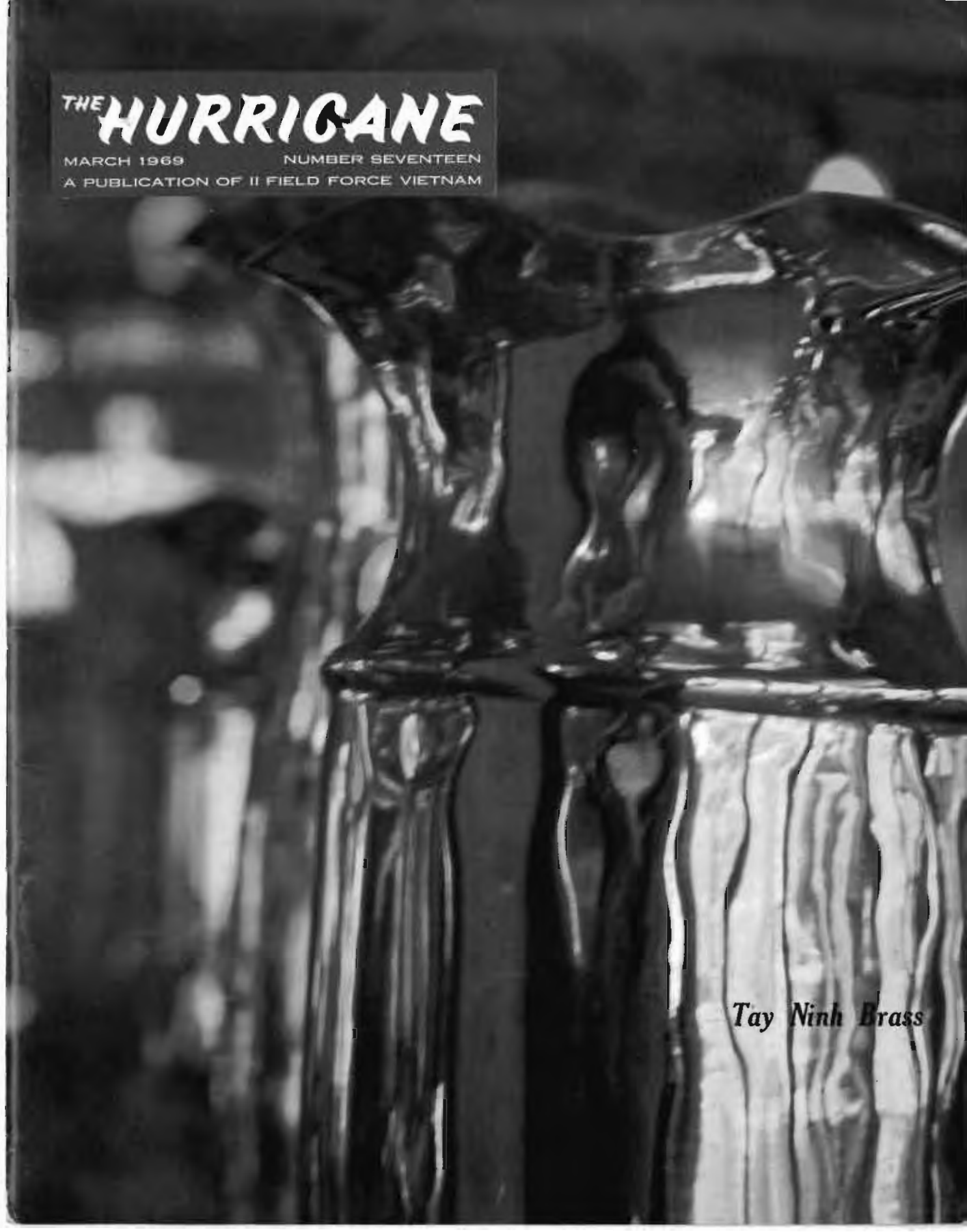
THE HURRICANE

MARCH 1969 NUMBER SEVENTEEN
A PUBLICATION OF II FIELD FORCE VIETNAM



Tay Ninh Brass

II Field Force Vietnam

March 1966 March 1969

Like the unit it represents, the blue, yellow and red shield of II Field Force Vietnam symbolizes a welding together of combat arms. This combination of Infantry, Armor and Artillery has produced an awesome military force.

II Field Force Vietnam celebrates its third birthday this month. Superimposed upon the blue arrow of its patch is the unsheathed sword of a crusader. The blue arrow represents force and the Infantry. It is bound at the top by the the red of Artillery and on the sides by the yellow of Armor. These colors also represent the flag of Vietnam.

II Field Force Vietnam traces its lineage to its predecessor, the XXII U.S. Army Corps. Formed in January, 1944, it saw action during WW II in the Rhineland and Central Europe Campaigns. Inactivated at the end of the war, the XXII was reactivated in January, 1966, at Fort Hood, Texas, where it received a new name, II Field Force. The word "Vietnam" was added on March 15, 1966, and this date marks the anniversary of the organization of II Field Force Vietnam.

On that date, the Force had operational control of five major units: the 1st and 25th Infantry Divisions; the 173d Airborne Brigade; the 12th Combat Aviation Group; and 23d Artillery Group. With the exception of the 173d, these units are still with the Force.

II Field Force has grown. Attached to the Force are elements of the 9th Infantry Division, the 1st Cavalry Division (Airmobile), the 1st Australian Task Force, the 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment, the 54th Artillery Group, the Royal Thai Army Volunteer Force, the 3d Brigade, 82d Airborne Division, the 199th Light Infantry Brigade, and a long range reconnaissance company.

The combined military might of II Field Force has been applied during operations such as Attleboro, Birmingham, Junction City, and Toan Thang I throughout the III Corps Tactical Zone.

Another kind of "might" has also been felt throughout the 10,000 square miles of III CTZ where U.S. advisors and technicians are working. They belong to the II Field Force Civil Operations and Revolutionary Development Support (CORDS) team and the III CTZ Advisory Group. Working with the people of the III CTZ, they are reducing the influence of communism, striving toward a progressive, viable economy and helping to build a confident, effective Army of the Republic of Vietnam.

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The front cover, this month photographed by SP 4 Stephen Wood, a recent addition to the staff, shows gleaming brass vases made from expended artillery rounds. This brassware is the nucleus of a new business in Tay Ninh Province. The story on the brassware industry, beginning on page 28, was written by SP 4 Wood.

The back cover, shot by SP 5 Jerry Cleveland, shows a co-op lineman stringing wire on a utility pole in his village. SP 5 Arnold Braeske tells the story of the introduction of cheap electrical power to villages bordering the 199th Light Infantry Brigade basecamp, starting on page 24.

The center spread—pages 18 and 19—are the creation of Pete Eastman, former editor of the Hurricane, who is now preparing for a world cruise and is writing the Great American Novel.

The Editor

AIR FORCE P. 2

PBR P. 7

DOCKS P. 16

BRASS P. 28

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II FIELD FORCE VIETNAM
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53D SIGNAL BATTALION *Photo Support*

USAF

Somebody Up There Likes Me

Air Force Fighter-Bombers Provide Close Air Support

by Master Sergeant C. E. Baumgardner

It takes the infantryman on the ground to dig Charlie out of his underground bunkers. But much of the infantryman's muscle in Vietnam today comes from overhead. This extra punch is provided by Air Force jet fighter-bombers.

The 3d Tactical Fighter Wing (TFW) provides close air support for allied units in the 10,000 square miles of the III Corps Tactical Zone. Wing members work around the clock providing close air support to allied infantry units.

A typical example of close air support occurred recently, when a troop of the 11th Armored Cavalry was ambushed by an estimated enemy regiment on Highway 13 near An Loc in Binh Long Province. Intense enemy fire soon had the troop pinned down while a murderous cross fire raked the column.

An F-100 Supersabre from the 3d Tactical Fighter Wing peels off and starts its run over an enemy target. Modern jet fighters carry a variety of ordnance suited to the particular target

Close Air Support

USAF

General purpose bombs are neatly stocked, awaiting use somewhere in the III Corps Tactical Zone

Fighter-bombers from the wing were called in to provide close air support. As the jets began raking the enemy positions, pre-planned flights were diverted to the scene from Bien Hoa. The battle raged all day and into the night. After 12 hours of fighting, the enemy finally broke contact and retreated into the jungle.

Nearly 300 enemy were killed by the air strikes. Friendly casualties were light in spite of the close bombing and strafing.

Apparently the enemy had not learned his lesson, because three weeks later he struck again.

Another armored troop was ambushed—this time just north of the earlier attack. Once again, fighter pilots delivered tons of ordnance on the enemy positions breaking the back of the attack.

A 1st Infantry Division blocking force of two companies was inserted the following day in an effort to reestablish contact with the retreating enemy.

Their blocking position was attacked at dawn by the badly mauled enemy regiment. The jets arrived just in time to prevent the Big Red One units from being overrun. Continuous air strikes pounded the enemy positions in spite of dangerously low cloud ceilings. The fighter-bombers came in so low at times that they barely escaped their own bomb blasts. Because of the constant battering, the enemy finally withdrew. The rifle companies were extracted that evening with overall light casualties in spite of their once desperate situation. A 1st Infantry Division officer cited the close air support as the sole reason for their survival.

In February, 1968, during the enemy's Tet Truce Attack, wing pilots flew a record 3,355 sorties. Aircraft were turned around in minimum time and launched again and again to support friendly ground forces. Pilots took turns sleeping between missions and ground crews worked doggedly to keep the aircraft loaded and flying. Wing pilots killed an estimated 1,170 enemy soldiers, with 927 confirmed by body count, while destroying 2,635 military structures, 313 sampans and causing 245 secondary explosions. They also damaged 2,249 military structures and 218 sampans.

During the May Offensive, the 3d TFW flew 2,750 sorties, 854 of them off the alert pad in immediate response to requests for air support, and 257 of that number were at night. Wing pilots were credited with killing 549 enemy soldiers confirmed by body count, destroying 1,794 military structures and 217 sampans. More than 100 secondary explosions were also recorded.

The 3d TFW continues its unrelent-

Occasionally low cloud ceilings force the pilots to dive their jet fighters much lower than they are accustomed. In cases like this their own bomb blasts can be just as dangerous as enemy antiaircraft fire

Air Force

ing attacks against the enemy, day and night, 365 days a year, hitting him in his hideouts, pressuring him wherever and whenever he appears.

Since their arrival from England Air Force Base, La., in November, 1965, wing pilots have supported thousands of ground actions, killing about 17,000 enemy soldiers with nearly 12,000 confirmed by body count.

Colonel Homer K. Hansen, a command pilot with more than 4,500 flying hours, commands the 3d TFW. An old hand with fighters, the 46-year-old native of St. Ansgar, Iowa, flew P-47 Thunderbolts in support of Patton's Third Army in France and Germany during World War II. He was the first pilot to complete 100 combat missions in the Korean Conflict while with the 5th Tactical Fighter Wing. Colonel Hansen was commander of the 27th Tactical Fighter Wing at Cannon Air Foree Base, N.M., before taking command of the 3d TFW at Bien Hoa in May 1968. He flies both the F-100 and the A-37A.

The 3d Tactical Fighter Wing is the oldest Air Force unit on continuous active duty. It was formed as the Army Surveillance Group at Kelly Field, Tex., in 1919. One of the three original squadrons was the 90th Aero Squadron, now the 90th Tactical Fighter Squadron. The three squadrons shot down 19 enemy planes in World War I, a feat memorialized on the wing's emblem by a Maltese cross for each kill. The unit was renamed the 3d Attack Group in 1921.

Pilots of the 3d Attack Group flew B-25 Mitchells against the Japanese long before Doolittle's daring raid on Tokyo and leap-frogged from Guadalcanal to Japan, hammering enemy defenses and supporting ground forces.

During the Korean Conflict, the group flew the first U.S. Air Force raid north of the 38th parallel and gained additional fame with their B-26 Night Intruders on hunter-killer operations. In January, 1956, the group was designated the 3d Bombardment Wing, Tactical, and assigned B-57 Canberra bombers. Later it was renamed the 3d Tactical Fighter Wing and equipped with F-100 Supersabres.

The wing is composed of four tactical fighter squadrons and supporting maintenance and supply units. These fighter squadrons are equipped with F-100 Supersabres that carry four 20mm cannons and a variety of conventional bombs and missiles. This versatility of weapons ideally suits the aircraft for air strike missions in support of ground combat units in South Vietnam. Supersabres can fly faster than 800 miles an hour and, with an in-flight refueling capability, have an almost unlimited range.

The fourth squadron has the A-37A attack fighter-bomber, which was designed specifically for counterinsurgency operations and close air support for ground forces in Southeast Asia. It carries a nose-mounted mini-gun and up to 5,000 pounds of bombs and rockets. With a top speed of 478 m.p.h., it could fly from New York to Miami without refueling. The maneuverability of the A-37A at low speed allows it to "press in" to a target for greater accuracy.

The enemy has unsuccessfully tried to stop the wing's thunder and lightning attacks by raining rocket and mortar rounds onto Bien Hoa Air Base. In the past year, more than 500 rounds have impacted on the base, which was also subjected to a large enemy ground assault during the Tet Attacks. Neither type of attack has deterred the wing from bombing and strafing enemy base camps and storage areas, interdicting the movement of men and supplies and providing instant, accurate and effective air support to U.S. Army and allied ground forces in close contact with the enemy.

The 3d TFW made history recently when the wing flew its 100,000th combat sortie in Vietnam—more than any fighter wing in any war in Air Force history. And they are still at it—setting records each day.

USAF

Close air support is the trade mark of pilots of the 3d TFW. Bombs are dropped with incredible accuracy close to friendly positions, requiring great skill

DELTA DRAGNET

"Patrol Boat, River" Finds the Enemy

by Lieutenant Pierre Loomis

The bright Asian moon casts soft shadows upon the My Tho River. At night, the high-pitched squeak of bats and the gentle lapping of the river emphasize the stillness of the evening. The breeze quietly slips through the thick foliage along the water's edge and then flows across the dark brown river. The cool night air is rich with the smells and scents of a Vietnamese evening.

And in the depths of the night lurks the enemy.

He needs the darkness to conceal his movement of supplies and men, for the rivers in the Mekong Delta often serve as Viet Cong main supply routes. Small enemy sampans stealthily slide in and out of the shadows near the river's banks. The cargo may be anything from ammunition or medicine to soldiers or monthly payrolls. Regardless of what the cargo is, it is vital to the Viet Cong and North Vietnamese war effort.

But the night does not completely belong to the enemy; he is not alone in the evening shadows.

Drifting silently with the current, a U.S. Navy PBR (Patrol Boat, River) keeps its radar eye peeled for the enemy. The twin 215-horsepower diesel engines quietly await action in the engine compartment of the 31-foot craft. A sailor nervously fingers the trigger of twin 50 caliber machine guns in a turret mounted on the boat's bow. Another man hovers over the stern mounted 50 caliber, while a third stands ready to man the 7.62 millimeter M-60 machine gun on the vessel's starboard side. The only sounds are the quiet hissing of the radio, an occasional whisper and the quiet caress of the My Tho River against the boat's fiberglass side.

In the wheel house, the only light is the soft green glow emitted from the radar screen. Intent eyes watch the blips dance across the screen. Hours creep by.

Contact! A new blip has suddenly appeared on the radar screen—and then another and another. It must be a Viet Cong river crossing. A hand grabs for the radio, and the contact is reported to headquarters. Artillery concentrations are plotted and helicopter gunships scramble in an attempt to catch the enemy in the midst of his river crossing. At the same time, the PBR's diesels roar to life as the craft leaps to the attack. The throaty, staccato bark of the twin 50's shatter the night silence, and the half-inch thick slugs, spaced by tracers, slice through the darkness.

Answering fire from the enemy stabs erratically into the night as they frantically attempt to silence their tormentor. The PBR twists and turns, yet still the

Navy river patrol boats police the vast river network in the Delta preventing the enemy from moving around. The crews depend on their boats' speed and maneuverability to stay out of Charlie's gunsights

LOOMIS

DRAGNET

Lieutenant John Cozad at the wheel of a PBR. The boat can maneuver in nine inches of water

Contraband is usually hidden in the bottom of rice sacks, making a search tedious

the rounds spray from the blazing 50's. As the range closes, the high-pitched hammering of the craft's M-60 joins the fray.

A sudden explosion rips the night. Apparently, an ammo-laden sampan was caught in the firefight.

The PBR is almost in the middle of the scattering enemy vessels now. The sailor on the M-60 deserts his weapon and grabs an M-79 grenade launcher to cover the PBR's port side. The dull "whoompf" of the grenade launcher can scarcely be heard above the steady pounding of the 50's, but the sharp explosions of its 40millimeter projectile are easily distinguishable.

Once through the enemy "convoy" on the initial firing run, the patrol officer calls for artillery fire, and soon the 105 and 155 millimeter shells are crashing into the target area. Two "secondary explosions"—one of them quite large—flash across the night sky, and then silence upon the My Tho river. Charlie is gone, but he'll be back.

And so will the PBR's. U.S. Navy River Division 533, comprised of ten boats, six officers and 47 enlisted men, will see to that.

For two years, three of the seven mouths of the Mekong River have been frequented by the prowling, pesty PBR's. Presently, River Division 533 patrols nearly 80 miles of the My Tho River. In addition, the unit spot checks countless small canals and tributaries in its search for enemy supplies and undercover movements.

Navy Lieutenant Robert Popp is the Commanding Officer of River Division 533. "Our mission," he said, "is the interdiction of enemy supply and troop movement, supplying friendly outposts along the rivers and inserting allied reconnaissance teams."

River Division 533, as well as the other PBR outfits in Vietnam, is highly decorated. The Vietnamesc Cross of Gallantry was presented to the Division for its actions along the Ham Long River in Kien Hoa Province— said to be the boyhood home of Ho Chi Minh. According to the Province Chief in Kien Hoa, River Division 533 cut Viet Cong and North Vietnamese movements on the Ham Long river by 50 per cent.

Daytime operations are markedly different from those at night. At sunrise, the day patrols cast off from the pier at My Tho and head out into the river. Donning sunglasses and flack jackets, the men prepare for the 12-hour patrol. Cans of C Rations are placed on the engines to provide a hot noon meal.

Vietnamese vessels are hailed at random for spot checks. Contraband items such as medicine, ammunition, weapons and Viet Cong pay rolls are often found in large sacks of rice, buried in false bottoms of barges or concealed under piles of smelly fish. According to Lieutenant (junior grade) John C. Cozad, "We also keep an eye out for draft dodgers, enemy agents and VC tax collectors."

The amount of traffic on the river is also important. "When we notice a large increase in traffic, it usually indicates that the VC or NVA are moving men or materiel in preparation for an operation," said Lieutenant Cozad. On an average day, the Division's PBR's spot check about 200 Vietnamese vessels carrying close to 2,000 people.

Boats of every shape and description ply the waterways of the Mekong Delta.

"The water taxis are always fascinating," added Lieutenant Cozad. "They are like a floating bus and have 30 or 40 people crammed into every inch of space. We can't possibly check everyone on board, but we do examine the papers of all the draft-age men. As for the women and children—we mostly just smile and say 'hello'."

But the men are strictly business when out on the river. "We always have a man armed with an M-16 keep an eye on the situation whenever a Vietnamese craft is alongside," said Lieutenant Cozad, "and sometimes this is necessary." Sometimes Charlie is waiting.

He usually waits in the form of an ambush. When the PBR's begin to put a pinch on enemy movements, the Viet Cong strike back, and during the Division's service along the Ham Long River, ambushes were the rule rather than the exception. According to Lieutenant Popp, "We had 12 contacts on the Ham Long during one 12-day period —we must have been hurting VC movement quite a bit. Now that we are operating on the My Tho River, our number of contacts has dropped considerably. There is just too much river for our few boats to cover effectively."

Correspondingly, the number of enemy-initiated ambushes has also decreased, but, pointed out Lieutenant Cozad, "we still keep on our toes—the VC are still here, and they know that if they are going to ambush us, they have to knock us out in the first few seconds or they'll have to get their heads down."

Fortunately for the U.S. Navy's brown-water sailors—and, perhaps, for the Viet Cong—most days on the murky My Tho River are peaceful. "The 12 hour patrols," says Lieutenant Cozad, "are hours and hours of boredom punctuated by moments of sheer terror."

River traffic is temporarily halted while identity cards and cargoes are checked. It's a tiresome job but necessary because Charlie likes to move his supplies along waterways

Vietnamese Engineers

Learning Today To Build Tomorrow

by Specialist 4 Steve Wood

The drawer of the miniature blue desk slowly slid open . . . BANG!

A deafening noise, as loud as a cherry bomb, startled the students as the sound bounced from the white masonry walls of the room—half-museum and half classroom.

"Exploding" drawers, doors, model booby traps and mines used by the Viet Cong as well as a model television set of yellow wood that "explodes" when turned on are all teaching aids for South Vietnamese soldiers studying demolitions.

The course is one of more than 50 taught at the engineering school for South Vietnamese armed forces where the Saigon River makes a right angle turn from its southward journey and heads briefly westward towards Cambodia.

Students at the Republic of Vietnam Armed Forces Engineer School are taught all phases of engineer work, from demolitions to construction

A hundred feet above the river at Phu Cuong where white masonry buildings thrust burnt-red tile roofs three stories into the sky, Vietnamese soldiers study engineering in old French stables.

The Republic of Vietnam Armed Forces (RVNAF) Engineering School graduates 2,000 to 4,000 combat engineers and equipment maintenance specialists each year, from where the French quartered their horse-drawn artillery 85 years ago.

In 1884, the French chose a high bluff on the northern bank of the river near the city of Phu Cuong, 13 miles north of Saigon, for their fort, the Citadel. They imported the bricks, tiles and iron grill railing piece by piece from the port of Marseilles, France.

Vietnamese cadre 450 strong now teach students sitting on tiered, black wooden benches, where the French kept their horses on the ground floor of the compound's two largest buildings, each longer than a football field.

Engineers

As many as 1,200 Vietnamese officers and enlisted men attend the school at one time. They cover three-quarters of the courtyard as they line up at eight o'clock each morning for formation with their dark green student helmets gleaming in the early morning sun.

In a scene from American basic training, the student commander, a major, checks their haircuts, the shine on their boots and the press of their dark uniforms before he dismisses each student group to its classrooms or to one of 12 construction training sites on the grounds of the school's 75 acres.

Officer engineer candidates come to the school after graduating from basic officer training at schools like the Thu Duc Reserve Officers School, the equivalent of the U.S. Army's Officer Candidate School.

They spend from 12 to 20 weeks at the school learning to be engineer company commanders, supply officers and combat construction and fortification officers.

Enlisted men spend as little as four weeks at the school learning the ins and outs of bulldozers, outboard motors, steam rollers, cranes, demolitions, masonry and carpentry.

The school has more than 200 major pieces of machinery to train the men, including 20-ton cranes, 7 steam rollers, 11 bulldozers, and a rock crushing plant that can turn out 25 tons an hour.

When they leave the school these students not only know how to operate their construction equipment but also how to tear it apart—whether it is a small generator, a jeep engine or a 20-ton crane. They can find malfunctions, fix them and put the machinery back together in working order with little trouble.

When they graduate from the school, both officers and enlisted men put their knowledge to use helping to rebuild damaged machinery for their country's engineer corps at the 40th Engineer Depot in Saigon. Enlisted men spend weeks at the depot perfecting their knowledge with practical training.

Officers either go directly to field engineer units or to the depot where graduates of the school's 20-week engineer company commander course and other administrative courses spend six to eight months supervising the newly assigned enlisted men.

But the school's programs don't stop there. Selected graduates of the school's basic courses return after two to four years of work in the field for advanced courses. Enlisted men may take courses in machinery maintenance or learn to become squad and platoon leaders for an engineer company.

Officers return for advanced training so comprehensive that upon completion they can plan, build and fund large projects. Graduates of the school's advanced construction management course can select the site for a project like a bridge, design it, find money to finance the construction and supervise building it.

The school also administers proficiency exams to enlisted men selected from field engineer units. The certificates awarded to the men who pass the day-long exams are far more than bits of paper, according to the commander of the school's four-man American advisory team, Major Harry D. Collins.

If they pass the exams, the Vietnamese qualify for extra pay—somewhat like proficiency pay for U.S. forces, but passing the exams is much more important for another reason. The certificates the school awards are generally recognized by the major South Vietnamese trade and journeymen's unions and can mean a better-paying job for the men who win them when they leave the Army.

Aside from the proficiency exams, the school's curriculum is patterned after the U.S. Army's Engineer School at Ft. Belvoir, Va.

"Right now there are 10 South Vietnamese officers at Ft. Belvoir translating U.S. engineering text books into Vietnamese," said Major Collins. "Most of the books are on equipment maintenance—things like cranes, bulldozers and generators. When they finish their two years in the States, they'll have translated 126 course books for us."

But the 10 engineer-translators aren't the only Vietnamese at the Ft. Belvoir school. The RVNAF Engineering School in cooperation with the U.S. Army periodically sends three or four officers and an occasional enlisted man to basic and advanced engineering courses at Ft. Belvoir. Before they go, the Vietnamese have six month's English language training in Saigon.

Many of the officer cadre and some enlisted men speak and read English. From private donations of books by individuals and by more than 75 universities and colleges in the United States, Major Collins and his predecessors on the advisory team have compiled a 300-volume library of English-language text books. They cover subjects ranging from simple algebra to advanced calculus, construction engineering and equipment repair and even history and liberal arts.

Adjoining the crammed shelves of the library's storeroom on the second floor of one of the school's two main buildings is a reading room furnished with modern furniture and loud modern art paintings depicting engineers in action, drawn by the students. American magazines from the construction field to LIFE and LOOK are provided to encourage the Vietnamese to practice and sharpen their English reading skills. Several books are stored aside in a back room, no longer usable because of the bullets that riddled them during last year's Tet Truce Attacks.

The students of the school learn engineering subjects in conjunction with combat military subjects. They man 43 defense bunkers around the school's perimeter and barbed wire encircles the grounds, while a foot-thick concrete wall four feet high surrounds the school's compound. During Tet a small body of students and faculty fought for their lives to keep the enemy from completely overrunning the school. A Viet Cong battalion re inforced with North Vietnamese regular troops attacked the school, which commands the high ground above the city of Phu Cuong, capital of Binh Duong Province.

In the darkness of early morning, the enemy breached the compound's concrete wall with B-40 rockets and forced the student-defenders to retreat from the school's main northern building to the same-sized building across the compound courtyard.

With their backs to the Saigon River, 87 students and their teachers held the building with the help of two platoons from the U.S. Army's 41st Engineer Company, then building the Phu Cuong bridge across the river near the school.

Together they held their ground against rockets, heavy machine guns and automatic weapons from before dawn until 10 o'clock that night when South Vietnamese infantry and tanks fought their way to the school and routed the enemy.

The school is now planning for the day the war ends. Courses today that stress military needs such as the need to repair damaged roads, bridges and equipment will be changed to stress civil engineering when peace comes.

"We have prepared new courses to train the South Vietnamese engineers to start from the ground up building new road systems, rail systems, ports and airports, but the basic skills are being taught now," said Major Collins.

The knowledge of machines, construction techniques, maintenance and even demolitions is fundamental for nation building as well as for waging war. The instructors will simply teach their students how to use these skills in different ways when peace comes.

"When peace does come," continued Major Collins, "we hope the engineering school will have helped the South Vietnamese Corps of Engineers provide the country with an organized, capable Corps—ready to build a nation."

Classroom instruction plus practical exercises give the engineer students a thorough knowledge of their jobs

WOOD

Officials at the engineer school are thinking ahead to the day when they will be training civil engineers

WOOD

Dock It To Me, Baby

The Newport Docks

by Specialist 4 Ken Heinrichs

Saigon port, once the biggest logistical bottleneck in modern warfare, is now an efficient cog in the machine that controls the flow of supplies to fighting men.

Though it may have been a favorite stop for sailors in years past, modern merchantmen dreaded the thought of docking at Saigon. For them it meant weeks of riding at anchor waiting for dock space with the hot sun turning steel ships into furnaces.

At one time nearly 50 ships lay anchored off the mouth of the Saigon River near Vung Tau, waiting to go up the channel to offload cargo. Something had to be done to ease the flow of supplies from the States to the fighting man in the field. Help was desperately needed.

And, at last, it arrived. A small army of transportation experts descended on Saigon port. Dock experts from Army logistical units teamed up with longshoremen from the East and West coasts to make an estimate of the situation. By then the port clogging had reached crisis proportions.

Meanwhile, the 4th Transportation Command arrived in Vietnam. Putting up their tents at Camp Davies, near Saigon, the command assumed operational control of the congested Saigon port and the ammunition site at Cat Lai.

Along with the unit came modern cargo handling machines to speed the offloading and delivery of cargo. The modern U.S. cargo system is based on the use of pallets and requires specialized machinery. Converting the Vietnamese system to pallets greatly increased overall efficiency.

The task of smoothing out operations was enormous, but the men wasted no time. Vietnamese civilians were recruited and trained to operate the heavy equipment needed to offload the ships. Supervised by U.S. Army "super-cargo-men," civilian stevedores were soon hoisting supplies out of ships' holds with powerful electric winches to civilian longshoremen who transferred them by fork lifts to warehouses for inspection and storage.

Constituting the bulk of the backed-up cargo were food supplies from every corner of the world. Tomatoes from Taiwan, eggs from Seattle, canned ham from Chicago and sugar from Australia were only a few of the items to be delivered to Americans and Free World Military Forces in Vietnam.

After an initial flurry of confusion things began to settle down to a pattern.

The 4th T.C. steadily improved its operational control of Saigon Harbor. Ships were now being discharged in less than seven days; harbor congestion, it seemed, was a problem of the past. As fighting increased, however, more cargo began pouring in, and the men again found the facilities unable to handle the build-up of ships.

Another docking area had to be established if the 4th T.C. was to maintain its smooth course of operations. The search for a new harbor site began, and luckily the men didn't have to look far.

Situated north of Saigon's commercial docks and south of the Newport Bridge spanning Highway 1A was a wide expanse of mosquito-infested swamp. Construction of the now-famous Newport docks was soon underway.

Filling nearly a hundred acres of

CLEVELAND

Computers are used to keep track of ships and cargos, keeping foulups to a minimum. Plans are already underway to computerize operations at Cat Lai

CLEVELAND

Big freighters are off-loaded with a minimum of delay at the Newport docks. The present facility, which was built on what used to be a swamp, handles all kinds of cargo ranging from insect repellant to 52-ton tanks

Supplying the Action Army

swamp, where solid bedrock lies far deeper than under any other terrain, is not an easy task. However, in a short time the brown mire was being replaced by two billion yards of sand fill. Iron pilings were plunging toward bedrock. With the pressure of incoming cargo ships serving as incentive, the Newport docks were completed in a year and a half at a cost of $70 million. Their location made them easy to secure.

The four-deep draft docks, barge loading site, and two LST (Landing Ship, Tank) slips built at Newport are seldom idle. If a deep-draft ship cannot move through shallow water its cargo is transferred in mid channel to barges for further breakdown. Nearly 20 ships can be unloaded simultaneously from the commercial and mid-channel buoys.

After a year and a half of operation, Newport has proved itself in more ways than one. By discharging ships in less than five days, the facilities relieve the Saigon docks and nearly double the capability of the 4th T.C.

Operations are exceptionally smooth at Newport. Under a system of "back-loading" or "Operation Closed Loop," a ship is reloaded with outgoing cargo after being discharged of its original supplies. Every ship is utilized to its full potential, and supplies move fast.

Since the 4th T.C. is also responsible for moving troops throughout Vietnam, the unit's LST's are also kept busy.

While the Saigon commercial docks still handle the bulk of food cargo for U.S. and Free World Military Forces, Newport is responsible for nearly all military cargo, ranging from mosquito repellant to jet fighters.

Adding to the variety of cargo is an abundance of U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) cargo.

Most of this cargo, which can be anything from cement to clothes for refugees, is shipped on a "long term" basis and is usually stored at a depot for later use. Having a stockpile of supplies close at hand assures immediate action in emergency situations.

No matter how smooth Newport's operations are, ships can never be discharged fast enough. Because of this, the management crew is always on the lookout for new talent, and to help matters along, the aid of an IBM computer has been enlisted.

Under the computerized system, a ship destined for Newport sends information on the type, weight, and cubic size of its cargo to Newport long before its arrival. This data is recorded on a "tranceived manifest card" and transferred to magnetic tape inside the computer where it is stored for quick reference when the ship arrives. By knowing the nature of a ship's cargo in advance, operations chiefs know how long it will take to discharge the ship and what type of cargo handling equipment will be necessary.

The computer is also capable of double checking the ship's cargo. By comparing the discharged cargo to the cargo that was "manifest," the IBM wizard can locate any error within seconds.

The 4th T.C. does not plan to shelter its brain child. "The cargo management system is a prototype system for all of Vietnam," said Lieutenant Tom Bruzenak, chief assistant in programming. "The first system is located at the 4th T.C. cargo accounting division and will be serving Cat Lai and Saigon terminals in the future."

The computer, however, is not invincible. "Manual work is always performed to check the computerized information," explained Lieutenant Tom Munn, director of documentation.

While internal management at Newport has adopted a "space age" operation, this futuristic trend is also evident on the harbor. As a Sea Land ship moves into Newport, there are no stevedores waiting to unload the cargo—simply because the cargo is already loaded on truck trailers. As each trailer shifts automatically into position, a hydraulic boom lowers it from the ship onto the chassis of a waiting Sea Land tractors The cargo is then ready for delivery.

In comparison to palletized cargo, a Sea Land ship spends no more than 24 hours at the Newport Terminal.

The introduction of Sea Land cargo vans has greatly increased the port's capacity. Palletized cargo has speeded up operations as well. The piggyback vans are hauled away by waiting tractors

APT

Former Enemy Soldiers Spread the Government's Word

by Specialist 4 Gary Rausch

"Nothing is more deadly to the cause of the North Vietnamese Army and the Viet Cong than traitors," says Le Van Huu, a man who speaks from experience.

Huu knows well the strengths and weaknesses of the Viet Cong, for he was a VC for six years before joining the Chieu Hoi (Open Arms) amnesty program of the Government of Vietnam in 1964.

Once a VC political platoon leader, Huu is now company commander for the Armed Propaganda Team (APT) in Long An Province.

As the primary arm of the Chieu Hoi program, the APT is designed for person-to-person propaganda—unquestionably the most effective kind. Secondary missions include providing security for the Chieu Hoi Center, village and hamlets and recovering hidden caches on cordon and search operations.

In October, 1964, the APT came to Long An. Members then, as now, were Hoi Chanh (returnee) volunteers. The majority of the APT is based in the province capital in Tan An. There are teams in each of the seven other districts, but the hub of activity is the Tan An Chieu Hoi Center.

There would-be soldiers undergo a six-week, 300-hour indoctrination course covering communism in theory and practice and the history and structure of the Republic of Vietnam. The APT members are inspired by the zeal common to converts to a new cause.

This zeal is channeled by rigid discipline. APT members are subject to dismissal for the slightest infraction. Replacements come from a lengthy waiting list. Getting the word to Charlie is the job. The APT works on the VC and NVA through propaganda. When possible, and without undue risk, the guerrillas are met in the hamlets and villages. Families often aid the mission through letters to their sons and daughters fighting with the enemy.

Amid this group is a lone American, Sergeant Ray Wade. The modest 23-year-old advisor hails from Omaha,

Armed Propaganda Team

where he starred in track and cross-country for South High and later Chicago, his home for the three-and-a-half years where he majored in Sociology at George Williams College.

For 12 of his first 17 months with MACV Advisory Team 86, Wade worked with the Long An Regional and Popular Forces (RF/PF). He extended his tour six months to work with Psyops (Psychological Operations), a division of CORDS (Civil Operations and Revolutionary Development Support).

When the APT program became stronger, Wade asked for the opportunity to advise and instruct this group of fierce fighters. An experienced foot-soldier, he earned his Combat Infantryman's Badge in the dangerous role of RTO (radio-telephone operator) on 110 missions with the RF/PF's. His face and arms are tanned and his fatigues are tattered, torn and faded.

Wade's job is considered "part-time" because it is not an allocated position. Wade, however, works 24 hours a day with the team—even sleeping in the APT village on nights of suspected VC attacks in order to call in U.S. artillery and gunships if necessary. "I'd rather be with 50 of these guys than any other RF/PF or American group on a similar mission," states Wade. "And I'll debate anyone who says these men are still VC. APT members have bounties on their heads higher than any other Vietnamese or American soldier. Do you think they'd risk their lives on these search missions if they still sympathized with the Viet Cong?"

RAUSCH

The enemy has placed high bounties on APT soldiers. With the Chieu Hoi village under the constant threat of attack, arms inspections are part of the daily routine

Apparently not, because the APT is feared by the enemy.

Tran Van Huong, who joined the VC in 1967, is 20. He was captured, imprisoned for three months and returned to his home in Ben Luc District. But within four months he had rejoined his old unit. Huong talks freely of the enemy's life. "We were always well supplied with weapons. If I lost my rifle, I had no problem getting another one.

"We were paid only 28 piasters ($.24) a day and forced to steal rice from the villagers or depend on parents to feed and house us overnight." The APT soldier makes 3,700 to 5,100 piasters a month, depending on his rank, plus separate rations for his family.

"Many days we went without food," continued Huong. "The morale was low; instead of giving us food they fed us more propaganda." Huong began receiving letters from his father—pleading for him to Chieu Hoi and then return to his hamlet. Dissatisfied with life as a VC, he ran all the way home.

"When I left the VC, their talk was centered around 'fighting twice as hard in the closing months of 1968', because by January peace would have come to Vietnam and we'd have driven the government and their allied forces from the country."

APT members circulate through markets and other gathering places explaining Chieu Hoi policies. Rallies and other public meetings are staged by the Hoi Chanhs to tell of their experiences.

Perhaps the most effective weapon has been the leaflet on known enemy hideouts, villages, hamlets and infiltration routes. Powerful speakers on aircraft and trucks verbally drive the psyops message home.

A new type of leaflet is being prepared for use that features a picture of a

RAUSCH

Exhibition of captured arms like this light machine gun is a proud occasion for APT members

recent rallier with a hand-written message. Called the "Pony Express," the program operates in the area of the rallier's former unit. In the more secure areas, the APT is joined by the psyops culture-drama team. Made up entirely of ex-Viet Cong, the group travels the countryside presenting skits, sing-alongs, magic shows and patriotic verses.

Before entering a hostile village, the team rids the area of the enemy's warning devices. Nguyen Van Phu, a team member and expert in the techniques of sentinel systems, leads the way into such unknown areas.

Very poor, Phu was easily swayed to the VC six years ago with promises of fertile riceland. They gave him a single hectare (two-and-one half acres) and made him deputy VC chief in the Binh Phuoc District village of Phu Ngai Tri. There he headed the 12-man squad permanently stationed in the village.

"We were there as sentries," said Phu, his eyes bright as a young child's. "When ARVN'S or Americans came, we contacted our 120-man company, two or three kilometers away, by hanging clothes on a washline. Many clothes on the line meant 'too many soldiers to fight, stay away.' Stripping the line bare meant 'few soldiers, come in for an ambush.' We wouldn't fight any more than 75 soldiers."At 43, Phu is the oldest and wisest of the team and a master in VC infrastructure—often called "shadow government."

Sergeant Wade lets his team's record speak for its efficiency. In their extensive search for weapons, ammunition, explosives, supplies and resistance itself, the APT returns with confiscated material on 90 per cent of its missions. Contact with the enemy occurs 70 per cent of the time and the team averages four missions a week.

In 1967, the team aided in the recovery of 92 weapons, 3,228 explosive devices and 24,878 rounds of ammunition. Through November, 1968, the weapon total had exceeded 130, primarily due to the largest find in Long An history on Nov. 15. The booty from that nine-hour operation included rifles, rockets and launchers, mortars, mines, ammunition, hand grenades, TNT, electrical wiring and documents. The reward was more than 300,000 piasters.

Long An's population is 476 persons per square mile—twice the national average, which makes it easy for the VC to impose an infrastructure. The propaganda mission of the APT is continually stressed. This group is not a combat unit, although the men show all the enthusiasm of a full-fledged field force.

Like their Hoi Chanh brothers, the Kit Carson Scouts, the group is highly motivated and shows a great degree of discipline, claims Wade. "They're at their best when searching and take great pride in rewards for outstanding work."

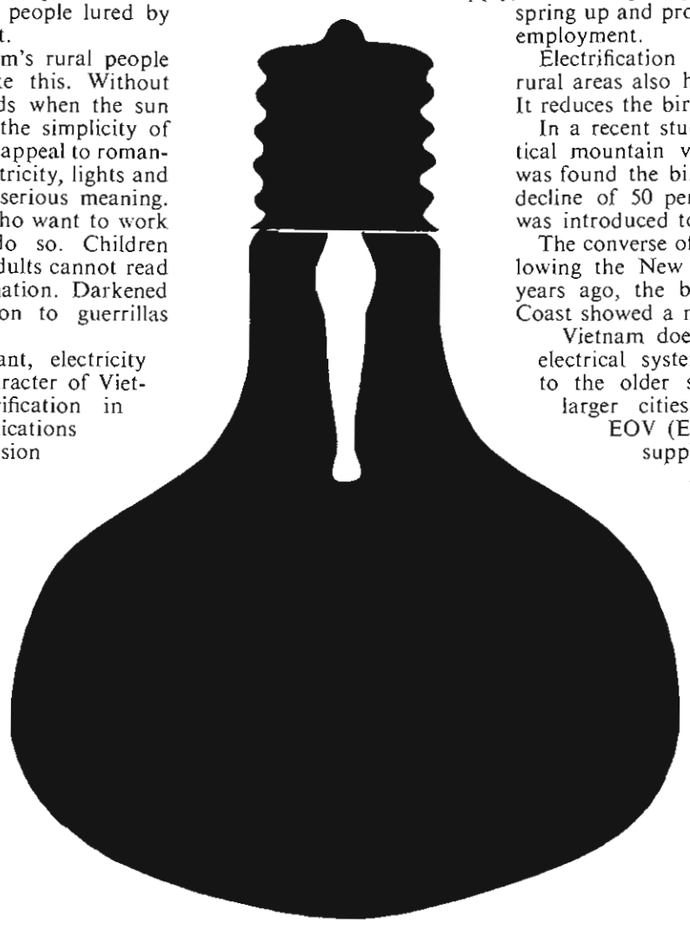
A Lesson In Cooperation

by Specialist 5 Arnold Braeske

The gas lamps of thousands of little Vietnamese villages and hamlets twinkle in the darkness. Along their streets, small lamps flicker over each house gate. Through open doorways families can be seen clustered around tables brightened by candlelight. The village children run to games under a rare street-light or in the pool of light given off by a soft drink stand. Where there is a generator-run television in a home or an open marketplace, the available space is jammed with people lured by light and entertainment.

The bulk of Vietnam's rural people spend their nights like this. Without electricity, the day ends when the sun goes down. Although the simplicity of this kind of life has an appeal to romantics, the absence of electricity, lights and appliances has a more serious meaning. It means that people who want to work past sunset cannot do so. Children can't do homework. Adults cannot read for pleasure or information. Darkened areas are an invitation to guerrillas and criminals.

Even more important, electricity affects the national character of Vietnam. Without electrification in rural areas, communications through radio and television are limited and village people remain uninformed. Industry cannot develop beyond the stage of the family run shop with hand-tools or generator-run machines for equipment.



Lastly, the economy of a country without ample electricity depends too heavily on agriculture for stability.

When electricity is introduced to a rural area the results are usually startling. Businesses and industries mushroom from out of nowhere. Already existing shops expand production. Communication improves. Money paid for electric bills is reinvested to upgrade the electrical system. Industries related to electricity, supply, wire and pole producers for example, spring up and provide more people with employment.

Electrification of heavily populated rural areas also has another side effect. It reduces the birth rate.

In a recent study of two nearly identical mountain villages in Pakistan it was found the birth rate had an initial decline of 50 per cent when electricity was introduced to one of the villages.

The converse of this is also true. Following the New York Blackout a few years ago, the birth rate on the East Coast showed a marked increase.

Vietnam does have an established electrical system. Power is supplied to the older sections of Vietnam's larger cities by government-run EOV (Electricity of Vietnam); supplying electricity to refugee areas is more difficult because their residents are often transient. In producing electricity, EOV makes use of its own facilities and of some of the remnants of the once

Co-Op

French-owned system in Vietnam, The very familiar, small generating stations marked with the letters "CEE" were part of this French system.

Shortly after World War II an attempt was made to supply electricity to Vietnam from the huge hydroelectric station at Dalat, a system built by the Japanese as part of their war reparation. In 1965, the Viet Cong toppled 11 towers along the 150-mile powerline to Saigon, cutting off this source of electricity. Today, the 230,000-volt line stands unused, impossible to secure along its long route through forests.

Saigon and the larger cities are not the only areas that are electrified. Most smaller towns have a few tiny generators, which produce power for a few hours a day for homes and sometimes street lighting. Many individuals buy small generators to power their own houses. These generators are usually costly and breakdown-prone.

In general, the residents of small towns and rural areas of Vietnam suffer most from the lack of electricity. Realizing this, the government of Vietnam, with United States support, is experimenting with programs to supply these areas with power. One such program appears to be working well.

On the edge of the sprawling U.S. military post at Long Binh there are two very prosperous villages that stay lit by electricity well into the night. People watch the news on television, iron clothes, read, work late at their business if they want to. Well over 1,000 homes in Honai and Trang Bom have electric lights and wall sockets. Nine thousand more houses in the villages are on the list waiting to be hooked into the current.

These people belong to the Duc Tu Rural Electric Cooperative, a project financed originally by a grant from the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), but one that some day will belong to the villagers and pay them profits as stockholders. Eventually, 60,000 people along this 15-mile stretch of Highway 1A will have access to electricity. The cost to each homeowner will be a monthly electric bill and 100 piasters ($.85) for membership in the co-op.

When USAID began a study of the feasibility of cooperatives in South Vietnam in 1965, the Catholic priests of Honai asked that their village be considered in the project. Honai is a closely knit village populated by Catholics who began fleeing North Vietnam in 1954. Its 40 churches are the dominant force of the village. In 1965, these churches were supplying limited electricity for themselves and small portions of their parishes.

"I'd say that, even today, 20 per cent of the people in Honai have their own little generators for lights, or maybe a television," explains Louis Sansing, acting manager for the Duc Tu Cooperative since 1967. "But only a small percentage of them are actually in working condition. They're expensive to buy and they need a lot of maintenance."

USAID hired six men from the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA) in the United States to pick out the three towns in which the co-ops would be tried. The six men were all managers of nonprofit, consumer-owned cooperatives in rural U.S.A. They knew how co-ops were supposed to operate.

Honai-Trang Bom was chosen for a co-op because it had the security necessary to keep electric poles standing, had literally thousands of electricity demanding small industries, and had a population that wanted electricity very much.

"The people do want electricity badly," said Sansing. "We took a survey a while back and found that what they wanted most was light—then outlets for ironing clothes."

After light and ironing, the villagers listed electricity for rice cookers, then fans. Shop owners wanted power for

CLEVELAND

metal and wood lathes, metal forging, weaving machines and welding machines. People living on the rural edges of the co-op wanted electricity for grinding hog feed, for water pumps to irrigate rice paddies, and for sawmill machinery. Without electricity, all of this work is now done by hand or with generator power.

The Duc Tu Cooperative was built from the ground up by local people. The men who erected the poles and strung the wire live either in Honai or Trang Bom. When the miles of wire in the cooperative are all finally installed, it will be these same electricians and linemen who will provide maintenance on the system.

Inside the individual houses in Honai and Trang Bom it is the responsibility of each homeowner to install sockets and wiring.

The people know the fundamentals of electricity," Sansing said. "We gave an open class on wiring at the beginning of the project. Only eight boys showed up for it, and they left after 30 minutes. They said, 'We know all this.' If anyone has any trouble with wiring, one of their neighbors will give them a hand."

The materials used in building the co-op's powerlines were financed out of the original USAID grant. In the beginning, however, when materials were slow in arriving from the States, the Army helped the Duc Tu Cooperative.

The Army loaned the co-op 800 wooden poles, to be repaid when the co-op got on its feet. It also sold them 2,500 aluminum poles, odd-sized for Army use, at a charge of 12.5 piasters apiece. The 44th Signal Battalion gave the co-op temporary use of one of its pole-digging trucks.

On October 29, 1968, current from the large generating station at Thu Duc, 12 miles to the southwest, began lighting the first homes in the Duc Tu Co-op. This followed nearly a year of installation of high-power primary lines and house-power secondary lines. The co-op's 34-man construction crew now installs meters and turns current on in member houses at a rate of 35 per day.

"It'll be three or four more years before we have the other 9,000 homes hooked into the system. A few years later after meeting margins for a few years they should be coming out in the black and the members will be making profits like stockholders," explained Sansing.

The grant of funds to the Duc Tu Cooperative will be repaid to the Government of Vietnam over a 35-year period at 2 per cent interest. The money will then be reinvested by the government in this co-op and in others just starting out. When the money is repaid by the people of Duc Tu, everything but the pure cost of the electricity and of maintaining the lines will be profit for the Honai-Trang Bom consumers. Even now, though, the villagers are saving money.

"The average family of five in Honai pays 700 piasters a month for charcoal to use in cooking and heating," explained Hubert Bush, team leader for the three Americans presently managing the co-ops. "If a family is only earning 2,000 or 3,000 piasters a month, 700 is a lot of money."

Electricity in Honai-Trang Bom will cost approximately eight piasters per kilowatt hour. At an average of 50 kilowatt-hours of electricity used a month, a family would only be paying 400 piasters for electricity. Unlike charcoal, electricity allows for the use of appliances also.

This experiment in rural electrification at Honai-Trang Bom will have a healthy effect on the economy of the villages and on the local peoples' feeling of self-reliance. It forms a cycle. Ten thousand people will be paying electric bills to a business owned by themselves, which will eventually pay them a profit. Local shop owners will be able to expand production. Meanwhile, the money repaid by the co-op to the government will be used to start other cooperatives. At the same time, industries producing electrical supplies—like the cooperative pole-treating plant at Phan Rang and the Vietnamese manufacturer of service wire for Duc Tu—provide jobs for other people in Vietnam.

CLEVELAND

The CO-OP provides lots of cheap, power to operate luxury items, (left) A co-op electrician assembles meter boxes to be installed somewhere in his village

and they shall beat their swords into plowshares,
and their spears into pruning hooks:
nation shall not lift up sword against nation,
neither shall they learn war any more.
Isaiah 2:4

BRASS

Nguyen Van Loi of Tay Ninh City and his family earn a living by making old brass live again. It's not a new idea for making money. In ancient times hawkers and peddlers roamed city streets seeking to trade new metalware for more valuable used items. But Nguyen Van Loi doesn't tread streets crying "new brass for old" as they did, because he has given the business a new wrinkle. He squats next to a hot fire and hammers old shell casings into shiny saleable brassware. Barely a foot from the broken pavement of a winding side-street in one of

the many hamlets that make up Tay Ninh City, Nguyen and his family transform corroded brass shell casings into ornate bowls, candlesticks, flower vases and kerosene lamps.

Under a roof that is half thatched rice straw matting and half corrugated tin, Nguyen Van Loi runs the brass business of Long Van Hamlet.

He has made an American-style success story come true. He once worked in the same shop as a laborer but saved his wages and bought it two years ago. He gambled his life savings that he could make the business go.

Nguyen shows his 40 years in a weathered, wrinkled smile. His broken teeth and workman's clothing of tattered shorts and dirty, black shirt belie his business sense.

He has applied American production and merchandising techniques to make his business prosper. His street-side shop, a ramshackle wooden frame building topped by tall coconut trees, doesn't look efficient, but he makes it work.

It's open to the street and shows a gray dirt floor and dark rafters. Small children and customers mingle with Nguyen, his wife, two brothers and two other employees,watching them change lead-colored shell casings into shiny, hour-glass-shaped brassware.

But he does have a production line, even if there's no machine to carry the casings from one worker to the next. It's not quite Detroit, but it works.

Nguyen begins his work by fanning what passes for his furnace, a heap of coal on the dirt floor, to soften and clean the shell casings.

When the coals gleam, he squats and lays a casing on the fire with metal tongs, rotates it and waits. Sparks flying around his black, crew-cut hair tell him the fire has burned the lead-colored rust from the brass and it is hot enough to mold.

Nguyen's wife sits astride a disarmed artillery shell as wide as both her legs and works the next step. She beats the top edges of the now yellow casing onto the rounded head of the shell to bend out the top of the casing. Then she pounds the bent edge with a tiny steel hammer into a series of lips like flower petals.

Nguyen's brother flattens the round body of the cylinder into six rectangular surfaces with a small hammer. Holding the cooled brass between his legs and feet, he etches intricate flower and bird designs into the brass with a small gray hammer and a steel nail.

Another brother re-heats the yet untouched bottom of the shell casing on the coals. He beats it with a hammer just above its base to form a curving stem for the brassware, now nearly finished.

Nguyen finishes the work himself by polishing the yellow surface on the only machine he owns, an electric motor fitted with a cloth-covered wheel. But his work is only half done—he has to sell it now.

The shop doesn't have a good location. Before he took over the brass business only local villagers used the street in front of the shop. But he has adopted American sales ideas to bring customers to his shop.

Facing the street from the dark interior of the shop are three modern glass display cases loaded with gleaming brass. Their bright, clean glass and engraved wooden frames stand out from the dark interior.

Nguyen's pride and joy is a string of red, green, blue and yellow Christmas tree lights flashing in his largest case. The colored bulbs plus two fluorescent lights provide the only illumination in the shop, spotlighting the brass against the darkness of nearby huts at night.

But his best sales techniques aren't the lights—they are customer service and low prices. Nguyen buys half the casings from civilians, but he gets the rest on consignment. A customer gives a brass casing to Nguyen and buys it back in about a week as a customized bowl or vase.

He charges 1,000 piasters (US $8.48) for his largest brass items, a pair of three-sectioned candlesticks three-and-a-half feet high. Ordinary bowls cost about $4.00, while small, six-inch candlesticks sell for as low as $1.50.

Nguyen buys the shell casings for between $.80 and $3.00 so he makes money on his work. It's a bargain for the customer and profitable for Nguyen —the brass man of Tay Ninh.

Intricate designs are traced on the brassware with a hammer and steel nail. The finished product is professional in appearance but low in price in comparison to brassware sold in Stateside gift shops

Hurricane Interview

A Quarter Century With the Infantry

As the Hurricane goes to press, we learn that First Sergeant Wallace has been promoted to Sergeant Major. Congratulations.

They call him a "ground pounder," a "leg," a "crunchie." He struggles through the swamps and jungle by day and sleeps in them at night. He's a target for snipers, mortars, ground attacks. The job is hard, dirty and altogether not very beautiful, yet the Infantry is called the "Queen of Battle."

How does he think? What is his attitude toward death and killing? What influences his attitude?

The foot soldier, the heart and soul of any army, stirs many questions. To answer some of them, we wanted to talk to someone who had extensive battle experience and the ability to communicate. After searching all over III Corps, we suddenly realized we had such a man—and in our own backyard.

First Sergeant Albert Lee Wallace, until recently with Headquarters Company of II Field Force Headquarters in Long Binh, has been an infantryman for the past 25 years. His record speaks for itself: he fought in World War II, Korea and Vietnam.

He has received 10 battle stars for combat from the Battle of the Bulge to the Tet Attacks First Sergeant Wallace earned three Combat Infantryman's Badges, five Army Commendation Medals, two Air Medals, two Bronze Stars and a Purple Heart. He also has the Vietnamese Cross of Gallantry for directing his men against enemy crew-served weapons during Operation Akron III (October, 12-20, 1967). He helped save the lives of two men during World War II, for which he received the Soldiers Medal.

First Sergeant Wallace began his career at Fort McClellan, Alabama, in June, 1943. Following basic, he received advanced training in both the infantry and transportation and entered World War II in April, 1944, with a transportation unit.

SGM Wallace

SP4 Smith

In November of that year, he transferred to the 310th Regiment of the 78th Infantry Division. A buck sergeant when he arrived, he was immediately made assistant squad leader. Two weeks later his squad leader was killed and Wallace took his place and has been leading infantry troops ever since.

During WW II he fought in four of the five major battles in Europe and was posted just outside Berlin when the war ended.

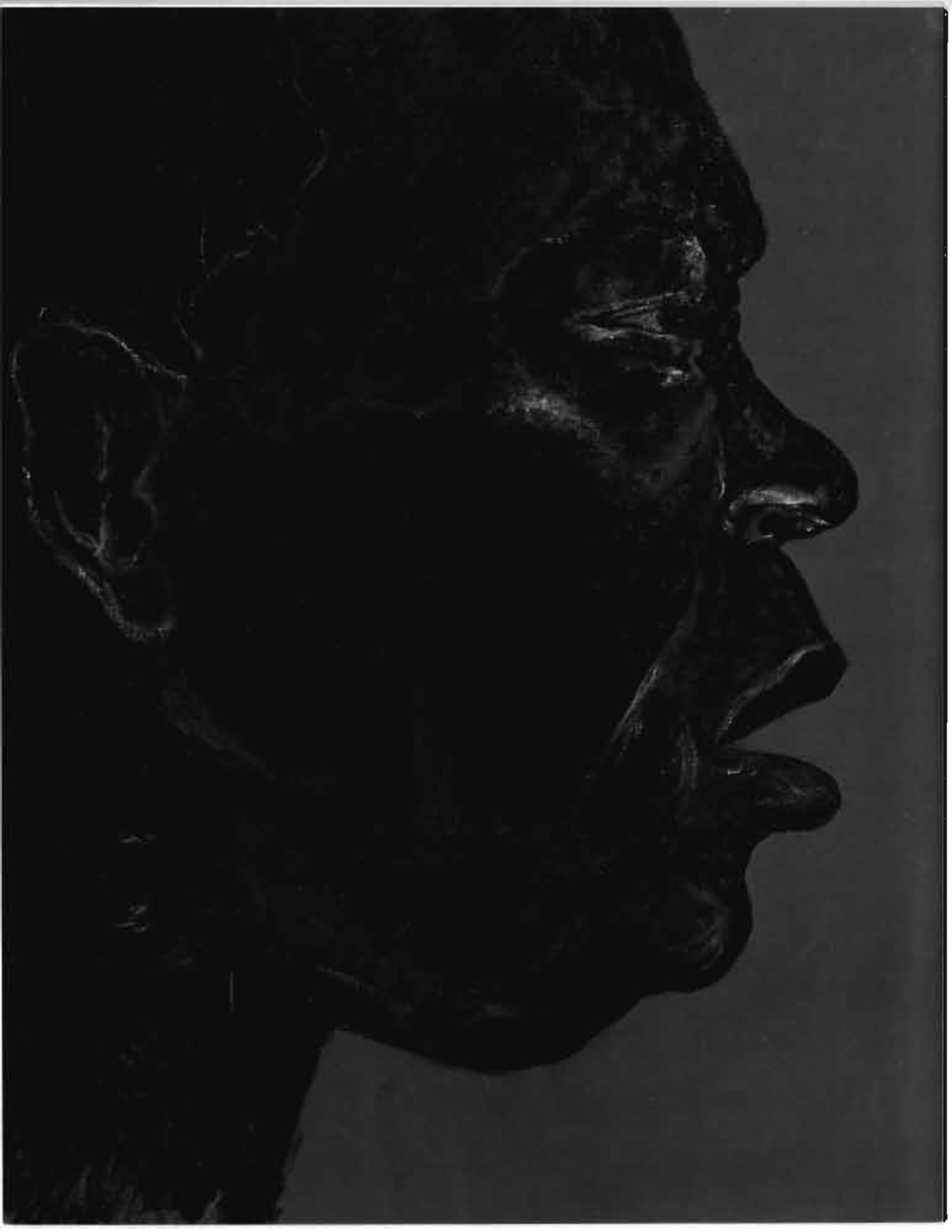
By December of 1950, he was back in action in Korea, as a sergeant first class. He served with the Wolfhounds—Company A, 27th Regiment, 25th Division and earned four more battle stars before a grenade wounded him in the neck and body. He was sent to Europe in December, 1952.

First Sergeant Wallace remained off the battlefield for the next 15 years, serving various assignments in Europe, Korea and the United States. Then in April, 1967, at the age of 43, he volunteered for Vietnam. "In order to communicate with and understand my fellow professional soldiers, I felt I had to be a part of this war," he said.

The First Sergeant served here with the 4th Battalion, 39th Infantry of the 9th Division until last September when he came from the soggy Delta to II Field Force Headquarters. He received two more battle stars for the Tet Attacks and Second Phase in May. In January, he was assigned to Germany. First Sergeant Wallace's wife and two children left their home in Tacoma, Washington to join him.

SMITH: Could you go back to World War II and recreate your first battle experience, describing your feelings at the time.

WALLACE: The Battle of the Bulge in WW II was my first combat experience and unquestionably one of my most shocking. Everything the Germans could possibly fire at us, they did. Of



Hurricane Interview

all the battles in the three wars that I've participated in, this is the most memorable.

I was only a buck sergeant at the time but I can still remember the day. Before going in we went through a "check out" area where we made a final check on our weapons, and made sure we had a basic load of ammunition, K-rations and clothes.

Then we went into an assembly area before heading out. I didn't really have too much time to do any thinking about what was going to happen to me. I just had a few minutes while waiting for the company commander to get back from the command post with his instructions on our mission. My mind was just focused on making damn sure I was up to snuff on my requirements. It was wasn't long before the First Sergeant was yelling "On your feet, let's move out!" As we started moving to contact I got this feeling in my throat, and began to choke a little bit, because I didn't know what I was getting into. Particularly as a rifleman. I was just more or less following the leader. But once we were fired upon and I managed to get missed, our leaders directed us somewhere to put out that firepower, then I had no qualms whatsoever.All the butterflies went out, and I was just a soldier trying to survive.

SMITH: Prior to a battle such as that, what is done with a man who is showing extreme tension?

WALLACE: There's always something you can kid any individual about. In a situation like that, you can usually look around and sense who's having problems. We immediately get to this individual. Someone will go over and start talking to him. The main thing is to get him talking and to loosen up and this usually takes care of him. If you can't kid him you generally ask about his family, where he's from and how he got involved in the war. But, as I say, once that man is in the battle and that first round goes off, he's a veteran and he acts like one from there on out.

SMITH: How long was it before you gained a sense of confidence about going into battle?

WALLACE: My initial confidence came when we had licked our opposition that day in the Battle of the Bulge. I really felt we had accomplished something, and our company's KIA rate was zero. It was like a big Saturday afternoon football game when the odds are 50-50 and everything falls into place and everything you do is right. That's the kind of thing that builds confidence—solidly defeating the enemy while keeping casualties to a minimum. The confidence we achieved that day wasn't as high as what we eventually got but it allowed us to go on and gain more and more. Not to the extent that we were cocky but to where we knew that if every man did his job we would be successful. So success is the big key to confidence.

SMITH: Are there any thoughts you have to guard against in combat?

WALLACE: Yes, with regard to fear, it must be controlled. It's obvious that everyone has fear to an extent, but under no circumstances do you want to make it obvious to the point of shaking up everybody in your squad or platoon. You also have to guard against your conduct. You want to make sure, since you're dealing with people's lives, you don't make hasty decisions. Every decision you make or order you give in combat is of the split-second type. You'd be surprised how much time three seconds is in making a decision.

SMITH: Does it happen often that a man's fear becomes obvious to the point of affecting the other men?

WALLACE: Yes, this can happen very easily. Particularly with a leader who has just been through one or two battles where he's narrowly escaped death, and is now about to enter another one. You can watch the tension in his face and the movement of his hands and know he's having trouble. It is especially important that he, as a leader who has to make the decisions, does not convey this to his men. It would undoubtedly weaken their confidence in his decisions, which could very possibly get them into trouble.

SMITH: What is done with a leader who is noticeably fearful?

WALLACE: Well, suppose we detect a lieutenant who is a little overanxious. We try to get him away from the men as fast as possible, even if we have to lie and say the Old Man wants to see him. Then we settle him down and let him know what he's doing wrong before we move out. Once again, this is knowing your men, knowing what they can and can't do. But we never degrade anyone for this. It's not a crime. It's nothing to be ashamed of just because a man has fear. This is part of life. But you can get that man off to the side and give him some self-confidence.

SMITH: Your job is extremely hazardous—you are constantly putting your life in danger. What is an infantryman's attitude toward death?

WALLACE: Death comes so quick in combat you don't have time to think about it. For example, I can relate death in combat to death on a highway. When a man is driving 100 miles an hour he's not thinking about dying. He's moving toward an objective. Things are happening too fast to think about dying. It's the same in combat. The only time you might think about it is when you're back at your fire support base relaxing. Then you might stop and think "My God, I could have been killed out there." This is actually when you start getting scared. But in the heat of a battle there's really no thought of death.

SMITH: Back at the fire support base, is a concern about death often expressed?

WALLACE: Most of them don't even talk about it. Prior to combat there is a natural concern about dying but nobody expresses it openly. Every once in awhile somebody might say, "Well if I don't get back would you see that my wife gets all my things."

SMITH: To relieve tension prior to combat, do they kid about it?

WALLACE: In some ways. Somebody might say "You've been around here a long time what's holding you up. You should have been out of here a long time ago." But kidding of this type varies with the individual. If a guy is serious and quiet they'll be the same way when they're around him. The name of the game out there is to make everybody feel part of the family. And we do this by treating everybody as an individual.

SMITH: Let's look at the other side of the coin. What is an infantryman's attitude toward killing?

WALLACE: It's very good, and when I say that you must realize we're in an environment where it's kill or be killed. Let's face it. When you put me up

against the wall, where it's a matter of my dying or the other guy, naturally I'm going to try to take his life.

However, that first man you kill gives you a big lump in your throat and your first thought might be "It was either he or I" or "This could have been me," but after that it just goes on and on. The hardest kill that you have is that first man. You think about it especially if it was an older fella. You begin to wonder if he had a wife and family and who his relatives were, but you can't afford to live with that. If you do, you go around feeling sorry for yourself. This is the initial thought that hit me. It doesn't hit everyone like that. There are different thoughts with different people about killing.

SMITH: With the enemy usually entrenched or behind cover, do you often know when you, personally, have hit someone?

WALLACE: When you fire at a body and it falls, you know you were probably responsible. If a volley of fire went in that direction you can't be sure if it was actually you, but generally you see the man fall and know it was you that got him.

SMITH: Do you feel a sense of accomplishment or exhilaration when you see him fall?

WALLACE: Well you feel it was either him or you, and inasmuch as everyone wants to live, you feel good about it in that sense.

SMITH: But is it like "Hey I got one?"

WALLACE: We run into some individuals like that. This is particularly true in this war where the body count seems to mean so much. I've seen people come back and say "Hey I got four today" or something like that. But this is an exception to the rule. You don't find too many individuals overenthusiastic about how many people he can kill. Accomplishing the mission is what counts, but if in doing so, someone is killed, this is viewed as part of the job.

SMITH: What single factor has the greatest effect on an infantryman's attitude?

WALLACE: Being successful in battle —which includes not losing your men, because the longer you're in an infantry unit the closer you get to them. When somebody particularly close to you is wounded or killed your attitude tends to shift toward extreme bitterness toward the enemy. As you lose more and more men your bitterness grows. Now you might say "why did you have to lose men to become bitter toward the enemy. Aren't you supposed to feel that way all the time?" Well you're more or less out there to protect your men, your perimeter or your fighting lines and to accomplish your mission. We're not cold-blooded killers in the infantry. If we can capture a man alive this is what we like to do. We don't go in to completely annihilate anyone. So I would say success in battle—which includes keeping your men alive—determines the attitude of an infantryman.

SMITH: Is bitterness an asset to combat success?

WALLACE: No, I don't think so. The bitterness can often stick with you for a long time. I'd much rather see an infantryman not bitter because if he is, he's the guy you have to watch to see that he doesn't violate the Geneva Convention. The enemy knows your unit, and if their intelligence discovers that men from a certain unit are violating the Geneva Convention, it could be real bad for anyone captured from that unit. This is primarily where bitterness can hurt you.

SMITH: During a battle, do you have any particular concern for another person?

WALLACE: Yes, you do. Through getting to know certain men and handling their personal problems and listening to the plans they've made for when they get back home—they naturally get close to you.

As I sit here and talk now I remember one very vividly. He was a Spec 5—a very fine guy—and I was particularly interested in seeing him get to Hawaii. He wanted to see his wife and there was only a certain time when she was free to meet him. But there was no R and R flight space available at that time and he was so determined he was going to pay six or seven hundred dollars to go on a commercial flight.

In order to save him all that money we went to great pains, working through our division headquarters, to get him a seat on an R and R flight. We finally got one, and then about three days before his leave he was blown off the road by a mine. There were four people in his vehicle and somehow he was the only man killed. It really hit me because I knew his wife was enroute to Hawaii at the time and how excited they both were about seeing each other. Frankly, for a few days, I could hardly see straight.

SMITH: Does a man in a leadership position have a special concern for the safety of his men?

WALLACE: As an NCO I'm concerned for all my men at all times. Part of every mission is bringing back as many men as possible. Our success in battle is measured largely by the number of men we've lost. When you're in a position of responsibility—even if only a squad leader—and you lose some of your men it is of particular interest to you. You are charged with the responsibility of getting those men back alive and the decisions you make in various situations could very well mean the difference between two men's lives or five or ten. So you have to be very much concerned with everyone.

SMITH: What is a unit's reaction in combat when a man is shot?

WALLACE: You never want to get so involved with a stricken man that you stop putting out that firepower. We are taught the principles of first aid but we have a medic with us. If a buddy is shot down next to me, I continue to observe the enemy while hollering for the medic. If none is available I'll designate one man to go over and try and stop the blood until a medic arrives. In this war we've lost quite a few men huddling around a wounded man. The enemy has that area zeroed in so it's not hard for him to take an entire group, gathering there. In WW II we did much more moving in a battle. We had people fall but we were taught never to drop out to treat a man unless ordered.

SMITH: I imagine it would be pretty tough if you were especially close to him.

WALLACE: You just try not to see him. You see him and then you don't see him. I might see a man drop but I'm also seeing rounds coming at me. My job is to continue putting out a field of fire, knowing we've got the best trained medics in the world. And either one of them will take care of him or one of our leaders will designate someone to do it. You can imagine what would happen if a whole squad stopped to treat this man. But this is where your training and self-discipline pays off. Sometimes you have to pick a man up and drag him along but you can't allow anyone to completely break down emotionally. The best thing for him to do is keep moving.

SMITH: Because of this hazard do the men—despite being friendly—try to maintain a certain distance from one another?

WALLACE: Yes. Very much so. But regardless of how hard you try there's always one or two who you can't help but get close to.

SMITH: How much do you tell your wife about what goes on in the field? Do you tell everything?

WALLACE: No, By no means. Some wives know the Army life as well as their husbands, so it's just as important to know your wife as it is your men. In my case, as long as I've been married, there are many things I haven't told my wife. I don't feel she should be burdened with the problems infantrymen encounter. She is not in the military but only a part of it. I try and select very carefully the things that I tell her. I'm pretty sure most servicemen do the same. I try and tell all the good things that happen, but she often criticizes me for not telling more. For example something might have happened in my general area when I was in the Delta with the 9th Division. Now she would learn more about it from Huntley and Brinkley and would often pin me down about it. But

I wouldn't give in. I'd write back and say "Well they've got to make a living with something, I don't know anything about it." I just tell my wife the brighter side of things. I don't think any soldier should tell his wife everything.

SMITH: She knows that you, as an infantryman, are bound to encounter combat sometime. Do you ever tell her when you've made enemy contact?

WALLACE: Well, I would mention that I was on an operation but that's all. But military wives are pretty smart. She's got to where she knew if I was at Bearcat (former 9th Division Head-

quarters), I wasn't in the field. But in Dong Tam she knew I was on operation. So then I got to where I didn't tell her where I was and fortunately that got me by. Now she knows I'm here at II Field Force and she could tell you almost before you could tell her if Long Binh were to get hit. I'll get a letter tomorrow about these rockets that hit Bien Hoa last night and she'll ask if it affected me? And I'll write back and tell her I didn't even hear them go off, that I slept right through it.

SMITH: Do you think she realizes you're encountering a lot more than you let on, but simply doesn't force you to talk about it?

WALLACE: Yes, they realize you don't care to talk about it. They know you've been in it, you've seen it and you want to get away from it. If they really want to know about it, they'll seek out another source.

SMITH: What's an infantryman's attitude toward so-called "desk jockeys"—soldiers in non-combat jobs?

WALLACE: He respects their job. The only time you may hear sarcastic remarks from an infantryman is when he walks into finance to get paid after he's been out in the jungle and a guy sits there drinking coffee showing no interest in him. The infantryman goes out and does his job, facing death all the time. Then he comes back and gets a rough time. Sometimes they won't show enough interest to process his pay voucher, or they won't get his orders out for his Good Conduct Medal or they won't show enough interest to see that his port call is there on time. These are the only times I've ever seen an infantryman even somewhat hostile toward a man in a non-combat job. There is definitely no bitterness. The infantryman is proud of the "Queen of Battle"—the missions and hardships he's encountered.

SMITH: What does the individual soldier do on his own to maintain his morale?

WALLACE: He relies on his confidence in the people placed over him. But one thing we've always done in the infantry —we never let one man do all the thinking. We always listen to any individual who wants to offer advice. We may not agree with it, but we listen to him. After all, this is his life too. He's going out there with you, and I've always maintained that two or three heads are better than one. Prior to an attack—if time permits—by asking some of the men, "How would you do it?" you'll have a better rifle team going out with you than if you just say "Okay, you go here, you go there, you do this etc." We let this private walk through the door right along with our leaders and that way he feels part of the team and feels he had something to do with the development of the operation order. It gets him saying "That old Sarge is tough, but at least he let me have my say."

SMITH: When a firefight gets pretty hot and the odds begin to go against you, do any different or new thoughts begin going through your mind?

WALLACE: In the Battle of the Bulge the odds were quite bad. I was rather young then and I can only remember wondering "What kind of a man will I be when I get out of this thing?" I can also say it sure made a Christian out of me. There have been a lot of people in combat that if it hadn't been as rough for them, they wouldn't have become religious. You ask for a lot of help out there. I've overheard a lot of things directed toward God in close calls, from men I never would have expected. When things look bad in combat, a soldier has a tendency to ask God for a little help. I know I've said a lot of prayers out there.

SMITH: Are your actions in combat altered when you're in a tight situation?

WALLACE: If you're getting a good licking and you've got men falling as we did in the Battle of the Bulge, you just try and hold your own—defend a piece of real estate. There's not much getting up and charging ahead when you know every man that sticks his head up will fall. So you stay there and wait for that reinforcement. That's the secret over here. You've got that communication going for you. Your commander radios into your battalion so they know you're pinned down and taking a lot of casualties. You're only hoping to put out enough volume of fire to hold you until your reinforcements or artillery arrives.

SMITH: You've been in three wars spanning 25 years. Out of all the missions and battles you've encountered, what has been your most taxing experience?

WALLACE: The first time I was fired at here in Vietnam. No matter how many times you've been fired on in the past, that first time after being away from it awhile is still pretty frightening.

SMITH: What makes a man like yourself stick with the infantry?

WALLACE: There seems to be an esprit de corps and a breed of man in the infantry that has deep concern toward each other as a family. They work hard together, play hard together, and train hard together. I don't think there's any one group of men that's as dedicated to a job. When you tell an infantryman he's a member of the combat arms—the "Queen of Battle"—of course it means something. He has pride, motivation, esprit de corps and just the real self-satisfying feeling of knowing he's part of one of the greatest combat arms in the business. I know this is why I've stuck with the infantry.

SMITH: Can you honestly say you enjoy your work in the field though, what with all the hardships and danger involved?

WALLACE: Regarding combat, I can't say that anyone enjoys facing death from day to day. But once you become part of that "machine" that's moving through that field out there, you have a personal satisfaction deep down. This is the mission you've been entrusted with, this is the job you've been trained for, this is a job that has to be done and when you accomplish it and return to the States in a garrison situation and you run into people who have respect for the job you've done, it gives you a great feeling to know you were a part of that.

A BROTHER'S DEVOTION

A Vietnamese Legend

Hai and Ba's father died suddenly without making out a will and Hai, being the older brother, took all the money and property for himself. Ba was left with nothing but a miserable hut and a piece of worthless land.

Although Hai was unfair toward his brother, he was very generous to his many friends. Hai's wife could not understand why he was so kind to his friends yet cruel to his own brother.

Upon returning one day from the village, Hai found his wife crying outside their house. His wife explained that while he was gone a beggar had come and while she was getting him some food, he tried to steal some clothes. In her anger, she struck him with a bamboo stick and killed him. She wrapped the body in a mat and dragged it outside. Someone was needed to bury it, but they could not call the village mandarin for fear he would not understand that she had killed the beggar by accident.

None of Hai's friends would help him bury the beggar. He knocked in vain at door after door, but the friends he had called upon first had spread the word. All doors were closed. At last, Hai turned to his brother for help. After hearing Hai's story, Ba offered his help without a second's hesitation. They both worked until long past midnight completing the unpleasant task.

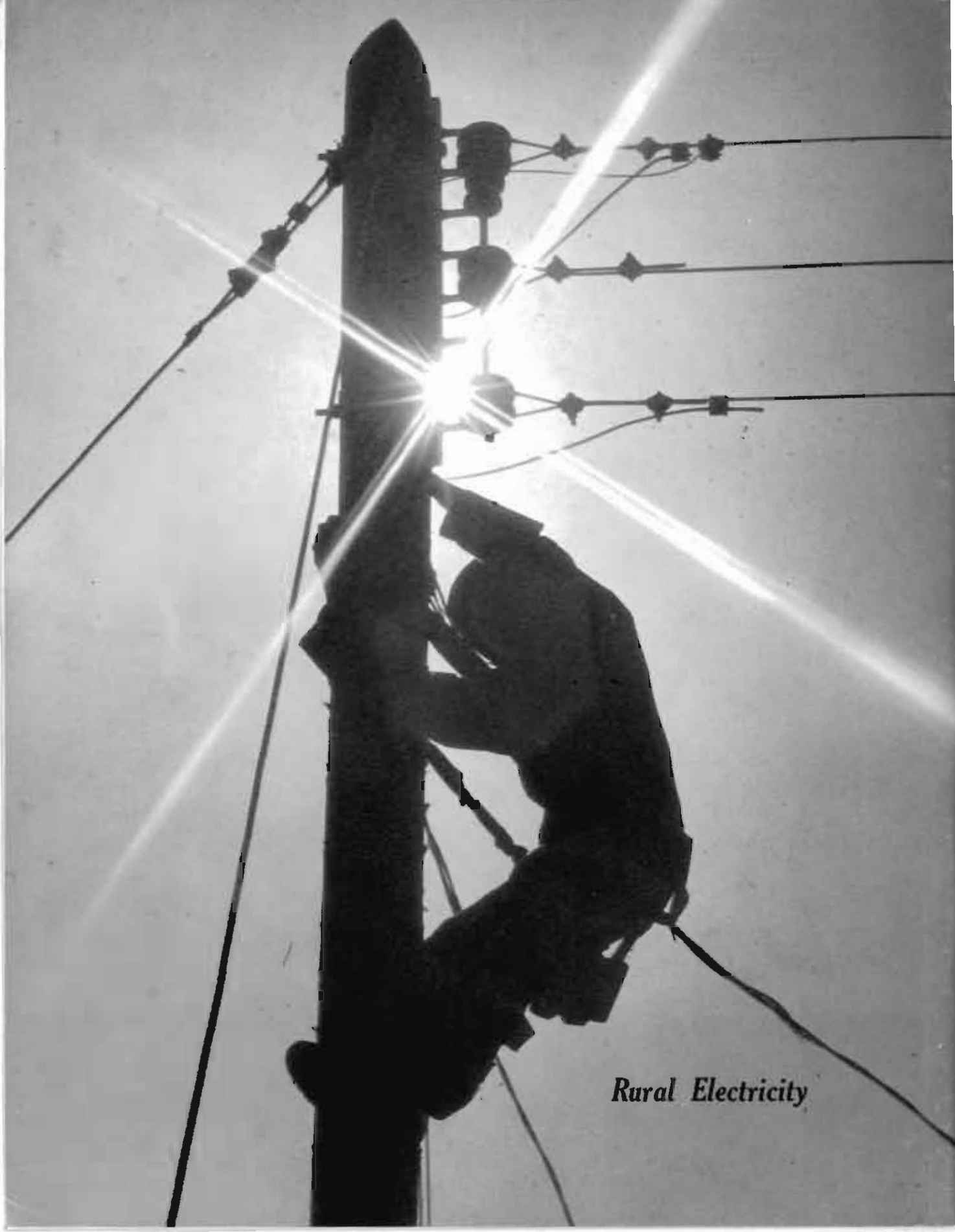
The next morning Hai and his wife were summoned to the mandarin's house. Ba was also summoned.

The mandarin charged them with murder. Hai's friends had turned them in. The mandarin instructed Hai to lead them to the beggar's grave site.

Everyone went to the forest and the grave was opened. But to everyone's surprise, when the mat was unrolled, all that was inside was a corpse of a big black dog.

All eyes turned to Hai's wife. She had planned the deception to show her husband that brotherly love was deep and holy.

From that time on Hai and Ba lived like true brothers and shared every joy and sorrow with each other. This was pleasing to Hai's wife, whose clever trick had brought them together.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