



ARTILLERY RAID

Story by SP4 William L. McGown

Simultaneously, at 10 a.m. on May 31, 18 high explosive artillery rounds burst into enemy base area 354 in Cambodia. Artillery Raid! As the thunder of crashing rounds reverberated for the next five hours, a deluge of 240 tons of steel was pumped out at the rate of seven rounds per minute. In the first artillery raid into Cambodia, and one of the largest in the Vietnam war, Tropic Lightning and II Field Force units combined to saturate suspected enemy positions in a 20 mile sector below the Dog's Face region.

The monsoon of arty fire showed that the extensive bunker complexes of the Viet Cong and NVA along the border are vulnerable to U.S. artillery firing from positions in Vietnam and can no longer be considered sanctuaries. Furthermore, the devastating attack effectively damaged the communists' hopes for a rapid rebuilding of supplies plundered by U.S. ground troops in their Cambodian sweep.

An artillery raid allows batteries to mass in an area that has seen little recent activity, fire large volumes of ammunition at pre-selected targets, then pull up stakes and move out again. It must be well-planned, quickly deployed, and devastating in scope.

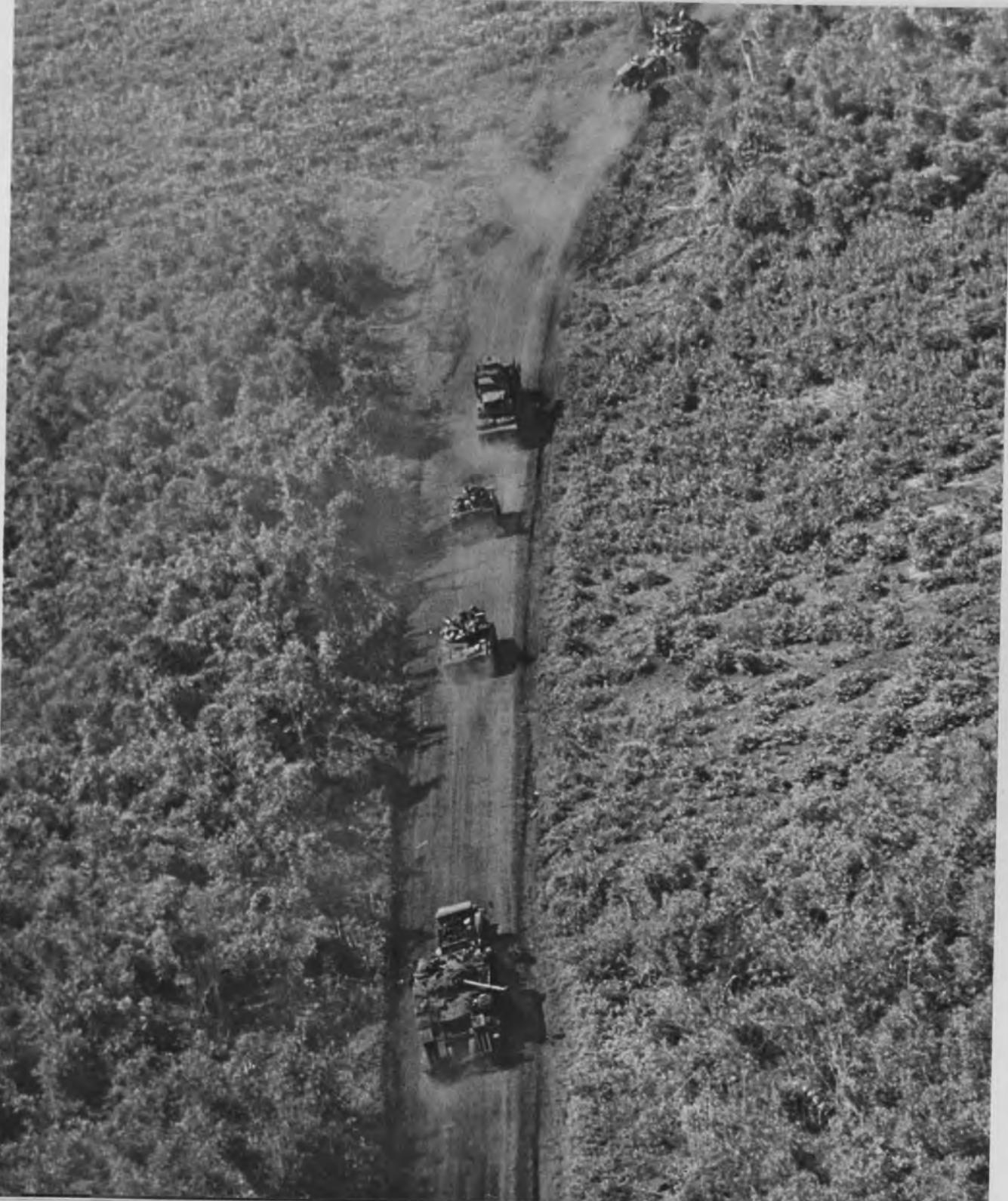
The plan for this attack was initiated by Colonel H.A. Buzzett, commanding officer of 25th Division Artillery (DivArty), and was based on the latest intelligence reports of enemy activity.

"I think the significant aspects here are two," Buzzett said. "One is surprise. We had only a small survey party come in here two days before to establish these locations."

"The first time that our hand was tipped that we would be here was when we rolled these weapons down the road, laid them, and began firing. The second aspect certainly, is the mass fires that we're delivering with medium and heavy artillery. We've got two batteries of 155s, two batteries of 8 inch howitzers, and a platoon of two 175 mm guns."

The target was a crescent-shaped jungle area about five miles west of the border, and less than two miles southeast of the Cambodian town of Krasang. Although 25th Division troops had previously swept through the area, they had met little resistance. After a thorough search, the troops moved on to priority missions further north,





leaving base area 354 unoccupied.

Attention was again focused on this area, however, when evidence indicated that North Vietnamese troops were using it as a mar- shalling area.

"Because of the Cambodian campaign, we already had detailed information about base camp 354," said Major Gordon E. Saul, DivArty S-2 Intelligence Officer. "Then our aerial observers began receiving frequent ground fire from this sector.

"We compiled information from several extremely accurate intelligence sources, and determined that about 800 troops of the 9th NVA Division and 750 of their 95th C Regiment were now occupying this area. We also had indications of heavy trail activity along this sector of the border. The question became, 'How could we attack these targets most efficiently to achieve tactical surprise?'"

A number of considerations led to the decision to stage an artil- lery raid. The available intelligence made it possible to pre-plan a master list of accurate target sites within range of medium and heavy artillery. The tonnage involved in this raid would have required about 20 aircraft. Artillery insures an all weather strike capability and is more economical. With the aid of aerial observers, arty fire could be adjusted on fleeting or developing targets within minutes, and insured safety for the friendly village of Krasang. The ability of Self-Propelled (SP) batteries to move from their separate Fire Support Bases (FSB) and quickly mass at a preselected firing loca- tion would increase the surprise element.

Considering all factors, artillery was determined to be the most effective means of destroying the bunker complexes, and the task was given to the DivArty commander.

Three days went into the planning and preparation for the raid. An operation order with information concerning the mission, units involved, target lists, firing positions, schedule of fires, amount of ammunition required, and the necessary security to be maintained for a surprise attack, was published by the DivArty S-3 Operations at the outset.

Most available for the operation were the division's self-propelled howitzers of Delta battery, 3d Battalion, 13th Field Artillery, and the II Field Force Artillery units of Bravo and Charlie Batteries, 1st Battalion, 27th Arty, (SP-155 mm) and Charlie Battery, 7th Battalion, 8th Field Artillery (SP-8 inch). Consequently they were alerted to begin preparations for the road march to the raid site, the former FSB Wood, three and one half miles northwest of Thien Ngon.

At Wood, the guns had the range to cover the 20 mile sector of suspected enemy base camps and areas of heavy trail activity. In addition, the 175 mm howitzers (SP) of Charlie Battery, 2d Battalion, 32d Field Artillery, (IIFFV) were already within stri- king range of the targets from their location.

To keep activity in the planned firing position area to a minimum, only personnel needed to conduct the survey and establish the bat- tery centers were allowed in the area prior to the morning of the raid.

The all important target list was handcarried via helicopter to

each battery's Fire Direction Center (FDC). There the grid coordinates of each target were plotted and then double-checked to insure accuracy. This information, along with up-to-date meteorological data, was then fed to the FADAC computers and double-checked on the firing charts to determine the deflection and elevation which the tubes would fire. Once rounds were being fired, the Artillery Warning Control Center would advise all aircraft to stay out of the target area up to an altitude of 11,000 feet.

Meanwhile, the biggest logistical problem was the amount of ammunition needed for the barrage. Initially the required order was for 2,000 155 and 1,000 8 inch High Explosive rounds. Including the fuzes and powder needed, the total weight was more than 240 tons.

A special convoy of 21 flatbed trucks loaded with the ammo departed from Long Binh the morning of May 29th to deliver the cargo to the Ammo Supply Point at Thien Ngon. The DivArty S-4 logistic section met them at Tay Ninh and along with the security elements, accompanied the convoy the last 20 miles through the hostile territory near Thien Ngon.

Upon arrival of the convoy at noon, the real back-breaking work began and the sweat began to flow. To help the crews get the job done as quickly as possible, two wreckers, two Light Recovery vehicles, and one forklift operated in the cramped 150 meter ammunition holding area during the following three hour period. All available battalion trucks were pre-loaded with ammo to be ready to move out with the batteries. The rest of the cargo was stacked at the Ammunition Supply Point and by 3 p.m. the flatbeds were returning to Long Binh.

"Besides the tremendous weight involved," said Major M.F. Waddell, the DivArty S-4, "the task was made more difficult by the large volume we had to transport and load in such a short period of time."

Time was also a major factor in another department supervised by the S-4 maintenance. To cover possible unexpected problems in the field, arrangements were made with the 725th Maintenance Battalion to provide an artillery contact team to go with Delta, 3/13th. They would stand by in the battery area to provide any possible assistance to DivArty or IIFFV artillery units.

According to Waddell, the short period—five hours—of the raid reduced the likelihood of maintenance problems in the field. "At the same time, however, any problem which might have arisen would have been critical," said Waddell. "Fortunately, none occurred."

Before they got to the field though, Delta, 3/13th did have a problem. One of its howitzers had a burned out motor. In an attempt to get the gun ready, a new engine was flown in by a C123, and arrived just before sunset the evening prior to the scheduled raid. The maintenance battalion personnel worked on the big howitzer all night, an exceptional effort considering the three mortar attacks on the camp during the night.

By evening of May 30, all the units had completed their preparations and were ready for the operation the following day. The three



enemy mortar attacks on Thien Ngon base camp caused some apprehension but little or no damage and no casualties to the units involved in the raid. When the threat seemed over, most of the men were able to get some needed shuteye. Others continued to man the guns and fire support missions throughout the night.

At 5 a.m., May 31, the units involved in the road march got ready to move out. Chow was served at 5:30.

An hour later, the convoys from three different locations began, with mechanized infantry units providing their security, to converge on the raid site.

As each battery pulled into the raid site, it was directed to its battery center previously established by the survey team. The Time On Target (TOT) was scheduled for 10 a.m. The pieces were boresighted and then laid by using an aiming circle which utilizes a known direction referred to as an orienting line. Meanwhile, RPG screens were put up in front of the tubes and crews set about

stacking projectiles within easy access of the hydraulic loader and rammer assembly at the rear of each howitzer.

Ten minutes before the TOT, the countdown began. Depending on the projectile time of flight, the batteries began blasting away so that all rounds struck the enemy base at exactly 10:00. The timing was precise.

After the initial bursts, each battery followed its own schedule of fires and target lists covering more than 50 suspected enemy positions. For the next five hours, each battery attempted to put out its maximum sustained rate of fire, with alternate crews taking over during the noon C-ration break. For each of the 8 inch batteries, this meant pumping out an average of two rounds per minute, the 175s one round per minute, while each 155 battery fired four projos a minute.

To cause maximum destruction, the 8 inch gunners used special fuzes so that the projectiles would penetrate the enemy bunkers before exploding.



As predicted, the morning weather was clear and sunny; but, a light drizzle in the early afternoon swelled into a torrential downpour. To prevent airbursts, the 155s changed over to special fuzes, and water and steel continued to rain on enemy locations. When the scheduled cessation of fire occurred at 3 p.m., a quick tally showed that more than 2,700 rounds had been fired by the batteries massed for the raid.

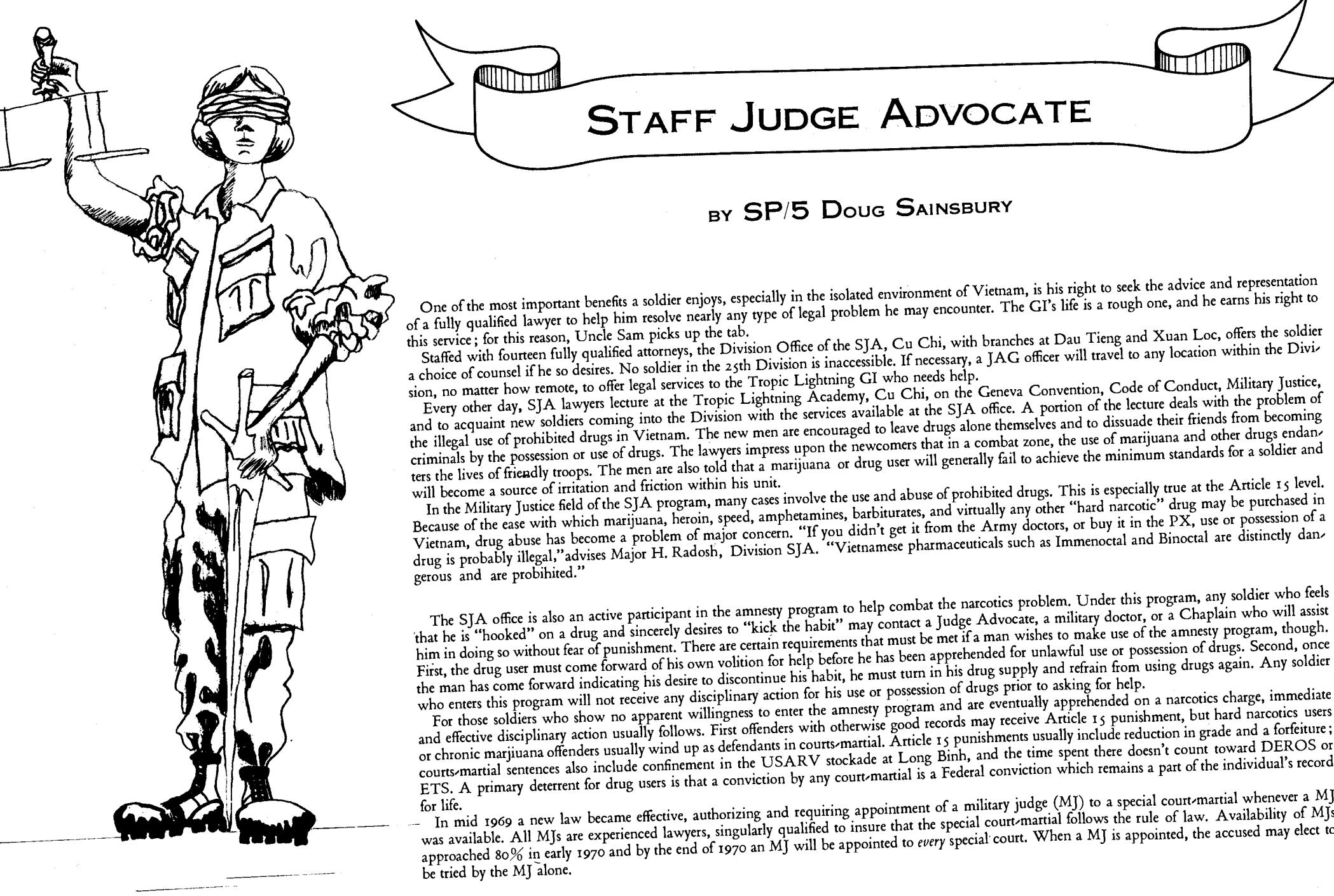
An aerial observer from DivArty reported that as the rounds zeroed in on their targets he saw many secondary explosions, indicating that stored enemy munitions stockpiles had been hit. Although the heavy jungle canopy hampered observation, the Arty fire was very accurate resulting in many hootches, outdoor work areas, fighting positions, trenches, and fuel tanks being destroyed and numerous small fires being started throughout the base area. The heavy rain, however, prevented the planned troop insertion following the raid which would have thoroughly assessed the damage inflicted on the

enemy.

After the attack, the weary artillerymen began loading up their equipment and road marched back to their former locations. The mission had been a strenuous exercise for the men, but the well coordinated effort of all involved resulted in a successful mission.

"In view of the success of this raid," said Lieutenant Colonel Thomas L. Kelly, DivArty S-3 officer, "the ability of Self-Propelled artillery to move rapidly into relatively inaccessible firing positions and mass large volumes of precision fire, has once again demonstrated the prominence of artillery on the battlefields of Vietnam. Continued missions of this type will greatly deter future border strongholds which have allowed positioning of enormous caches, close to, but out of the reach of allied forces."





STAFF JUDGE ADVOCATE

BY SP/5 DOUG SAINSBURY

One of the most important benefits a soldier enjoys, especially in the isolated environment of Vietnam, is his right to seek the advice and representation of a fully qualified lawyer to help him resolve nearly any type of legal problem he may encounter. The GI's life is a rough one, and he earns his right to this service; for this reason, Uncle Sam picks up the tab.

Staffed with fourteen fully qualified attorneys, the Division Office of the SJA, Cu Chi, with branches at Dau Tieng and Xuan Loc, offers the soldier a choice of counsel if he so desires. No soldier in the 25th Division is inaccessible. If necessary, a JAG officer will travel to any location within the Division, no matter how remote, to offer legal services to the Tropic Lightning GI who needs help.

Every other day, SJA lawyers lecture at the Tropic Lightning Academy, Cu Chi, on the Geneva Convention, Code of Conduct, Military Justice, and to acquaint new soldiers coming into the Division with the services available at the SJA office. A portion of the lecture deals with the problem of the illegal use of prohibited drugs in Vietnam. The new men are encouraged to leave drugs alone themselves and to dissuade their friends from becoming criminals by the possession or use of drugs. The lawyers impress upon the newcomers that in a combat zone, the use of marijuana and other drugs endangers the lives of friendly troops. The men are also told that a marijuana or drug user will generally fail to achieve the minimum standards for a soldier and will become a source of irritation and friction within his unit.

In the Military Justice field of the SJA program, many cases involve the use and abuse of prohibited drugs. This is especially true at the Article 15 level. Because of the ease with which marijuana, heroin, speed, amphetamines, barbiturates, and virtually any other "hard narcotic" drug may be purchased in Vietnam, drug abuse has become a problem of major concern. "If you didn't get it from the Army doctors, or buy it in the PX, use or possession of a drug is probably illegal," advises Major H. Radosh, Division SJA. "Vietnamese pharmaceuticals such as Immenoctal and Binoctal are distinctly dangerous and are prohibited."

The SJA office is also an active participant in the amnesty program to help combat the narcotics problem. Under this program, any soldier who feels that he is "hooked" on a drug and sincerely desires to "kick the habit" may contact a Judge Advocate, a military doctor, or a Chaplain who will assist him in doing so without fear of punishment. There are certain requirements that must be met if a man wishes to make use of the amnesty program, though. First, the drug user must come forward of his own volition for help before he has been apprehended for unlawful use or possession of drugs. Second, once the man has come forward indicating his desire to discontinue his habit, he must turn in his drug supply and refrain from using drugs again. Any soldier who enters this program will not receive any disciplinary action for his use or possession of drugs prior to asking for help.

For those soldiers who show no apparent willingness to enter the amnesty program and are eventually apprehended on a narcotics charge, immediate and effective disciplinary action usually follows. First offenders with otherwise good records may receive Article 15 punishment, but hard narcotics users or chronic marijuana offenders usually wind up as defendants in courts-martial. Article 15 punishments usually include reduction in grade and a forfeiture; courts-martial sentences also include confinement in the USARV stockade at Long Binh, and the time spent there doesn't count toward DEROS or ETS. A primary deterrent for drug users is that a conviction by any court-martial is a Federal conviction which remains a part of the individual's record for life.

In mid 1969 a new law became effective, authorizing and requiring appointment of a military judge (MJ) to a special court-martial whenever a MJ was available. All MJs are experienced lawyers, singularly qualified to insure that the special court-martial follows the rule of law. Availability of MJs approached 80% in early 1970 and by the end of 1970 an MJ will be appointed to *every* special court. When a MJ is appointed, the accused may elect to be tried by the MJ alone.

Another significant change which became effective August 1, 1969 was the right of the accused in a special court-martial to be represented by qualified legal counsel. Now the accused may be represented by civilian counsel at his own expense, by military counsel of his choice if available, or by military counsel appointed for him. Formerly, the accused was often represented by a commissioned officer who had no background in law whatsoever. The 25th Division SJA office prides itself on its ability to provide legal representation equivalent or superior to that available in the civilian world. To substantiate this claim, the officers of JAG point out that an SJA attorney enters the case at once and has access to all evidence and information pertinent to the case. Civilian lawyers often enter a case at a late stage and are sometimes restricted as to what information the police or District Attorney are willing to show them. As in civilian law, any communication between the accused and his military counsel is "privileged." That means the lawyer may not divulge what is told to him in confidence. A military lawyer selected by the accused or appointed for him is required to devote his undivided loyalty to the accused. A soldier need not wait until charges have been preferred against him before obtaining military counsel. And perhaps most important from the GI's point of view, the entire cost (such as the salary of the lawyer and his helicopter transportation to see witnesses, etc.) is borne by the Government.

Most of military justice is handled at the Article 15 level. A few points to remember are:

1) Accepting an Article 15 does not mean you admit guilt. You can set forth matters in extenuation, mitigation and defense.

If you've got something to say, put it down at your first opportunity . . . before punishment is imposed.

2) You have a right to appeal the punishment to the next higher commander.

3) You may consult a qualified military lawyer for advice. The days of the "barracks lawyer" are numbered.

"Legal Assistance" is the traditional term for help in civil-type matters, such as wills, powers-of-attorney, indebtedness, divorce, support, etc.

The client is well advised to seek legal assistance promptly, instead of letting the problem get out of hand. The only limitation is that the military lawyer may not represent you in a civilian civil court. He has a civilian law license, but there aren't enough military lawyers to handle that job, too.

SJA ACTIVITIES

LEGAL ASSISTANCE—Wills, powers-of-attorney, indebtedness, support of dependents, naturalization, disputes, etc.

INTERNATIONAL LAW—Lectures and opinions on the Geneva Convention, etc.

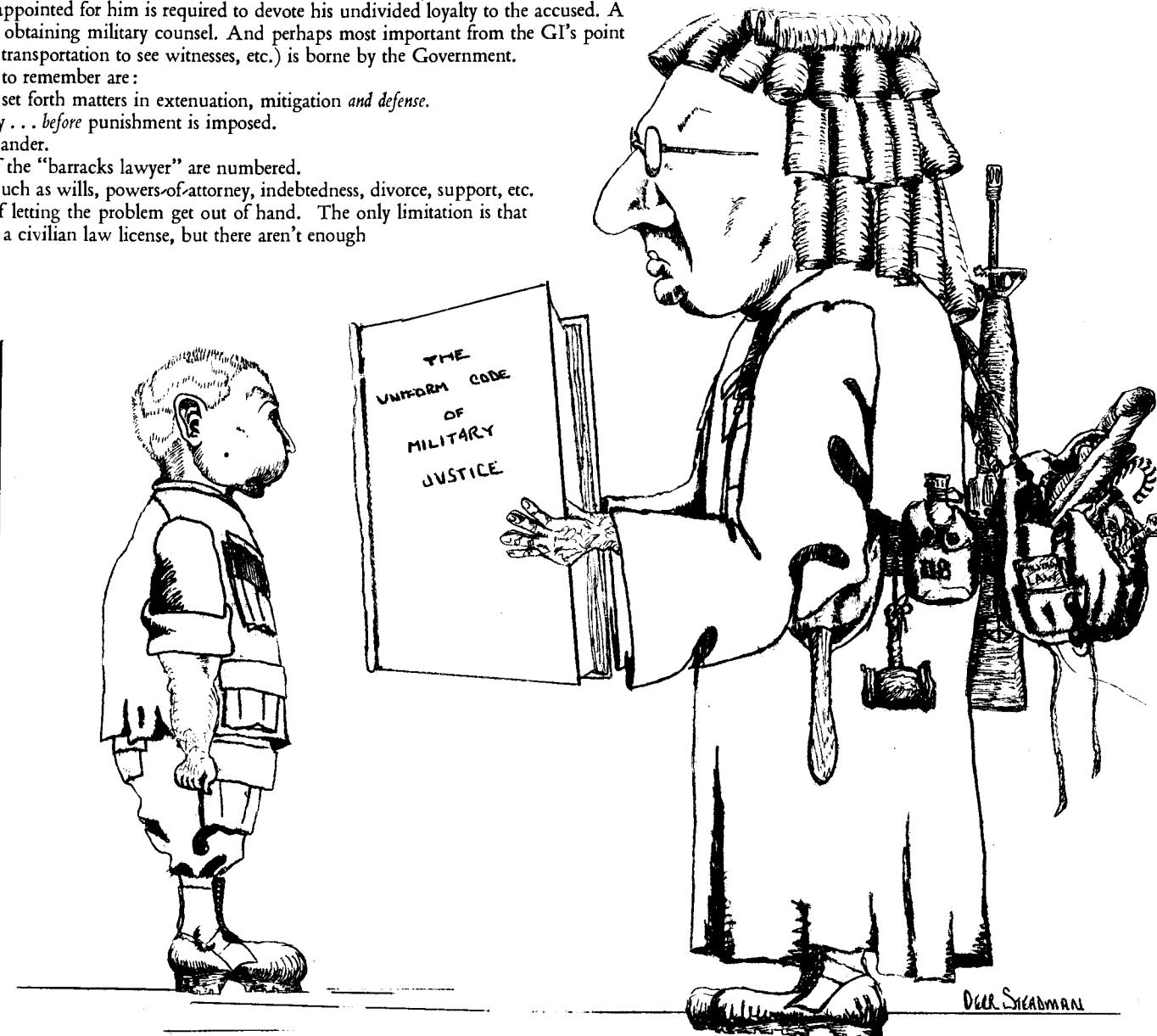
MILITARY JUSTICE—Responsible for Art 15s and courts-martial, to include furnishing qualified TC and DC in all cases; furnishes lawyers upon request to GIs "in trouble."

CLAIMS—Adjudicate all GI claims, Assists GIs and Battalion claims officers in filing claims; processes some foreign claims.

ADMINISTRATIVE BOARDS—Furnishes counsel to respondents in "212" cases, and various formal investigations.

CONFINEMENT—Keeps close watch over all Tropic Lightning GIs in "LBJ" (USARV Installation Stockade, Long Binh), insuring a speedy trial and orderly post-trial processing.

STAFF LAWYER—The Staff Judge Advocate is the Legal Advisor to the Commanding General, the Special and General Staff, and subordinate Commanders and their staffs.



WOLFHOUND COUNCIL

Story by
SP5 STEPHEN F. KROFT



When the new battalion commander assumed command of the 2d Battalion, 27th Infantry "Wolfhounds," he discovered a breakdown in communications and basic human relations. Hoping to improve morale and battalion performance, he responded in a typically American fashion. He formed a committee.

There was a time, not long ago, when it was unheard of for a battalion commander to sit down with a group of low ranking enlisted men and explore ways to improve the battalion. But now, at a time when the only constant in American society is change, the Army has been forced to adopt a progressive attitude in the area of human relations. Those in command readily admit that they share society's problems as well as the burden for solution. Throughout the Army, terms like "understanding" and "communication" are reaching new levels of importance, and unit leaders are being encouraged to experiment with various tools to solve their problems.

Shortly after Lieutenant Colonel A. P. Hodges assumed command of the Wolfhounds, there was a series of incidents that indicated a possible breakdown of communication within his command. In his effort to remedy the situation, Hodges drew the plans for a committee—the "Wolfhound Council"—which ideally would

facilitate a free flow of information between the people in command and those carrying out the orders.

Colonel Hodges selected a vehicle that would give a voice to those enlisted men outside the established structure of military protocol. He decided that each company would have two elected representatives with both men being E-4 or below. To further insure a good cross section of opinion, Hodges asked that one of the company representatives belong to a minority group.

It would be erroneous to assume that the Second Wolfhounds has any more or less problems than any other infantry battalion in Vietnam. "Our battalion has racial problems," Hodges says, "because our society has racial problems and for no other reason. The Army is simply a reflection of our society. Today our young men are better informed than ever before. They demand and have a right to answers. As society becomes more liberal, I'm not surprised to see the Army become more liberal."

The people who are fighting this war are young and predominantly draftees. They are participating in a war that is largely unpopular with their civilian contemporaries. And as products of what many have labeled a "permissive society," many are suffering through





their first experiences with a system long known for its rigidity, a system where everyone is positioned according to rank and where one man controls the actions of hundreds of others. They look to their leaders for justifications and explanations, often, with unsatisfactory results.

Many defenders of the *status quo*, however, frequently point out that the American GI today has a tremendous amount of freedom of expression. He can cuss about his commanders, they say, and damn the war with little fear of repercussion. Yet the channels for constructive dissent are narrow indeed. The official means of self-expression in the military has always been the chain of command. In addition, the Army demands that every commander have an "open-door" policy, making himself available to the troops for counseling on personal problems.

It is difficult to imagine an Army functioning without the chain of command. It is absolutely necessary in a combat situation as well as for handling the day to day problems of the military. Yet some difficulties are less conducive to the chain of command than others. Personal problems and legitimate grievances must often pass through three or four people before they reach someone who has the authority or the knowledge to do something about them. Stories often change considerably by the time they reach the battalion commander, if they reach him at all.

Also, battalion commanders are busy people and don't have the time to personally deal with every problem in the command. Junior officers and NCOs, therefore, make many personnel decisions at a lower level, sometimes with the overall effect of too securely insulating the "old man" from the problems the men are facing. Sometimes, unfortunately, these seemingly trivial matters are the basis for irritation and bad feeling that can explode into ugly incidents.

The "open-door" policy was an attempt to remedy this breakdown in communication between the enlisted men and the commander by providing an exchange which would allow the commander an opportunity to deal quickly with legitimate complaints. Still, there are serious drawbacks. There is always the psychological fear of being rebuffed and the repercussions from bypassed officials. As a result, EM do not make extensive use of the "open-door." One member of the Wolfhound Council was asked if he had ever approached the commander in the field with a problem. "Hell no," he replied, "I always try and stay as far away as possible."

The Wolfhound Council was not intended as a substitute for the chain of command or the "open-door" policy. It was devised to supplement and complement these existing channels of communication. It offers the enlisted man the opportunity to air matters in his own words and to convey any sense of immediacy. There is comfort in numbers and in the knowledge that the commander brought the group together to hear their problems. The formal structure of the council serves to legitimize the right to present issues, and the men are assured that they have the attention and interest of the battalion commander.

The council benefits Colonel Hodges as much as it does his men. The meetings provide an opportunity for him to find out exactly

what his men are thinking, what they want and need, what he can do to help morale and, in the long run, improve battalion performance. They also suggest how to avoid serious problems.

It also provides the commander with an opportunity to put things into perspective. The grunt is not always right and his complaints not always legitimate. He has a restricted view of many situations and the council meeting gives the commander a chance to give the overall picture, list priorities and put things into perspective.

Despite all the advantages of the council or the committee approach, there are a few serious drawbacks. Under ideal conditions, the battalion commander would have the resources to solve *bona fide* problems. In reality, many problems are well beyond Colonel Hodges' power to correct. As in a tough labor management dispute, there are certain things that are simply non-negotiable.

For example, the shortage of promotion allocations is a reasonable complaint, and Hodges is sympathetic. However, there is very little he can do to remedy the situation. All he can do is explain that these decisions are made in Washington and assure the men that they will get their fair share and no battalion will get more.

Specialist Four James Callway, a representative from Bravo Company, introduced the question of promotions and is responsible for delivering the reply to the men in his company. "Personally I like the council," he said. "I think they are really trying to help us, but some of the men think we're just discussing the problems without doing anything about them. The Colonel gave a good reason why the men aren't making E-5, but that still won't make them happy."

Nor can Hodges do very much about the hardships of the infantry. "The best I can do is explain why things are like they are," he commented at a recent meeting. "I can explain why we have larger APs or smaller APs or why we stay in the field for a specific period of time, but I can't change the basic hardship of the infantryman in combat. I don't know of anyone who can. It is just a tough business."

Colonel Hodges realizes that the ultimate success of the council rests squarely on his shoulders. He knows that he cannot afford to assume a defensive posture or make promises that he can't keep. The men would quickly see through it, and the confidence he has worked so hard to develop would be lost.

But despite the limitations, progress is being made every week. Specialist Four Gary Blagg, a 60-gunner with Alfa Company, summed up his feelings about the council in the following way, "Everybody is real interested. And they are real skeptical; they don't know whether it's going to work or not. Personally I think it is doing a lot of good, but mostly for small problems. The big ones are too well established, but just talking about them helps."

The big problems are always the tough ones to solve and the Wolfhound Council is not a solution . . . it is simply a means to a solution. Solutions depend on how well the battalion commander and the members make it work. But this first step is the important one as Specialist Four Thomas Zwetter of Delta Company pointed out, "They seem more receptive to your needs now. They want you to come to them with your problems. Before, they never knew you had any."



