

Pilots Add 2 Cents To Chaplain's Mass

BAN ME THUOT—To Chaplain (Lieutenant Colonel) Peter Van Dyke of Green Bay, Wis., a typical Sunday means going to the field to hold mass.

He has learned to live with the numerous distractions there—outgoing artillery shells, small arms fire and even 750-pound bombs exploding nearby.

But he wasn't quite ready for what happened to him at Firebase Saber in the Central Highlands, then home of the 2nd Brigade's 2nd Battalion, 35th Infantry.

Father Van Dyke of I Field Force Victor, was offering an early mass to the 4th Division soldiers, when suddenly, two Air Force F-100 Super Sabres came screaming overhead only a few hundred feet off the ground.

Service Halted

The service was momentarily halted while the noise abated. Then Father Van Dyke asked someone to contact the jets.

"Tell them not to fly over so low again," he smiled. "They're disturbing my service."

The message was radioed to

Captain Bradley Van Sant of Davis, Calif., 21st Tactical Air Support Squadron, who was winging overhead in a FAC (Forward Air Control) plane.

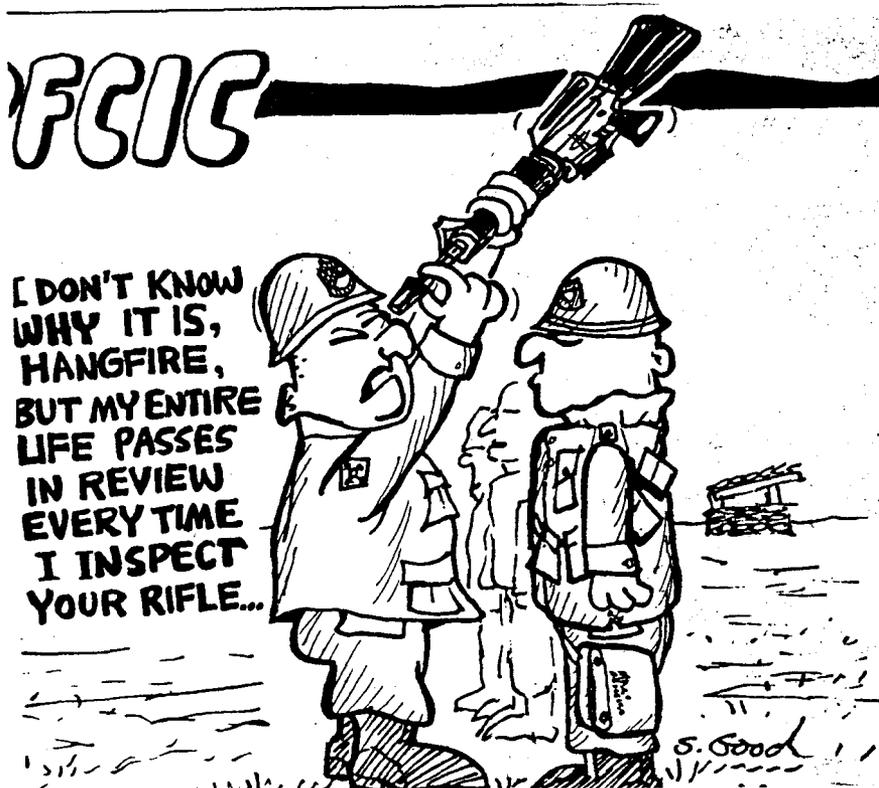
"We had just put in an air strike on a suspected enemy bunker complex southwest of the Duc Lap Civilian Irregular Defense Group (CIDG)," Captain Van Sant said.

"The F-100 pilot told me they still had fuel and they like to give the ground forces an opportunity to see what their air support looks like. So in they came.

"I relayed the chaplain's message to the pilots," he continued. "They apologized for disturbing the mass, but said to me: 'Please remind the chaplain that all good things come from above.'"

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Joy Leaf



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