

VC say 'cover gone!'



the OBSERVER

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Co's chronicle

SUPERSTITION MOUNTAIN (DMAC) -- As the Army of the Republic of Vietnam (ARVN) troops neared this legend-cloaked peak during a Seven Mountains operation last Fall, a VC lieutenant chronicled what were to be the last days of his life.

The Communist company commander's diary, released a short time ago by intelligence sources, opened November 8. Following nine weeks of bitter cave-to-cave fighting that had all but won ARVN control of Nui Gai and Nui Cam, Viet Cong Second Lieutenant Co Vo scornfully penned:

"The enemy operation changed directions and began to concentrate on area 'D' (Nui Coto) in order to encroach his pacification scheme on our land.

"In order to accomplish this sweep operation, the enemy utilized the 9th Division, the puppet of the IV Corps Military Region. Right now the enemy is preparing to attack from all directions to occupy the area of the Liberation Front, an area in which they previously couldn't even build outposts..."

ARVN sweep-and-hold operations had already succeeded in taking most of the surrounding mountains and lowlands, and were then carving deep inroads into the virtually impregnable cave-and-boulder fortress of Nui Coto, when he added:

"There are now four infantry battalions already occupying the important high ground and encroaching on the area in the vicinity of O Dam village. Yesterday afternoon, the enemy set up an outpost in this area with

(Continued on Page 3)

FSB BRONCO (23RD INF DIV AMERICAL) -- The dark, rainy night conceals a group of Viet Cong from any human eyes which may be watching. Confident that they are unobserved, the enemy moves down the mountain trail in force, carrying weapons and equipment.

Suddenly the peaceful night is alive with the scream of incoming artillery rounds; seconds later, a few surviving enemy soldiers stumble back into a darkness which no longer seems so protective.

Is a crystal ball responsible for this uncanny detection? No, a more effective answer to enemy infiltration has been employed: it's called Target Mission Force (TMF). And although the 11th Infantry Brigade's TMF receives little publicity, episodes such as the one just described testify to its effectiveness.

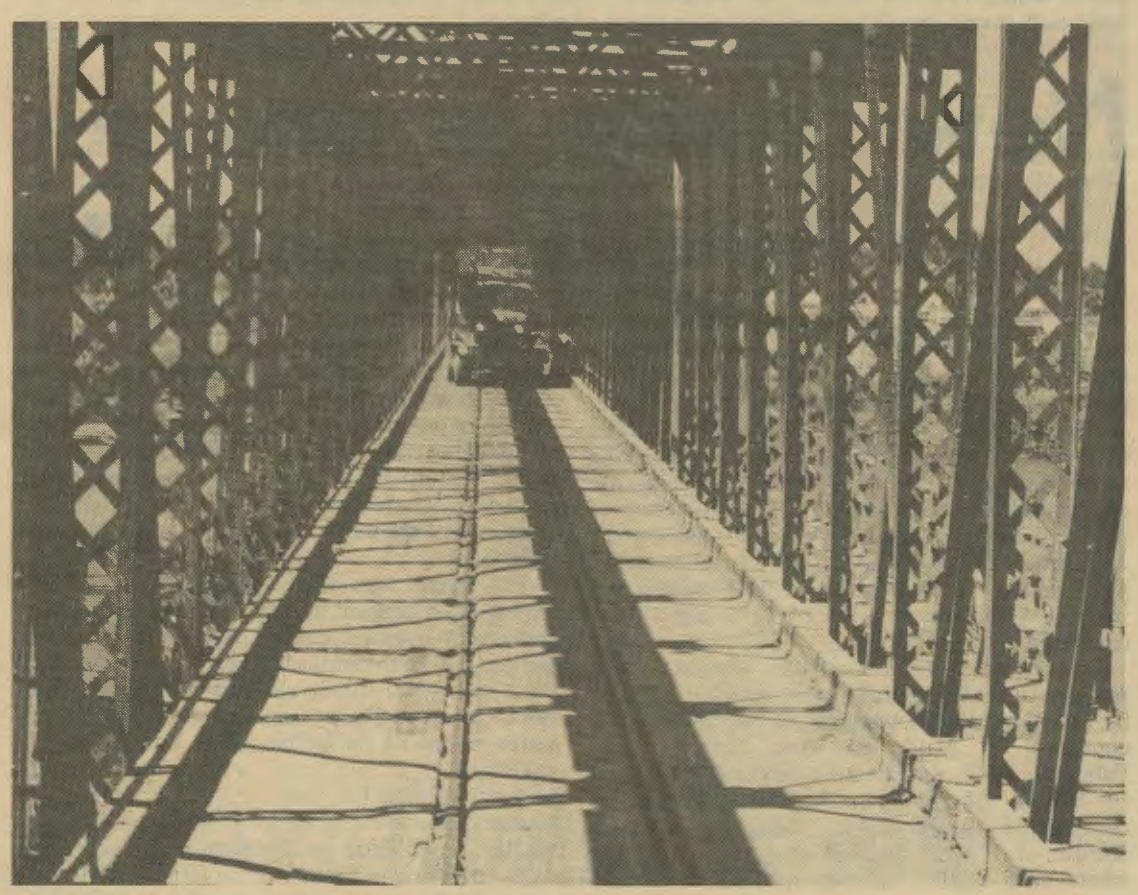
According to Sergeant John Turnipseed, of TMF, it is all a matter of mechanical

reconnaissance. The equipment and its method of operation are, of course, strictly classified, but Turnipseed and his men readily point out that the unit's success is no secret.

"We can often supply the same information that a recon team would bring back," he comments. "We can tell how many personnel are in an area, which direction they are headed, how quickly they are moving, and what types of weapons they are carrying. Given the speed and direction of travel, artillery can be plotted on top of them."

Many people consider TMF an easy rear echelon job, but it doesn't always work out that way. Teams must go into the field regularly to replace or relocate equipment, and on these occasions there is no guarantee of missing contact with the enemy.

FIRST IN VIETNAM



WATCH OUT FOR THE 4:30 -- An old railway bridge serves as a highway for the truckers of Company C, 11th Motor Transport Battalion, 1st Marine Division as they enter Hue enroute to Khe Sanh. The convoy's story is featured on page eight of this week's Observer.

(USMC PHOTO By: Cpl W. H. Baldwin)

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Sherman was a loser. A vicious 18th MP Brigade sentry dog, he preferred wagging his bushy tail and licking the trainer's padded arm during school. On a short assignment as a scout dog, he managed to get an entire platoon of infantrymen lost. Later, he lost his vocal cords to the vet after refusing to stop howling one night. And when it came to detection training, he couldn't tell pot from soap. But now the long-haired voiceless failure has found his niche in life, a role determined one day when a wounded scout dog was medevaced to the vet hospital at Cam Ranh Bay. You guessed it...nowadays Sherman is the resident canine blood donor there.

To build a navy

PART ONE OF A NEW SERIES



AN INVESTMENT IN THE FUTURE — Bridge QL-1-241 spans out majestically in Tuy Hoa. 3610 feet in length and consisting of 59 spans, the bridge will handle two-way traffic where such traffic has not traveled in twenty years. Built entirely by ARVN Engineers, it was completed forty-five days ahead of schedule.

(U.S. ARMY PHOTO)

New bridge spans twenty-year gap

PHU TAI (USAECV) — As the withdrawal of U.S. military forces from the Republic of Vietnam proceeds, increasing attention is being focused on the success of the Vietnamization program.

Vietnamization of the conflict has posed numerous challenges for the Army of the Republic of Vietnam (ARVN) ranging from the assumption of battlefield operations to the acquisition of technical skill and knowledge. As a result, the ARVN soldier has found himself placed in such a position that he must prove to both himself and the world that he is in fact able to meet these challenges.

Success of one facet of the Vietnamization program was dramatically demonstrated recently by the 201st ARVN Engineer Battalion under the command of Major Ha Thuc Xang. On 13 February 1971, a dedication ceremony was held for Bridge QL-1-241 in Tuy Hoa. The bridge constructed by the 201st, 3610 feet in length, consists of 59 spans and will allow two-way traffic where such traffic has not traveled for almost 20 years.

The fact that it was constructed entirely by ARVN Engineers warrants the admiration of ARVN and Allied personnel alike. The bridge, with its numerous steel piles and endless number of spans rising above the Song Da Rang River, is a tribute to the 201st and will long serve as a monument to the dedication and skill of the men who built it.

Preliminary planning for the bridge was first conducted by Major Tran Thanh Tung, the previous commanding officer of the 201st Bn, during the early part of 1969. Upon Xang's assumption of command on 24 September 1969, planning was finalized based upon this planning, the US Army's 18th Engineer Brigade prepared and furnished the detailed drawings and specifications for construction of the bridge.

The US Army's 84th Engineer Battalion assisted the 201st Bn by providing the required materials for construction and engineer equipment augmentations. During November, 1970, the supply and equipment responsibilities were reassigned to the US Army's 299th Engineer Battalion. Security of the job site throughout the construction was coordinated through the Phu Yen Sector Chief, Lieutenant Colonel Nguyen Van To.

During the 16½-month construction, the 201st ARVN Bn overcame numerous frustrations as they developed the expertise required to construct a major bridge. Training of ARVN equipment operators was a vital necessity and as a result, six personnel were trained as welders, six as 40-ton crane operators, and three as transit mix truck operators. These personnel were to become the backbone of the major construction operations that lay ahead.

The project was complicated by the two rainy seasons that occurred during the construction. The endless number of steel piles had to be driven during the dry months. Having won the race to drive piles, two floods challenged the strength of the uncompleted structure. Fill washed out at the southern end of the bridge where the water depth exceeded 22 feet with a maximum stream velocity of five feet per second. As a result of prudent scheduling, damage from the floods was negligible and little reconstruction was necessary.

As the bridge neared completion, it became apparent that construction was ahead of schedule. While this could have been a time to lessen construction effort, it served only as a further incentive to complete the bridge as far ahead of the scheduled completion date as possible. With the support of the local people, continuous on-site supervision by Maj. Xang, and frequent visits by Colonel Pahn Van Hai, the commanding officer of the 20th ARVN Engineer Group, work continued in an effort to complete the bridge before Tet.

The resultant completion of the bridge 45 days ahead of schedule demonstrated the ability of the 201st to accomplish its mission. Additionally, it was the most meaningful New Year's present that the men of the 201st could give to the people of Tuy Hoa. The completion of Bridge 241 enabled the people of Tuy Hoa to participate enthusiastically in the dedication ceremonies when President Nguyen Van Thieu formally dedicated their new bridge.

While enjoying a well-deserved pause after completing this major construction project, the 201st ARVN Engineer Battalion is already looking for future challenges. For soon, Maj. Xang and his men will once again be spending long hours in the construction of Bridge 242 to ensure that their recently established reputation will continue to grow with each additional challenge.

JUSPAO — The Vietnamese Navy got a new flagship when the 1,582-metric-ton USS Camp, a destroyer escort radar picket ship (DER) armed with sophisticated electronics equipment and three-inch guns, was turned over to a Vietnamese crew at Hawaii's Pearl Harbor naval base on February 13, 1971. Camp, recommissioned as Tran Hung Dao, was placed under the captaincy of Commander Tran Van Triet for the voyage to Saigon, where the newly refitted vessel will formally take over flagship duties early in April.

It is the ninth large ship — in addition to 650 small "brown water navy" boats, over 100 harbor defense and minesweeping craft and more than 40 logistics vessels — turned over to the Vietnamese Navy (VNN) since "Vietnamization" began. More than 150 additional craft of varying functions and sizes, including three more "blue water" ships, remain to be transferred from the U.S. Navy under the program that naval brass call Operation ACTOV — "accelerated turnover to the Vietnamese." Underway since November 1968, this 44-month crash program entails accelerated personnel training as well as transfer of assets and responsibilities to the VNN as rapidly as the Vietnamese can absorb them.

The overhauled and modernized Tran Hung Dao — 28 years old, although she spent more than 10 years in mothballs right after World War II — is the first ship of the destroyer type to join the VNN, and now is the fleet's third largest warship. Two 1,766-ton high-endurance cutters (WHECs) — the former U.S. Coast Guard cutters Yakutat and Bering Strait — remain the craft with the greatest displacement. Other large, ocean-roaming combatant or logistics ships in the VNN include three LSTs (landing ships, tank), two patrol craft escorts (PCE) and a support tender (PCT).

Vietnamese waters will not be strange to the sleek hull of the 93-meter Tran Hung Dao, for she has served 30 months on a number of U.S. Navy tours since 1965 on Operation Market Time, the offshore effort to prevent infiltration of water-borne arms and men from North Vietnam. In addition to her new flagship duties, she will continue such coastal patrol work for the VNN on returning to Vietnam. The 21-knot, diesel-powered, long-range DER will be taken out of Pearl Harbor by her 150-man VNN crew in mid-March en route home.

The USS Camp was named after Ensign Jack H. Camp, a U.S. Navy pilot killed in the Pacific War, and renamed after Tran Hung Dao, the Vietnamese military commander who seven centuries ago drove invading Chinese from the waters of Vietnam and became patron hero of his country's navy.

Today the VNN is physically unrecognizable as the descendant of Dao's junk fleet. With 39,611 officers and men, it has grown into a potent striking force now responsible for defending against communist attack or infiltration some 2,400 kilometers of navigable inland waters, much of the 1,900-kilometer coastline and all six of its main harbors. By the end of Operation ACTOV in 1972 the VNN will have a total of nearly 1,600 vessels — wooden, steel, fiberglass and cement — minus any sunk or retired and plus whatever ferro-cement craft the VNN shipyard in Saigon can build by that time. In terms of number of craft, that would make it at least the 10th largest navy in the world.

Already the Republic of Vietnam's naval fleet has been more than doubled since ACTOV began — from 632 vessels, including more than 250 fighting junks, in 1968 to more than 1,440 today. The program, nearly two-thirds through the timetable, also has made significant progress in transferring functions and responsibilities to an increasingly competent VNN. Vietnamese officers now command 33 of the 42 naval bases established by the U.S. Navy throughout Vietnam. Half of the coastal defense operation and all but one of the U.S. Navy's harbor and inland waterway operations have now been turned over to the Vietnamese, and this one remaining brown water navy venture — Operation Solid Anchor, on the Ca Mau peninsula — is expected to be transferred soon. As a result of this sustained rate of progress, which is relatively greater than that achieved by any other branch of the service, the U.S. Navy has been able to cut its personnel strength in Vietnam from a high of 36,000 officers and men in October 1968 to fewer than 17,000, and redeployment to U.S. bases is ahead of schedule.

NEXT WEEK: FOILING THE ENEMY

Keeps neighborhood peaceful

DA NANG (1st MARINE DIV) - It could have passed for one of California's cliff-hanging roads going down the coastline with the sea dropping off on one side, or possibly archaic, two-lane highway 50, winding through the mountains of northern West Virginia with an occasional store and gas station clinging to the side of a hill.

But, all it took was the crackling of rifle fire to erase visions of the States and bring in the reality of Highway 1 in Vietnam moving north out of Da Nang toward Hue, through the contested Hai Van Pass.

Providing security along this key route are Marines from Company I, 3rd Battalion, First Marines, 1st Marine Division. The man in charge is First Lieutenant Wayne E. Kiger, a 25-year-old native of Detroit, Mich., and psychology graduate from Tennessee Temple College in Chattanooga.

The "Kiger Rifles" territory encompasses about five miles as the local crow flies, but actually 10 miles thanks to the highway engineers and Mother

Nature's design.

It begins in the ville of Kim Lien just north of the Nam-O bridge and ends at Hai Van I, the northernmost Marine outpost in the area, overlooking the South China Sea.

The lieutenant is mainly confined to Kim Lien, where his men are engaged in a population control program designed to cut back on enemy activity in a town where estimates of the number of VC/NVA sympathizers run as high as 75 per cent. "I know that there is a price on my head, but I'm not sure what the going rate is now," grinned Kiger who has been married nine months and overseas for eight of them.

"We get a lot of cooperation during the daylight but at night the people go about their business," Kiger noted. "At times I'm scared, especially at night when I go out in the ville, but people see me and they think 'He's a Marine, he's not afraid, he'll be here awhile' and that helps them."

Kiger is responsible for all the patrols and ambushes in and around Kim Lien



Marine 1Lt. Wayne E. Kiger is flanked by representatives of the Regional and Popular Forces in the Kim Lien area, 10 miles north of Da Nang.

(USMC PHOTO By GySgt. J. Wold)

...chronicle

(continued from page 1)

two 105mm guns and one 106mm recoilless rifle for the purpose of containing and blocking our forces. Now the enemy is up to his old tricks to retake this hill."

In the subsequent entry, Co noted a brilliant strategic gambit employed by the 9th Division. As his company and four others braced for an attack over the southeast slope, two ARVN battalions literally walked up the north side under the cover of darkness while using Luc Luong 66 Scouts as guides.

In a later passage, a surrounded and far less confident Co summarized the day he first realized the impending disaster:

"When we recognized what the enemy was trying to do, we attempted to react in order to destroy the enemy, who was all around us. However, numerous obstacles confronted us.

"Our forces were limited. We had no replacements, and the casualties continued to mount. The enemy defenses became more and more unbreakable..."

Below his position, ARVN forces were struggling upward through intense resistance: Viet Cong mortars, B-40 rockets, hand grenades, and AK-47 semi-automatic rifle fire from innumerable holes, caves, and crevices.

On the fifth day of what had become one of the bloodiest clashes of the war, South Vietnamese forces were closing in on the position held by the VC commander and his company.

In an entry marked "0700 hours, 12 November," he hastily recorded:

"The guns have started firing. My mind is trembling with excitement, but it is nothing new. It is a sensation I have already experienced in the last few days..."

"The firing has started and the battalion communications center is receiving reports from every unit under its control. I clutch the handset of the telephone following every report..."

"The tactical situation changes with every passing hour..."

An hour later, ARVN elements had overrun nearby Ong Tan Hill and were pressing onward in their attack. With escape impossible and certain death suddenly a reality, the lieutenant jotted disjointedly:

"The enemy is moving forward...the situation is really tense. The field telephone is ringing all the time now...I can't get any rest. I really pay attention to all the new reports. Sometimes I hold my breath the excitement is so great.

"More bad news - the enemy has already reached the second hill..."

"Friendly troops will have to draw back to Sam Kiem Hill."

Five more days of watching and waiting followed. ARVN soldiers had broken through most of the battalion's resistance. Co's outlook seemingly reached fateful resignation shortly before 6 p.m., November 17, as he reasoned with himself:

"The battle is continuing. I myself am awaiting an order to attack the enemy."

"Unfortunately, I hurt my leg in our last operation and the wound is not yet healed. But this is a personal problem."

"It's very difficult to use the leg and extremely painful, but since there's no one to replace me, what if I can't overcome the pain? If other of our troops get sick they can be replaced or allowed to rest. But it is very difficult to replace me, or let me rest. Therefore, I have to resolve all the problems which arise myself and this is very difficult to do..."

At this point-according to authorities-Co paused temporarily to follow the tactical situation on the mountain. During this pause his unit was committed to the battle, against the ARVN 3rd Battalion, 14th Regiment, that ended his life.

The last-ditch defense of the Red stronghold cost the enemy 82 men, and marked the achievement of an important objective in the drive to bring pacification and security to the Seven Mountains region of the Mekong Delta.

and he coordinates these actions with the hamlet chief. From this working relationship, Kiger is well known in the ville and is usually included in on any local goings-on such as the recent Chieu-Hoi program where a carnival-like atmosphere prevailed in attempts to pick up draft dodgers.

On this day, the bespectacled Marine was one of the honored guests at a lunch at the village chief's house. Outside in his little town, activity buzzed around the two local restaurants fondly dubbed "The Cockroach" and "Granny's Head Shop" as loudspeakers blared out music and messages to the people in and around the ville. The day's activity netted two UA (unauthorized absence) members of the Regional Forces.

An old pappa-san approaches Kiger and the two stop and exchange greetings. The children in the town, who outnumber adults by more than three-to-one, follow the lieutenant and his men around the town in Pied Piper fashion. "Having my Marines wander about the town has helped counteract the VC influence," Kiger noted.

Occasionally Kiger gets the opportunity to view the rest of his platoon but the occasions are more the exception than the rule.

"This will be the first time in a month that I've been up here," Kiger mentioned while heading up the south side of Hai Van Pass. "I see some of the men when they come back to the rear but usually that's it."

VNAF: fantastic job

SOC TRANG AB (7AF) - The Republic of Vietnam Air Force's (VNAF's) 227th Helicopter Squadron here flew its first combat assault mission March 18 to become the second unit at this all-VNAF base to beat its programmed combat ready date.

The 227th was activated Nov. 1, 1970 and scheduled to be combat ready by Aug. 1, 1971. It attained its goal nearly four-and-a-half months ahead of time.

The 225th Helicopter Squadron, the 227th's sister unit here, was rated combat ready nearly six months ahead of schedule. Activated Oct. 1, 1970, it was scheduled to fly its first combat assault mission on July 1 of this year. Instead, the mission was flown on Jan. 6.

Major Chester Y. Williams, a member of Detachment 4, Air Force Advisory Team 4 and advisor to the commander of Soc Trang's 84th Combat Group, said "the 227th's first assault was in support of the 21st ARVN Division troops and the National Police Field Force operating in the U-Minh Forest."

There were two troop insertions in the morning and one in the afternoon. Williams said each one was different in respect to the techniques required of the pilots and the landing zones into which the troops were dropped. "I was really amazed at the flexibility of the crews," he said. "There wasn't much time to discuss each situation between

insertions, so the pilots had to adapt quickly. They did."

Williams has worked with the 227th since it was activated. He says he's impressed with the squadron's progress. "They've come a long way in four-and-a-half months. Most of the 227th's pilots are young and inexperienced, so they have to make up for it with aggressiveness and desire."

The majority of the unit's pilots have been training with the 4th Air Division's other three helicopter squadrons-the 211th, 217th and 225th. All of the pilots have combat experience.

Williams said he thought Maj. Tran Chau Ret, the 227th's commander, had done an excellent job of directing the assault. "Leadership was the important factor on the mission, as it is in any combat situation. Ret did a fantastic job of running the whole show as command and control pilot. There is no question in my mind that, from an operational standpoint, the VNAF can fight this war, especially with leaders like Major Ret."

Observations

One night in Saigon

The Saigon steets were nearly deserted an hour past the 10 p.m. curfew. With no GI business, most vendors had closed their shops for the night and were hurrying home.

But the hum of activity at the 90th Provost Marshal Office belies the calm facade of the city. The military police unit is assigned to U.S. Army Headquarters Area Command.

"Book him," snapped Staff Sgt. Bob Bradshaw to the Military Police Patrol that had apprehended a soldier wandering the downtown area at midnight.

A call to his unit had not been answered, but the young man from the 25th Infantry Division had admittedly been absent without approval for two days.

Bradshaw and Sgt. Ray Staggs are a two-man team pulling the 7 p.m. to 7 a.m. shift as PMO desk sergeants. Both are experienced MPs with ten and four years respectively in police work.

Their job: to direct the activities of 19 motorized and two walking patrols providing security for GI's in Saigon.

Their decisions can also mean the difference between a permanent mark on a man's record for a minor offense or merely a warning.

"We have an SOP to guide us," commented Sgt. Bradshaw, "but each desk man does his job differently."

Sgt. Staggs added, "A lot depends on a man's attitude when he's brought in here. If he's cooperative and has a good record we are more likely to let him off with a warning for a small violation."

A call from the local Canh Sat station shatters a momentary lull for Bradshaw. It is a Signal 100 alert--possible bomb or booby trap--and he moves into action. The area is swiftly isolated by MP patrols and a team from the 170th Explosive Ordnance Disposal is on the scene to disarm any potential threat.

Thirty minutes later another call reports negative results and the operation is logged in the desk book as just one of five Signal 100's received in an average day.

While handling stolen vehicle reports, "32s" (accidents) and assaults the pair attempts to keep abreast of the mounting paperwork. Two GI's

detained for curfew violations are booked on the more serious charges of AWOL and possession of falsified government papers.

The men turn in all their personal possessions, including belt and bootlaces, joining a growing number of men in cells lining one end of the room.

The arresting MP deposits their belongings and Sgt. Bradshaw begins the tedious chore of double checking the list down to serial numbers of large denomination MPC notes.

"You know," said Staggs, "some of these men are just asking for trouble when they go into certain areas. After dark there aren't many sections of the city that are considered safe for a GI and there's not much we can do when a man comes in here complaining that he was assaulted and robbed."

"Our men can't be everywhere at once so the individual has to take care of himself," he added as Sgt. Bradshaw nodded in agreement.

By 2 a.m. reports and requests for assistance have dropped sharply and both men quickly finish off a cold dinner between phone calls.

Entries now fill an entire page in the desk log as patrol members and the desk men finalize earlier reports.

An accident involving a GI and a Vietnamese national is logged in and a final 32 report is handed to a clerk.

Outside, the city continues its sleep with only an occasional Vietnamese walking guard along the road. It's relatively quiet now, a few moments to relax before curfew ends and Saigon wakes for another day.

(USAHAC)



ARMY DIGEST

Blackmarket Checks

We Americans normally consider it one of our prerogatives to write a personal check to take care of our financial obligations. However, in Vietnam some individuals use personal US dollar checks to manipulate the money blackmarket. For this reason, MACV and the component services have restricted their use.

For instance, you must fill out the "Pay to" line before signing a check. Personal checks in Vietnam may be given to a Military Banking Facility, the Vietnamese Regional Exchange, officer and Enlisted Messes, or other US Government Agencies.

Personal checks in Vietnam may also be given to another individual in Vietnam only if the "Pay to" line includes a statement such as: "pay to the order of the Chase Manhattan Bank, for Payment to John Doe," and then only to a US serviceman or to a US Government direct-hire civilian.

Don't risk disciplinary or adverse administrative actions. Abide by current regulations concerning the use of personal checks, and don't let your checks be picked up on the blackmarket.

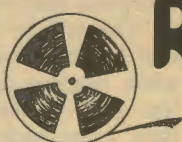
SITUATIONS

"SITUATIONS" continues this week with another episode on how an American can appreciate the Vietnamese point of view in a given instance. So read along, and try to put yourself in the other guy's shoes.

DO BE AWARE OF THE VIETNAMESE ATTITUDE TOWARD WOMEN

Reason: As a result of religious and ethical concepts Vietnamese women have a different status than American women. While exposure to our movies in the cities has modified traditional attitudes and behavior among the young, most Vietnamese still adhere to time-honored customs. Public displays of affection between the sexes (holding hands, kissing, embracing, fondling) are unacceptable. Since most marriages are arranged by the family, "nice" girls do not associate with Americans except in a properly chaperoned environment, nor can they have their pictures taken with any male except their own relatives. Girls seen in public with servicemen are considered to be involved in improper conduct and are regarded with disdain. Hostility toward the Americans is an understandable result and is often exploited by the communists.

Visits to Vietnamese homes should not be made without specific invitation and only when an adult male member of the family is present. At social occasions conversation is normally directed to those of one's own sex.



REVIEWS IN PASSING

REELS AND REAMS

By Sp4 Kevin Moriarty

What makes the novels of Saul Bellow so wonderfully haunting are his truly remarkable characters. Framed in the author's recurring theme of the individual attempting to come to terms with society, they reach about and attempt to grasp for a niche in the social scheme of things. Now Augie March and Moses Herzog, two of his more memorable creations have been eclipsed by the title character of Bellow's latest offering, Mr. Sammler's Planet.

Caught in a world that has passed him by, Artur Sammler, lingering relic of the Old World of Eastern Europe and pre-war London, finds himself placed by a series of circumstances in the New York of today. Perplexed by everything from a nattily-dressed pickpocket to some rather ill-smelling students at Columbia, Sammler mnemonically retreats to the old days of the life he knew.

The world he inhabits is half hidden behind his blind eye; the world he observes dances obscurely and curiously before his good one. America for Sammler is the place of sour milk and bitter honey where the mechanics of life and death are all too superficial and meaningless. Basics are superceded by the functional, the commercial, the pleasurable...

It was an attempt to retreat from all this that prompted Sammler to rush to Israel when the six-day war broke out. This meant a return to reality, a chance to be present at a primary event, a life and death experience in a world that provided a direct link with the past. Like a Hemingway character, Sammler feels like a war correspondent seeking the awesome spectacle of death. What he found is an almost carnival-like atmosphere of newspapermen accompanied by their girlfriends and a priest in Vietnam-style jungle fatigues.

Surrounded by eccentric relatives on a race course toward monetary gain and an uncertain future Sammler finds himself involuntarily involved and frequently embarrassed by their madcap *contretemps*.

Throughout his love/hate relationships with people and the state of things, Sammler demonstrates his bewilderment at not being able to meet "the terms of his contract" with life. Everything about him suggests contradiction, reversal and isolation. Despite the colorfully populated characters that surround him, he always remains removed and curiously alone.

Sammler as a character is reminiscent of Nabokov's Pnin, though much more complex. He is a multi-faceted figure who is superbly realized and utterly plausible. It would be impossible to even begin to examine the finer nuances of his makeup.

Bellow recently received the National Book Award for this novel and though this is no real measure of greatness, in this case the award was well deserved. He has written a marvelous, reflective work. As this novel is currently available through special services, it should be easy to obtain. It is easily one of the more richly rewarding books to come through country this year.

Civil Affairs

Growing capability

SAIGON (USAHAC) -- On the outskirts of Saigon, nestled on a horseshoe of land surrounded by the Saigon River, is the tiny settlement of Thu Thiem.

It might resemble any rural village as people tend livestock and raise crops, but Thu Thiem has one vital difference—it is a leper colony.

Officially founded in 1970 by the Friends of the Lepers Association, the village offers the victims of Hansen's Disease (leprosy) an opportunity to lead productive lives not dependent on government support.

And through the efforts of the U.S. Army Headquarters Area Command Civic Actions Office, the dream may soon be realized.

With materials furnished by the Civic Actions Office and volunteer labor from USAHAC's 716th Military Police Battalion, the colony built a pig pen that will enable the villagers to expand their swine herd from 12 to 100 hogs.

Then CA distributed three truckloads of building materials, clothing, foodstuffs and

personal items donated by organizations in Vietnam and the United States.

Limited to providing \$VN 100,000 for any single project, CA relies on gifts from other groups to aid several of its projects. One of these donations came from the employees of a civilian contractor for Department of Defense.

Each year the company conducts a raffle for its employees and the profits are used to aid some worthwhile cause in Vietnam. This year the company was able to donate \$VN 300,000 to Thu Thiem that will be used to construct a family dwelling unit.

"Our goal is to make the colony self-supporting," said Lieutenant Colonel Ed Wallington, head of the Civic Actions Office. "Expanding the village's ability to produce its own food is one step along the way."



BUDDIES -- Lt. Col. Ed Wallington, head of the U.S. Army Headquarters Area Command Civic Actions Office, presented toys donated by organizations in the United States to two of the younger residents of the Thu Thiem leper colony. See story above.

(U.S. ARMY PHOTO By Sp4 Dave W. Stuckel)



CHEESE! -- This young lady was one of the first to greet men from the 23rd Infantry Division who recently brought gifts to Van Coi Orphanage in An Ton, Quang Tin Province. (U.S. ARMY PHOTO By Sp4 J. Andrewjeski)

MEDCAP

LA CHU (101ST ABN DIV) -- A joint civil affairs program administered by the 3rd Brigade S-5 Psychological Operations (PSYOPS) team, 101st Airborne Division (Airmobile), the Military Assistance Command, Vietnam (MACV) advisors from the Hung Tra District and the Republic of Vietnam Regional Forces was held in the hamlet of La Chu, three miles west of Hue, recently.

The program included a local road repair project by the 156th Regional Forces Company and a Medical Civil Assistance Program (MEDCAP) clinic sponsored by the medical team from 3rd Battalion (Airmobile), 187th Infantry. Three South Vietnamese civilian medical technicians from Hue worked alongside the "Rakkasan" medics in treating the villagers. A Vietnamese "rock and roll" band entertained the waiting crowd that gathered at the clinic located in the hamlet's main square.

The MEDCAP effort included the distribution of medicines, vitamins and antibiotics to the townspeople and the treatment of minor bruises, burns and lacerations.

"At one time, the MEDCAP mission was solely an American undertaking," explained Major William Crouch, Hung Tra District MACV Senior Advisor and coordinator of the La Chu project. "But, more and more we are encouraging the South Vietnamese to take over the program. In this way, they will become increasingly self-sufficient in providing their own medical care."

Helping the needy

LONG THANH (1st AVN BDE) -- Civic action personnel of the 210th Aviation Battalion, based at Long Thanh North Army Airfield, recently held a party for impoverished Vietnamese families in the hamlet of Lien Kim Son in Long Thanh District. A list of 120 such families had been obtained through the cooperation of the village chief. The party illustrated to the people that the government, acting through the village chief, feels concern for their welfare.

Late last month Captain Loren R. Lofgren and his S-5 staff distributed large duffle bags of gifts to the needy families. Each bag contained fifteen articles of clothing, apple sauce, juice concentrate, candy, soft drinks, soap, toys, a mirror, shoelaces, and utensils.

The gifts, weighing over 3500 pounds, were collected over a two month period from the Catholic Relief Service, the 12th Aviation Group Chaplain and S-5, several U.S. charity organizations and many U.S. personnel.

Entertainment



VIEW FROM THE GREEN

By Sp4 Chuck Menich

This year in the ABA the Indiana Pacers are looking for their 2nd consecutive title. Without a player in the top 10 scorers the team depends on balance, speed and the rebounding strength of league leading (18.2 rebounds per game) Mel Daniels. Along with the (6-10) Daniels at center the starting five consists of: guards Bill Keller and Freddie Lewis, and forwards (6-9) Bob Netolicky and (6-5) Roger Brown. The team at the time of this writing is leading the ABA Western Division with a 69.6 percentage, tops in the league. The Pacers will be looking to the Virginia Squires and Utah Stars for their toughest competition, in the upcoming playoffs, for the championship.

This year if everything goes right Hank Aaron will get close to Willie Mays in the home run race. Right now Aaron stands at 592 and is 36 years old. Mays, who will turn 40 May 6, has 628 round trippers but the last two seasons have been mediocre for the slugger. He has hit 13 and 28 respectively the last two injury ridden years. Aaron has consistently hit 30-40 home runs a season. So if Mays has another bad year Aaron with his consistency could make up some of the 36 home run spread. The next goal for Aaron will then be the Babe's mark of 714.

If he can stay healthy he'd only have to hit an average of 31 home runs a year in the next four seasons to top 714. Aaron will then be 40. There's a good chance he'll beat the Babe's record.

FOR OLDTIMERS

- 1) Babe Ruth wore number 3 for the Yankees. Who wears it now?
- 2) Eddie Shore was a star in what sport?
- 3) The scourge of tennis in the 20s was known as "Big Bill." What was his full name?
- 4) Tex Rickard was associated with what sport?
- 5) Who was the first player to hit a grand slam in the World Series?
- 6) Who were the original "Celtics?"
- 7) Who was baseball's first commissioner?
- 8) Who held the heavyweight championship the longest?
- 9) What baseball team was called the Black Sox?
- 10) Who was the "Flying Finn?"

ANSWERS: 1) Nobody, the number was retired. 2) Ice hockey (formerly of Boston). 3) Bill Tilden. 4) He was boxing's first famous promoter. 5) Elmer Smith, Indians against the Dodgers, 1920. 6) First all-star professional basketball team. 7) Judge Kenesaw Mountain Landis. 8) Joe Louis, 1937-1949. 9) The Chicago White Sox, because of the baseball scandal of 1919. 10) Paavo Nurmi, world's leading miler in 1920s.



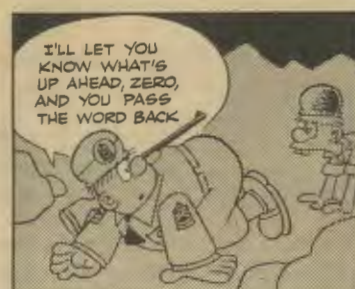
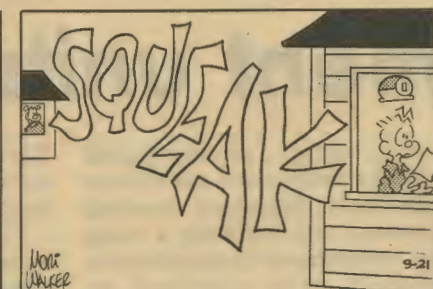
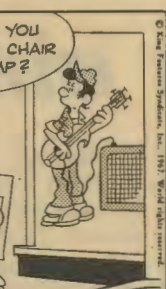
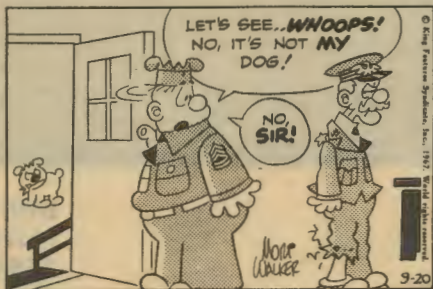
ARMY DIGEST

BUNKER BUNNY SEEZ:

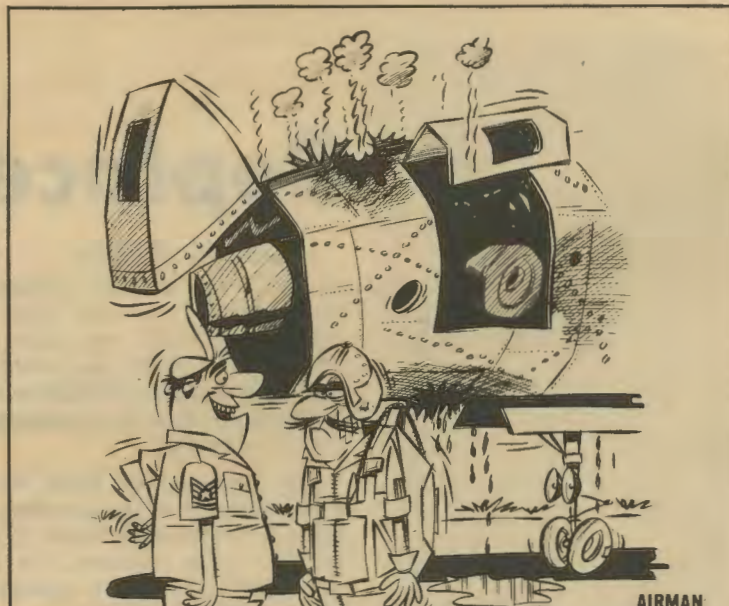
"Hello fellas. Remember me I'm Jaqueline Bisset. I recently appeared in the film *Airport* as an Airline stewardess. As you will recall I didn't have a very pleasant trip as one of the passengers tried to blow up the plane I was on. There are other kinds of trips that are also unpleasant. Pill-popping, snorting and mainlining are rotten ways to fly. So play it safe when you want to take a trip take a plane. Most planes don't carry a death package."

Beetle Bailey

By Mort Walker



"HA, HA!...AND I THOUGHT YOU BOILED THE EGGS!"



"Haw, haw, haw... Wanna hear somethin' funny, Captain. Looks like your photo-recon flight over the North Vietnamese SAM sites was wasted, 'cause... haw, haw, haw... Somebody forgot to take off the lens covers...!!"



Every night at the movies



APRIL 18-24	SUN (18)	MON (19)	TUES (20)	WED (21)	THURS (22)	FRI (23)	SAT (24)
TAN SON NHUT No1	The McKenzie Break	The Mind Of Mr. Soames	Cry Of The Banshee	How Do I Love Thee	The Valley Of Gwangi		
MACV ANNEX	The Undefeated	Oliver	The McKenzie Break	The Mind Of Mr. Soames	Cry Of The Banshee		
MACV COMPOUND	Loving	The Last Day Of The War	The Undefeated	Oliver	The McKenzie Break		
TAN SON NHUT No2	The Executioner	Loving	The Last Day Of The War	The Undefeated	Oliver		
BIEN HOA AB	You Can't Win 'Em All	The Brain	The Executioner	Loving	The Last Day Of The War		
DA NANG AB No1	The Wild Bunch	Trouble With Girls	Getting Straight	Paddy	To Commit A Murder		
DA NANG AB No2	Kashmiri Run	The Looking-Glass War	The Wild Bunch	Trouble With Girls	Getting Straight		
FREEDOM HILL	Little Fauss And Big Halsy	Kashmiri Run	The Looking-Glass War	The Wild Bunch	Trouble With Girls		
PHU CAT	On A Clear Day You Can See Forever	The Big Bounce	The Walking Stick	El Condor	Shark		
TUY HOA AB	Macho Callihan	Zabriskie Point	Che	Alice's Restaurant	Which Way To The Front		
CAM RANH BAY	Dirty Dingus Magee	Brotherly Love	Death Rides A Horse	Darker Than Amber	Murder For Sale		
PHAN RANG	Airport	The Liberation Of L.B. Jones	The Graduate	Tarzan's Deadly Silence	Support Your Local Sheriff		
CAN THO	Hornet's Nest	The Grasshopper	Ned Kelly	The Landlord	Hail, Hero		
VUNG TAU	The Adventurers	The Boys In The Band	The Chairman	Tell Me That You Love Me Junie Moon			



BUS STOP -- Soldiers of the 1st Infantry Division (ARVN) prepare to board UH-1 helicopters of the 158th Aviation Battalion, 101st Airborne Division.

Replacement units aim to please

LONG BINH (USARV) -- The most uptight, emotion-packed soldiers in the Republic of Vietnam are the newbies and short-timers found in the 90th and 22nd Replacement Battalions. Awaiting orders to virtually any place in country, and following a tiring 18-to-26-hour flight, the newbies are understandably apprehensive and fatigued. Many DEROSing short-timers, on the other hand, are beginning to think like civilians again, and cannot wait to take off on their freedom bird.

The American Red Cross, located at each replacement battalion, lends assistance to the travelling soldiers, and provides free haircuts through the exchange barber shops. Often considered as harassment by the young soldiers, the haircut policies are necessary to insure minimum military standards for the often shaggy-haired soldier returning from the field.

A small medical and dental detachment is provided to care for the health needs of the transients. Incoming personnel process through a fluoridation treatment aimed at adding extra protection against decay of their teeth while they are in Vietnam.

Anxieties can be vented through the vast entertainment and recreational programs. A series of movies is rotated through the battalion's various theaters, so there is always a choice of movies to attend, and the clubs have an average of three live shows each day.

Alice's Restaurant, a popular snack bar at the 90th, provides an air conditioned place for men to eat and chat with their buddies.

The P.X. concession includes a gift shop, complete with wrapping service for those last minute gifts. And a steam and massage parlor is handy for soothing travel-weary muscles.

The favorite recreational spot at the 90th is the swimming pool, where G.I. shorts are available for those without swim suits. Both battalions have ball fields and tennis courts; one at the 90th is nicknamed the "Swamp Bowl."

Geographically, the 90th and 22nd handle roughly the southern and northern parts of the country, respectively. Each battalion is composed of incoming and outgoing (DEROSing) companies for enlisted men, a company for officers (O-5 and below), an R & R company, and a headquarters company for permanent party personnel. The R & R company for the 90th is located at Camp Alpha in Tan Son Nhut.

Attachments to the battalions include a central issue facility, bus detachment, finance detachment, APO detachment, and medical and dental detachments. The Veteran's Administration is also on hand, giving orientation classes and personal interviews for ETSing people.

Despite the lack of harassment and availability of services at the replacement centers, they seem to be unpopular with soldiers. No one likes to wait for an airplane or wonder too long about an assignment, so the attitude is understandable. Even so, one feels respect for the speed with which the cadre process so many thousands of soldiers each day.

Seize VC hospital, find nurse inside

LZ HAWK HILL (196TH INF. BDE) -- A chance reunion of a Hoi Chanh working with men of Company C, 3rd Battalion, 21st Infantry, and a Viet Cong nurse took place recently near LZ Center. The occasion was Company C's discovery of an NVA hospital hidden in the bush just northeast of the LZ.

The Hoi Chanh who led the unit to the hospital had previously worked for two years with the nurse as a VC medic.

"About a thousand meters from the suspected hospital site we found that the entire approach area was heavily booby-trapped, so we called in artillery," said Sergeant First Class Homer Salzman, acting field first sergeant of Company C.

After setting up a night defensive position in the vicinity of the hospital, the unit awoke the next morning to find that the artillery barrage had made their access to the hospital relatively safe. Six of the "Chargers" advanced to within the hospital's outer complex only to find, once again, that the inner compound was booby-trapped and further penetration was impossible. At that location, however, they did find the only remaining enemy: a VC nurse with a gangrenous wound suffered from being struck several days earlier by a Claymore mine.

Questioned by a Kit Carson scout named Quyt, who was working with the 196th unit, the nurse revealed that the hospital's two doctors, seven medics, two other nurses, and 30 NVA guards had fled the area after the artillery barrage began. She said that in their haste they had to leave her behind, promising to return for her later. The next people she saw were the "Chargers" and the Hoi Chanh with them, whom she recognized immediately.

The soldiers removed four aluminum containers laden with various surgical instruments, including scalpels, forceps, bone saws, and drugs such as morphine and penicillin.

The captured instruments were of Communist Chinese, Soviet and French manufacture.

For the VC nurse, who was in danger of death because of her wounds, the reunion may have been a happy one, after all. After further questioning, she was flown to the 91st Evacuation Hospital in Chu Lai for medical treatment that will probably save her life.



THEIR PAL -- All wrapped up in their pet are Petty Officer First Class Charles A. Butts (left) and Navy Airman Steve Ledger (right). Sam (both left and right) weighs around 100 pounds, is 16 feet long, and belongs to the members of the crash/rescue division of the Fleet Air Support unit at Binh Thuy.

(USN PHOTO By:
J03 Don Gaylien)



Soul drummer organizes band

CAMP HOCHMUTH -- Motown Recording Corporation in Detroit is where most of the soul music in the states is produced. Yet the music isn't always played by the people singing the song. The songs are often sung by the hit singers while the background music is played by professional musicians.

One of these professionals from Motown is now serving with Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 2nd Brigade, 101st Airborne Division (Airmobile). Private First Class Maurice L. Jackson, Special Services clerk, was a drummer in his own band, The El Dorados, which played for

recording sessions in the "soul capital" of the world.

Jackson began playing the drums at age 10. He became a professional drummer when his sister, a secretary for Motown got his band a job.

"The first group I played for was Gladys Knight and the Pips," notes Jackson. Since his first experience with a famous group, he has played with The Supremes, Stevie Wonder, The Jackson Five (no relation) and the Temptations.

After entering the service, he organized a band in his basic training unit, and he hopes to form a band while he is in the Republic of Vietnam.