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1st Air Cavalry Division

November 19, 1969

Increased Fighting

Enemy Losses Climb; Highest in 2 Months

PHUOC VINH — Air Cavalrymen inflicted the heaviest losses on the enemy in two months during the last week in October while friendly casualties continued to decline.

Helicopters from the 1st Squadron, 9th Cavalry, again saw most of the action as the 1st Cav led all divisions in the number of enemy killed during the month.

A 13-ton rice cache was found by Bravo Company, 2nd Battalion, 12th Cavalry, 12 miles northeast of Song Be. The 120 bags of rice were lifted out that day by Cav helicopters and distributed to Vietnamese citizens in the Song Be area.

In the biggest action of the week, Bravo Troop, 1st Squadron, 9th Cavalry, killed 41 enemy in a day-long air-to-ground duel near Song Be.

A hunter-killer team initially made contact at 9:10 a.m. when it spotted and killed three NVA seven miles southwest of the Provincial capital. Four more enemy were killed an hour later in the same area then the team moved their surveillance to an area six miles northwest of Song Be. Here the team hit the jackpot.

At 4 p.m. that afternoon the team spotted 15 NVA in the open and killed five before they could

seek cover in the jungle. Artillery and jet air strikes were then called in on that location.

Remaining on station, the scout helicopter succeeded in drawing fire, pinpointing a large enemy concentration. Artillery and air strikes again combined with Cobra gunships to pound the area until dusk. A search of the battleground revealed 29 more enemy killed in the fight.

That same afternoon Alpha Troop, 1st Squadron, 9th Cavalry, killed eight NVA in an area 20 miles northwest of Tay Ninh. In the sporadic four-hour battle Cobra gunships and air strikes engaged enemy in three separate bunker complexes.

Charlie troop was also quite active during the week killing 21 enemy in an afternoon battle 25 miles northeast of Tay Ninh. After the initial duel, artillery and jet air strikes were called in on the bunker complex, complete with tin hooches, killing 10 more enemy.

In ground action Alpha Company, 1st Battalion, 12 Cavalry, killed 11 NVA in a series of early morning skirmishes 12 miles north of Tay Ninh.

"It was some way to wake up," said PFC Dennis Butler. "Early in the morning we took some mortars and a couple of guys got their air mattresses

shot up by AK's, but luckily no one was hurt."

Following the mortar attack, two platoons of the company fanned out to sweep the area and encountered light enemy resistance. Later that morning Alpha Company made contact again, bringing their toll for the day to 11 kills. The Air Cavalrymen lost three air mattresses.

The 1st Cav killed 231 enemy during the week. Four Skytroopers were killed and 17 wounded.

28 Enemy Killed

Rangers Tune Out NVA

TAY NINH — A NVA balladeer's final performance ended on a sour note when the 1st Cav pulled the final curtain down on 25 of the audience in a four hour battle 18 miles northeast of Tay Ninh.

Prowling through the jungle on a recon mission, Ranger Team 43 suddenly stopped as a high-pitched voice belted a song through the undergrowth before them.

"We were in an area where the NVA had heavily traveled

Clean That Ammo . . .



(U.S. Army Photo by SP4 Borchester)

A Skytrooper of D Company, 1st Battalion, 12 Cavalry, cleans off an 82mm mortar round found in an arms cache near FSB Grant. The cache, determined to be a major enemy supply depot, also included cases of picks and shovels.

trails when we heard loud singing and talking down the trail," said Specialist Four John Shupe, assistant team leader for the Company H, 75th Infantry (Ranger) operation.

"Both NVA had AK-47s and started firing back as soon as we opened up on them," said SP4 Shupe. "We got both of them but they hit our radio antenna so we had some trouble making contact with the rear for support."

Shortly before noon, the band of Rangers got some help from the Blues from Troop C, 1st Squadron of the 9th Cav, who combat assaulted into the area during a lull in the ground battle.

Leading point for the Blues, Specialist Four John Harrell was one of the first men to receive fire from the NVA hidden in the undergrowth. Enemy rifles blazing, SP4 Harrell crawled to a wounded machine gun-

ner, grabbed his weapon and poured accurate fire into the enemy locations — killing seven NVA.

The enemy finally broke contact shortly after 3 p.m. and a resupply bird from the 9th Cav was called in to drop ammo to the grounded cavalrymen. Piloting the Huey, 9th Cav Commander Major Robert N. Tredway hovered his helicopter above the battle site to drop the needed ammunition while the retreating enemy poured 20 rounds of small arms fire into the helicopter. Three more enemy were killed with Cobra rockets while they tried to down the 9th Cav commander's helicopter, making a total of 28 kills in the battle.

For their heroic actions under fire, Major Tredway and Specialist Harrell received the Silver Star in impact award ceremonies two days after the action.

1st Brigade Assists Tay Ninh High School

By CPT William Shelton

TAY NINH—Thousands of dollars worth of power tools and a power source will soon be operational at the Tay Ninh Technical High School because of a recent civic action project initiated by the 1st Cav's 1st Brigade.

The project was undertaken after coordination with school principal, Ngo Van Chang, by Lieutenant Colonel John B. Norvell, 1st Brigade deputy commander, and Major Harry J. Bacas, civil affairs officer.

"During our visit to the school we found over a quarter of a million dollars worth of equipment," said Major Bacas. "Included were a 104 kilowatt diesel generator, and assortment of power tools of every imaginable type, and complete wiring and lighting fixtures for the entire building."

The equipment was still in crates and the school needed technical assistance to put the generator into operation and install the electrical wiring and fixtures.

Generator mechanics from HHC, 1st Brigade, with assistance from Tay Ninh Pacific Architects and Engineers, were charged with putting the generator in operation. Also, personnel from the sheet metal shop of the 229th Assault Helicopter Battalion contributed by preparing fuel line fittings for the generator.

"The project will be finalized with installation of electrical wiring and fixtures by the Philippine Civic Action Group (PHILCAGV)," added Major Bacas.



(U.S. Army Photo by SP4 Bill Ahrbeck)

Children from a nearby village march along with 1st Air Cavalrymen from the 1st Battalion, 8th Cavalry, on patrol near Fire Support Base Ellen.

Rat Patrol . . .



(U.S. Army Photo by SP5 Terry Moon)
SGT Jesse Denham of Troop D, 1st Squadron, 9th Cavalry watches the jungle carefully during a joint operation with the 3rd Battalion, 9th ARVN Division.

Pot May Be a Bad Trip

The American soldier in Vietnam has easy access to a type of unprocessed marijuana even more potent than the "Acapulco Gold" found in the States. Unlike the marijuana back in the world, however, the Southeast Asian variety is a hallucinogen — a mind-expanding drug — that can cause both physical and psychological damage.

The technical name for the plant from which all marijuana preparations are derived is *Cannabis sativa*. The cannabis plant is native to large areas of the world, and is grown abundantly in Vietnam. Its fibers have been used for the manufacture of twine, rope, bags, clothing and paper. Marijuana has also been tried in the treatment of a variety of medical disorders, but all of these medical uses were found to be unsound, inefficient, or without any predictable effect.

For this reason marijuana has been removed from the official medical drug lists of nearly every country.

Little is known about the long-term effects of marijuana use. In its mildest form, marijuana does not appear to be physically dangerous. However, the effects of marijuana, caused by chem-

ical ingredients called tetrahydrocannabinols (THC), vary with the individual.

A given dosage of THC may have no apparent ill effects on one person but may have pronounced effects on another person. You cannot be certain that even a mild form or dose of marijuana is totally safe for you.

The consumption of marijuana produces a variety of immediate mental and physical effects which become more pronounced with chronic use. The 1965 report on Drug Dependence for the World Health Organization describes some of these effects. They include distortion of sensation and perception, impaired judgment and memory, distorted emotional responses, irritability and confusion.

Other effects, which may show up after repeated use of marijuana include illusions and delusions which make individuals inclined to antisocial behavior, anxiety and aggressiveness and sleep disturbance.

While he is under the influence of marijuana, the individual's concepts of time and space can be radically distorted. His response to emergency situations can be unpredictable, and in

Vietnam this can cost lives. Life may have its dull moments but it also has its crises. At these sudden and unexpected times, a person who is "high" is not sharp enough to depend upon.

Another important reason for not using "pot" stems from its being against Federal law to use or possess. The penalties for a first offense can be as much as 10 years in a penitentiary and a \$20,000 fine.

The possession, use or sale of marijuana is likewise a violation of the Uniform Code of Military Justice, punishable by court-martial and up to five years in prison. Administratively, the U.S. Government may also impose and collect a tax of \$100 for each ounce or fraction thereof possessed.

Charlie's Wheels . . .



(U.S. Army Photo by SP4 Bob Borchester)
PFC Louis Rosales carries one of several bicycles found in a cache by the men of Company D, 1st Battalion, 12th Cavalry, during an operation near FSB Grant. "I guess Charlie can't afford Hondas," he joked.

...For God And Country

By Chaplain (LTC) Charles F. Powers
Division Chaplain

Do you know someone who is in trouble? Maybe it's a friend or a hootchmate. Maybe the trouble is depression, loneliness, or frustration. NOW is the time he needs your friendship. It's easy to be friendly toward someone who is happy and in a good mood, but it is more important to show friendship and concern for someone else when he's "on the bottom."

In the Broadway play *Raisin In The Sun*, there is a most powerful scene which describes what true awareness is. The mother speaks to the daughter after the son has lost the hard-earned money which was to make the down payment on the home that would lift them from the slums:

"There's always something left to love—and if you ain't learned that, you ain't learned nothing. Have you cried for that boy today? I don't mean for yourself or for the family because we lost the money. I mean for him. What's he been through and what has it done for him?"

"Child, when do you believe it's time to love somebody? It's when he's at his lowest and cannot believe in himself because the world won't let him. When you start measuring somebody, measure him right, Child, measure him right. Be sure you take into account what hills and valleys he's gone through before he got to where he is."

Water, Salt Combat Tropical Heat Injury

The heat is one of the hard facts of life in Vietnam, and it can kill you if you aren't careful. Heat exhaustion, heat stroke, heat rash and sunburn can be avoided if you are careful. Heat stroke is the most dangerous of these injuries and may be fatal.

The two most important ways to prevent becoming a heat casualty are to be sure to drink enough water and take extra salt. Approximately six to eight quarts of water per day per man should be available to troops engaged in tactical operations.

Heavy salting of food at mealtime is the best way to get extra salt. However, in prolonged hot weather and when doing prolonged hard work, salt in your drink is necessary.

The most serious heat injury, heat stroke, is recognizable because the casualty will normally have red, dry, hot, non-sweating skin, may be unconscious or delirious, and in some cases, may have convulsions. Steps should be taken at once to lower the victim's body temperature. This can be done by removing the victim's clothing, pouring water over him and fanning. If available, cold water or ice should be used.

Heat exhaustion, which results from salt and water depletion shows symptoms of wet, pale skin. If the casualty is conscious, give him water containing two ground up salt tablets per canteen.

For heat rash, wash with soap and water, and expose the rash to the air, but not to direct sunlight. Try to wear clean clothes and keep the skin dry and clean. Also, increase your fluid intake.



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Share Alike . . .



(U.S. Army Photo by SP4 Bill Ahrbeck)
First Air Cavalrymen, Sergeants Pat Byrne (left) and James Bond, of the 1st Battalion 8th Cavalry, share their chow with two Vietnamese Regional Force members on a joint operation near Fire Support Base Ellen.

Rice, Tool Kit Shipments Help Refugee Population

FSB BUTTONS — An average of 25 tons of rice a week is airlifted from the 1st Cav's Fire Support Base Buttons to the refugee population of Phuoc Long Province.

A transportation project of the Cav's 2nd Brigade, 80 tons of rice have been shipped to the district capitals of Bo Duc and Duc Phong in three weeks. Four tons of tool kits, containing mostly farm tools, have also been donated.

One of the primary goals of the pacification program in Phuoc Long Province is elimination of refugees—those persons who have been forced out of their homes either by Viet Cong activity or by government relocation in order to provide secure living conditions.

Before an individual can be removed from the refugee rolls he is provided with a six month

supply of rice as well as some building materials and tools.

In Phuoc Long Province, which is the largest province in the III Corps area, there are few roads connecting the far flung villages. Although the Province Chief and his refugee advisor could provide the rice, they had no means of transporting it to the districts for distribution. That's where 1st Cav airmobility takes over.

"All we really had to do was go through our channels to get the aircraft," said Captain Tim Desiderie, assistant logistics officer for the Blackhorse Brigade. "The Vietnamese brought most of the rice up by convoy from Saigon, guarded it here on the airstrip at FSB Buttons, and broke it down into packages for distribution."

Ten tons of rice and a ton of tool kits were transported by Chinooks to Bo Duc in the north-

ern part of the province. The airstrip at Duc Phong made it possible for 70 tons of rice and three tons of tools to be taken in by C-130, which can carry over three times as much cargo as a Chinook.

"With these shipments, the goal of getting all the refugees in the province supplied is being accomplished," said Captain Michael W. Griffith, the brigade S-5.

Queer John Bait Enemy Gunners

By PFC Robert Hackney

TAY NINH — The men call it "Queer John," this much shot at 1st Cav helicopter with its uncanny ability to stay in the air under the most adverse conditions.

"Our mission is reconnaissance," said the Light Observation Helicopter's pilot, Warrant Officer Stephen Collinsworth. "But often we end up serving as bait. Sometimes getting fired at is the only way you can tell if the enemy is around."

The bird lifted gently off the ground, its body vibrating as the engine generated 10,000 rpms. Queer John floated down the runway, banked to the left and rose to 1,000 feet.

The radio broke in on the 1st Squadron, 9th Cavalry LOH. Company D, 2nd Battalion, 7th Cavalry was in contact nearby. It was no longer a routine scout mission.

The ground unit popped smoke as the LOH and Cobra gunship team drew near. Banking hard

right, Queer John went into a dive and circled at 200 feet for a better look.

The initial search drew no enemy fire and the Cobra circling high above contacted the ground unit. "We've got rockets up here if you need them."

"Thanks a lot," the unit's commander said. "Go ahead. We've got four dead NVA so far, but there's more around."

Queer John moved out of the way and the Cobra rolled hot on the enemy location. The LOH moved back to check out the area, circling again just above the trees. With his fuel running low and no enemy sightings, the LOH broke station and headed back to Tay Ninh.

"One day I flew seven or eight missions, and was in the air for hours. I was so tired, all I could do was fall into bed," the pilot said.

Just then a head leaned out of the operations bunker.

"Crank it up in zero-five."

The afternoon was just beginning for Queer John.

Boonie Scare Bath

By 1Lt Hugh Miller, Jr.

FSB MARY—Skytrooper gun bunnies of Battery A, 1st Battalion, 21st Artillery, had just gotten "End of Mission" from the Fire Direction Center, and began policing up the expended 105mm cannisters tossed aside during the firing.

A Huey "slick" circled lazily overhead, then drifted down to tree top level for a short final approach to the VIP pad. As it skimmed low past the howitzer crews, a couple of men noticed two of the chopper's passengers.

The cry went up, and moments later the whole battery was cheering, whistling and yelling, "Donut Dollies!" "USO Girls!"

Then the cheers were replaced by groans and frantic waving at one man. There, just inside the perimeter berm, and completely unaware of the visitors, was Specialist Four Jim Church, busily taking a shower.

Church just grinned and continued to lather up. "The shower is right next to a generator," he said later. "I couldn't hear what the guys were saying."

Whatever the chopper set down for with its precious cargo, the men of Battery never discovered. As they stood by their howitzers in disappointment, the ship lifted off and headed away from the firebase.

Sadly turning back to their work, the men spotted SP4 Church, now drying off after his hower. "Guess I scared them off, huh guys?" he asked sheepishly.

Checking for Charlie . . .



(U.S. Army Photo by PFC Jim McCabe)
The "Rat Patrol"—D Troop, 1st Squadron, 9th Cavalry—and the Phuoc Long Province National Police check sampans and passengers for contraband and proper identification along the Song Be River.

Tactic 'Intercept' Checks Waterways

FSB BUTTONS, Vietnam—The "Rat Patrol"—D Troop, 1st Squadron, 9th Cavalry—and four members of the Phuoc Long Province National Police moved out from Fire Support Base Buttons.

They set up a checkpoint at a site along the Song Be River and positioned mortar tubes to control traffic flow on the river. Then, they waited.

"Operation Intercept" was in effect.

Similar checkpoints are being positioned along the roads and other major transportation routes. Vehicles, sampans and passengers are stopped by the National Police and checked for contraband and proper identification before they are allowed to move on, decreasing the movement of unauthorized personnel and supplies.

For Delta Company, the day's operation was routine. Only one of the men stopped could not produce his ID card. The man's wife, however, watching from the opposite bank quickly ran home and found the card. Man and sampan were then allowed to pass.

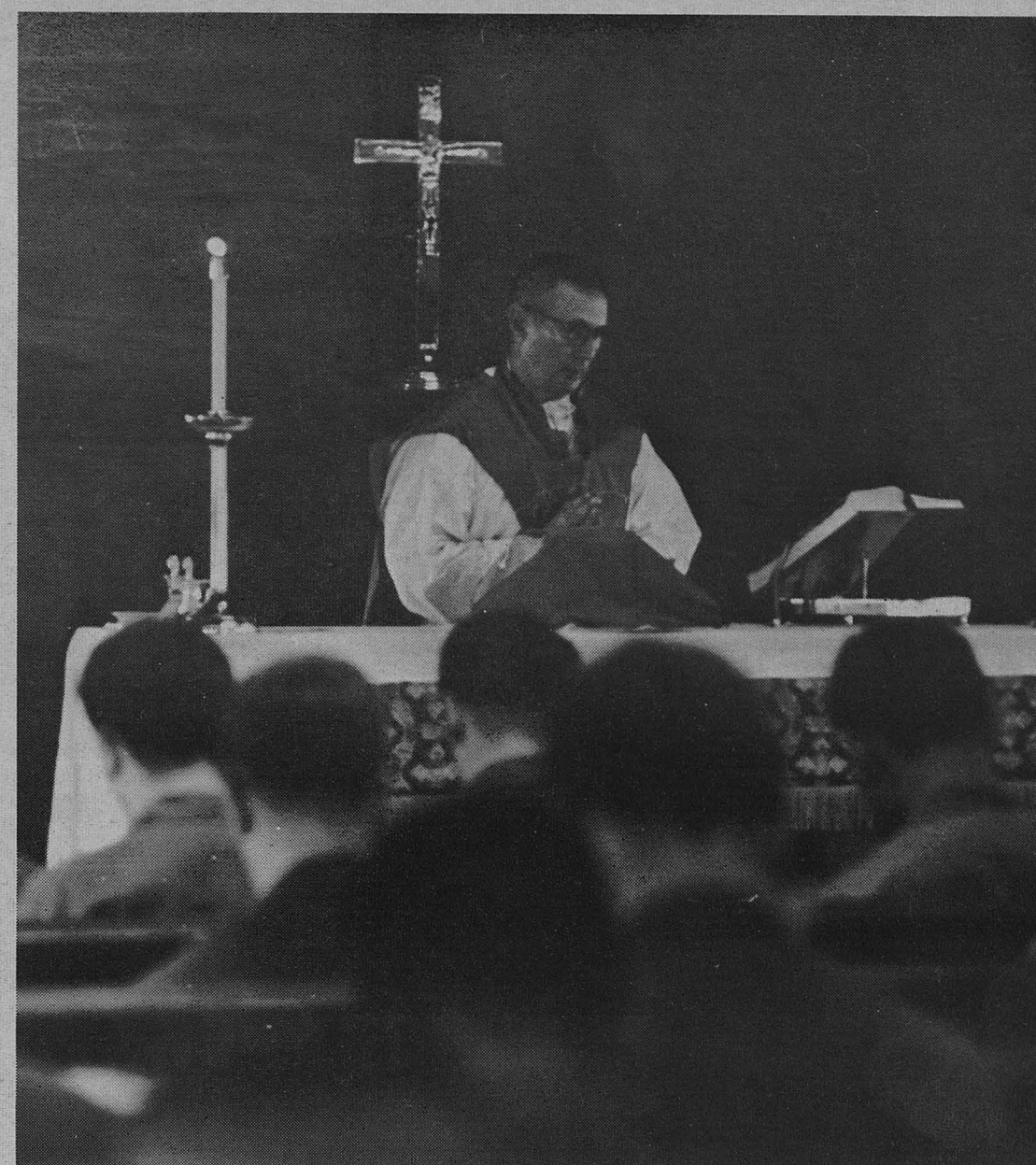
Although the checkpoint operations are unable to cover all routes at all times, they keep the enemy uneasy never knowing when another route for resupply or movement may be closed to him.



Chaplain (CPT) James M. Brennan brings Catholic Mass to Company D, 5th Battalion, 7th Cavalry, surrounded by the bamboo forests of the Cav's area of operations.



Chaplain (MAJ) Henry L. Hunt instructs a class in the dominant Vietnamese religions during a retreat held for the men of the Support Command.



Division Chaplain (LTC) Charles F. Powers leads Mass at the 1st Air Cavalry Division Chapel.

Travelling Cav Chaplains Bring Church to Boonies

PHUOC VINH—He can't match Division Artillery or ARA for firepower, but the "support" the chaplain provides to 1st Air Cavalrymen is often the most vital offered in the war zone.

The chaplain is in Vietnam to give the soldier strength in his faith and spiritual guidance, to provide counsel and aid him in worship.

To accomplish this mission, the Army chaplain often goes to extraordinary lengths, reaching the combat soldier in the most remote areas, providing a hand for those who need one. Long hours are spent traveling from service to service.

There are 24 chaplains in the 1st Air Cavalry Division. The division chaplain is Lieutenant Colonel Charles F. Powers.

The American fighting man always has access

to these men who know and understand a soldier's spiritual needs. One example of the chaplain's willingness to get out in the field with the grunt is Chaplain (CPT) Claude Newby.

Chaplain Newby spent six months with a line company. Given a choice of rear area jobs, he selected the airmobile 1st Squadron, 9th Cavalry. His "rear area" assignment still keeps him in the field most of the week.

Another example of chaplain activities is the series of retreats held for men of the Support Command. One day was accorded each of the Protestant, Catholic, and Jewish faiths. Entitled "Duty Day With God," each retreat involved searching discussion and worship. The project was so successful that plans are being made for another series, hopefully by Christmas.

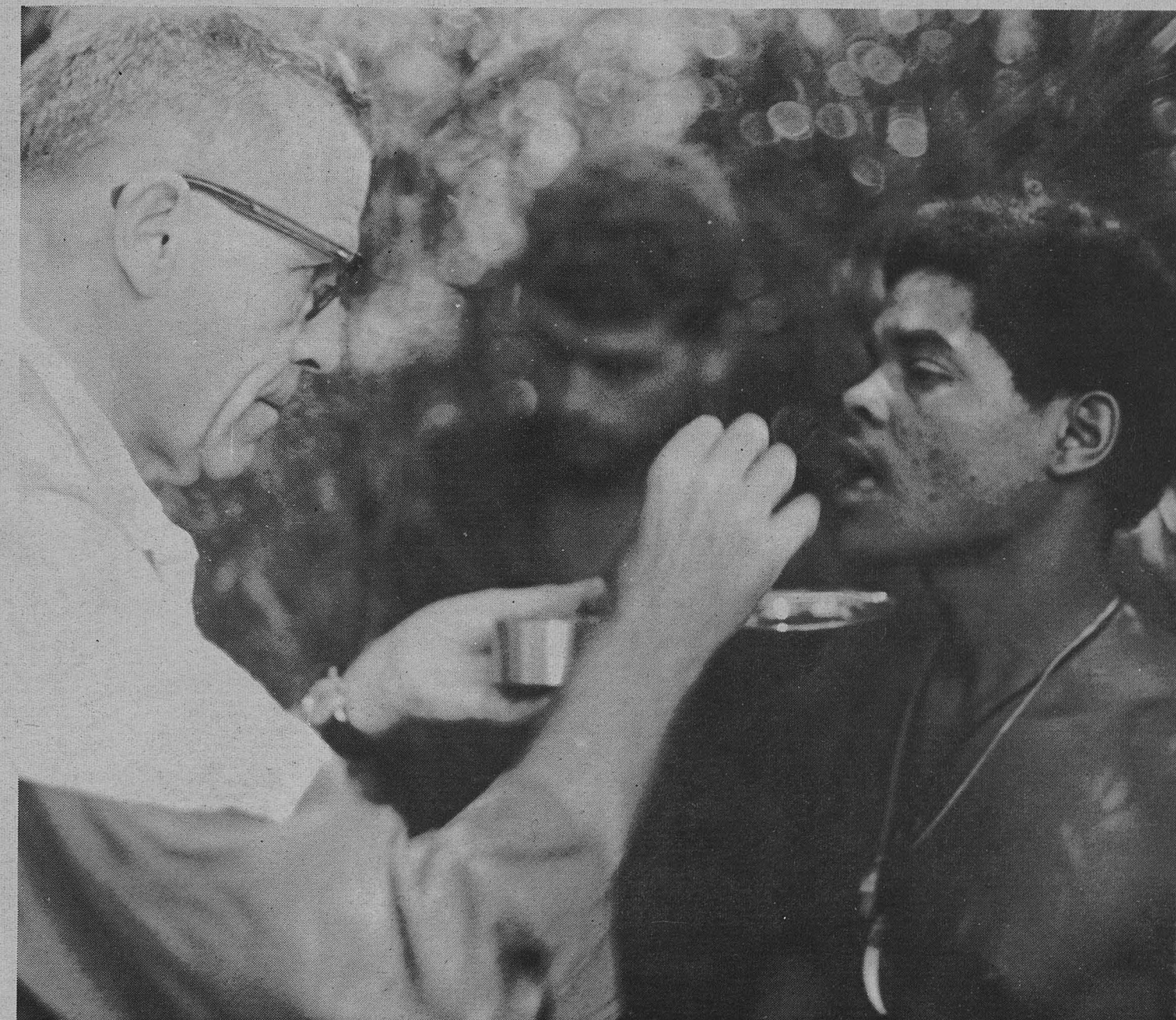


In the field everything is done informally. Chaplain (CPT) James Thompson adapts in method to take the message to Skytroopers isolated by terrain.

Cavalair Staff Photos



Division Artillery Chaplain (MAJ) Charles H. Hosutt leads a discussion with men manning one of the 1st Cav's 105's.



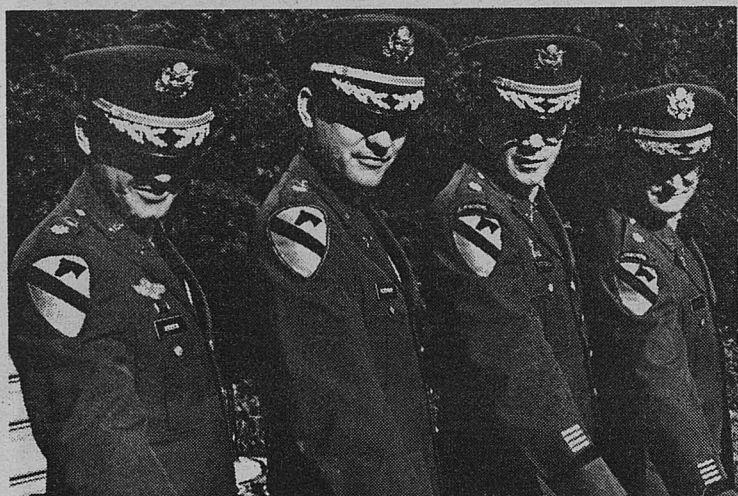
Man and his religion are inseparable even in the jungles of Vietnam. Chaplain (MAJ) Peter T. Farrelly regularly visits Skytroopers in the field.



Snake of the Week

This week's entry in the Cavalair Snake-of-the-Month Contest comes from Company A, 2nd Battalion, 12th Cavalry. Their nominee: An 18 foot boa-constrictor. The snake was encountered during an operation in the area around Fire Support Base Don. The snake was cut open by a Kit Carson Scout, and disclosed a 60 pound deer. Can any unit top that?

Cav Vets Head ROTC



Half of the University of Delaware ROTC instructors wear the 1st Cav patch from previous tours with the FIRST TEAM. Showing off their patches on campus are Senior Instructor MAJ Don Munson (left), Junior Instructor MAJ Frederick Roeming, Sophomore Instructor MAJ Chester Steckel and Freshman Instructor MAJ Charles Raymond. Majors Munson and Roeming served with the 1st Battalion, 77th Artillery while Majors Steckel and Raymond were assigned with the 2nd Battalion, 19th Artillery.

Skytroopers on TV

FSB ELLEN—For most of the Skytroopers in the 1st Battalion, 8th Cavalry on FSB Ellen it was their first chance to appear in a television series.

Mr. Gilbert Williams, Staff Director of the Army Pictorial Center, and his chief cameraman, Staff Sergeant Thomas Jordan, were on the firebase filming for the television program THE BIG PICTURE.

The series they were working on, which tentatively will be called, "The Might of the Pen," deals with the Military History Detachment and is primarily concerned with the role of the Army combat artist. They filmed Company A being extracted back to the firebase and worked with the Army's 9th Combat Artist Team as they made sketches of the men carrying out their various duties.

2000 Letters to GIs

Apparently inspired by sympathy for U.S. soldiers in Vietnam who have little mail from home, a letter from a woman in Pennsylvania arrived at the Cavalair quarters recently. It was addressed simply "To a Soldier in Vietnam."

For any Skytrooper wanting a faithful pen-pal in the world, Miss Edith Erb may be an unexpected blessing. She claims to have written some 2,000 such letters. Wishing to "give great praise to all of you for the fine job you are doing," she regrets that no one has written her back for some time.

Anyone wishing to write Miss Erb should address their letters to her at RD 1, York Haven, Pennsylvania 17370.

Cav Reunites Friends

PHUOC VINH—Staff Sergeant Donald W. Reed was surprised, as he walked into the Division Tactical Operations Center for his first day on the job with the FIRST TEAM, to see an old friend sitting behind a desk.

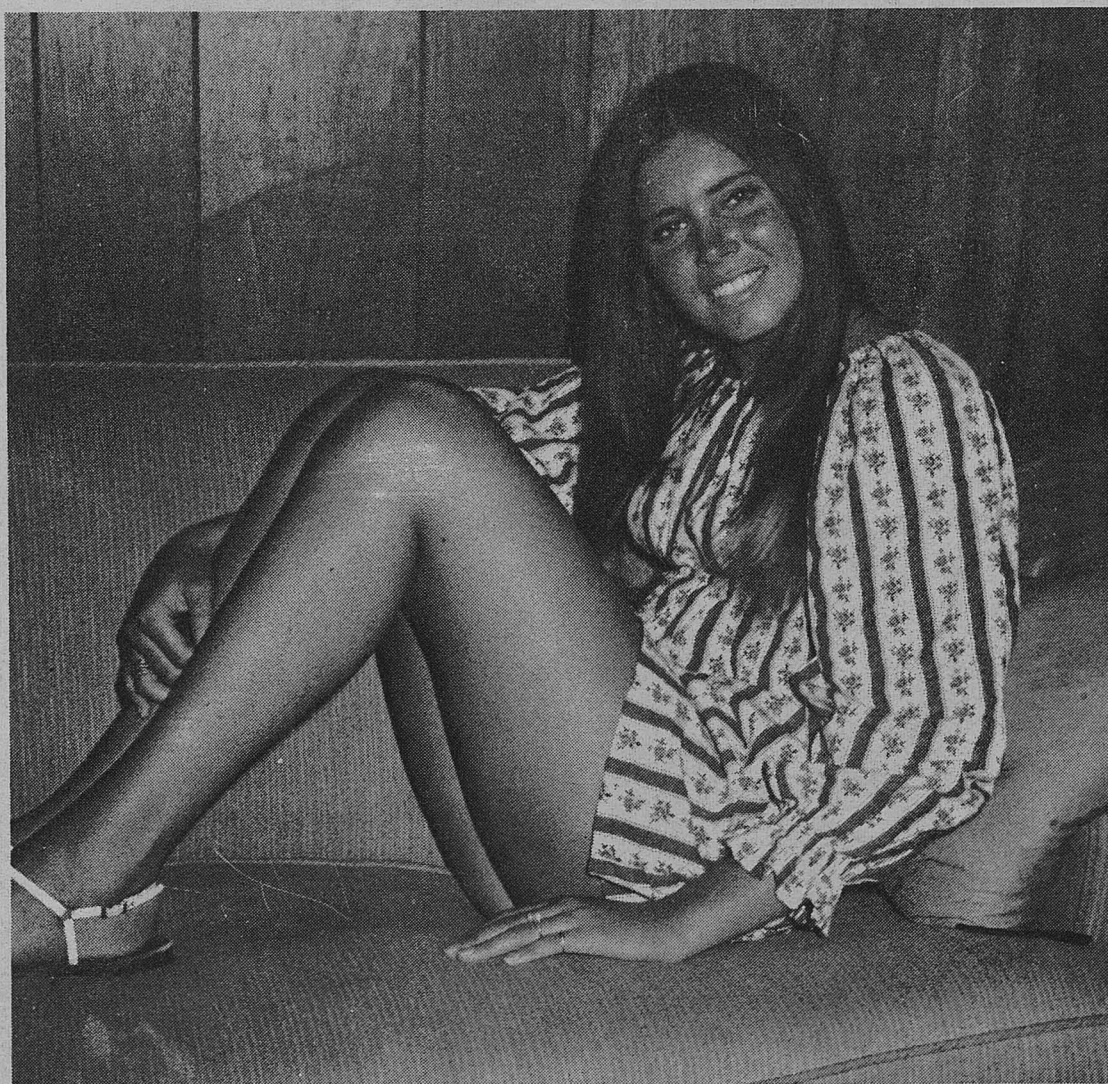
Staff Sergeant Roger D. Brandt and SSG Reed, who work for the division's G-3 section, were stationed together during their previous tours in Vietnam in 1967. Oddly enough, on their previous tours they were stationed in Phuoc Vinh, then the headquarters of the 1st Brigade of the 1st Infantry Division.

Two for One . . .



Number 1 Girl

Here's Pat Wright getting ready to start the race that occurs each time a Skytrooper gets home from Vietnam, the race to the nearest girl friend and good times . . .



Number 2 Girl

and here's pretty Sue Cavett, a Hawaii mainland coed who works for one of Honolulu's escort services which provide—for a fee—R&R or leave Skytroopers with an accompanied night on the town. There are women waiting all over "the world" for your safe return, men. So take your malaria pills, watch your step and go home the same as you came.

MUD—The Grunt's Legacy

PHUOC VINH—Mud. Oozing, red, grey, gummy M-U-D!

Every grunt from the Ardennes to War Zone C has fought it. He's discussed and cursed it, but he's lived with it because it's another legacy of being a grunt.

1st Air Cavalrymen are finding no more relief from this legacy for being airmobile. In fact, many of them have become quite expert at living with it and in it. Some are even getting used to it.

The monsoon rains of South Vietnam's III Corps, the present home of the 1st Air Cavalry Division, has its own special breed of mud, named by the French in earlier days "Terra Rouge" or Red Mud. In the huge rubber plantation area of Binh Long Province, this stuff that dyes your skin,

clothes and letters home a dingy reddish hue can not be avoided.

Like his counterpart in World War I and World War II, the grunt of Vietnam laughs at his own predicament and finds ways to cope with it.

"Put your boot into a sandbag, tie it at the top and your feet are mud proof and even a little bit waterproof," explained one grunt.

"Yeah, it's great if you don't mind looking like the demon from the black lagoon stomping around in two muddy sandbags," replied his buddy.

But then there are those who are more atuned to nature who do their own thing by taking off the sandbags and their boots. In bare feet, they just pretend it's another Woodstock happening.



Many Air Cavalrymen have become quite expert at living with mud, and often times in it.



Mud. Oozing, red, grey, gummy M U D!

Photos By
PFC Robert Sharp



A Skytrooper tries to keep at least one part of his body clean and out of the sea of mud that soaks his feet.



A stubborn 1st Air Cav mule plows its way through the mire of red mud at the Cav's Quan Loi basecamp.

THEY COVER the CAV

LIFE **The New York Times** **CBS** **TIME** **Newsweek** **UPI**

By SP5 Joe Kamalick

Craig Spence, reporter and TV commentator for ABC News in Vietnam, sat at his desk beneath a large window — criss-crossed with masking tape against the shock of bomb blasts — which overlooks Tu Do Street and the Vietnamese General Assembly Building with its freshly patched tin roof.

"Why write a story about me?" asked the 28-year-old Spence. "There are more interesting things, you know." With that he launched into his favorite topic: helicopters and the men who fly them.

"The two most impressive things about this war are the development of the helicopter as an airborne fire platform, and the other is the esprit among the pilots and gunners."

In reporting for ABC, Spence has had the opportunity to see

every branch of service in Vietnam in action — from the heat and mud of the infantry to the more removed and antiseptic war of the Air Force jets and bombers.

"Army pilots have the best esprit of any I've seen," said Spence. "Their esprit is better because the Army pilots have more contact with the enemy than any of the others."

"The Army proved the worth of the helicopter in this war," he said, "but they never measure the guts of the pilots. It is the pilots who make the game what it is."

While awed by the gunship and slick pilots who daily come face to face with enemy gunners, Spence knows the whole story of the Army air war in Vietnam. He knows that the better part of it is fought quietly and without glamour in hundreds of hangars.

C. Spence
ABC

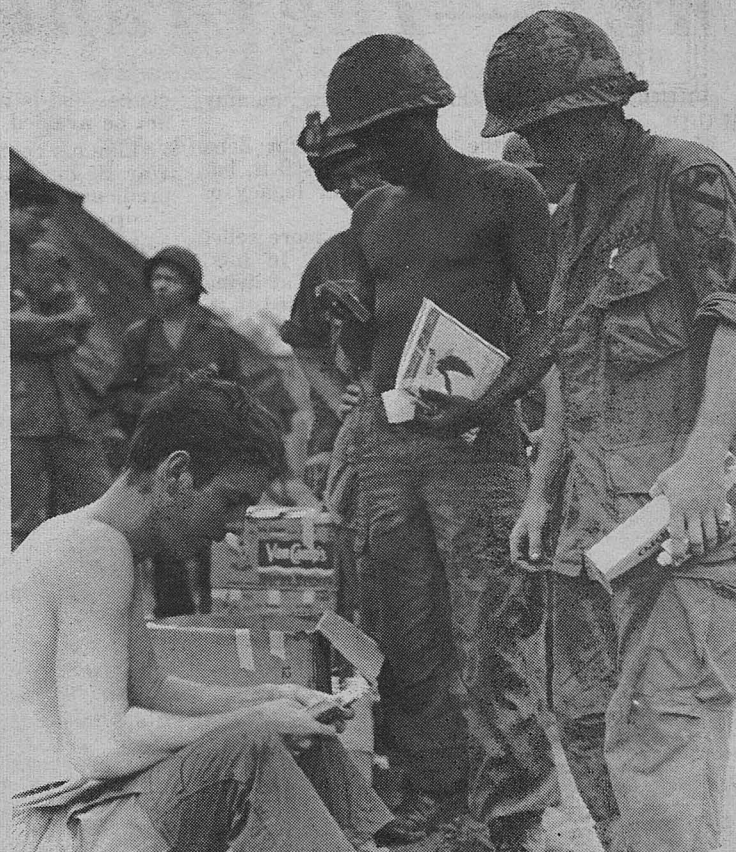
"The maintenance is amazing," said Spence. "The people who keep these aircraft flying are the unsung heroes of the war. But for them there would be a lot more aircraft falling out of the sky."

"The helicopter has made the cost of this war much cheaper than it might have been," he said. "Can you imagine what it would have cost in men and time to keep all of the roads open and secure so the firebases could be supplied by truck?"

Spence did get away from helicopters long enough to comment that "this is the only war where there has never been press censorship. They (the military) present their point of view, but the newsman can still tell it the way he sees it."

And if you want to know more about Craig Spence, the reporter, you'll have to try to get him to stop talking about flying and pilots.

Goodies from the Sky . . .



(U.S. Army Photo) Skytroopers take advantage of the "Flying PX," a treasure-laden Huey helicopter that makes regular trips to 1st Cav firebases.

Former Viet Cong Urges Villagers to Flee Duc Bon

FSB BUTTONS—He obviously couldn't quite believe it was his own voice coming out of the whirring machine—but it was and hundreds of his fellow villagers would hear him.

Dinh Thong, a one-time VC guerrilla, rallied to the government of South Vietnam from the village of Duc Bon, located just south of Fire Support Base Mary, home of the 5th Battalion, 7th Cavalry.

Mail Call Dangerous For Mailmen

By SGT Ron Miller

TAY NINH — Danger lurks outside the window every day for mail clerks, 1st Air Cavalry Division.

"I've had my life threatened more as a mail clerk than I did when I was in the field," said Specialist Four Jim McGreevey, unit mail clerk. "A person not receiving any mail for even one day can become extremely dangerous."

At the time the mail is being sorted out in the small room, a gathering of mail hungry soldiers collects outside the distribution window. Such comments as "There had better be some mail for me" and "It's a good thing there's a door between us" echo in ears of mail clerks as they sort the day's delivery.

"After 3 p.m., it's danger time," said Specialist Four Gerard Jenkins, who shares the mail room with SP4 McGreevey. "At that time, people suspect that the mail is in and start banging on the door for it."

"Some people become highly suspicious of us when they receive no mail," he added. "They seem to think we've somehow managed to hide it from them."

Among the reasons he gave for his decision to rally was the **PSYOPS** broadcasts, blared from the sky by 1st Cav helicopters. And, according to the Hoi Chanh, the more effective tapes were those made by villagers who had rallied earlier.

Now it was Dinh Thong's turn.

First Lieutenant Michael J. Olenczuk, assistant civil affairs officer for the 2nd Brigade, asked for volunteers from a group of six ex-guerrillas, now at the Song Be Chieu Hoi Center. All six of the group were willing, but of the group, only Dinh Thong could read and write.

With Sergeant First Class Nguyen Van Cung, S-5 interpreter, Dinh Thong wrote out his brief message. "With some Hoi Chanh we suggest ideas to include in order to get across the complete message. In this case, he covered everything we feel is important in a tape such as this.

We didn't need to do a thing," said 1LT Olenczuk.

Although the message was short and pointed, it does give a picture of what is important to the Hoi Chanh, and an impression of VC propaganda.

Part of the message follows:

"My name is Dinh Thong and I belonged to the Duc Bon guerrillas. I Chieu Hoi'd. . . Now I know the Vietnamese Government and the American Army took very good care of me. The government gave me food, medical care and a place to sleep.

"I wasn't beaten for intelligence. It looks like the VC propaganda was wrong about Hoi Chanh being beaten. But now I call the people who are still controlled by the VC to try to get out and Chieu Hoi, for you will find freedom and happiness and build a new life, for yourself and families. Many Hoi Chanh over here are waiting for you. So hurry up and Chieu Hoi."

Hungry 'Claymore' One-Cat Rat Patrol

By PFC Barry Bjornson

FSB BUTTONS—Peering through the muted light of a dark perimeter bunker, the ultimate weapon in this type of war searches for the enemy.

Suddenly a flash of movement, followed by a squeal and then silence. Claymore has struck again.

But this weapon is strictly pro, not anti-personnel. Claymore is a cat that just hates rats.

About ten inches long, without her crooked tail, this vehement rat killer has been averaging three rats KIA per day at Fire Support Base Buttons, home of the Cav's 2nd Brigade.

Claymore was a gift from the villagers in nearby Song Be to the men of the Cav's 11th Aviation Group.

"She looks too small to be a real rat killer," explained Sergeant Clay Jordan, "but her size enables her to get into the small places where the rats are."

Because of the large dog population at the firebase a ready reaction force has been formed to prevent Claymore's demise.

"She could probably handle most of the dogs in the area," SGT Jordan said. "But we don't want her to forget who the real enemy is."



(U.S. Army Photo by SP5 Joe Kamalick) Craig Spence

MEDCAP Soothes Cough, Not Stomach

By SP4 William Block Jr.

TAY NINH — As a water buffalo grazed on the front lawn of the 19th century gilded Buddhist temple, the modern miracle of a MEDCAP was unfolding in the rear courtyard.

The people of Thai Phu hamlet gathered quickly as Captain Thomas L. Blake, surgeon for the 1st Battalion, 12th Cavalry, 1st Air Cavalry Division, and his Medical Civic Action Patrol hung their shingle for the day on the century old pagoda.

His patients for the day were mothers and sisters with small wide-eyed children — patiently waiting for their turn.

The first in line was a small boy with a bad cough. He explained his problem to interpreter Sergeant Le Tam. CPT

Blake prescribed some bright green cough medicine.

"Brightly-colored medicine is popular with these people," observed First Lieutenant William F. Shivers Jr.

One three-year-old boy had an abscess on his forehead. After the abscess was cut and drained, the boy clung tightly to his mother and sobbed. Then his big brother put a GI "boonie hat" on his head and off they went.

Many of the children remained in the courtyard, obviously avoiding the line, and hoping that the gifts wouldn't be restricted to pills and syrups. Their hopes were justified.

Another box was opened, but the kids were clearly disappointed. Instead of candy, they each received a cake of soap.