



WEST OF WEST

4TH BATTALION

31ST INFANTRY

VOL II NUMBER 1

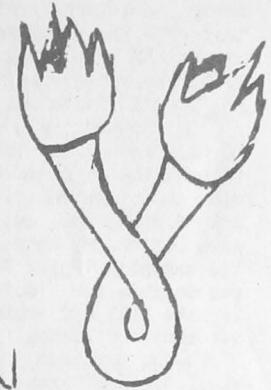
5 JANUARY 1970

Commander's Comments

A commander receives numerous accolades for the accomplishment of his unit. This has been especially true to his battalion during the past six months. Believe me, I know who earned these words and symbols of praise. It is you the man in the ranks and the junior leaders that mean the difference between a mediocre and an outstanding unit. It was you who met the enemy and defeated him each time he became bold enough to challenge your title to the land and its people. It is you, the man with a rifle in his hands, that make an Army.

On my departure, I wish to acknowledge this fact to you and to offer my sincere thanks for a most difficult job well done. I will maintain a continuing interest in the Polar Bears and wish the best of luck to each of you.

HAPPY NEW YEAR!



WIN IT IN YOUR MIND!

"It's a New Year but does it really make any difference, since I'm still in Vietnam?" Each of us asks himself. The answer is "Yes, it does!" True, we will face the same enemy, encounter still more booby traps, endure more extreme Vietnamese weather, and perhaps receive unfortunate news from home - but the difference is that we can each approach these obstacles in a new way and conquer them by "winning them first in our minds!"

The mind has a tendency to reproduce whatever has been placed in it. The mind is the key! The mind organizes its thoughts so that it makes a picture composed of those thoughts, i.e., if a soldier thinks, "Gosh, does that CO think I can hump that far? - I'm tired; I'll never make it!" Well, then the mind presents you with a picture of you being very tired and what results? - you tend to become just like you think and that hump becomes almost unbearable. At this point is where some simple statements from the Bible can come to your rescue. For, remember, the mind forms a picture of what you put in it.

The Bible is full of mind rejuvenators, one has only to find what they are and put them in his mind. An excellent way to have these mind restorers available when you need them is to memorized a short sentence that somehow means a whole lot to you - place it in your mind and when an occasion arises when it is needed it is surprising how it comes to your rescue and restores not only your mental outlook but even your physical feelings. Here are a few examples of thoughts to feed your mind:

(1) When tired and running out of patience: Isa 40:31 "They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk and not faint."

(2) When fearful: Ps 23:4 "Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for Thou art with me..."

(3) When worried: Phillipians 4:7 "And the peace of God which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds..."

(4) When help is needed: John 15:7 "If you abide in Me, and My word's abide in you, You will ask what you will and it shall be done unto you."

These, when said over and over in your mind when you have a particular need, fill your mind with that picture and help that picture become a reality. But each individual must find his own "word" rejuvenators" - the Bible is full of them!

PENETRATION METHOD Shown

CHANGE -of- COMMAND

In broad daylight, two enemy soldiers crept through the perimeter wire at LZ West while 50 "Polar Bears" of the 4th Bn, 31st Inf watched.

The sappers took only 10 minutes to crawl through the concertina wire and neutralize the trip flares set out to warn of their approach. The watching "Polar Bears" responsible for defending the hill did nothing but look and listen.

The sapper team, made up of two Hoi Chanh - both experienced - is touring bases to give practical demonstrations of sapper techniques. The demonstrations begin with a short talk on sapper methods, then comes the demonstration.

Once inside the perimeter wire, the sappers begin to feel for trip wire. Following the wire to its source, they then either tie off the trip flares or disarm it. Within minutes they are ready to go to work inside the fire support base.

Talking with Major Roger Lee, Operations Officer, the sappers related that a unit will always recon the perimeter, making detailed maps of bunker locations and defenses, before actually trying to get inside.

Even if they think their recon activity has been detected, the sappers plans are so inflexible that they will still follow them using the same route of approach and point of penetration as covered in reconnaissance.

To go undetected will be more difficult for sappers in the future. Two Hoi Chanh sappers, getting through the wire in the middle of the day are helping to prevent future sapper attacks against fire support bases.

In a brief ceremony on LZ West on 27 December LTC Cecil H. Henry (Rome, GA.) turned over command of the 4th Bn, 31st Inf, to LTC Kenneth L. Skner (Spokane, Wash.) LTC Henry is taking a position as senior adviser with the 5th ARVN Regiment of the 2nd ARVN Division.

CPT Jimmy Krasak (Macon, S.D.) has taken command of Headquarters and Headquarters Company from CPT Sheldon D. Hittelman (New York City). CPT Hittelman is now at the 196th Brigade.

On LZ Siberia, LTC Henry conducted a ceremony giving CPT John Wilson (Cartersville, GA.) command of Alpha Company. CPT James G. Mantell, Alpha's former CO, is now in charge of the battalion S-3 Section on LZ West.

MALARIA CAN KILL!!



TAKE THOSE
PILLS!!

BATTLE LULL ROUTINE

One of the unusual aspects of the Vietnam War is the inconsistency of enemy attempts to attack allied military installations. Enemy battle campaigns that sometimes last two or three months may suddenly stop and then once again begin six or eight months later.

This staggered type of enemy activity is generally referred to as a battle lull and is a period of extreme caution because no one can accurately calculate when the enemy will resume offensive activity.

It's easy for a GI to rationalize that if "nothing has happened in three weeks, nothing should happen tonight."

Realistically and militarily, preparedness remains the paramount consideration.

To the "Grunt", the most important aspect of this preparedness is his weapon - a clean weapon.

Whether a soldier is a clerk or an Infantryman, he can't foresee the occasion when he may be called upon to protect his own life or the lives of his friends. It would be very unhealthy, for instance, for a soldier to give his weapon a detailed operational inspection after a ground attack had been launched by the enemy. Daily maintenance can avoid such embarrassment.

Flak jackets and steel helmets also play a very important role in a soldier's life - they can save it. A person would hardly consider walking through a driving rain storm without a hat and raincoat. Salvoes from the NVA have been known to rain particles much heavier than water. Flak jackets and helmets provide excellent protection from these sudden storms.

Guard duty is a never-ending process. Night and day an alert soldier can save millions of dollars of equipment and prevent harm to hundreds of his fellow servicemen. Watching for the unusual and keeping in constant contact with the sergeant of the guard can prevent tragedy. The point is to keep distracting items away from you. That tune that's No. 1 on the radio this week may become No. 10 if a soldier's mind is on it rather than the perimeter he's guarding.

All these things are normal procedure when the enemy makes his presence known day after day; but they must remain normal routine even during so-called battle lulls. Unforeseen attacks can occur at any time.



Company Reenlistment Personnel

Battalion Reenlistment
NCO

31 Dec 69/ma

Reenlistments accomplished during the month of December 1969, with option and reassignment shown after each name, were as follows:

HHC:

1. GRIFFITH, Winston N.
2. KRALICH, Joseph
3. ROSA, Francisco

Present duty assignment - Chu Lai - VRB-1-\$1,000.00
Present duty assignment - Chu Lai - VRB-1-\$10,000.00
Present duty assignment - Chu Lai - VRB-1-\$3,000.00

A Co:

1. PALMER, John D.
2. LAYFIELD, Bobby R.
3. DANLAU, Robert
4. HANBY, Raymond S.
5. CATALI, Louis
6. BOYERS, Dennis G.
7. NUNLEY, Wendell W.

Supply HQ&A Co 723 daubt Bn- Chu Lai
Motor Transport 23 S&T Bn, Chu Lai
Motor Transport 23 S&T Bn, Chu Lai
HQ, 18 Engr Bde, Long Binh
537 Personnel Services Center, Long Binh
HHC, 20 Engr Bde, Long Binh
HHC, 4th Bn, 31st Inf, 196th Bde Light Vehicle Driver

B Co:

1. KLASSEN, Joseph E.

Supply HHC, 4th Bn, 31st Inf, 196th Inf Bde, Chu Lai

C Co:

None

D Co:

1. RIZZO, Joseph

HHC, 196th Inf Bde dy/w Message Center

E Co:

1. TILBERT, Micheal C.
2. SHATEL, Donnie R.
3. GIESON, Ronald
4. MOON, William W.

735 MID Americal Division, Chu Lai
ARO Scout Co, 123 AVN, Chu Lai
537 Personnel Services Center, Long Binh
HHC, 18 Engr Bde, Long Binh

RECAPITULATION:	Objective	Reenlistments	Percentage attained
	4	16	400%

QUART RLY	12	54	450%
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TWO GET \$14,000.

In a ceremony held recently in the Americal Division Reenlistment Office LTC Cecil R. Henry, 4/31 commander, presented two "Polar Bears" a combined total of \$14,000 in reenlistment bonuses.

SP6 Joseph M. Kralich (Newport, R.I.) received a \$10,000 bonus when he reenlisted for six years as a clinical medic with the battalion.

Receiving \$4,000 for an additional six years as a cook was SP6 "inston M. Griffith (Newport News, VA.).

"An additional dividend in reenlisting while in Vietnam is that the bonus is tax free," commented SSG Leroy M. Peterson (New York City), Battalion Reenlistment NCO.

LEROY M. PETERSON, SSG
Bn Reenlistment NCO
4th Bn, 31st Inf, 196th Bde
APO SF 96374

WEST OF WEST

LTC Kenneth Skaer	CO
PFC Gerald Lamb	PIO
SP4 Peter I. Kostrikidin	Typist

This newsheet is published monthly by the 4/31 Infantry, 196th Infantry Brigade APO 96374, as an authorized publication. Views and opinions expressed herein do not necessarily represent those of the Department of the Army. AFPS material used.

TEAM GOES TO VILLE

SPORTS

As American efforts toward "Vietnamization" of the war continue and the Vietnamese people struggle to establish secure villages where they can build permanent homes, the "Polar Bears" are helping as much as possible wherever they can. The people of Son Hoa village, part of the Que Son District northeast of LZ West, recently asked for a liaison between the village and American Forces. "These men were chosen because they are well qualified in their field," said LTC Cecil N. Henry.

The head of the team, a specialist in fire direction control, is a warrantman, SGT John Duwe (San Antonio, Tex.). If it is needed, he will call in and adjust fire support from nearby bases for the Popular Forces providing local defense in the village.

SP4 Fred Martin (Omaha, Neb.), an Infantryman, will advise the people in establishing local security. Martin is also the RTO for the team.

Assisting the people in medical needs - a Vietnamese nurse already visits the village twice a week - is a medic, SP5 David L. O'Neil (Marl Park, Ind.). The villagers have already turned an empty building into an aid station and SP5 O'Neil hopes to set up a regular sick call schedule and clinic when he has enough supplies.

SGT Duwe remarked, "The village chief has been very helpful in getting us set up here and stops in several times a day to see how things are going and talk over problems."

As the team becomes established 4/31 will cooperate in combined operations with the PF's in the village. There are several Chieu Hoi's among them who are familiar with the area and know where the VC usually hide.

In the meantime the liaison team is trying to go as ethnic as possible and to become accepted by the people on an equal plane. Specialist Martin commented, "We are invited to eat at their house by different villagers every day and I was surprised to find that the food is very good.

In the continuing effort by the American Soldier to encourage the people of Vietnam to establish themselves again, this team is providing an important step toward reaching that goal.

AWARDS PRESENTED IN DECEMBER 1969

NAME	AWARD	CO	BO NUMBER
LT JAMES E. SMITH	BS "V"	HHC	11316
SSG TONY H. BLAWERSHIP	BS "V"	E	11291
SPL WILDELM B. KING	BS "V"	B	11390
SP4 JUAN F. FLORES	BS "V"	B	11324
SGT JAMES E. DESE	BS	C	11589
SGT RICHARD HAST	BS	C	11589
SGT OSCAR HAWKINS III	BS	C	11589
SGT ROBERT B. HERMANN	BS	C	11589
SSG CHESTER PHILIPS	BS	B	12544
SFC RAYMOND G. STICE	BS	HHC	12544
SGT JOHN E. ROYAL	BS	C	11589
SGT WILLIAM F. SMITH	BS	C	11589
SGT TROY D. ROBINSON	BS	C	11589
SFC ROGER DROWN	BS	C	11589
SFC WAYNE D. BOYD	BS	D	11589
LT DOUGLAS J. MONROE	BS	B	11589
SGT RICHARD HOBBS	BS	B	11589
SGT ALLEN PETTENGILL	BS	D	11589
SGT JACK RICHARDSON	BS	B	11589
SP5 GEORGE SWEAT	BS	HHC	11589
CPT THOMAS L. MURPHY	BS	HHC	
PFC LARRY D. MARTIN	SS	HHC	
SP4 JACKIE R. ROUSE	ACM "V"	B	

ROSE BOWL

USC 10 - MICHIGAN 3

COTTON BOWL

TEXAS 21 - NOTRE DAME 17

SUGAR BOWL

MISSISSIPPI 27-ARKANSAS 22

PEACH BOWL

W. VIRGINIA 14-S. CAROLINA 3

ASTRO-BLUEBONNET BOWL

HOUSTON 36 - AUBURN 7

The Top Twenty, with first place votes in parenthesis, won-lost records, including bowl games, and total points. Points awarded on basis of 20-18-16-14-12-10-9-8-7-6-5-4-3-2-1:

1. Texas (36).....11-0 910
2. Penn State (7).....11-0 822
3. USC10-0-1 695
4. Ohio State.....8-1 659
5. Notre Dame.....8-2-1 457
6. Missouri.....9-2 336
7. Arkansas.....9-2 335
8. Mississippi.....8-3 317
9. Michigan.....8-3 301
10. Louisiana State.....9-1 287
11. Nebraska.....9-2 20
12. Houston.....9-2 20
13. UCLA.....8-1-1 203
14. Florida.....9-1-1 183
15. Tennessee.....9-2 88
16. Colorado.....8-3 70
17. West Virginia.....10-1 62
18. Purdue.....8-2 46
19. Stanford.....7-2-1 25
20. Auburn.....8-3 23

Also receiving votes:

Toledo.....11-3 17

Texas and Penn State each received two split first place votes, worth 19 points apiece.

PACIFIC STARS & STRIPES
Monday, Jan 5, 1970

SFC RAYMOND G. STICK

ACM
(1ST OAK LEAF)

HHC

SP4 RICKY D. JAY	ACM	B	
SP4 CARL L. FLYNN	ACM	B	
SP4 HOWARD C. SHEPPARD	ACM	B	11394
SGT ULYSSES CUTTER JR.	ACM	B	11395
SP4 SHALDON PORTER	ACM	B	12909
SP4 DONALD J. FOLMAR	ACM	B	11396
SP4 FRANCIS P. WALKS	ACM	B	11329
SSG MAURICE MAUR FWARD	ACM	B	12692
SGT ORVIS O. GANTT	ACM	B	12693
SP4 LARRY P. FAYON	ACM	HHC	12691
SFC RICHARD J. SLARS	ACM	HHC	
SP4 PATRICK RAYMONDO	ACM	C	11592
SP4 JOSEPH SANDERS	ACM	C	11592
SGT EDWARD WILSON JR.	ACM	D	11592
SP4 JOHN CLEARY	ACM	D	11592
SP4 ROBERT L. HAGLEY	ACM	D	11592
SP4 JOHN DORROPS	ACM	D	11592
SP4 JOSEPH CURTIS	ACM	D	11592
SP5 AUGUSTINE MURROS	ACM	HHC	11592
SP4 JOHN L. TAYLOR MARY	ACM	D	11592
SP4 THOMAS RUSTIGER	ACM	HHC	11592
SGT ROBERT M. SMITH	ACM	HHC	11592
SP4 ALAN T. TESAK	PM	HHC	
SSG LARRY FARNERD	PM	P	
PCG ORVILLE L. JOHNSON	PM	B	



"Won't you join us for some