



Vol. 3, No. 22

1st Air Cavalry Division

May 28, 1969

## COL B. Greene Takes Helm Of Cav's Blackhorse Brigade

By CPT Peter Zastrow

LAI KHE — In a colorful ceremony at Lai Khe, base camp of the 1st Air Cavalry Division's Second Brigade, the colors of the Blackhorse Brigade passed from Colonel Conrad L. Stansberry to Colonel Byron D. Greene, Jr.

COL Stansberry, who served as brigade commander since November 27, 1968, had previously been the commander of the division support command and division chief of staff. He leaves Vietnam to assume a position as executive officer to the Assistant Secretary of the Army for Research and Development.

In remarks made upon leaving the brigade, COL Stansberry said: "For the professional soldier there is nothing quite like leading a brigade in combat, but when the brigade is the Black-

horse Brigade and the division is the 1st Air Cavalry Division, it has to be the high point of any military career."

COL Greene, the new brigade commander, is a 1946 graduate of the U.S. Military Academy. He comes to Vietnam from the Infantry School at Fort Benning, Ga., where he served as its secretary (a position corresponding to chief of staff).

When he learned of his assignment to Vietnam, COL Greene immediately wrote to the Cav's commanding general requesting a job with the 1st Air Cavalry Division. "If I am going to be in Vietnam," said COL Greene, "there just isn't any other division to be with."

In part, the desire to serve with the Cav came from the reputation the division has acquired during its years in Vietnam, but

for COL Greene there was also a personal incentive. From 1963 to 1964 he served as commander of the 1st Battalion, 7th Cavalry, and later as G-1 while the Cav was in Korea.

After graduating from West Point, COL Greene attended the Airborne School, and later, the Infantry Advanced Course at Fort Benning. He is a graduate of the Command and General Staff College and he attended the Navy War College at Newport, R.I. His combat experience includes a tour with the 2nd Division during the Korean War.

COL Greene's wife and their three children reside in Hartsville, S.C. COL Greene has one son who is studying at Wofford College in South Carolina a daughter who will graduate from high school this year, and another son in nursery school.

## 2/5 Finds Huge Cache, Hospital From Clue Given By Bde. Scouts

TAY NINH — The company cut and hacked its way through the thick tropical vegetation, drawing ever closer to the enemy rice cache discovered by scouts earlier in the morning.

Toward the end of the day, the troops of Company B, 2nd Battalion, 5th Cavalry finally arrived at the cache site. The Skytroopers counted the enemy's rice bags, make a quick survey of the area which revealed more NVA supplies, and then withdrew to a night forward operations base.

As the sun rose and the heavy morning mist dissipated from the clearing, the men returned to destroy the large enemy cache.

"As soon as we went in," said Lieutenant John N. Stewart, "we secured a large bomb crater for a PZ (pickup zone)."

As several men were checking out the treeline, the enemy set off a command-detonated claymore mine.

"That's when we called in the air strikes," said the young lieutenant. "They were pretty effective, but they did not do the job completely. As soon as we moved towards the treeline again, the enemy blew another claymore, and we had to hit the dirt again."

The company then withdrew for the night and re-entered the area the following morning, carefully exercising noise discipline to reduce their chances of detection by the enemy.

Moving through the thick bamboo, they entered from the south and stumbled into what the enemy had been trying to conceal all along — a bunker complex.

The first thing confronting them as they entered the bunker complex was an enemy field hospital. It contained penicillin, intravenous equipment, an operating table, and countless bottles of drugs.

Further on, they found elaborate living quarters for the enemy troops who had hastily departed prior to the Cav's arrival.

"They must have taken water and smoothed down the walls," said Sergeant Joseph W. Dufort, a squad leader. "The walls looked just like cement. They were cool and spacious, and they had brand new hammocks hanging inside."

The sweep continued until snipers fired at the troops. A quick call to the aerial gun-platforms of the 1st Sqdrn, 9th Cav, as well as massive firepower from the ground troops brought the enemy fire to an abrupt halt.

Soon the friendly company was removed from the complex, but not until they had discovered 200 two-hundred-pound bags of rice and numerous other equipment, and destroyed most of the bunkers.



(U.S. Army Photo By CPT Peter Zastrow)

### New CO

Colonel Byron D. Greene, Jr., new 2nd Brigade commander, presents the "Blackhorse" colors to the brigade command sergeant major, J.B. Christianson. Brigadier General Frank Meszar (center), assistant division commander and Colonel Conrad L. Stansberry (left), outgoing brigade commander, look on.

## Mortar Plt. Using Riflemen Proves Its Value In LZ Battle

By SP4 RICHARD CRAIG

TAY NINH — The enemy force peppered the 1st Air Cavalry Division's landing zone (LZ) with everything from B-40 rockets to 107mm rockets. To the men on the LZ, a massive ground attack seemed only minutes away.

Suddenly, the enemy heard a "thump, thump," a sound he has heard time and again, and as the 81mm mortars came slammimg into his positions he fled, leaving behind a small cache of 107mm rockets and numerous blood trails.

A first light sweep of the area

confirmed what was already quite clear — the enemy had fled in terror from the deadly, accurate mortar fire dispensed liberally by the mortar platoon of Company E, 2nd Battalion, 5th Cavalry.

Company E's mortar platoon is a highly effective, well-trained unit, much like any mortar platoon. But that's where the similarity ends. The mortarmen of most platoons are all school-trained. Not so with Company E. For the most part, its mortarmen are light weapons infantrymen who have been cross-trained for the mortar.

Sergeant First Class Thomas H. Cook, platoon leader, was given the task of creating the platoon with a core of eight mortarmen and 19 infantrymen.

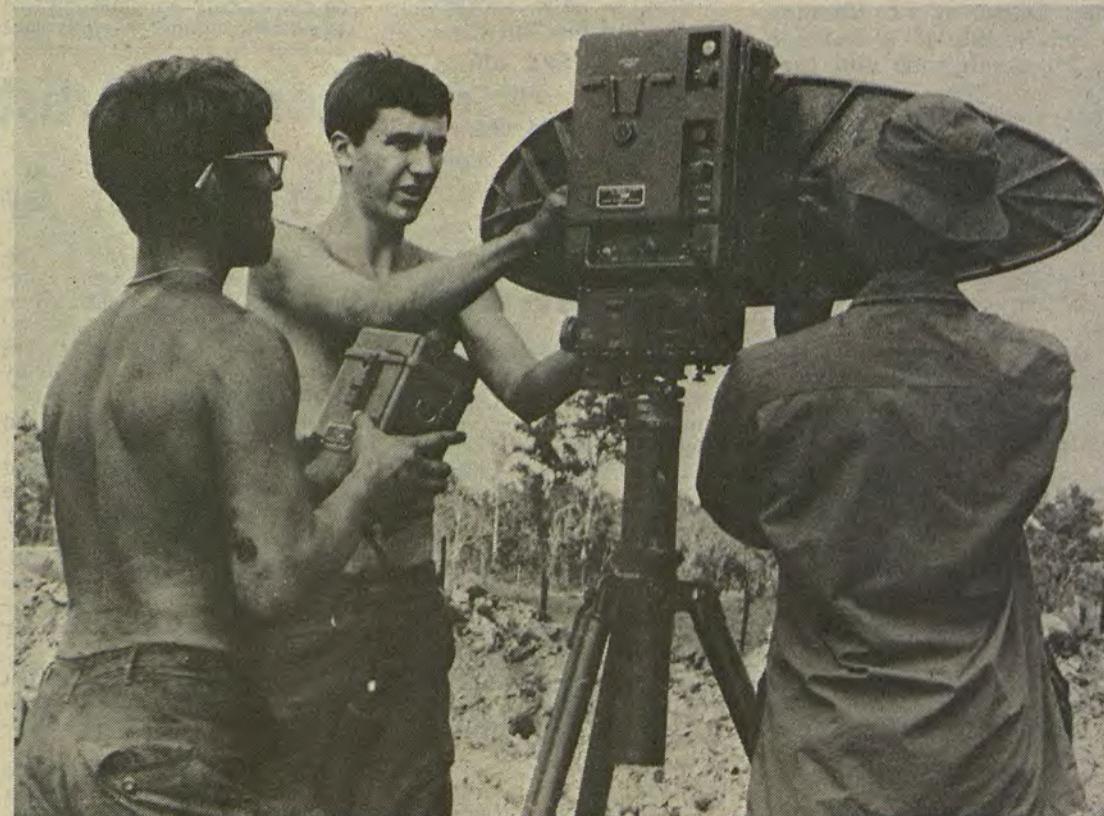
"I was lucky," said SFC Cook, a former instructor on the Fort Benning mortar committee. "We had a group of extraordinary 'grunts' to work with. They learn fast, and they're all good soldiers. In 19 years in the Army, I've never worked with a quicker, more responsive team."

After two weeks of intensive training, the mortar platoon was ready for action, which they got shortly after their arrival at LZ Rita. "That's when the platoon proved it's got what it takes," said Platoon Sergeant George E. Boothe.

It looked as though the enemy was planning a ground assault against LZ Rita as they threw in 107mm rockets and B-40 rockets at point-blank range. Without regard to their own safety, the mortar platoon instinctively ran to their tubes and commenced counter-firing on the enemy positions.

"Those men," said PSG Boothe, "had rockets hit ten feet from their parapets. The enemy may as well have thrown those rockets outside the greenline, because our crews didn't even notice them. Or, if they did, they kept up their fire anyway."

During the early morning (Continued on Pg. 8)



### Super Snooper

This portable radar unit used by mortar platoons detects enemy movement in both day and night.

# ...For God And Country

Peace and Charity are two words which are uppermost in the minds of most people. They especially are words whose meaning are of great impact on people here in Vietnam.

What is peace? What is charity? Peace, I suppose, could be defined as the cessation of hostilities. You were in hostility with God until you were called by the glorious message of the Gospel. You are a recipient of charity when God offered his son as the supreme sacrifice for sin.

So now you have peace with God through faith in Christ Jesus our Lord. You can now offer the charity of the message of forgiveness of sin to all who know not God. The Gospel message is a message of peace with God and charity extended. We have used both words peace and charity in a way you perhaps have never seen or heard; yet the affiliation of these terms in this sense is very appropriate. It also ties into the Peace and Charity which should be found among all men.

Peace among men can only come from the Peace of God in Christ. Charity to men flows from the "Kapis" of God for charity comes from a word that in English is grace—unearned, undeserved love. We do what we have to as citizens of our nation. This all must be predicated on the ideal of peace and charity as exemplified by the love of God in Christ.

Do your duty in the light of faith in the Blessed Message of the Gospel. Peace and charity will manifest themselves in your life even if you are a soldier in Vietnam. And the peace of God which passeth all understanding will help your heart and minds in Christ Jesus.

Chaplain (MAJ) Kenneth K. Wittenburg

## Keep In Touch.....

### .....Join Cav Ass'n

Now that you're part of THE FIRST TEAM, you're eligible for membership in the 1st Cavalry Division Association. And if you're scheduled to DEROS before the last week in August, you may want to attend its 22nd annual reunion, to be held August 22-24 at Ft. Benning, Ga.

In addition to encouraging its members to get together in local and regional chapters and publishing SABER NEWS, a quarterly newsletter, the Association provides scholarships to dependents of men killed or disabled while serving with THE FIRST TEAM.

A lifetime membership in the 1st Cavalry Division Association costs only eleven dollars (a single membership fee with no subsequent dues) and includes a lifetime subscription to SABER NEWS, a volume of the division's history and a membership directory, plus Cav decals, insignia cards and pins.

If you're interested in keeping in touch with the guys you've met in 'Nam, you'll definitely want to join the Association and participate in its activities, beginning with the August reunion.

Under the able leadership of BG Oscar E. Davis, commanding general of the Training Center at Ft. Benning, this year's reunion committee has scheduled a series of meetings and social gatherings for cavalrymen and their families.

Much of the program will be held on post. Cavalrymen and their families will be able to tour its famous Infantry Museum. Many parties are scheduled this year, including one for teenagers August 22. Briefings are also on the agenda, including one on the Cav's performance in Vietnam.

Interested individuals will also be able to go on tours of Columbus, Ga., Callaway Gardens, and Warm Springs, President Franklin D. Roosevelt's "Little White House."

The main social event of this year's reunion will be an outdoor barbecue-picnic-dance at Victory Lodge, a retreat on the Ft. Benning reservation. In addition, the reunion committee has assured the CAVALAIR that it has arranged for ideal weather.



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Opinions expressed in the CAVALAIR are those of its editorial staff and not necessarily those of the Department of the Army.

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 Press Officer ..... CPT Jim Ryan  
 Production Editor ..... SP5 Steve Haldeman  
 Layout Editor ..... SP5 Allan Schlosser

# Awards

The following awards were presented to Skytroopers of the 1st Air Cavalry Division:

## SILVER STAR

BURCHAM, LTC Jerry J.  
 HHC, 2nd Bn, 5th Cav

CAIN, CPT James R. JR.  
 Co C, 1st Bn, 5th Cav

DAUBERT, SP4 William J.  
 HHC, 1st Bn, 7th Cav

JINES, SP5 Robert A.  
 HHC, 1st Bn, 7th Cav

KERR, SP4 Wesley  
 HHC, 1st Bn, 8th Cav

LITTLE, MAJ John A.  
 Co C, 227th Avn Bn

MACY, 1LT Steven D.  
 Co A, 2nd Bn, 5th Cav

MROS, SP4 Stephen R.  
 Co B, 2nd Bn, 7th Cav

MORGAN, SP4 Michael A.

Co B, 2nd Bn, 5th Cav

RACCA, 1LT William  
 Co B, 5th Bn, 7th Cav

PAVICK, SGT John III  
 Co B, 2nd Bn, 5th Cav.

## DISTINGUISHED FLYING CROSS

ELLIOTT, 1LT Jerry L.  
 Troop B, 1st Sqdn, 9th Cav

JAMES, WO-1 Kenneth R.  
 Troop B, 1st Sqdn, 9th Cav

PERRINE, 1LT James L.  
 HHC, 15th Med Bn

## BRONZE STAR MEDAL FOR HEROISM

ALEXANDER, SGT Vintise  
 Co D, 5th Bn, 7th Cav

BANNART, SP4 Eldon  
 Co C, 1st Bn, 5th Cav

DELAROSA, PFC Jack M.  
 Co E, 2nd Bn, 7th Cav

EGGERT, SP4 John M. III  
 Co D, 1st Bn, 7th Cav

HOLTZ, SGT Edward  
 Co B, 2nd Bn, 7th Cav

JASMIN, SP4 Alfred W.  
 Co E, 1st Bn, 7th Cav

MORRIS, SP4 George S.  
 Co B, 5th Bn, 7th Cav

PHILLIPS, PFC Issac  
 Co B, 5th Bn, 7th Cav

## New Award, MS Medal

WASHINGTON (ANF) — Design and criteria for the newly established Meritorious Service Medal (MSM) has been approved by the Department of Defense.

The MSM was authorized by executive order of former President Lyndon B. Johnson to provide recognition for commendable achievement falling just below the requirements for the Legion of Merit.

The decoration is to rank with but worn after the Bronze Star. As it is a non-combat award, the 'V' device denoting valor is not authorized for the decoration.

All lieutenant generals and above are authorized to award the MSM. Authority is retroactive to Jan. 19, 1969, though recipients must have served part of the cited period after that date.



SGT RE-UP  
 SEC...  
 "DID YOU  
 KNOW???"



Many times in the not too distant past, we have all heard the phrase, "It just isn't right, the 'First Termers' get all the options, and the 'Old Timers' get nothing!" The words may vary, but the theme remains the same. Now, this is no longer true!

Under the new concept, anyone in the pay grade of E-6 and below, regardless of status, may reenlist for the overseas area of their choice, providing a vacancy exists for their present MOS and grade in the area requested.

How do you go about getting this option? First, when you are within six months of your rotation date, visit your nearest career counselor and inform him you wish to apply for an overseas area of choice. He will then fill out the necessary forms, listing the three overseas areas in which you wish to serve. Your career counselor will then make sure the request is sent through proper channels to Department of the Army for approval.

When the assignment comes back approved, you may then reenlist for that area regardless of the time you have remaining on your current enlistment.

Upon completion of your current tour in Vietnam you will be reassigned to the area for which you reenlisted.

This is the option a lot of us have been waiting for, so why not look into it? Visit your nearest career counselor today for all fine points. It may be well worth your while!

## Civilian Health Care With Gov't Payment

(Editor's Note: This is the first in a series of Army News Features articles on the Civilian Health and Medical Program of the Uniformed Services (CHAMPUS). Questions and answers were prepared by the Office of the Surgeon, U.S. Army, Denver, Colo. 80240.)

Question: — What is the Civilian Health and Medical Program of the Uniformed Services (CHAMPUS)?

Answer: This is a program under which the beneficiaries may receive a wide range of civilian health care services with a significant share of the cost paid by the government.

Q: — Who is eligible for CHAMPUS benefits?

A: — The following categories of persons are eligible:

1) Spouses and children of members serving on active duty under orders which do not specify a period of less than 31 days.

2) Retired members (and former members) entitled to retired, retainer or equivalent pay and their spouses and children.

3) Spouses and children of members who die while serving on active duty or while entitled to retired, retainer or equivalent

pay.

Q: — Are all health care services payable under CHAMPUS?

A: — No. While the range of benefits is very great, not every health care service is payable. Some examples of health care services not payable under the program are domiciliary or custodial care, dental care (except as a necessary part of medical treatment), glasses, hearing aids and well-baby care.

Q: — Does the government pay the entire cost for authorized health service?

A: — No CHAMPUS is a cost-sharing plan. The government pays a significant share of the charges determined to be reasonable. The patient pays the remainder. A charge is allowable under the program if it has been determined to be reasonable.

## Combat Artist's Program To Record Army Activity

WASHINGTON (ANF) — The soldier phase of the Army Combat Artist Program initiated in 1966 will be expanded and continued during fiscal year 1970 under the designation "Army Artist Program."

This program is sponsored jointly by The Adjutant General, Chief of Military History and Chief of Information. Under the new designation, authorized by the Secretary of the Army, soldier artists will document military activities throughout the Army. Complete details on the program appear in DA Circular 28-40, dated April 17, 1969.

The original Combat Artist Program was limited to recording military activities in the Republic of Vietnam.

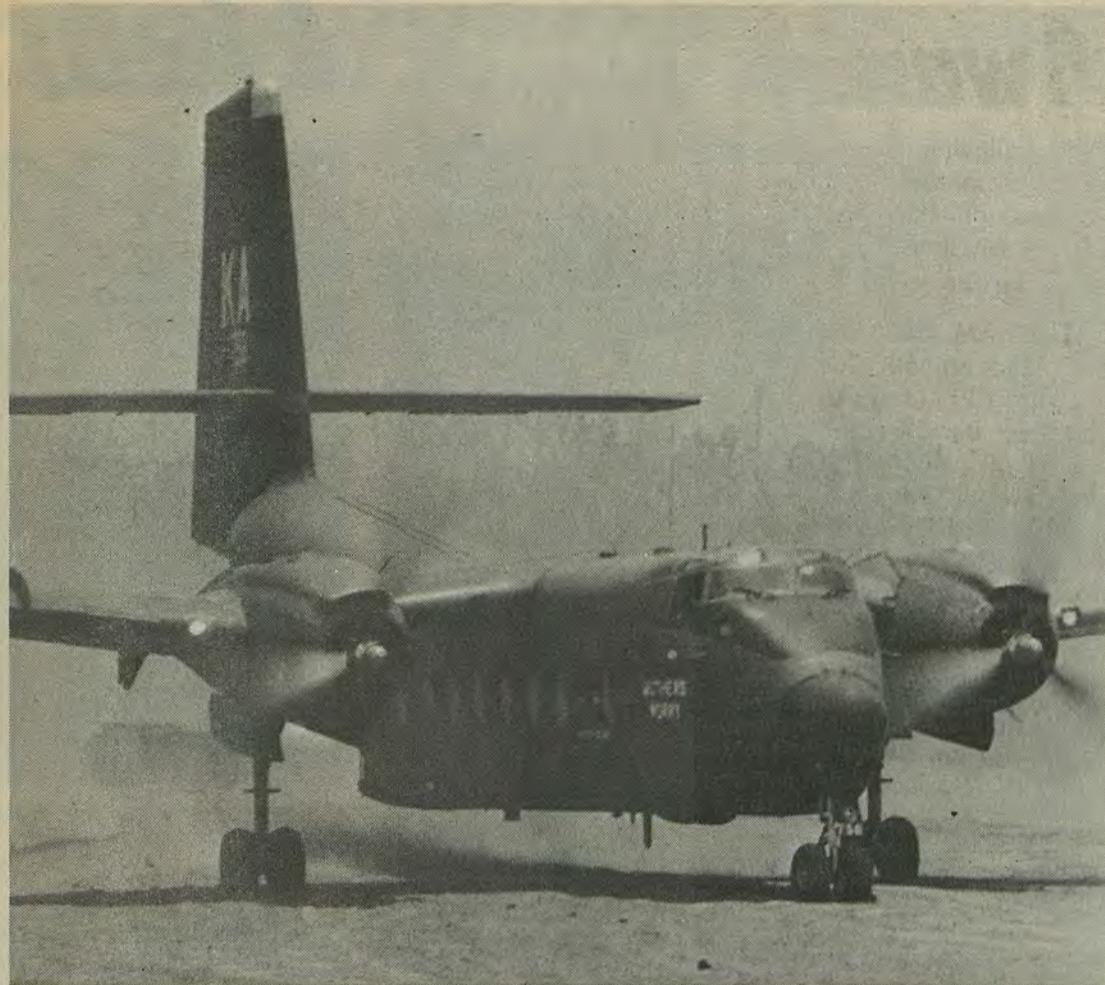
During fiscal year 1970, the program will sponsor two teams of soldier artists, one in the Republic of Vietnam and the second in the Republic of Korea. Each team will spend 60 days on location making sketches, then transfer to Hawaii for 75 days to prepare finished paintings from

their sketches. All work by the soldier artists will become a part of the U.S. Army Art Collection in the Office, Chief of Military History.

All applicants for the FY 1970 program must have a written appraisal of their qualifications as an artist from an Army Crafts Director and an authorization for release from duty for 135 days signed by their commanding officer.

Applications must be prepared on DA Form 2496 and forwarded through official military command channels to: The Adjutant General, ATTN: AGMS-C, Department of the Army, Washington, D.C. 20315. The application deadline is Dec. 1, 1969.

Join up...  
 Join in  
 + SUPPORT YOUR RED CROSS



(U.S. Army Photo)

### First One

A Caribou touches down on the mini-airfield at Prek Klok, command post of the 2nd Bn, 8th Cav. This marked the first time in more than a year a fixed wing aircraft has landed there.

## Company H Rangers Light Fire For NVA Smoke Break

By SP4 George Vindedzis

LAI KHE — Lightly armed men, miles from the nearest friendly unit, are not normally a potent fighting force. However, when these men are a Ranger team from Company H, 75th Infantry, and when they enjoy the airmobility of the 1st Cav, their fighting potential is greatly increased.

Although Rangers can fight if necessary, these men conceal themselves from the enemy. Their job is to watch not fight.

So it was when a Ranger team went out from Quan Loi, the base camp of the Blackhorse Brigade. Its mission was, as usual, surveillance of the many trails which the NVA were using to infiltrate troops and supplies into the Saigon area. The specific mission was directed toward a major north-south trail running near the Song Be River.

Working with the 1st Squadron, 9th Cavalry, the team was inserted by a UH-1H Huey helicopter and, under the direction of team leader Sergeant Robert Larson, quickly moved away from the landing zone in case the enemy had spotted the incoming chopper.

The hours between 11 a.m. and 2 p.m. are what the members of the Ranger Team call "pot time." During this time, the NVA usually stop moving and set up ambushes. Often, this is the time when NVA soldiers bring out their marijuana and take a smoke break — hence the name.

During this time, the Ranger team set up three claymore mines and, finding a mound along the side of the trail, settled down behind it in order to watch for any traffic. Three NVA soldiers, wearing uniforms and carrying AK-47's, suddenly appeared on the trail.

Although the mission of the

Ranger team is surveillance, when their position is in danger of being spotted, they open up. In this case, Specialist Four Herbert Bradley fired his M-16 and two NVA went down. The third scurried into the jungle undergrowth along the trail.

Not knowing whether the NVA were only scouting party or the point element for a larger force, SGT Larson immediately radioed his situation. Meanwhile, hostile fire poured from the surrounding jungle. "Apparently," said SGT Larson, "they were

trying to pin us down so they could drag off the bodies."

Within minutes, Cobras snaked through the sky overhead and began working over the area. Enemy fire ceased.

When a Ranger team makes contact, its usefulness as a reconnaissance element ends, since the enemy knows its location. Working in conjunction with the 1st Sqdrn, 9th Cav, the team moved to a pick-up zone and was extracted. Another mission for Company H, 75th Infantry was completed.

## First Plane In Year Lands At Prek Klok

TAY NINH — The drone of an approaching C7A (Caribou) airplane signaled the reopening of the tiny airfield at Prek Klok, deep in the jungles of War Zone C. It was the first time an aircraft had landed there in more than a year.

Prek Klok, a former Civilian Irregular Defense Group camp, now houses the command post of the 2nd Battalion, 8th Cavalry. The Skytroopers moved there recently to establish Landing Zone Carolyn.

Many of the structures built during the CIDG's occupation still stood but were in poor condition. Engineers and infantrymen pitched in to get the place in shape.

High on the priority list for repairs was the 2,500-foot runway, which at one time could accommodate C-130 airplanes. Its perforated steel surface had been ripped in several places by incoming mortars and rockets, leaving steel bars peeled sky-

wards. The engineers employed an entire 15-man section to work on the first 1,500 feet of the strip so that the C7As could begin their runs.

The torn plating was removed, and new sheets locked in place. In many areas, the fill beneath the plating had washed away and had to be replaced.

The 5,500-pound capacity Cobras brought C-rations, artillery ammunition and peneprime on their first nine sorties to the landing zone.

With the eventual completion of the entire 2,500-foot strip, C-123 and C-130 airplanes will begin hauling supplies.

Since supplies will be able to go directly from rear areas like Bien Hoa to the forward bases, this will eliminate the "middleman" at Tay Ninh, resulting in a saving of time and manpower. In addition, the reduction in blade time on the CH-47 (Chinook) helicopter will be a welcome relief.

## DA's Aircraft Maint. Head Visits 1st Cav

PHUOC VINH — The 1st Air Cavalry Division was visited recently by Mr. Joseph P. Cribbens, the Department of the Army's Special Assistant for Logistical Support of Army Aircraft.

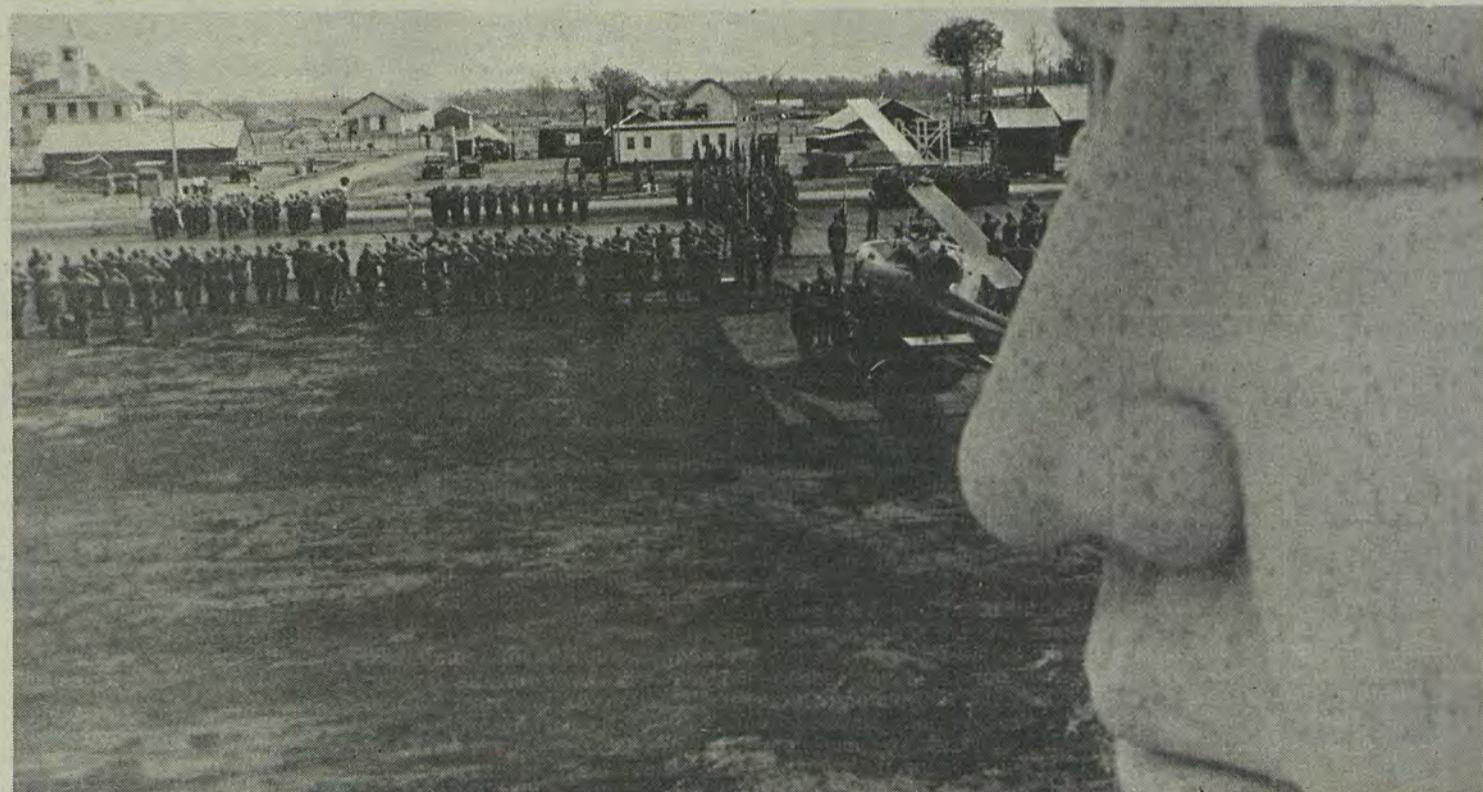
Mr. Cribbens is the man responsible for maintaining all of the Army aircraft throughout the world. He visited the Cav to review the division's current aviation and supply situation, and to discuss the decentralized maintenance concept planned for the division in the near future.

Currently all of the 1st Cav's aircraft maintenance is handled by the 15th Transportation Corps Battalion. Earlier, Mr. Cribbens and Lieutenant Colonel A.R. Schlim, director of aircraft maintenance with G-4, discussed the application of the decentralized concept to the division's

maintenance system. When this concept goes into effect, all units which operate aircraft will have their own aircraft maintenance units. This will reduce the 15th TC from four companies to two, and it will be used only in support of the others.

During his tour of the division, Mr. Cribbens visited Cav Headquarters, the 11th Aviation Group, the 227th and 228th Aviation Battalions, the 1st Squadron, 9th Cavalry, and Companies C and D of the 15th TC, checking on the progress of the decentralized maintenance system. The system is scheduled to go into effect within the Cav on May 20.

Mr. Cribbens is a retired lieutenant colonel who has worked in the office of the Chief of Transportation, Department of the Army, and the Army Materiel Command. He has worked in aircraft maintenance for over 20 years.



(U.S. Army Photo By SP4 Philip Blackmarr)

### Under The Eye

The sculpted visage of Vietnamese Major Nguyen Minh Manh, the Binh Duong province chief assassinated in 1961 by VC terrorists, overlooks ceremonies at Camp Gorvad as Major General E.B. Roberts assumes command of the division.



A hovering resupply helicopter prepares to land midst the men of Company A, 5th Bn., 7th Cav.



Food and other supplies are a welcome sight for hungry LZ builders.

# *Clearing, Supplying, Defending An LZ*



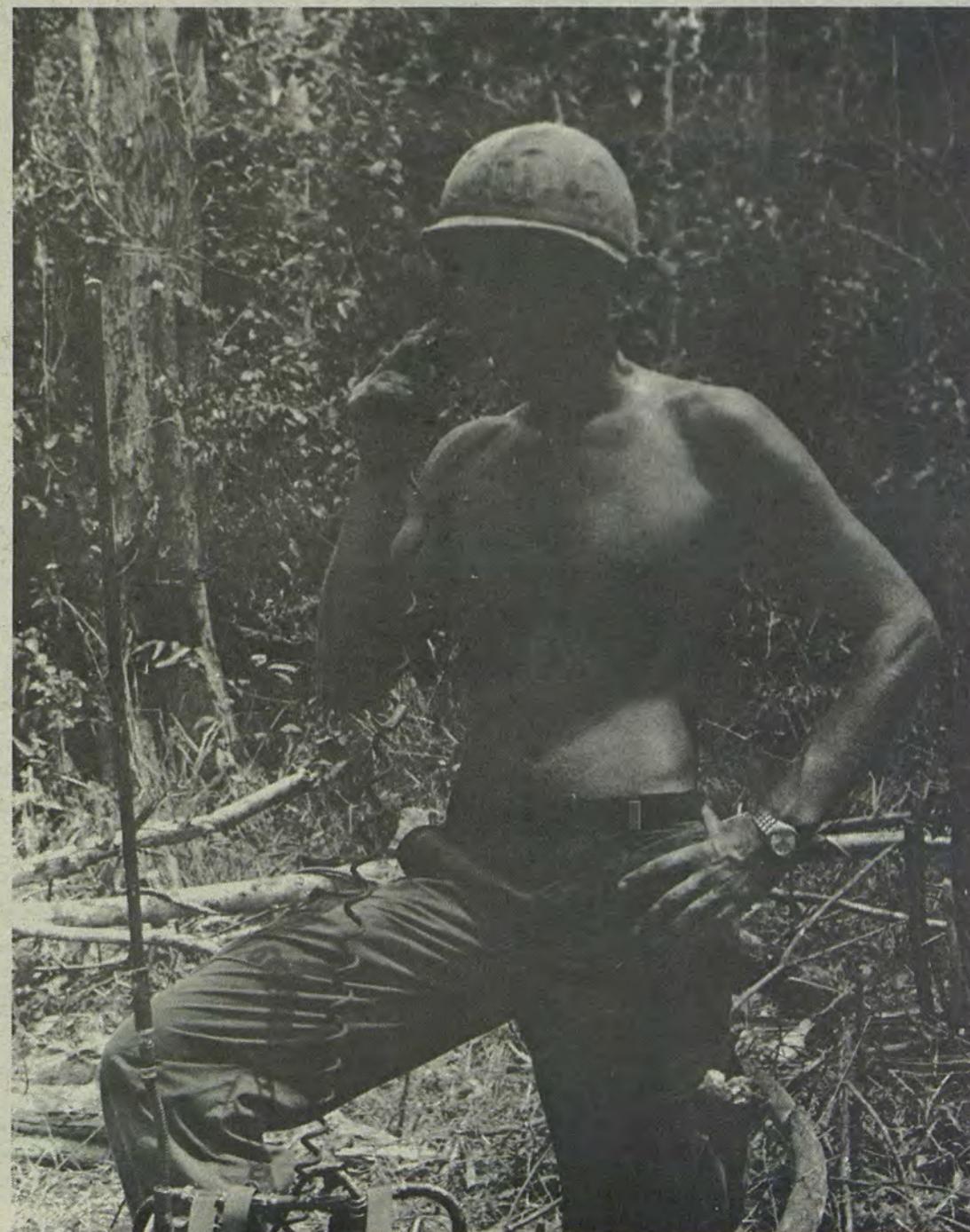
A Skytrooper scans the bamboo for any movement disclosing the sniper's location.



Enemy fire cracks through the dense jungle, forcing the Skytroopers to take cover at the edge of a bomb crater.

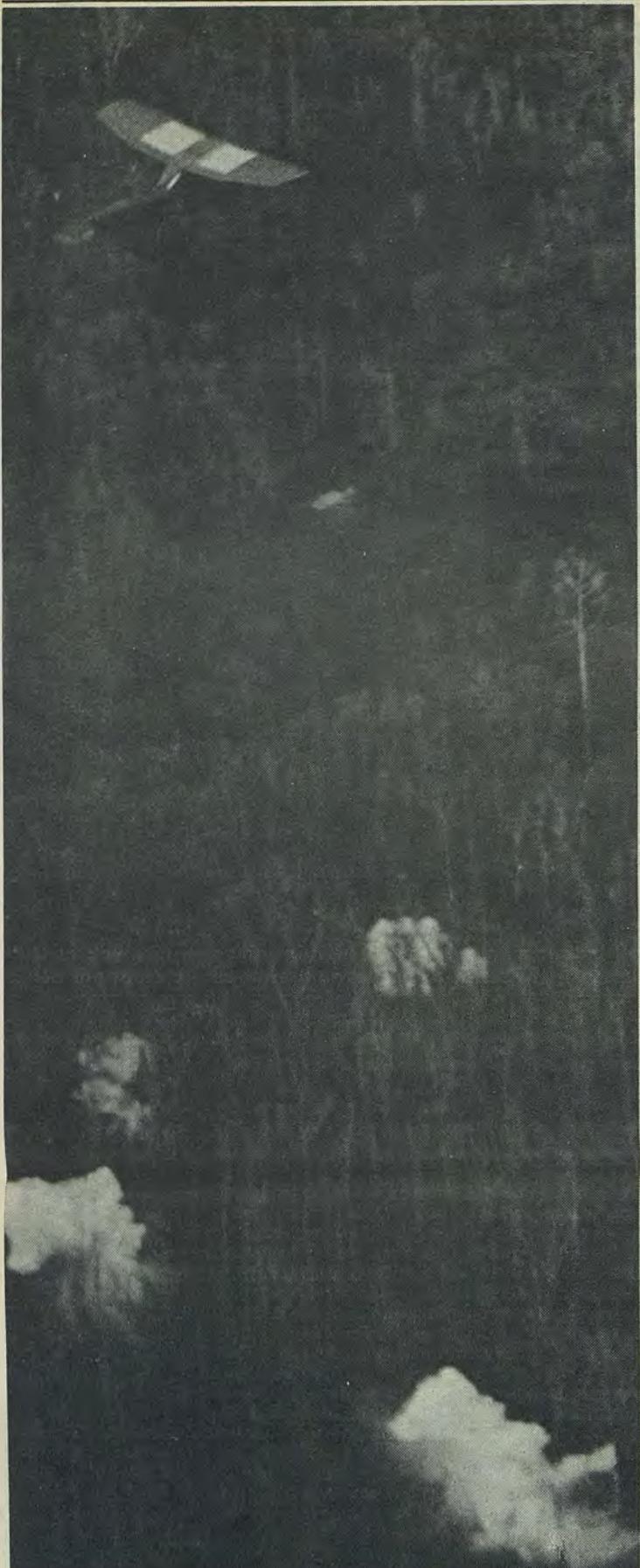


PFC Edward Jones helps clear a landing zone for resupply choppers.



SGT Darrel Blackinship monitors the radio for further instructions from his CO.

Photos By SP4 Ed Koehlein



(U.S. Army Photo By SP4 Terry Moon)

### Bringin' Smoke

A "bird-dog" spotter plane from Company E, 82nd Artillery keeps a wary eye for the enemy as rounds slam into this enemy position.

## 1st Cav Big Change For Iowa Guardsman

TAY NINH — When is a National Guardsman not a National Guardsman? When he's the first sergeant of Company E, 2nd Battalion, 5th Cavalry.

"I was first sergeant of Company A, 2nd Battalion, 133rd Infantry," said Kenneth L. Freese, "when I was called to active duty. I have to admit, there's quite a bit of difference between the 1st Air Cav and the Iowa National Guard. I'm really impressed by this division."

Adjusting to a regular Army unit after 20 years in the National Guard doesn't sound like an easy task, but 1SG Freese didn't seem to mind the transition. "My biggest concern," said the 40-year-old native of LeMars, Iowa, "was how well I'd be able to handle the job."

But the problem disappeared as the men of Company E "showed him the ropes" of a regular Army outfit.

"We were all sort of worried," said Captain Dennis D. Poppel, the company commander. "But our doubts didn't last long. Top's doing an outstanding job. He instills a feeling of duty in the men. He makes my job a heck of a lot easier."

How did 1SG Freese adjust so quickly? Perhaps the answer was best given by 'Top' himself when he said, "In this unit, they have some real good teachers. I'm not beyond the point where I'll accept advice from a private if he knows what he's talking about. After all, we're all members of the same team."

## Tactical Operations Center

# Nerve Center Of Combat Ops. A Mass Of Activity

By SSG Matt Glasgow

LAI KHE — From an underground, map-lined cubicle, amid the crackle of radioed voices, scarcely a dozen men direct the movement of 3,000 Blackhorse Brigade soldiers of the 1st Air Cavalry Division.

Not unlike a scene from a military novel, the grim reality of their business — the conduct of war — can be read on tense faces and in terse conversation. Life or death hangs in the balance of words, decisions and actions, and little time remains for levity in the bare-beamed Tactical Operations Center (TOC).

Ten field telephones and a like number of radios compete against each other for the attention of those engaged in clipped-tone conversations.

Tactical information — the combat nerve center's synapse — moves through the muggy room. Three fans turn sluggishly in the windowless, unpainted room. Sound clashes with sound; electronic transmissions superimpose themselves over personal conversation and a whirring

noise comes from no place in particular.

From a separate room, word flashes that "Bravo-five-seven" is "in contact" and "a Tac-E" exists. The verbal shorthand is a common tongue. Company B, 5th Battalion, 7th Cavalry, has engaged the enemy and a tactical emergency exists.

Bespectacled Captain George J. Hafner hurries through the crowded room as he personally coordinates the efforts that will lend tactical assistance to the embattled unit. To another captain, still in staccato-clip, he says, "Bravo-five-seven in contact. Get Redleg and clearance." Rushing elsewhere, CPT Hafner goes to coordinate a jet air strike on the enemy position.

The man at the first desk, Sergeant Philip L. Ehlert reacts to the information as he alerts a helicopter to scramble into the area. Having done this, his attention turns to further word of the battle. Like most of the men in the TOC, SGT Ehlert was once one of those in the field. It is not an empathy easily lost.

And like most, he seems to be emotionally as much a part of the firefight as those who are fighting for their lives.

"Clearance and redleg," permission to fire on target and artillery support, is arranged by Captain Stephen Rinehart. The crewcut officer, acting on his instructions, relays map coordinates in code and gives the request for precision artillery fire.

Within minutes of the original transmission, the sound of small arms fire — miles away — is punctuated by the ground-shaking explosions of artillery barrages and jet air strikes.

Data arcs back to the perspiring men in the subterranean bunker. Anxiously they listen, for they aren't just observing the battle but are in it.

Captain James Mace, an assistant S-3 (operations) officer, prepares to send in reinforcements if the length of contact permits. He appears both disappointed and relieved when the enemy breaks contact and disappears into the jungle to reorganize and strike again elsewhere.

One is reminded that this is Charlie's type of war, for this is the way he chooses to fight it. Wait for the advantage, hit, then run.

Although the shooting has stopped, First Lieutenant Lynn E. Midkiff's job has just begun. Screening all available data, he must try to determine the size of the hostile force, their armament, and probable direction of evasion. This and other intelligence information he compiles may determine the outcome of the next clash.

Specialist Four Mark C. Frisch, a radio operator, relays the message that three NVA were killed in the fray. His radio rattles with static and he turns a trained ear to the receiver. His shift ends soon, and a replacement awaits a lull to assume his duties.

The three enemy dead are recorded on one of many cryptic charts about the room by the duty NCO, Staff Sergeant William L. Miller, as he writes: ". . . B 5/7 in cont 1407. S/A fire A/S & Arty spt — 03 NVA KBA. . . ."

Meanwhile, more contact has been reported and each person continues to act and react according to his role. Words are spent miserly for they cost valuable time.

The radio crackles, and the war goes on. . . .

## 1/9th Last Lighters

### Keep 'Chuck' Awake

By SP4 Al Persons

PHUOC VINH — "If 'Charlie' is out there, he doesn't have a chance," said a chopper pilot of Troop C, 1st Squadron, 9th Cavalry referring to the "last light" missions carried out every afternoon.

"Charlie" literally shakes in his boots when he sees the Cav helicopters moving along just inches above the treetops, making a reconnaissance of the area surrounding the perimeter of Camp Gorvad.

In the late afternoon members of Troop C fly around the perimeter in light observation helicopters (LOHs) searching for enemy movement. In addition, they assist "grunts" (infantrymen) in finding enemy bodies and reporting assessments.

On a last light mission, the LOH crew has a pilot, an observer, and a gunner. The gunner, who sits in the rear of the aircraft, has an arsenal of weapons, including an M-60 machine gun, M-79 grenade launcher, fragmentation grenades, and an assortment of smoke grenades.

The crew boarded the aircraft, lifted off, and headed into the setting sun. The minute they were airborne, the pilot said to the observer, "As soon as we get outside the perimeter, lock and load a magazine in your M-16 and put it on automatic."

Skimming the treetops, the bug-like aircraft was like an eagle in search of his prey. All of a sudden, it lunged to the right. The chopper received fire from someone by the river below them. Circling around and around, they returned fire with the M-60, ripping up the entire area. After that nothing happened.

The pilot reported to the sister

ship and continued with the search.

As the chopper buzzed around, the observer, who was on his first mission, saw a group of men moving on the ground in a wooded area. A quick check revealed them to be friendly forces.

"We have a dead NVA down here," came a grunt's voice over the radio. "Can you see him?" The chopper crew couldn't see him at first, so the "grunts" marked his position with smoke. There he was, clear as day. "Roger that," said the pilot. The LOH continued its search.

Moving north, the crew spotted a maze of trails, one of which was larger than the others. The pilot's voice rang out, "That trail down there, the big one, it wasn't there a few days ago." Naturally, the chopper followed it. Along the way, the gunner spotted something.

"What's that brown looking object on the trail?" he asked.

"I don't know," the pilot answered, "it could be some sort of mine or booby trap. We'd better fire at it before someone finds out the hard way." The rattle of machine gun fire filled the helicopter, the bullets hitting their target each time. Nothing happened. "Better safe than sorry," commented the pilot. "Right," thought everyone to himself.

As they followed the trail further, they found it led to a complex of abandoned bunkers with .50 caliber machine gun positions. "We found that a few days ago," said the pilot. "I don't understand why we didn't spot the trail before. It must have just slipped by us," he thought. "Can't let that happen again."

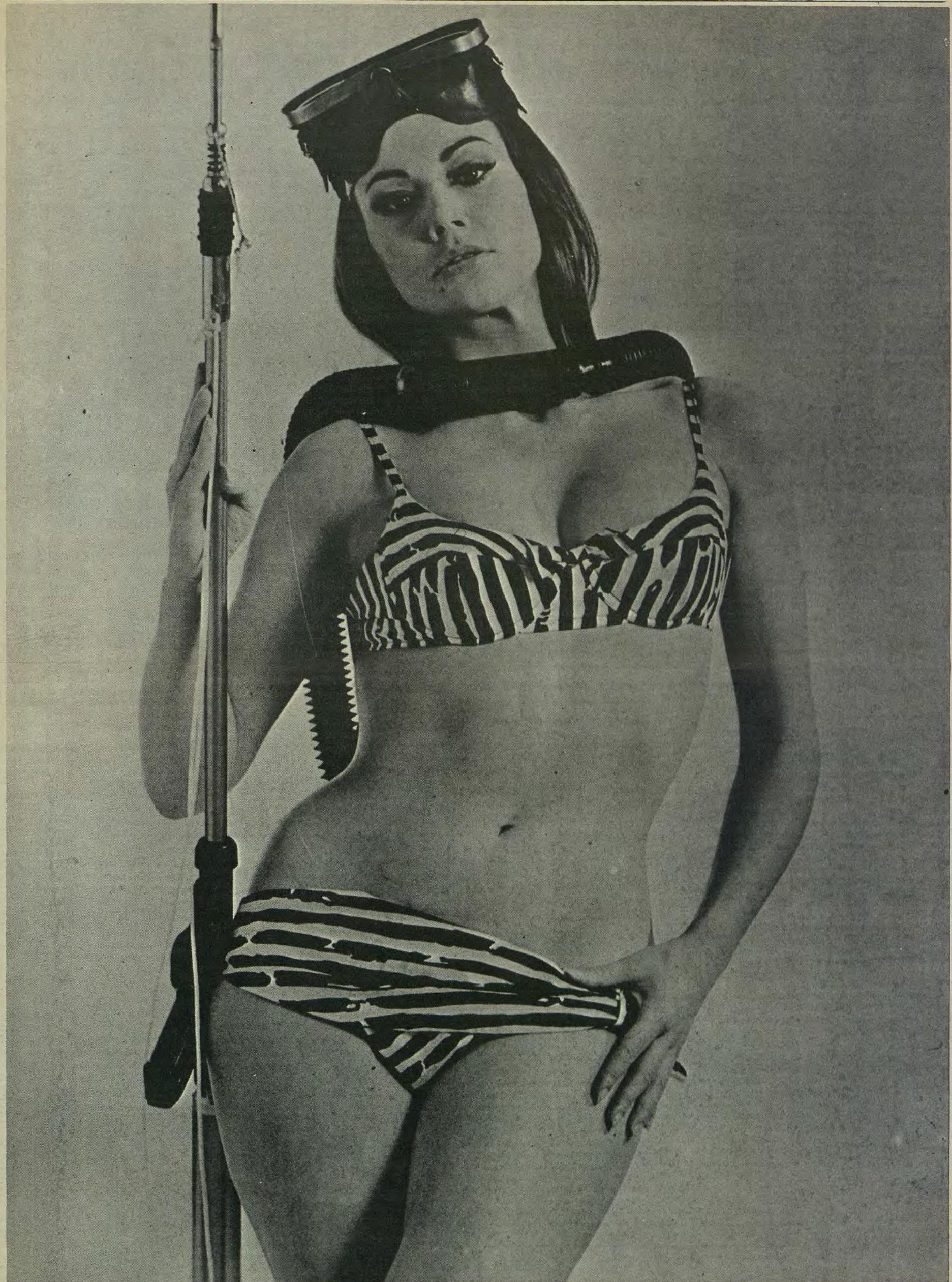
As it began to get dark, all of the choppers returned to Camp Gorvad. The day's mission was completed.

### Photo Contest

PHUOC VINH — See your favorite photos in print — send them to the Division Information Office.

If you have photographs taken of combat action or R&R, send your negatives (for black and white film) and color slides to: Editor, Cavalair, Information Office, APO 96490 (In Country). The negatives and color slides will be copied and the originals returned to you.

Be sure to give proper identification of individuals (Name, Rank, Hometown) and a brief explanation of the action involved. Also be sure to include a return address.



**New Weapon???**

With the monsoons watering down Cav Country, a new weapon has been developed for hunting 'Chuck.' Sorry guys—it's not Airmobile Auger (Claudine)—it's a wet frag.

# DSC To Cpt Mace

LAI KHE — It was ten in the morning on the 30th of April and the men of Headquarters and Headquarters Company of the 2nd Brigade were ready — boots polished, uniforms pressed, jeeps shining.

The event was a visit by General Creighton Abrams, MACV Commander, to present Captain James E. Mace, the assistant S-3 of the Blackhorse Brigade, with a Distinguished Service Cross. General Abrams was met upon his arrival at Lai Khe by Brigadier General Frank Meszar, assistant division commander, and Colonel Byron D. Greene, Jr., commander of the Blackhorse Brigade.

At the parade ground, the honor guard waited, entertained by music from the division band. General Abrams arrived, cam-

## Civil Affairs Brings Joy To Children

TAY NINH — What does civil affairs have to do with the neighborhood ice cream man? Not much, really, but in Tay Ninh, the 2nd Battalion, 12th Cavalry civil affairs team draws just as much attention.

Each week, Sergeant Jesse D. Raley, NCOIC of the battalion Civil Affairs Office, and Private First Class Stephen Woods, go to each of the companies in the battalion and round up unused sundries which are left over from the unit's supplies.

Then, from time to time, they carry them to the Co Nghi Vien Orphanage where they are met by the anxious children.

The items distributed to the children vary, but candy and personal hygiene items usually comprise the bulk of their issue.

In the brief history of their project, known as Project Welcome Wagon, they have distributed, among other things, 350 toothbrushes and 485 bars of soap.

"We try to give them items having a lasting impact on them," said SGT Raley. "A toothbrush will have a far more beneficial effect on the kids in the long run than will a candy bar."

Currently, they are also repositioning 150 wooden ammunition boxes to make benches and stools for the classrooms.

"We haven't done anything really big," said SGT Raley, "but we're doing as much as we can, considering what we have to work with."

If the North Vietnamese Army is being defeated in the field by the efforts of American infantrymen, then their greatest allies, poverty and squalor, are being defeated by the steadfast efforts of the Cav's civil affairs offices and men like SGT Raley and PFC Woods.

What other plans does the Civil Affairs Office have in mind? "We're going to continue to do as much as we can," said SGT Raley.

eras clicked, and the men of the 2nd Brigade snapped to attention.

After the band played "Ruffles and Flourishes," the Vietnamese National Anthem, and the "Star-Spangled Banner," General Abrams moved forward, and, after the citation was read, pinned the award on the Blackhorse Brigade captain.

In his concluding remarks, General Abrams said, "It was a

tremendous citation and a tremendous performance by Captain Mace.

"Whatever we do in Vietnam is dependent upon individuals. Teamwork is, of course, important, but in the end, it is the conviction, the heart, the courage, and the faith of individual men who persevere. My congratulations to Captain Mace and to the 1st Air Cavalry Division."

## 1/9 Crew Saves Chopper, Fly Sideways, Get DFC

By SP4 Richard Craig

TAY NINH — As Brigadier General Frank Meszar, assistant division commander, presented the Distinguished Flying Cross to the three aviators, a look of disbelief could still be seen on the face of Major Frederick N. Olson, the troop commander.

"I still can't believe they brought that chopper down safely," said the major, who commands Troop A, 1st Squadron, 9th Cavalry. "It's really incredible."

Although the cards were stacked against them on that fateful day, they brought the chopper down after flying two and one half miles — sideways.

As First Lieutenant David M. Stegall, and his crew flew a scout mission 10 miles north of here, they drew heavy automatic weapons fire from a well-entrenched enemy force below. As he tried to evade the enemy fire, rounds or shrapnel not only hit each member of the crew, but severed the fore and aft cyclic push-pull lever, causing the chopper to lurch in and out of the tree line, narrowly averting a collision with the triple canopy jungle.

Despite their injuries, the crew immediately swung into action, saving their chopper, an OH-6A observation helicopter. Sweat poured from 1LT Ste-

gall's face as he wrestled for control of the chopper, finally compensating for its shaking action by increasing lateral thrust, or forcing the chopper to fly sideways.

Meanwhile, the crew-chief, Specialist Four Larry Kempers, began throwing unnecessary gear and ordnance from the chopper in anticipation of a forced landing, while the observer, Sergeant John K. Binegar, sprayed machine gun fire at the enemy positions below.

Suddenly a break appeared in the treeline, and a "clearing" could be seen. Landing a chopper under ordinary conditions in a field covered with six-foot high elephant grass and ten-foot tall stumps is no easy task. But how do you land it when your flying on your side, still trying to maintain control?

If 1LT Stegall's confidence was shaken, it certainly didn't show as he landed the chopper without further injury or damage, and breathed a heavy sigh of relief.

Shortly afterwards, both the crew and the tiny chopper were evacuated to Tay Ninh, where the men related their story to somewhat skeptical ears.

But their story was true, as any helicopter mechanic who saw the chopper can tell you. And for their action, the crew was given an impact award of the Distinguished Flying Cross.



(U.S. Army Photo By SP4 George Vindedzis)

## Honored Captain

CPT James E. Mace (left), assistant S-3 of the Blackhorse Brigade, accepts the Distinguished Service Cross from General Creighton Abrams, MACV commander, during recent ceremonies at Lai Khe.

## Know Your Army Bennies

New and expanded programs of benefits and privileges appear for the first time in the newly published "Handbook on Retirement Services for Army Personnel and Their Families."

Army retirees and other interested persons may purchase this handbook for \$1.75 from the Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C. 20402. Orders are now being accepted for this informative booklet.

## Mortars

(Continued from Pg. 1) hours, the small platoon fired over 1,100 rounds at the enemy positions, breaking the back of his main elements and forcing him to flee.

Shortly after that, elements of the 2nd Bn, 5th Cav moved to LZ Terry, where they again encountered the enemy, inflicting severe losses.

"When our mortar platoon arrived at Terry," said Captain Dennis D. Poppel, "the enemy used to fire at the LZ with three 82mm tubes. By the time we left, he was down to one tube and only dared to fire one round at a time for fear of detection."

The amount of firepower put out by the platoon is enormous. During one recent month, it amounted to the equivalent of one round of fire every three and one-half minutes, day and night, over a 30-day period.

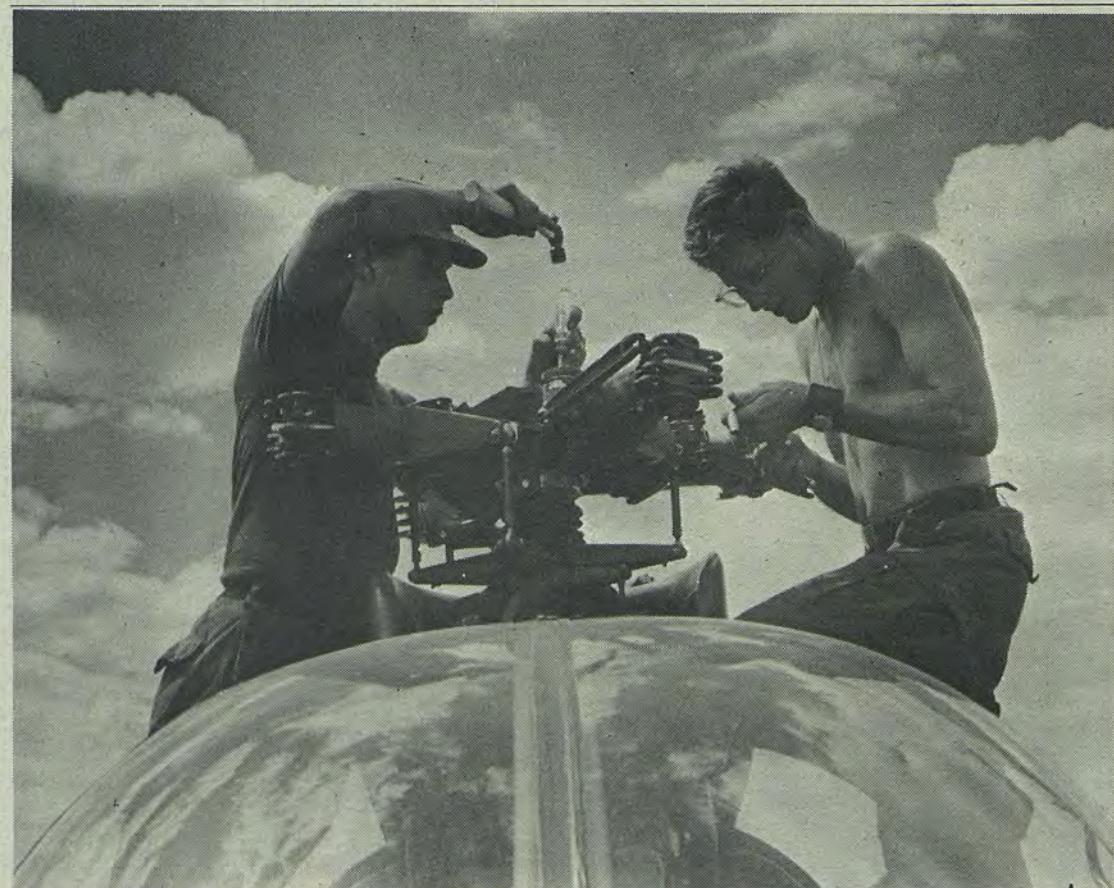
Why does the unit rely so heavily on the 81mm mortar?

"Because the mortar is a fine weapon for this type of war," said PSG Boothe. "You just can't beat it. The way the VC and NVA operate is sort of a hit and run thing. As long as we can outsmart him and outshoot him, we've got him beat."

"I don't feel there is any weapon that can hurt him more than the mortar. He fires mortars at us from well behind the tree-line, and consequently, our mortars are the weapons best suited to do the same to him."

An example of the effectiveness of the radar-mortar combination occurred the night of April 12th at LZ Jess.

"I detected about eight individuals moving," said Specialist Four Roger Schliecher, "moving from the northeast towards our perimeter. I called down to the mortar pits on our phone and within two minutes they were placing rounds exactly where I called for them. The movement ceased on our screen, and we didn't pick up another thing all night."



Tap! Tap! Tap!

PFC Craig H. Thornburg (left) and SP4 Sidney Blythe, aircraft repair specialists with the 15th TC Bn, replace the rotor head on a LOH.

