



FIRST IN VIETNAM

# THE OBSERVER

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## 4th Div Halts Enemy

596TH INF (USA) - In one of the sharpest clashes of the Cambodian operation, men of the 3rd Bn., under operational control of the 4th Inf Div., killed 47 NVA soldiers from distances as close as 15 meters.

The men of Company B engaged an estimated three companies of NVA soldiers in a heated firefight four miles east of Firebase Currahee in support of 1st Brigade operations. The commanding officer of Company B, Captain James N. Waybright of Williamstown, W. Va., said, "We spotted NVA soldiers in a village five or six clicks east of Firebase Currahee. As we closed in on them we noticed that the enemy were scattered at various distances from the perimeter of the village. My men were in close contact, about 15 to 20 meters from the enemy."

As Company B pulled their teams forward the NVA soldiers enveloped two of their platoons. A short time later, the first platoon began to penetrate the enemy encirclement.

"It seemed like everywhere we went, we ran into more NVA soldiers," was the way the fire team leader for the first platoon, Sergeant Ronald J. Leslie of Madison Heights, Mich., described the action. "During the firefight our platoon was secure. The NVA soldiers had our second and third platoons pinned down and we got a call to try and break up the enemy perimeter. We had to get the rest of the company out of there. We took fire as we went in and broke through the enemy line. Our platoon spent the rest of the night there until Company D came in the morning and got us out."

The pointman for the first platoon, Specialist 4 James E. Beatty of Livingston, Tenn., seemed to sum up the feelings of the men in the company when he said, "There's no doubt about it, every man out there was scared and we took our lumps, but even under the extremely difficult conditions I think we did the job. I know we killed quite a few of the enemy."

"The men put out 100 per cent," said Waybright. "No one ever backed up an inch. Guys that you think would never be heroes were just that - heroes."

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Private First Class Nicholas Ivey of Kite Ga., a member of the 101st Airborne Division (Airmobile), moves cautiously along a trail during a recent patrol of the mountainous jungles just west of Nui Ke Mountain, southwest of Hue.

(USA PHOTO By: 1st Lt. R. Ivan Pinnell)

## 65th Spans Rach Ca River

25TH INF DIV (USA) - When the word came for the 25th Infantry Division to cross into Cambodia, the 65th Eng Bn began a crash program to span the Rach Ca river on the western border of the Republic of Vietnam.

Tropic Lightning mechanized units would need the bridge in order to support operations inside Cambodia.

The first morning, Company C, 3rd Bn, 22nd Inf, was air assaulted into Cambodia. Their

mission was to secure the Cambodian side of the river bank.

Next on the scene was Company E of the 65th Engineers - the bridge builders. The bridge was constructed of light transport rafts. Every ten minutes the roar of the engineers' bridge erection boats (BEBs) signaled the arrival of one more section of bridge.

While Company E engineers fitted the pieces of the "International Bridge,"

II CORPS ADVISORY GROUP (USA) - The provinces of Pleiku and Kontum are once more the responsibility of the 22nd ARVN Infantry Division. The strategic reorganization, which was effected May 1, abolished the 24th Special Tactical Zone for the two provinces.

The present realignment is designed to supply the greatest possible mobility for ARVN operations in northern II Corps, explained a Corps military spokesman. It provides four regiments that can be deployed anywhere in the highland or coastal areas.

The 24th STZ was created when the 22nd Division left the highlands in June, 1965. The division's 42nd Regiment was left behind and placed under the Command of STZ Headquarters, Kontum. The Zone also included the ARVN Second Ranger Group and Third Armored Cavalry Squadron.

The division's three remaining regiments were sent to the heavily populated provinces of Binh Dinh, Phu Yen and Phu Bon. Their mission was to

reopen highways 1 and 19 and drive the Third NVA Division and local VC forces from the coastal basins. In five years of heavy fighting, the 22nd, aided by Korean forces and the U.S. 173rd Airborne Brigade, has succeeded in reestablishing government control in these key rice-growing regions.

The 22nd has also taken an active role in Civil Affairs projects. Its soldiers have built and repaired 48 schools, 20 aid stations, 709 homes and 40 bridges in their tri-province area of operations. Its 1st Battalion, 40th Regiment, was honored by the Vietnamese Minister of Social Welfare for the best ARVN civic action program of 1969 in II Corps.

Twenty-second Division units have occasionally operated in the highland provinces in recent campaigns. The division's 47th Regiment fought in the battles of Ben Het and Dak To last year and the April counteroffensive at Dak Seang. Soldiers of the 22nd ARVN recently fought alongside the American 4th Division in operations against North Vietnamese strongholds in the Se San River valley of Cambodia.

Under the new setup, the 42nd Regiment will return to its divisional command, while the Ranger and cavalry units will remain under II Corps control.



Mechanized elements of the 1st Bde, 25th Div. roll across a pontoon bridge into Cambodia. The bridge, about 3½ miles east of Tasuosa, was built by the 25th's Company E, 65th Eng. Bn.

(USA PHOTO By: Sp4 Charles C. Self)

## A Way To Get Burned

MACV - The VC are known to be using boobytrapped cigarette lighters containing a plastic explosive charge.

The lighters, which resemble the "Zippo" brand, are set to explode when the flint wheel is turned. The charge is sufficient to kill one or two persons at close range.

The lighters are likely to be left along roads and in public places frequented by US and FWMAF personnel. Personnel finding a cigarette lighter under suspicious circumstances should not touch it, should warn others to stay away from it, and should contact the nearest EOD unit at once.

# Battle...Before, During, After

5TH INF DIV (USA) -- There is an established routine that veteran combat soldiers carry on in spite of chaotic circumstances and the incredible commotion and uproar of close ground combat.

### A HARD FOUGHT BATTLE

The men of the 1st Battalion, 61st Infantry, 1st Brigade, had fought a day long battle against a well dug-in enemy -- an enemy respected for his fighting ability by the Red Devils.

Combat was initiated by intense mortar and small arms fire. The skillful interplay of organic weapons and support assets began. Direct fire from M-48 tanks of the 1st Battalion, 77th Armor, Cobra gunships, artillery from the 5th Battalion, 4th Artillery and a "sky full" of tactical air support combined to suppress the intense enemy fire. The full allowed the Red Devils time to consolidate their gains and treat the wounded.

### THE ROUTINE BEGINS

After the battle, the routine begins. Helicopters roar in bringing water, ammo, batteries, boots, claymores, hot food and the always welcome mail.

Men trudge back to their units. Slung over their shoulders are the bright orange plastic "elephant guns" of water. Some carry mines or ammo. With labored breath they struggle up the suddenly steeper slopes.

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## Thanks His Lucky Pot

4TH INF DIV (USA) -- A PF soldier stationed near Op Chao had just about finished his guard duty recently when the compound was attacked by a unit of NVA soldiers. Ngo Sang, the PF soldier, was hit directly on the head by a B-40 rocket. The rocket tore a large hole in his steel pot and shredded his helmet liner, then caromed into a tree and exploded. Sang escaped with only minor scratches and a terrible headache.

Platoon Sergeant Alexander Olah of New Jersey, a team leader of the 1st Battalion, 22nd Infantry Civil Affairs team, noted, "The rocket sheared off a tree branch six inches in diameter. If one could see the helmet and the gaping hole, he would have thought the man had lost half his head."

Sang was issued a new steel pot to replace his old one. And needless to say he keeps the new one near -- and dear.



The gaping hole in this steel pot was the result of a direct hit by a B-40 rocket. Ngo Sang, a PF soldier, was wearing the helmet when the rocket struck him during his last few minutes of guard duty. Platoon Leader Nguyen Thanh Xuan displays the damaged helmet.

(USA PHOTO By: Sp4 Henry Veldman)

## A Nine Day Rout

The following information is provided by the Press and Information office, General Political Warfare Department, RVNAF, for the period of 17 through 23 May.

### IV CORPS

The IV Corps Headquarters announced that Operation Cuu Long QD4/1, which began May 9, was terminated May 17.

Over a period of nine days of heavy fighting, ARVN soldiers killed 1,092 enemy soldiers in Chau Doc Province and inside Cambodia.

Participating in the operation were several regiments of infantry, armored cavalry, rangers, marines and artillery batteries. Friendly forces

detained 61 persons for questioning.

### CAMBODIA

An ARVN Ranger battalion engaged an estimated battalion size enemy force while operating northwest of Duc Co inside Cambodian territory. Forty-five enemy soldiers were killed during the engagement. Friendly forces received artillery and tactical air support. Immediately after the enemy unit had been forced to withdraw, the ARVN soldiers made a search of the surrounding area. The search turned up three enemy ammunition caches and a hospital. Also captured were 1,000 82mm mortar rounds, 1,000 60mm mortar rounds, 500 rocket grenades, 20,000 AK-47 cartridges and a large quantity of medicine.

Everywhere men are engaged in the preoccupation of the hour -- improving the night defensive position (NDP). Sandbags are filled, logs dragged over bunkers, mines set, final protective fires registered and ammo resupplies located.

### EACH MAN HAS A JOB

Scattered here and there are small knots of men talking in low tones as they apply their trade. These are the medics. They are dispensing stitches, shots, bandages and reassuring words. All are uniformly young, completely trusted by their comrades, and nearly always called "Doc".

Dawn reveals a new routine. Rucksacks are repacked, mines brought in, rocket propelled grenade (RPG) screens are taken down from in front of the armored vehicles. Platoon leaders meet with company commanders then move off to give their "op orders". The men "saddle up", recheck weapons and loads, perform communications checks and smoke one last cigarette while gazing up the hill. The hill is today's objective. With an ear-splitting thunderclap the guns of the M-48 tanks begin to prep the area. Then come the Cobras, then the troops.

### AGAIN THEY MOVE OUT

In single file columns, the men move toward their objective. The files move up and down the steep hillsides, winding around the gaping shell holes and bomb craters. A machine gunner, his M-60 balanced on his shoulder, slips and falls down an incline. Subdued curses are heard as he labors back up the slope to reach an outstretched hand.

Suddenly the slow motion movement forward becomes a series of flashes, reflexes and training. Common sense and commands fuse to give each man a sense of direction as the first "crump" of mortar rounds, accompanied by the snapping of automatic weapons fire, signal contact. Initial sporadic friendly fire intensifies as machine guns and M-79 grenade launchers open up. Medics hurry forward as they are needed. Overhead, a forward air controller (FAC) turns in lazy circles marking the area for the fighter bombers. A sweating infantryman mutters something to himself as he reloads his M-16.

### ANOTHER DAY, ANOTHER BATTLE

Suddenly all is quiet. The enemy has been silenced. Small groups shuttle forth to check out the area. Slowly, tensed muscles relax. The word comes down, "Charlie has split"

Then comes the routine again -- the medevacs, the supply choppers, the positions, then wires, the chow and the mail.

## Mark! Shoot The Azimuth

25th INF DIV (USA) -- After moving into a new area of operations south of Bear Cat the 1st Battalion, 8th Artillery was faced with the task of surveying artillery target areas located in dense jungle plagued by enemy patrols.

Heavy undergrowth, triple-canopied foliage, enemy ambushes and boobytraps made the use of conventional survey methods impossible.

Rising to the challenge, the 1/8th's survey section went "sky high" hurdling the problem.

Major Frank Serpico of Colorado Springs, Colo., battalion executive officer, and Captain Ronald Kendis of Los Angeles, battalion intelligence officer, introduced a system that has never been used by the 25th Infantry Division Artillery and only rarely used by other Army artillery units.

Using a light observation helicopter (LOH) to hover over the inaccessible points, two survey teams shot azimuths using the LOH as the corresponding point. The exact

location of the geographical feature was then computed. In this manner, artillery targets accurate to fourteen-place grids were surveyed.

Two platoons from the 1st Battalion, 27th Infantry provided physical security during the three day operation. The two survey teams were positioned atop the peaks of two mountains in the area which are about 1,500 feet high. By using the two mountain tops the survey will be classified, according to National Geodetic standards, as a "first order survey," which is the best survey possible.

Once the surveyors had oriented themselves, the procedure called for Kendis to fly with the LOH pilot out over a predetermined geographical feature and attempt to hover, at least for a few seconds, perpendicular to the specified feature. The pilot and Kendis could only "eyeball" the feature and estimate when they were perpendicular to it.

Once Kendis decided they were at the exact spot, he radioed the survey teams and gave the command, "Mark!" Both teams shot azimuths to the hovering aircraft. Using this method, the two azimuths intersected and the exact location was known.

The LOH flew at an altitude of 1,500 feet, placing it at eyelevel with the surveyors on the mountains. Thus any vertical angle to be considered in the computations was eliminated.

Kendis commended the LOH pilots for their outstanding performance. "They did an excellent job hovering over the targets and then holding for the few necessary seconds. They also made excellent landings on the hilltops, considering they had to fight swirling winds and up-and-down drafts," commented Kendis.

The survey was proven accurate when Batteries B and C fired numerous valid night registrations using the surveyed targets.

## Stateside Medevac?

1ST MAW -- A medevac mission that is completely routine in the RVN, yet may revolutionize ambulance service in the United States, was performed recently near Da Nang.

Two vehicles, a large truck and a jeep, collided on Highway 1 near Quang Chau hamlet. The occupants of the truck were uninjured, but the driver of the jeep was thrown against the

windshield when his vehicle ran off the road.

In minutes, a Marine Medium Helicopter Squadron 262 CH-46 medevac chopper arrived at the scene of the accident. Quickly, the injured man was placed on board the aircraft. A corpsman gave him first aid enroute to a Da Nang hospital.

It took five minutes to airlift the injured man to the hospital from the accident site. It would have taken a regular ambulance much longer.

Fortunately the injured man's condition was not serious. If it had been, the time between the accident and his arrival at the hospital could have been crucial.

## No Gripping

101ST ABN DIV (USA) -- Everyone blames the unit mail clerk when mail is scarce.

But in Headquarters Battery, 101st Airborne Division Artillery (Airmobile), Specialist 4 Robert Smeltzer of Turtle Creek, Pa., has eluded the complaints.

Smeltzer, the battery mail clerk, put a sign in his mail room window. It reads, "It has been 26 days since I've gotten a letter. If you have gotten a letter in the last 26 days, then don't complain. If not, your complaint is legitimate."

Smeltzer gets few complaints.

## A Self Help Program

# Call It 'Social Work'

II FFV (USA) -- Fifty miles north of Saigon is a desolate region of dying rubber plantations and red dust. It is home for the 15,000-plus inhabitants of its four villages and 15 hamlets. First Lieutenant Willie McCrary of East Orange, N.J., commander of the 19th CA platoon and assistant New Life Development Officer for Phu Giao District, is showing the people how to help themselves through channels set up by the GVN.

"We fill the people's needs by using their own resources and channels," he said.

During the last eight months McCrary, with the help of four other team members, has attempted to counteract the effects of war-general lack of education and sanitation-through training and

personal guidance. The emphasis has recently been placed on teaching the citizens of Phu Giao how to use the RVN's aid programs.

Civic action covers a broad spectrum of projects in the 465-square-kilometer district, and he feels the best results come from personal relationships.

"It's social work," stressed McCrary, "and each week we attempt to contact a different area so we can relate to the people and more importantly the hamlet chief."

The needs of each village are determined by the hamlet chief in coordination with the district. The village is allotted self-development funds, according to population, by the GVN. McCrary monitors these activities, obtains professional assistance, assists with paper work and vouches for the types and quantity of material needed.

Adversity, in the form of apathy, ignorance and enemy terrorism is being overcome. McCrary recalled one incident where their efforts were followed by an enemy rocket

attack. "These tactics hurt, but we return and try to replace or rebuild the damaged items," he said. And he added, "It hurts the VC infrastructure more."

The team stockpiles extra commodities from various units in the Civil Affairs warehouse, but these are primarily food and sundry items that are given to the very poor, as an exception. "We go through GVN channels so they'll know how to get it (assistance and aid) when we pull out of here."

Sanitation and public health has been the biggest problem. But the team's specialization surmounted this obstacle. The district has well-trained nurses and midwives, but there are not enough doctors. The gap is filled by teaching simple hygiene and sanitation techniques, setting up immunization clinics and practicing insect control.

"People underestimate the Vietnamese," he explained. "I think the people of this district can do as good a job as the Americans. They are hard working and they learn quickly."

McCrary added, "We have our ups and downs, but I think we've helped."

## Minn. Students Aid Victims Of Conflict

25TH INF DIV (USA) -- American college students have begun to take part in the so called "other war."

Students at St. Olaf's College in Northfield, Minn., in response to a request by one of that school's alumni, contributed valuable supplies to the civic action program of the 4th Battalion, 9th Infantry.

Specialist 6 James Zika of St. Paul, Minn., a medic, contacted his alma mater and requested a few minor items for his battalion's civic action

operations.

The overwhelming response was a great surprise to Zika.

"At first there were only one or two boxes," he said, "but soon it seemed like they would never stop!"

In all, the students sent thirty boxes with contents ranging from soap to books.

The Integrated Medical Civic Action Program, at which the student-donated supplies were distributed, took place at the Vinh Tanh District High School in Phuoc Thuey Province.

## The 'Bread Basket' Of The RVN

USA SUPPORT COMMAND -- They bake 125,000 loaves of bread each month! That's enough bread to feed an army, and that's essentially what the 1st Logistical Command bakery does. The bakery supports military units in Phan Rang, Phan Thiet, Bao Loc and Da Lat, as well as the Dong Ba Thin area and all of Cam Ranh, its commissaries, snack bars and mess halls.

Commanded by Staff Sergeant Robert L. Boyd and under the direction of the 59th Field Service Company, this small but efficient bakery operates 18 hours a day and employs 24 logmen who work two shifts.

### THREE KINDS OF BREAD

The bakery turns out three kinds of bread - white, raisin and French. But it's the process involved in making the bread that invites attention.

At the staff's disposal is a 1000-pound capacity mixer. It takes two men only 11 minutes to mix 550 pounds of dough in this monster. After mixing, the dough is put in a trough where it is allowed to ferment for two hours. After the dough has swollen to approximately twice its original size, one of the bakers will "punch" it, releasing the captured carbon dioxide gas.

### PUT INTO DIVIDER

The dough is then put into a divider molder. Here it is divided and molded into rectangular loaves which drop onto a conveyor belt. At the end of the belt the loaves fall into a pan. The pans of molded

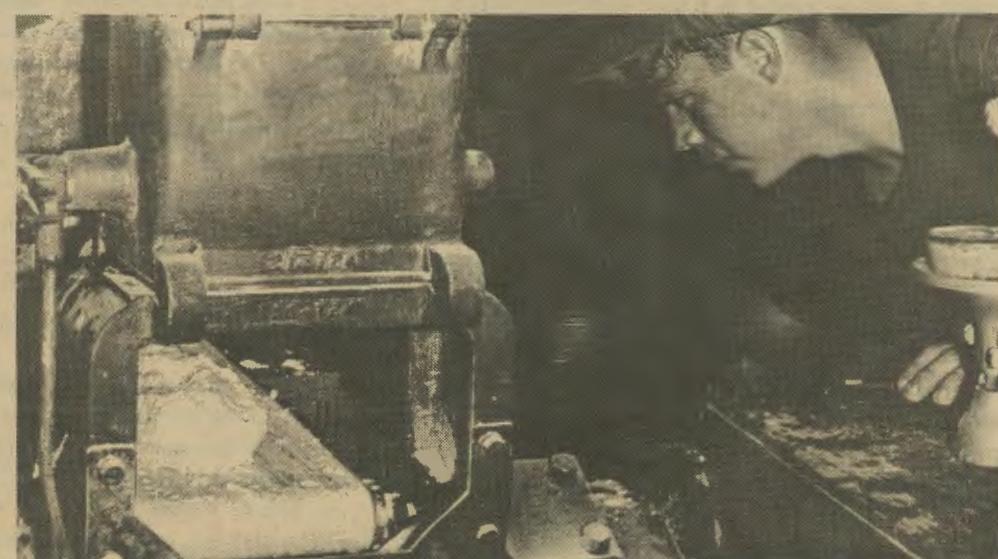
dough are put on racks for proofing. After careful inspection, the loaves are put into a cubicle whose temperature is at least 200 degrees. The loaves remain in the oven for 25 to 40 minutes.

### HANDLES 489 LOAVES AT ONCE

The oven is capable of handling 489

loaves at a time. It takes only 30 minutes at 325 degrees to finish the baking. The process is finally completed after the bread has been allowed to cool for three to six hours.

With the mixing, baking and cooling completed, the bread is bagged, boxed and shipped to the various units.



Specialist 4 Andrew Henry works the divider molder in cutting the dough into the appropriate size for loaves. (USA PHOTO By: Sp4 William Mitchell)



### An Ancient Art

During a special "personal response" class for Force Logistic Support Group B Marines, Sgt. Lewis I. Gladney watches as one of the Vietnamese guests demonstrates how the familiar conical hats of her countrymen are made. (USMC PHOTO By: Cpl. Al Wiegand)

## Plague Threat Averted

1ST MARINE DIV -- An early morning telephone call alerted the Public Health Division in Da Nang to a possible plague outbreak. Four members of a single family had died. At least one, the fourth victim, had died of a plague virus.

Navy corpsmen and civilian officials were immediately rushed to the village of Phu Hiep where they vaccinated more than 700 persons against the virus. Mr. Harold B. Rice of Oakland, Calif., of the Public Health Division, came to the

what it was," said Sergeant Jesse Guerra, Jr., of Houston, Texas. After a few words with the elder's wife, the Scout turned to the Screaming Eagles and, with a smile, said, "You know anteater with long nose. That is what she cooked.

"We all controlled ourselves very well. No one became ill, but no one asked for seconds either," noted Guerra, concluding that "the next time we dine with the Vietnamese, I doubt anyone will ask what we've been served."

Using a loudspeaker, ARVN soldiers called the villagers to the health center to receive shots. The people were warned that if they didn't come quickly, they could become very sick and possibly die. They came, and ARVN and U.S. Navy corpsmen went to work.

There were occasional screams from some of the children as the air-pressure gun shot home the life saving vaccine. However, most understood it was for their own good.

Expert organization and quick action by the ARVN and Navy corpsmen possibly prevented a plague outbreak in the village of Phu Hiep.

"We were all wondering what kind of meat we were eating, so when our Kit Carson Scout came in, we asked him to find out

## ARVN Rgt. Will Build Dispensary

101ST ABN DIV (USA) -- The people of Luong Dien hamlet will soon have their own dispensary.

The six-room dispensary is a unique civic action project because the 1st ARVN Regiment will control almost all aspects of the construction in this, their first extensive civic action project.

The 3rd Brigade S-5 Civil Affairs Office will supply lumber, masonite and tin roofing. The 1st ARVN Regiment will furnish the cement, nails, labor and supervision for the month-long project.

Upon completion of the project, RVN officials will train Vietnamese from the community to staff the dispensary.

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## Job Help Is Available To Retiring Servicemen

WASHINGTON (AFPS) -- The serviceman about to retire may find the way paved smoothly into a meaningful second career under the Defense Department's new Referral Program set to begin June 1.

Active duty personnel about to leave the service may register their post-service employment objectives with the referral service at that time.

Statistics gathered by the Defense Department show that a need exists to help the 65,000 to 70,000 servicemen who retire each year.

While Referral participation does not guarantee a job for a retiring serviceman, it is designed to meet some of his unique problems by providing improved communications with the civilian labor market.

It should be pointed out that the Referral Program is not designed as a means for servicemen to obtain civil service employment. Retiring personnel seeking a civil service position with the federal government will be referred to the nearest Federal Job Information Center, the Base Civilian Personnel Office, or other appropriate activity where detailed information and application forms can be obtained. Federal employers may submit job vacancies to the referral computer to obtain names of potential employees, but any hiring must be accomplished in accordance with appropriate Civil Service Commission regulations and other government directives.

Once a determination of employment objectives has been made, the retiree will register his preferences and other personal data with the program's computer facility. This registration must be accomplished within the six-month period before the serviceman leaves active duty.

Meanwhile, both public and private employers with specific employment opportunities will be permitted to submit "job orders" to the Referral computer facility.

At this point -- based on the standardized input from retiring personnel and employers alike -- the computer will accomplish a man-job match.

From the computer will come resumes of personnel who meet stated job qualifications. These will be provided the employer in response to job orders. At his option, the prospective employer may contact any or all of the persons about whom resumes are provided.

After making contact, the employer and the serviceman may engage in direct negotiations for employment purposes.

Servicemen soon to retire should report to the nearest Referral registration point or to the Base Personnel Office for additional information.

## Why Smuggle It?

MACV -- When Johnny comes marching home again...

Yes, Johnny is looking forward to the time he can get back home to that rousing welcome he's going to get. Of course he'll have many war stories to tell during the time he's getting readjusted to the "Land of the Big PX" -- and the pursuit of the girls therein.

But Johnny will sooner or later get around to breaking out his war trophies to illustrate "how it really is," and the tragedy is that he may be doing just that if he smuggled in a live grenade, a "souvenir" mine, a stick of explosives or maybe some ammo for that Chicom rifle he picked up.

Weapons of war are dangerous because they were designed to be, but they can be far MORE dangerous when sent through the mails or placed where unsuspecting civilians can get them.

We have a responsibility to safeguard our homes and loved ones, and that includes not exposing them to war trophies which are harmful. One serviceman sent home a grenade which he had disarmed -- but in taking the powder out of the body he didn't finish the job. His little brother did, though, for in playing with it at home, he

pulled the pin and activated the firing mechanism. The small amount of explosives it contained were sufficient to blow off a finger and blind him in one eye.

Another serviceman sent home "sample" rounds of ammunition to exhibit the fact that the bullets were made in China. The bullets were harmless enough until they were played with by a nephew who tried to make them go off by throwing them on the ground. They eventually did, and the boy was wounded in the leg.

Mailing explosives back home is prohibited by postal regulations, but another GI evidently thought, "Well, they won't catch me." It took him a long time to pay off the fine he was assessed by a summary court-martial.

Still another man tried to smuggle out some weaponry, and he was lucky enough to have it confiscated at the airport. If he had only taken the time to get his trophy certified free of intelligence value, he would probably still have his harmless "conversation piece". As it was, he ran the risk of missing that flight home, since he could have been held in-country for punitive action and spent a few more months here.

# Pay Hike Seen

MACV -- President Nixon has announced that he will ask for a 20 per cent pay-raise for enlisted servicemen with less than two years time in service.

The President said that he will ask Congress to approve the unprecedented pay-raise for first-termers to be effective Jan. 1, 1971. He also said he will recommend to Congress, in the Fiscal Year 1972 Budget, "an additional \$2 billion for added pay and other benefits . . . to help attract and retain the personnel we need for our armed forces."

A substantial increase in pay for first-termers was a major recommendation of the President's Commission on an All-Volunteer Armed Force, headed by former Defense Secretary Thomas S. Gates.

The Gates commission concluded that the interest of the nation will be better served by an all-volunteer force, and that steps should be taken in this direction.

In discussing the steps he will take in reducing draft calls to zero, Nixon said, "The starting pay of an enlisted man in our armed forces is -- taking the latest raise into account -- less than \$1,500 a year. Some married enlisted men have been forced to go on welfare to support their families."

He added that, "While we

focus on removing inequities in the pay of men serving their first few years in the military, we must not neglect the career servicemen. They are the indispensable core of our armed forces. The increasing technological complexity of modern defense and the constantly changing international situation make their assignments ever more difficult -- and critical. We shall continue to make every effort to ensure that they are fairly treated and justly compensated."

## No Roster Release!

WASHINGTON (CD) -- A Department of Defense official has expressed concern about the release of information on separating personnel.

Release of personnel rosters to commercial enterprises is in violation of DoD Directive 1344.7.

The "Personal Commercial Affairs directive, dated July 1, 1969, points out that "procuring, or attempting to procure, and/or supplying roster listings of DoD personnel" is prohibited.

Other solicitation practices listed in the directive as prohibited on military installations include:

— Solicitation of recruits, trainees and transient personnel in a "mass" or "captive" audience.

— Making appointments with or soliciting military personnel who are in an "on-duty" status.

— The use of official identification cards by retired or reserve members of the Armed Forces to gain access to military installations for the purpose of soliciting.

— Any oral or written representations which suggest or give rise to the appearance that DoD endorses a company, its agents, or the goods, services and commodities it sells.

Regarding on-base commercial activities, the directive states, "The solicitation of military personnel and their dependents will be conducted on an individual basis by appointment and in such locations and at such hours as the military commander may designate."



"Ever wonder why some guys get selected for Project Transition and some don't? Well," says this week's lithesome lovely, "Selection criteria for transition training are in four categories. First priority goes to people with no previous civilian or military skill transferable to a civilian job. Second priority is for those who have received military training to qualify for a civilian job. The third includes those who already possess a civilian skill, but need refresher training. The last priority goes to those who already possess a marketable skill, but desire training in another field."

(PHOTO BY: Playboy)



A dustoff ship sets down to pick up an injured soldier following an earlier helicopter mishap. Continuous enemy sniper fire was a constant threat to the Red Devils as they moved down the mountain slopes.



FSB Fuller, high atop Dong Ha Mountain holds many unpleasant memories for the Company D Red Devils after spending 43 days and nights under intensive enemy mortar attacks.

## Tour Of Terror Ends For Red Devils At FSB Fuller



While helicopters provide cover, men of Company D walk down "stairs" carved out of Dong Ha Mountain. The Red Devils, before being relieved by the 2nd ARVN Regiment, had received more than 400 enemy mortar rounds during their stay.

STORY AND PHOTOS BY USA



The first group of exhausted soldiers reaches the Cam Lo River following the trek down Dong Ha Mountain. The happy troops stripped off their web gear for a dip in the cool water.

5TH INF DIV (USA) — The hacking of a jungle knife could be heard in the distance as the lead element of bone-weary soldiers cleared their way down the south side of Dong Ha Mountain.

Fifteen minutes later the first man from Company D, 1st Battalion, 11th Infantry, came down the last steep slope, ending his 43 day stint as a bunker rat. As he reached the bottom, he peeled off his 75-pound rucksack and dove into a nearby stream.

The Red Devils had just completed a five and one-half hour march from the top of Dong Ha Mountain, leaving behind a battered but unbowed FSB Fuller.

As First Lieutenant Fred Johnson of Saratoga, New York, a platoon leader with Company D, described it: "Everywhere you walked up there a mortar round had already hit."

During their 43 days at Fuller, the company took more than 400 rounds of 120mm mortar fire, but the extensive bunker complex in which they lived in up to 12 hours each day kept casualties extremely low.

"They usually hit us in the daylight hours," recalled Johnson, "so we would check the perimeter at first light, call in the night guards, and stay in the bunkers until just before dark. During the day all we could do was wait for the next rounds to come in and direct counterbattery fire."

Company D arrived at Fuller for what they thought would be a two week stay. They normally pull two weeks of base security and then rotate with another company.

Three days after their arrival at Fuller, located approximately seven miles south of the DMZ, several enemy mortar rounds crashed into the mountain fortress, setting the pattern for the next 43 days.

Helicopter extraction of the men became an impossibility as NVA gunners zeroed in on the LZ at Fuller. Resupply missions were accomplished on "sling loads" and chopper pilots reported taking small arms fire almost daily.

So the decision was made to walk out. As the Red Devils headed down the side of the mountain, they passed their replacements from the 2nd ARVN Regiment who were on their way up. The NVA welcomed the new tenants with more than 35 rounds of mortar fire. They were answered in kind.

The march through thick underbrush in the 100-degree weather was made even tougher by occasional enemy sniper fire along the way.

Reaching the base of the mountain, Johnson summed up everyone's thoughts saying, "It's great to be here, just great." Someone else remarked that nothing could go wrong now, and a split second later a mortar round came crashing down within 75 meters of the exhausted troops.



Sp4 James L. Thompson of Birmingham, Ala., takes a well deserved dip following the three-mile journey down the mountain in 100-degree weather.



**Weapons Must Be Loaded...**



**The Flight**



**The Troops Are Covered...**

## **VNAF Fly**

**USAF STORY By:  
Capt. John A. Turner**

**USA  
PHO**

**BINH THUY (USAF)** -- An 18-man U.S. Air Force training team stationed here recently graduated the first class of Republic of Vietnam Air Force pilots and gunners who will fly the Bell UH-1 helicopter gunship into combat.

For the first time in the history of the Vietnam air war the VNAF will be providing helicopter gunship support for their own troop-carrying helicopters, known as "Slicks."

The advisory team, consisting of pilots and gunners, are temporarily assigned to U.S. Air Force Advisory Team 4. The team trains two classes comprising 64 VNAF pilots and 64 VNAF gunners in using the XM-93 weapons system in combat. The XM-93 is a two-pronged system consisting of two rocket pods, each carrying seven 2.75 inch rockets, and two 7.62mm miniguns, each capable of spitting out 6,000 rounds per minute.

An initial 10 VNAF helicopters have been equipped with this system, transforming them into powerful offensive weapons.

Improved VNAF effectiveness is the result. Communication is automatically improved since the gunships and the slicks can coordinate the assault missions in their own language.

Major Paul Schnucker, a pilot advisor, sees the gunship training as an integral part of the Vietnamization program and a major step in turning the air war over to the VNAF. "The VNAF have improved tremendously since I was here in 1966 and 1967," he said. "I can see it right here in the maintenance shops and on the flight line. They have assumed much more responsibility and are handling it very professionally."

Most of the students are volunteers, highly motivated and very eager to assume the responsibility for the all-important role of gunship support. Many will remain as instructors and as the instructor force increases, so the VNAF approach that time when



ht Lifts Off...

## Bell UH-1

USAF SSgt. Ray Borders  
PHOTOS By: Sgt. William Diebold

they will have taken over the entire gunship program throughout Vietnam.

Master Sergeant Tran Tan Phu Tho is typical of the VNAF volunteers. He has 11 years in the VNAF, and is assigned to the 217th Helicopter Squadron of the 74th VNAF Combat Wing here as a flight engineer. He went through gunship training to increase his value to the helicopter crew. As he put his reasons for entering the program: "So I can be involved in more combat action . . . more danger."

His training advisor is Staff Sergeant Leroy Milton Jr. of Miami. He, like many of the other gunship advisors on the team, expressed surprise at how quickly the VNAF airmen are picking up the operation and use of the minigun system.

"It's a relatively complex weapons system and an important part of using it is knowing how to quickly identify and correct in-flight malfunctions. Tho has learned surprisingly fast and will not only be one of the best helicopter gunners in the VNAF, but will also make a tremendous instructor to train other VNAF airmen after we leave," he said.

The professionalism of the gunship training team is exemplified by Sergeant Isidro Arroyo Jr., recipient of the 1969 Cheney Award for heroic and humanitarian acts after being shot down twice in combat while flying as a helicopter gunner. He volunteered to come back to Vietnam to serve as a weapons instructor because, as he puts it, "This is where the action is and where an important job needs to be done. I also know that training the VNAF and gradually turning the war over to them will help get a lot of my buddies home faster."

The VNAF get their first real test while still in training. Their "final exam" is an actual combat assault with the USAF advisors monitoring the mission. It's the moment of truth...the supreme test that nobody can afford to fail.



A Gunner Prepares The LZ...



Troops Are Disembarked...



A worker guides a giant bucket as it dips molten steel from a pit beneath furnace.



A hydraulic clipper removes inferior steel from end of each ingot.



Finished product -- steel rods for strengthening concrete -- is ready for loading on trucks bound for Saigon.

## New Steel Mill Shores Economy

**SAIGON (VPS)** -- Vietnam's first steel rolling mill is now producing reinforcing rods at a rate of 25,000 metric tons per year -- equal to one-third of the annual imports of structural steel into the Republic.

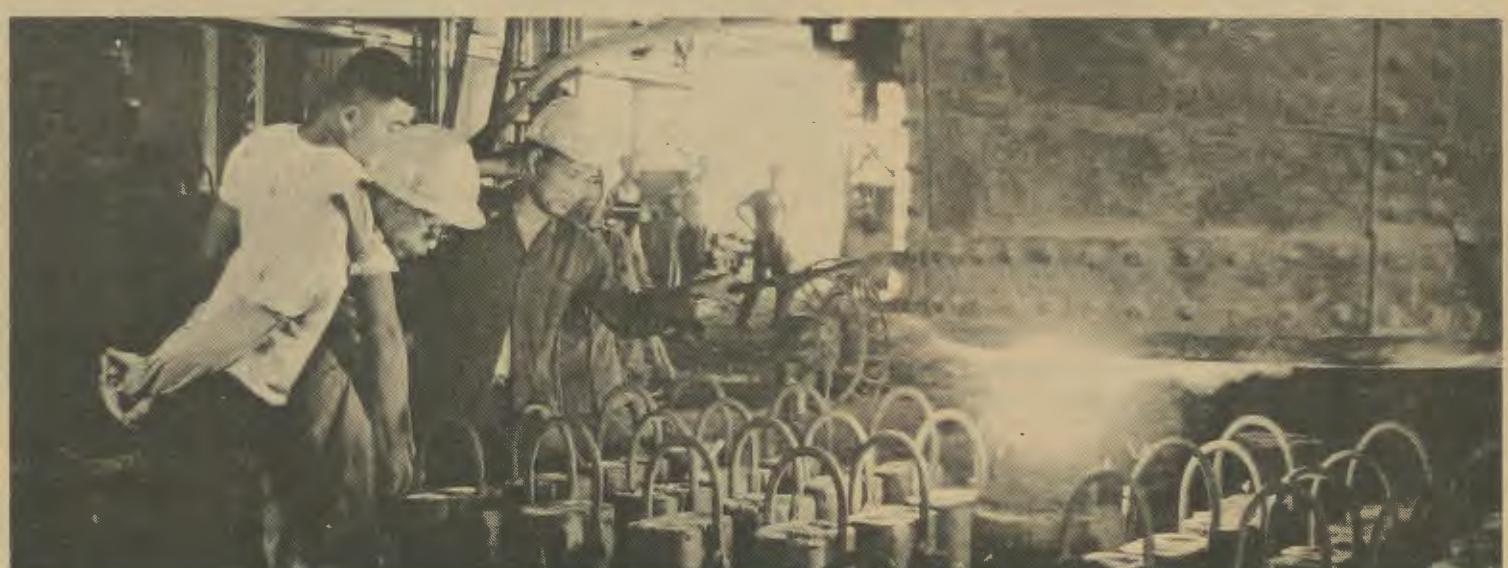
Located in the new 23-factory industrial park at Bien Hoa, 24 kilometers north of Saigon, a privately owned Vietnamese firm has invested the equivalent of \$2,500,000 in the mill.

The factory began production in October 1969. It now employs three shifts of workers around the clock. The reinforcing rods, in sizes from 14 mm to 25 mm, are immediately channeled to consumers through distribution agents in Saigon.

Several of the technicians and skilled workers are Chinese; rolling equipment and furnaces were made in the Republic of China. The bulk of the 150-man work force is Vietnamese, however, some of whom are training to take over jobs currently held by the Chinese steelworkers.

The firm was able to make its initial investment with funds borrowed from a Government of Vietnam sponsored development corporation.

The Bien Hoa Industrial Park, served by the Dong Nai River and located on one of Vietnam's major highways, Route 1, is an example of the new government emphasis on boosting a viable industrial base to serve the nation's growing economy.



Workers handle huge bucket with care as liquid metal flows from open cock into ingot molds.

**Story  
And  
Photos  
By  
C.A. Crane**



**'For Me!'**

This little fellow reaches eagerly for one of the gifts he received during a visit to the Sao Mai Orphanage at Nghi by members of the U.S. Army Support Command, Cam Ranh Bay.

(USA PHOTO By: Sp4 Richard Struble)

## System Puts Unit On Right Track

ENGR COMV (USA) - A new supply train is being employed in the Phan Rang-Song Pha area to facilitate road construction which will eventually open a trade route between the Central Highlands and coastal regions.

The innovation, instituted by the 18th Engineer Brigade's 589th Engineer Battalion, has already begun to bolster the local economy by creating jobs for 35 Vietnamese civilians.

Two trains, each pulling seven gondola cars, make runs six days a week between battalion headquarters at Phan Rang and the Company C work site at Song Pha. They carry base course and other road building materials being used on a section of National Highway QL-11 west of Phan Rang.

Rail transportation enables Company C to overcome the problems of maintaining steady production with long supply lines. The train supplements the 589th's transport capabilities by carrying the equivalent of a 40-truck convoy load and frees many battalion trucks for asphalt hauling.

Creation of the train system became a reality through a cooperative effort of the Agency for International Development (AID), the Vietnamese National Railway System (VNRS) and the 539th Battalion.

The Military Assistance Command Vietnam (MACV) Traffic Management Agency coordinates trains between the 589th and the VNRS. AID acts in an advisory capacity to the Vietnamese and defrays the cost of operation.

Considerable work went into the loading and unloading sites implementing the rail system. The 589th and VNRS cooperated in fashioning a spur track at the loading site so gondolas could be filled without interfering with each other's rail traffic.

More work went into the completion of an offloading facility at Song Pha. The normal

fill of a railroad bed is sloped gently upward toward the rails, causing the base course from the site-dumping gondolas to pile up around the trains.

For 17 days men and bulldozers labored to mold a concrete wall to the 10-foot drop next to the tracks. A latticework of rebar secured to the railbed provides a reinforcing skeleton for the supporting wall.

The completed offloading facility allows cars to dump their loads into stockpiles on either side of the track. Then it is simple to haul the material the short distance to the work site.

BIEN HOA (USA) - Until recently, a very stubborn ol' tree had been delaying an important U.S. Air Force civic action project at Bien Hoa Air Base.

The project, directed by the base civic action office, involves the building of an on-base playground for the Vietnamese children living at Bien Hoa AB. The playground area will feature swing sets, slides, a small merry-go-round, and several small ponds and flowered areas.

However, the entire project was held up by a large tree growing on the proposed site. The 505th Tactical Control Maintenance Squadron, in charge of the project, found the tree just a little more than stubborn. It proved to be impossible to cut down with hand tools.

From January to April, members of the 505th, the VNAF 23rd Civil Engineering Squadron, USAF Advisory Team 3 and even some Vietnamese Boy Scouts, hacked and sawed

A little farther away, a jungle of bamboo and concertina wire bears the promise of shelter and safety for several thousand Vietnamese. Scurrying figures run along the maze of trails and paths carrying seemingly impossible loads of bricks, sticks and logs.

A wizened little woman motions for an Americal Division lieutenant to lift one end of a log - as big and heavy as she is. She searches for the center of balance and, hoisting the log to her thin shoulder, moves down the path with a fast, sure-footed gait.

A young boy cautiously edges into the perimeter of the American position on the edge

of the village. He sees "Doc." The company medic examines, carefully washes and then treats a large sore on the youngster's head. A quick smile and the child is gone.

Another lad, slightly older than the first, walks confidently to the perimeter and announces that he wishes to trade an enemy round he has found for some food.

Later in the morning, a group of Quang Ngai Province Civilian Irregular Defense Group forces and Americans from the Americal Division's 198th Brigade move carefully into the woodline east of the village.

They seek the enemy, a lurking threat.

The "New Life" village of Van Thien grows, wall by wall, adding one family after another. The people are returning to their own land. The security provided by the soldiers enables them to work their fields and rebuild their homes relatively free from harassment and intimidation.

Van Thien will soon shelter about 3,000 people. It may blossom to a population of 6,000 when more of the displaced farmers return to their fields.

Most of the building is done with the abundant bamboo, although tin, sandbags, wire and steel post have been provided by the Americans.

The local Popular Forces are trained and assisted by the company providing security for the village.

## 90 Girls

## Floor Gls

18TH ENGR BDE (USA) - A group of 90 high school girls from Minnesota recently dropped a gigantic surprise on a company of engineers at An Khe.

The girls, students at St. Mary's Hall Girls' School in Faribault, Minn., sent a 100-foot long letter to the men of Company D, 84th Engineer Battalion.

The long letter was the result of a casual letter which arrived in January addressed to "Any Soldier at Company D, 84th Engineer Battalion." The letter suggested the possibility of correspondence between the engineers and the girls at the school.

The men jumped at the opportunity. Acting for the entire company, Specialist 4 John I. Clark of Racine, Wis., wrote a thank you letter which was signed by about 20 men.

None of the engineers had any idea they would receive such a lengthy reply to their letter. The 90 girls who make up the enrollment at the school expressed their views on the war and the great job the men are doing.

According to Specialist 4 Stephen Leavitt of Idaho Falls, Idaho, the unit mail clerk, "We never expected anything like this. It sure makes you feel good to know that people back home really care about what is happening over here. This letter is something we won't forget for a long time."



**Heading Home**

A tug boat of the U.S. Army Support Command heads across Cam Ranh Bay after a day of berthing freighters carrying supplies from the States.

(USA PHOTO By: Sp4 Clyde Hanyen)



**BUNKER**

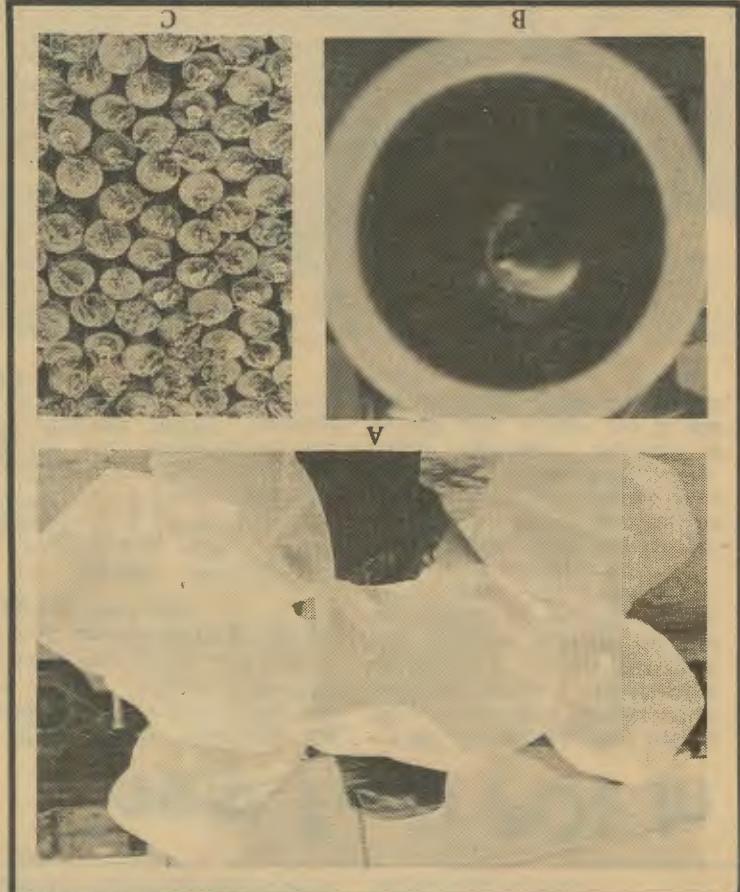
**BUNNY**

**SEZ,**

"Now I ask you, what good clean-cut American would turn his back on a sharp chick like this? Not very many I bet. But how many of you have turned your backs on your responsibility to vote? Voting, while a right, is also one of our foremost responsibilities, and hopefully, you have or are going to apply for an absentee ballot so you can vote in your state's primary election. Don't disregard your right to have a voice in your government. Whether it be at the federal, state, county or local level." And from the looks of our "Bunker Bunny" this week, I'm sure most of you will agree that she possesses some outstanding qualifications for almost any public office, at least in the morale department."

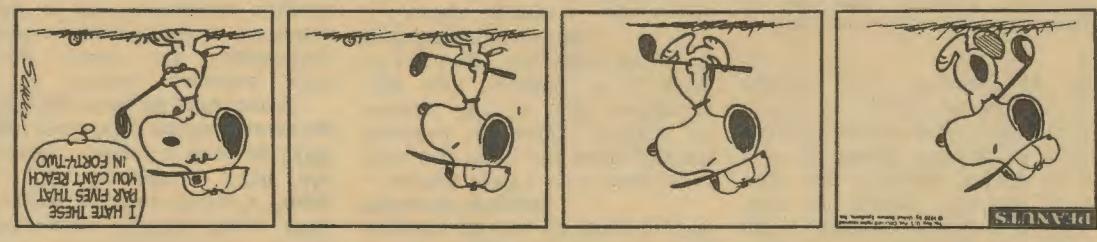
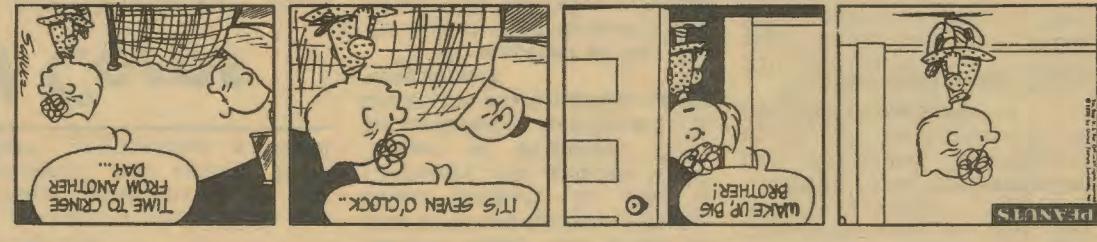
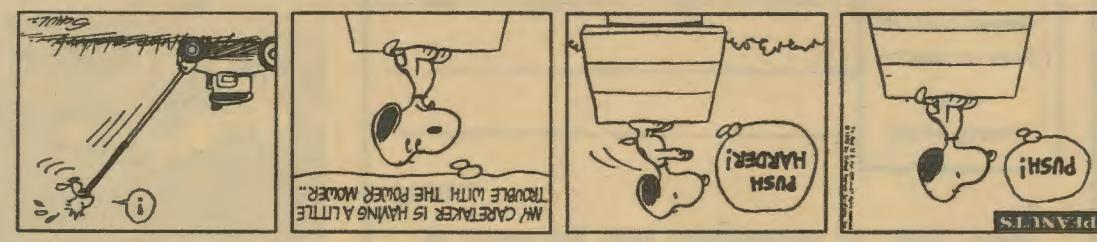
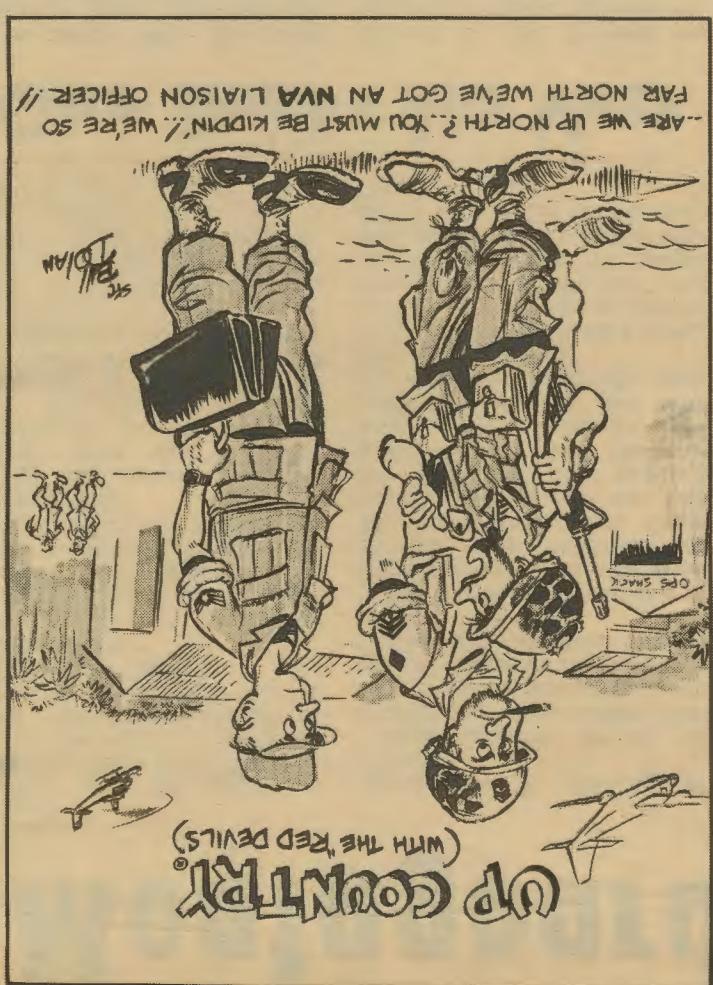
(PHOTO COURTESY OF COLUMBIA PICTURES)

Answers: (A) If you guessed blocks of ice, you were indulging in wishful thinking. This Marine is carrying ten empty 5-gallon plastic water containers which replaced the WWII metal water cans considered too difficult to handle and transport. (B) An eclipse? Not by a long shot. You're looking down the business end of a 105mm howitzer tube. If you look closely, you can see a round being loaded into the breech. (C) Grenades, hand smoke. Just part of a cache of 357 grenades found several months ago by members of the 25th Inf. Division. Where'd they come from? Somebody left them behind for "Charlie."



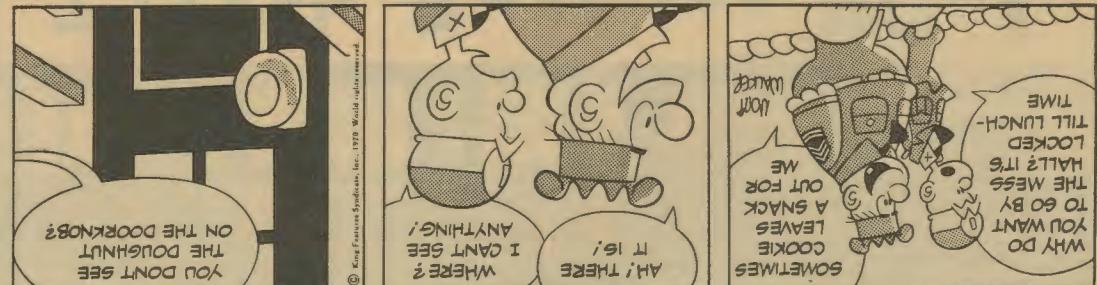
"Things are not always what they seem", and the fact is that first impressions, particularly, are not necessarily correct ones. This is especially true when we allow ourselves to make rash generalizations about the Vietnamese people based on isolated instances or so-called "personal experiences". Everyone likes to be an expert, but a true expert is one who has patiently developed his skill or knowledge over a long period of time. Closing your mind by making rash judgments prevents you from becoming an expert on much of anything. Keeping that in mind, let's see how an expert you are at identifying the objects pictured in the photographs below.

## Photo Quiz



By Charles M. Schulz

## Peanuts



By Mort Walker

# Montagnard "Bachelor's Hut"

17th Avn GP (USA) - Specialist 4 Don Vos of Everson, Wash., has what is probably the most unusual part-time job in the 52nd Avn Bn. He works in a Montagnard "bachelor's hut" selling souvenirs.

His job is part of the Bn. Security Detachment's Civic Action Project, in which the unit helps to provide a market at Camp Holloway for Montagnard made products.

The hut, which was built several years ago by local Montagnard tribesmen, stands near the runway at Camp Holloway. In the villages, the hut is used as a meeting place for bachelors and, of course, is a favorite place to drink rice wine. Until last month, the hut was used as a welcoming point for guests arriving at the camp. At that time it was fitted out with glass-enclosed counters and

stocked with Montagnard souvenirs.

The souvenirs proved so popular that the specialist now has to spend almost as much time buying stock for the hut as he does selling the items to eager GIs.

The souvenirs are available at any price range you wish, from 25 cent woven bookmarks to \$40 hand woven shirts. Or if you're buying for the man who has everything, how about a wooden lizard trap? The ever popular crossbows are sometimes available, but they don't last long, especially with Vos as the salesman.

And when his DEROS comes around, you can almost see the newspaper ad: "Wanted" one part-time salesman for unique gifts. Experience in dealing with natives helpful, but not essential. Car not necessary."



## One Boot - No Vest

1st Marine Div - The point man in a "grunt" outfit has the responsibility for the safety of the men following in his footsteps.

Lance Corporal David J. Gurtowsky from Detroit Mich., had been walking point for his unit Company E, 2nd Battalion, Fifth Marines for two months.

Recently while on patrol, Gurtowsky's unit was coming off high ground and approaching a treeline when he felt something snap against the bottom of his foot. The unit was closer together than usual because of the dense undergrowth they were traveling through at the time.

Suspecting that he had stepped on a pressure type firing device, he froze on the spot. Signaling his patrol leader forward and telling him what he

thought he was standing on, Gurtowsky waited until the rest of the unit had taken cover before making his next move.

He removed his knife from his cartridge belt and cut his foot out of the boot, keeping pressure on the boot when he removed his foot. He then took off his helmet and placed it over the boot and did the same with his flak jacket.

After checking to make sure his unit was clear of the area, he dove over a nearby rice paddy dike. Before he hit the ground the device exploded harmlessly, destroying his boot, helmet and flak jacket.

"It took me about a half hour to calm down and then I finished the patrol with only one boot and no flak gear," stated the alert point man.

CAMP HOLLOWAY (USA) - Two OH-6 Light Observation Helicopters (LOHs) from 17th Combat Aviation Group's Troop C, 7th Squadron, 17th Air Cavalry, rescued a downed LOH pilot with NVA soldiers pursuing them less than 20 yards away.

The action occurred nine miles inside the Cambodian border, approximately ten miles west of the Vietnamese outpost of Duc Co.

A team of two LOHs, two Cobra gunships and one command and control Huey were conducting a visual

reconnaissance mission in an area of known enemy activity in support of the 1st Brigade, 4th Infantry Division.

As the LOHs were scouting at tree top level, the wing aircraft received a heavy volume of enemy fire. It took numerous hits and crashed in a small clearing surrounded by antiaircraft positions.

Captain Berry J. Spears of Albany, Calif., was flying the lead LOH and his two observers, SSgt. Robert H. Pilk of Caselberry, Fla., and Sp4 Walter Yeager of Rochester, N.Y., immediately maneuvered to locate the exact position of the wing aircraft.

"It all happened so fast that for a short while the didn't even notice that our wing ship had been shot down," Pilk recalled that evening. "We were all drawing fire and the wingship was quite a ways behind us. They went down so fast they didn't even have time to call for help on the radio."

"As soon as we noticed they were missing we started looking for them," he continued. "After a few tense minutes we spotted the LOH which was on fire with the crew members still inside. Immediately Spears landed our helicopter approximately 150 feet from an enemy position.

"Yeager and I jumped out of the ship and ran to the burning

LOH. When we got there," Pilk said, "We found both the pilot and observer trapped inside. First we pulled out the pilot who was hanging outside in a state of shock. Just as we were going to reach for the observer I noticed that several NVA soldiers were sneaking up on us."

The two LOH observers tried to get the downed observer unhooked from his seat, but found he was dead.

"By this time we were taking fire," Pilk added, "so we picked up the pilot and started carrying him back to our LOH."

"We were hustling across the 150 yards back to our waiting ship," Yeager said, "with several NVA soldiers chasing us. They were just waiting for us."

"We took a detour through some heavy undergrowth and finally we reached the aircraft," he said. "We placed the wounded pilot in the rear of the LOH and hopped aboard."

Immediately Spears pulled pitch with a heavily overloaded scoutship.

"By the time we got off the ground the NVA soldiers were less than 20 yards away," Yeager said.

The pilot was flown to the 71st Evacuation Hospital in Pleiku where he was reported in good condition.

## Team Tests POL In II Corps

QUI NHON (USA) - An inconspicuous trailer at the base of Vung Chua Mountain provides the quality surveillance for all petroleum (POL) in the upper II Corps area.

The mobile laboratory is operated by the 959th Quartermaster Detachment. All forms of POL - package, pipeline and tanker - are tested in the lab, according to the detachment's NCOIC, Sergeant Leo Romanczyk, Pine Island, N.Y.

"We check the fuel several times before it is distributed to outlying units," Romanczyk explained. "First at the port, then while it is in the pipeline and finally when it reaches the tank farm." The facility also tests samples of lubricants.

"Averaging 500 samples per month, the 959th handles the same volume of samples as a base lab," claims Romanczyk. "The difference between a mobile and a base lab is the sophistication of the equipment used."

The detachment sends two-man liaison teams to Tuy Hoa, LZs English and Uplift and other major areas. Armed with test kits, liaison teams perform quality surveillance in remote areas also. Romanczyk noted that if any detailed tests are required the teams forward samples to the lab.

In addition to performing fuel tests, the detachment maintains a supply role. "All POL sampling equipment in the upper II Corps area is distributed through the lab," said Romanczyk.



## Convoy Leader

Moving convoys is one of the 18th MP Brigade's biggest commitments. Using the newest generation of convoy wardens, V-100 armored cars, MPs provide security for vital convoy operations.

### Mail THE OBSERVER Home

★ (Does not meet requirements for "free" mail.)

From:

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Place Stamp  
Here

(12 cents 1st class)  
(20 cents Airmail)

TO:

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