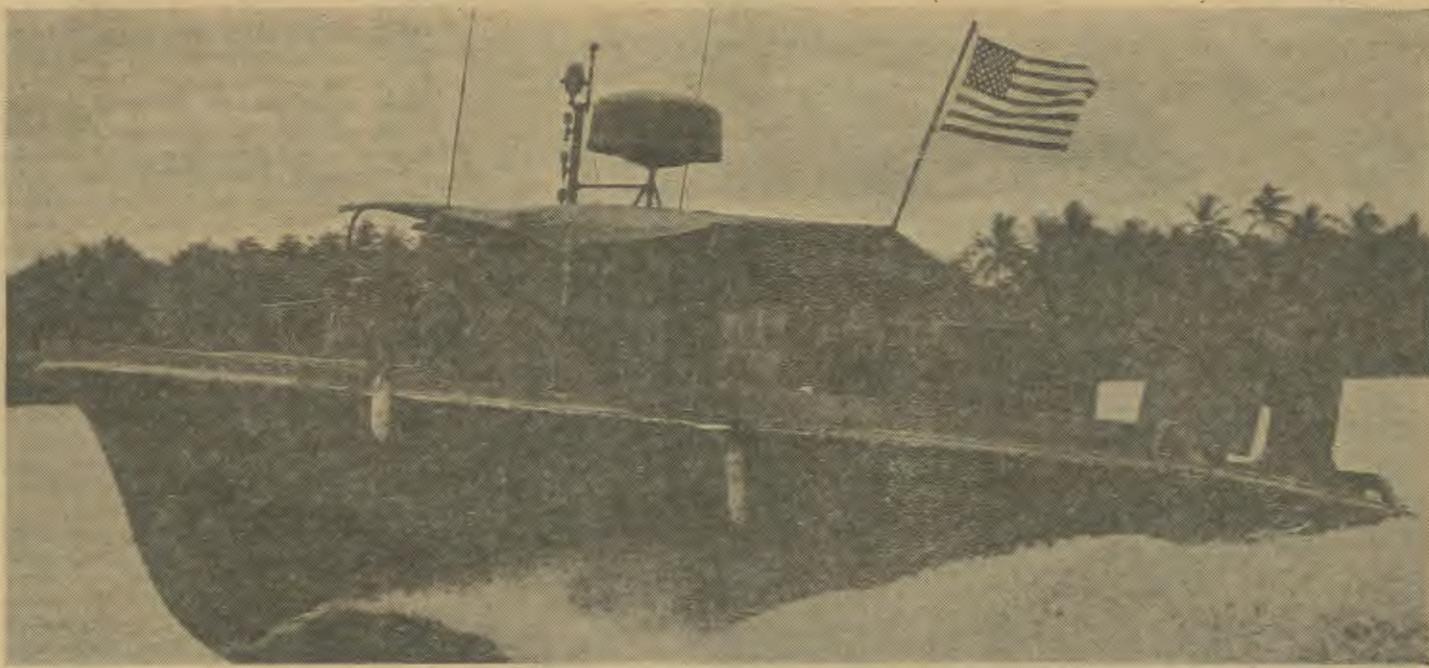
The poor but hard working villagers were accepting the clothes, shoes and toys from their friends, the American Navymen who patrol the many waterways of the Rung Sat to check the Viet Cong's movement of troops and supplies.

They were unaware, however, that the gifts had come to Vietnam from other friends whom they had never met—the citizens of Sacramento, Calif.

Sacramento became involved with the Tan Thanh village through Lieutenant Ronald J. Calhoun, assistant officer-in-charge of River Patrol Boat Section 542. The river section adopted the riverside village last September and have made monthly MEDCAP visits ever since.

When Lieutenant Calhoun saw the raggedness and, in some cases, nakedness of the village children, he wrote to his parents, Mr. and Mrs. William G. Calhoun in Sacramento, and asked them if they could gather up some children's clothes he could give to the villagers.

The elder Calhoun, president of the Southeast Sacramento Kiwanis Club, proposed that his organization start "Project



PBRs are used for MEDCAPs as well as river patrol and river assaults against the enemy.

Vietnam" to get the needed goods for the villagers. His club, along with a number of other Kiwanis Clubs in the area, immediately went to work.

They gathered shoes, clothing and toys, boxed it up and delivered it to the Sacramento Army Depot Special Services, which took care of the mailing. After the shipment of some 55 boxes arrived in Vietnam, a MEDCAP visit was scheduled.

When the three river patrol boats (PBRs) left their base at Nha Be, on the northern edge of the Rung Sat, they carried the boxed goods, two Navy doctors, three medical corpsmen and two nuns, both nurses, from the

Catholic Relief Society.

The boats announced their arrival through a taped message in Vietnamese, broadcast over loud speakers. The children lined the banks of the river as they always do when the PBRs stop at the village, but their eyes fairly popped out when the combat crews began carrying the boxes towards the school house.

One room was quickly arranged as a clinic and patients began filing through. Meanwhile, the gifts were placed in one of the other rooms. Soon the schoolmaster began handing out the toys. Once the toys were gone and the medical needs taken care of, the village chief called in representatives of each family to receive the clothing and shoes.

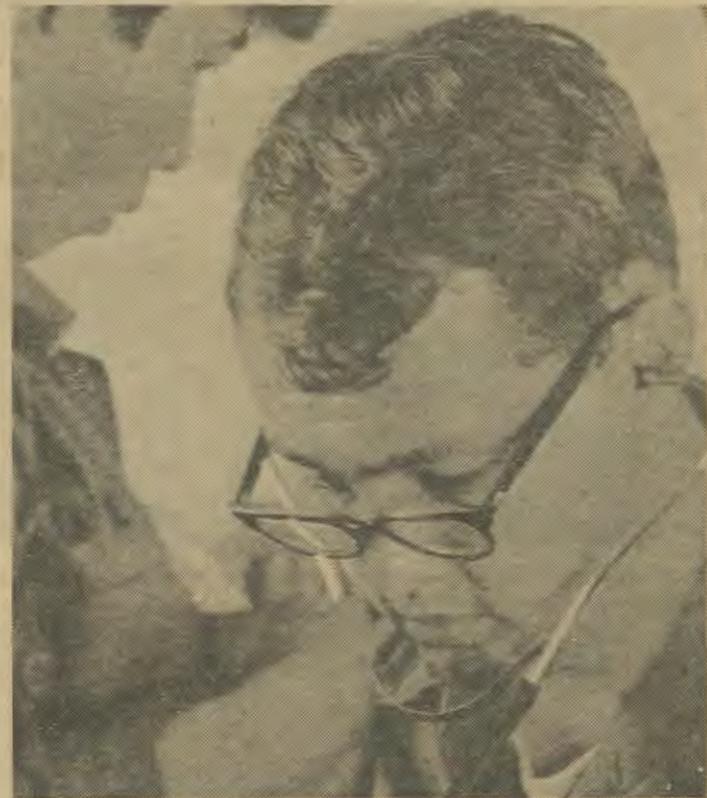
Other boxes were carried by boat across the river to the local militia outpost there and to the other end of the village where a second outpost is located. The local soldiers' families live within the compounds and they, too, received their share of the gifts.

As the visit ended and the PBR crews once again manned

their boats, the villagers lined the river bank once again. This time a little better clothed, a little healthier, and a lot happier.

And the civic action is not over. The navymen of River Section 542 will continue to

make their monthly visits to their adopted village, and, according to Lieutenant Calhoun, the Kiwanis Clubs of Sacramento are continuing their "Project Vietnam" and already have another shipment of similar goods ready for mailing.



A Navy doctor examines a boy during the MEDCAP.



The reaction of the village was best displayed by the children.



Several boxes of clothes given to the RF military personnel.

Story And Photos

By

JO1 Tom Walton



A Popular Forces soldier helps hand out clothes brought by the Navy team.

# ARVN Airborne Battalions Strike Hard



A wounded Vietnamese paratrooper is hastily moved to safety for medical aid.



Paratrooper of the 8th Battalion fires M-79 grenade launcher at enemy position.

SAIGON (VAD)—The South Vietnamese Airborne Division has been credited with an official enemy body count of 878 killed during the recent Viet Cong and North Vietnamese attacks on principal cities throughout the Republic during Tet.

In addition, the Airborne troopers captured 29 enemy troops, 91 crew-served weapons and 398 individual weapons.

Elements of the division were instrumental in repulsing the enemy attack on the west and southwest perimeters of Tan Son Nhut Air Base.

The initial action began on Wednesday, Jan. 31, when a special VC commando platoon forcibly entered Saigon's radio station about 3:30 a.m. Immediately Major General Đỗ Quoc Dong, division commanding general, sent two companies of the 1st Battalion into action.

They drove out the enemy, killing the entire platoon, which numbered 14, while suffering eight killed. Fifteen individual weapons and one crew-served weapon were also taken.

At 5 a.m., two companies of the 8th Battalion attacked an unknown size enemy force, later identified as elements of the 812th Regiment from Kien Hoa, that was moving through villages on the perimeter of Tan Son Nhut.

In the action, the paratroopers completely aborted the Viet Cong's attempt to overrun the Vietnamese Joint General Staff Headquarters at the air base.

One prisoner captured in the action said that the force was part of more than 1,000 VC who had traveled for five days from the Delta area of Kien Hoa, 50 miles south of Saigon.

About the time the two companies of the 8th Battalion were blocking the enemy's attack on the Vietnamese headquarters, more enemy troops hit the southwest corner of Tan Son Nhut. They were met by heavy automatic and rocket grenade fire as elements of the 6th Battalion were called in from Vung Tau.

Although the 6th Battalion had just returned from fierce fighting at Dak To, they were in position by 1:45 p.m. Heavy building-to-building contact continued throughout the day and night supported by Airborne Headquarters mortar platoon and US Army gunships.

By morning, the enemy were beaten on both fronts, losing a total of 259 killed. Nine enemy were captured and 46 crew-served and 216 individual weapons taken. The two Vietnamese battalions suffered 44 killed.

The newly formed 11th Battalion was attacked at its training center at Van Kiep, 20 kilometers northwest of Vung Tau. The enemy broke contact at 10 a.m., leaving behind 80 dead. A total of 34 individual and four crew-served weapons were captured here. The new battalion suffered four killed and 30 wounded.

In Hue, at 11 a.m., the 7th Airborne Battalion engaged an unknown-size attacking enemy. The 2nd Battalion moved in to aid the 7th and fought off the attackers, who left 275 dead and 22 crew-served and 71 individual weapons on the battlefield. Five enemy were captured; the battalions lost 28 men.

At 3:30 p.m., the 5th Battalion was engaged in a fierce battle with a battalion-size enemy force at Da Nang. This battle resulted in 50 enemy killed and two captured. Three crew-served and 10 individual weapons were taken. The battalion lost 15 men killed.

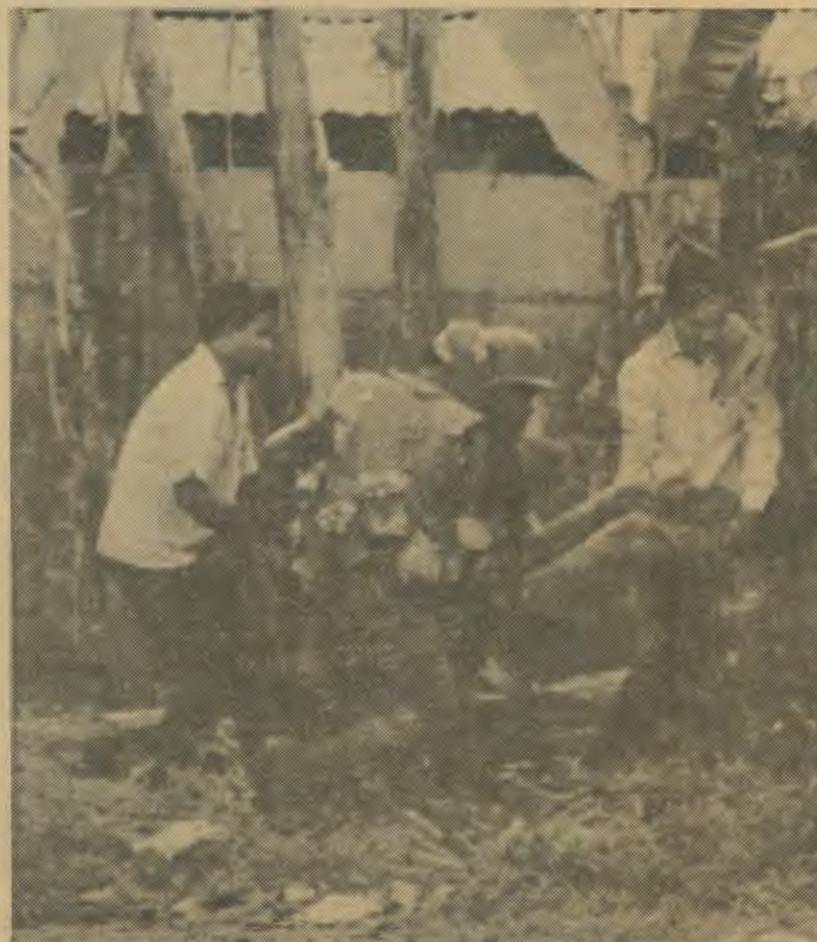
When the North Vietnamese attacked the city of Quang Tri in I Corps, the 9th Battalion helped to meet them. In fierce fighting, an estimated 200 NVA lost their lives and 12 were captured. Forty-two individual and 10 crew-served weapons were also captured; the battalion suffered 15 killed.

The kill ratio for the South Vietnamese Airborne Division, stands at 10 to 1. Two of its battalions, the 7th and the 8th, are holders of the United States Presidential Unit Citation for valor under fire.



During heavy fighting

Story & Photo  
By  
Vietnamese  
Airborne  
Division



With civilian aid, two paratroopers (one himself wounded) retrieve a

# *Be Hard At Enemy*



During heavy fighting, a machinegun team maneuvers among grave vaults.



Vietnamese paratroopers cross a city street under enemy fire.

Story & Photos  
By  
Vietnamese  
Airborne  
Division



(self wounded) retrieve a fallen comrade.



ARVN paratrooper scrambles to reach a rooftop position during heavy fighting near Tan Son Nhut air base.

# Viet Cong Supply Route Cut By 9th Division Engineers

TAN AN (USA)—Engineers of the 9th Division are cutting up a major Viet Cong supply route and shaking the enemy's grasp on a large portion of Tan Tru district.

Companies C and E, 15th Engineer Battalion, are reconstructing a road through a flat, oblong area known as the "bowling alley". When finished, the road will provide a much needed land route to Tan Tru's second largest marketplace at An Nhut Tan.

The project also involves replacing two demolished bridges.

After a week of bulldozing and clearing booby traps, the engineers were ready to throw their first span across the Can Sao river. A pontoon float bridge was chosen for quick construction.

Floats were preassembled here and lifted to the bridge site by a CH-47 Chinook helicopter from the 200th Assault Support Helicopter Company.

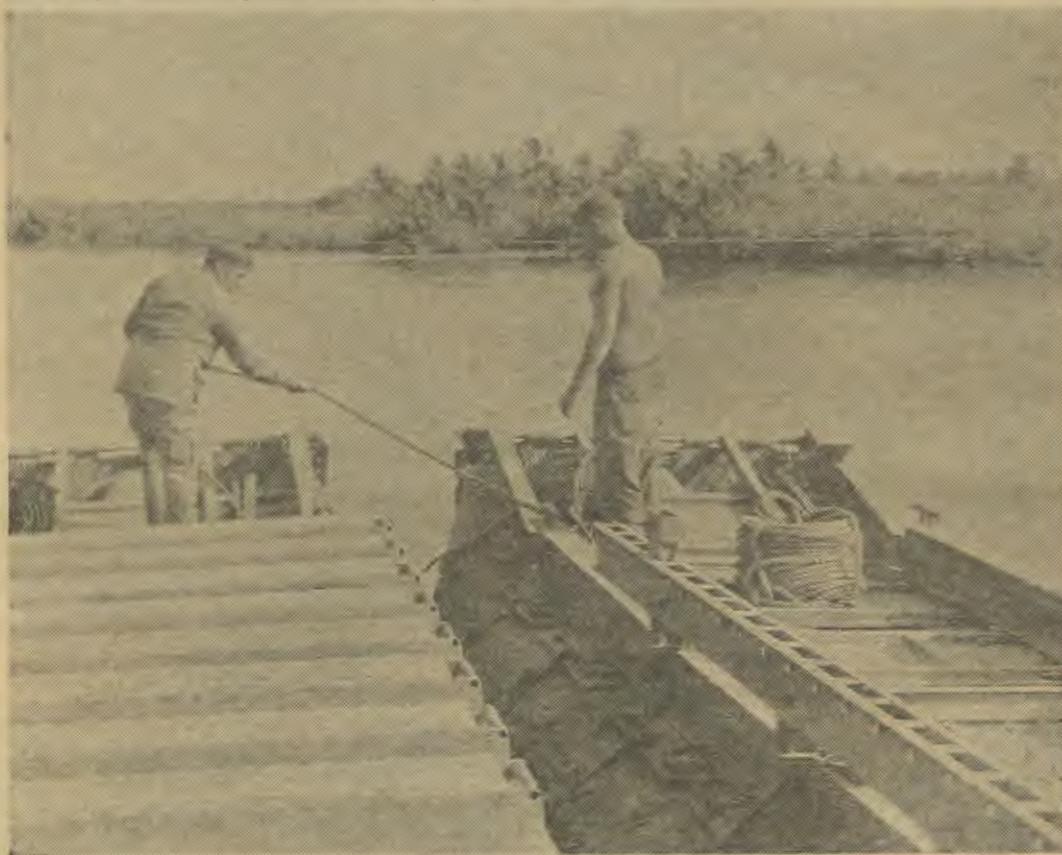
The first of several obstacles to the bridge building appeared with a bulldozer uncovered the home of five king cobras. The reptiles began striking angrily at the bulldozer's blade and were finally dispatched by small arms fire.

Additional problems were caused by the river's eight-foot tides. Its 260-foot width at high tide shrinks daily to 170 feet at low tide.

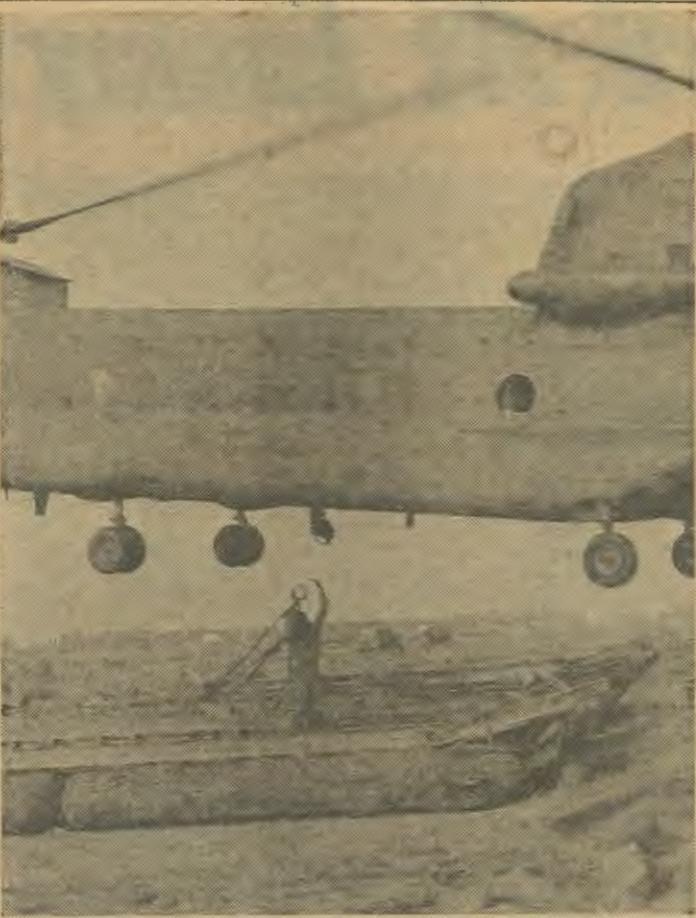
To combat this obstacle, flexible dry-span approaches, which rise and fall with the bridge level, were emplaced. In addition, powerful bridge erection boats were used to jockey the bridge's section against the river's strong tidal current.

The bridge was ready for traffic after eight hours.

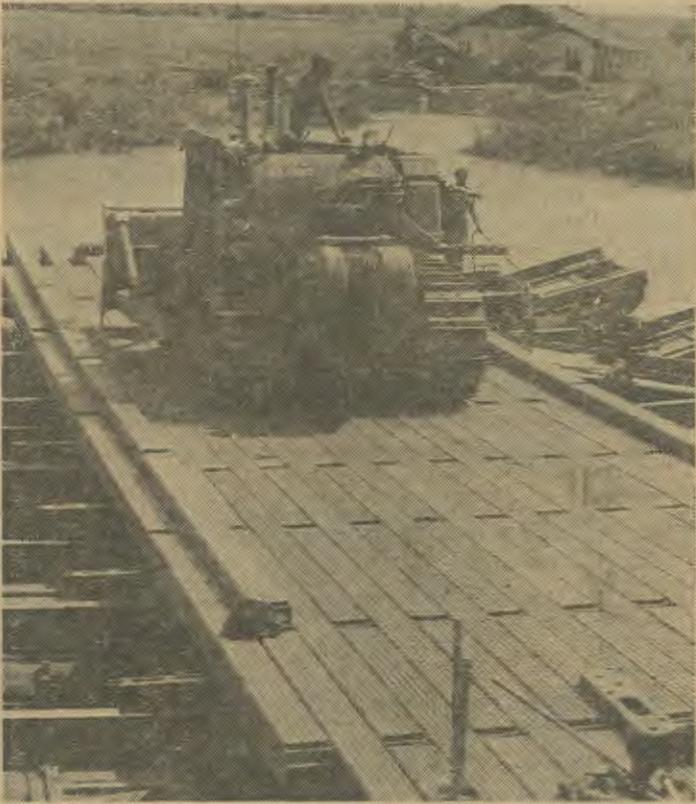
"The road is important to the province chief," said Captain Tom Best. "It will open pacified areas for a large number of people who are moving back into the district."



Two members of the battalion add another float to a bridge.



A CH-47 'Chinook' hooks a pontoon float for placement.



A bulldozer is ferried across a river on pontoons.



Men of the engineer battalion emplace sections of a bridge.

PHOTOS By  
Sp5 Bruce McIlhaney



Three engineers push a piece of road surface material onto a pontoon bridge.

# Village Builds Heliport

THUAN DUC CHAU (USA)—Cooperation from the villagers in this Delta hamlet has made it easier for the 52nd Signal Battalion to pursue their civic action plans for the people here.

To allow the members of the battalion to airlift building materials to the hamlet, the people have cleared an area and are building a heliport. "Although it isn't completed yet, we were able to land there recently with Christmas gifts," said Captain David A. Jones, civic actions officer for Company A, 52nd Signal Group, 1st Signal Brigade.

The first helicopter that flew into the remote village on the Tinh Vinh Long River was piloted by the commander of the Can Tho airfield, Lieutenant Colonel Bertran B. Leach, where the Signal company is based.

When Company A and the battalion's Headquarters Company were asked to perform civic action in the village, the only access route was by civilian-operated water taxi. "A year ago this land was inhabited by the Viet Cong, and the local people are just now beginning to build villages away from the main town," said Captain Jones.

Twenty boxes of clothing were lifted in on the first helicopter; these came from the Dempsey Compound Doner Deposit Fund, which administers all civic action donations at the Can Tho airfield.

To show their gratitude for the efforts of the 2nd Signal Group Signalmen, the village chief presented them with a Viet Cong flag captured in the area.



Capt. Oanh watches a cook prepare rice over the new stove.

## Through Civilian Job Program

# Soldiers Freed For Combat

SAIGON (USA)—About 100,000 Vietnamese employees are helping the U.S. Army and its contractors in their continuing effort to release soldiers for duty in combat and combat support units, according to the Army's civilian personnel director in Vietnam.

William S. Moyers—speaking

to Saigon Central Lions Club members—said that no civilian job position will be held by American military or civilian personnel if qualified Vietnamese are available to do the job.

Roughly 50 per cent of the work force consists of female employees. Mr. Moyers said women now are working in such vocations, among others, as carpentry and plumbing—vocations that are normally considered for men only. He compared the present work force to the situation in World War II in the U.S., when women filled jobs vacated by men going to war.

The personnel chief said the many thousands of "loyal and hardworking" Vietnamese employees are vital to the Army's mission here.

He referred to a "common misconception" that the military pays higher wages than the

# ARVN Troops Get New Field Stove

LONG BINH (USA) — The Vietnamese combat soldier likes his food every bit as much as his American ally does. Although their diets differ considerably, they are equally as interested in having their meals hot whenever possible.

During combat operations, however, hot food is not always available because of tactical requirements. So a captain in the 25th Infantry Division, Army of the Republic of Vietnam (ARVN), has come up with an innovation that promises improvement in the ARVN soldier's field rations.

His innovation—a new, but simple stove—has been okayed for army-wide distribution by the ARVN Quartermaster Corps. Its simplicity and efficiency also drew the admiration of the U.S. Army Chief of Staff, General Harold K. Johnson, who visited the 25th ARVN Division last December.

Former standard procedure in ARVN company-size mess operations has been to dig large holes in which cooking fires

were laid. Food is prepared, and the company is assembled in the mess area where each man receives his ration. This concentration of men is undesirable in enemy territory however, so at such times the food is divided among large pots which are then carried through the fields to the various squads.

Captain Nguyen Duc Oanh, commanding officer of the division's 25th Quartermaster Company, pondered the problem of feeding a company under field conditions. He then devised a modification to the existing set of pots used by an ARVN combat squad. This solved the problem of keeping food hot under any field conditions, and eliminated the possible need of concentrating the company's squads in one area.

The squad's mess gear consists of four nesting pots, each fitting into the one below, like a series of double-boilers. A framework of strap metal with a loop at the top enables two men to carry the entire set slung between them on a pole.

Captain Oanh decided that four pots weren't really necessary as food containers. So he took the bottom one—about one foot deep—and cut out most of the metal of the sides, leaving a semi-open framework with a bottom. With a little experimentation he used small pieces of wood to build fires in this makeshift stove, and found that it readily kept food hot in the pots stacked above. Furthermore, by leaving a rim around the bottom to contain the fuel, the entire unit could be carried along with the fire going.

He had the new unit tried under field conditions and found that it worked in practical use as he had planned. Better yet, he learned that, if necessary, a squad could cook its own food from scratch without need of the company mess section.

A squad can now send in men from its outpost to pick up the meal. If it is already cooked, a fire in the stove will keep it piping hot while they carry it to the outpost. If the food is unprepared, they can either build a fire and let it cook as they move along, or they can wait until they reach their squad before lighting the fire.

# Infantrymen Help Boy Get Education

CU CHI (USA)—Little Nuynh, an 11-year-old Vietnamese boy, had never gone to school. Money was scarce at home, so he became a shoeshine boy to earn money to help his family.

Everyday he made his way down to the business district of Cu Chi to compete against other boys for the shoeshine trade.

Because he did such a good job, Nuynh made many friends at the huge U.S. Army base near his village. One of his favorites is First Lieutenant Alfred Serrato, executive officer of the 25th Division's 1st Battalion (Mech) 5th Infantry.

One day, as Lieutenant Serrato was having his boots shined, he noted that the boy was quiet and not his "usual self". When the lieutenant asked him what was wrong, Nuynh burst into tears.

"There was a group of kids standing around us teasing the boy, so I asked them what was going on," commented Lieutenant Serrato. "They told me Nuynh couldn't afford to go to school like the rest of them." The tears disappeared when the infantryman told him he would be back in two days with enough money for his schooling.

"I felt this would be a good project for the company," explained Lieutenant Serrato, "so I asked for help. The response was great."

Within hours enough money had been collected to send the boy to school for a year. With

the extra money, they bought him clothes and school supplies.

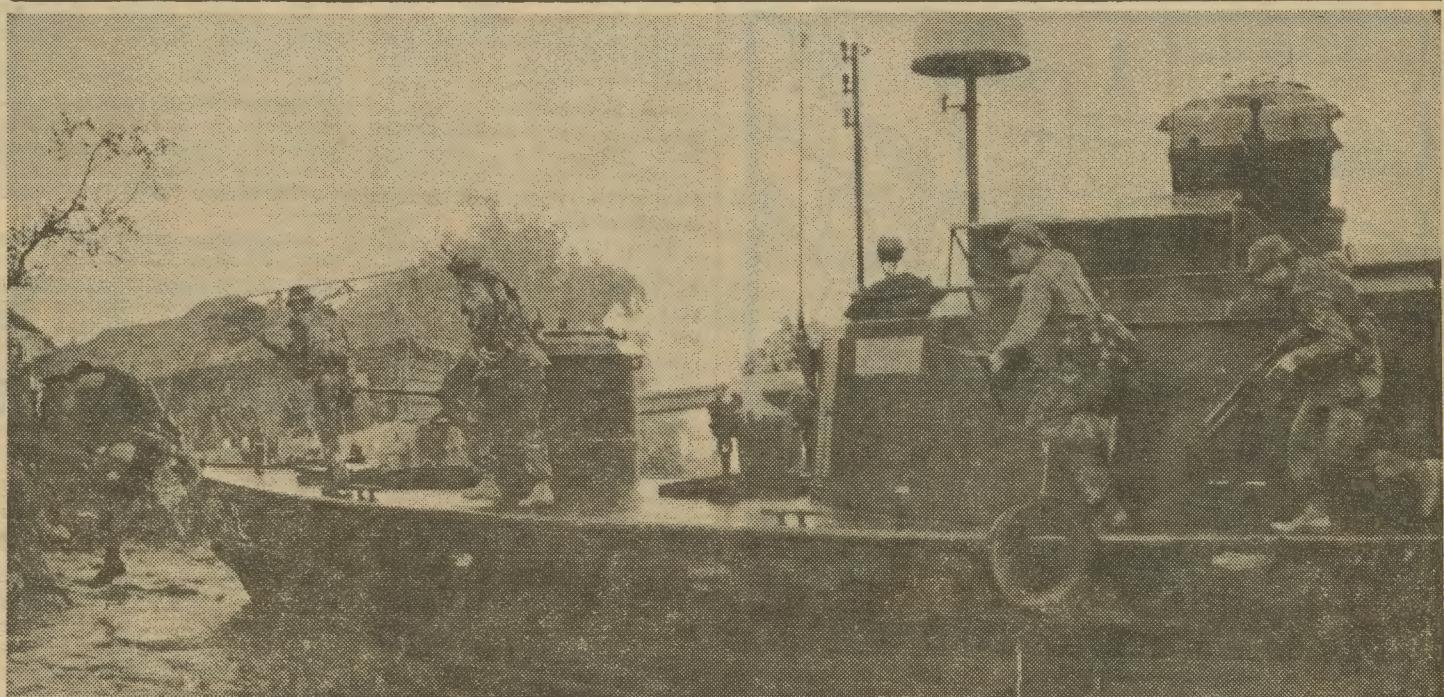
"As time goes on and he needs more money for school supplies, we'll have it ready for him," the 5th Infantryman added.

Little Nuynh is still shining boots, but only after school and then just to visit his friends.

private sector and the Vietnamese Government. Surveys and data-gathering projects have been conducted, he said, to insure the workers are compensated on a par with others having similar occupations and responsibilities.

Mr. Moyers mentioned benefits that many companies pay, such as housing and rice allowances and "other items which we do not pay separate and distinct from basic pay." This differential, he explained, is given in monetary value included in the wages.

The average salary for the total work force, according to Moyers' figures, is 28 piasters per-hour, or roughly 25 cents. "So, you can be assured that U.S. Forces in Vietnam are not inflating wages, and to the contrary, only want to pay those wages that are being paid by the private sector and no more."



SEAL RAID—Navy SEALs leap from a river assault boat on the Rach Thom/Rach Mo Cay Canal system late last month to raid a Viet Cong base in Kien Hoa Province. The raid resulted in an estimated 40 to 50 bunkers and numerous camp structures destroyed, including a VC propaganda center and two tax collection stations. Fifty-one suspects were detained. (USN PHOTO BY JO1 Tom Walton)

# Advisor Says His Job 'Best'

PHU TAN (MACV)—Army Major Charles K. Hanson says he has the best job a major can have in Vietnam.

As senior U.S. military advisor in Tuy An District of Phu Yen Province, he is the principal U.S. advisor to the commander of four Vietnamese Regional Force companies and 12 Popular Force platoons. All units are commanded by First Lieutenant Nguyen Van Be. The total force is equivalent in manpower, if not in firepower and equipment, to a U.S. infantry battalion. The troops are responsible for the internal security of the district, which has a population of about 35,000.

Major Hanson's "force" consists of his civilian deputy as second in command, one lieutenant, a medic, an infantry advisor and a radio operator. With these men, he advises the ARVN lieutenant on the best means of employment of his forces, checks positions of the ARVN troops daily, helps the RF and PF get supplies and equipment, and insures that the equipment receives proper maintenance. His team also accompanies the RF and PF, known as "Rough-Puffs", on operations, coordinates medical evacuation by helicopter for the ARVN wounded, and trains the Vietnamese forces, with Lieutenant Be's coordination and cooperation, in infantry tactics.

In addition to his primary military mission, Major Hanson has

another responsibility, now considered equally important. That is his support of CORDS (Civil Operations and Revolutionary Development Support) in Tuy An District.

This program is designed to assist the Vietnamese self-help program by furnishing advice, know-how and commodity support. The major's deputy is responsible for all CORDS activities in the district.

As part of his civil operations duties, the major checks every RD project in the district at least once each week. He visits all schools, dispensaries, wells, rice-grinding courts, bridges and markets to insure that there are no problems or to recommend solutions to any that might exist.

One reason the major likes his job is the variety, which he could not have in any other assignment in Vietnam. He explains that he is involved, as a commander, in nearly every type of military operation that can be found in Vietnam—from a battalion assault to a squad ambush. He said he can call, on his own authority, for artillery and air strikes—to include B-52 bombers—and can get an air strike within 20 minutes after he requests it.

This is Major Hanson's second tour in Vietnam, having served here from July 1961 until June 1962 as a Ranger advisor to the Vietnamese Ranger force.

## Learns Vietnamese In Korean School

SAIGON (USA)—Specialist 5 William Le May is the first American to graduate from the Republic of Korea Capital Division language school.

Specialist Le May recently completed 14 weeks of intensive Vietnamese language study at

## US Engineers Train ARVNs

BIEN HOA (USA)—The latest U.S. engineer training program for ARVN units has been completed at Bien Hoa by the 34th Engineer Battalion and 79th Engineer Group.

Instruction covered a wide range of operations and included the techniques of constructing timber trestle bridges, assembling and disassembling float bridges and establishing anchorage systems.

Part of the program consisted of a one-week course on vehicle maintenance where personnel of the 302nd ARVN Engineer Battalion learned to repair engines and transmissions as well as meet the need of implementing an effective maintenance program of their own.

Certificates of Achievement were given to the ARVN engineers at the completion of the course in recognition of their improved maintenance knowledge.

the ROK "Tigers" base camp near Dieu Tri.

"I feel honored to have attended the fine Korean school. I was chosen by the ROK's school staff because I have mastered both spoken and written Korean," said the 41st Civil Affairs Company interpreter.

Specialist Le May's wife, Tong Ho, is of Korean descent and lives in Seoul, Korea. The interpreter spent two tours of service in Korea.

For his exceptional performance, Specialist Le May received a framed certificate of graduation from Colonel Lee Soon Kil, Chief of staff, ROK Division. During the graduation ceremony Colonel Kil commended the efforts of Specialist Le May and his 46 Korean classmates.

Letters of appreciation were presented by Major General Chung Soon Min, commanding general, ROK Capital Division and Major Le-Xuan Mai, Vietnamese senior liaison officer with the division, on behalf of Lieutenant General Vinh-Loc, Vietnamese II Corps commanding general.

"When I found the Koreans were teaching Vietnamese, I immediately applied for the course. I now have five languages at my command: English, Italian, German, Korean and Vietnamese," concluded Specialist Le May.



NOT BAD G.I.—That's what this 21-year-old miss from London seems to be saying to the fellow teaching her the latest Vietnam dances. All we know about her is that her name is Sandra and she is presently touring the country with the USO show called "The Fontaine". Keep your eyes open and you might see her. As if we needed to mention it!

## Dunnage Used For Viet Aid

SAIGON (USA)—Enough dunnage to build a two-foot wide path the full length of South Vietnam has passed through the Dunnage Yard in the Saigon Port since its inception in July 1967. Dunnage is lumber used for packing and securing cargo in the hold of a ship.

The U.S. Army Terminal Saigon Dunnage Yard is the storage and transfer point for more than one million feet of dunnage coming off ships arriving in the port each month. The majority of this lumber is used in Civic Action projects and by Army units in the III and IV Corps areas. An average of 250,000 board feet of dunnage is used each month for the back-loading of ships.

Orphanages, refugee camps, under-privileged schools and Army units all put requests for lumber in to the supply section of the 125th Transportation Command, which has overall control of the yard. The requests are checked against normal monthly requirements for the port and then given to Dunnage Yard personnel for distribution.

Sergeant William C. Howse, NCOIC of the night shift, commented: "About 70 per cent of the lumber we receive is top quality. It is this wood we try to save for the civic action projects and Army units. The remainder is used for backloading ships."

Every piece of lumber coming off a ship is accounted for when it is brought to the yard. When it is issued, a record is kept of the amount issued and where it is going. As far as port authorities are concerned, dunnage is handled with the same care as any other commodity leaving the port.

Civic Action projects rate high on the list of agencies receiving the wood. Sergeant Howse concluded: "The men in this section feel that orphanages, refugee camps, and schools deserve the best support we can give."

## AF Unit Donates Furniture

BINH THUY (USAF)—A civic action visit to a hamlet in the village of Gia Xuan, near Binh Thuy Air Base, by a representative of "E" Flight, 4th Air Commando Squadron (ACS), has resulted in the delivery of the first shipment of homemade furniture to school teachers in the five permanent hamlet schools of the village.

When Lieutenant Colonel Charles L. Rose visited the Thoi An hamlet chief, Nguyen Van Viet, he asked what assistance the men of "E" flight could render. Mr. Viet said that the school teachers, in the recently constructed hamlet elementary school, had been forced to live with families in the hamlet due to the lack of furniture for the teacher's rooms in the school.

Further conversation revealed this problem was common not only to the school in Thoi An but in four other schools, each in a separate hamlet of Gia Xuan. Furniture needed in the schools included five teacher's desks, 13 wardrobes, 26 chairs and 26 beds.

Colonel Rose began working on the project, enlisting the aid of squadron personnel and help from the base civil engineer ed from shipping crates and

scrap lumber.

The deputy district chief of Chau Than district arranged for blue-prints and specifications for the furniture. Civil engineer's native employees interpreted the specifications and squadrons. The wood was provided and translated them from metric measurements into feet and inches.

Many man hours later, the fruits of their labors began to materialize. Arrangements were made for a Vietnamese Air Force helicopter to take the

furniture to Thoi An. The helicopter was loaded with pre-cut wood; enough for four beds and two desks.

"We are continuing to work on this project," the Colonel said, "and will be delivering the rest of the furniture as soon as we can get it made."

He continued, "Our project will encourage the Vietnamese to help themselves even more. A project which strengthens the security of Gia Xuan also strengthens the security of Binh Thuy."

## SEALs Strike At Enemy

SAIGON (USN)—Taking advantage of a confused enemy, U.S. Navy SEAL teams killed eight enemy along the Tien Giang River near Sa Dec. This is how the situation developed.

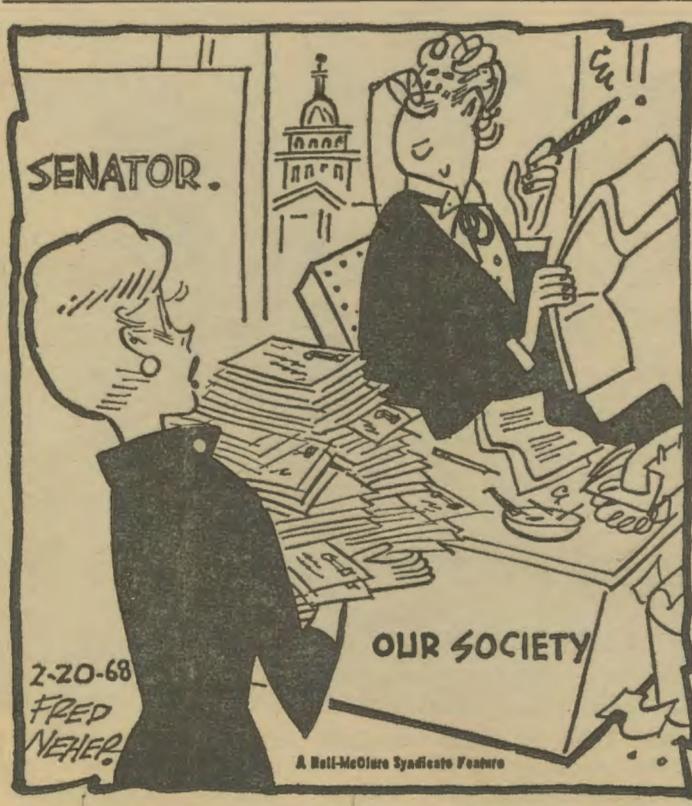
Two SEAL teams were inserted into an area on the north bank of the Tien Giang River about 77 miles southwest of Saigon. The teams, reinforced with Vietnamese counterparts, patrolled along two sides of one of the many canals in the area.

The teams engaged two sampans moving without lights along the canal. In reaction to their

fire, four Viet Cong on the south side of the canal fired on the SEAL team on the north bank. The SEALs did not return the fire, but a group of seven Viet Cong on the north side of the canal did.

Several cries were heard indicating that there were Viet Cong being hit in the firefight.

When the fire between the two groups subsided, the SEALs attacked the Viet Cong with small arms and automatic weapons, killing eight. There were no U.S. losses.



"Just get-well cards from people who say you're sick."



## Informant Program Succeeds

**CHU LAI (USA)** — Due to his promotion of the Voluntary Informant Program, Second Lieutenant Patrick F. Van Duynhoven used up approximately 90 per cent of the American Division's December allotment for the program.

By encouraging the local Vietnamese to turn in mines and other explosives for a piaster reward, he depleted the VIP funds in less than a month and had to work on credit until the funds were replenished.

Lieutenant Van Duynhoven is a platoon leader in the 39th Engineer Battalion's Charlie Company which is located just outside the town of Mo Duc, 40 miles south of Chu Lai.

The purpose of the Voluntary Informant Program is to encourage Vietnamese civilians to give information concerning the Viet Cong and the North Vietnamese Army, to show the location of mines and booby traps, and to turn in weapons, ammunition and explosives for cash or material rewards.

Lieutenant Van Duynhoven got no response when leaflets explaining the Voluntary Informant Program were distributed, so he went into Mo Duc to talk with the people personally. He found the boys who spoke a little English to be the most interested in the program.

At first they brought in only a few mines; but after receiving 50 to 1,000 piasters for each explosive (depending upon the size), they began to bring in an average of 20 munitions a day. From 30 to 40 boys bring in the explosives from a radius of four to five miles around Mo Duc.



**ONE MILLION PIASTERS** — President Nguyen Van Thieu talks with Nguyen Van Bang, former member, 2nd NVA Division, who showed men of Company A, 3rd Battalion, 21st Infantry of America's 196th Brigade, the location of 140 enemy weapons. President Thieu rewarded nearly one million piasters to Bang for the cache. (USA PHOTO By Sp4 Fred L. Tolman)

## Ho Nai Refugees Aided By II FF Civil Affairs Company

**LONG BINH (II FF)** — Refugee care for the villagers of Ho Nai — 19 miles northeast of Saigon — began before the guns, rockets and mortars stopped exploding recently in the besieged village.

With the assistance of the 2nd Civil Affairs (CA) Company, II Field Force, Vietnam, Colonel

William H. Pietsch — assistant chief of staff for civil affairs — has continued his "Operation Friendship" for the predominantly Catholic village.

Over the year, Operation Friendship has brought numerous improvements to Ho Nai. Today most of those improvements are in ruins and the villagers are scattered among churches, hospitals and other public buildings.

The village — a few miles north of the sprawling base camp headquarters of II Field Force — lies directly across from the camp of the 199th Light Infantry Brigade. Because of its proximity to key military targets along the Saigon-Bien Hoa Highway, Ho Nai became the unwilling hideout of at least a battalion of the same enemy from whom the villagers first fled in 1954 when they trekked south from North Vietnam.

After the attack on the Greater Bien Hoa area at 3 a.m. on January 31 — while the villagers were still celebrating the lunar new year (Tet) — Ho Nai was caught in the crossfire between the attacking Viet Cong and the defending U.S. troops. At least 20 per cent of the village was totally destroyed; the rest suffered damage.

The 2nd CA Company, commanded by Lieutenant Colonel David E. Wade, provided first for basic needs. Water in inflatable rubber tanks, and nearly 20 tons of rice, have been moved into the shattered community. The company has also provided tents for temporary shelter for 10,000 refugees from the village and neighboring hamlets.

It is presently estimated that the Ho Nai hospital is housing 4,000 of the refugees; another 3,000 are expected to seek shelter.

The 61st Medical Detachment, commanded by Lieutenant Colonel Lawrence LaTure, is preparing to inoculate at least 5,000 refugees as a preventive measure against cholera and typhoid, although there have been no indications that an

epidemic is imminent.

Plans are also being made to allow the villagers to return to their areas to salvage what is left and to begin sorting out their needs for rebuilding.

Heavy security remains around Ho Nai, as it probably will for the near future. Intelligence sources indicate that remnants of the Viet Cong are hiding among the villagers disguised in civilian clothes. Some VC have continued to snipe at U.S. troops in the area and rocket fire is being received from areas so close to civilian homes that it cannot be countered by air and artillery. These positions can only be taken out by infantrymen.

The villagers, still in shock, told U.S. authorities, that, when the VC moved into their homes shortly before the attack, they threatened to shoot anyone who tried to warn the Free World Military Forces of their presence. Despite the threat several townsfolk, including a seven-year-old girl, tried to slip out and were shot.

## Major's 'Dream' Fulfilled

(Continued From Page 1)  
Major Milantoni said.

The bombs fell less than 200 meters away. The VC rifle fire slackened a little. The general smiled and called several more airstrikes.

Then as the VC started pulling out he called in helicopter gunships and hosed them down. The general smiled again, tapped his ebony swagger stick against his leg and walked out.

The reaction force swept in on the VC.

ARVN Lieutenant Colonel Phan Hoa Hiep, Da Nang Defense Area Commander, planned the sweep on the spot — a spot so hot that the colonel's driver and his radio operator were killed.

The colonel designated Major Nguyen Van Hiep, commander of the 1st Ranger Group, as reaction force commander and named Major Nguyen Van Cua, executive officer of the 4th Cavalry — a former Olympic Boxer — as second in command.

The two officers put their command — which included one APC machinegunner who reported so fast that he spent the day in white pajamas — to work.

The soldiers pried the VC out of dense Ap Ba village just south of the I Corps headquarters, bounced them against Marine MPs who were blocking to the west, then drove them south into the fires of a force of Vietnamese soldiers and U.S. Marines.

Seventy-three of the VC died in sight of the I Corps headquarters. The southern blocking force killed 102 more.

Major Can was hard at work in his bullet-nicked TOC.

In the next three days he helped coordinate actions which blunted the VC Tet offensive and killed more than 3,000 VC.

Two days after the fight at the compound, North Vietnamese troops repaired a war damaged railroad bridge south of Da Nang and began hauling supplies over it. They were readying another attack.

"Milantoni," said General Lam, "bomb it. Use big bombs."

The bridge fell.

"This," said Major Can, "is better. I'm getting lots of action again."

## US Sergeant Receives Thai Medal For Valor

**LONG THANH (USA)** — Sergeant Thomas D. O'Connell, a communications specialist attached to the Royal Thai Army Volunteer Regiment, recently received a Bronze Star for Valor and the Thai Medal of Bravery for his actions during the Thai's first major battle in Vietnam.

The 9th Infantry Division sergeant is the first U.S. soldier in Vietnam ever to win the Thai's only award for heroism.

He earned it for his part in the Dec. 20 action 15 miles southeast of Long Thanh. During this time, the sergeant directed air strikes, gunships and artillery on enemy forces and summoned medical "Dust Off" helicopters for the Allied wounded.

The Cobra forces gained a decisive victory, killing 56 enemy and capturing numerous weapons.

Sergeant O'Connell was promoted the following day from specialist 4 by Major General G.G. O'Connor, 9th Infantry Division commanding general.

## School Gets Cafeteria

**QUAN LOI (USA)** — The children of Sung Trung I in Phuoc Long Province were reasonably fortunate: they had a school, but like so many other schools in Vietnam they had to bring their own lunches, as the school did not have a cafeteria.

That is, it did not have a cafeteria until the 1st Infantry Division's civil affairs officer, First Lieutenant David Lambert, saw the problem and decided to have his unit do something about it.

He brought the problem to the attention of Lieutenant Colonel Mortimer L. O'Connor, commander of the nearby 1st Battalion, 2nd Infantry.

The division provided the materials, and soon a group of infantrymen were busy working on the cafeteria. During the

construction, MEDCAPs were held by the unit's physician, Captain David Mielke. He and the medics treated some 500 children and their parents.

A warm friendship soon developed between the infantrymen and the children. Every day the men would bring C-rations and candy for the children. In return, the youngsters presented the soldiers with stalks of sweet sugar cane to eat while working in the hot sun.

"It's really great stuff once you learn how to eat it," commented PFC Percy Scott as he bit off another strip.

After the cafeteria was completed, a presentation ceremony was held and attended by the children, parents and teachers of the village, and personnel of the 1st Infantry Division.

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