

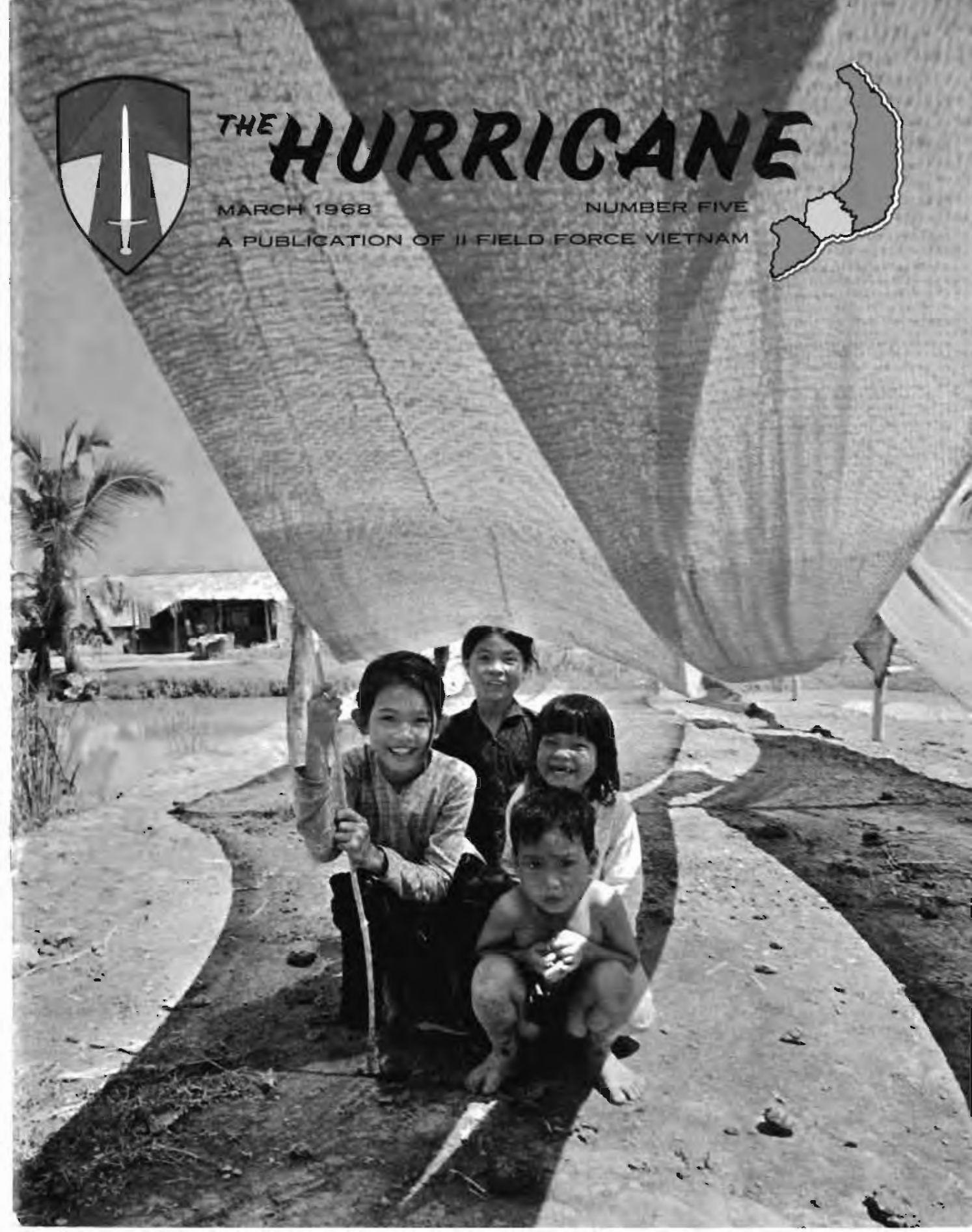


THE **HURRICANE**

MARCH 1968

NUMBER FIVE

A PUBLICATION OF II FIELD FORCE VIETNAM



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This month, The Hurricane reaches out to the salty air of the South China Sea to bring you a colorful story of "The Sea" on page 24.

Our cover photographer was PFC Paul Temple, a member of the 16th Photo Detachment, 53d Signal Bn. SP4 Jerry Cleveland, 16th Photo Detachment, photographed the back cover.

Also, this month we begin the first in a series of stories on the provinces in III Corps Tactical Zone. Read "Long An — Gateway to the Delta" on page 4.

Remember. A good way to share your Vietnam experiences with your family and friends is to mail The Hurricane home.

1LT Michael L. Gerson
Editor

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THE SEA P. 24

Cover: While on a photographic assignment to Phuoc Tuy Province, PFC Paul Temple composed this portrait of a Vietnamese mother and her children in the shade of a fishnet spread to dry. The women's husband and the other fishermen of Phuoc Tuy province use the nets to wrest their livelihood from the waters of the South China Sea. Read the story of "The Sea" on page 24.

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II FIELD FORCE VIETNAM
LT. GEN. FRED C. WEYAND COMMANDING GENERAL
LTC J. W. DEVITT Information Officer MAJ C. CUNNINGHAM Deputy Information Officer
16TH PUBLIC INFORMATION DETACHMENT
MAJ C. E. MOSLEY Commanding
1LT W. H. CAMPBELL Press Officer 1LT B. W. STOKES Radio & TV Officer
1LT M. L. GERSON Editor
SGM C. E. Lacy Sergeant Major; SSG T. L. Quigley Information Supervisor; SGT G. W. Livengood Information Supervisor; SP5 J. T. McMahon Information Specialist; SP5 S. L. Shaw Information Specialist; SP4 E. W. Bishop Information Specialist; SP4 P. B. Bie Information Specialist; SP4 L. E. Youngblood Audio Specialist; SP4 K. W. Baltes Audio Specialist; PFC R. A. Klindtworth Clerk Typist; PFC M. L. Holbrook Clerk Typist.
53D SIGNAL BATTALION Photo Support



Head nurse Judy Hagen (above) displays Australian bedside manners at Bien Hoa Hospital where the Australian Surgical Team from Queensland is spending the year. (Below) Operating in one of the two surgical rooms of Bien Hoa Hospital, the Australian Surgical Team performs one of the 500 operations it accomplishes each month. The surgeons spend a three-month tour at the hospital and then are replaced by another specialist group. The rest of the team is on loan for a year.



Australian Surgical Team

Story by MAJ Cleve Cunningham
Photos by SP4 David Briggs

Vietnam has many problems, but one of the most serious facing the 17 million South Vietnamese is the shortage of professionally-trained doctors.

There are only 844 doctors for the entire nation. A training program initiated through the auspices of Civil Operations and Revolutionary Development Support (CORDS) is turning out 150 trained doctors at the medical school in Hue each year, but in the meantime, the need is critical.

In a nation where "bleeding" and herb remedies are still commonplace "cures," the presence of the three Australian Surgical Teams at Vung Tau, Long Xuyen, and Bien Hoa is life-saving.

Probably the busiest of the teams is the one at Bien Hoa, headed by Dr. Tom Sale. The 17-member team, all from Queensland in Australia, are volunteers—most for a year-long tour. Five specialists rotate every three months because, says Dr. Sale, "They can't afford to be away from their private practices for a longer period of time."

The group at the Bien Hoa Hospital arrived in October. They run the surgical, pediatric, and orthopedic wards, as well as the operating rooms, on a 24-hour basis. They also visit the nearby Bien Hoa Mental Hospital twice a month and fly to the Ben San Leprosarium (25 miles north of Saigon) twice a month.

The Bien Hoa Hospital, built in 1937, has adequate surgical equipment, the team says, but is already cramped for space. It has 350 beds and two operating rooms. Patients come into the operating room still wearing the clothes they were admitted in. Despite the primitive sanitation facilities throughout the hospital, there are few infections or complications from surgery.

Conducting over 500 operations a month (32 the day after Christmas), the team's records show only three deaths in nearly 1600 operations.

One reason for the abnormally low mortality rate is their reinstitution of a World War I and II technique for treating battle wounds, called "delayed primary suture." The technique re-

quires leaving a wound open for two or three days and treating the infection before closing it.

Another reason, suggests Dr. Sale, is the fact that all of his team are "first rate chaps—experts" and the patients are treated by experienced surgeons.

Pointing to one of his nurses who had just assisted in an operation and who was now mopping the post-recovery ward floor, Dr. Sale commented with classic Australian understatement, "We just get on with the job."

The majority of the surgical patients are traumatic, meaning they have suffered an accident. Most are civil injuries, relatively few are war casualties. The burn cases the Australians have treated have primarily been as a result of cooking fires.

The team also has earned a reputation for almost completely overcoming cleft palates through corrective surgery.

Although they conduct some on-the-job training for the Vietnamese nurses, the team's role is not one of advisors. "We're here to answer an acute need, to put out a fire," said Physician Barry Smithurst, one of the specialists who left in January after completing his three-month tour. "The job of creating a professional medical corps in Vietnam is beyond our capability, but it is a job which must be done soon," Dr. Smithurst said.

The Australians' wry sense of humor keeps them from getting discouraged over some of the complications and frustrations which face them. One of the biggest problems is that the families move into the hospital with the patients. Not only do they overtax the space, but if they think the patient is "cured" or is going to die, they move him out.

The Australians are also reluctant to admit to "sloppy sentimentalism" when discussing their motives for volunteering for the assignment. They give a variety of reasons but their main one quickly becomes apparent—they are professionals and had heard there was a desperate need for their skills in Vietnam.



Dr. Brian Courtice, one of the special surgical group with the Australian Surgical Team, inspects the head X-ray of a Vietnamese boy during sick call at Bien Hoa Hospital. Dr. Courtice, who has since returned to his practice in Queensland, Australia, spent three months with the surgical team. Team Chief, Dr. Tom Sales, praises his team as "first rate chaps" who "just get on with the job".

LONG AN GATEWAY TO THE DELTA

Story by MAJ Cleve Cunningham
Color by SSG Thomas Quigley



This is the first of a series of articles on the provincial organization of III Corps Tactical Zone which will be published in THE HURRICANE throughout the year.

(Continued on following page)

The "Land of the Peaceful Dragon"—LONG AN—could be a paradise for its 400,000 inhabitants if it were not for some 3,000 unpeaceful dragons, the Viet Cong, who terrorize the Rhode Island-sized province.

Subdivided into seven districts, the 838 square miles of fertile delta land lie to the southwest of Saigon, a position which causes the province to be called the "Gateway to the Delta."

Army of Vietnam (ARVN) units, Vietnamese Navy River Assault Groups, elements of the 9th U.S. Infantry Division, and Regional Force/Popular Force (RF/PF) units combine with Government of Vietnam (GVN) agencies to slay the dragons. Operators from Civil Operations and Revolutionary Development Support

SP4 David Briggs



TEXTILES—a growing industry in Long An Province.

(CORDS) work to rebuild the province.

Province Chief Lieutenant Colonel Nguyen Van Nguu is the key to GVN control and revolutionary development in Long An. He is advised by Army Colonel James A. Herbert of Annandale, Va. Of the 544 hamlets in Long An, 110 are considered to be under government control, 100 are deserted and 140 are "contested", which means that neither side has full control. Only 250 of the hamlets have populations in excess of 500 people. The figure of 110 represents an increase over the 92 under GVN control at the beginning of 1967.

Capital of the province is Tan An, some 30 miles south of Saigon, located on the banks of the West Vaico River and linked to Saigon by Highway 4. Tan An is the headquarters of both the province chief and the 3d Brigade of the 9th Infantry Division.

Although most of the province is a mere two feet above sea level the area is well-drained and rarely floods.

Most of the inhabitants of the comfortably-spaced hamlets dotting the seemingly endless green delta area are Buddhist farmers. Their residences are primarily built of thatch with dirt floors or of wood with a thatch or tile roof. Some are built of cement blocks or bricks, stuccoed and roofed with tile.

The working clothes of the men and women of Long An are the two-piece pajama-like costumes common to all Vietnam. Some men wear Western-style clothes. On special days the women don the graceful flowing tunics called Ao Dai's.

Their diet consists of rice with fish sauce and duck, chicken, pork, vegetables and fresh fruit—all of which are in abundant supply. The basis of the economy is rice production; the province produces nearly twice as much as is needed for its own consumption. Yearly production averages 320,000 tons.

Pineapples are becoming a cash industry also, with 2,000 hectares (5,000 acres) in production in 1965. Ninety percent of the 29,000,000 pineapples grown that year were sold outside the province for approximately five piasters each. Other crops are sugar cane, manioc, sweet potatoes, tobacco, watermelon, mangos, and citrus fruits.

Agriculturally-related industries include 27 factories producing Vietnam's distinctive fish sauce, Nuoc Mam, and 16 saw mills producing 4,000 cubic meters of lumber for local use. Long An rice is processed through any of 112 mills.

Additionally, there are several ice cream factories, 11 sugar processing plants, seven brick factories and three textile mills. Commercial duck-raising operations have brought the duck population to some four million.

The war has disrupted the pastoral life of the people of Long An, making development projects difficult, closing roads and waterways, and interfering with their opportunity for commerce, industry, and education.

ARVN and US units have successfully reduced the Viet Cong activities to not larger-than platoon-sized operations and have driven the Main Force units many miles to the north, separating them from two of their objectives in the Delta—recruits and rice. This Allied military success has also reduced the extortion of taxes. But it only takes a few acts of terror, murder and destruction to paralyze a peaceful people—and these atrocities continue.

One of the key areas disrupted by VC terror is education.

More than 50,000 youngsters are enrolled in primary and secondary schools, tutored by more than 1,300 teachers with a pupil-teacher ratio ranging from 1:54 in the beginning grades to 1:43 in the last years of primary school.

Starting school at age six, the children attend from August to May. They progress from elementary to junior high to high school as in the U.S. Approximately 67 percent of the primary school-age children attend school.

New classrooms are continuously being built to keep pace with the growing educational system. In the period 1963-65, 159 new classrooms were added; in 1965-66, 60 new classrooms were built; and in 1967, 67 more.

But education is an enemy of the VC, and their actions have caused 200 classrooms in other areas to be abandoned during the last three years.

The war has also created the inevitable refugee, although to a lesser degree in Long An compared to other parts of Vietnam. During the period July 1965 to March 1967, 2,662 family groups (16,000 persons) were classified as refugees. Few live in refugee camps, however.

The war in Long An is one for civic allegiance and military victories. Provincial authorities have placed great emphasis upon the amnesty program (Chieu Hoi) through which former VC may be reunited peaceably with their neighbors. The "Open Arms" program has had marked success in Long An during 1967.

While 290 Hoi Chanh (Ralliers) defected from the VC in 1964, 511 returned to GVN control in 1965, and 578 came back in 1966. In 1967, more than 1,500 defected, more than all who came in during the preceding three years.

Successful police work in the province is directed against the infrastructure (shadow government) of the Viet Cong as well as performing normal law enforcement duties. The nearly 1,200 Long An police help keep the VC separated from the Main Force military units and from the people through such techniques as Joint Mobile Resources Control checkpoints and the Police Field Force, who are specially-trained lawmen who bring order back to areas recently freed of VC domination.

Three problems of revolutionary development which still give province authorities a difficult time are provision of continuous security, electrification and the development of drinkable

water. Most electric power in the province is provided by diesel generators located in the densely populated-urban areas. Dreams of cheap, plentiful electricity probably will not come true until the Mekong River potential is tapped—and that is, unfortunately, still years in the future.

Although there is water, water, everywhere, there are few drops which are drinkable. Tidal currents from the South China Sea turn the river brackish. The answer lies in wells 200-300 meters deep and costing over \$60,000 each. Such wells have been dug at Tan An, Thu Thua, and Ben Luc, and one is being developed at Can Giuac. A special \$400,000 USAID grant is programmed to bring more potable water to the province in 1968.

(Continued on following page)

SP4 David Briggs



RICE MILLS—One of the 112 in Long An Province.



Pacification is built around the eight Revolutionary Development (RD) Cadre Teams working in the province behind the shield of two ARVN Battalions, 27 Regional Force (RF) companies and three Popular Force (PF) platoons. There are 16 RF companies and 68 PF platoons not committed to direct support of the RD effort. The specially-trained 59-man cadre teams enter selected villages to bring security, conduct a census, and to determine the legitimate grievances and desires of the people. Their aim is two-fold: to assist in the development of villages, and, to establish a steadily-spreading network of established village governments.

RD cadre teams, with their RF/PF comrades are designed to give a 24-hour "government presence" which, in time, will prove to skeptical villagers that the GVN is here to stay.

The island village of Long Huu in the south-east corner of the province is an example of how US-GVN efforts, military and civilian, mesh together in the entire pacification process. A joint ARVN-US force captured the nine hamlets last March in a controlled experiment. An Information Research Team (IRT) surveyed the 11,000 villagers and found that a mere 22 VC had controlled the area with terror, in much the same manner as one switchblade-toting tough on a subway can terrorize the passengers.

To bring "instant government" to Long Huu, including the return of their former village chief, the joint force immediately began high-impact projects to benefit the villagers. In ten days, the US battalion was withdrawn. Most of the ARVN battalion withdrew five months later, leaving behind an RF company to work with the newly-formed Popular Force Company. The

purpose of the experiment was to see if it took massive military force to "pacify" Long Huu.

As the military-civil teams began working with the inhabitants, 103 VC defected from outlying bands, and 43 of these joined the Popular Force Company to protect the hamlets from their former comrades. Today, Long Huu is classified as secure.

The enemy in Long An Province numbers about 2,000 Viet Cong and another 1,000 village guerrillas, although approximately 1,500 VC have been killed since March 1967. "Ferretting out the remainder," says Colonel Herbert, "is a difficult task and will require continued effort. The whole purpose of our military action combined with attacks on the infrastructure or underground and operations designed to satisfy the aspirations of the people is pacification."

The indications are that LONG AN will some day again really mean Peaceful Dragon.

DUCKS—About four million in Long An, "Land of the Peaceful Dragon"



A FISHERMAN'S TALE

Story by SP4 James Senn
II FFORCEV AG SECTION

There is a small town in a remote jungle area in Africa where it is reported that the tribesmen fish while standing deep in crocodile-infested water. The fish that they catch are bartered with the next town where the main industry is the manufacture of wooden legs.

Ridiculous, of course, but the demonstration of shortsightedness by these fishermen illustrates how some people spend today's wages with little thought of tomorrow's needs. The fishermen do not have the foresight to realize that they are laboring long hours to gain absolutely nothing.

Some servicemen, in a sense, are doing the very same thing. They eagerly await the monthly pay day, but soon after it has arrived, find themselves quickly out of money and with virtually nothing to show for it.

How can this problem be overcome?

One foolproof method is through the purchase of United States Savings Bonds. You may have heard this statement before, but have you given serious thought to the topic?

United States Savings Bonds offer an individual the opportunity of fulfilling two obligations with very little effort. Primarily, the purchase of savings bonds strengthens the economy of the United States of America and additionally reaffirms one's belief in his country. By strengthening the economy, bonds assist in assuring that America will continue to be a major peace power, able to resist the strongest threats from those who challenge our belief in a free world.

The soldier in the Republic of Vietnam enjoys a fine opportunity to invest and save dollars. The combination of added foreign duty and hostile fire pay, along with exemptions from income and sales taxes, results in a higher monthly payroll for every individual stationed in Vietnam. Because of the limitations imposed on travel in a counterinsurgency environment, there are few places in which to intelligently spend or invest money. It is, therefore, to the advantage of the service member to save these extra dollars so that they will be available upon his return to the United States. By investing the additional pay earned each month in Vietnam while still drawing the normal stateside amount of money, one can build up a reserve in excess of \$900, an amount which will go a long way toward the purchase of a desired consumer item or an enjoyable vacation.

There are many ways to save money while in

Vietnam, but savings bonds must be considered among the most desirable. Not only do they earn a high rate of interest, but they may be held indefinitely after returning to the United States, continuing to draw a compounding rate of interest. They are safe from loss or destruction and can be redeemed only by a beneficiary or co-owner personally designated by the service member.

The Department of the Army and military commanders in the Republic of Vietnam are intensifying their efforts to publicize the benefits of investing in United States Savings Bonds. In the words of Major General W. C. Haneke, chief of finance and accounting, Department of the Army, "These bonds helped defend our freedom during World War II and they are helping our country to meet all the challenges of those who would infringe upon our freedom today."

Recently, Headquarters, II Field Force Vietnam, received the Secretary's of the Army United States Savings Bond award for more than 80 percent participation in the program. Additionally, the 5th Battalion (AW) (SP), 2d Artillery, was awarded the Minuteman Flag, having over 90 percent of its members enrolled in the savings bond program and for their assumption of this patriotic obligation.

Only by a collective effort on the part of all unit personnel can organizations qualify for the savings bond award and the right to proudly display the Minuteman Flag. If you are not a member, get on the bandwagon and enroll today. It is only through your efforts that the goal will be reached. Complete details on how a savings bond allotment can be initiated (for as little as \$6.25 a month) may be obtained from your unit personnel officer.

Do not follow the example of the native fishermen. Bait your hook with a piece of the future to insure the continued strength of America.



FLORENCE NIGHTINGALE OF BINH DUONG PROVINCE

Story by MSG Merrill Harrison
Photos by SP4 David Briggs

In the tradition of Florence Nightingale and Clara Barton, Mariana Hartmann has the situation well in hand in Binh Duong Province north of Saigon. And anyone who doubts that fact can check with Pham Van Thong.

Miss Hartmann, 28, is a public health nurse from Elmhurst, Ill.; who has found an outlet here for all the energy that helped her work her way through nurses' training at St. Francis Hospital, Evanston, Ill.; Loyola University, Chicago; and the University of California at Berkeley where she got her master's degree in public health in 1965.

Pham is a Vietnamese national public health nurse at the hospital in Phu Cuong, the Vietnamese counterpart of Miss Hartmann, whose job places her in the Public Health Division of CORDS (Civil Operations and Revolutionary Development Support).

They make quite a team, too—the short, slim, smiling Pham, and the tall, slim, eyes-blazing-with-energy Miss Hartmann. In her job as the advisor in public health for this province of 300,000 people, she cannot tell Pham what to do, but she does seem to get the message over. Take the matter of the diphtheria-tetanus inoculations.

Every American child gets a "DPT" shot as a matter of course, along with preventives for polio, smallpox and all the other diseases that no longer plague children in the U.S. Mothers keep the shot records and the youngsters get the boosters as necessary. Not quite so in war-torn Vietnam.

There are 21 hamlet dispensaries in Binh Duong Province, some with access only by helicopter since all of the province is still not "secure." The team of affable Pham, who knows his people, and Miss Hartmann, who cannot waste time getting things done, has worked out this problem. Every youth in the province

will get the shots in a round-robin operation—and have them entered in a regular shot record, the latter courtesy of the U.S. Agency for International Development.

She is quick to point out that shots are nothing new to the Vietnamese, that she is only here to help. After all, she and Pham explain, Vietnamese youngsters who took Salk shots for polio a few years ago much prefer the sugar cube method, just as children do all over the 50 states.

Miss Hartmann came to Vietnam because, "I was interested in foreign service, wanted to see how other people live and to do what I could to help raise their standards. And I thought it would be an opportunity to make my contribution to the American commitment here."

She started as a surgical nurse at a hospital in Bac Lieu Province, spent 15 months in operating rooms, and did some public health work. When the opportunity came for a transfer to Binh Duong Province she took it because Binh Duong had a going local public health program, about 35 Vietnamese public health people in a rural health program, and there was only one American advisor here. There is still one—Miss Hartmann.

The local immunization program was limited to cholera and smallpox inoculations twice annually, not because the Vietnamese did not know better or want more, simply because of a lack of other vaccines.

Now Miss Hartmann and Pham are working to improve the situation with a year-round program of immunization for plague, diphtheria, tetanus and polio. The diphtheria-tetanus shots started December 15, and with greater availability of more vaccines, the long-range plan is on the road.

Miss Hartman has never forgotten that she is
(Continued on following page)



In her role as public health advisor, she cannot tell Pham, a Vietnamese public health nurse, what to do. She does, however, seem to get the message through to him.

only here to advise Pham. But she has not let her official status stop her from getting other Americans to participate in "her" program of education.

One of her current projects is a program of dental education in Binh Duong's schools. To accomplish this she has enlisted Army dentists stationed nearby.

Her program calls for enrolling Vietnamese wives and mothers, the 700 school teachers in the province, provincial dentists, and the provincial educational chief in the campaign for oral hygiene—starting with educating the teachers to instruct the children in making toothbrushes.

Miss Hartmann, who admits that she always wanted to be a nurse, came by the desire naturally and not from playing with dolls in the frame house she lived in as a child. Her mother was a nurse; so were two aunts.

She likes hospital nursing, but prefers working with families in home nursing. She does not have to leave the hospital here for that. It is traditional in Vietnam that when a patient is in

the hospital the family moves in to help look after the ailing member.

With Pham's support, she has started still another education project, a rural health worker trainee program.

In their two-month course the students learn what to do, and, equally important, to call a doctor for more serious ailments ranging from fractures to snake bite, skin diseases, respiratory diseases, intestinal diseases, fever and pain.

Capable of treating minor cases and able to teach the rudiments of preventive medicine, they learn to recognize the serious problems and get better-trained help.

Upon completion of their training, they return to their own hamlets to work in the local dispensaries. Criteria for selection are important, encompassing respect of their neighbors, trustworthiness in a position of responsibility and ability to read and understand the manuals used in training.

Giving plague shots and killing rats helps prevent disease. Hauling away the garbage is



With Pham's support, Mariana started a rural health worker trainee program. After completing a two-month course, the students will be able to teach the rudiments of preventive medicine in their local dispensaries.

the real preventive. So Miss Hartmann is engaged with Pham in a program to get the people to build incinerators and burn their refuse, not dump it in the nearest stream from which they might be getting their drinking water. The first of the incinerators will go to the province's dispensaries. She and Pham are also trying to get trucks to haul the garbage to central dumps for burning.

Still with time to spare, Miss Hartmann is working on a program—with Pham's concurrence—to determine the medical needs of each of the hamlets of Binh Duong. Then she will be better able to help coordinate all the medical civic action of American and other Free World military units in the province. Some day, she hopes, Army doctors might even make post-natal calls on new mothers.

Miss Hartmann expects to go home—some day. Her immediate future is in Vietnam. In the distance she envisions a career in public health and community work as a teacher.





N U I B A D E N



Photos by PFC Paul Temple
53d Sig. Bn.



NUI BA DEN
"MOUNTAIN OF THE BLACK VIRGIN"
SACRED—STRATEGIC
A YOUNG MAIDEN ABOUT TO BE MARRIED
FELT HERSELF UNABLE TO FULFILL THE
VOWS OF MARRIAGE.
SHE DIED ON THE MOUNTAIN IN SELF-IMPOSED
EXILE.
THE ANCIENT SACRED MOUNTAIN OF THE CAO DAI
IS A MODERN STRATEGIC POINT MANNED BY
SPECIAL FORCES AND SIGNAL CORPSMEN.



REFUGEE VILLAGE

Story by SGT Gary Livengood
Photos by PFC William Leverington
53d Sig. Bn.

The village of Ben Suc "died" a year ago during Operation Cedar Falls. Scores of articles, columns and even a book, have deplored the "military inhumanity" which destroyed the settlement.

Yet, today, happy villagers who made the exodus would not turn back the clock.

Cedar Falls was intended to raze the area known as the Iron Triangle, some 40 kilometers (25 miles) north of Saigon. The area had been a Viet Cong sanctuary since 1965, serving as the political-military headquarters which gov-

Proper animal husbandry and care of livestock is emphasized at the Lai Thieu refugee village. Here a youngster puts to practice what he has been taught as he cares for some pigs. The refugees, evacuated from the Ben Suc area prior to Operation Cedar Falls, feel that they now have opportunities available which they never before envisioned.



erned VC terrorist activities in and around Saigon.

Since the area was of critical military importance, it was decided to drain the "sea" in which the VC "fish" swam. Although there were no hamlets in the dense jungle area of the Iron Triangle, Ben Suc was located on the west edge and three small hamlets were on the northern line of the triangle. A total of 6,000 Vietnamese were in the "fire zone."

Two days prior to the operation, the military sacrificed surprise to warn the villagers of the impending actions. Hundreds of thousands of leaflets were dropped telling the people where to gather for evacuation.

On moving day, members of Vietnamese and U.S. units worked side-by-side helping families load their furniture, bedding, pigs, cattle, chickens and pets aboard Navy landing craft and Army Chinook helicopters for the move to a hastily-built camp which had been constructed in 72 hours at Phu Cuong.

As the refugees poured into the Phu Cuong camp, they were given food, clothing and medical treatment by Vietnamese and U.S. agencies.

After living at the camp for almost four months, the refugees were moved again, but this time to a carefully planned village situated on forest land cleared by Army engineers.

The Binh Hoa hamlet, near the village of Lai Thieu, Binh Duong Province, presently has 800 homes housing about 4,000 persons. Approximately 80 percent of the inhabitants are from Ben Suc. The extreme ratio of women and children to men is indicative of the hard fact of life that most of the men were either Viet Cong or pressed into service by the Viet Cong as laborers. More than half of the refugees are children. There are twice as many women as men. Yet this is slowly changing as more and more of the Ben Suc men return to their families as official and unofficial Hoi Chanh (Ralliers).

A recent opinion study was taken in depth by a Vietnamese research team. The results were surprising. More than 90 percent of the refugees said emphatically that even if the war were over they would not return to Ben Suc. The Binh Hoa hamlet was "home" for keeps, they said.

Probing for the reasons for the conversion, the research team found that the refugees felt secure from Viet Cong terror. In fact, there have not been any VC incidents since the open-



Vietnamese and American civic action teams relocated civilians from the Iron Triangle to safe areas during Operation Cedar Falls. With civilians removed, the area became a free fire zone, thus depriving the VC of a safe haven which had existed for 20 years.

ing of the hamlet.

The refugees also enjoy the quality of their new homes, which were partially built of brick with an aluminum roof. Each has a sanitary toilet located behind it.

The brick came from the refugees' own cooperative brick factory which has 12 hand-operated machines which compress damp dirt and dry cement into bricks. The refugees also use the brick for other community projects.

Another reason for the refugees' satisfaction with their new life is the quality of the medical facilities. A functioning dispensary was in operation on the day they moved in, and a newer one has just been completed. It needs only supplies and a medical staff to begin improved service.

This dispensary was a civic action project of the 2d Brigade, 1st Infantry Division. Most of the lumber was provided by the 2d Brigade. Cement and fixtures came from Civil Operations and Revolutionary Development Support (CORDS) resources. The refugees aided in the construction of the dispensary.

"The most outstanding feature of the project

was the cooperative effort to meet a need," said Major Peter D. Booras, officer-in-charge of the project.

Some of the men in the hamlet are training to be medics in the new dispensary. One is a Hoi Chanh.

The economic opportunities available to the refugees also come into focus as a reason for the success of the "New Life" hamlet. Mr. Walter Bagley, agricultural advisor for Binh Duong Province, recently introduced a plan to raise chickens for a profit. The experiment is now under way with one refugee, Nguyen Van Xan, raising 400 chickens under ideal conditions.

Mr. Xan has built wire mesh cages for the birds (which normally run free in Vietnam) and will soon give 200 chickens to another refugee to start a second farm. Mr. Bagley estimates that the chickens will produce a 20,000 piaster (\$160) profit every 10 to 12 weeks. Other refugees interested in starting chicken raising will be able to get a low interest loan from the Binh Duong Agricultural Loan Bank—another innovation.

(Continued on following page)



Workers at the Lai Thieu refugee village brick "factory" produce building material for their homes, school and for other civic projects. The bricks, made of dry cement and dirt, are compressed by one of the 12 hand-operated machines at the factory. The refugees are part of the 6,000 villagers evacuated from the Ben Suc area prior to Operation Cedar Falls.



Functioning since the beginning of the Lai Thieu refugee village, this school provided for the children's educational needs. The school, staffed by Saigon YMCA workers, is presently in a tent, but there are 10 classrooms under construction with two scheduled to be completed in the near future.

REFUGEE VILLAGE

Other ventures for the refugees include livestock raising and an experimental garden. The farmers will soon receive training in animal husbandry and livestock care.

Their experimental garden is progressing well, with such crops as corn and sweet potatoes. Since these crops are new to Vietnam, members of the International Rescue Committee have come to the village to advise the farmers.

One of the problems facing the fledgling farmers is the lack of water. But this shortage may soon be solved. A survey team from the Vietnamese Army Engineering School at Phu Cuong has reported that an irrigation system would be feasible and plans are being drafted to build one.

Each of the refugee families will be given land from the more than 880 hectares (2,200 acres) of cleared land.

Educational opportunities at the hamlet also exceed those which had existed at Ben Suc. Their first school was a makeshift one, staffed by members of Saigon's YMCA, but it was open for business on the day the refugees arrived. Ten classrooms are being constructed now, and will be furnished with double-seated benches built at the hamlet carpenter shop.

The Saigon YMCA will also help the refugees build and equip a recreation center.

Construction of a community center is now underway. The center will have reading rooms, meeting and game rooms, and a television room. Outdoor facilities will include a soccer field and badminton court. The television room is considered a real mecca.

Life in the community is not a paradise by any means. Problems still exist which need solutions—and some, perhaps, are insolvable as long as the war continues. But, in the words of Mr. Charles W. Browne Jr., assistant district director for Lai Thieu (and considered to be the hamlet's godfather) the new start given the former inhabitants of Ben Suc and the Iron Triangle "is remarkable in its complexity and originality."

"We've come a long way from other wars where the refugee—displaced person—was shunted helplessly from tent city to tent city, never able to put down new roots. It would be easy for a hostile critic to come here and find fault," adds Mr. Browne, "for the same reason that the guerilla has the edge in warfare; it's easier to destroy than to build and it's easier to criticize than to accomplish."

Mr. Browne, who originally planned to stay in Vietnam for 18 months, now is committed to staying "as long as needed."



Command Sergeant Major

Stocky and powerfully built, the new command sergeant major for II Field Force Vietnam wears the Combat Infantryman's Badge with two stars denoting service in three wars. Sergeant Major Farrell C. Graham, 43, serves as the link between his three-star commander and the enlisted men of the command.

Says Sergeant Major Graham of his job, "My goal is to communicate to the men of all our units throughout the III Corps area. I'm primarily interested in the morale, welfare and discipline of all our enlisted men."

The St. Louis native travels with the commanding general on his many field trips visiting units that are OPCON to II Field Force. During these visits, SGM Graham talks with enlisted men as well as senior non-commissioned officers about his areas of primary interest.

His participation in three wars, has earned SGM Graham a total of nine campaign stars with two in WW II, six in Korea and one, thus far, in the Vietnam conflict. He was wounded by a shell fragment in the second World War during the Ardennes campaign.

SGM Graham was selected as the new top NCO last December upon the rotation of SGM Daniel J. Quinn, who was reassigned to the Berlin command in Germany. Qualifications of the new sergeant major include service as both a battalion and a brigade sergeant major with the 9th Infantry Division. During his prior

wartime service he has soldiered as a platoon sergeant, first sergeant and sergeant major.

How does one move to the top of the enlisted ranks? Says SGM Graham, "First of all, have the desire to get ahead. A keen desire—one that nags at you and says, 'how can I do my job better.'"

"Then seek out responsibility, be conscientious, loyal, pay attention to detail, and above all, learn, learn, learn."

"The secret of success is not any one single answer, but a combination of many qualities and traits that make the leader stand out above his contemporaries. And, as you move ahead in rank, you will find yourself in positions of greater trust and with more leeway to act independently. Each move forward is a stepping stone."

"If you prove that you can handle greater responsibilities and you show the capacities for learning more and moving even further up, then your commanders will be your biggest boosters in helping you to get ahead."

The Force's top NCO is also an active family man with a brood of seven youngsters, now under the watchful eye of his wife, Jean, in Kaneohe, Hawaii. An eight child, the eldest of four daughters, became a bride last year.

Although SGM Graham has over 22 years of active duty, he still wants to, "Stay in Army green; it's a good life."

TASK FORCE

"BUILDER"

Story and Color by SSG Thomas Quigley

Concrete evidence of progress in the pacification program in Rach Kien District, Long An Province, was apparent at the beginning of the year with the completion of several projects by the 46th Engineer Battalion's Task Force Builder.

The 58-man Task Force is headed by Captain Richard M. Goldfarb of Brooklyn, N.Y., who describes the composition of the Force as "a collection of the most skilled men in each company of the battalion."

Under the command of Lieutenant Colonel George B. Gray, Jr., the 46th Battalion of the 159th Engineer Group is working closely with local Vietnamese officials and the provincial office of Civil Operations and Revolutionary Development Support (CORDS). Their combined efforts are directed toward improving and increasing the public facilities throughout the province, as part of a pilot project to use U.S. resources to boost revolutionary development.

In late November the original elements of the Task Force convoyed from the battalion's Long Binh home to establish an operational base camp in the sleepy, dusty village of Rach Kien, a district headquarters located about 18 miles southwest of Saigon.

The Task Force immediately began work on six different projects within the vicinity of Rach Kien. They supplied the manpower and were assisted by Vietnamese local-hire personnel who were mostly women. The construction materials were provided through CORDS channels such as the USAID (U.S. Agency for International Development) office in Tan An, the province capital situated some 12 miles west of Rach Kien.

Included in Task Force Builder's projects are a three-room school, a maternity dispensary, a four-room school with teacher's quarters, a

hamlet office, a foot bridge and a two-room schoolhouse. Each of the structures is built on a module system which will allow easy additions in the future.

The first week of December was devoted to laying the concrete pads at each of the job sites. The men of the 46th then concentrated on completing the vertical construction, aiming toward a target deadline of early January.

One project, the two-room schoolhouse, presents some unusual problems in meeting any deadline. The job site is located in the middle of lush rice paddies and a treacherous three-quarter mile hike over muddy and narrow dikes represents the only land access. Therefore, building materials must be transported by sampan over a long, circuitous route—navigable only at high tide—from the supply drop point to the building site.

Each of the buildings is of concrete block and wood construction and follows the design plans of local Vietnamese officials.

The structures are finished by applying a layer of stucco covered with whitewash on the walls; a coating of paint on the doors, shutters, and latticework; and tin sheeting on the rafters.

At one of the schools, the Task Force engineers built a flower planter with Vietnamese housebricks to add the "final touch." The men returned to the school site on the morning following construction of the planter to find that residents of nearby homes had already shown their approval of the idea by planting fully bloomed flowers.

Rach Kien is now what the pacification people call a "Doi Moi" or "New Life" village. The men of Task Force Builder have helped to insure that the new life is a much better one for the people of that area.



TO BUILD A SCHOOL





SGM Minnick pauses on a Sabbath to check the schedule of services at the Plantation Chapel, which he helped to build as his first project after arriving in Vietnam in January 1967.

Security also comes under the attention of SGM Minnick as he checks the commo line leading into one of many bunkers surrounding the II Field Force installation. His crew of Vietnamese workers built these bunkers under the direct supervision of SGM Minnick.



"PLANTATION"

Story by SGM Clay Lacy
Photos by SP4 Richard Nelson

Just two short years ago, a thickly matted greenery of jungle vines, lush foliage and stately rubber trees standing in precise rows like toy soldiers covered a strip of land 20 miles north-east of Saigon. Running along the edge of this area, called the "Plantation," was a narrow road which twisted northward to the rich truck garden oasis of Dalat.

Today, the same area has been completely transformed. Twin flag poles rising from a rich green lawn fly the national colors of the Republic of Vietnam and the United States. This is the headquarters of the U.S. Army's II Field Force Vietnam, commanded by Lieutenant General Fred C. Weyand.

The advance group for this newly organized unit arrived in Vietnam in January 1966 and moved into the "Plantation." Some clearing had already been accomplished by members of the famed "Big Red One," the 1st Infantry Division, who had used the area as a base camp.

The first year on site was spent in constructing the headquarters building plus erecting the quonset huts used for staff sections' offices. A major problem after the plows and bulldozers had scraped off the foliage was the high dust level, particularly in the hot dry season.

The solution came through the tedious task of digging up clumps of grass along the roadway and transplanting them at the site. It was back-breaking work in the steaming heat of Vietnam's summer, but the dividends are self-evident. Today, the long highway north from Saigon is bordered by growing military installations and marked with choking swirls and clouds of dust—except at the "Plantation." Here the dust problem does not exist due to thick grass throughout the headquarters area.

In January of last year the "old troopers," those who had come with the new unit to Vietnam, rotated and a new crop of soldiers arrived to continue the development of the "Plantation." Sparkplugs for the new development were Lieutenant Colonel John P. Lamb of Seattle, Wash., and Sergeant Major Adam Minnick, a beefy soldier from Killeen, Tex.

Behind the headquarters building and staff offices built by the "old troopers" squatted rows of tents, the housing for enlisted men. Under the Lamb-Minnick team, the canvas houses were replaced with metal "Adams' Huts," airy buildings atop cement foundations.

To accomplish these many improvements, Colonel Lamb, the Headquarters Commandant, had a team of seven non-commissioned officers and nearly 200 Vietnamese laborers, hired from the surrounding area. In addition, the men of the headquarters company and other units at the "Plantation" worked evenings in a massive program called "Self Help."

Engineer units contributed the major buildings to the growing complex. Company B of the 46th Engineer Battalion completed small cottages for the general officers of the headquarters, as well as a mess for the commanding general. A new 500-man mess hall for the troops was another engineer accomplishment.

Paramount during the expansion and development of the "Plantation" was the round-the-clock operations by II Field Force. General Weyand's command includes all U.S. units within the III Corps Tactical Zone plus units of third country forces such as the 1st Australian Task Force and, most recently, the Royal Thai Regiment.

As the development program moved into high gear, Sergeant Major Minnick demonstrated his interest for athletics as he undertook to build sports facilities. First came two full-sized football fields, then a softball field and an all-purpose court, capable of being used for tennis, badminton, volleyball and basketball.

A swimming pool with a wooden boardwalk offered the troopers some respite from the hot sun. A recently finished annex houses all the concession shops for the post exchange.

Other improvements were furnished for the staff offices including a court room and expansion of buildings for the nerve center of the headquarters, the G2/G3 Tactical Operations Center.

The goal for the "Plantation" development is a functional site where soldiers of II Field Force will have a place to live, work and relax in relative comfort.

Busy, busy, busy is the theme, as SGM Minnick checks another construction project, this one a recreation room. Here, the versatile non-com shows one of his Vietnamese laborers the correct way to apply a base coat of paint to the frame of the building.



THE SEA

Story by 1LT Bart Stokes
Photos by PFC Paul Temple
53d Sig. Bn.

The Vietnamese New Year (Tet) marked the beginning of the "Year of the Monkey." But for the people of Phuoc Tuy Province, 1968 is the "Year of the Fish."

The fifty miles of fishing banks along the southern coast of Phuoc Tuy from Long Hai Hamlet to the boundary of Binh Tuy Province were reopened New Year's Day.

The Phuoc Tuy fishermen have taken their boats out of dry dock and headed once again for the open sea. One old fisherman said fondly, "It's good to return to our fishing grounds again. Two years away is a long time for men who have lived all their lives as fishermen."

This narrow strip of coastal water was closed in 1965 when the Viet Cong were seizing catches. The VC also used these waterways to ship contraband in and out of the mainland.

Today the Viet Cong have been driven to the mountains by the Army of the Republic of Vietnam (ARVN), the 1st Australian Task Force and the Regional/Popular Forces (RF/PF).

"The real story began on November 24th," recounts Major D. C. Smith of Biloxi, Miss., Civil Operations and Revolutionary Development Support (CORDS) representative in Phuoc Tuy Province.

Leading members of the province, including representatives of the district and province chiefs as well as major U.S. and Australian units, met with the Phuoc Tuy Fishermen's Council at their request to decide if it was possible to reopen the fishing banks.

"The manner in which the local province and district chiefs requested government assistance at their council meeting constitutes the finest example of practical democratic action I have ever witnessed in Vietnam," commented Major Smith.

"As the meeting opened I knew something unusual was about to take place. The chief of fishermen elicited opinions and suggestions from all the gathered fishermen. There were differences of opinion on each major point. Out of the orderly exchange of ideas a consensus arose," recalled Smith.

This consensus was voiced by Le Tham Chanh,

the fishermen's representative for Phuoc Tuy Province. "The boats from each village will assemble offshore opposite their hamlet and the escort vessel from the GVN Navy will pick them up as they proceed up the coast to the fishing area."

Arising before dawn on New Year's Day the fishermen checked their boats in final preparation for the day's activity. By 4:30 a.m., tiny firefly specks of boat lights dotted the waters around Phuoc Tinh Hamlet.

The line of bobbing lights moved slowly up the coast under a mild wind. The fleet gained strength as boats from Phuoc Hai Hamlet joined the long procession. The wind picked up, rolling the creaking trawlers from side to side. By the time the fleet reached Long Hai port, the wind was hurling ten-foot waves against the boats.

A few of the fishermen were skeptical, voicing the belief that ill omens might influence the outcome of their first fishing venture in two years.

The boats hovered in a tight circle while the skippers decided to wait out the wind. At 5:30 a.m., the boats set out in a straight line for the fishing banks 500 to 1500 meters off the shoreline.

Suddenly the lead trawler lookout shouted, "School ahead!"

The trawlers quickly formed a large oval and nets were spread to make an overlapping trap. Each boat strained against the rough seas while the fishermen kept their nets taut to trap the waiting fish.

Returning home, the tired, salt-stained fishermen proudly displayed their catch to waiting families and friends.

The first day's catch fulfilled the desires of the expectant fishermen. It yielded nearly 750,000 piasters (\$6,360). Future catches are expected to produce a regular daily yield worth almost 1,000,000 piasters (\$8,480).

This catch, and succeeding ones, will find its way into the markets of Saigon, Dalat, Cholon, and Bien Hoa. Tonight, and on many succeeding nights, the fishermen of Phuoc Tuy will have dinner cooked from fish of their own harvest.



the fleet



the fish



the catch

the fisherman



the mender





the future

