

"And then there was a beginning, a separation, and certainly some exhilaration about the long trip ahead, but more than anything else, there was sadness."

May 26, 1969: Things were a little stilted around home that morning. We ate a light breakfast and the two hours before I was to leave for the airport passed quickly.

Kathy was dressed in her cute, red and black mini-dress. She looked beautiful as always. Mom looked strikingly well-dressed and Dad had "suited-up" for the occasion. Randy and Ronny were dressed for school, where we left them after saying the not-to-anticipated "Good-bye and see you later."

We pulled into Eppley about 8:00 a.m., as my flight was scheduled for 8:50. We drank coffee until just before boarding, then proceeded to boarding gate #9.

Once again it was time for some soft words and last re-assurances. These would have to last for a year, so they had to be good ones. The rest of my immediate family had been visited the night before, so this helped our cause a little bit.

Kathy kept a stiff upper lip, as we'd been preparing ourselves for this moment for some time. Mom and Dad conscientiously controlled their emotions, making the last few moments with all of them a lot easier. I'll never forget that morning. Thanks to their efforts, it was much easier than I had thought it might be.

I then walked aboard the United Airlines Mainliner #727, with the most distant, certainly the longest duration, and possibly the most adventurous trip of my short life.

Here in pictures and words is recorded my account of "One Year in Vietnam." It's a task that has been undertaken as a time-passer, and as a personal history of this battle-scarred land that I visited from March 29, 1969 to March 28, 1970.

One

Year  
in

Vietnam

by

DUKE WOLFE

Mr. and Mrs. Max Schnoor and Mr. and Mrs. Dean Galyen and family went to Council Bluffs Sunday where they were guests of Mr. and Mrs. Austin Wolfe and family at dinner honoring Sp.4 and Mrs. Dave Wolfe. Dave will leave Omaha March 26 enroute to Vietnam for a year's duty. Mrs. Wolfe will return to Tilden Friday to stay with her parents, Mr. and Mrs. Dean Galyen. She has enrolled at Wayne State College for the term starting the last of April.



This picture looked so much like Kathy, I had to cut it out and save it for all to see.



PACIFIC  
**STARS  
&  
STRIPES**

# NEWSFRONT

B52 Strikes  
Fall Below  
Average

## VIETNAM:

**NVA Depot 20 Mi. Above DMZ**

**VC Arms Factory Captured**

**Allies Rout Reds From DMZ to Delta**

**Marines Are Quicker and Slicker**

**Westy Rejected Viet War Censorship**

**65 N. Viet Units Reported in Laos**

**Reds Disturb GIs' Rest—Pay With Lives**

**Navy Lowers Boom  
On Enemy Bunkers**

**Enemy Can't Keep Up A-Blasts for Hire**

**Tight Security Ring  
Circles Mutiny Trial**

**the Draft**

CIVIL ACTION...

# Americans Give Viets Food, Hope



Father Bui Duc and members of the 1st Brigade check progress on the construction of Bong Son Refugee Center.



Lieutenant Cameron Lee of 1st Civil Affairs Company, delights children of Bahner Village with basketball antics.



Even the muddy An Lao Valley water doesn't stop a quick battlefield shower by men of Co. B, 5th Bn., 7th Cav.



Villager receives free medical care.



GI washes small Vietnamese lad.

# Gave Viets a Hand



Squadrons assault from Chinook.



CH-17A "Co-Co" ship, heavily armed Chinook, awaits mission.



**THE CAV**



CH-54 "Flying Crane" moves 1.5m howitzer during Operation Porshing.



1st AIR CAVALRY DIVISION  
APO SAN FRANCISCO 96490

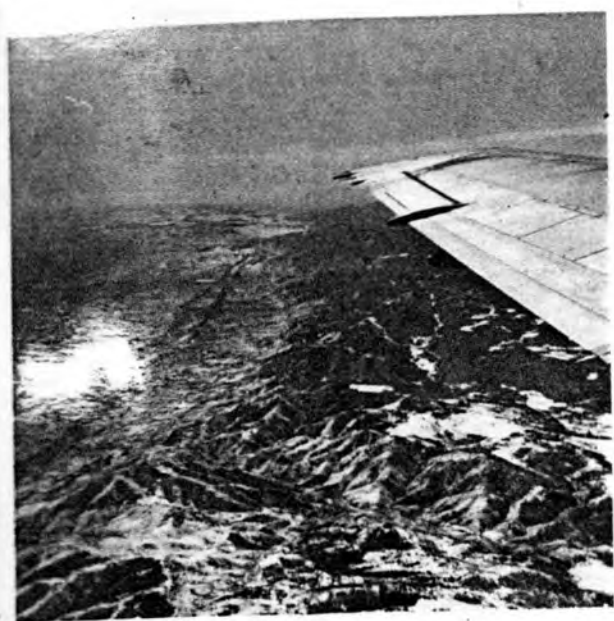
**AIRMOBILITY**



CH-47 "Chinook" airlifts 105mm assault howitzer.

**GRUNT**

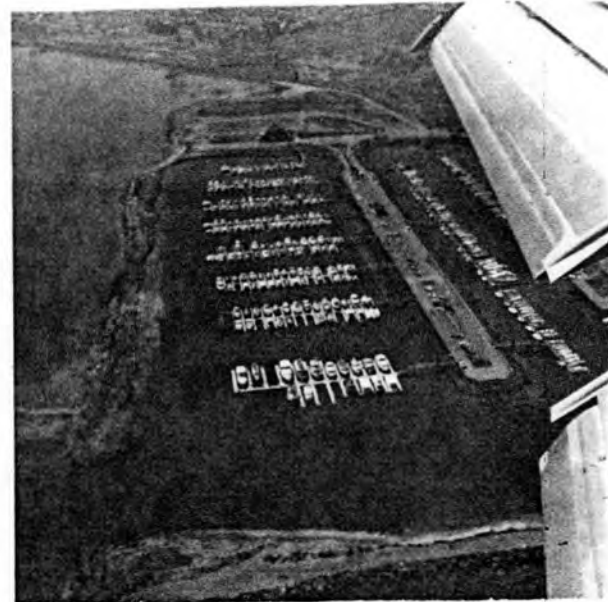




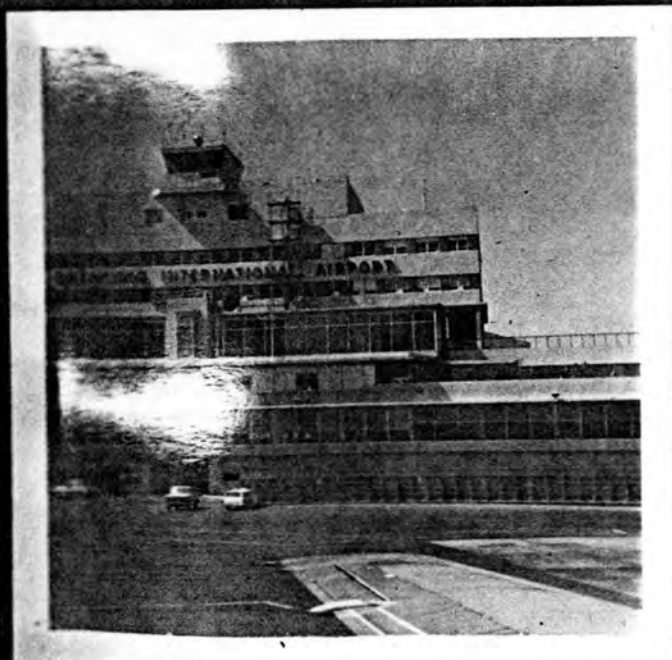
We were immediately over the outer edge of the Rockies when this was taken. I remember that we were being served breakfast at this time, as I spilled a little coffee on my Army uniform when we hit a small air-pocket.



There were some ski resorts below us when this picture was taken, obviously not visible from an altitude of 20,000 feet, however.



This picture shows the harbor which skirts the San Francisco International Airport. Note that the wing flaps have been lowered for the landing. I didn't think we were going to hit land when we were approaching the airport, as we were only 100 feet or so off the water just before touching down in the sunny state of California. My first visit there was to become a pleasant experience.

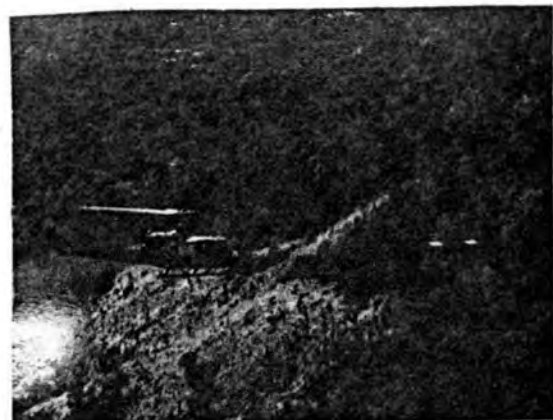


But the San off the Francisco in the picture, but the airport in the Bay area was about as nice as any I'd previously flown into. I got my baggage from the terminal turntable, and immediately left for the Oakland Reception Station. It was a soothing ride in the bus, as we passed through a lot of Oakland, and passed over the Bay Bridge. Saw quite a lot.





# Weapons of War



2nd B., 20th Aerial Rocket Artillery  
engages target.



Improved Personnel Carrier (APC) of  
1st Bn., 50th Tech tests flame  
thrower.



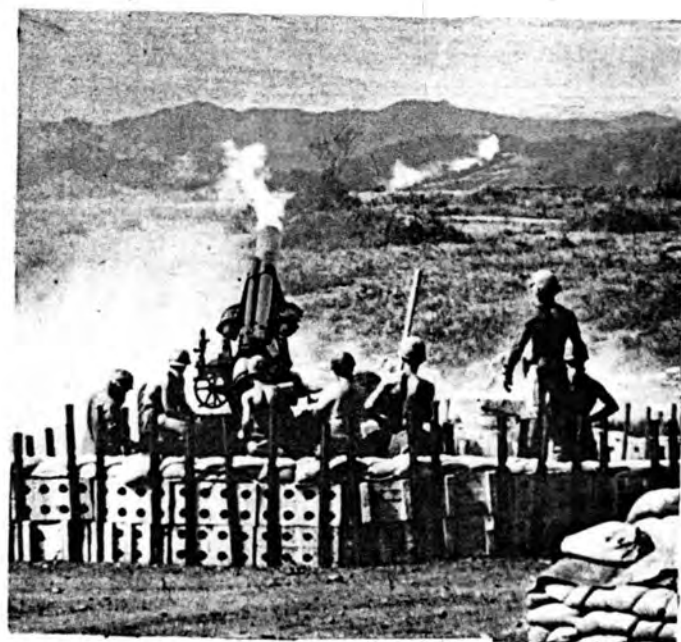
Artillerymen.

All Americans



Moving through the jungle, you  
stay alert and keep quiet.

Blast It!



More Artillerymen.

Oa

CONG EXTERMINATORS



DEATH WING INC.

1ST PLT. DELTA CO.

1ST BN. 12TH CAV.

HOT L.Z. ON CALL  
NIGHT AIR ASSAULTS  
BY APPOINTMENT ONLY

TEL. CAMP EVANS  
EAST 801

The calling card of the 1st Platoon, Company D, 1st Battalion, 12th Cavalry, 1st Air Cavalry Division. The card states their nickname: "Death Wing Inc." I got this while working at Division Information Office, Phuoc Vinh, Vietnam. The combat artist there had drawn it, then it was photographed for publication. However, it was censored on the grounds that it didn't promote the Army image with its image of blood thirsty men.



**Humor in Uniform**

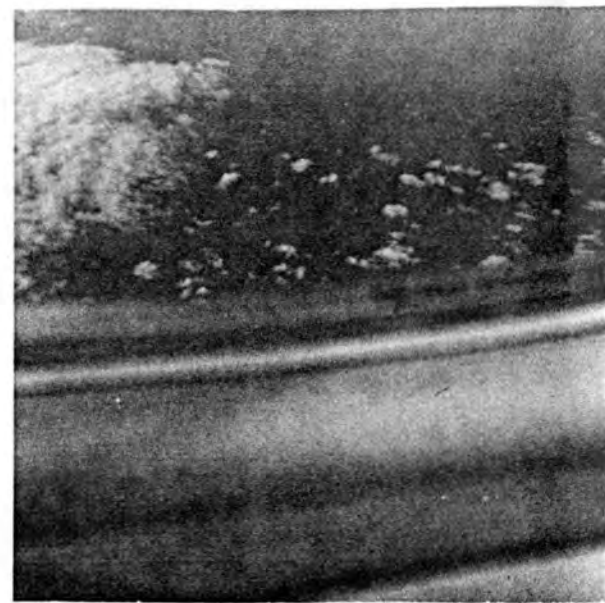
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The first one picture the state of the house. Replace massive was to Flying were allowed to record how it looked inside, but it wasn't like your living room back home, believe me.



And here it is, "The Freedom Bird." It was an awfully large plane, with approximately 180 passengers on board for our flight to Alaska, then Japan, and finally--Vietnam.

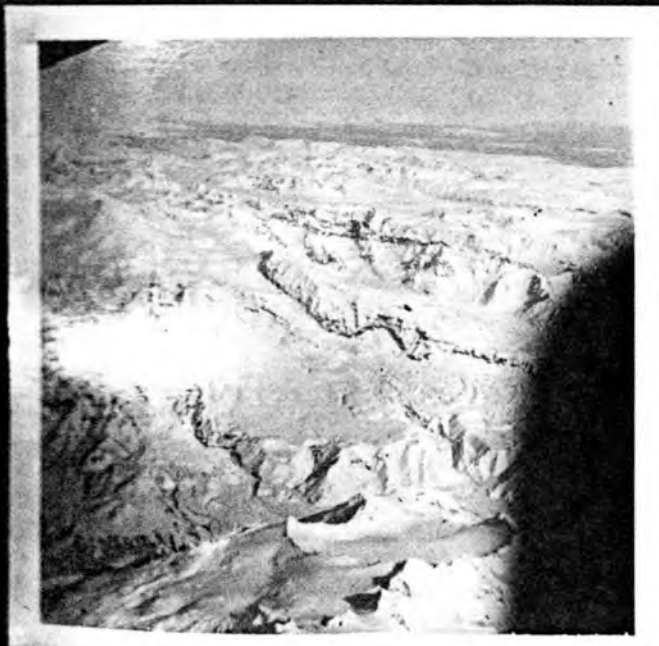


This is a view of the ocean off the coast of California, as we flew over the top of the world, through Alaska and Japan and on to the "land of the rising sun." The picture was taken from approximately 28,000 feet, and it looks like the horizon--not water--The clouds drift listlessly around, but seem to be standing still and not moving at all when viewed from a plane.



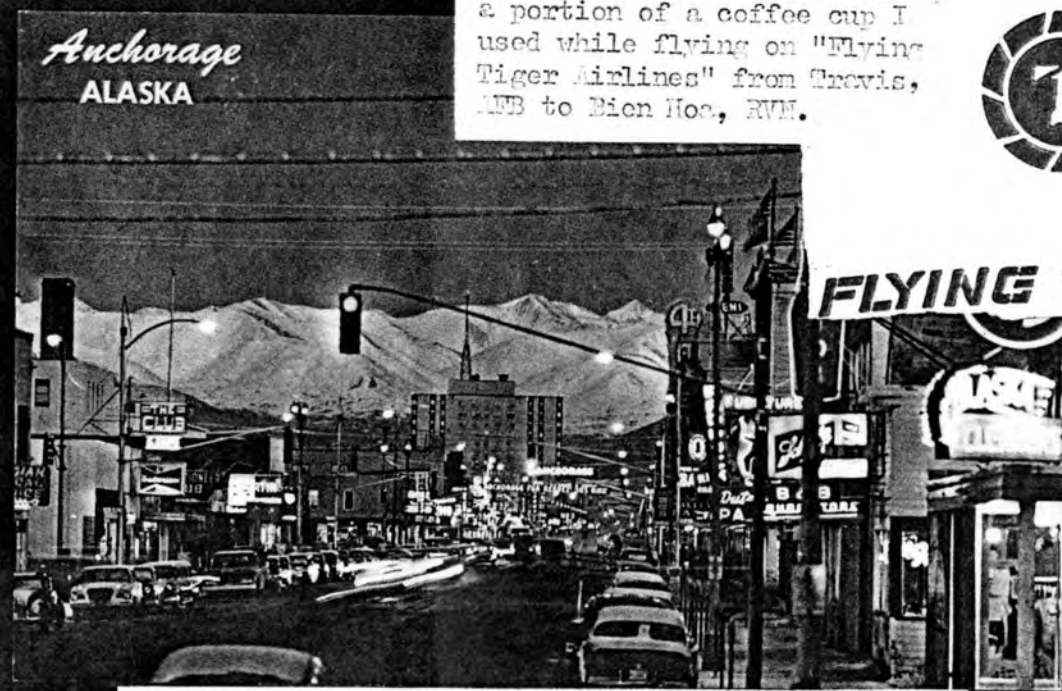
My first glimpse of the snowy peaks of the mountains in Alaska. I'd just woke up from a 3 hour snooze, and managed to fumble around long enough to take this picture. The white portion in the middle is, of course, a cloud formation moving through the area. Just below us, there was vast amounts of huge lakes, rivers and that sort of thing. It really was a pretty sight, but this pictures doesn't do it justice.

# Alaska



This is one of the best pictures I took while flying to Vietnam, but I messed it up by getting my big finger over a portion of the lense. I remember that I was setting in the middle of a 3-seat column, and had to lean over this guy to take all my pictures. That's my excuse and I'm sticking to it. Okay?

Anchorage  
ALASKA



Anchorage, Alaska is shown in this view of the modern city at dusk. The Chugach Mountains are seen in the distance.

Believe it or not, this is a portion of a coffee cup I used while flying on "Flying Tiger Airlines" from Grovis, AFB to Bien Hoa, RVN.



**FLYING TIGERS**

Everyone who comes to Vietnam is initially a FNG-- a polite abbreviation for "Funny New Guy."

Your first few weeks are usually the toughest. Your mind is filled with stories you've heard from Vietnam veterans in Basic and Advanced Individual Training, or perhaps from a buddy back home, who just returned from his Vietnam tour.

You arrive in-country at a replacement center. While standing in one of many mandatory formations, you hear a passing GI yell "Short!" and, "Five days till ETS!" These are terms which mean nothing to you at the moment and add to your growing apprehension and confusion about the months ahead.

After several days of details and processing, you finally receive your orders to "go forward." Carrying a duffel bag with your life's belongings, you're taken to a nearby airstrip, manifested for a flight on the waiting C-130 and sent on the next leg of your journey to "the field."

Why do they call it "the field?" you ask yourself. What's it going to be like? These and other questions toss in your mind. In the torrid heat, your odorous, sweat soaked clothes remind you of your high school locker room after a tough football game...a scene that seems not so very long ago.

Finally, after a flight that leaves your stomach upset and your head spinning, the plane lands...where? You don't know and no one bothers to tell you. The "follow the crowd" instinct takes over and you move off the runway to a staging area where you're told that you'll be leaving in three hours.

"Stay here...don't wander around," is the greeting you receive as you settle down on your duffel bag in the hot sun. You try to get some sleep but anticipation keeps your mind alert. You sit listening to your fellow FNGs speculate about the coming weeks.

The hot tar pavement makes the air around you even more stifling. Three hours become five and finally word reaches you--your flight is here.

Again you climb aboard the big camouflaged bird that looks so far behind in aircraft design that you wonder how it ever gets off the ground. But it does, and once again you arrive at an unknown destination, some landing zone somewhere.

The next three to four days are taken up by training to acquaint you with Vietnam and conditions there. You discover that most of it is merely a review of the instruction back in the States, but still you listen, thinking that perhaps you'll learn something that might save your life later on.

You experience what it's like to rappel from a 40 foot tower, and discover it's not as bad as it sounds or looks. Still you hope you never have to do it under combat conditions.

With division training over, you report to your unit back down south, where you just came from. You sign into your unit, and 3 days later, you're no longer a FNG, but have become a 3-day veteran, who waits for the next FNG to come in so you'll no longer be the long-timer in the unit.

I found this little legend in a magazine I was reading in April, while there in Vietnam. I felt it pretty well depicted the close family ties that are prevalent in these Asian people. Family ties have probably caused the death of many GI's, because the very same people who work at Army installations there, are the ones who provide information to "Charlie", and/or the NVA. Perhaps many of these same people are the enemy, also.

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.

BRAND NEW



A scripture reading in the field.

## Religion in the Field



The Lord's Prayer



This poetical interpretation of the Lord's Prayer was written during the War of 1912. At the time of its publication, the text was accompanied by the following explanatory note:

"We lay before our readers this morning the 'Lord's Prayer,' beautifully paraphrased into an acrostic, by Thanos Sturdevant, Jr., a soldier in the 26th Regiment, United States Infantry, and prisoner of war in the province of Upper Canada."



Men at prayer in the open air.

OUR Lord and King, who reign'st enthroned on high,  
 FATHER of light; mysterious Deity:  
 WHO art the great I Am, the last, and first,  
 ART righteous, holy, merciful and just,  
 IN realms of glory, scenes where angels sing,  
 HEAVEN is the dwelling place of God our King.  
 HALLOWED Thy name, which doth all names transcend,  
 BE Thou adored, Our great Almighty Friend.  
 THY glory shines beyond creation's space,  
 WRITTEN in the book of justice and of grace.  
 THY kingdom towers beyond the starry skies:  
 KINGDOM satanic falls, but Thine shall rise,  
 COME let Thine empire, O Thou Holy One,  
 THY great and everlasting will be done,  
 WILL God make known His will, His power display:  
 BE it the work of mortals to obey.  
 DONE is the great, the wonderful work of love,  
 ON Calvary's Cross He died, but reigns above.  
 EARTH bears the record in Thy holy Word,  
 AS heaven adores Thy love, let earth, O Lord,  
 IT shines transcendent in Thy eternal skies,  
 IT'S praised in Heaven: for man the Saviour deis.  
 IN songs immortal angels laud His name,  
 HEAVEN shouts with joy, and saints His love proclaim.  
 GIVE us, O Lord, our food, nor cease to give  
 US of that food on which our souls may live:  
 THIS be our boon today, and days to come,  
 DAY without end in our eternal home:  
 OUR needy souls supply from day to day,  
 DAILY assist and aid us when we pray.  
 PREAD though we ask, yet Lord, Thy blessing lend.

AND make us grateful when Thy gifts descend  
 PARDON our sins, which in destruction place  
 OUR follies, fruits, and trespasses forgive,  
 DEBTS which we never can pay, or Thou receive:  
 AS we, O Lord, our neighbours' faults O'erlook,  
 WE beseech Thee blot ours from Thy memory book.  
 FORGIVE our enemies, extend Thy Grace  
 OUR souls to save, e'en Adam's guilty race.  
 DEBTORS to Thee in gratitude and love,  
 AND in the duty paid by saints above.  
 LEAD us from sin, and in Thy mercy race  
 US from the tempter and his hellish ways,  
 NOT in our own, but in His name who bled,  
 INTO Thine ear we pour our every need.  
 TEMPTATION'S fatal charms help us to shun  
 BUT may be conquer through Thy conquering Son!  
 DELIVER us from all which can annoy  
 US in this world, and may our souls destroy.  
 FROM all calamities which men betide,  
 EVIL and death, O turn our feet aside.  
 FOR we are mortal worms, and cleave to clay:  
 THINE 'tis to rule, and mortals to obey.  
 IS not Thy mercy, Lord, forever free?  
 THE whole creation knows no God but Thee.  
 KINGDOM and empire in Thy presence fall;  
 THE King eternal reigns the King of all.  
 POWER is with Thee, to Thee be glory give.  
 AND be Thy name adored by earth and heaven;  
 GLORY to Thee, the everlasting One,  
 FOREVER be Thy triune name adored;  
 AMEN! Hosanna! Blessed by the Lord!



GI receives "holy communion" in field.

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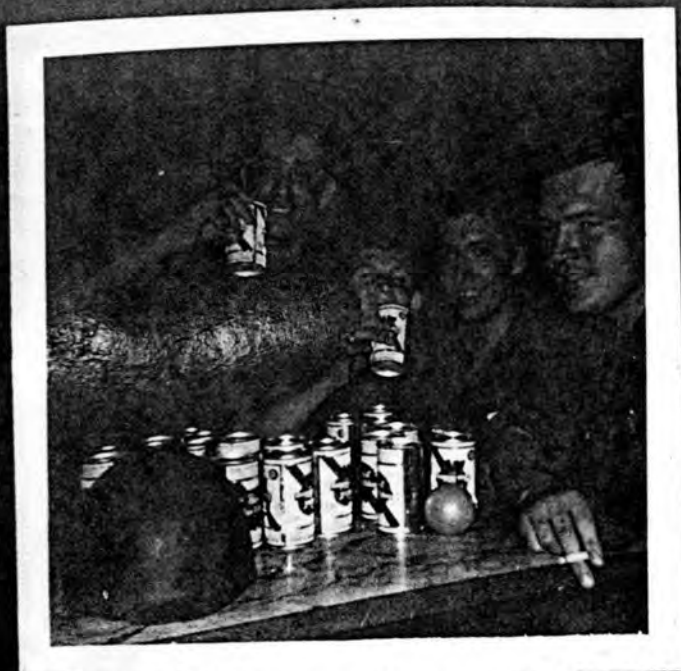


### What Happens After it's Over?

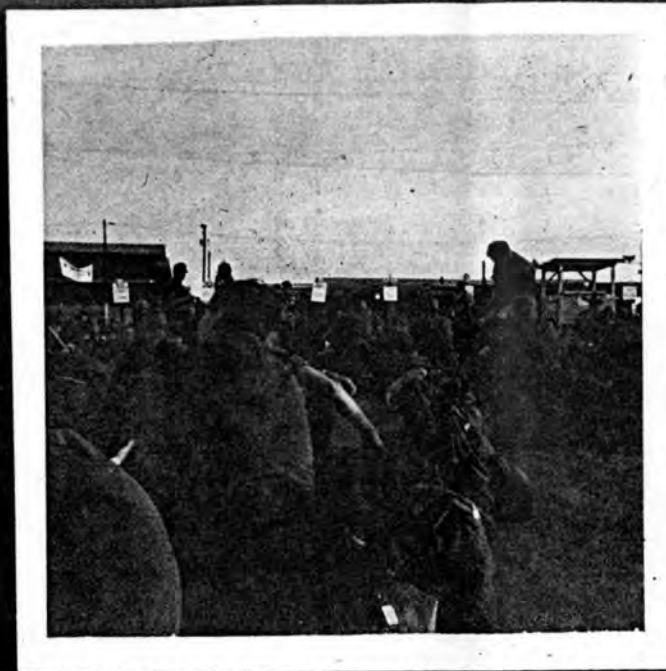
The teams visit the villages and hamlets regularly. They offer a variety of things--medical help, construction material, and much moral support. The people watch for them--the elderly, the middle-aged, but mostly the children. When the people see them coming, the throngs start to gather--maybe to get the "Doc" to take a look at a child's infected ear...maybe to listen to a concert by the Division's band...once a year to celebrate Christmas in present brought by the team. Civic action programs in the 1st Air Cavalry Division really need no introduction. They are as important in their own way as the famous Cav combat operations--the battle of Hue, the relief of Khe Sanh, the jump into the A Shau Valley. The average mother or child in the average South Vietnamese village has never heard of the Division's action at Khe Sanh, or in the A Shau. But they have heard of civic action. In the Cav's areas of operation they have seen the Skytroopers' own version of the civic action program. It's much easier to win a mother's or child's confidence with a present for Christmas or medicine for an illness, than by explaining the battle for Hue. It's also much more pleasant. I've seen these civic action programs in action, and as far as I can predict, these are the answers to a great deal of our propaganda difficulties in this warring nation. When "Charles" stops firing, it is my idea that a massive "Peace Corps" effort will do so very much to right the wrongs and problems of this underdeveloped nation.

→ **need**





The guy on the left was really a fine kid. His name was Danny Anzuras, and he was quite a smooth talking, Spaniard. I really enjoyed meeting him. He was an 11-B, and therefore, we soon went our separate ways. He was from outside Phoenix, and gave me his address, but I lost it. The guy on the far right with the funny look on his face was named Bob. He, Danny and I went to San Francisco the one night we got passes while at Oakland Reception Station. We went to a Discotheque called "Sergeant Peppers Lonely Heart's Club." There was a popular tune, which later became a nation-wide hit by the same name. I really enjoyed their company, as it was good to find others in the same ill-suited predicament. Bob had a 13 month old daughter, and a very pretty wife. Danny had 4 children (can you believe it), but volunteered for Vietnam as he had something to prove to himself, or so he thought.



This was the scene the night we got our orders to move to An Khe, and the Division Training Center. I'd estimate that approximately 600 guys moved to their respective divisions on that day alone. As I recall, it was the 31st of March, and we were to fly on a C-130. I later took a picture of the inside of the C-130, but it didn't turn out, so will try to get another before I leave. There were a lot of very sad faces everywhere you turned, and there were a lot of happy ones, too, as a great many GIs were to leave the next morning to catch the "Freedom Bird" for home.

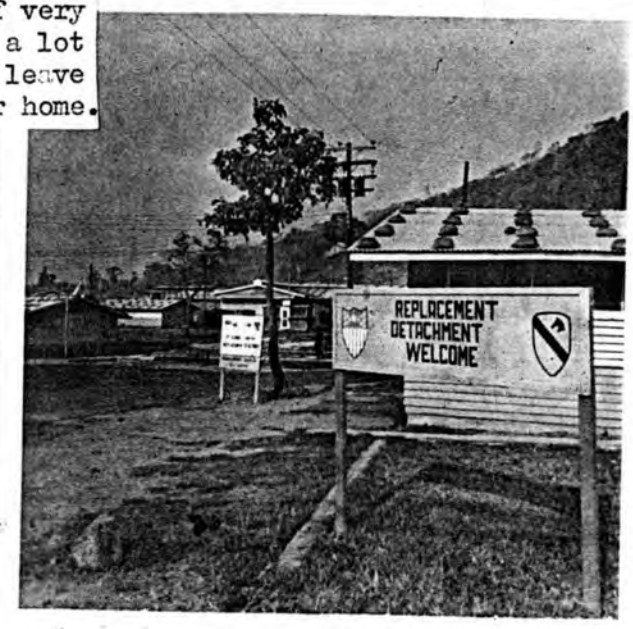
An Khe

**M-16 PM INDICATORS**  
FOR INSPECTORS

JUST LIKE ANY PIECE OF EQUIPMENT, THE M-16 MUST BE CHECKED EVERY DAY TO KEEP IT FIRING. THERE ISN'T ANY WHITE GLOVE INSPECTION FOR THIS BABY - YOU HAVE TO LOOK HER OVER CLOSE AND GET SOME OIL ON YOUR HANDS TO TELL IF THE OWNER IS TREATING HER RIGHT. AFTER AN INITIAL CHECK FOR GENERAL APPEARANCE AND OBVIOUS DEFECTS, MAKE SURE YOU:

1. REMOVE THE BOLT CARRIER, IT SHOULD BE LUBED WITH LSA. THE INSIDE OF THE KEY SHOULD BE CLEAN AND DRY.
2. CHECK THE EXTRACTOR FOR SIGNS OF WEAR - PUSH IT UP WITH YOUR THUMB - UNLESS IT HURTS THE SPRING IS PROBABLY TOO WEAK. CHECK THE FACE OF THE BOLT FOR PITS AND ELONGATION OF THE FIRING PIN HOLE.

(20 SEPTEMBER 1967)



After our thrilling C-130 ride to An Khe, we piled on busses again, and went through some desolate looking country. But it wasn't that bad there, because we'd left the sultry humid heat of the south and had come to the less arid portion of Vietnam, the central highlands. It was actually further north than that, as we were within 70 miles of the DMZ (demilitarized zone). Another replacement detachment welcomed us, this time the 1st Air Cavalry Division 90th Replacement Detachment. We had finally arrived at our division destination, but we still had some training and processing to do. I was at An Khe for approximately 7 days.

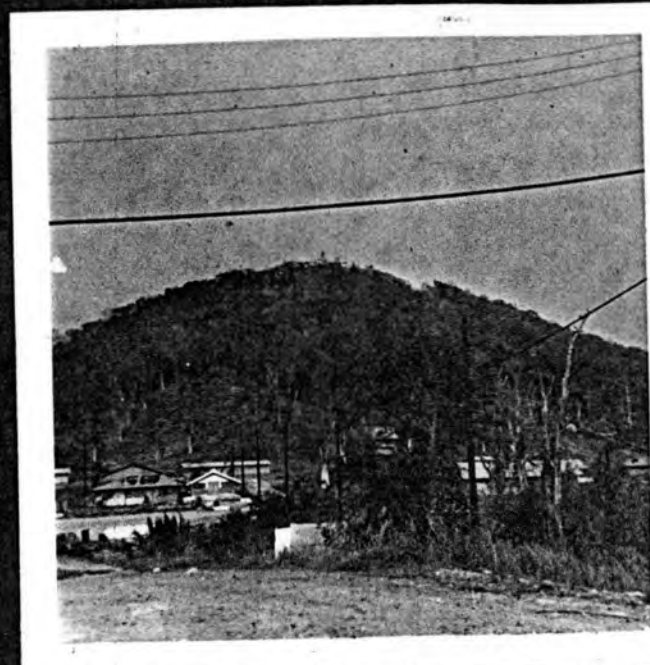
DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY  
HEADQUARTERS 1ST AIR CAVALRY DIVISION  
APO San Francisco 96490

SPECIAL ORDERS  
NUMBER 94 EXTRACT 4 April 1969

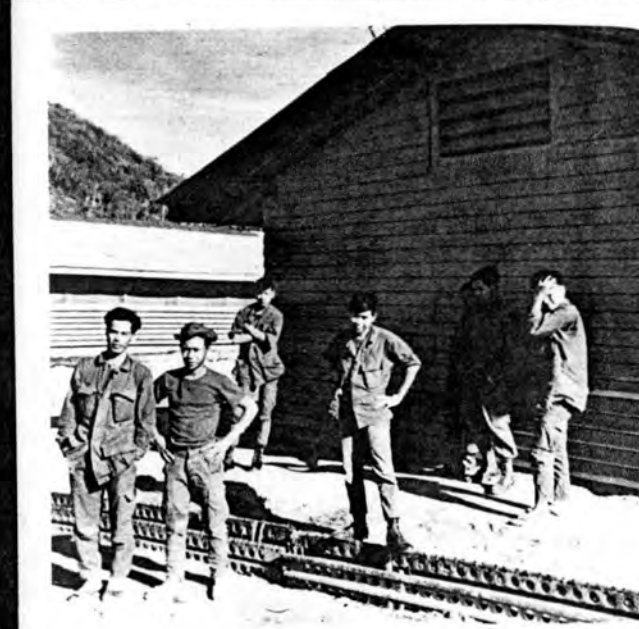
38. TC 250. Fol indiv having been asg this sta/org are FUR ASG as indic. Fol data applies UNOINDC. Rel fr: US RV Trans Det APO 96384 Rept date: NA Grade: PVT E2 DEROS: 30Mar70 Scty Clnc: X PFSC: A COA: NA Lv data: NA Depn: V Sp Instr: Indiv atch to Repl Det, 15th Admin Co for approx three days and DEW 531 GEN for approx five days for rats and qtrs eff date of this order. EDCS.: 10Apr69

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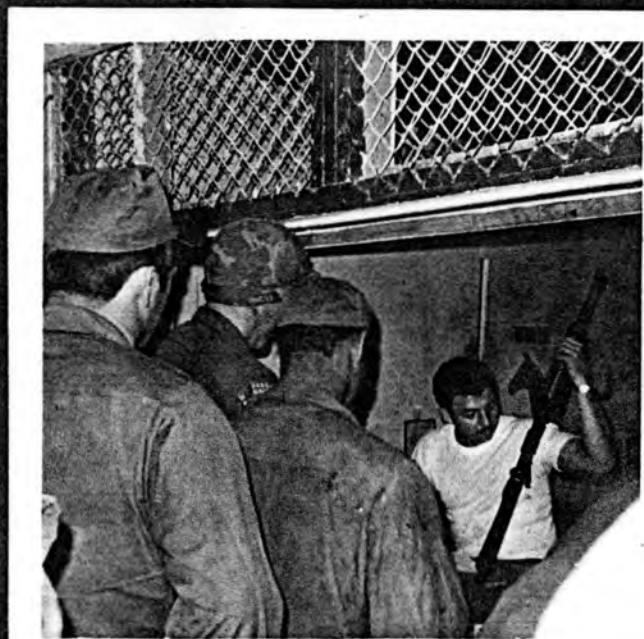
# Montagnard Villagers



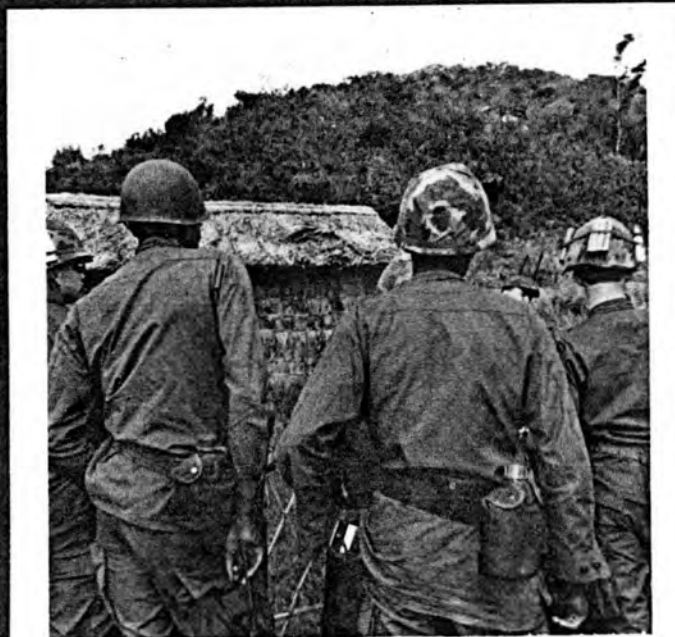
High atop this hill (Hong Kong Hill), there's a giant Cavalry patch, since removed when the Cav moved down to the III Corps area in the south. You can barely make it out. A signal unit is stationed up there with vast radar equipment and housing, etc. The buildings in the foreground are part of those that we stayed in while at An Khe.



These young gentlemen are Montagnard Villagers, who are training with the U.S. Army to combat the communists, (pronounced MOUNTAIN-YARD). I got their attention and they are looking rather pleased at having their picture taken. They are a shy people, but evidently make some of the best fighters for the Army of the Republic of Vietnam--ARVN.



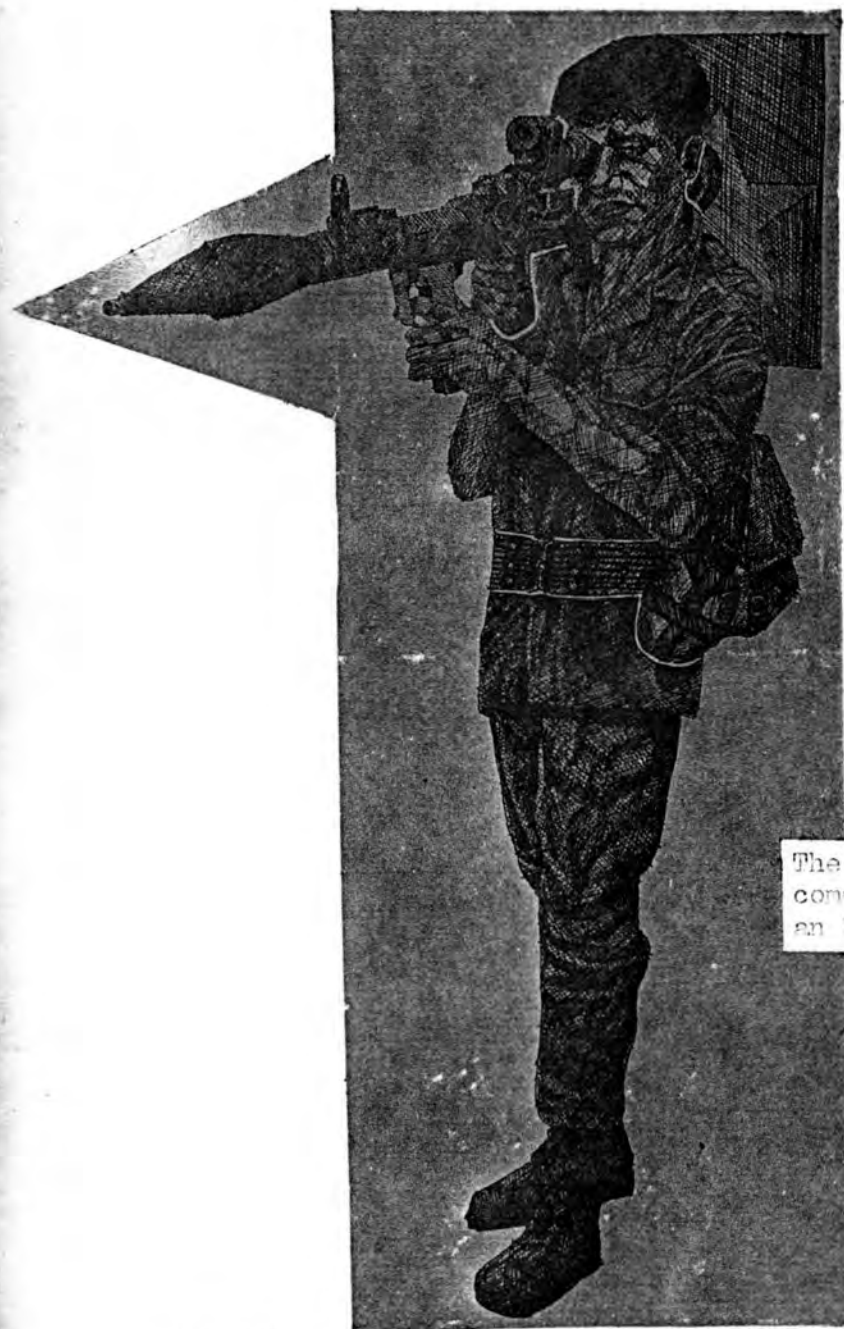
Now they are turning us into soldiers. They are issuing us our M-16 rifles, and the dude behind the counter was from Minneapolis. Funny how you remember insignificant stuff like that. The one guy in the middle is wearing a Ranger Airborne patch, so he obviously is a rough-ridin' SOB.



Another day of DTC (Division Training Center) finds us listening to a lecture by an E-8 sergeant, former platoon leader in the field, who knew what he was talking about. The lecture concerned the vast number of ways the VC have of boob-trapping gates, fences, villages, etc.

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# The Latest Fashions From Hanoi



Rocket-propelled grenade (RPG) launchers have played an important role in the Vietnam conflict. This North Vietnamese "hard core" soldier looks through the sight of an RPG-7. With a new rocket booster adding extra thrust to the armor-piercing grenade, the RPG-7 is a devastating weapon.



The popular black pajamas worn by Viet Cong guerillas come in long and short styles. This VC is armed with an NVA Chinese Communist rifle and US hand grenades.



While the Viet Cong guerilla has only sandals to protect his feet, the North Vietnamese Army soldier wears thick-soled boots. The NVA-issued fatigue uniform and web gear are other advantages he has over his VC ally. Armed with a Chinese Communist 7.62 mm light machinegun, the NVA soldier has gained the respect of the American men in Vietnam.



This VC soldier is armed with an AK-47 assault rifle, the primary infantry weapon used by Communist forces throughout the world. He also carries a roll of rice across his shoulders—enough food to keep him on the move for many days.

## Charlie

**FIRE BASE KLAU II, Vietnam (Special)** — In Long Dinh, a chaplain used them for an altar. In Tan An a civil affairs officer made them into desks for Vietnamese schoolchildren. And at Fire Support Base Klaw II, artillerymen use them for almost everything.

Probably the most valuable pieces of trash in the Army, they're empty 105mm howitzer ammunition boxes.

"We can make just about anything out of them," said Spec. 4 David Harris of Ashville, N.C., a cannoneer with C Btry., 3rd Bn., 34th Arty.

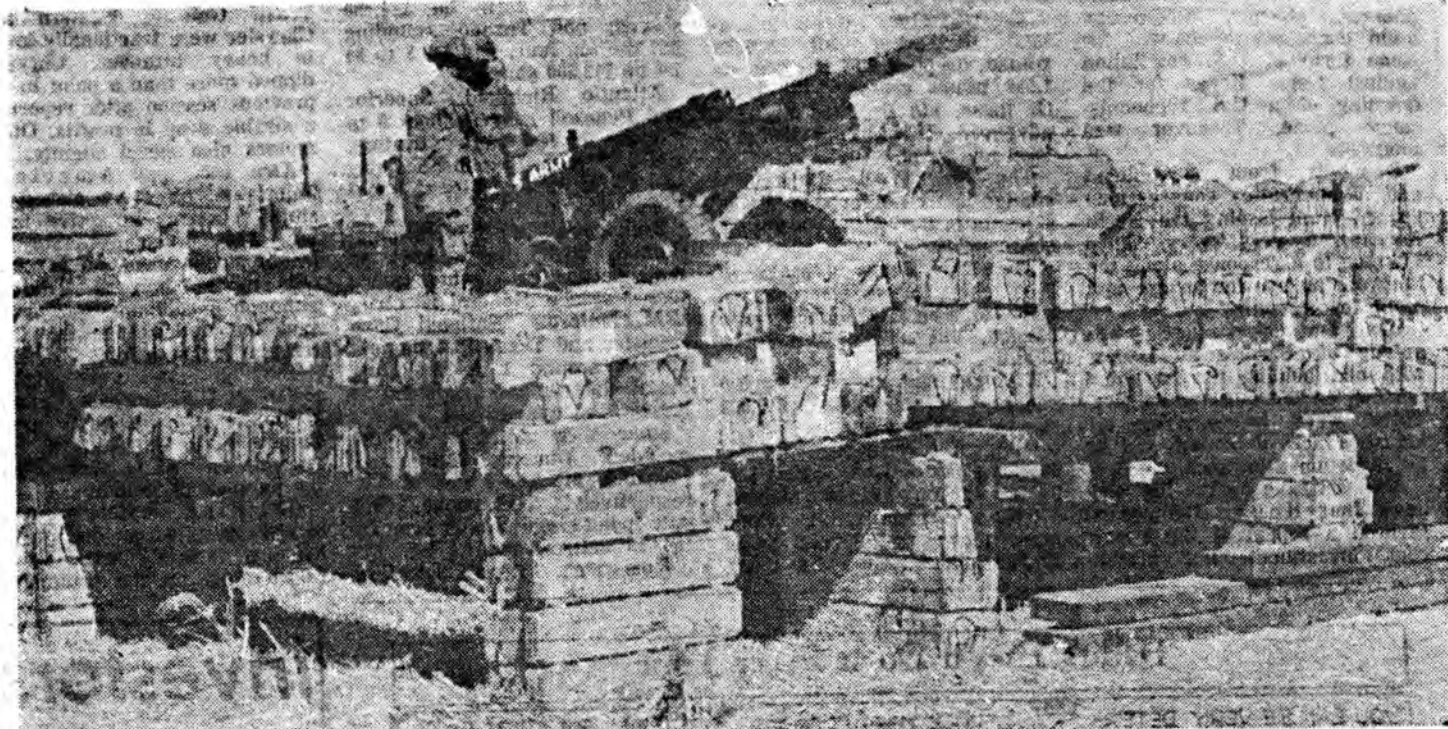
He knew what he was talking about, for almost everything at this base owes its existence to the invaluable empty boxes.

"They're what we eat out of, sleep on and hide in," was the way fellow cannoneer Spec. 4 Jack Burnham of Bastrop, Tex., summed it up. "They even make good clothes lockers."

Situated in the middle of wide open rice paddies, Klaw II was built from scratch. Filled with sand, the boxes made good bunkers and are now used for parapets to protect the howitzers.

Nailed to a wall, they're great shelves or on the ground, they're foot lockers. When it comes time to panel the walls or make a floor, the boxes need only be torn apart to do the trick.

With a little bit of work, the artillerymen turn them into ta-



**EMPTY 105MM HOWITZER SHELL BOXES ARE USED TO BUILD PARAPETS TO PROTECT THE BIG GUNS AT FIRE BASE KLAU II.**

bles and desks. Vietnamese civilians gladly cut them up and make chairs in trade for a few extra empties.

The Vietnamese know what to do with them; they go a little further and build an entire building.

The two rounds in each box are wrapped in plastic and tar paper to protect them from moisture. The 9th Inf. Div. artillerymen turn right around and use the plastic to cover their tables or to make windows, while the tar paper helps make shingles and water-proof the crude bunkers.

Not to be overlooked are the nails, hinges and latches, which come on the container. The hinges help make doors and the nails are used everywhere.

"When I get to these tempora-

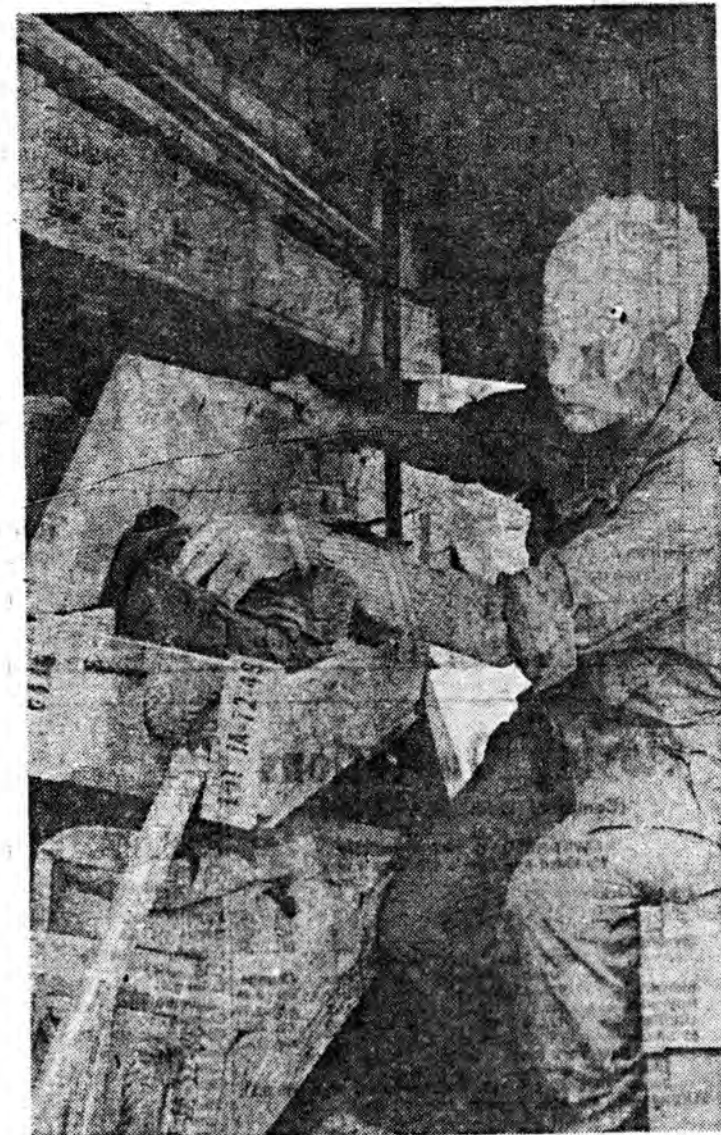
ry fire support bases, the boxes are most convenient," said Capt. Richard B. Benonis of Philadelphia, the Division Catholic chaplain. "I use them for altars frequently."

When 1st Lt. John La Due of Tucson, Ariz., got hold of the boxes, they were quickly turned into desks for needy Vietnamese schoolchildren.

Lt. Col. Robert Dirmeyer, the commander of the 2nd Bn., 4th Arty, came up with the idea and before he knew it, his unit had completed a very successful civic action project.

There is little doubt that the boxes are worth their weight, empty or full. As long as artillerymen need to build something, the ammo boxes will never be thrown away.

They're just too valuable when empty.

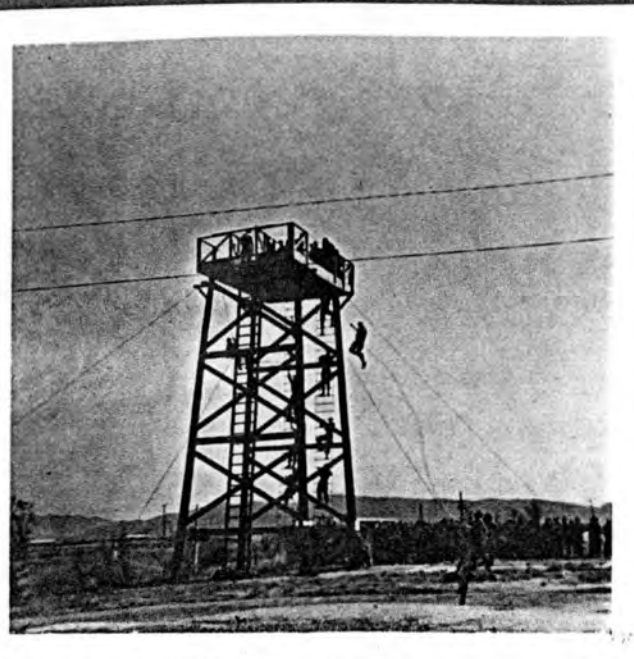


**Pfc. William Hamilton of Portsmouth, Ohio, uses his empty shell boxes as clothes lockers—hung on the wall of a bunker built of the useful crates. (USA Photos by Spec. 5 Bill Wagner)**

## Praise the Lord and

## Pass the Ammo Boxes

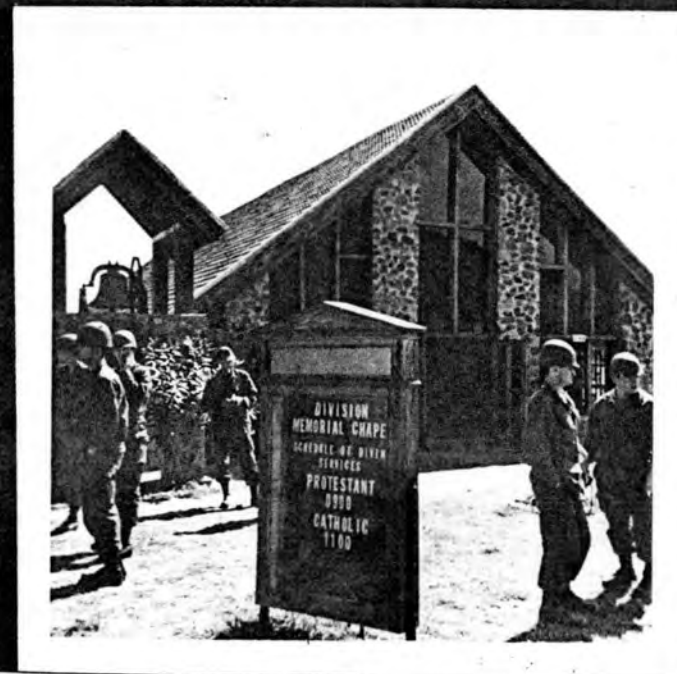
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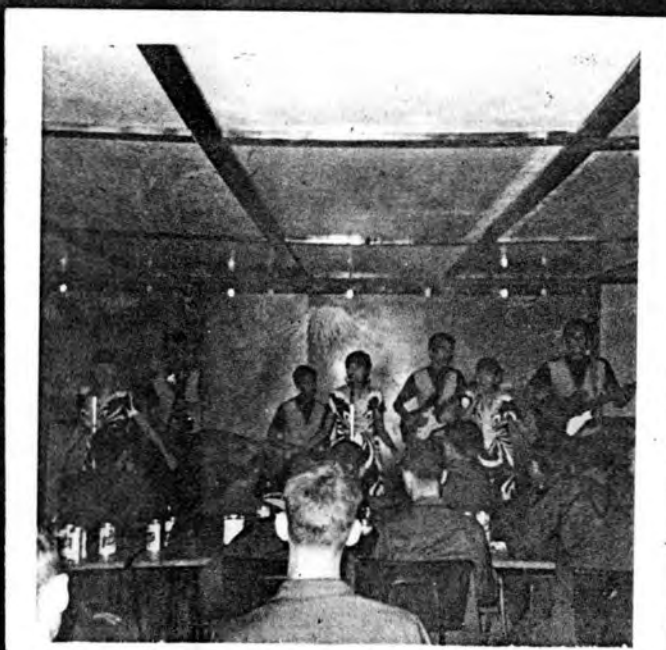
Wow! Was this ever something. The tower was slightly less than 40 feet high. We were harnessed onto a rope by a series of entangled ropes that went through our legs, with a heavy steel hook that attached to the rope leading off the tower. The ladder to the top was the scariest part, as it shook, gave way, etc. We all made it safely, and could now be classified, "Airmobile."



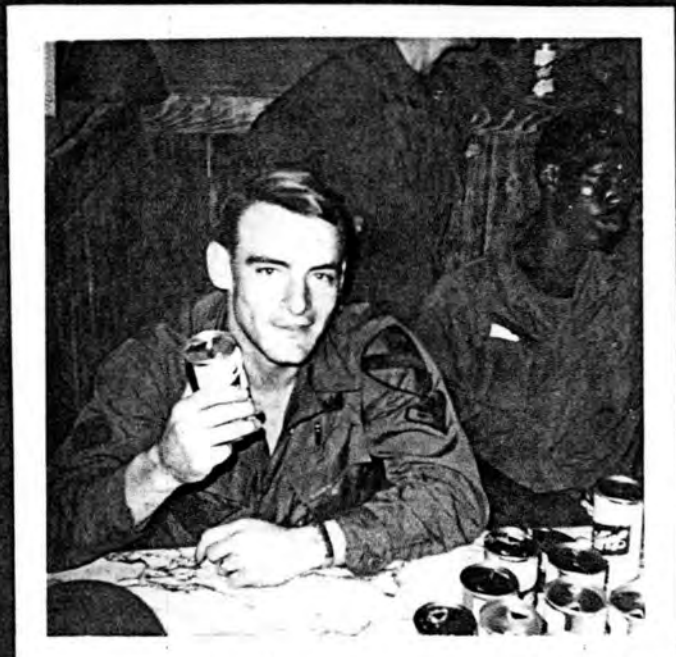
This is a job to be avoided, "Human Feces Burning." I managed to acquire the job while at Long Binh, and it's not the type of job the uneducated can not do. I felt it to be a very degrading job, but not as difficult for me to accept as is KP. It sure does stink, though.



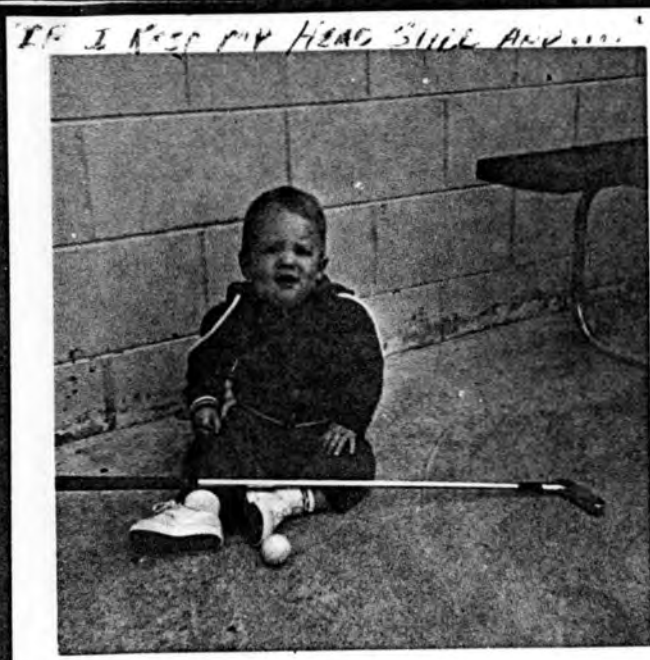
All was not horrors, though. On Easter morning, we were given the opportunity to hop in the back of a 2½-ton truck, and we were transported to Easter Sunday Services. I was tremendously moved on that bright, sun-shiny day--perhaps by my circumstance, but mostly because I knew everything was going to turn out all right. That afternoon, we returned to our training, and marched 3 miles to the rifle range (it was located outside the green line wire, and gave us our first taste of being unprotected), where we zeroed our weapons, night fired, etc. It was quite a different way to spend my Easter Day, 1969, believe me.



At night it was possible for us to visit the local EM Club, generally having entertainment provided to us. In this picture you see a Korean Rock group, who made some pretty good sounds. The young ladies were rather cute, but so very small and petite that they could hardly be considered women in the true sense of the word.



And here is the kid, "Ole Dave enjoying one of his first of many beers in Vietnam." If it weren't for this one luxury item, things would have been much harder to get through. But it's surprising how soothing and relaxing a nice cold beer can be. You should try one sometime.



This is another class on booby-traps, pungy stakes (bamboo stuck in the ground), nails in boards that collapse around your ankles, etc. As you can very easily see from the tremendous attention being given by the lad in the rear, it was awfully educational.



Now our week was past, and it was time for us to finally move to our respective units of assignment. I was headed for Phuoc Vinh and the Division Information Office. I was lucky, as many were going to infantry divisions and companies, which is not my way of spending a "Year in Vietnam." We are passing our time away at the An Khe Airport, waiting for another C-130 ride back down south where we'd already been about a week earlier.



Received this picture of Shannon Hill during my 3rd month in 'Nam. June, Lewis, and many others helped me pass through my first days over there by writing to me. My family, and of course, Kathy, also wrote a great deal -- in fact, I received a letter from Kathy nearly every day, except when the mail didn't arrive, which happened quite often.



Later picture, taken at Lai Khe.

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# What Kind of People?

Stepping off the plane upon arrival in Vietnam, the answers begin to present themselves to the questions you'd been mulling over.

"It's my first time overseas...what are these foreigners like?"

"How do these Vietnamese differ from Americans?"

"If their customs are so different from our, how do I get along?"

What are these foreigners like? First of all, the American soldier is the foreigner...for South Vietnam is the home of the Vietnamese. And he is just as proud of his homeland and his family as you are of yours. Although usually slight in stature, he is of strong physical and moral fiber; he has fought a long, historic struggle for national independence. His wish is for individual freedom.

The people are mainly Vietnamese, formerly known as Annamese or Annamites, and speak a tonal language, much influenced by Chinese. Chances are he is a Buddhist, with his religion based on the Chinese version rather than that of India.

The women are striking, wearing the unique "ao dai" (pronounced "ow-zi"), walking along the boulevard or riding a bicycle, while you wonder how she prevents her attire from tangling in the spokes of the wheel.

Also among the millions of Vietnamese in the republic, there are several minority groups. There are, for example, almost a million Chinese. The vast majority of them can be found in the urban centers of the south, particularly Cholon, Saigon's twin city. To a great extent, the Chinese are the primary business leaders of the country.

The Montagnards--almost 700,000 of them--are for the most part farmers. Although there are as many as 30 to 35 distinct Montagnard groups inhabiting the central plateau, the principal groups are the Phade, Jarai and Bahnar. Physically, they more nearly resemble Indonesians than Vietnamese, having a short stature, light skin, and wavy black hair. Magical and religious beliefs influence their daily lives--in family matters and even their farming methods.

The Khmers are of the same ethnic stock as Cambodians. Compared to the Vietnamese, the Khmer is slightly taller and somewhat darker in complexion. Their eyes have a pronounced Mongoloid appearance, and many have wavy hair. The customary dress of both men and women is a tight jacket buttoned down the front and a short shirt with the lower end brought forward between the legs and tucked in a belt at the waist. The approximately 375,000 Khmers live--for the most part--near the Cambodian border around Phuoc Vinh, Tay Ninh and An Xuyen Province.

Another minority group, the Chams, live in villages in the central lowland coast, near Phan Rang, Hoa Da, and around Tay Ninh and Chau Phu. Only 35,000 Chams remain from what was once a leading influential clan. The people can be traced back to a high civilization which ruled a coastal empire lasting for 1,500 years. Now, all

that remains of that greatness are ruined towers of once prosperous coastal cities. The men dress like the Vietnamese, but the women wear a knee-length, loose fitting tunic with tight sleeves over a longer petticoat, and often wrap their heads in silk scarves. Unlike the balance of the peoples of Vietnam, descent and inheritance are through the female line. The majority of Chams are members of the ancient Brahmanist religion, though some are Moslem.

How are these people different from Americans? The cultural differences are many, but there are some similarities too. Just as you are flattered when someone asks about your home and family, the Vietnamese are flattered when you show interest in or understanding of their customs, religions or language.

In day-to-day contact, some of the likes and dislikes become quickly apparent. If you beckon a Vietnamese in the typical American fashion of crooking a finger, he is insulted. In Vietnam, such a gesture represents the way a person would beckon an animal. The gesture to get someone to come to you is more like a good-bye wave.

There are many such customs which should be recognized to insure against offending the Vietnamese. In order for a soldier to get along well with the people while in Vietnam, it is a necessity that he study their ways and acquaint himself as well as possible with these people.

Whereas most Americans are Christians or Jewish, most Vietnamese are Buddhists. The majority of those who are not Buddhists are Catholic. Normally, Buddhist religious leaders can be quickly identified by their distinctive red or yellow robes. And, like Americans of all faiths, the Vietnamese are quickly offended when one makes fun of their religious beliefs.

If their customs are so different from ours, how do I get along? Politely.

Americans can get along nicely by treating the Vietnamese with the same respect they would another American, and by being willing to say "Xin Loi" (pronounced "sin-lov") when necessary. "Xin Loi" means "I am sorry."

Actions which contribute to mutual understanding will enhance our relations with the Vietnamese people and will further the U.S. effort to secure their freedom. For example:

- ..Remember, Americans are guests in Vietnam and should make no demands and seek no special treatment.
- ..Join with the people! Understand their life, use phrases from their language, and honor their customs and laws.
- ..Treat women with politeness and respect.
- ..Make personal friends among the soldiers and the people.
- ..Always give the Vietnamese the right of way.
- ..Don't attract attention by loud, rude, or unusual behavior.
- ..Avoid separating yourself from the people by a display of wealth or privilege.

Above all else, you find yourself in the middle of a warring struggle. We must, therefore, act in accordance with the normal standards of good conduct and courtesy.

Vietnamese

# "The Short-Timer's Tale"

How long is a year? How high is up?

For some a year is 100 firefights, while for others in Vietnam, it represents--again at the individual level--10,000 pieces of paper handled. For both it starts at 730; a total of 365 days and a like number of nights.

By the time a new troop arrives at the 1st Air Cavalry Division Training Center, the awesome realization of the meaning of the word "year" has struck him in a way that can't escape attention; he has a full year to do here. When he graduates and starts the series of troop movements that will take him to his unit, things brighten. Having been here an entire fortnight, he informs himself that there are only 350 days to go. From here on he will mark his helmet, his calendar, and spend endless hours counting the remaining days without ever reaching the same total twice.

Being thrust into an alien environment helps. By the time he has conditioned himself to expect the unexpected, learned new words that would never be understood at home, and has become accustomed to the routine that things begin to seem humdrum, the 50 days have slipped away. Only 299 to go.

At this point his helmet, his calendar and his letters home reflect that he is in his third month. Nine more to go. Although he knows that he is only five days into his third month, and he has nine months and 25 days remaining, it seems to help if he ignores the odd number of days and deals instead with round months. For the next 100 days, the calendar is marked religiously. Only he knows the precise number of days, and he isn't telling anyone, and especially when short-timers are around. If asked, he will reply with the seemingly fewer number of months, or not reply at all.

For the next three months, short-timers, especially those with less than 50 days remaining, seem to be the most obnoxious people on earth. They run around all the time yelling, "Short!" Or "50", "32", "17", or whatever. He decides, "None of this for me when I get short, 'cause it's childish."

After slashing away 165 days from the calendar, although it hardly seemed that long, he breaks "200 days." Every once in a while he resists the urge to yell "short," just to see how it feels. In the next 20 days he discovers the "short-timers calendar," a series of numbers arranged in pattern to resemble Charlie Brown, a Cav patch, or a pin-up. Selecting one, he colors furiously at the days he has already completed. From this point on, his short-timers' calendar becomes both a love and a hate object. He may curse it for the number of days that remain on it, or cherish it for the number already colored in; but he will never, never throw it away.

When he colors out the slot indicating 182, a bell rings in his head. A day later he realizes that bell was the half-way mark. Six months in--six to go. He runs around, frantically looking for someone still in their 200's, so he can yell "Short!" Having passed this mark, he will never again

refer to his remaining time in months. From here on, it will always be \_\_\_ days remaining, although he isn't conscientiously aware of the decision.

Since he is now shorter than about half of the others in his section or squad, he finds himself waiting for the other half to be absent for a brief period of time, so that he too can yell, "Short!"

From there the game continues. While keeping one eye on his multi-colored calendar, and the other on those who have less time than he, he cries, "Short!" whenever he is the one with the least time remaining. It is considered a faux pas to use this term in front of someone with less time. The retort, "Shorter!" is a much feared comeuppance used by those who have fewer days to serve.

The days in the 100 plus category seem interminable. But it is time to think of R and R, so instead of counting days until his return, he tries counting those until R and R.

The big day finally arrives and he departs to sample the delights of Hawaii with his wife, or if single to Hong Kong, Bangkok, Sidney, or other Asian cities. Approximately 10 to 14 days later, he returns--possibly fulfilled if he met his wife, but still much poorer, probably not too much wiser, but just the same--he returns.

The wonders of civilian clothing and indoor plumbing are still fresh in his mind--things he'd almost forgott--as he marks off his 100th day. From now on he calls himself a two-digit midget and cries "Short!" at an increasing frequency.

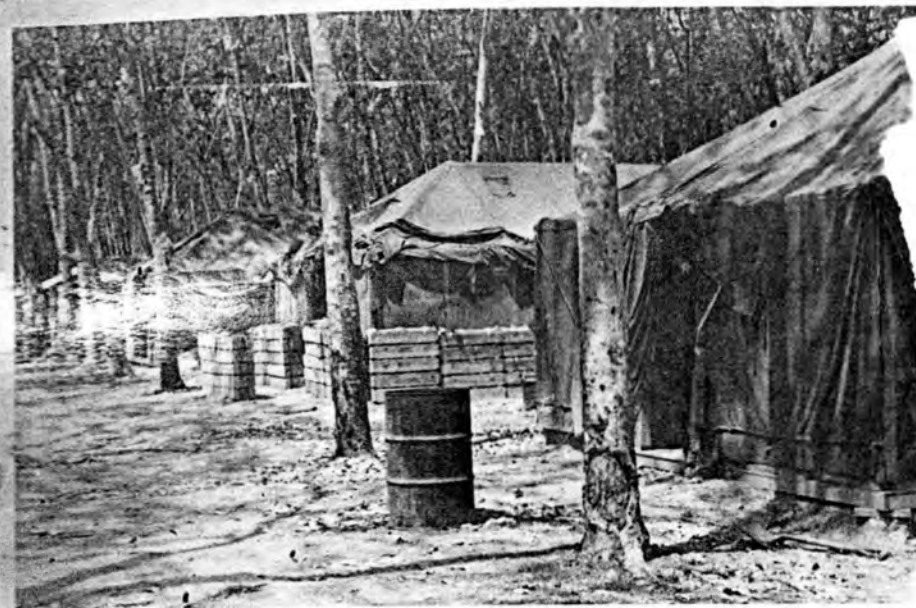
There are ever fewer to offer him a comeuppance. He has savored the opportunity to yell that phrase at least once or twice.

About this time he discovers the "short-timer's letter," which is intended to warn, in a spoofing fashion, his parents and loved one about the wierd behaviour patterns he may display on his not-too-distant arrival back home. After reading the part that say, "Take it with a smile when he insists on digging up the garden to fill sandbags for the bunker he's building....," he locates as many copies as he can put his hands on, and sends them to everyone he knows.

Running around yelling "short," "50", "32" and then eventually "17," he wonders why the guys with 200 or more days remaining act strangely toward him.

Having decided to quit working three times already, he still works. Even working beats looking at his watch every ten minutes to see if it is yet time to croos out another day.

Finally, the much awaited ten-day mark arrives, and here our story ends. Having been through all of the above, I do not know exactly what lies on the other side of the ten-day mark. Besides, I have a plane to catch. FTA (a rather gross connotation is inherent to this abbreviation) here, I come. It's Flying Tiger Airlines here I come--back to Japan, then to our 49th state (Alaska), and finally, back to the sunny state of California. From there, it's all down hill and back to Iowa-Nebraska where I belong.

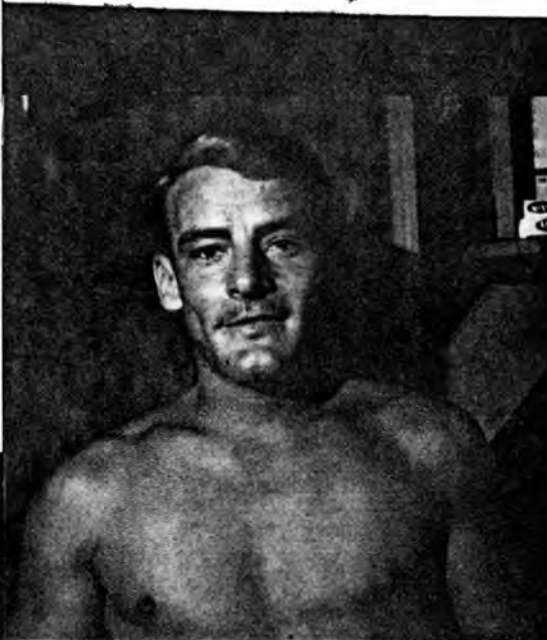


Tent area at Lai Khe, where the Blackhorse Brigade lived while I was there. All in all, there were some 6 rows of tents just like the one's shown here, with 7 tents to a row, plus headquarter building, the TOC (Tactical Operations Center), mess halls, and that sort of thing.

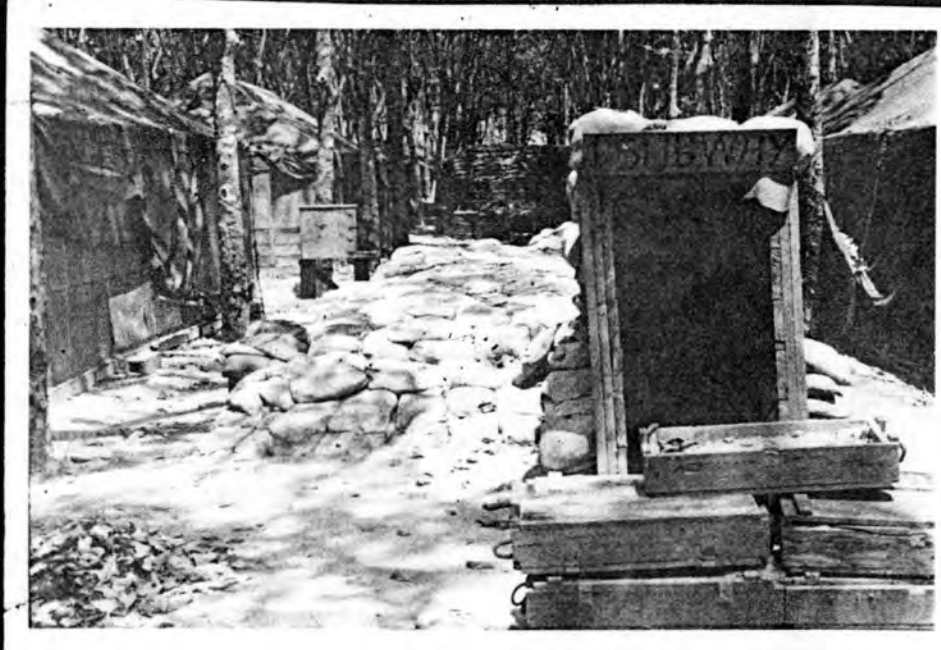


A puppy in the next tent caught my eye for all the time I was at Lai Khe. I kept wanting to steal him, but didn't think I could get away with it. He was awfully rolly-polly when he was about a week old, then he grew so quickly. I saw him recently and he's not nearly as cute as he was then, but then, that is what happens to some people; isn't it.

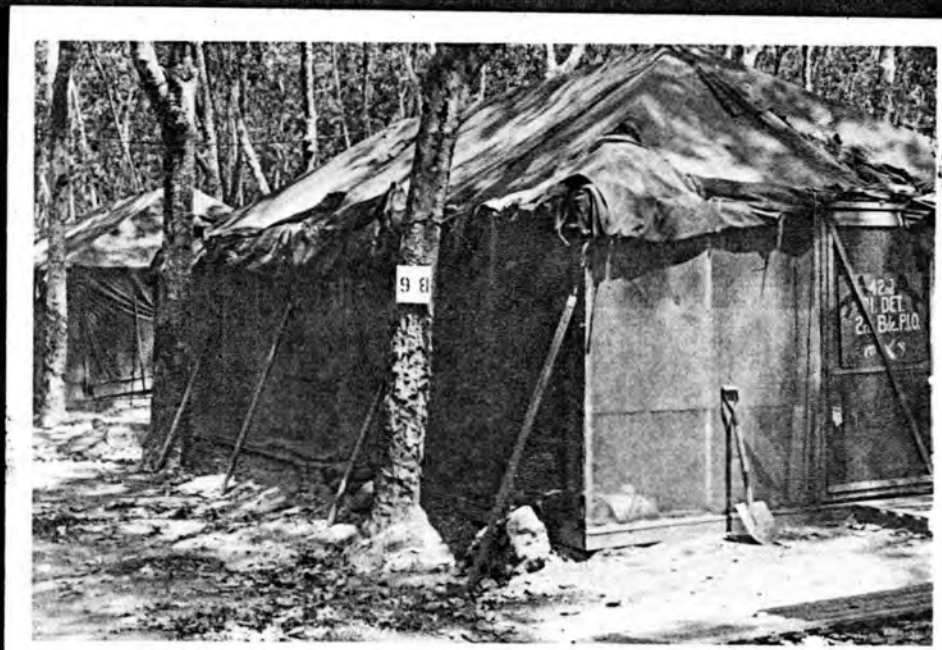
Lai Khe



Sandbags



Someone's dry humor is evident here as they mark a bunker "Subway," when it's only use is in case of an attack. Most of this bunker is below the ground, which should make it fairly safe from rockets, mortars and other flying objects. I had the occasion to visit this bunker on only one occasion --- that being one night when we had several (10) 107 mm rockets land a short distance from our hootch. We had quite good overhead cover, and very seldom did we head for a bunker when we had the infamous and exhilarating thing called, "Incoming!!!" As they say in the Army, "No sweat, GI."



The 42nd PID Detachment tent at Lai Khe was a pleasant place to live for about 4 weeks. I enjoyed Captain Zastrow (U. of Indiana professor), George Vindedzis and Eddie Koehlein -- writer and photographer. We built a whale of a bunker inside, but I only got to sleep in it for about 8 days. That's hardly worth 2 1/2 days of very hard work, but that's the breaks. Went to 3rd Brigade, where I stayed for 2 months, or until I returned to the division information office to become editor of the paper.

*Humor in Uniform*



Lying under my mosquito net (above) and Eddie Koehnlein and I in our tent (and civies) at Lai Khe.



Pottawattmie County  
Local Board #6781234

July 9, 1969

Dear Specialist Wolfe,

In reviewing our records, we have discovered a slight error. According to our files, you were drafted by some mistake on the part of our clerk. Arnold Wolfard should have been drafted instead of you.

However, since you have already been inducted, and are probably enjoying the military life, we see no reason to go through all the necessary red tape to make a correction. Besides, my nephew, Arnold, has a very good job, and it would be somewhat of a hardship to make any change at this time.

We certainly appreciate what you are doing for your country. Your local draft board sends its best regards -- and so does Arnold.



Sincerely yours,  
**George Codliveroil**

General Geo. Codliveroil  
JMP, Board Commanding

#### A SOLDIER'S CRIES

Here I am, tired, drunk, pissed-off, homesick, flat broke, got a terrible headache, no friends, damn few relatives, out of smokes, missed bedcheck last night. I'm in debt up to my ass, have a poor character rating, pay is all screwed up, food is lousy, no clean clothes, laundry rejected, leave cancelled, pass pulled, on restriction for a month. I lost my shot record, have guard duty tonight, CQ tomorrow night, KP next weekend. I have a "mule driver's" MOS, got a "Dear John" letter, 'cause my wife ran off with the milkman. My kids have malaria, the rods blew out of my car, plus I'm sleepy, my shoe string is broken in three places and my watch just quit running. I've got ingrown toenails and a hard-on -- with no place to turn. I'm about to crap my pants, and the latrine is off-limits until after inspection. And some "son-of-a-bitch" just said "RE-UP FOR THE BENNIES."

Course Rules in Effect on  
South Vietnamese Golf Courses  
During the Vietnam War.  
(1954 to 19??)

1) Players are asked to collect bomb and shell splinters to save these damage causing thing from the way of the movers.

2) In competition, during gunfire or while bombs are falling, players may take cover without penalty for ceasing to play.

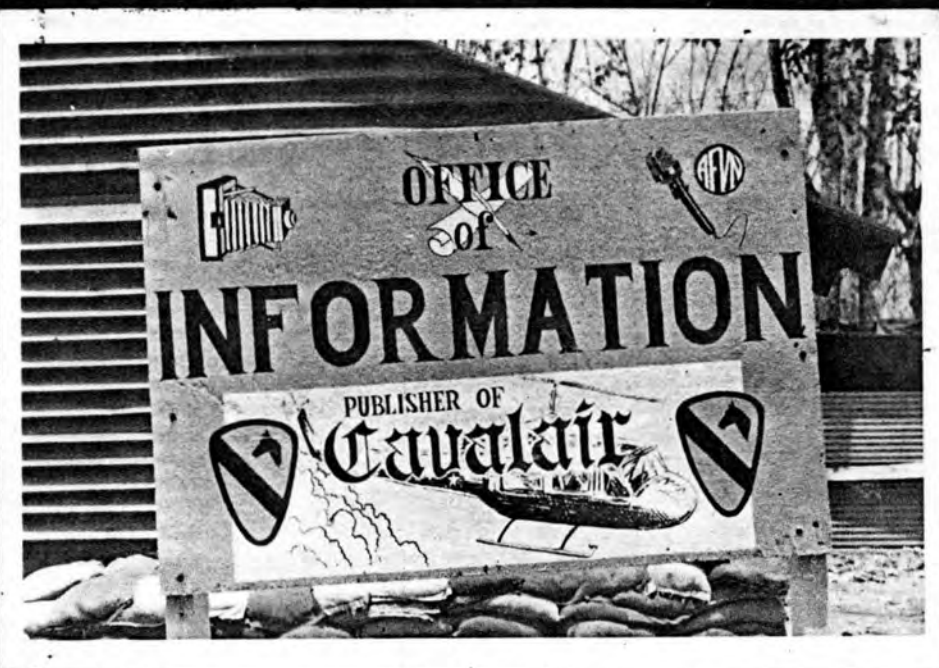
3) The positions of known delayed-action bombs are marked by red flags placed at a reasonably, but not guaranteed, safe distance.

4) A ball lying in a crater may be lifted and dropped not nearer the hole without a penalty stroke being added.

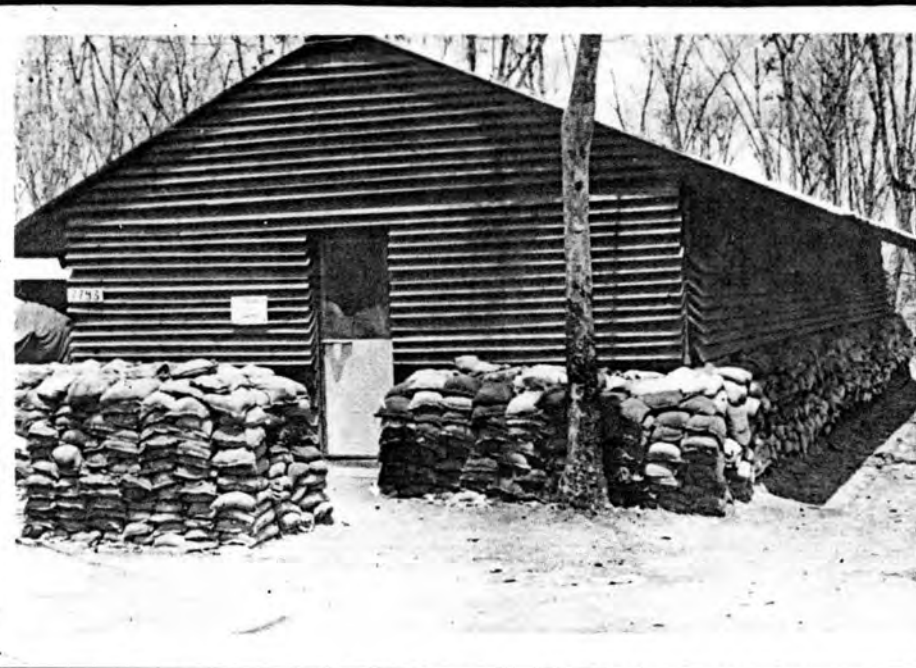
5) A ball moved by enemy action may be replaced as near as possible to where it lay, or if lost or destroyed, a ball may be dropped not nearer the hold without penalty.

6) A player whose stroke is affected by the simultaneous explosion of a bomb, rocker or shell, or by machine-gun, may play another ball from the same place. Penalty-one stroke.

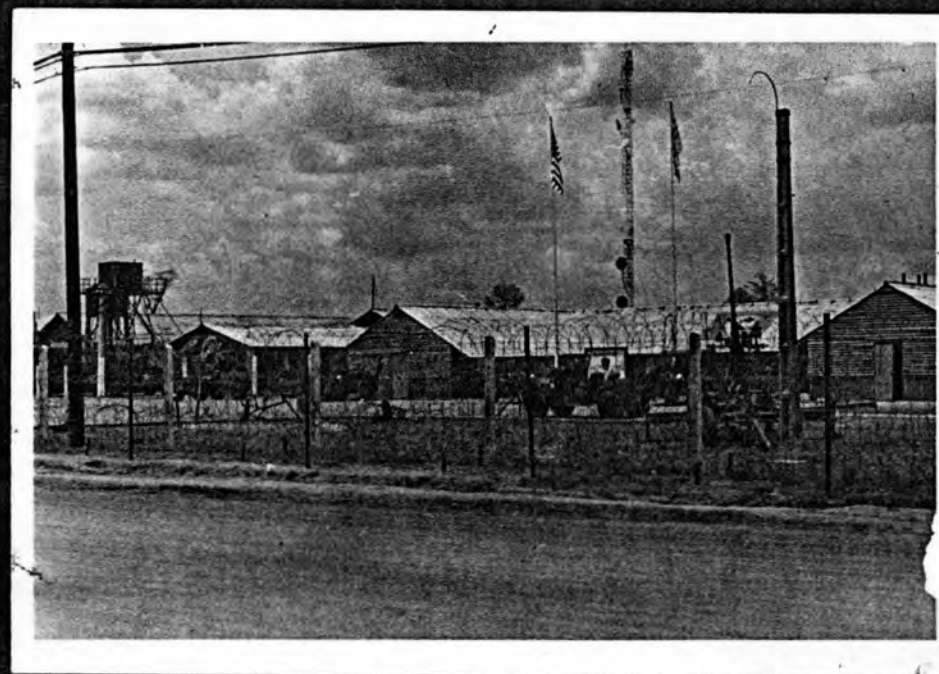
Lesson from "Ole Vietnamese Proverb": Let's have no more complaints about caddies rattling clubs, shall we?



Sign in front of IO, which is pretty self-explanatory.



Press and Photo building at division IO. Here's where I work and play a lot of the time. Editing, writing and artistic abilities are evident here, as there are some pretty talented people who pass in and out of this location. It was a pleasure to work with most of these people.

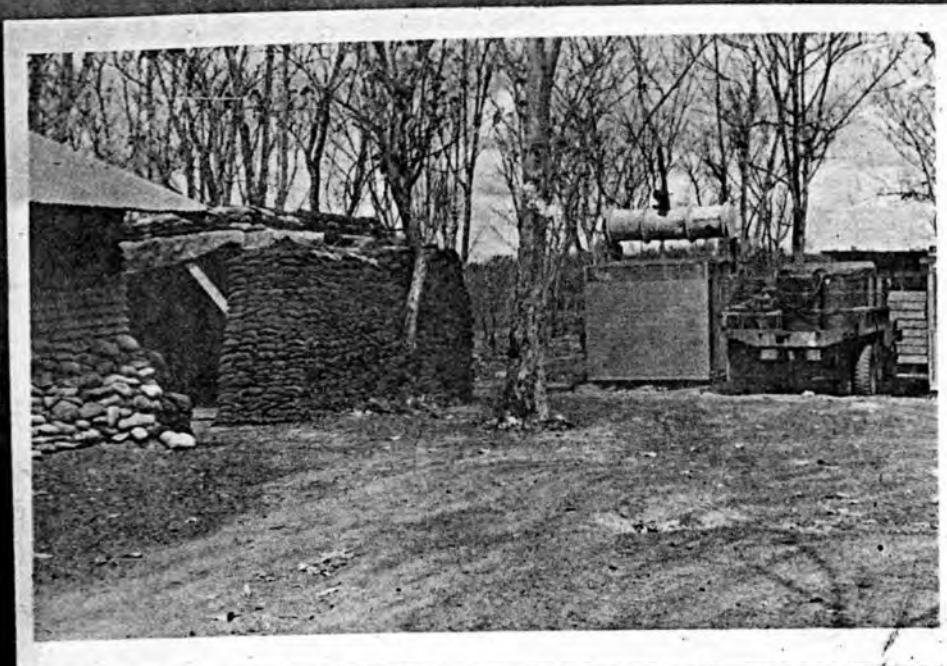


The Headquarters complex of the 1st Air Cavalry Division, located at Phuoc Vinh. The commanding general had his office just behind the sign that can be seen behind the jeep. Our captured weapons are displayed out in front, which include: Russian mobile artillery piece, Chicom (Chinese Communist) mobile recoilless rifle, and others. Also a large cement block with the words "Hue," and "Hanoi" on them. It looks like a sign used for identification purposes on a large intersection somewhere in the northern regions of Vietnam. I found it historic.

## GUARD DUTY



Here's a guy standing day guard with his poncho liner used to protect him from the sun. Bunker #35 is just behind the office. All 8 foot Cyclone Fence is front to protect against grenades thrown by the enemy. There's 3 rows of barbed and concertina wire stretched out in front to protect against infiltration. Note the numerous sandbags and the barrels filled with dirt. Obviously the inside is hollow, and it measure approximately 12 feet by 8 feet inside. Most of them are fairly waterproof, but not all.



Taken at the office with the corner of the billets there showing on the left. The bunker was converted into a television room, and has a floor, etc. in it. The truck brings water to the gravitational showers with the officer's and NCO's using the one shown to the truck's left. The very edge of the EM shower shows on the right. The "green-line" is about 100 feet from the showers with bunkers located approximately every 150 feet for base defense.



Stop sign near the information office. It's just down the road from the PX and other more important places (i.e.-Service Club-ugh! etc.) Thought "Dung Lai" was pretty easy to say, so decided to put it on film. "It ain't much, but it's something!"



Picture shows several of the guys in the office one night when we were messing around. Everyone is looking at a picture Ron Doss from Austin, Texas, is holding. He drew this from a Playboy picture, and put some clothes on her. The others around him are: Dave Van Drew, Al Persons, Larry Adams, Bob Dyslin, John Salandi, myself, and Chuck Spicer.

The pictures show a few scenes around what was then the 15th Admin Company area. We were later assigned to Headquarters and Headquarters Company. About this same time, there were serious rumors that we would not be pulling IP, as Vietnamese had been hired to do this for us. At this writing, we are unsure as to whether or not we will have guard duty or not. There is a security platoon at HHC, who are in charge of pulling guard all around the perimeter. Luck might be with us. Guess we'll know soon enough.



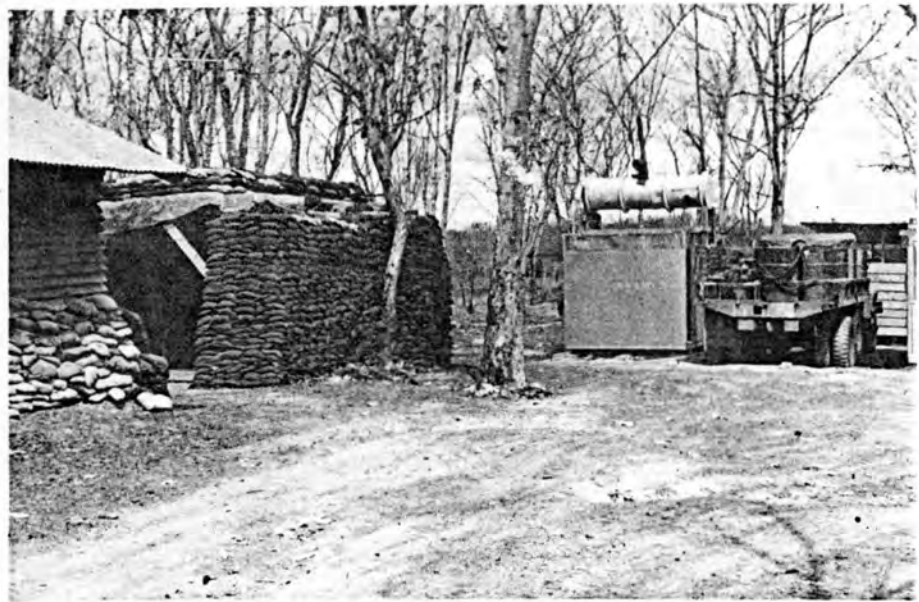
A GI works on a jeep in the 15th Admin. Company motor pool, which is located just across the street from the information office. When I first got to the office, I was called upon to perform some 1st echelon maintenance on three-quarter ton trucks and on a couple of jeeps -- tighten bolts, clean, change oil etc. Got so dirty one day I could hardly stand myself. But at this writing, that was 3 months ago, and for all tense and purposes, long since forgotten. Yippee!

Phuoc Vinh, VN  
CROWN

Tape Recorder  
\$76.00

Purchased Apr. 12, 1969

CROWN RADIO CORPORATION  
AFAN



Taken at the office with the corner of the billets there showing on the left. The bunker was converted into a television room, and has a floor, etc. in it. The truck brings water to the gravitational showers with the officer's and NCO's using the one shown to the truck's left. The very edge of the EM shower shows on the right. The "green-line" is about 100 feet from the showers with bunkers located approximately every 150 feet for base defense.



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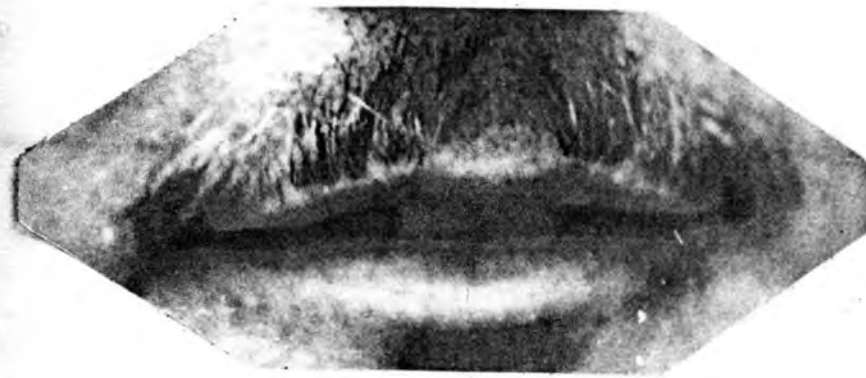
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Phuoc Vinh, VN  
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 Tape Recorder  
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 JAPAN



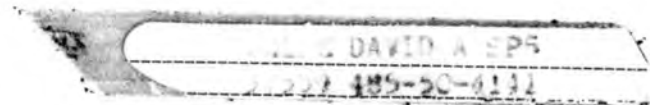
My Vietnam mustache



Tentative passport picture  
(never used it)



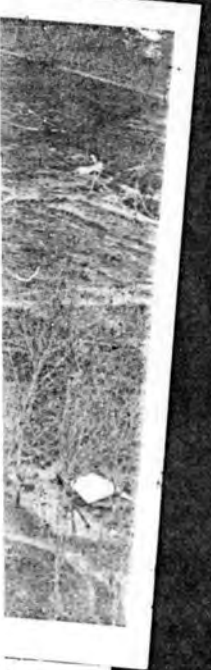
Kathy's passport picture



Wrist band from hospital in Japan  
---Camp Drake---



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*"In the jungle,  
a scout dog  
isn't just a dog...  
he is your life"*

# HOW EASILY THEY DIED

## DIARY OF AN NVA SOLDIER

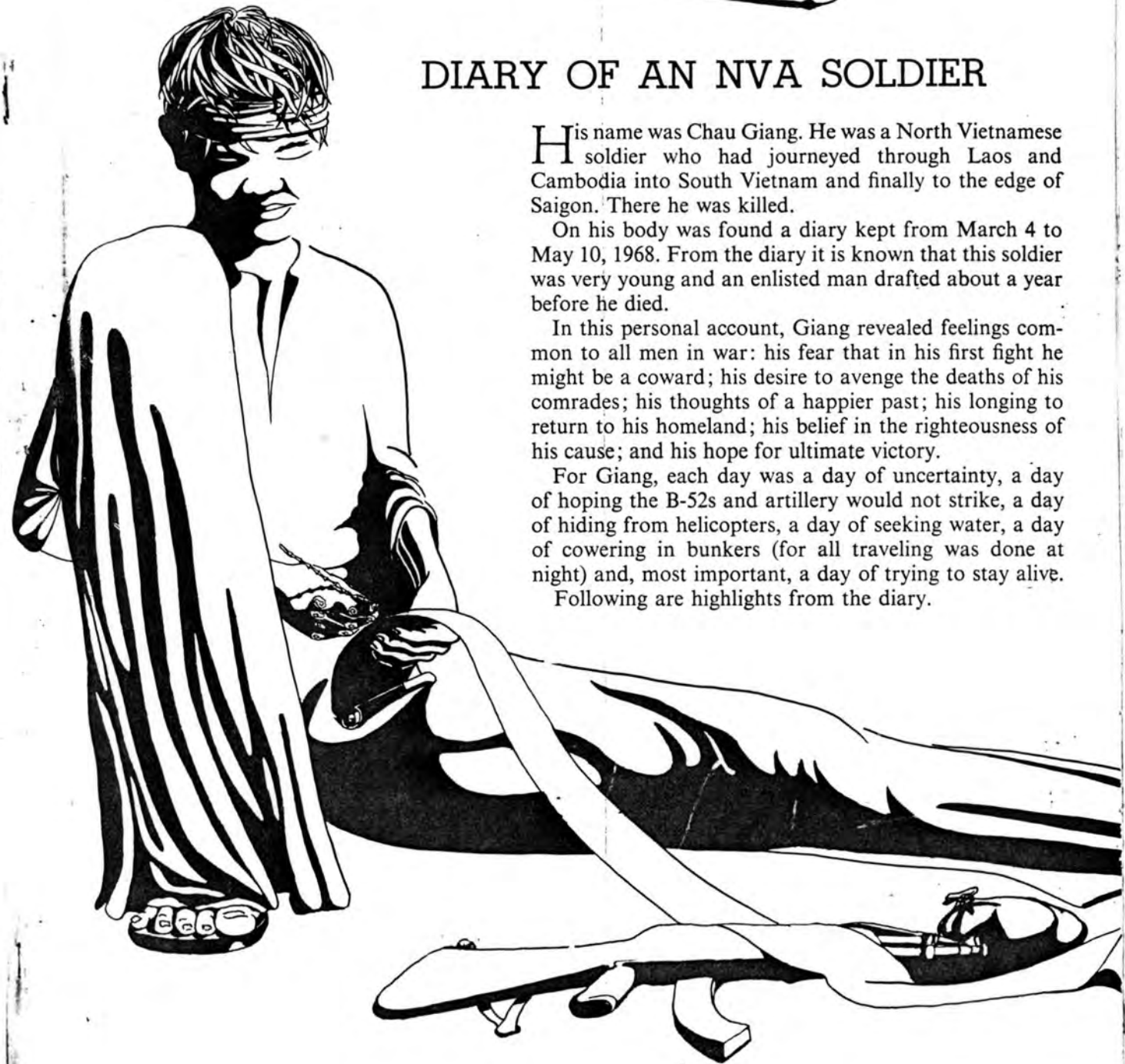
His name was Chau Giang. He was a North Vietnamese soldier who had journeyed through Laos and Cambodia into South Vietnam and finally to the edge of Saigon. There he was killed.

On his body was found a diary kept from March 4 to May 10, 1968. From the diary it is known that this soldier was very young and an enlisted man drafted about a year before he died.

In this personal account, Giang revealed feelings common to all men in war: his fear that in his first fight he might be a coward; his desire to avenge the deaths of his comrades; his thoughts of a happier past; his longing to return to his homeland; his belief in the righteousness of his cause; and his hope for ultimate victory.

For Giang, each day was a day of uncertainty, a day of hoping the B-52s and artillery would not strike, a day of hiding from helicopters, a day of seeking water, a day of cowering in bunkers (for all traveling was done at night) and, most important, a day of trying to stay alive.

Following are highlights from the diary.



*March 4*

Today, after many days of hesitation, I decided to write my diary. . . . For six months, I moved from North Vietnam through the friendly territory to here for the struggle. I have walked, climbed, swum . . . and now the day of preparing for combat is forthcoming. I have thought much about living and death. In combat I may die, but how to die deservedly? Since my childhood I have been trained for nine years, but now I feel I am a coward. . . .

*March 6*

I slept all day; my shoulders and thighs are hurt. I am hungry but hardly touch dinner because I am too tired. . . .

*March 7*

This morning I woke up late. I walked out hurriedly from the bunkers to call some men going to cook the rice for our meals. In the morning, the planes and helicopters always fly over our camp. Perhaps they will fire on our location. In the afternoon the L-19 aircraft and helicopters fly very low to drop the bombs and fire heavy machine guns near our location.

*March 8*

. . . All day long I stay in the bunker, so bored. It is better to go to the battlefield. Staying here we can be killed by bombs of Americans. It is too bad to die like that.

*March 9*

. . . I again dream of MH [name in short for a girl]. Six months pass, but I always keep the picture of MH in

my mind. I cannot forget MH. On March 8 of last year I was very merry at my school. I am missing my friends, my school. . . . I have borrowed the book *Coming Back in the Glorious Victory from the Terrible Battles*. The author of this book is Nguyen Duc Thuan. The book is so interesting that I read fascinatedly and forgot to go to wash. I shall wash tomorrow.

*March 10*

When I read the book of Nguyen Duc Thuan I thought that I am as bad as D, a person in the book. He is afraid of the hard struggle and a coward. He wants only an easy and happy life. . . . Mom and Dad I am missing you so much and wishing to see you a moment, only a moment and my heart can be filled with happiness. . . . Today, the B-52s drop bombs near our location. I have just washed. It makes me feel better.

*March 11*

This afternoon, some friends and I went to take the sugarcane. This is the first time I have gone to the sugarcane field. On the road I thought of long and high sugarcane, but the reality is contrary. There are only the small sugarcane because nobody cares for the sugar fields. . . . In the evening, many airplanes fly over our heads. Perhaps the B-52 bombers will fly here to drop the bombs.

*March 12*

All day long we are worried. In the alarm situation we can't leave the bunkers. We are always ready to fight and waiting for the dropping of bombs. We receive the operation order and

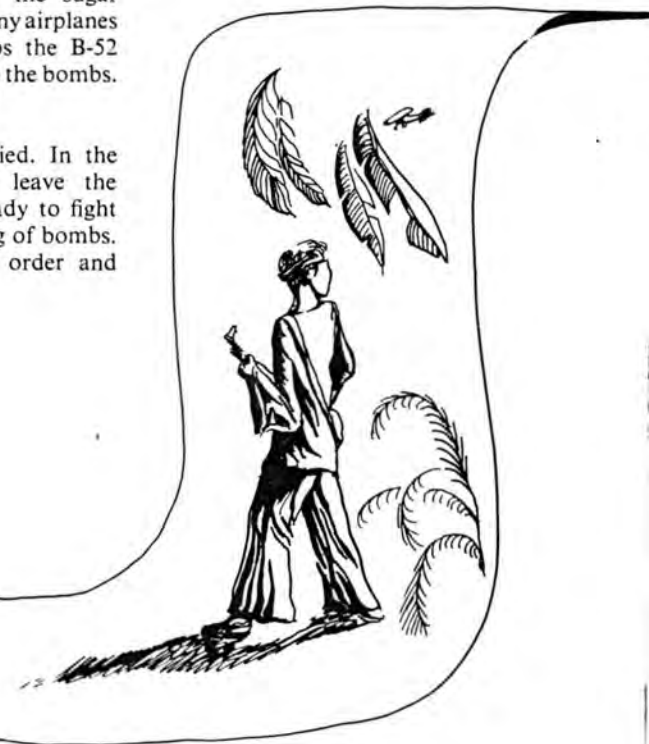
prepare hurriedly to go to the battle. But it is evening, and we are still in here.

*March 14*

On the road to buy vegetables I had to stop many times to hide because some old ladies [NVA term for L-19 aircraft] always fly over our heads. . . . It took a long time to buy seven kilograms of vegetables. . . . I slept the rest of the day. Today our company killed a cow for food. It made a very delicious meal. I have spent 14 days here.

*March 15*

I am reading some stories in the book *The Last Fortification*. The book is not much good, but I can get the experiences from it. It is a kind of remembering book. I compare our present situation with the missions of the heroes in the last anti-French struggle. I think the most important is bravery on the battlefield. I am always afraid of, and preparing for, the first battle of my life in South Vietnam.



March 17

We moved all the afternoon of March 16. Alas! After one month of not walking, today I can walk no more, I feel too tired and sick. All the company is in the same situation with me. In this time we wish an old lady or helicopter to fly over our heads so we can get some minutes for concealment and rest. Our great hope is seeing a river. . . . Walk and walk, then at last we hear the news we must return to the last location. How bored we are! Return! Our bodies are hurt and tired. But we must try to walk because we cannot stay here to make good targets for the helicopters of the enemy.

March 18

. . . The battalion will go back to the camp at once because it is very dangerous to stay here without bunkers; dawn is near! . . . Water! How fast the news of water runs. About 30 meters from the roadside we see a small well. How delicious the water is. We drink, drink, drink, fill our bellies.

March 19

. . . Now I feel how lovely my parents are. I ask myself can I go back to North

Vietnam to live and help them in their old age.

March 20

. . . I have heard some news about my friends who were wounded in action. I hope that I shall not be wounded in my first battle in South Vietnam.

March 25

. . . The situation is grave. The enemy is about one hour from us. I want them to come here to fight. I am ready and wait for them. I want to try fighting the Uncle Soldiers. . . .

March 28

Now I have been in the Army for one year. Three hundred and sixty-five days ago, I was still a student with the dream of becoming a soldier. March 27, 1967, I received the drafting order for joining the Army. I had to reject my friends, books and pens to take the gun for fighting to live.

March 30

I had decided to reject sentimentality, but that is very difficult. The souvenirs of memories rise up within me. . . . At night, I often dream of going back to North Vietnam and see my brothers, my parents and my friends.

March 31

. . . I have a cough, and that is very dangerous for concealed movement. March is almost over and April is nearly come.

April 10

In the afternoon, I went to the village to buy food and meet Lien, the girl of the South I met some days before. I like to talk to her because she is very merry, truthful and lovely. Perhaps Lien doesn't know my true age. Really my age is the same as the age of Lien's younger brother. I told her a lie that my age is two years older than my true age. My dear girl friend! Maybe here is our last meeting. Each of us will continue our separate way. I will never forget

you. . . . I shall always keep your picture in my mind.

April 14

. . . The company leader tells us to throw away the heavy things such as books, writing pads. . . . No, I never throw this diary away. . . . If it is too heavy I can throw the rice away, but not my diary because it's my intimate friend. . . . When night fell, we reached a location to rest temporarily. I suddenly received an order to bury a body. When we took the shovels and walked along the path, we smelled a strong stink from a body dead about one month. How terrible it is! This is the first time I had to bury a body. We buried it at once. Fortunately, Thuy stood up and helped us. We put the ground on that body. I can't sleep because that terrible image is heavy on my mind.

April 15

The operation starts at 6 o'clock. We must pass a river, and I see the landscape is the same as my country in North Vietnam. The fields of South Vietnam are very fertile. We must pass the muddy fields and stop to rest near the break of day. I see the houses, children playing merrily, the villages, the peasants going to the field. . . . How merry the spectacles are!

April 23

After over one week of operation, today we came back to the former camp, and now I can write my diary. In the last week I have met many miseries and hardships. . . . After one week of endurance, we are much older than before. One week of sorrow, lack of food and sleep. I had walked from the North to here, but I never knew more hardships than when we passed muddy fields. The howitzers of the enemy fired all night, but fortunately no man of ours was wounded. The enemy seemed to know about our moving, and they organized many operations to prevent us. . . . At night I stepped on a piece of shrapnel of a howitzer shell. It caused a long

wound in my foot; my blood flowed out. I was very hurt, but I tried with all my heart to walk with the unit across the muddy fields.

April 25

. . . I think much about the wound and want to request permission to stay here and continue with another group, but I am afraid the cadre will not agree and criticize me for cowardice. Especially I cannot stay here alone.

April 27

Today, we cooked rice for our only meal. This morning, the jets bombarded so near us that the shrapnel dropped on our area. We are so sleepy, but we can't sleep with the sounds of bombs, shells and planes. . . . I'm afraid that I don't have enough strength to endure. The conference between us and the Americans is arranged; so both of us are trying to fight, and the situation is becoming more and more complex.

May 1

This day in last year, my friends and I were having the Tet Lao Dong [Labor Day] in Thom Bac and Thanh Tan [names of villages in North Vietnam], and now I am in the jungles to prepare the equipment for our operations for

the next General Attack. . . . If I survive, I shall again see my dear North Vietnam, my friends, my parents, my brothers, my sisters. How happy I shall be on that day!!

May 2

I thought that only our unit was in the operation, but when we came here we met many other units. I see our forces are very strong. For two nights the Phao [NVA term for artillery] of the enemy fired to prevent our advance and create an important obstacle to us. At night on May 1, one man in my squad was wounded by the shrapnel of a shell. The other friendly units are also damaged severely. . . . So many are the soldiers; we don't have enough bunkers to conceal everyone.

May 4

In the morning, when I was sleeping, I suddenly awoke to the sounds of shells; I think that the concealed place of our unit is discovered by the enemy. The howitzers fire continuously. Planes and helicopters fired violently. If they fire in this area, perhaps I will be killed. . . . Perhaps we shall spend half a month to walk to Saigon.

May 6

Last night, when we started the operation I heard that our forces have begun to attack Saigon. We are very glad and try to walk faster to participate in the battle. But when we crossed a road, the enemy fired flares and helicopters came to fire and launch the rockets. We had to separate to hide, so most of us lost our way and our unit. . . .

May 7

. . . Perhaps tonight we shall reach Tan Son Nhut. We don't know where our principal unit is. We remain over one platoon.

May 8

There are many mosquitoes here, so sleep is difficult. . . . The helicopters always fire near our area. . . . Sometimes I have a stomachache. I think we



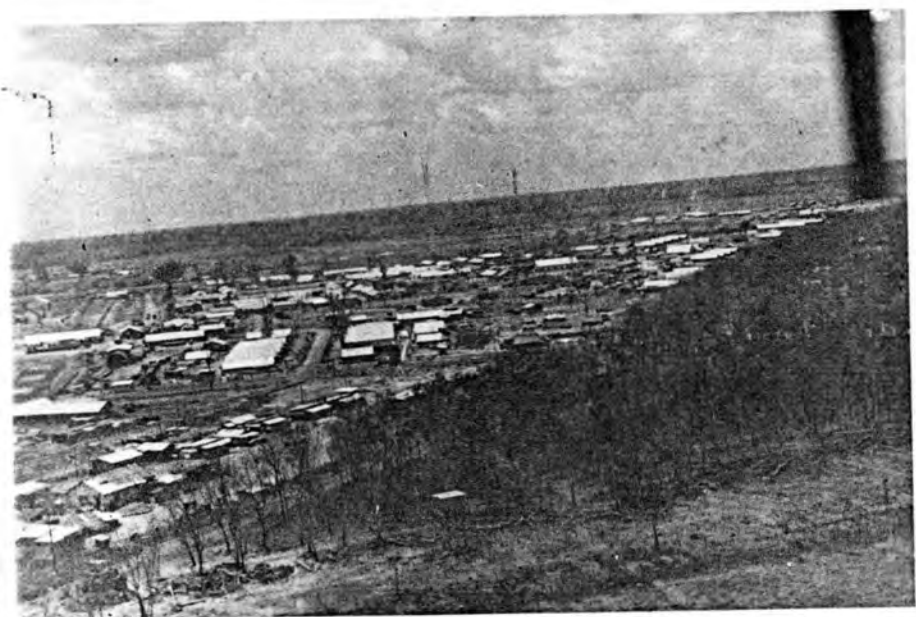
have many diseases from lack of food. . . . In the evening we met our principal unit; simultaneously we heard the news about the deaths of some friends! Alas! How easily they died. Our unit was attacked by the enemy's howitzers. All night long we walk to a new location.

May 10

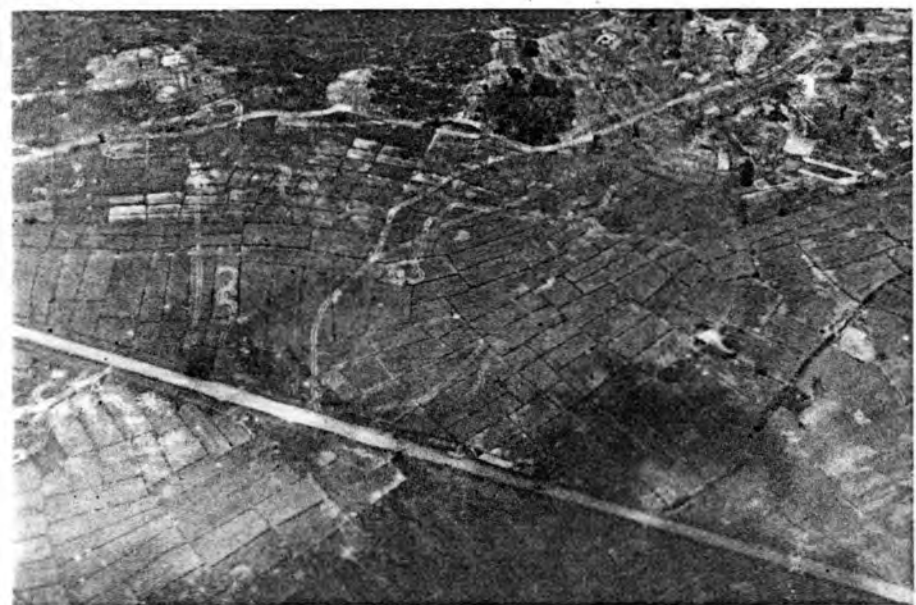
Today, there is nothing to do. In the morning I had a deep sleep. I had a delicious meal with fish. For days we have had only cooked rice and salt for our meals. I always think of Khoi, Luc . . . my friends who have died. Dear Khoi, Luc . . . I shall take blood revenge for you. In the afternoon, there were some changes in the unit. Hong and I became the messengers of the company. To me every mission is good. I shall try to do my missions perfectly, and I will take revenge at any cost for my friends who were killed on May 8. Blood for blood! Do not forget! This revenge will be taken.



Art by SP4 Richard W. McDowell



This shot shows Phuoc Vinh from the air. I was riding on a LOH (Light Observation Helicopter) when I took it. Note the guard tower in foreground, and the rubber trees just behind it. If you look closely (at the bad color) you can see a portion of the airstrip there. The tallest tower in the center of the picture gives power to the local radio station, run in part by guys from the radio-television department at the info. office.



Rice paddies, rice paddies, rice paddies all over the place. Note the slight reflection on the water, which completely covers the paddies on certain occasions. The soil over here soaks the water like a sponge. Taken from approximately 2,500 feet.



Small village between Lai Khe and Phuoc Vinh. Seems as though I take far too many aerial shots, but they wouldn't be too bad if the exposure had been absolutely right. Most of these were taken in the late afternoon, when light settings are harder to determine. That's my excuse!



A newly built village just outside Phuoc Vinh. It is unique because the huts are spread apart, and they are normally very close together. Rubber trees are without the leaves (odd, because it was taken in April -- no sign of leafing out). As I recall, I was on a courier mission from Lai Kai to the office that day, and got a pretty wild ride, due to strong winds. We landing at the VIP pad in the middle of the whole complex. That's where the CG's bird lands and takes office, so it's pretty well kept. Note the tin roofs on all the huts, hootches, or houses (your preference).

# Propaganda



NGƯỜI THƯƠNG BINH CỘNG SẢN NÀY ĐÃ MAY MẮN ĐƯỢC QLVNCH VÀ ĐỒNG MINH CỨU CHỮA KỊP THỜI.

## LÒNG NHÂN ĐẠO PHẢI ĐƯỢC ĐẶT TRÊN TRÁCH NHIỆM CHỈ HUY

Với phương tiện tải thương nhanh chóng bằng máy bay trực thăng và những bệnh viện tối tân, QLVNCH và Đồng Minh đã cứu sống 90% chiến sĩ bị thương ở chiến trường không phân biệt bạn hay thù.

Trong quá khứ, rất nhiều thương binh Cộng Sản đã được cứu sống vì QLVNCH và Đồng Minh có đầy đủ phương tiện y khoa tối tân.

Tuy là một thủ trưởng nhưng vì lòng nhân đạo, bạn nên để cho những thương binh nặng có một cơ hội may mắn là được QLVNCH và Đồng minh cứu chữa cũng như nhiều thương binh Cộng Sản khác đã được cứu chữa như vậy.



## Trở về với chính nghĩa VIỆT NAM CỘNG HÒA

### MỘT CỰU CÁN BINH BẮC VIỆT KẾT HÔN VỚI MỘT CÔ GÁI MIỀN NAM



Anh Trần Quang Huân, một cựu cán binh Bắc Việt hồi chánh đang chụp chung với người vợ miền Nam, cô Cao thị Châu. Vợ chồng anh Huân sống tại một xã do trên 100 hồi chánh viên Bắc Việt thành lập. Họ hiện giờ là công dân với đầy đủ quyền tự do tại miền Nam Việt Nam.

mạng vì...  
quá thiếu thốn.  
Các bạn có thể hưởng được phương tiện thuốc men đầy đủ, nếu các bạn:

## CÁN BỘ CHIẾN SĨ TRONG HÀNG NGŨ CỘNG SẢN

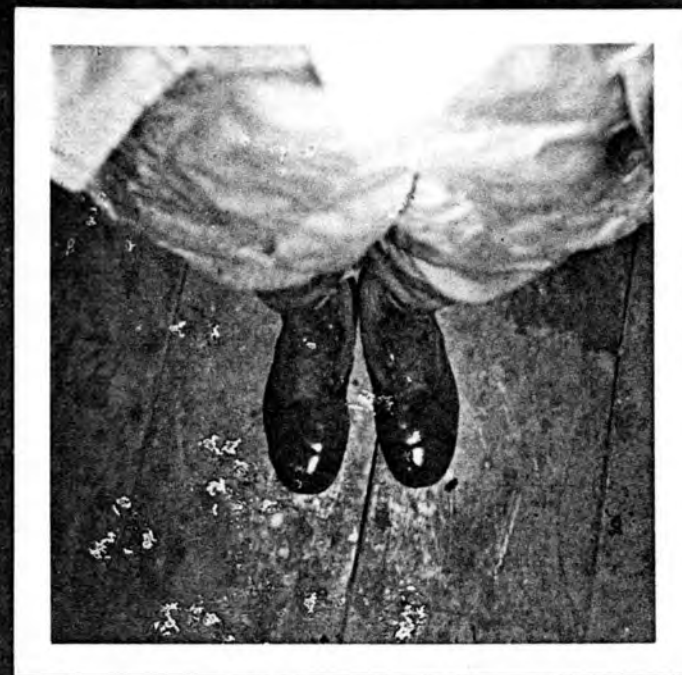
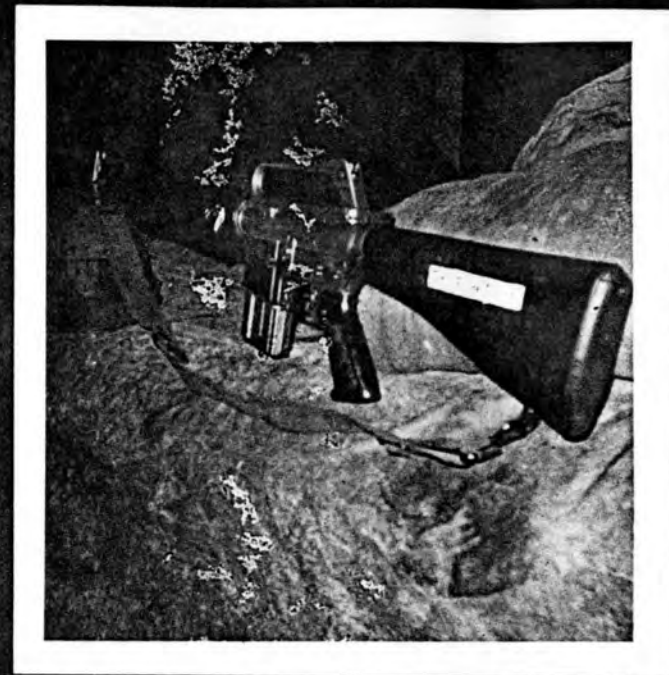
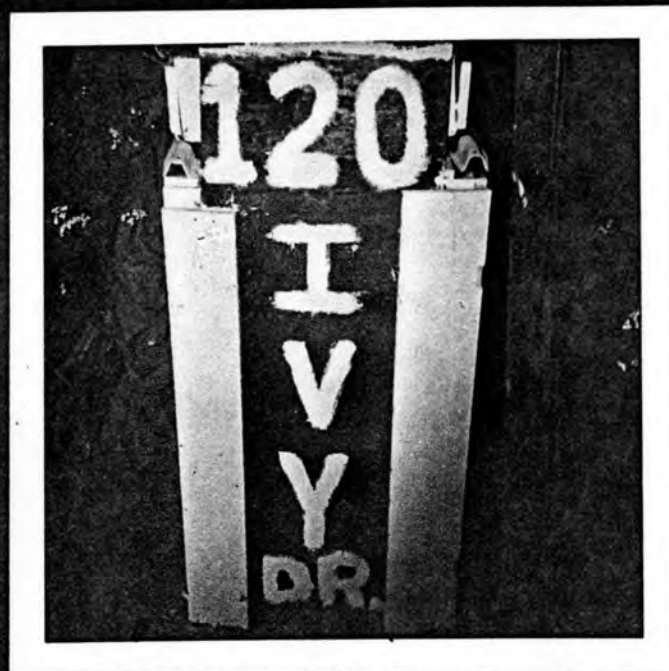
Chính sách di tản thương binh bạn, dù có được chấp hành hình cũng ít có hy vọng cứu sống chiến sĩ bị thương nặng vì thiếu phương tiện y tế. Trong khi đó QLVNCH và Đồng Minh đã dùng máy bay trực thăng để di tản thương binh nên chỉ một tuần sau, thương binh đã được chuyển tới bệnh viện gần nhất. Vì vậy mà khá nhiều binh sĩ Cộng Sản bị thương nặng ở chiến trường đã được QLVNCH và Đồng Minh cứu sống.



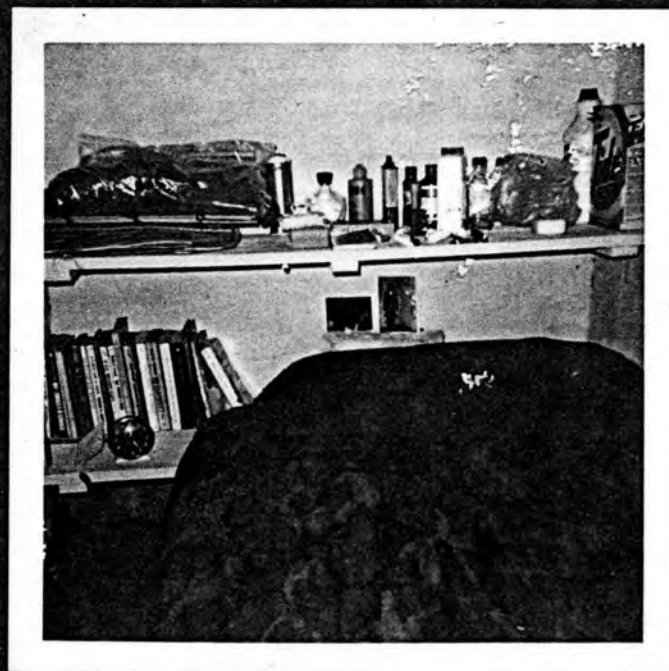
NHỜ TẢI THƯƠNG NHANH CHÓNG, BINH SĨ CỘNG SẢN NÀY ĐÃ ĐƯỢC CỨU SỐNG.

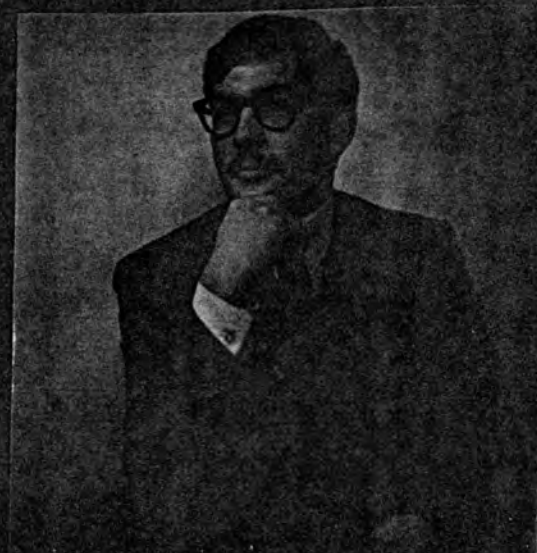
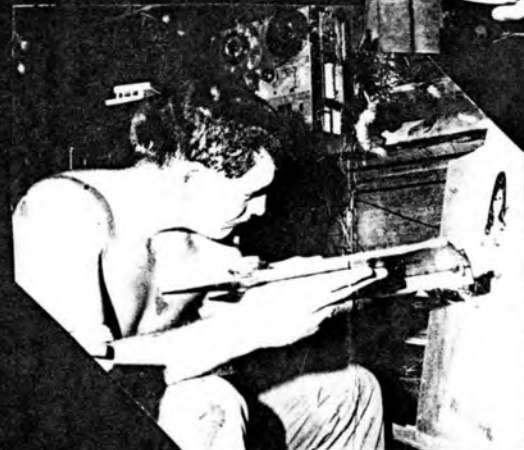
Unfold  
to  
read





Pictures of my "hootch," rifle, boots, etc., which were taken at Quan Loi shortly before I returned to Phuoc Vinh to become newspaper and later magazine editor for "the Cav."





Doss' Finest Hour



Bill Ellis  
Major Coleman  
Ron Doss  
Paul Sgroi  
Steve Haldeman  
Bob Dyslin  
John Salandi  
Chuck Spicer  
Dave VanDrew  
Ed Freudenburg

(Military Payment Certificates)



M  
P  
C



Vietnamese money







Party-time  
Bill Ellis  
John Dixon  
Ron Doss  
Joe Kamalick



Dear Civilians, Friends, Draft Dodgers, and other "World" People:

In the very near future the undersigned will once more be back on the block dehydrated and demoralized, and suffering from an acute nervous condition triggered especially at the sound of loud noises, to take his place again as a human being with the well known forms of freedom and justice for all, and to engage in life, liberty and the somewhat delayed pursuit of happiness. In making your jovous preparations to welcome him back into organized society, you might take certain steps to make allowances for the crude environment which has been his lot for the past twelve months. In other words, he might be a little Asiatic from the Vietnanesitis and should be handled with care. Do not be alarmed if he is infected with all forms of rare tropical diseases. A little time in the "Land of the Big PX" will cure this malady.

Therefore, show no alarm if at meal time he asks for plastic forks, eats with his fingers when the fork breaks, and always prefers canned fruit in preference to eggs for breakfast. Never suggest that he help with the dishes after the meal unless you have no objections to your china being washed in the garbage can with a toilet brush.

His personal habits will also require a little understanding on your part. Be patient while he once again learns to flush the toilet. Have plenty of burn ointment on hand for immediate use after he has taken a shower. After all, he's completely marked out of his mind the existence of hot water. In fact, indoor showers may be a little hazy to his memory, so try to suppress your embarrassment if he disrobes, grabs a bar of soap, and runs outside completely nude when it rains.

By all means ignore his vocabulary. When he mumbles something about chop chow, don't head for the axe, but rather rush to the kitchen and begin preparing chow (a meal). The constant repetition of the phrase, "That's a negative on that," doesn't indicate any deep seeded psychological manifestations of negativism. He's merely telling you "no thank you," or "I'm sorry, that's not correct." And if he continues to seem to think that everything is a "Roger," he hasn't contracted any visionary disease. He's simply agreeing with your statement. If he utters "sin loi" don't worry. It has absolutely nothing to do with sinning. And never deny him the privilege of going to the latrine (bathroom). You very well might have a big mess on your hand or floor.

Never ask why the Jones' son held a higher rank than he did. Avoid the words "extend" and "incoming." Try to eliminate as much green as possible from your wardrobe, and never, never wear a straw hat while working in your garden. Don't ask questions when there is a noticeable lack of underwear in his dirty laundry. And graciously consent to pull your turn at guard, to go on police call, and help with the sandbagging of the garage.

Above all, keep in mind that beneath that tanned and rugged exterior is a heart of gold. Treat him with kindness, tolerance, and an occasional fifth of liquor, and you will be able to rehabilitate that which once was a happy-go-lucky guy that you once know and loved.

Last, but not least, send no more mail to the APO, fill the refrigerator with beer, get the civies out of mothballs, fill the car with gas, and the the women and children off the streets.....**BEG USE THE KID IS COMING HOME!!**

.....  
Signature



Desire—Good Food



The Legacy of War



Viet

Future Is

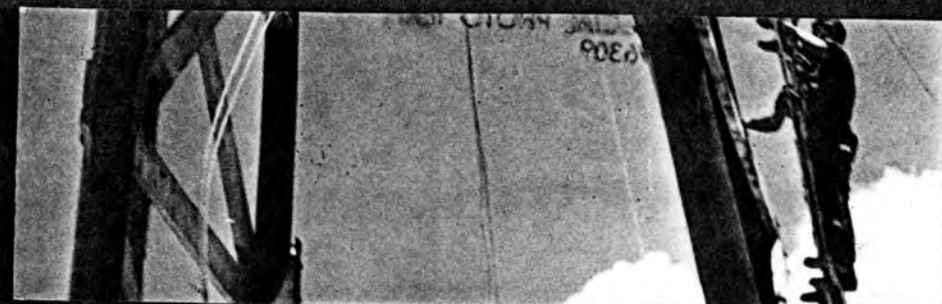
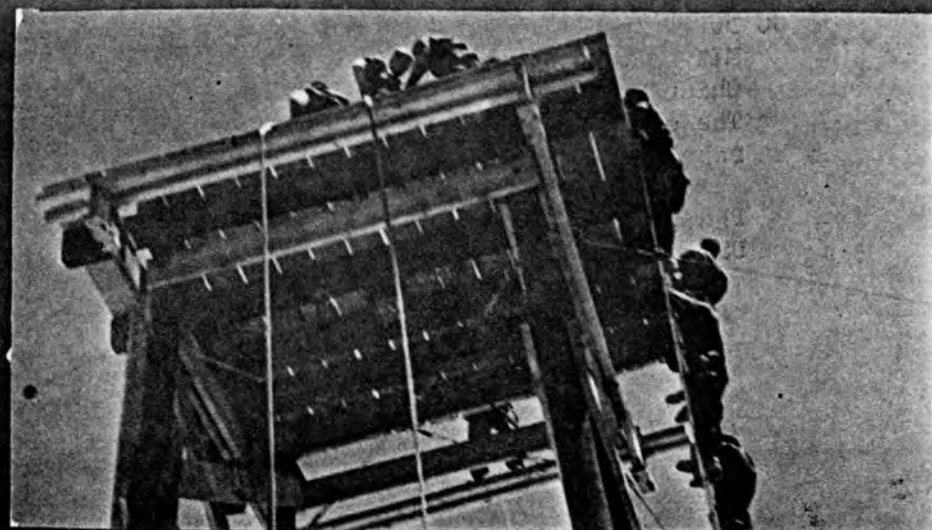
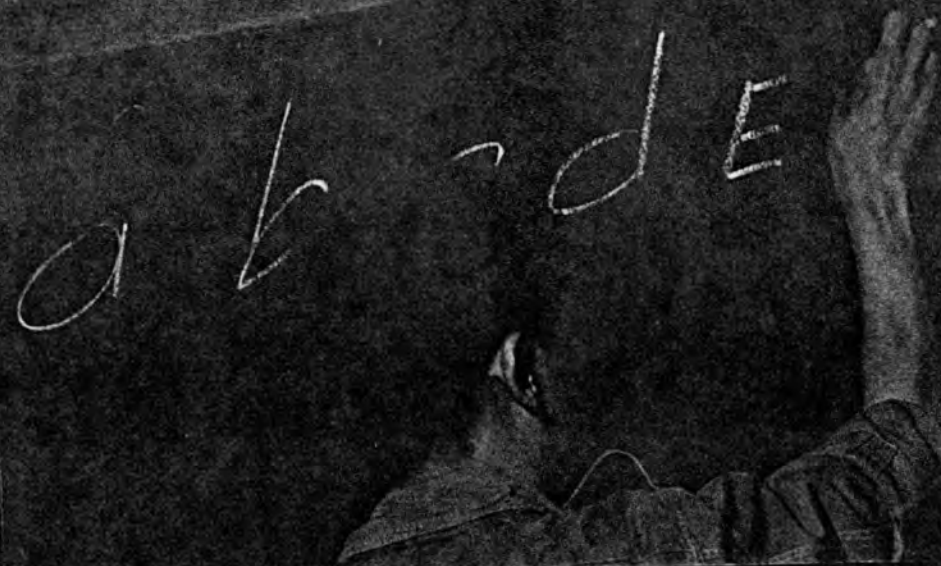
'Bright'



re to walk to a fight:  
th, 228th, and 220th



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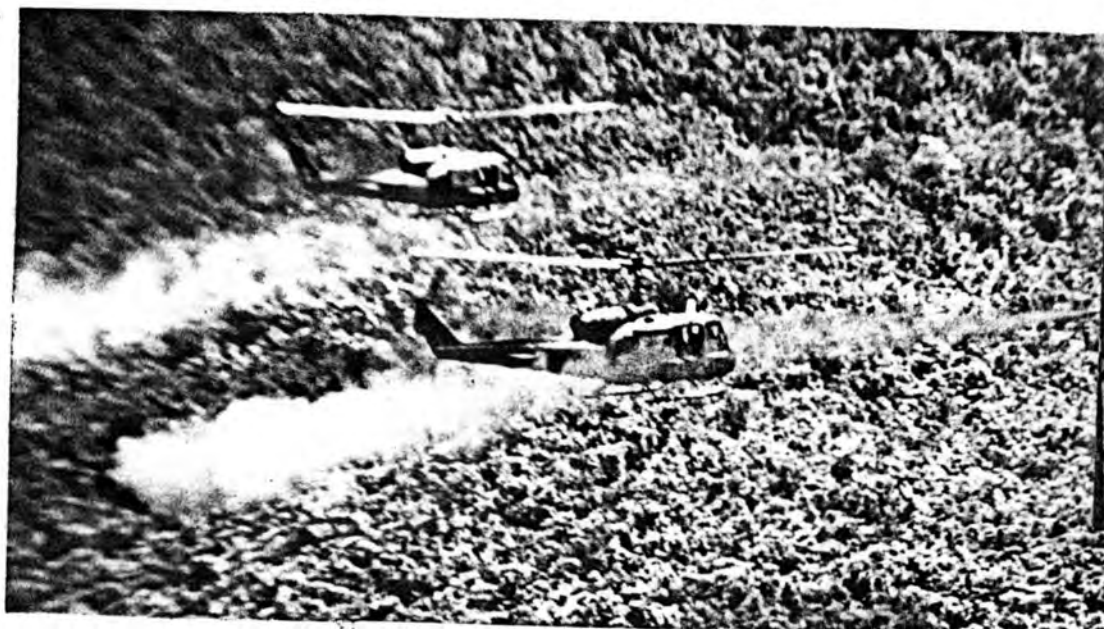




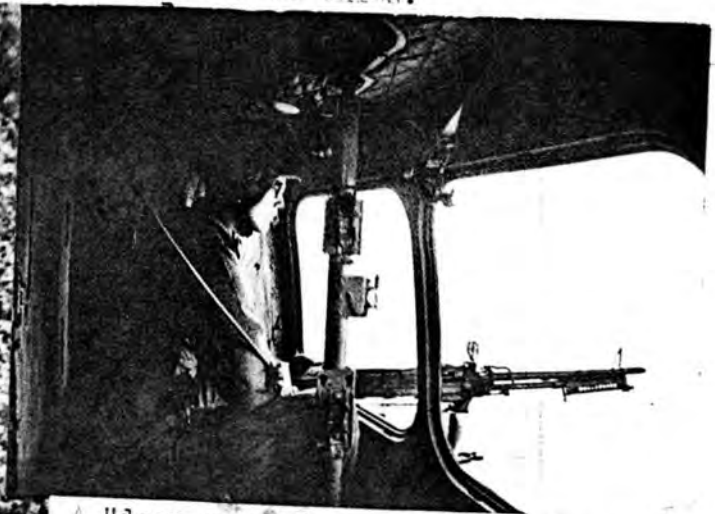
A "Cobra," more commonly known as a Snake, works out here, as he "Comes in Hot!"



In the Cav an infantry company doesn't have to walk to a fight; they're flown there, compliments of the 227th, 228th, and 229th Aviation units.



A Huey gunship fires its rockets, as another ship does the same -- they are "Bringing the Max on Charlie!"



A "door gunner" on a Huey slick. He provides suppressive fire, refuels the ship, and helps maintain it to some degree.

# Action Army

This "trite" phrase holds true in Vietnam.



UH-1D "Huey" brings 1st Cav Skytroopers on combat assault.



Troops off-load from a Chinook, and move into a new area to conduct a reconnaissance-in-force mission; to search and destroy, or some other tactical movement.

SPACE CENTER, Houston (AP) — "Houston . . . Tranquillity Base here. The Eagle has landed." Those were the first words from the lunar surface, from command pilot Neil Armstrong after the touchdown on the moon.

PACIFIC  
**STARS AND STRIPES**

AN AUTHORIZED UNOFFICIAL PUBLICATION  
FOR THE U.S. ARMED FORCES OF THE PACIFIC COMMAND

Vol. 25, No. 202

Tuesday, July 22, 1969

# A MOONWALK!

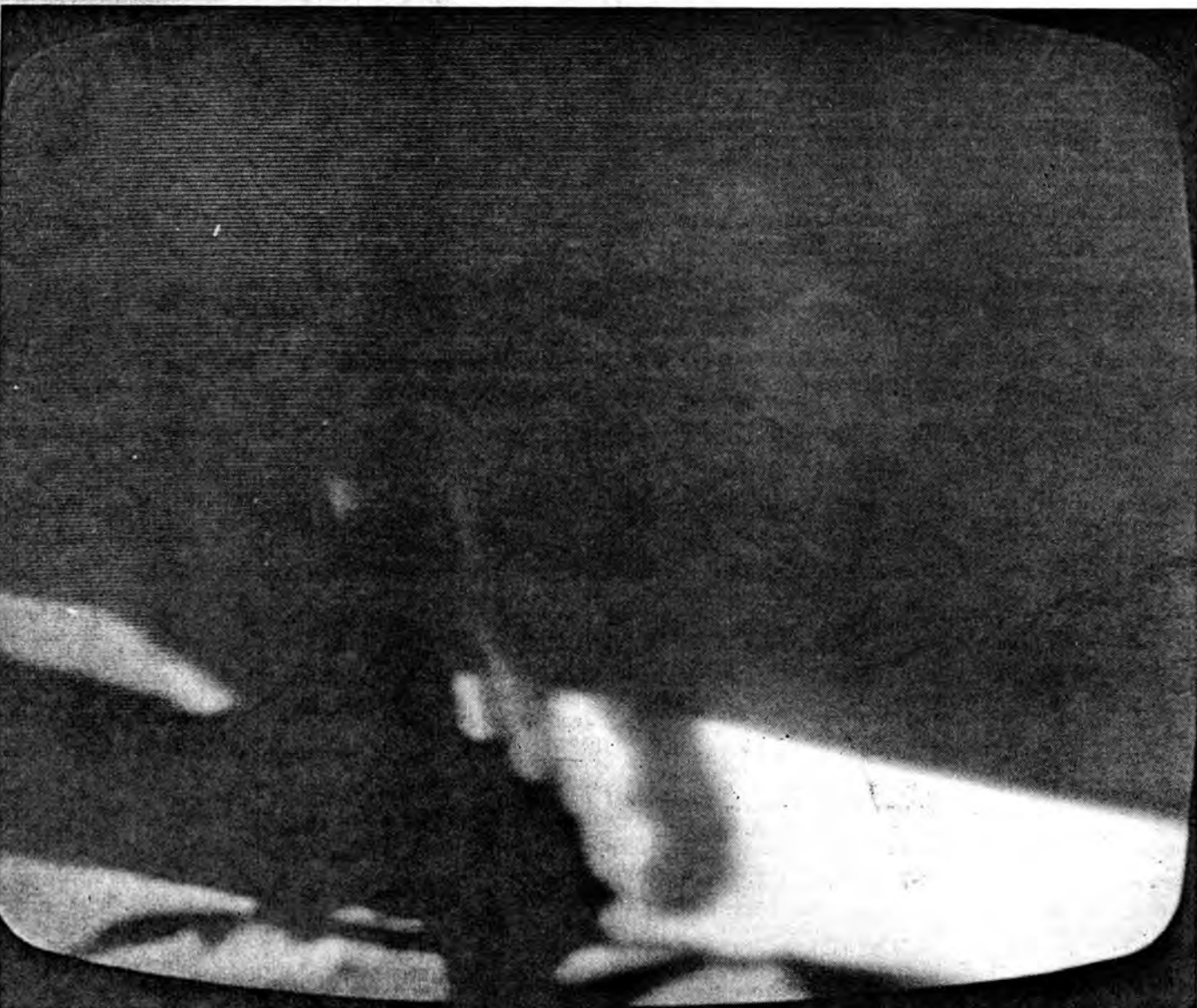


NEIL A. ARMSTRONG

***U.S. Leaves Its Mark in History As Neil 'Leaps For Mankind'***



EDWIN E. ALDRIN JR.



ASTRONAUT NEIL ARMSTRONG BECOMES THE FIRST MAN TO SET FOOT UPON THE MOON.

S&S Photo

SEA OF TRANQUILITY, The Moon (AP)—Man landed and walked on the moon Sunday, July 20, 1969.

Two Americans, Neil A. Armstrong and Edwin E. Aldrin Jr., 240,000 miles from their home on the planet Earth, settled to a dusty landing on the moon's alien soil at 4:18 p.m. EDT and some six hours later Armstrong

Related stories on Page 2

made the first footprint on that strange globe.

In a bulky suit that gave him the life-sustaining environment of his planet, Armstrong climbed laboriously down the nine steps on a ladder at the side of his spaceship.

Armstrong's first words on the moon were:

"That's one small step for man. One giant leap for mankind".

Aldrin, his companion on this trek of history, waited inside the ship Eagle to

(Continued on Back Page, Col. 1)



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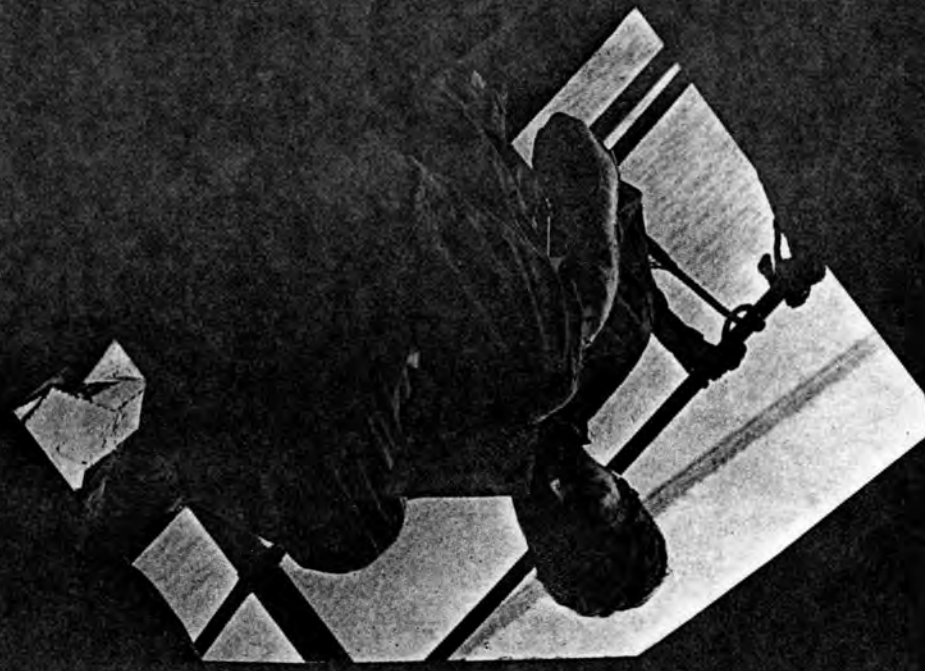
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**STRIPES**  
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per month. Second-  
an Francisco, Calif.



The only thing worse than no mail  
at all, is a Dear John letter  
from your Mother!



Mail, Like Dirt and Dying, Has  
Always Been Part of War



*"...And where is the prince who could so afford to cover his country with troops for its defense as that 10,000 men descending from the clouds might not in many places do an infinite deal of mischief before a force could be brought together to repel them?"*

**BENJAMIN FRANKLIN**





# Is a Moving Experience

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TROOPERS HEADED FOR SOUTHEAST ASIA WAIT IT OUT AT TERMINAL.



AN OPEN SUITCASE MAKES A COMFORTABLE COUCH.



LEAVING, ALL YOU CAN DO IS WAVE FAREWELL AND, MAYBE SHED A FEW TEARS.



EVEN AS SOME LEAVE, A NEWCOMER GETS A WARM GREETING.

# Yokota

S&S Photos By PHIL RALPH CAYNE

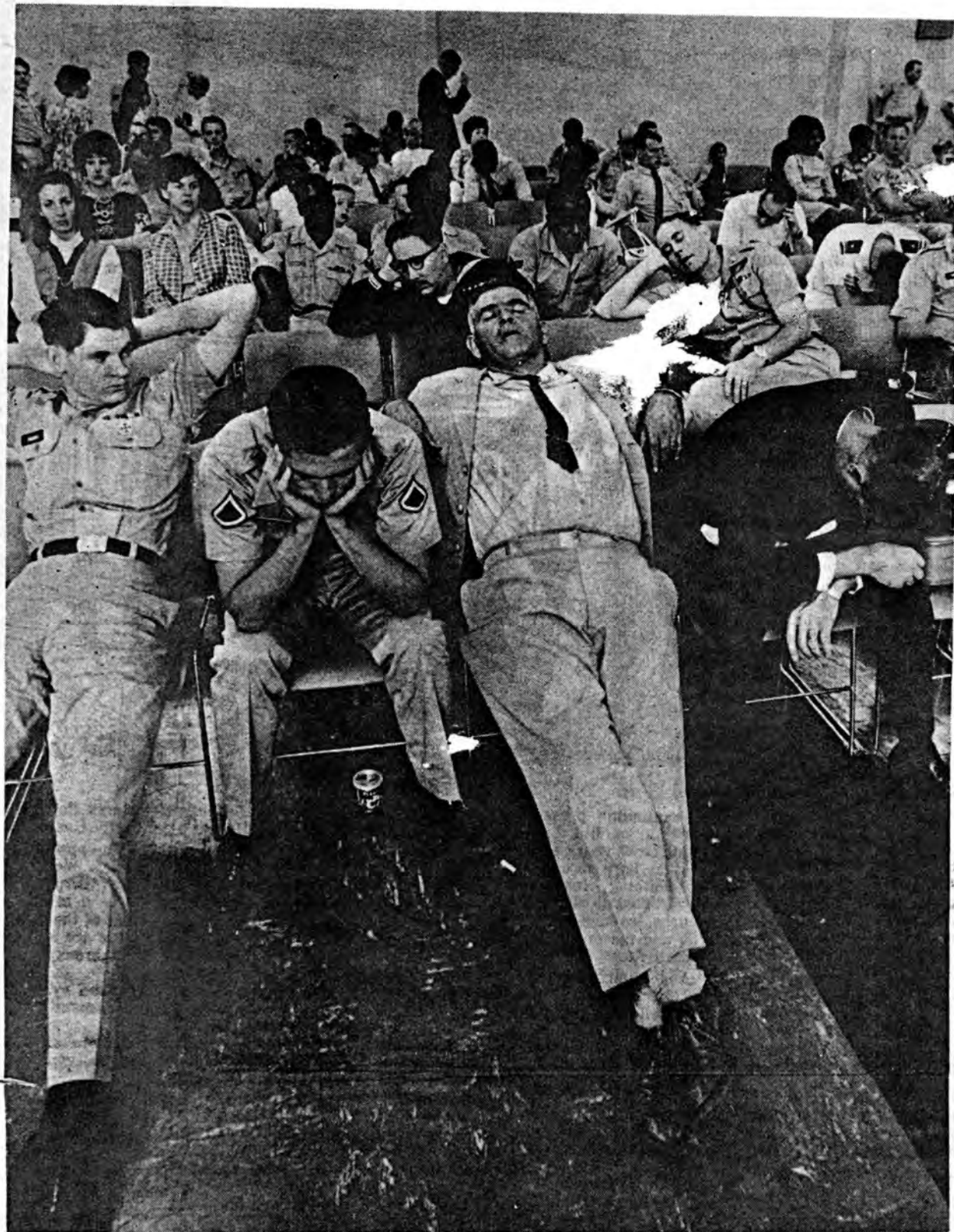
A soldier stares hypnotically, chin in hands, at a patch of white on the red tile floor. The patch is partially obscured by dust that only hours before was mud clinging to GI's jungle boots in Vietnam.

This soldier is typical of hundreds of servicemen—many of them with their families—who can be found at any time of the day—or night—waiting for space available for flight at Yokota Air Terminal just north of Tokyo.

Reading, sleeping, writing letters or playing cards are some ways to kill time while waiting for a flight.

They may wait a few hours or days. Three days have gone by without a person leaving. Another day, and space available passengers have boarded the same airplane.

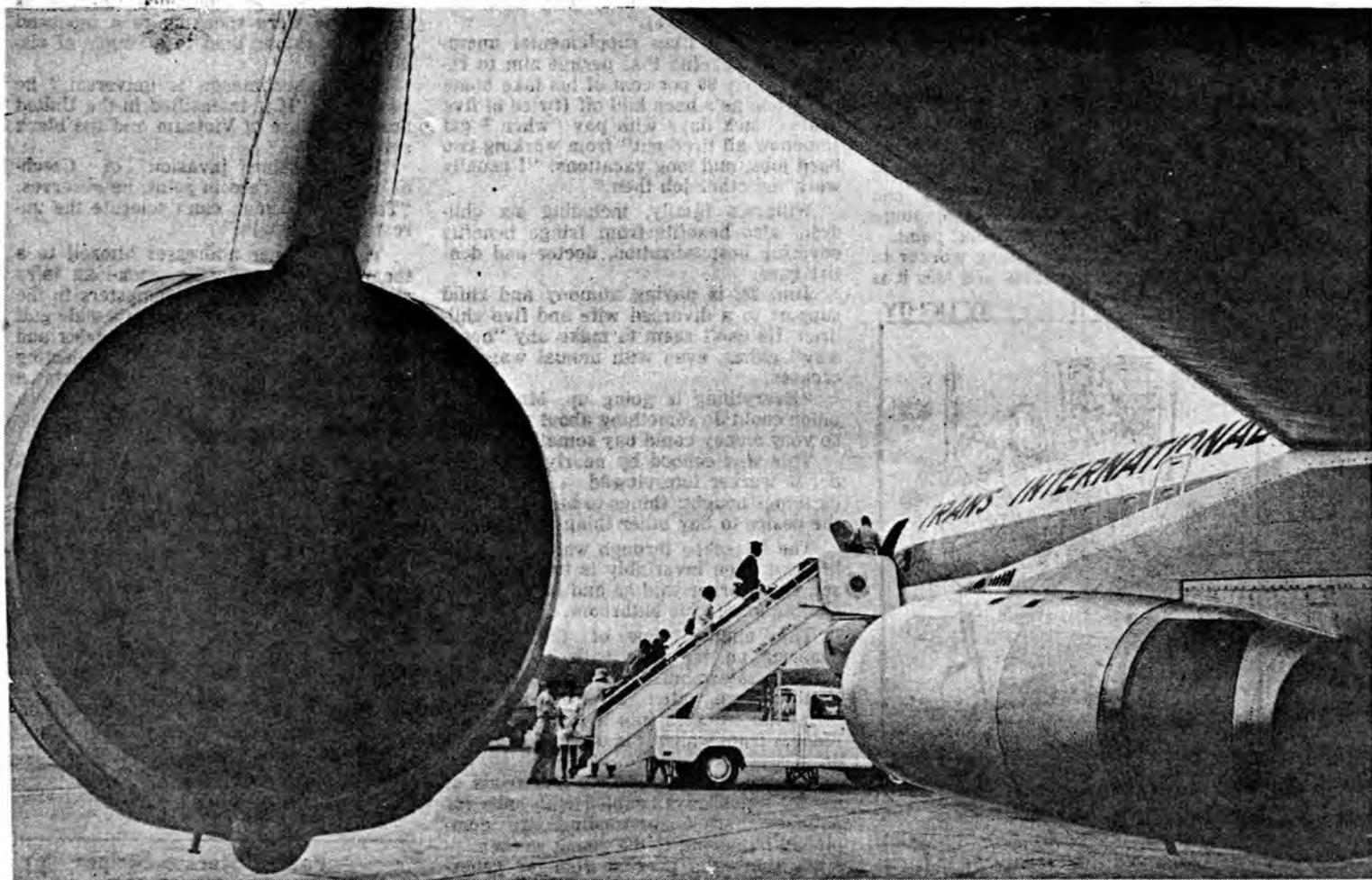
With all the waiting, Yokota's two passenger terminals are anything but inefficient, having moved as many as 120,000 persons per month.



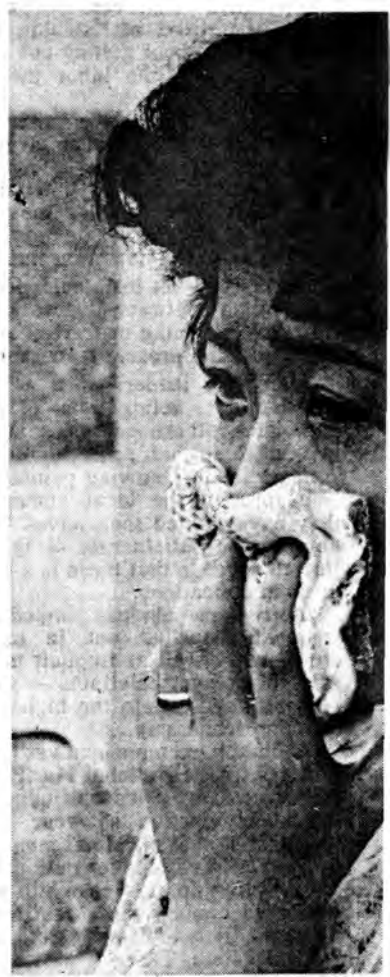
THERE'S NOT MUCH TO DO BUT SLEEP OR MEDITATE—WHEN THE PLANE GOES YOU HAVE TO BE THERE.



THINKING ABOUT FRIENDS LEFT BEHIND.



EVENTUALLY THE WAIT ENDS, AND PASSENGERS FILE ABOARD A DC8 FOR THE FLIGHT OUT TO THEIR BASE.



WITH A LOVED ONE LEAVING.

No man is an Iland, intire of it selfe; every man is a peece of the *Continent*, a part of the *maine*; if a *Clod* bee washed away by the *Sea*, *Europe* is the lesse, as well as if a *Promontorie* were, as well as if a *Mannor* of thy *friends* or of *thine owne* were; any mans *death* diminishes *me*, because I am involved in *Mankinde*; And therefore never send to know for whom the *bell* tolls; It tolls for *thee*.

JOHN DONNE 1624



"In the Field"





VI  
Will N



# VIETNAMIZATION

## Will Nixon's Plan Work?

THE WAR IN VIETNAM



Looking into the future: U.S. commander General Abrams inspects a detachment of South Vietnamese troops

## VIETNAMIZATION: WILL IT WORK?

Once again, it is Tet in South Vietnam, and in the bustling sidewalk market stalls, potted kumquat trees—the ancient tokens of good luck—are selling at a brisk pace as are plastic toy guns. The Year of the Dog begins this week, and along with the traditional lotus tea, candied fruits and plum wine, a custom of more recent vintage is much in evidence: the people of South Vietnam and their U.S. allies are nervously waiting to learn whether the Communists will try to repeat the stunning Tet offensive of 1968.

But what a difference two years have made. While it is conceivable that the enemy may try to start something in this lunar New Year season, there is every sign that the Viet Cong and their North Vietnamese comrades have gone to earth, licking the deep wounds they sustained since their high-water mark two years ago. For Americans, the war in Vietnam has come to mean fewer casualties, a steady withdrawal of U.S. troops and a gradual shift of the battlefield burden to the armed forces of South Vietnam. In one astonishing year, Richard Nixon has taken the war off the front page and tucked it into the back of most American minds. Although there still are many doubting Thomases, the President has convinced most of his countrymen that, through a program tactfully described as "Vietnamization," he intends to liquidate his nation's most pressing problem—even in the total ab-

sence of progress at the Paris peace talks. The question is: will Vietnamization work? Certainly the President and his advisers think so, and at his news conference last week, Mr. Nixon insisted that the process is "irreversible." But even the most sanguine of Administration officials would be quick to concede that, so far, only the relatively easy part of the job has been done. Last week, when 3,000 U.S. marines boarded homebound transport ships, the Administration's "third slice" withdrawal officially began. When it is completed in mid-April, U.S. troop strength in Vietnam will be down to its lowest level in more than two years. A few months from now, however, the President will begin to cut perilously close to the bone, and as he tries to calculate how many more troops can be spared from the fighting, he will be haunted by a host of imponderables.

The Army of the Republic of Vietnam (ARVN) is one of them. The ARVN is unquestionably bigger and probably better than it has ever been. But it is still largely untested, and until it faces the enemy on its own, its report card must remain a blank. South Vietnamese President Nguyen Van Thieu has also been measurably strengthened, but he and his fractious countrymen—who are in the grips of a profound social revolution—are hardly twin pillars for anyone to lean on.

And although, as American generals like to say, the Communists are "hurting," too little is known of their intentions and capabilities to draw much comfort from their present disengagement. "The enemy," warns one U.S. policymaker, "has it in his power to knock Vietnamization into a cocked hat by noon tomorrow."

If that should happen, it could well maim Mr. Nixon's entire foreign policy, for Vietnamization is the keystone of what has come to be known as the Nixon Doctrine. "Simply put, the Nixon Doctrine rejects the idea of our being a world policeman, rushing in ground troops to fight someone else's war," says a highly placed Defense Department official. "It also rejects 'Fortress America' isolationism. It is the middle course of providing a nuclear shield against big-power aggression and offering our allies military advice and supplies where needed. But the local people have to provide the manpower to defend themselves." Should Vietnamization fail, it will present Mr. Nixon with an agonizing choice: to re-escalate the conflict, thereby reviving the bitter domestic discord over Vietnam, or to become the first President in American history to nakedly lose a war.

It goes without saying that Mr. Nixon wants to avoid painting himself into such a corner, and his Administration has drawn up a flexible but nonetheless urgent timetable. In his Pentagon office, Secretary of Defense Melvin Laird hops



Gearing up: ARVN soldiers practice assaults from a wrecked U.S. helicopter and learn to handle the M-60 machine gun



Prize catch: A South Vietnamese pilot dashes to his bomb-laden F-5 fighter; Ruff-Puffs proudly escort three captured Viet Cong



Associated Press

out of a maple captain's chair, strides to a table and picks up a top-secret chart labeled "Visual Conceptual Overview." Making sure that his visitor is too far away to read the fine print, Laird remarks laconically, "It goes to 1973."

If things go according to Laird's plan, the Vietnamization program will be carried out in three phases: (1) the removal of U.S. forces from ground combat responsibilities, (2) the gradual disengagement from air, artillery and logistical support and (3) the assignment of the remaining U.S. forces to a purely advisory role. By the end of this year, reports NEWSWEEK Pentagon correspondent Lloyd Norman, the Administration hopes to have withdrawn some 250,000 to 300,000 troops. Eventually, the U.S. presence will be pared down to between 20,000 and 30,000 men. During the final transition period, U.S. air squadrons and support units will retain bases at Saigon's Tan Son Nhut airfield, and at Bien Hoa, Qui Nhon, Da Nang and Chu Lai. The last American combat unit to leave will be the First Air Cavalry Division which, with its 400 helicopters, will serve as a security force to protect the support troops.

So far, however, Laird has not been entirely successful in spreading the word on Vietnamization, for many American military and civilian officials in Vietnam still do not believe that Washington intends to wrap up the U.S. role in the war at such an early date. In their view, haste spells disaster, and many still assume that 200,000 or more GI's will have to remain in Vietnam for several years. Thus, when Laird travels to South Vietnam next week, he will have a double mission: to check up on progress and to do some proselytizing among his own subordinates.

The Secretary of Defense will undoubtedly be presented with ample evidence to show that the military side of Vietnamization is proceeding nicely. The ARVN has been expanded to nearly 400,000 men, armed with many of the latest U.S. weapons. Some of its divisions have achieved a respectable level of efficiency. Under constant American prodding, the officer corps is gradually becoming more aggressive and effective. "In another six months," vows one senior U.S. general, "the ARVN junior officers are either going to be dead, wounded, fired or experienced."

Other branches of the South Vietnamese armed forces have also made considerable strides. The 33,000-man navy is perhaps the furthest along, for through the use of mixed Vietnamese-American crews, it has long been a prototype of Vietnamization. By this summer, the U.S. Navy will have turned over all of its 500 gunboats to the South Vietnamese "brown-water navy" patrolling the inland waterways. "I keep waiting for them to turn the gunboats into water taxis," says an American, "but so far it hasn't happened." The South Vietnamese Air Force is less Vietnamized, but it too is gearing up; this fiscal year, some 1,200 pilots will be undergoing training in the U.S.

On the assumption that men fight best when they are defending their own homes, the American commander, Gen. Creighton Abrams, is putting his strongest emphasis on the South Vietnamese militia, and the effort seems to be paying off. The nearly 400,000 members of the Regional and Popular Forces have taken over much of the security burden at the district, village and hamlet level. Behind the "Ruff-Puffs" are the most irregular of irregulars—the People's Self Defense Force, some 3 million citizen-soldiers who serve as a part-time early-warning system for the other branches of the

armed forces. About 400,000 of these men are armed with a motley collection of shotguns and World War II weapons. Altogether, the militia are of varied quality. In Binh Dinh Province on the central coastline, the Popular Forces are valued more highly than the better trained and equipped ARVN, while in Binh Duong Province just north of Saigon, only six of 35 RF companies are considered even marginally effective. "But they don't have to be all that good," insists a high-ranking American. "The VC just have to fall over them."

As stumbling blocks, the militiamen have contributed to the current success of the Saigon government's Accelerated Pacification program. Although statistical surveys are notoriously unreliable in South Vietnam, the latest data show that 92 per cent of the people now live in areas considered at least relatively secure. In October 1968, the figure was 69.8 per cent. And more than 90 per cent of South Vietnam's villages and hamlets now elected their own officials.

All this is the good news. But the debit side of the Vietnamization ledger is at least as imposing. For at their present level of development, the South Vietnamese armed forces still exhibit glaring deficiencies in leadership, morale and effectiveness. In all of those categories, the showpiece First ARVN Division is both an example and a rebuke to its sister units. In the grisly battle for Hamburger Hill last spring, members of the division were first to reach the hotly contested crest. But on the way up, a junior officer was killed, and the attack began to stall. Listening in by radio at a command post, one ARVN captain grabbed his M-16 rifle and, without any prompting, charged up the hill to get the men moving again. "In an ordinary ARVN

division," marveled an American officer, "that type of thing would never be done. If a general didn't personally get up there and order something to happen, nothing would."

All too often, senior ARVN officers are reluctant to act, and this has a disastrous effect on the young lieutenants and captains who have been trained in American methods. When Vietnamese graduates of the U.S. Army's school at Fort Benning, Ga., return home wearing the infantry's "Follow Me" badge, they often run into trouble. "You can shout 'follow me' in the U.S. Army, but in Vietnam you're better off if you say 'I'll follow you,'" says a young ARVN officer. "If you go out and overrun an enemy machine-gun position singlehanded, you're liable to embarrass your superior officers. Americans are supposed to do that; Vietnamese are supposed to survive."

Because they are in for the duration of the war, most South Vietnamese soldiers work full time at the business of survival. Deep in the Mekong Delta not long ago, a naive young officer from the ARVN 21st Division actually yelled "Follow me!" to his men and then, without looking back, he charged off through scattered small-arms fire toward an enemy bunker complex. When he got there, he turned around and discovered that he was quite alone; his men were still huddled back in their trenches.

The ARVN itself does little to make the trooper's lot any easier. The ordinary ARVN family lives in a dirt-poor hovel, and the head of the household often must support a wife and several children on \$25 to \$50 a month. The daily allowance for a soldier's food ration does not exceed 40 piasters. That is 27 cents at the official exchange rate, or about 10 cents on the black market, and even a

modest food stall in Saigon charges that much or more for a simple bowl of soup. There is scant opportunity for the average ARVN soldier to increase his wages through promotion. And so far, the U.S. Vietnamization budget contains no funds for upgrading these living conditions.

Small wonder, then, that many ARVN soldiers are such proficient pilferers. In that, they are only emulating their superiors, for corruption and misappropriation are still rampant in the South Vietnamese officer corps. The commander of one ARVN division employs one of his precious helicopters to fly his wife into Saigon to have her hair done. Another division commander is using almost a company of his men to build himself a summer house. At the Thu Duc training camp outside Saigon, officer candidates are forced to take up a collection to buy food for their superiors. If the recruits want 24-hour passes, they must promise to scrounge for the officers. One was told to bring back two bags of cement, another to round up ten "high class" girls. "Why should I risk my life for people like that?" asked one outraged recruit. "You feel like you're fighting for the Mafia, not for your country's honor."

With so much on their minds, many South Vietnamese units remain enormously ineffective in combat. In the II Corps area of central South Vietnam, a regiment from the 22nd ARVN Division reported setting 1,800 ambushes during the May-July period last year. The unenviable score: six enemy dead and ten ARVN fatalities. The inexorable arithmetic of Vietnamization aggravates these problems. In the northern I Corps area, two and a half ARVN divisions will have to defend a region they once shared with five U.S. divisions. The formula apparently requires each ARVN regular to be worth two or more Americans.

One of the more elementary conclu-

sions to be drawn from the Vietnamization process so far is that many South Vietnamese units fight far better with American help than without it. When American advisers are along on an operation, the South Vietnamese know that they will get air and artillery support. They know that food and water will be brought in by helicopter. And they know that if they are wounded, they will be promptly evacuated to a clean American hospital. When the South Vietnamese are off on their own, none of this support can be taken for granted.

Even when American advisers are on-scene in force, success is far from assured. In the Mekong Delta, where the last U.S. ground combat troops were withdrawn in September 1969, there are some 26,000 Americans still on hand. But it appears that the government's position in the delta is already beginning to erode. There are as many guerrillas in the area now as there were in 1963—some 80,000—and government forces often seem reluctant to challenge the enemy. Recently, the lack of fighting spirit in the Seventh ARVN Division prompted its American advisers to draw up contingency plans for destroying U.S.-supplied equipment if some of the units decided to walk out of the war. And the 21st Division—whose commander, Brig. Gen. Nguyen Vinh Nghi, maintains a private zoo at his headquarters—reportedly has a serious desertion problem.

The ARVN's poor combat performance is a bad enough handicap, but as Vietnamization moves into Phase Two—the withdrawal of support troops—another problem will emerge: the lack of logistical capability. "Their supply channel isn't good," says one U.S. officer. "Without our logistical tail, they couldn't even do the job they're doing." The

## THE WAR IN VIETNAM

South Vietnamese are also short on administrative and technical skills. "We must familiarize them with problems of long-term management," says Maj. Gen. Roderick Wetherill, who recently returned home after commanding the Delta Military Assistance Command. "How many hours do you fly your helicopters? How long do you keep your gunboats operating before overhauling? These problems will be increasingly important. The Vietnamese will have to learn how to manage their military assets."

One of those assets, the South Vietnamese Air Force, will be seriously strained. With fewer than 500 aircraft, it will be hard put to it to perform both fighting and supply roles. South Vietnamese pilots will not be flying even half of the combat missions in Vietnam until the end of 1971. As it is, U.S. planes must handle 70 per cent of the ARVN's airborne supplies. And Saigon's air arm will have scant capability to meet such other demands as medical evacuation. "We are almost entirely dependent on U.S. helicopters," says Brig. Gen. Vu Ngoc Hoan, the ARVN's surgeon general. "We need at least eight medevac helicopters per corps—32 in all—with double that number eventually." So far, after hard bargaining with the Americans, General Hoan has been promised only eight choppers to cover the whole country, and already Saigon's air force has grabbed those for its own use.

The Americans have been equally sparing in other planned equipment turn-overs. "Contrary to what most people believe," explains a U.S. officer, "ARVN units already have 85 to 90 per cent of what they are going to get." And that is surprisingly little. When fully equipped, a typical ARVN unit will have only a third as many machine guns as its U.S. counterpart. It will have significantly fewer radio sets and very few of the exotic electronic gadgets that the Americans have used to such good effect since Tet 1968. One of the best of these is the "starlight" scope, which permits a soldier to see clearly under most nighttime conditions. A typical U.S. battalion has 82 of the scopes; ARVN battalions are scheduled to receive three.

Militarily, the thrust of Vietnamization appears to be an effort to remake the South Vietnamese armed forces in the image of their American patrons. But so far, in terms of leadership, fighting habits, equipment and logistics, it is not a very good copy. For the moment, none of these shortages and deficiencies are terribly important. As long as American combat and support units are on hand to plug the gaps, the South Vietnamese can probably withstand any Communist challenge. But sooner or later, the U.S. withdrawal will pass the point of no return. If it turns out to be "sooner"—as the Administration's timetable would seem to suggest—then serious trouble may be lurking beyond some not-too-distant horizon.

## Revolution Without Plan

It is curfew time, and the bars and massage parlors along Saigon's gaudy Tu Do Street are closing. At the doorway of The Flowers, one of the more expensive establishments, a tall, stunningly attractive Vietnamese girl is saying good-night to a U.S. airman who has been buying her drinks for the past hour. The bar girl, who calls herself Madeleine, is a 23-year-old Saigonese who is not at all unhappy about the presence of so many Americans in her country. For though she privately despises many of her customers, Madeleine does not dislike the Yankee dollar. "Why should I want the war to end," she says. "I've saved enough to make most Americans look poor." Then she drives off in her pearl-white Toyota.

Such a girl is not unique. There are more than 200,000 Madeleines in South Vietnam, and, while few are rich enough to drive Toyotas, they all dread the prospect of a full-scale U.S. withdrawal. Ordinary Vietnamese have nothing but contempt for the bar girls and the other blemishes upon their traditional way of life that have appeared since the Americans arrived, but they nonetheless feel much the same. For the vast U.S. war machine has wrought profound changes in Vietnamese society. And not all of them have been bad.

There is a great irony in this. From the outset of its involvement in the war, the U.S. wanted to bring about a social revolution in South Vietnam—but through well-planned reforms. For their part, the

Viet Cong have also been struggling to achieve a social revolution; indeed, the whole point of their war has been to change the way Vietnamese society is ordered. But now it appears that, despite the most inspired schemes of both sides, a social upheaval has taken place which is being shaped by no one in particular. "What's going on here in South Vietnam is a revolution in spite of us," says a senior U.S. official. "And it is making what is happening out there in the jungles between us and the Communists a little passé. What are the VC going to do with people who are more interested in television than revolution? And what are we going to do with all these people once the fighting stops? I don't think for a moment that anyone has given this much thought."

That is not altogether accurate. Many American and South Vietnamese officials have expressed concern over the rapid demographic transformation of the country. Only a decade ago, South Vietnam was a predominantly rural society. But the widespread devastation of the countryside—plus the magnet of easy money in areas where U.S. troops were based—has caused a mass migration to the cities. Today, as a result, about half of South Vietnam's 17 million people live in urban areas, many of them bustling boom towns. Saigon itself is probably the most densely populated city in the world.

This burgeoning urbanization has been a mixed blessing for South Vietnam. For the first time, millions of Vietnamese have been exposed to modern methods and machinery. Thousands of small businesses have opened up. Never before have so many Vietnamese made so much money and bought so many consumer goods—from television sets and refrigerators to Honda motorbikes. But whether this economic boom has done much to build a sound and durable economy is open to doubt. The Vietnamese who have capitalized on the war economy have, by and large, tended to invest their money not in industry or in other lasting enterprises, but in hotels, bars, massage parlors and residences for Americans, all designed for a quick profit. The upshot of this is that South Vietnam has built more nightclubs than hospitals, more luxury apartment buildings than schools.

In the pursuit of the dollar, a whole new class of *nouveaux riches* has been born—Vietnamese either skilled in milking the U.S. servicemen or in squeezing more than their share from the ramshackle wartime economy. Anomalies in wages have become bizarre. A policeman makes the equivalent of only \$25 a month; an American-employed construction worker may make \$300. A civil servant with twenty years' service earns \$85; the cleverer or more attractive among the young women who work the bars and red-light

districts ringing the bases and downtown areas can make more than \$850 a month.

Many of Vietnam's intellectuals turn their venom on the Americans for this unconscionable state of affairs. Among them is 50-year-old novelist Do The, who bitterly insists that the biggest change the Americans have brought to Vietnam is the "industry of the orphanage." Adds The unhappily: "This whole generation of young people is falling into wells of depravity, especially youth from poor families. I was sitting in a café. A young girl about 13 came up to me and asked me to buy her a cup of coffee. 'Goddam these Americans,' she complained. 'They've been making love to me all day and I still haven't got any satisfaction.' He paused briefly before asking: 'Is this Vietnam or California?'"

Sometimes, in downtown Saigon, it is hard to tell. For prostitution aside, the American influence has undoubtedly played havoc with traditional Vietnamese manners and mores. The old, tightly knit family structure has been undermined, and a grave generation gap now yawns between Confucian-minded parents and the new urban rock-and-Coke generation. "The young people have lost their faith in the older generation," says Nguyen Van Trung, the dean of the faculty of letters at Saigon University. "They have seen people talking about revolution and then stealing money from the people. This is why the youngsters have given up the ideal of a life of struggle and are now in pursuit of pleasure."

It is also true that Vietnamese young people, like their American counterparts, are becoming increasingly independent in matters of dress, manners and morals. Schoolgirls, who once would have blushed at the mention of sex, now discuss it openly, and virginity is not necessarily considered a badge of honor. Many take the Pill. On weekends, in the downtown area of Saigon, it sometimes seems as if the Sunset Strip has been transported across the Pacific. Well-to-do Vietnamese kids, wearing tight pastel-colored shirts hanging out of equally tight pants, gather in Kennedy Square with their Hondas and their girl friends. After a couple of hundred have gathered, the motors begin to rev. Then the boldest take off down Tu Do Street and a great bike race is on, the police, traffic lights, MP's, palace guards or pedestrians notwithstanding. Later, the cyclists and their dates head for one of Saigon's innumerable dark nightclubs to listen to Vietnamese singers mimic Aretha Franklin.

The impact of social change in the countryside has been different but no less striking. Modern techniques and equipment introduced and financed by the Americans have all but transformed large areas of formerly peasant society. In many places, the water buffalo and the wooden plow have been replaced by mechanized tools such as tractors and Japanese-made roto-tillers. Farmers who

once believed that only the moon could influence their crops now use chemical fertilizers, irrigation pumps and improved seeds: As a consequence, farm incomes have risen sharply, and many farmers who would have been satisfied with a motorbike ten years ago now own trucks. The rural people of today also read newspapers, listen to the radio and even travel to the big cities. In Cao Lanh District there are now as many television sets as there were oil lamps twenty years ago.

Not all of rural Vietnam, of course, shares equally in the general prosperity. Tens of thousands of uprooted refugees still live miserably in the wretched camps of central Vietnam. Nor do the families of the underpaid Vietnamese soldiers benefit much from the upswing. But for the owner of some fertile land or for the prosperous small-town merchant or shopkeeper, the rewards of the U.S. presence have been gratifying indeed.

Thanks to prosperity, the grievances of the farmers are no longer basically

guerrillas do not dare sabotage the public TV sets. In fact, the typical Viet Cong agent has himself been deeply affected by the modernization process. He, too, is riding the economic boomlet and, in the process, acquiring middle-class tastes. The new breed of Viet Cong official has discarded the black peasant garb of the past for the same white cotton shirts that the other prosperous villagers wear. The revolutionary zeal of yesteryear has softened. No longer does the Maoist vision of hordes of landless peasants encircling the cities and bringing about their collapse seem even remotely feasible.

This does not mean that all is well in the countryside. President Nguyen Van Thieu has made many visits to the villages in the past two years, and his face is familiar in most parts of the country. But a quarter century of political tensions and nearly continuous warfare has left the average farmer highly skepti-



New ways: In place of buffaloes and wooden plows, the modern roto-tiller

economic ones. Land reform, for example, is not a burning issue any more. In large areas of the country, the Viet Cong chased out the landlords and redistributed the land. The government in Saigon has generally accepted the Viet Cong land reform as a *fait accompli* and has launched a sweeping "Land to the Tiller" program of its own, designed to root out the remaining absentee landlords. As a result of all this—and of the migration to the cities—in many provinces there is now more cultivable land than there are peasants to cultivate it. The countryside today is a labor-scarce, full-employment economy where even 14-year-olds can earn good money.

The psychological climate in the villages has also undergone an enormous transformation. The traditional Viet Cong propagandist with a bullhorn must now compete with the message brought by a dozen government radio stations and, to a lesser degree, the 40 dailies printed in Saigon. Television is so popular that the

cal toward all authority outside his own village. Also, now that the farmer has seen what modernization can do, he—like his city cousin—wants bigger and better things from the government: better education for his children, more medical facilities, rural electrification and, above all, honest, responsive officials.

Whether the Thieu government can provide all these things is difficult to foresee. For even if the war ends favorably for Saigon, postwar South Vietnam will face enormous problems. Can the current economic boom possibly survive the U.S. withdrawal? What will happen to the people who swarmed into the cities to work in the bars and laundries and other service industries geared to the American troops? Some, no doubt, will return to the villages, but many will remain, a potential source of economic discontent and political turmoil. For a revolution of rising expectations has come to Vietnam, and—like Mr. Nixon's Vietnamization program—it is probably irreversible.



Tet 1970: Toy guns for sale

# SOUTH VIET-NAM

## *Land of Contrasts*

South Viet-Nam — a thousand miles long; its greatest width a seventh of that. Sub-tropical heat; and the bitter nights of mile-high mountains.

Sophisticated citizens of Saigon, "the Paris of the Orient"; hardy farmers of the lowlands; mountain tribes called "savages" by city-dwellers. 800,000 Confucian Chinese and more than a million Catholics; Buddhists, Taoists, Mohammedans, and a "new" religion embracing them all. These are its people.

Villagers distrust central government yet fight vigorously for their country; there is compulsory education of children but mountain tribes may not understand the language of a tribe ten miles away; tigers and elephants are hunted on high plateaus, and the white sand beaches welcome sunbathers.

City restaurants with French cuisine also serve coagulated pork blood with chopped heart, liver, and intestines; French wines and rice wine compete on equal terms. City streets are used to Western clothing and colorful monks' robes; and black or blue loose cotton shirts and trousers brush against white satin tunics, split to the waist, and satin trousers.

Countrymen carry their produce to market in wicker baskets, suspended from a bamboo pole across the shoulders; but there are aircraft everywhere. Railroad lines have rusted away, but oxen pull heavy loads.

South Viet-Nam — land of contrasts and variety . . . melting-pot of old and new, of many faiths and customs, of towering mountains and warm beaches. A land of terror and hope. A battleground for the Free World's fight against the tyranny of Communism.

Here is a country with a thousand miles of coastline on the South China Sea, and its other border thirty to 130 miles away. Here is a sub-tropical climate in most of its area, and bitter cold nights in its mile-high highlands.

Here are diverse peoples: the sophisticated city-dwellers of Saigon, "the Paris of the Orient"; simple, hard-working farmers; highland Montagnards with their own languages and customs; eight hundred thousand Chinese, largely concentrated in Saigon's suburb of Cholon.

Here are Confucians, Buddhists, Mohammedans, Catholics, Taoists, Christian Protestants, and a religion called Cao Dai which is composed of many of the others.

Here are village governments, each composed of numerous tiny hamlets, for many years almost untouched by any central government and inclined to be opposed to central authority of any kind — government or Viet Cong.

Here is a country with its railroads inoperative because of guerrilla action, its highways useable only by armed convoys, depending upon airlifts (and oxen) for vital transport.

Here is South Viet-Nam, a land of gentle, peaceful people — but the battleground where the destiny of hundreds of millions will be determined in the war of Communism against the Free World.



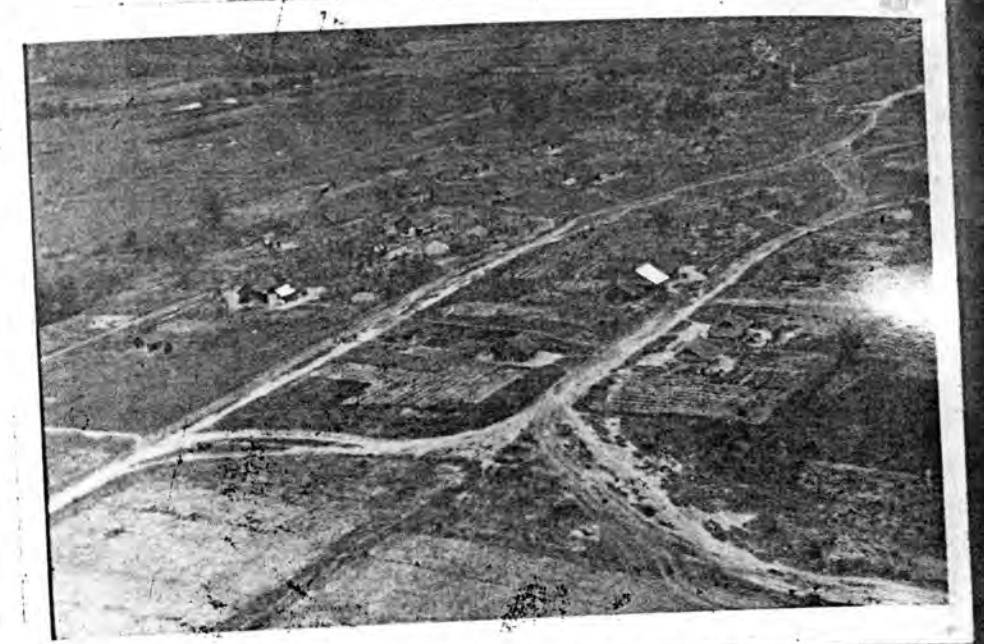
(too good) taken at high speed  
Rice paddies are visible, if  
on the upper left hand side of  
the picture is evident in the picture.



Brazilian money given to me  
by a guy who had been on  
R&R to Australia. I'm not  
sure how he got ahold of  
this kind of currency, but  
he gave it to me somehow.  
It looks like it should be  
worth a lot of money, but  
actually it is almost worth-  
less--about ten U.S. cents  
to be more precise.



Christmas card (1969) printed in Tokyo for sale (10 for \$1.00) by The First Team Gift Shop--and scholarship campaign.



An aerial view (not too good) taken at high speed from a helicopter. Rice paddies are visible, if one looks closely, on the upper left hand side of the picture. Village is evident in the picture.

U.S. GOVERNMENT MOTOR VEHICLE OPERATOR'S IDENTIFICATION CARD				CARD NO. FG-5234-8
NAME OF OPERATOR WOLFE, DAVID A.				DATE ISSUED 13 Nov 68
SEX M BIRTH DATE 28 Jan 45 COLOR OF HAIR Brn COLOR OF EYES Blue HEIGHT 69" WEIGHT 170				DATE EXPIRES 13 Nov 71
BIRTHPLACE Council Bluffs, Iowa				SOCIAL SECURITY NO. [REDACTED]
The holder of this card is qualified to operate U.S. Government vehicles and/or equipment specified, subject to the restrictions set forth on the reverse of this card.				
SIGNATURE OF ISSUING OFFICIAL <i>Straw</i>			TITLE MOTOR OFFICER	
NAME AND LOCATION OF ISSUING UNIT Driver Testing, Fort Gordon, Ga.			POST MOTOR POOL	
NOT TRANSFERABLE		SIGNATURE OF OPERATOR (Not valid until signed)		
Card must be carried at all times when operating Government vehicles.		<i>David A. Wolfe</i>		
Standard Form 46 (December 1963) USCSC-FPM Chap. 930 46-104-02				



Brazilian money given to me by a guy who had been on R&R to Australia. I'm not sure how he got ahold of this kind of currency, but he gave it to me somehow. It looks like it should be worth a lot of money, but actually it is almost worthless--about ten U.S. cents to be more precise.

U.S. GOVERNMENT MOTOR VEHICLE OPERATOR'S IDENTIFICATION CARD				CARD NO. 1273
NAME OF OPERATOR WOLFE, DAVID A.				DATE ISSUED 19 May 70
SEX M BIRTH DATE 28 Jan 45 COLOR OF HAIR Brown COLOR OF EYES Blue HEIGHT 5'9" WEIGHT 170				DATE EXPIRES 19 May 73
BIRTHPLACE COUNCIL BLUFFS IOWA				SOCIAL SECURITY NO. [REDACTED]
The holder of this card is qualified to operate U.S. Government vehicles and/or equipment specified, subject to the restrictions set forth on the reverse of this card.				
SIGNATURE OF ISSUING OFFICIAL <i>Straw</i>			TITLE CIV. TC	
NAME AND LOCATION OF ISSUING UNIT TEC US Army Ft Belvoir Va				
NOT TRANSFERABLE		SIGNATURE OF OPERATOR (Not valid until signed)		
Card must be carried at all times when operating Government vehicles.		<i>David A. Wolfe</i>		
Standard Form 46 (December 1963) USCSC-FPM Chap. 930 46-104-02				

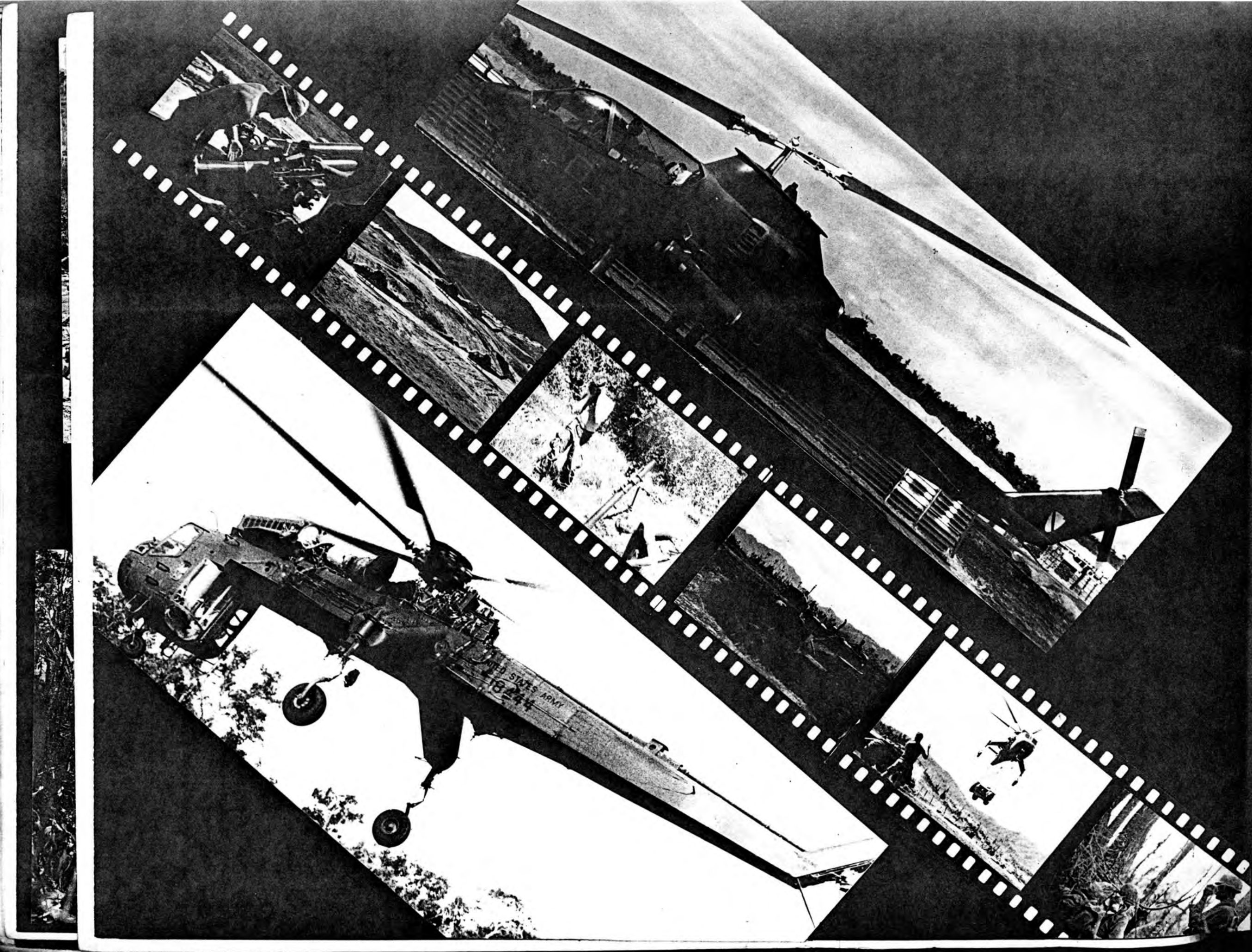


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ST AIR CAV. DIV.  
BAND





Handed to me by an American deserter on the streets of Tokyo, Japan

# WE GOT THE

Journal of the Second Front International

ASIAN EDITION No 1

FALL 69

FREE TO GIVE

BRASS



The Paris of the Orient

THIS IS THE FIRST ISSUE OF WE GOT THE BRASS -- PUT OUT BY G.I.'S, DESERTERS, AND RESISTERS IN EUROPE, UNITED BY OUR OPPOSITION TO THE MINDLESS WAR IN VIETNAM AND THE PAWN OF THAT WAR, THE U.S. ARMY. We are also united with the large number of G.I.'s in the States who have begun to say FTA: G.I.'s at every base are now uniting, finding out that the only way to fight the bullshit is to get together. This is their paper too -- the paper of the Presidio 27, the G.I.'s United Against the War at Fort Jackson, the Fort Hood 43, the American Deserters' Committees in Sweden, France, and Canada. And the G.I.'s in Japan who got sick and tired of occupying a country that hated their presence and deserted. And the countless men in Vietnam who died for something they didn't understand, and the many others who have seen that the war is not their war but the war of a handful of fat cats back home, and have acted by taking a permanent R&R in Japan (en route to Sweden).

WHAT UNITES US IS SIMPLE -- the unwillingness to kill and be killed in a war that makes others rich, that our parents pay for, and that neither the Vietnamese or the majority of the American people want. And the daily oppression of life in the army, taking orders from stupid lifers, learning the robot discipline that gets us prepared for life (?) on the outside.

BUT WHAT DIVIDES US IS STRONG TOO -- the fear of the stockade, the isolation, being so far from home, and the feeling that it's impossible to act against a monster the size of the U.S. army when you're alone. But that's no longer true. We are no longer alone. That is why this paper is your paper too; it is the paper of everyone who gets fucked over by the army and begins to fight back. What we can do is break down the army's news blackout of G.I.'s fighting back - in this issue we have concentrated on printing material from G.I. underground papers in the States. What you can do is give us more to write about.

ONE OTHER THING -- the brass keeps telling you that the people stateside who demand "End the war! Bring the troops home NOW!" are your enemy. If you believe that the answer to 40,000 guys dying in vain is to have 40,000 more die, you can probably dig their grave. We can't convince anyone that he's being fucked over (that's why we don't expect too many lifers to dig WE GOT THE BRASS). But many among us have been stationed in Nam, Korea, Japan. And we know that most guys are hip to the unending stream of lies from Washington and its owners, the corporations. Everyone knows the Paris talks are bullshit - yet guys get slaughtered "liberating" Hamburger Hill while Lodge and crew live it up in Paris. No more lies about victory, now just die to help the U.S. save face. We have said no to their bullshit - and begun to take control of our own lives. Join us!



THIS IS YOUR PERSONAL PROPERTY! IT CANNOT BE TAKEN AWAY FROM YOU.



Personally, it was  
But I was more than

on the streets of Tokyo, Japan

# THE

emotional

FREE TO GIs

# BRASS

BRASS -- PUT OUT BY  
UNITED BY OUR OFFICERS-  
THE PAWN OF THAT WAR,  
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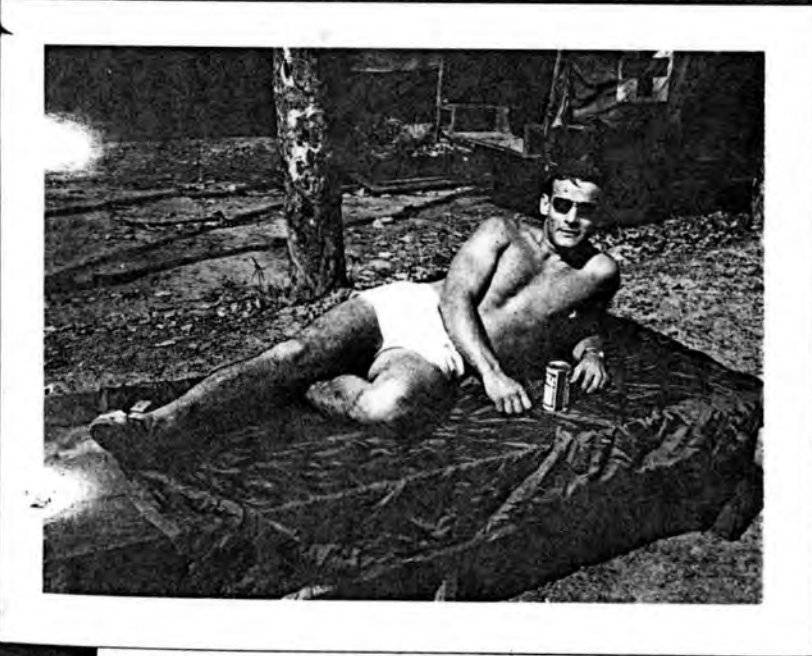
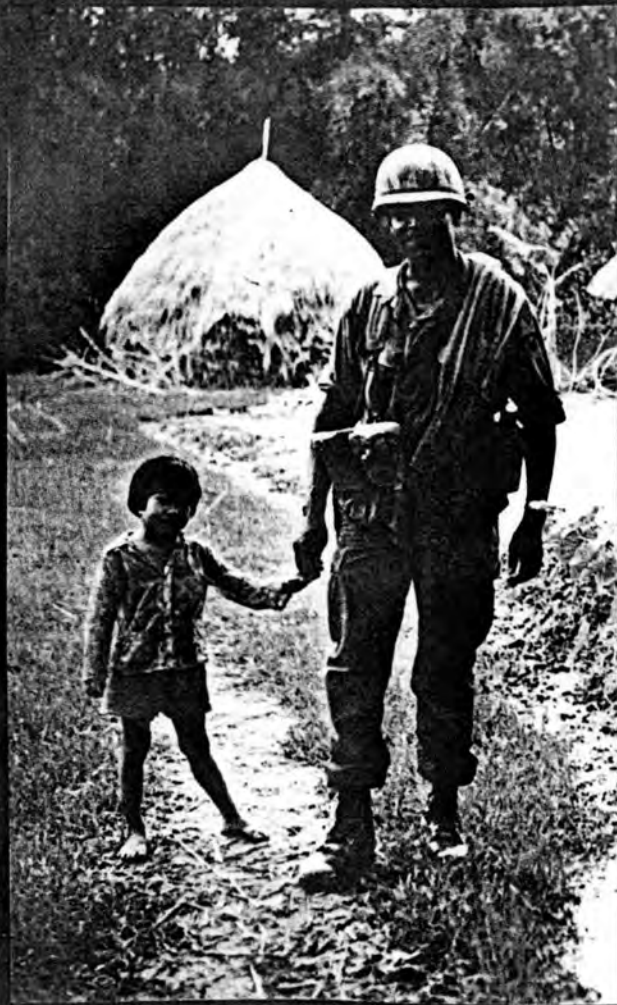
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And we know that most  
from Washington and its  
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Hamburger Hill while  
lies about victory, now  
said no to their bullshit  
. Join us!

E TAKEN AWAY FROM YOU.



Personally, it was "a nice little war."  
But I was more than a little fortunate.



SAIGON



#### Statistics on C-5A

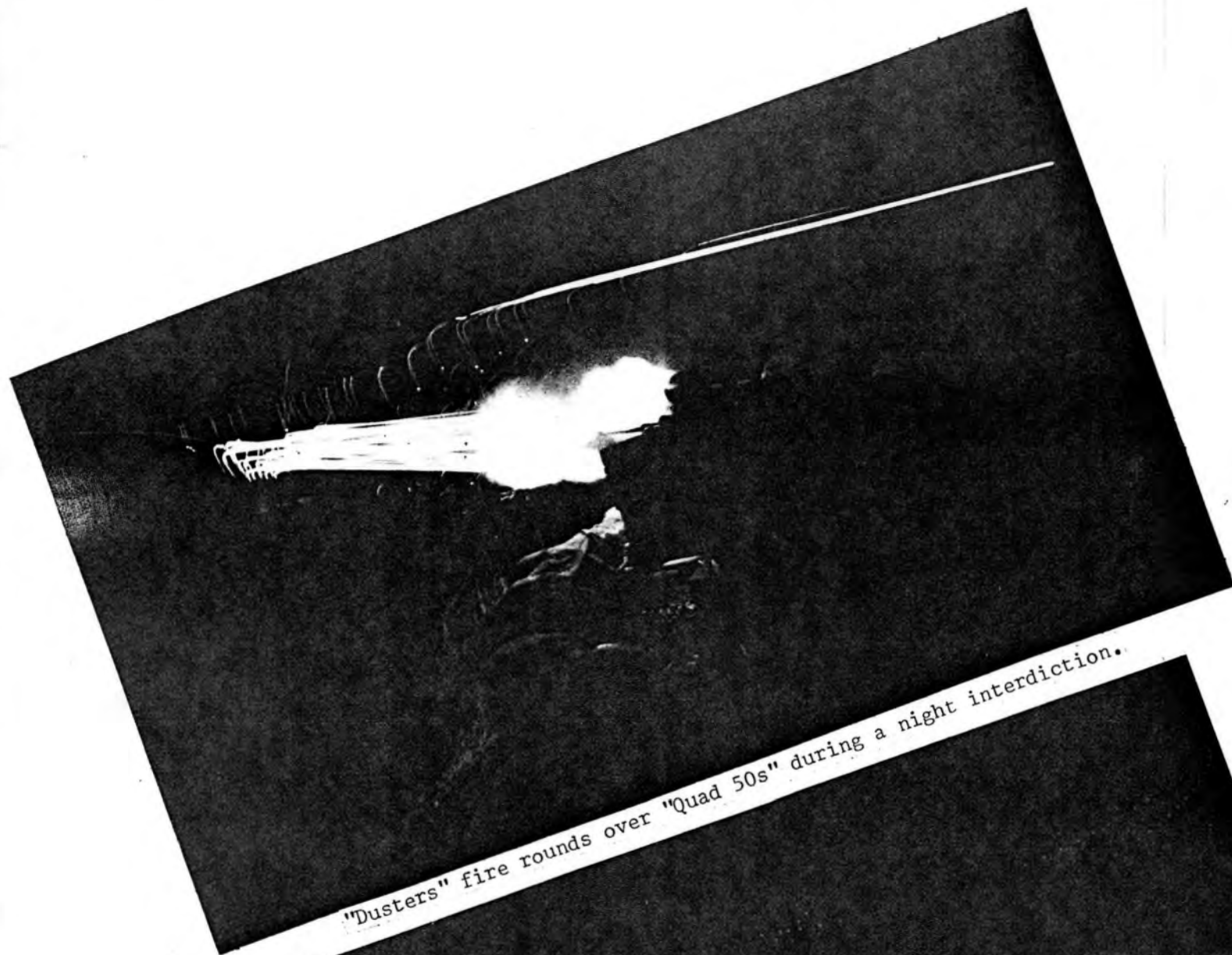
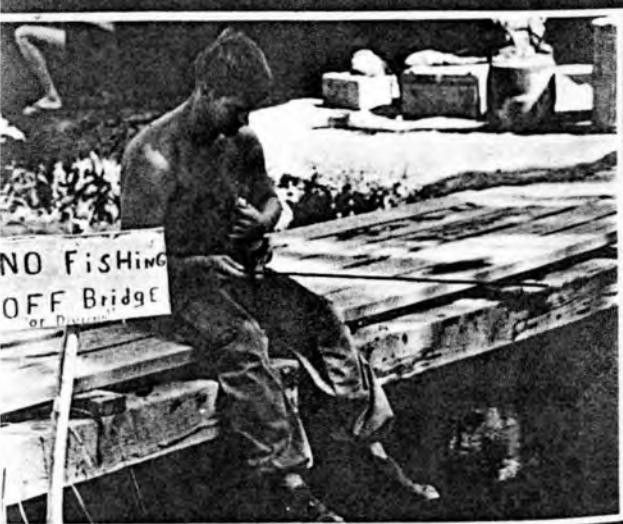
Wingspan: 223 feet  
Fuselage Length: 248 feet  
Height, tail: 65.1 feet  
Cargo Max Weight: 130 tons, roughly  
Total Weight: 765,000 lbs  
Airspeed: 500 MPH  
Fuel Load: 49,000 pounds, average flight (small car run on that for 100 yrs.)  
Troop capacity: 75 seats in upper deck, additional 360 seats if bottom compartment was used.

#### Extraneous information:

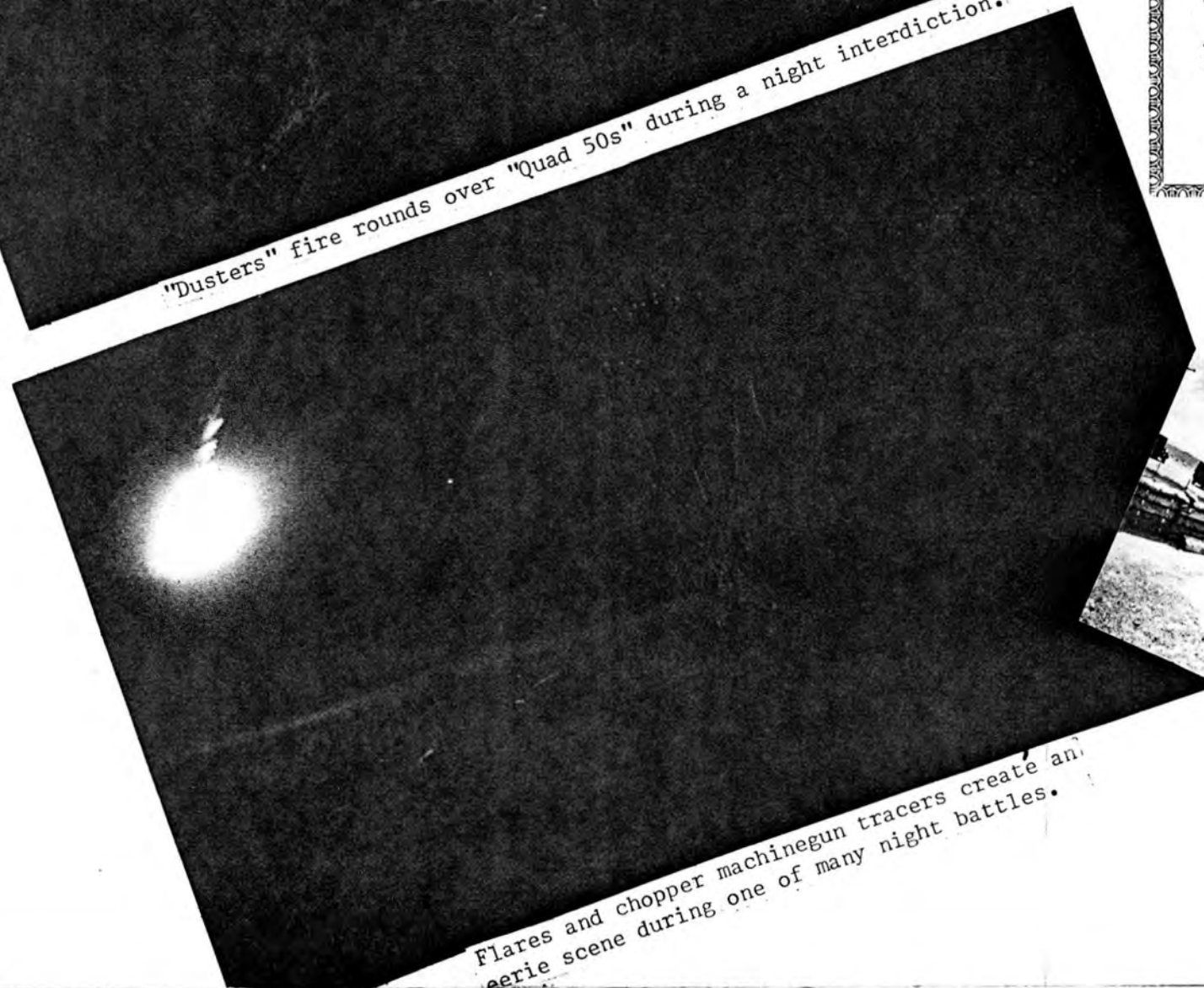
Would hold; 63-ton M-60 battle tank.  
7 Bell Hueys at once.  
75mm self-propelled gun.  
61-ton bridge launcher mounted on M-60 battle tank.  
Minuteman Missile can be carried.



a door-gunner, and an M-60--all  
ck jungle in War Zone C.



"Dusters" fire rounds over "Quad 50s" during a night interdiction.



Flares and chopper machinegun tracers create an  
erie scene during one of many night battles.

# Poet's Corner

## To My Husband

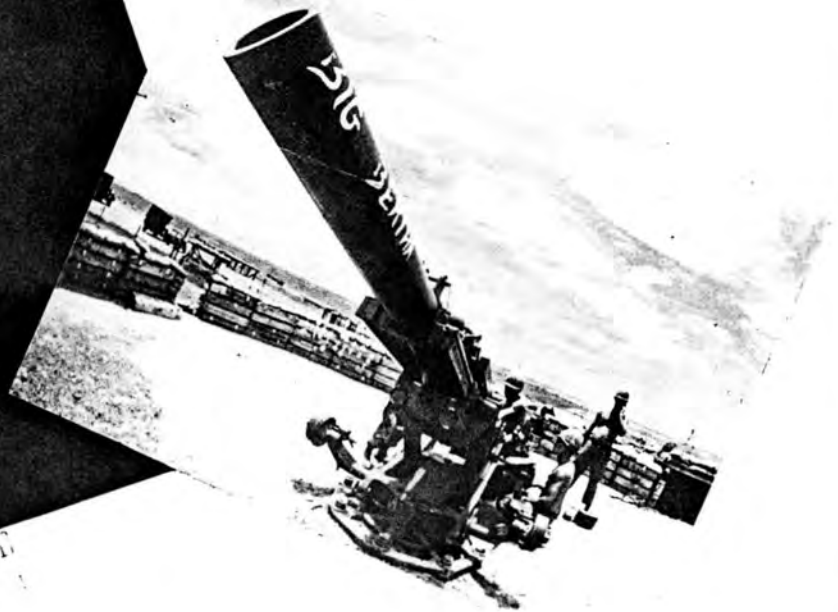
*It rises every day, the sun, and winds its rays  
throughout the garden of my mind,  
Until its reaching fingers have stretched so far  
to make the day.  
And children play, and rain falls, and summer  
comes into my garden.*

*And still it rises in another day, the sun, and  
with it comes the winds to play about the  
garden of my mind,  
Until the leaves will fall and blow away.  
And children walk, and leaves die, and loneliness  
comes into my garden.*

*It rises yet in cloth of gray, the sun, and lengths  
of steel creep round about the garden of  
my mind,  
Until I cannot stand in all the silence and the  
dark.  
And children cry, and snow falls, and it's so cold  
here in my garden.*

*But then it comes once more, the sun, the year  
has passed within the garden of my mind,  
And things will grow and warmth will dwell.  
The children laugh, and I will cry, for you will  
come into my garden.*

Marlene Harris  
(Mrs. Marshall E. Harris)  
Fort Worth, Tex.





Mine sweeping by Co. C, 8th Engineers is a ticklish job.

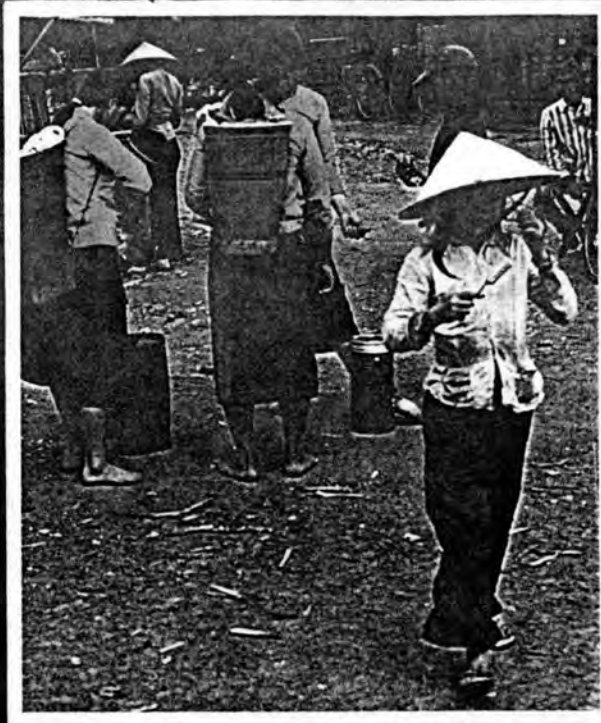


Recon by firs as men of 2nd Bn., 8th Cav move across graves into sniper infested tree line during Operation Pershing.



A "Cav patch," a door-gunner, and an M-60--all flying over thick jungle in War Zone C.





## IN THE LARDER

Fresh fruit and vegetables are always available—bananas, tomatoes, pineapples, mushrooms, cucumbers and many others. Meat (pork and beef), shellfish, and river and ocean fish go with the inevitable rice. (Right) Everything for dinner in a crowded square.



Pavements are hard, and sometimes the farmer's feet get tired!



Sugarcane goes to market, together with sacks and baskets of other produce. This farmer may be heading for the kitchen of the modern hotel on the square.

(Left) In contrast, here is a roadside market near An Khe.





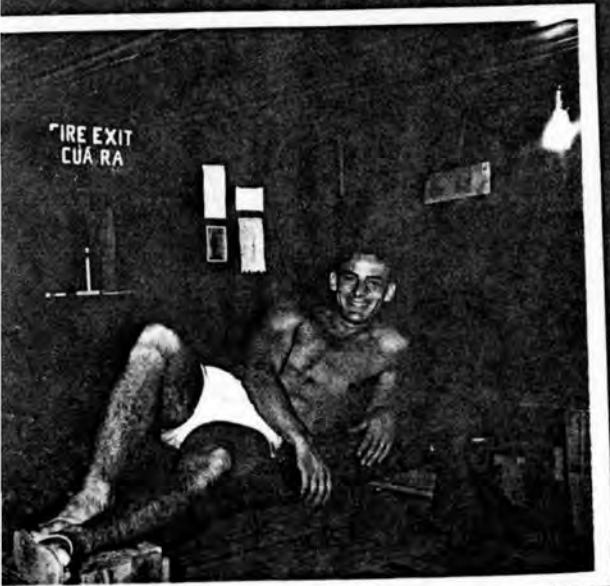
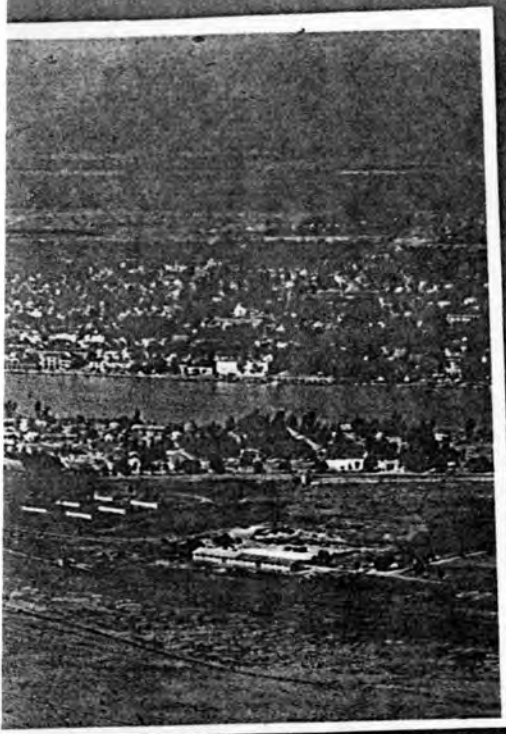
## WHAT'S FOR DINNER?

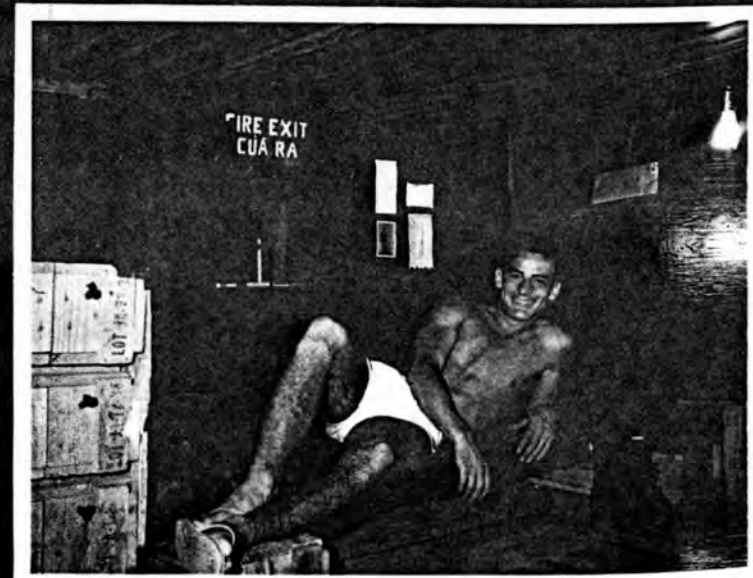
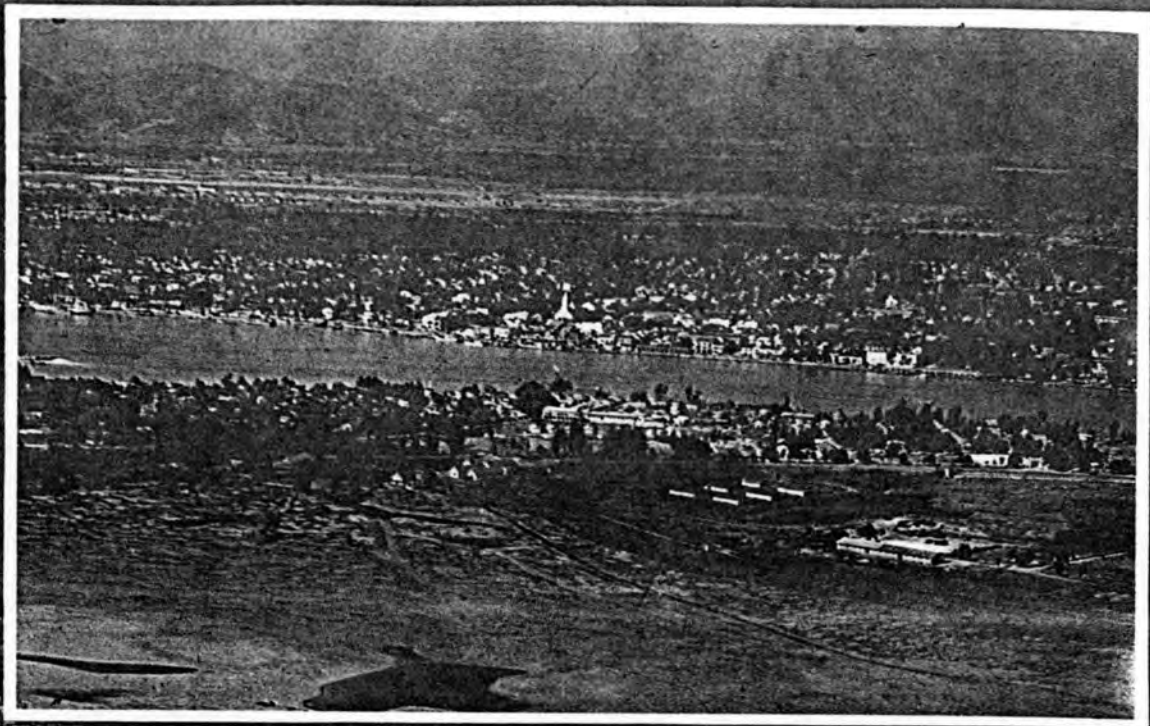
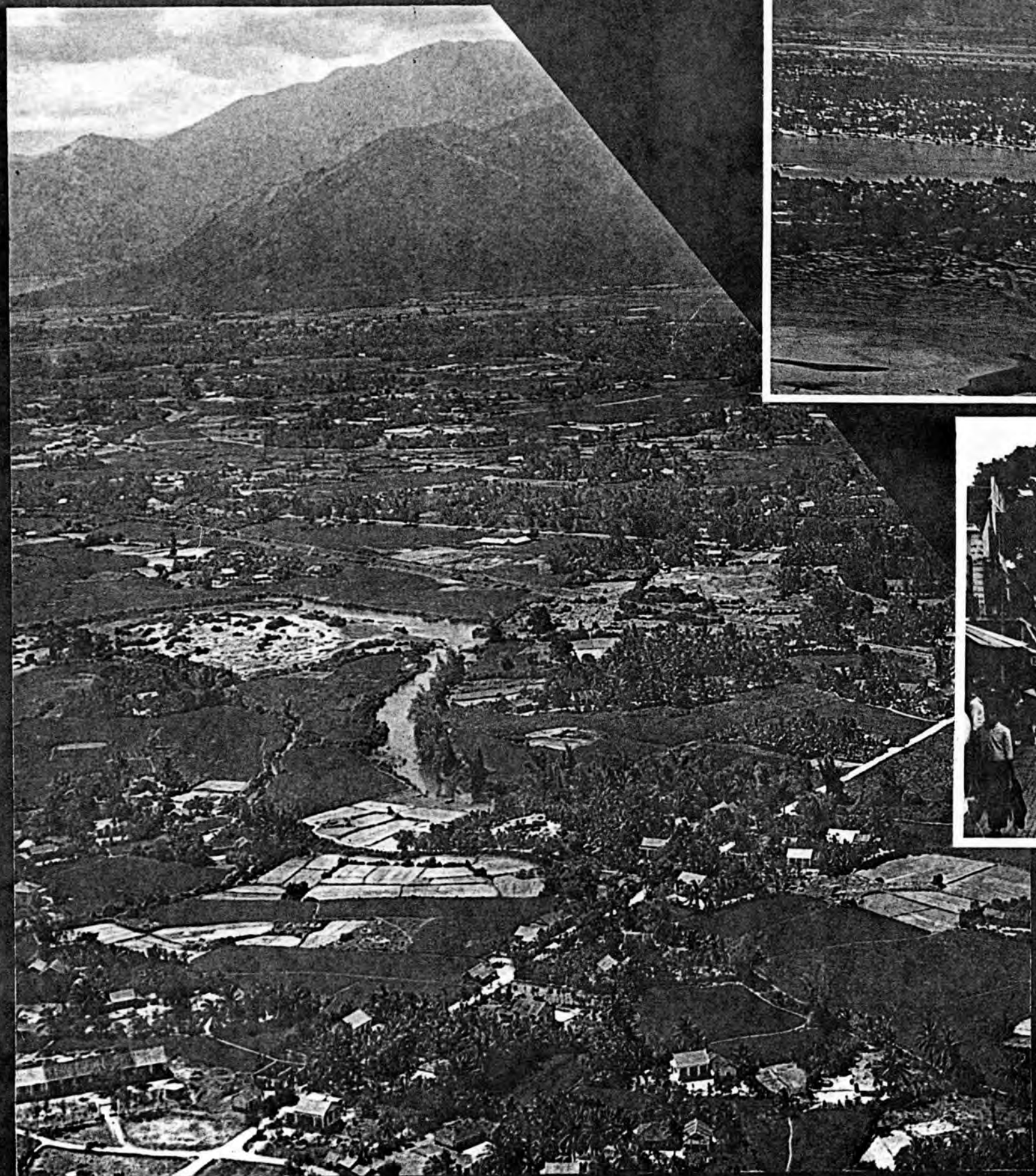
Rice, fruit, vegetables, fish, sweet-meats and other meats are all to be found in Viet-Nam's markets. (Top) A housewife chooses the day's vegetables. (Below) A young woman's Don Ganh baskets provide complete lunches for sidewalk customers.

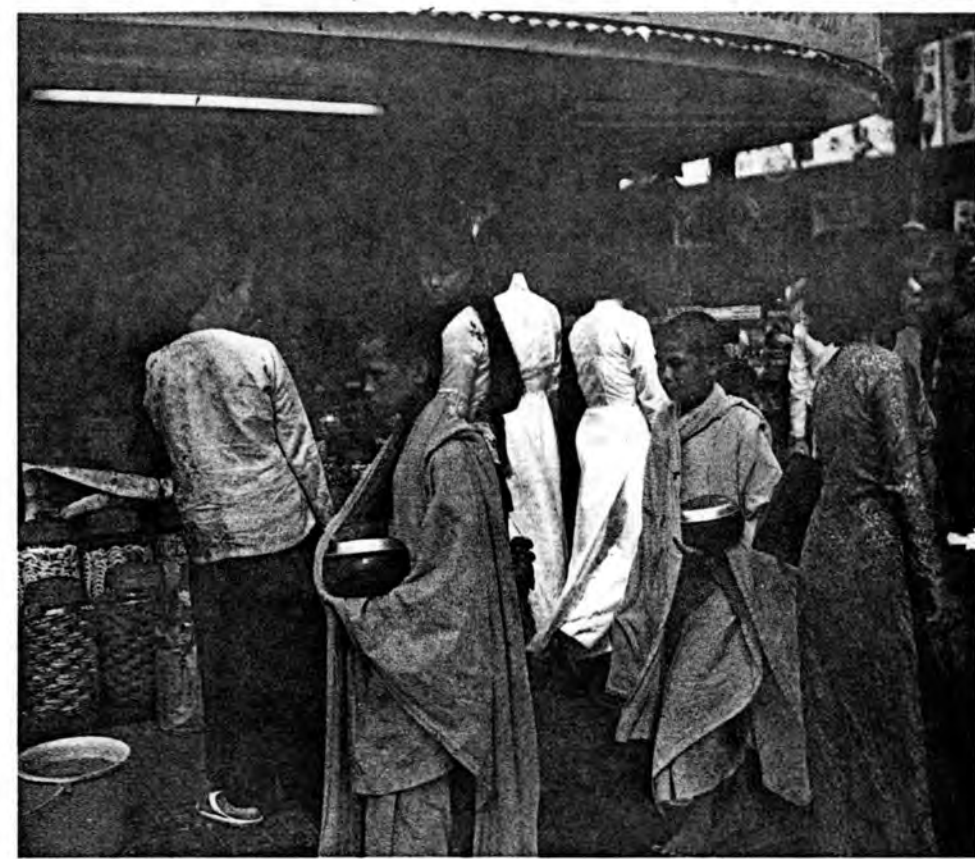
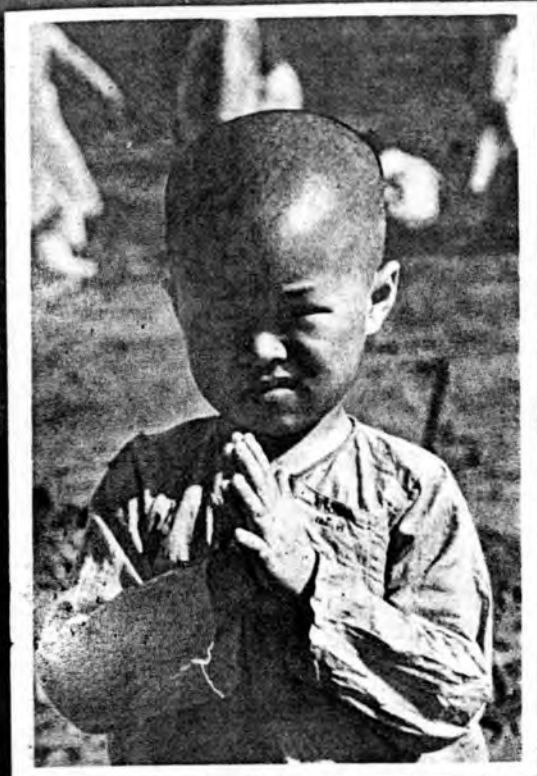


(Above) When sales are slack, there's time to discuss the news. (Right) Farmers bring their loads of produce to the market.









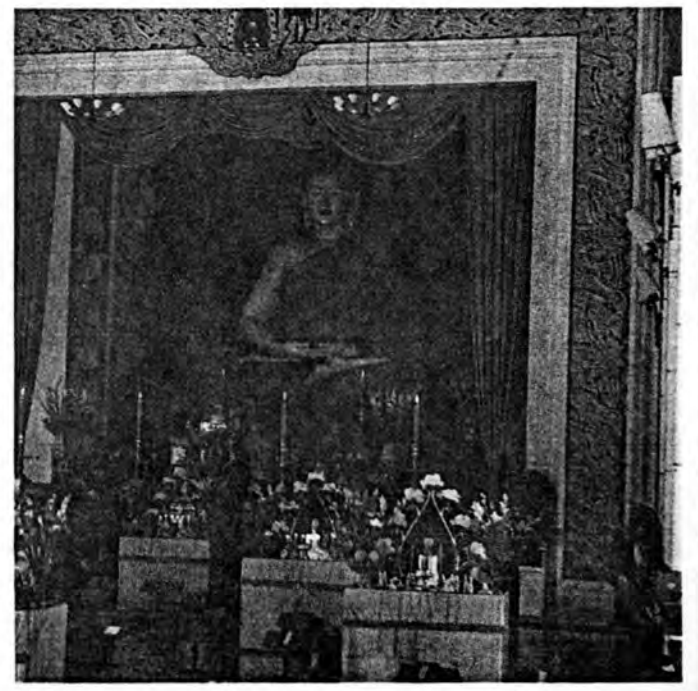
# RELIGIONS OF VIET-NAM

Buddhist monks, with their begging-bowls in hand, walk through Saigon streets. South Viet-Nam is a religious country, with free choice of worship and (which may seem strange to Westerners) plural religions. One may make offerings in a Buddhist temple, but also pay reverence to his ancestors according to the teachers of Confucius; and it is possible to find Christ, Confucius, Mohammed, and Buddha all honored in the same temple.



This is the interior of a Cao Dai Temple near Tay Nigh. Cao Dai is a new religion blending Confucianism, Taoism, and Buddhism.

A Buddhist Temple — the Xa Loi Pagoda in Saigon. Its exterior is pictured on the opposite page, lower outside corner.





# THE PEOPLE

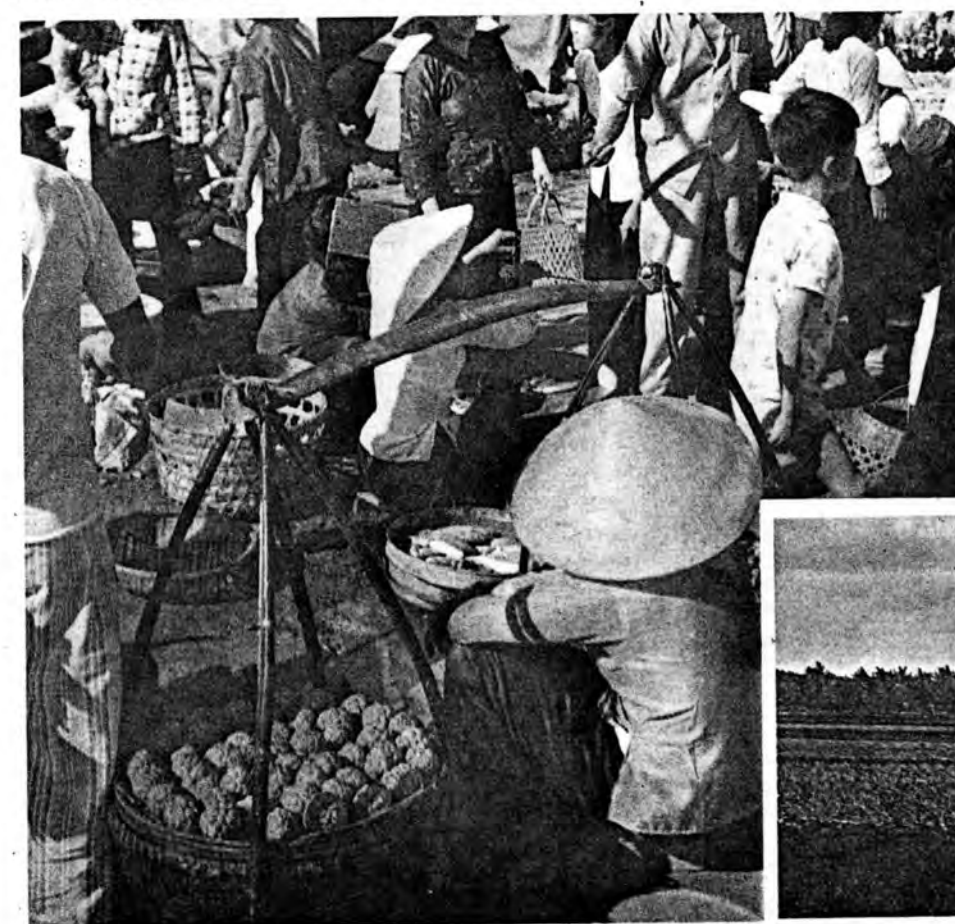
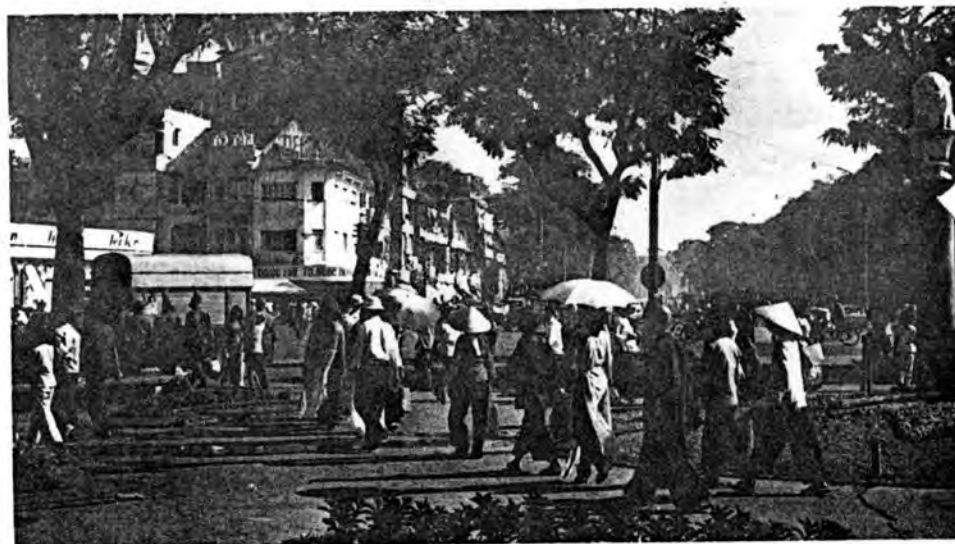
Vietnamese are a reserved and courteous people, small in stature but well proportioned, of many religions and occupations — but all intensely loyal to family and respectful of the aged.

The busy upper scene shows many manners of dress, from the women's traditional "Ao Dai" of long trousers under a long-sleeved tunic slit from hem to waist, to the working people and farmers in their loose black trousers and conical straw hats.

The smiling girls look and dress much like school-girls anywhere, but at high school age they will wear the "Ao Dai" and become young ladies of the great middle class.

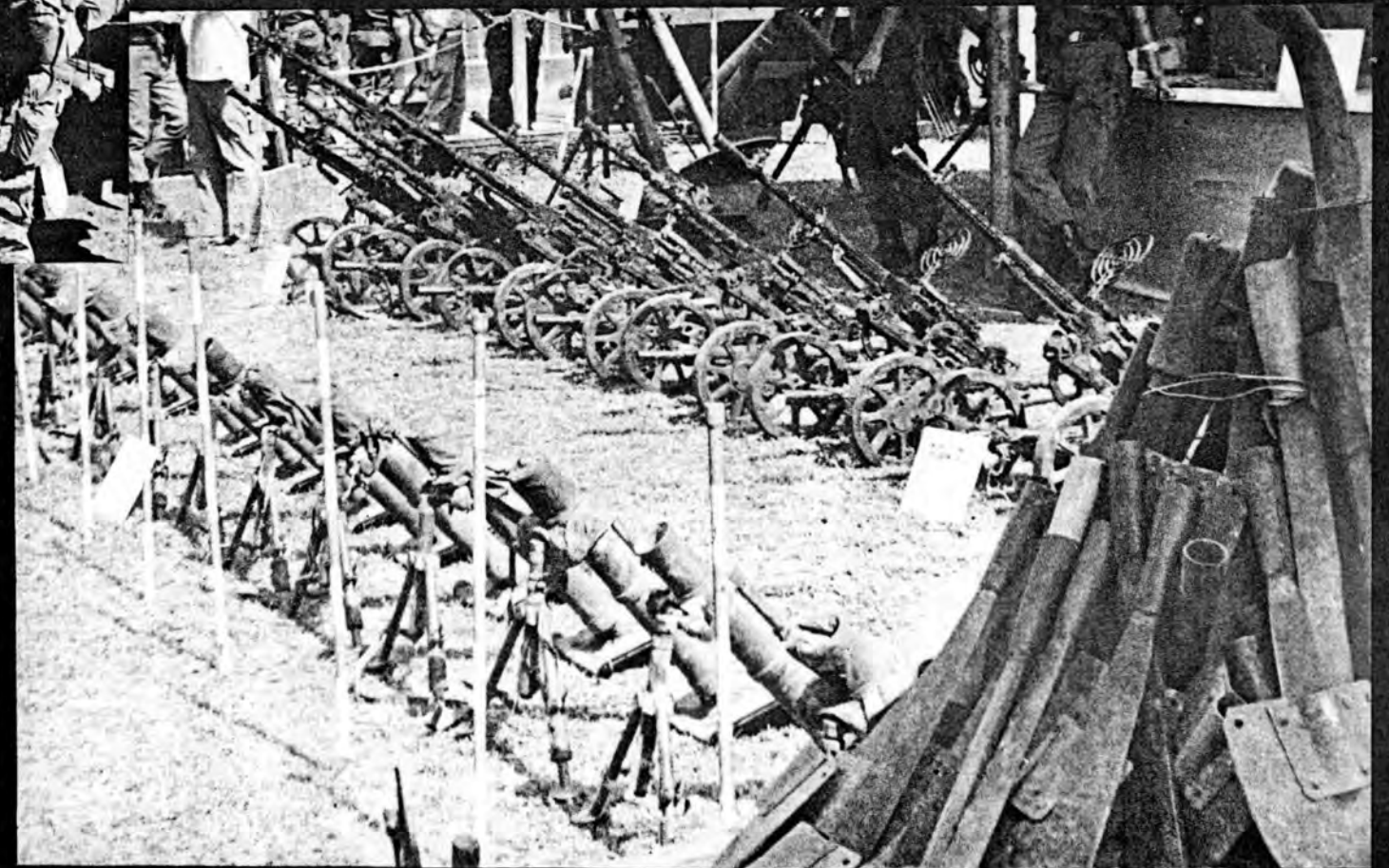
The market scene has, in the foreground, a farm woman with her "Don Ganh" — two wicker baskets suspended from a pole which she carries across her shoulders. The small boy, striding so purposefully, could be a small boy anywhere engaged in his own important affairs.

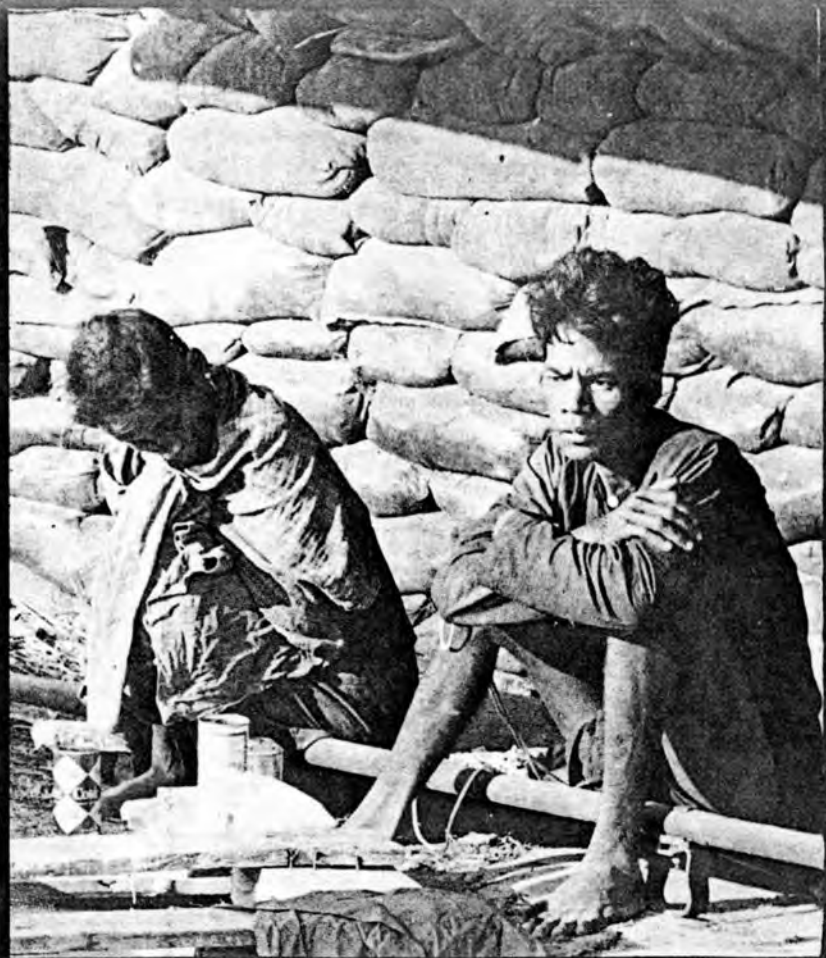
City people are much more sophisticated than the farmers and villagers, due largely to their long association with the French. All schools teach French or English as a "second language", and compulsory education for the first three grades is generally observed except in the remote high-land areas.

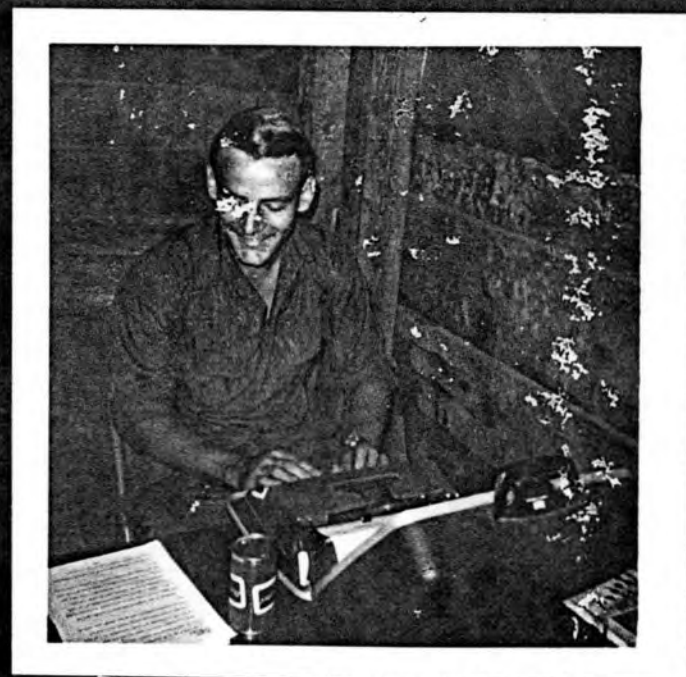


PEOPLE OF THE FIELDS AND RICE PADDIES





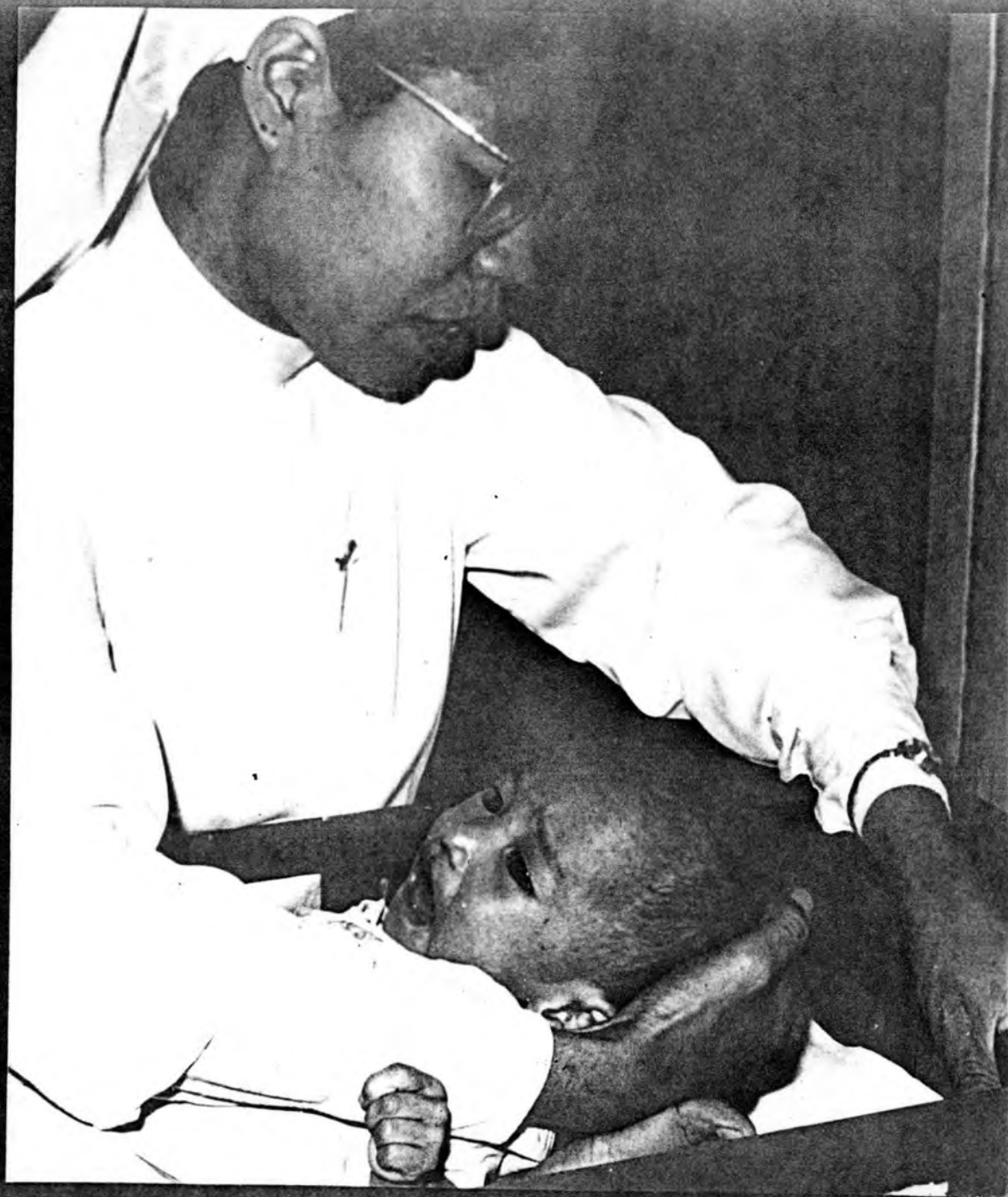




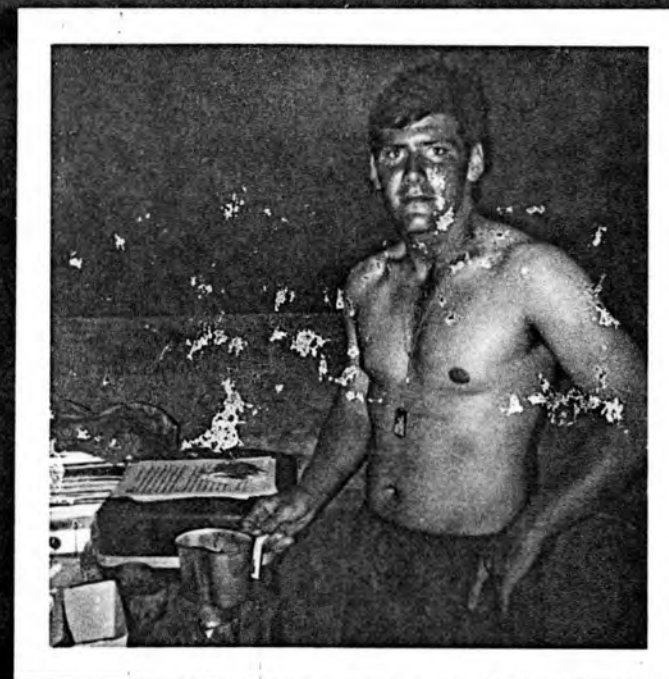
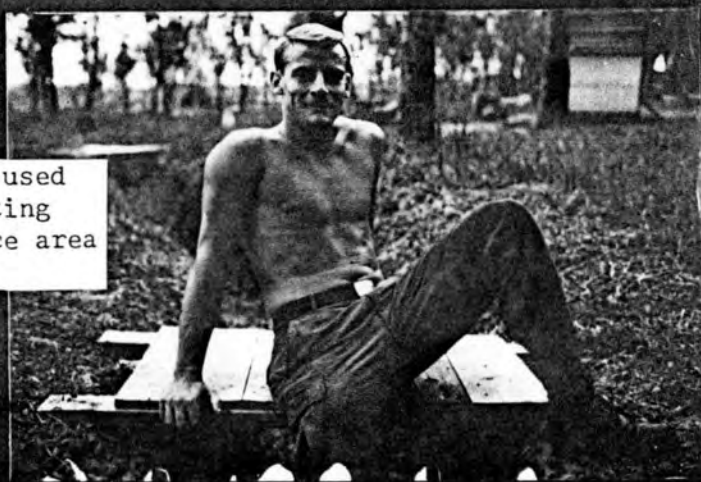
Working on a story at Quan Loi.



Proposed picture for second magazine. Justifiably called "poor taste for mothers back home."

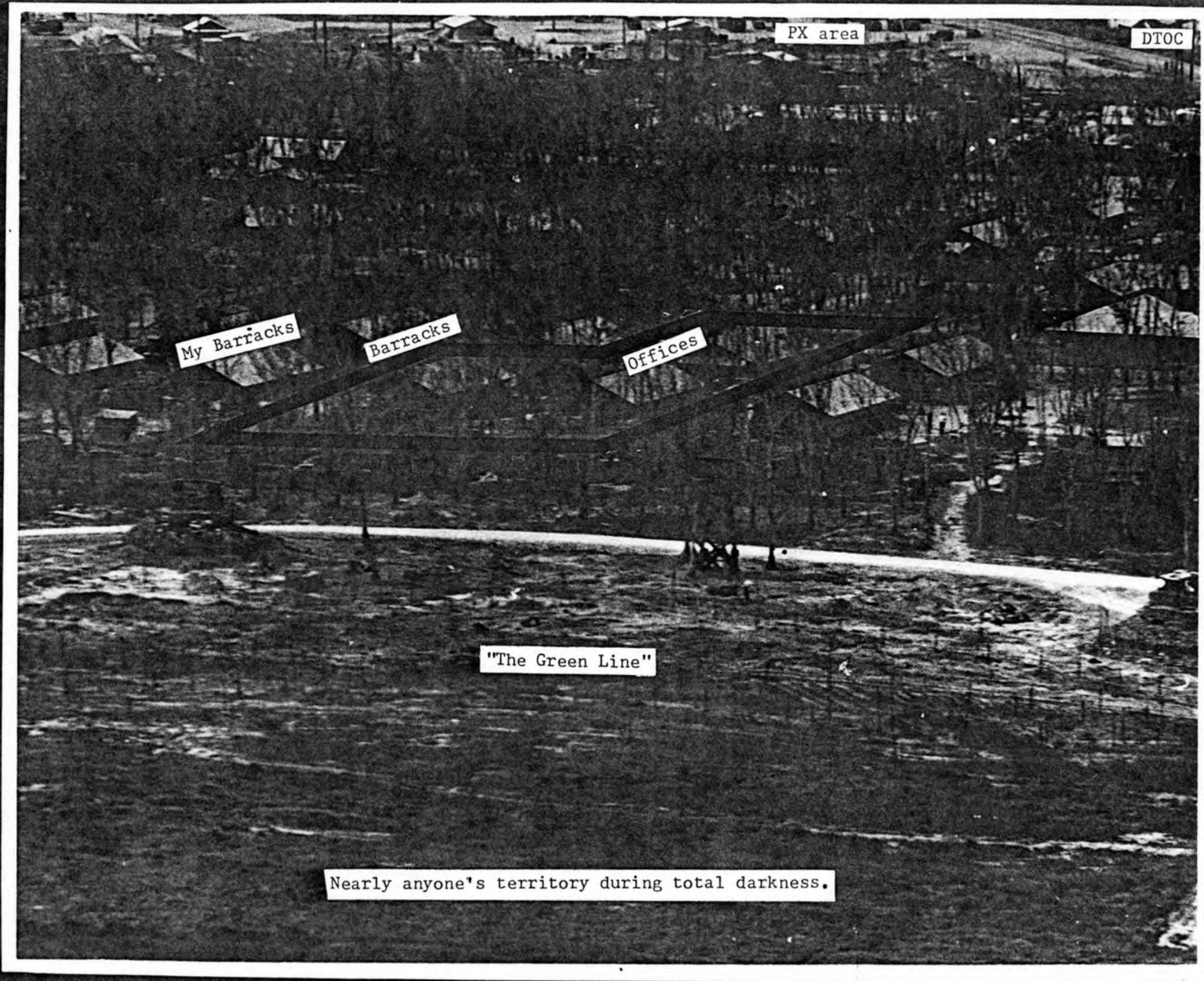


Sitting on the bridge used to pass over the fighting ditch behind our office area at Phuoc Vinh.



Bill Ahrbeck at Quan Loi.

This pictures shows the area where our office was located in Vietnam. The area outlined is the main office building, the press building and one of the two hootches we had for barracks. The first building to the immediate left of the outlined area is the one I slept in for the last 2 or 3 months I was actually in "the 'Nam."



Nearly anyone's territory during total darkness.

the Infantryman--rifleman,  
being the grenadier: M-79 is used.

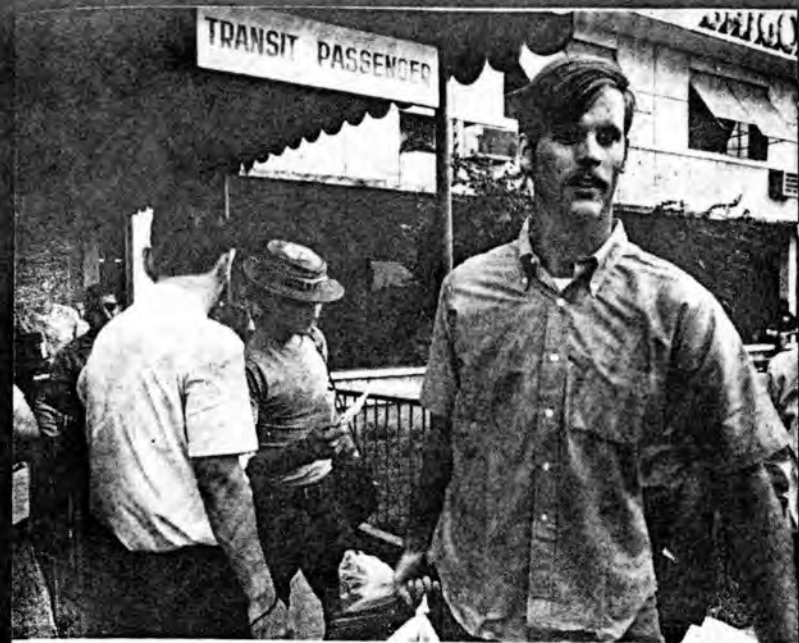
"Jumpin Joe Kamalick," during jump school training with the ARVN.



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Picture taken for magazine story on the Infantryman--rifleman, machinegunner and grenadier--this being the grenadier: M-79 is used.



Heading home: A GI prepares to board a 'freedom bird' in Saigon Katsuhiko Shim

Newsweek, January 11, 1971.

## 'YOU CAN HAVE YOUR OWN LITTLE CASTLE'

It is an article of faith among U.S. Army officers that, whatever the failings of rear-area troops, the men in the front lines will, in Army slang, "stand tall." To test this assumption and assess the feelings of the "grunts," as frontline infantry soldiers call themselves, Saigon bureau chief Kevin Buckley spent Christmas at a First Cavalry Division outpost north of Saigon called Firebase Dragonhead. Below, Buckley's report:

It was cool, almost cold, on Christmas night and the grunts at Firebase Dragonhead sat in clusters around their bunkers. The scenes that they presented were diverse enough to support any opinion about the standards and behavior of the American GI in South Vietnam. At one bunker, soldiers with hillbilly twangs were singing "The Green, Green Grass of Home," and to them the song title undoubtedly retained its conventional meaning. But at another bunker, the title would have produced waves of knowing giggles. The GI's there were listening to hard rock on a tape cassette. And as Iron Butterfly sang "In the Time of Our Lives," the grunts passed around a glowing pipe of "dew," the GI slang for marijuana.

Someone changed the tape to Jimi Hendrix's version of "Machine Gun" and one grunt, with a slight grin on his stubbly face, muttered, "Wow . . . wow . . . wow. That really spun my mind." A second soldier reached into the bunker and produced a sleeve which had been cut off a fatigue shirt. "You put this wide part over your nose and mouth," he began to explain. "Then someone blows the dew in from the cuff end and it can't escape. You're in a world of dew." Suddenly a siren sounded; this was the signal for a "mad minute"—one minute of small-arms firing around the entire perimeter of the base in case enemy troops had infiltrated the area during the Christmas cease-fire. The soldier who had muttered "wow . . . wow . . . wow" slapped his M-16 rifle on full automatic and fired into the echoing underbrush. When silence returned, the aroma of cordite mingled with the fragrance of the powerful Vietnamese dew.

Outside the barbed wire surrounding the base, Claymore mines faced the area from which enemy soldiers might launch an attack. But on Christmas night at Dragonhead that was about as likely as the arrival of the Three Wise Men. Enemy activity in this area has been so slight that the grunts have trouble recalling when they took their last casualty. In

The American GI in Vietnam—and his attitudes—at about the time I was leaving active military duty, as told by Newsweek Magazine's Kevin Buckley.

THE WAR IN INDOCHINA



Dragonhead 'grunts': Soldiering on Kevin P. Buckley—Newsweek

fact, for many of the GI's the real threat that night came from within the base—from the "lifers," the career men, and especially the career NCO's, whose attitudes so often are diametrically opposed to those of the young draftees. As the Iron Butterfly tape moved on to "Filled With Fear" and "Lonely Boy" and the dew pipe was being passed, someone stood on lookout, whispering from time to time: "Watch it, a lifer."

**Agreement:** But the lifers never appeared, and the talk turned to the war. Everyone—pot smoker and non-pot smoker alike—agreed when one stoned soldier remarked: "You know what this war is like? It sucks. That's just about all you can say. It sucks. There's nothing good about us being here. There it is. All we want to do is get out of here alive. Morale is bad, man."

That, in fact, seemed to be the unifying theme at Dragonhead. The day after



Almond: 'Send over the hard hats' Kevin P. Buckley—Newsweek

Christmas, I visited a company from the base which was on patrol, and while conditions were different—no one was stoned—the message was the same. "They ought to send over some of those people who are for the war," growled Sp/4 Steven Almond, 22. "Send some of those brave politicians and hard hats and let them see if they like it so much. I'll change places with any one of them." Others picked up the chant. "A lot of our buddies got killed here but they died for nothing," muttered one GI. "Our morale, man, it's so low you can't see it," said another.

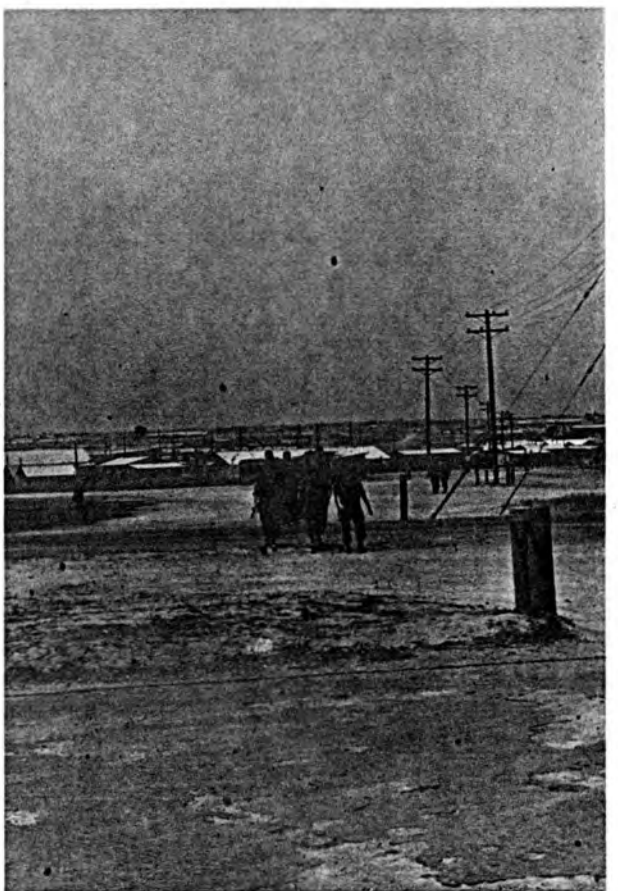
**Good Soldiers:** Yet, around a jungle clearing where the soldiers rested there were indications of higher morale than the GI's might let on. For fifteen days, the men had been struggling through tangled, prickly vines that tear ferociously at clothes and skin alike—"wait a minute" vines, the grunts call them. Two soldiers had playfully written "Merry Xmas" on a tree trunk with shaving cream. And an officer, hardly older than the grunts in his company, insisted: "Sure they bitch and a lot of them smoke grass and they don't like it here. But these men are good soldiers."

After talking with these soldiers and with many others, I decided that flat statements about low grunt morale are not accurate. As much as they complain, they also boast about their work. And like soldiers in all wars, they recall exploits, tell war stories, chide and congratulate each other. They are proud of themselves and proud of each other. "We do everything together," said one. "It's like being brothers for a year." And they are proud to be grunts. "Those REMF's don't even know what Vietnam is all about," sneered one grunt, using the derisive acronym [Rear Echelon Mother F-----] for men at support bases. An officer described one manifestation of the grunts' pride: "In the field they're always complaining they can't get new fatigues or have a shower. But if they ever have to go to the rear, all that changes. Then all they want is to look as funky as they can and terrorize the people in clean, pressed fatigues who work in air-conditioned offices."

**Rhapsody:** And the field itself—the "boonies"—has compensations now that the war is winding down and combat perils are less frequent. One grunt at Dragonhead, very stoned, went off into a rhapsodical speech. "Being a grunt ain't all bad," he mused. "Sometimes I really kind of like the bush. At the end of the day you drop your pack. You hack away a little piece of jungle and make a little space for yourself. You hang your hammock, you heat up some C-rations and maybe mix some together so they taste a little different. You put on your cassette for a little sound, really low. Maybe you smoke a little dew, just to relax. Man, that's not bad. Out in the bush you can have your own little castle."



oint general  
tes began.



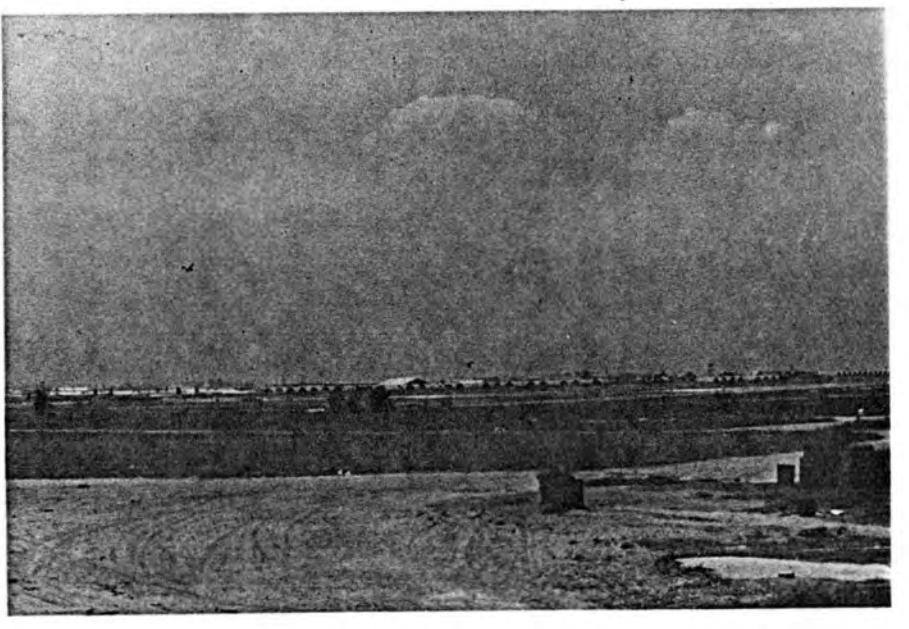
Some new troops (replacements) march toward the "White House" for their processing prior to shipment to their respective units.



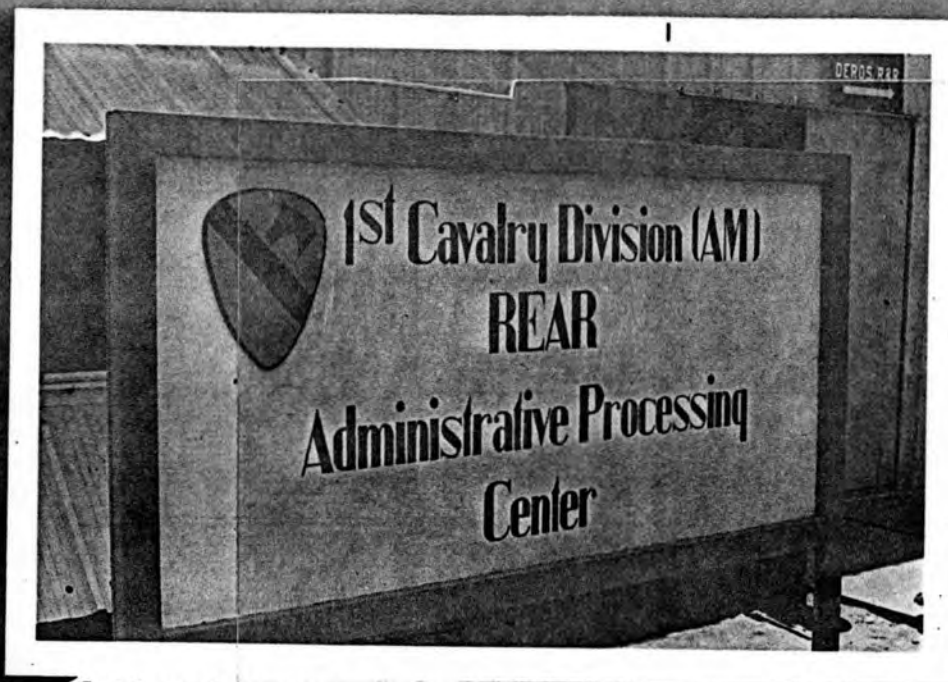
Again, new troops processing. It was great to be going home, and you couldn't help but snicker a little to yourself when you saw guys just arriving. And it was a little sad to see them having to be there, as well.



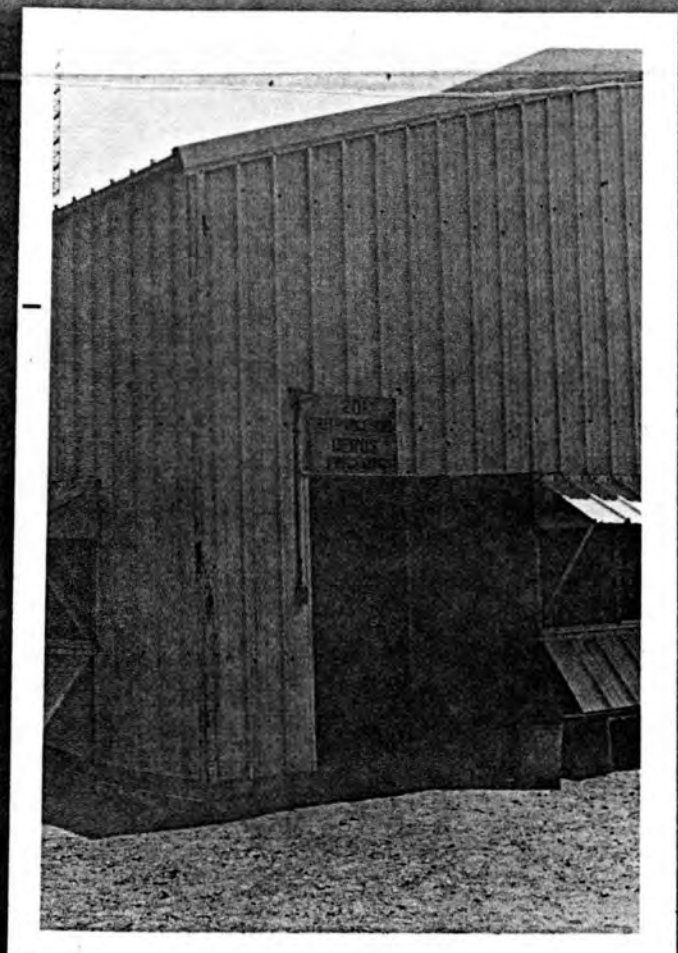
Some "brothers" playing cards at Bien Hoa Processing.



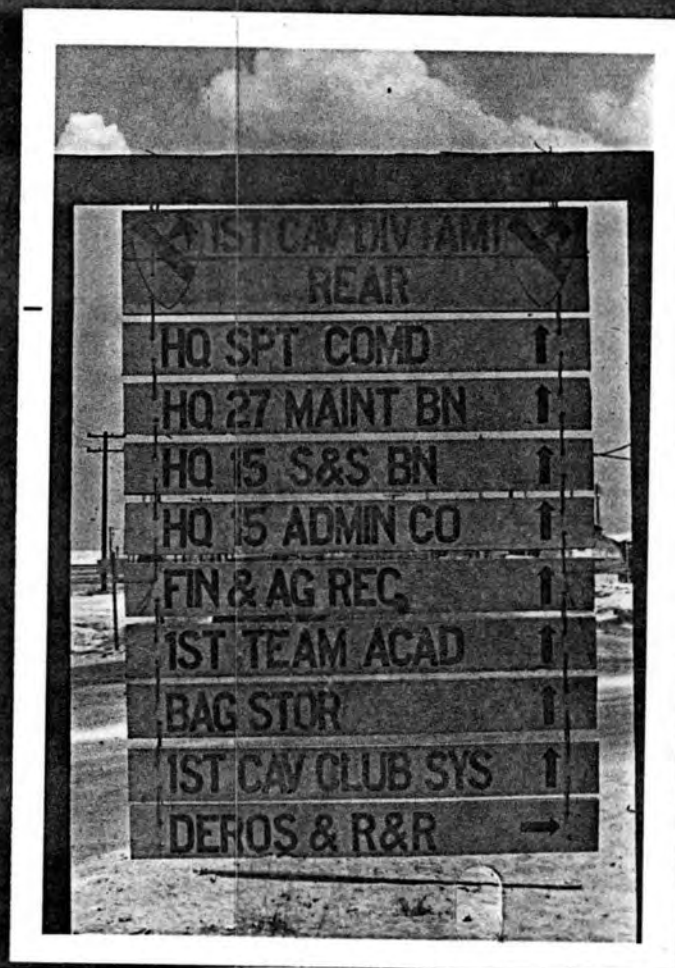
A long-range view of Bien Hoa Army-Air Force Base airport. We flew out of here on Overseas Airlines at approximately 10:30 a.m., March 23, 1970.



Self-explanatory. I was here for processing before going home.



A door into the "White House," at which point general processing for return shipment to the States began.



A sign outside the White House, proclaiming all the offices in the immediate area.



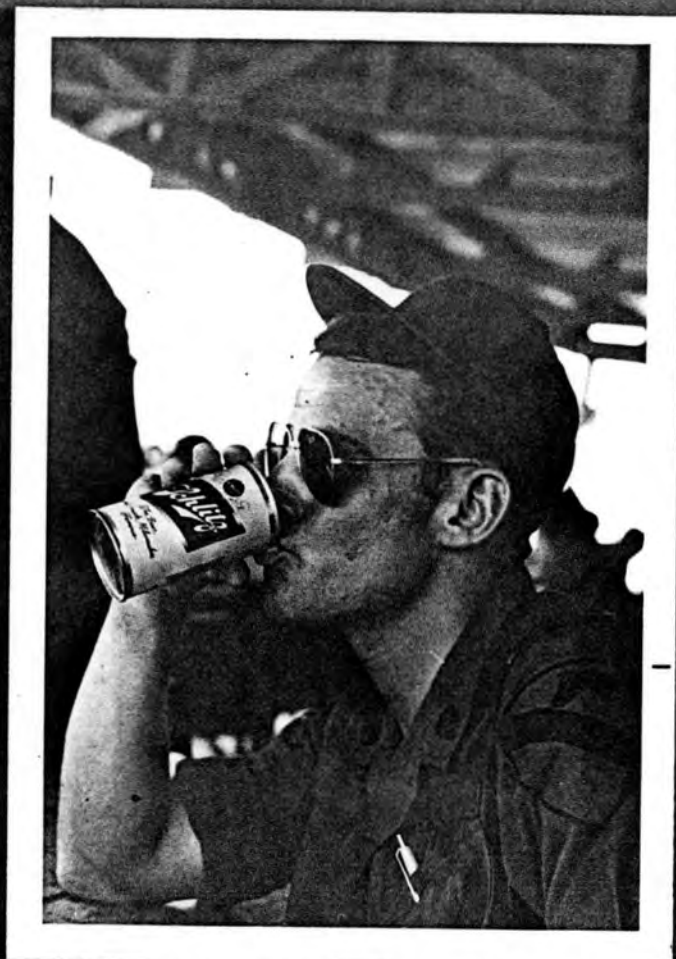
The mama-sans are all over the place, tired looking, a little dirty, some pleasant enough, others avid and proclaimed swindlers--often out of necessity.



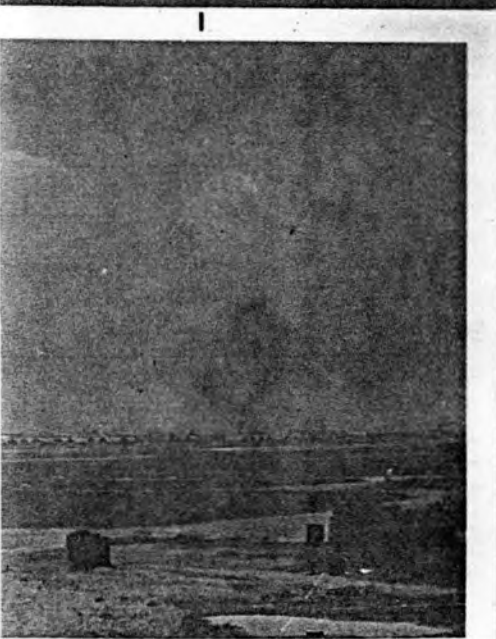
l to my rear. Our  
on our way home.



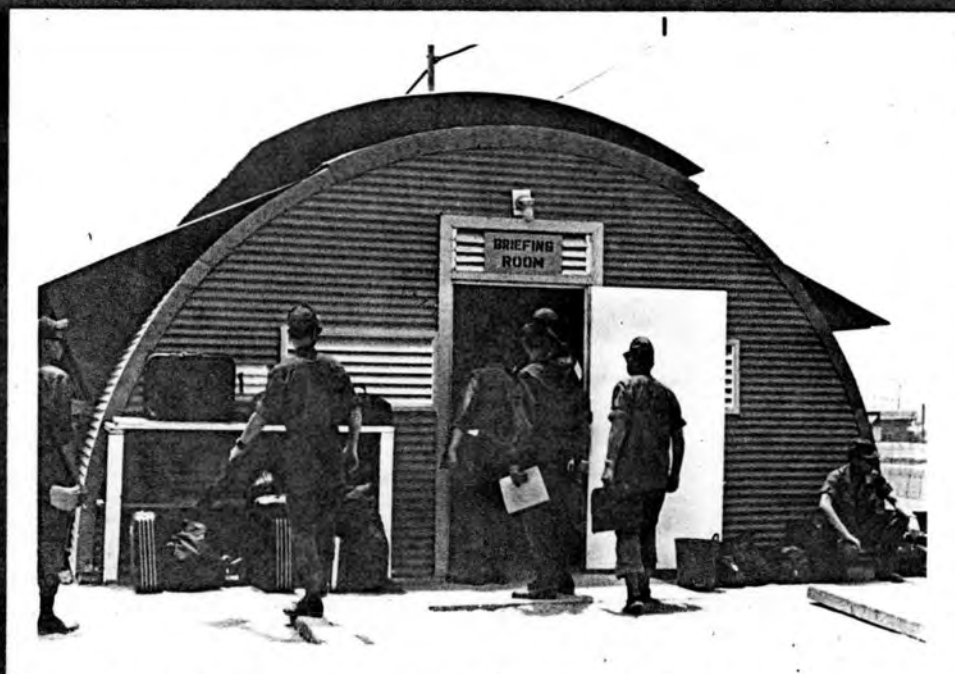
"Gateway to the World" doesn't say enough for this place. Guys talk of nothing else for a full year in Vietnam. Going home. There's nothing like it.



One of my last "Vietnam beers," one of an almost uncountable number. We were going home--at long last.



plane heading for the world,  
the day before we left to go to  
ement Company where we were to  
rior to loading aboard our own



Final briefing room before going to the 90th Replacement Battalion at Long Binh. It was a 15 minute briefing, but it seemed as though it would last forever.



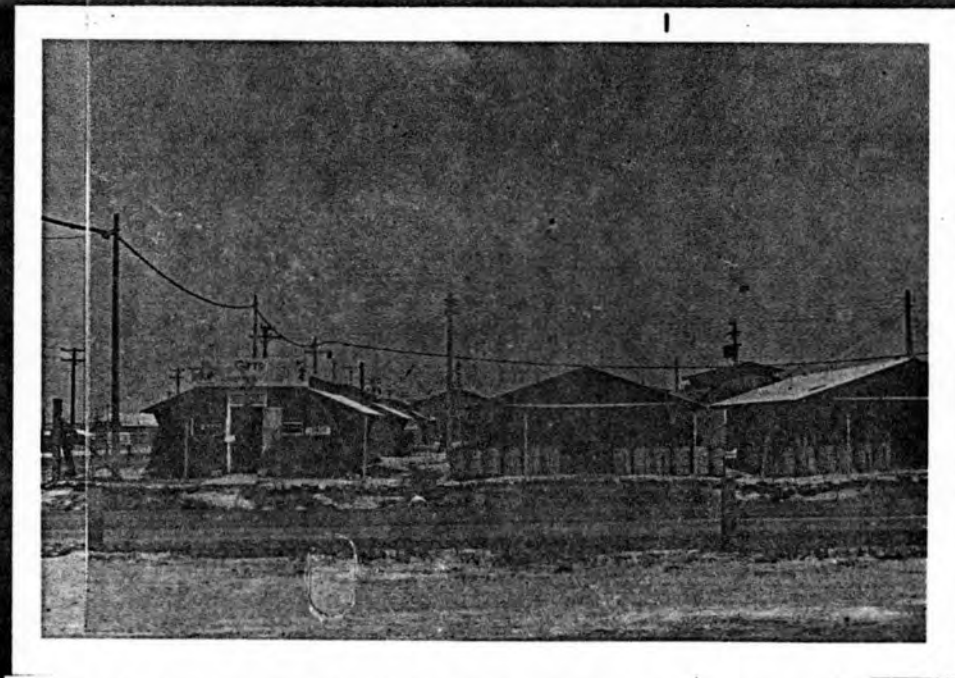
My luggage and camera equipment--a full load for one man to carry with him everywhere for approximately three full days.



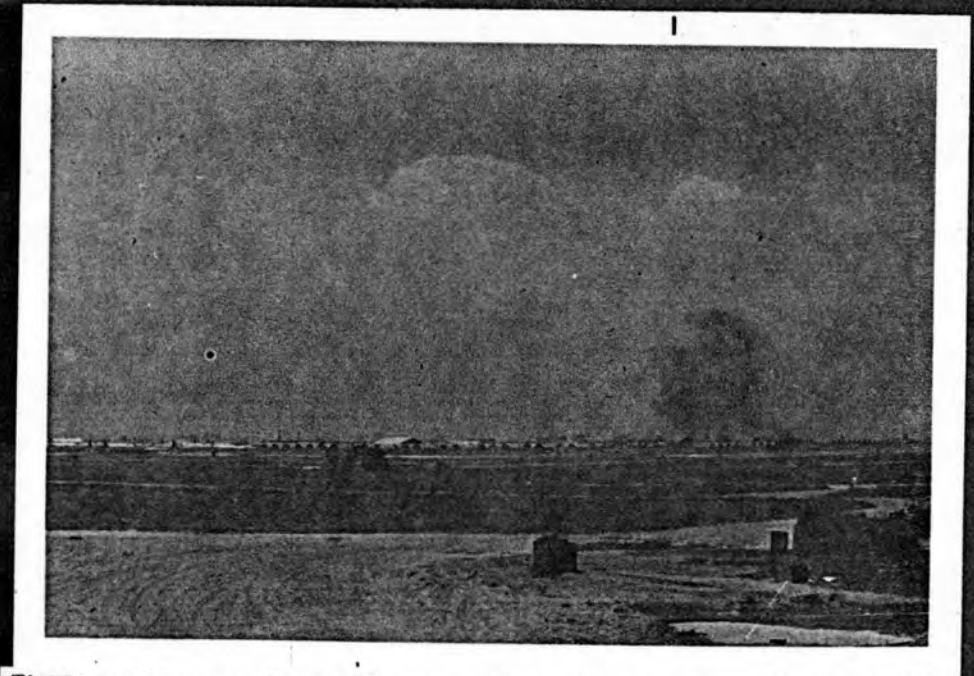
This fellow is Paul Piette, a guy I went to Vietnam with, and then returned with after our "One Year in Vietnam."



A bunker and more hootches stand to my rear. Our processing was over and we were on our way home.



Typical "hootches" at Bien Hoa. A gift store is at left.



The trailing smoke is from a plane heading for the world, taken late in the afternoon the day before we left to go to Long Binh and the 90th Replacement Company where we were to undergo routine processing prior to loading aboard our own "Freedom Bird."



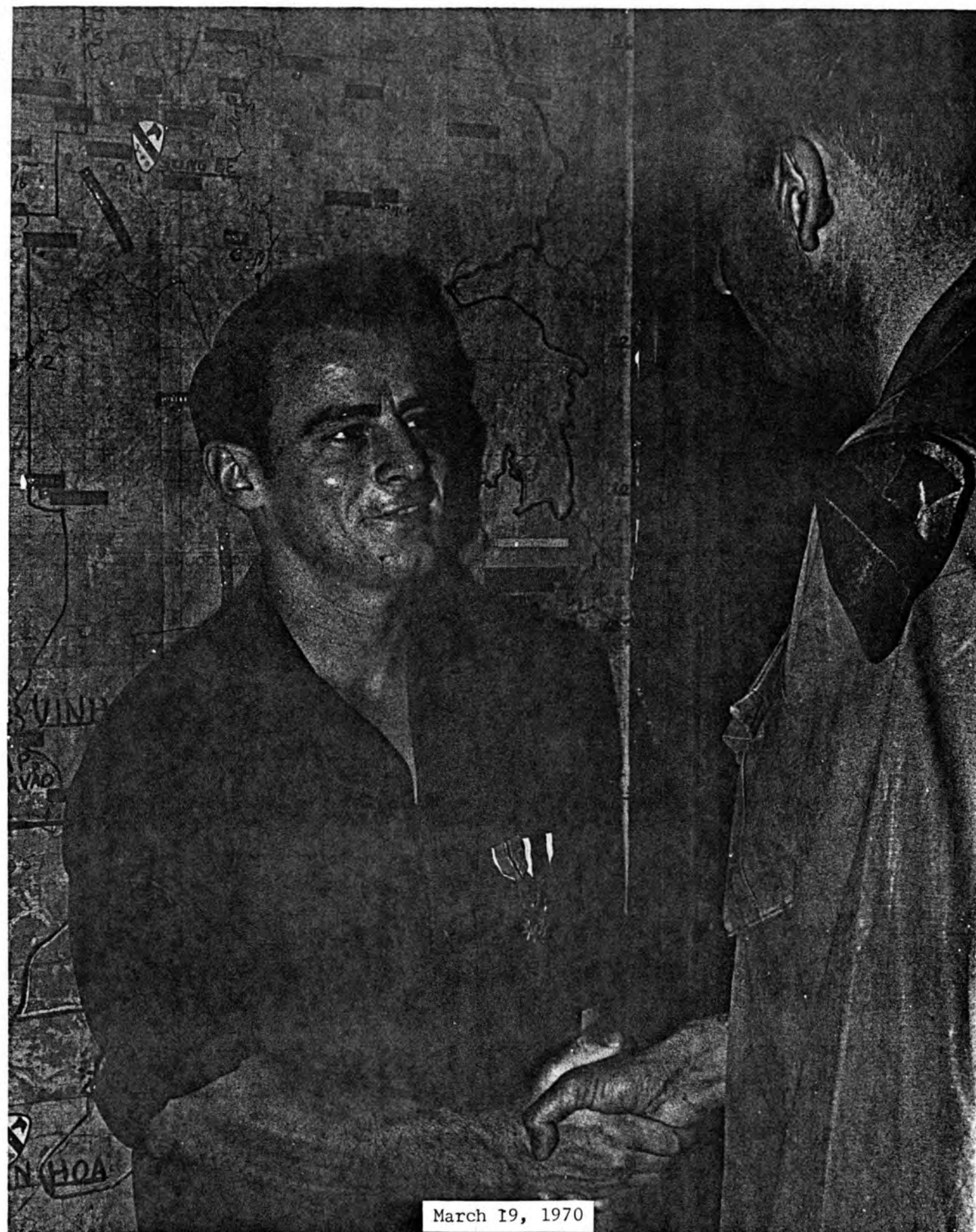
Piette" again, and another guy we went to Vietnam.  
His name was Bell as I recall.

Villages and locations  
I visited during my  
"One Year in Vietnam,"  
26 March 69 to 21 March 70

Bien Hoa  
Long Binh  
An Khe  
Phuoc Vinh  
Lai Khe  
Tay Ninh  
Tay Ninh  
Quan Loi  
Black Horse  
Song Be  
Xuan Loc  
Bear Cat  
Saigon  
Chu Lai  
An Loc

(Fire Support Bases,  
or Landing Zones)

LZ Dolly  
LZ St. Barbara  
LZ Julie  
LZ Westcott  
LZ Joy  
LZ Rock  
LZ Libby  
LZ Jake--and several  
others whose names  
escape me.



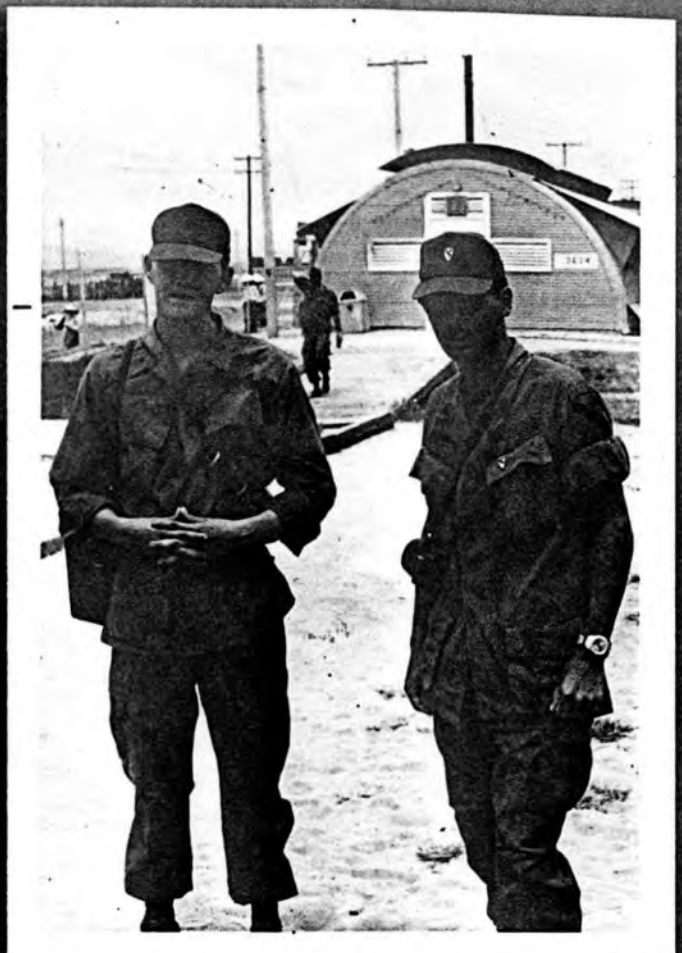
Major J.D. Coleman, presenting my Bronze Star and Air Medal



*Dave  
We've had  
times in  
any  
never  
forget  
you  
and  
of  
Bill*

*There have been good times  
and bad times we'll never  
forget you and I  
will be great some day  
Taste care & best of luck  
Bill*

Bill Ellis, the 1st Cav singing balladeer--San Francisco, California



Here's Piette again, and another guy we went to Vietnam with. His name was Bell as I recall.

by a Japanese student.  
American demonstrations.

発行 1966年6月 20元

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A hot "C-ration" meal eaten late one night at Phuoc Vinh, South Vietnam--a reminder of the Army chow that very often did not get eaten at the proper time.



The pain of a war she has inherited, but does not understand is mirrored mutely in the woeful eyes of a small Vietnamese girl, the innocent victim of a violent Viet Cong attack.

「The Footprints of War」  
trip for two

War



Handed to me by a Japanese student  
during anti-American demonstrations.

発行 1966年6月20日  
20元

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Returning Home Again From War

A hot  
eater  
at PH  
Vietn  
the A  
very  
eater