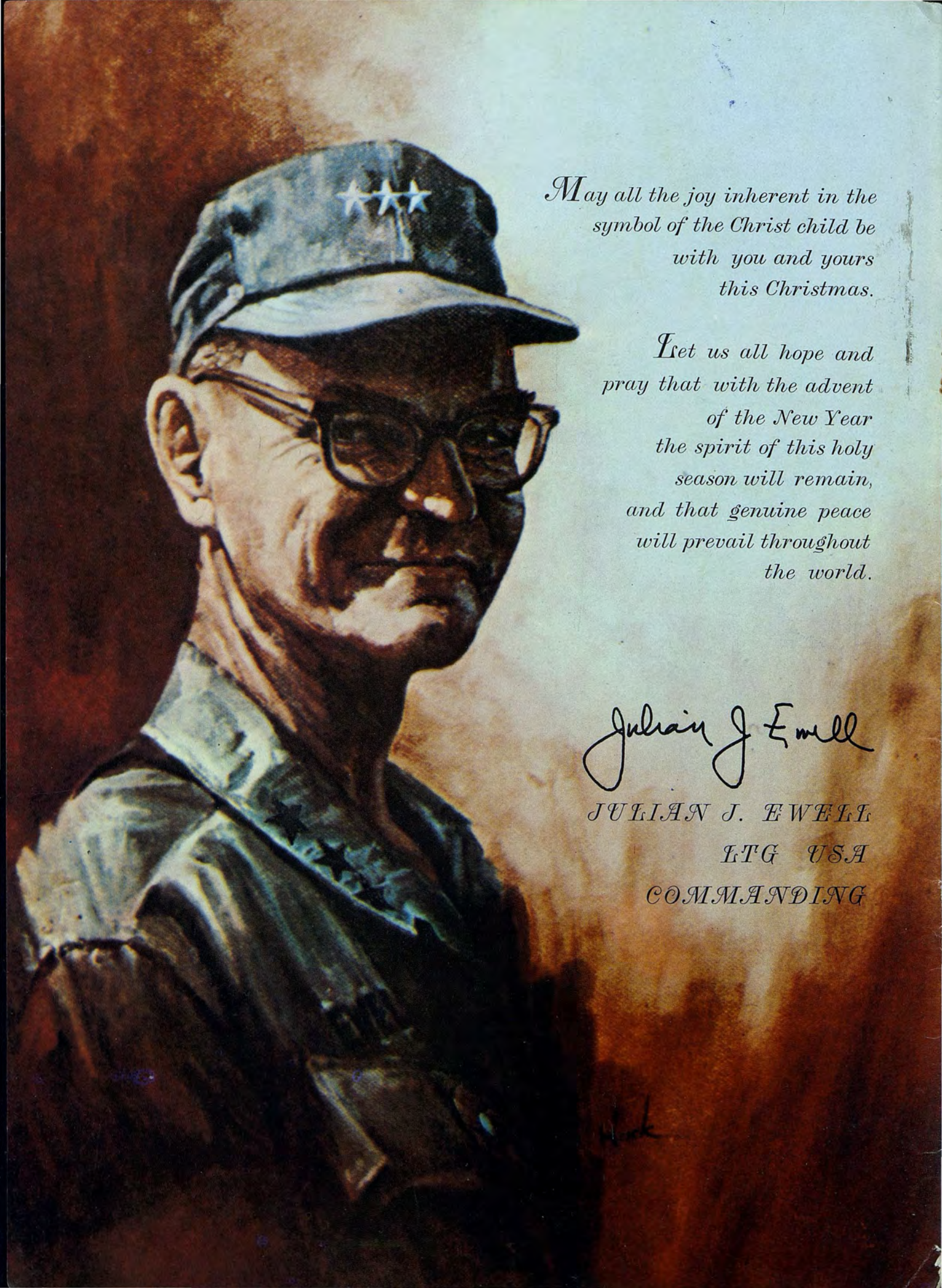
THE HURRICANE

DECEMBER 1969 NUMBER TWENTY-SIX
A PUBLICATION OF II FIELD FORCE VIETNAM

Inside the Cao Dai Holy See



May all the joy inherent in the symbol of the Christ child be with you and yours this Christmas.

Let us all hope and pray that with the advent of the New Year the spirit of this holy season will remain, and that genuine peace will prevail throughout the world.

Julian J Ewell

JULIAN J. EWELL
LTG USA
COMMANDING

Chuck Winer

(2842)

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NO 26

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Cao Daiism, the "faith of everyman" explored in this issue on page 16, was founded less than 50 years ago in Vietnam. It bridges five of the world's greatest religions—Buddhism, Confucianism, Zen, Taoism and Catholicism—and is followed by over three million people in Southeast Asia. The breathtaking beauty of the Holy See at Tay Ninh rivals many a famous cathedral in Europe. The front cover, a detail from a temple column was shot by the magazine's editor.

Cities of the Mekong Delta are not really cities at all but small traditional centers of commerce along the main Delta waterways. Although this southern most region of RVN contains half the nation's population, the largest city has has but 90,000. The third sketch of Vietnam's cities begins on page two.

The rear cover was shot by Sp4 Dean Hawk while with a Philippine Civic Action Medcap team. PHILCAGV is discussed on page 30. Also, in this issue is the first of a two part article on the Viet Cong Infrastructure, long time thorn in the GVN side. The article was four months in preparation and is an accurate account of the VCI's operation and current capability. (p. 13)

The Editor

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Can Tho and the Delta

The Cities of Vietnam Part III

by Specialist 4 Darrell Batchelder

LESS THAN TWO centuries ago there were no cities in IV Corps. Eventually, the rivers spawned them, trading centers for fish and rice which are still the largest exports of the Delta. Today, the rivers remain the lifeblood of the cities.

Looking at the southeast tip of Asia, many tend to believe the land mass is slowly sinking into the sea. In reality however, the opposite is happening. The rivers are carrying top soil from as far away as China and depositing the silt at the base of the Delta, extending the land mass into the sea at the rate of two miles per hundred years.

After many centuries, the passing rivers created a low, fertile flatland—an often flooded, agricultural gold mine whose potential has only been scratched.

With less than 20 per cent of the land, Delta farmers produce 75 per cent of South Vietnam's rice and 80 per cent of its cattle, pork and poultry. River fishermen supply the country with 85 per cent of its fresh water fish.

And although the Delta region contains half of South Vietnam's 17 million population, the largest city has less than 90,000 residents.

The cities then, are little more than trading centers, marketplaces for the surrounding area's production. Predictably, the three largest cities are fronted on tributaries of the Mekong River. My Tho, the second largest Delta city, straddles the Song (river) Cua Tieu just 31 miles southwest of Saigon. Vinh Long is 27 miles southwest of My Tho on the Song Co Chien branch and the capital, Can Tho, sits 19 miles south of Vinh Long on the Song Hau Giang branch.

In the last decade, the population of the cities has almost doubled. Many of the newcomers are refugees, many displaced farmers; others seek either the security of the city from the Viet Cong or a better standard of living.

Still, little has changed. Despite the Garden of Eden abundance, there is a lack of mineral resources and construction materials required for any kind of broad-based industrialization. Even though it is the 20th Century, eight million lives are still affected by the whims of the mighty Mekong River complex.

It is easy to see why the cities are such a by-product

of the land, why their being is directly concerned with the foods of the Delta. The cities reflect this dependence, with the exception of the capital city, Can Tho, almost to the point of monotony.

My Tho and Vinh Long are cities of the same mold. Sporting the same elongated contours along both sides of the water where the small fishing boats unload their daily catch, the cities are bustling commerce centers. The marketplace is centralized and larger than marketplaces in comparably-sized cities farther north. The 'cities' qualify as such in population only. There are few fine restaurants or big stores. There is little in the way of nightlife. My Tho with a population of 65,000 is little more than a big village.

Vinh Long's major industry, as expected, is rice mills. The city supports 93 mills and has 41 brick factories as its second most important industry. River clay is abundant here and it is far cheaper to build a house of brick and cement than of wood. There are numerous small scale operations: handicrafts, mechanical trades and small shops.

The limited highways, due to the often flooded lowlands that lead in and out of the cities, are always filled with farmers bringing their products to market. Following Route 4, the largest highway in the Delta, south from Vinh Long brings you to Can Tho.

With a growing population of 87,000, Can Tho is similar to the other Delta cities; it serves as a transportation link or destination for the surrounding provinces and relies heavily on the river traffic for its food and economy. Can Tho is known for its university (the only college in IV Corps) and as the cultural center of the Delta.

Legitimate theaters featuring the old forms of drama, compete sucessfully with the newer movie houses in the downtown area. The corps' cultural drama teams are organized here too. Through a good primary and secondary education system, Can Tho has a learned, middle-class fully aware of its history and culture. This sophistication is unusual in the Delta.

As if pitting these aesthetic values against more practical ones, the city provides a small park on the waterfront near the market square—it can only be seen in the late evening though, as vendors cover the grass with their wares during the day. Pedicab taxis seem undecided too. In most Vietnamese cities the passengers are pushed through the streets from the rear. In the Delta, motorcycles convert in the daytime to pedicabs with the addition of a small uncomfortable carriage bolted to the rear fender. The rider is treated to the fumes of the cycle's exhaust and the prospect of seeing little but the back of the driver's head.

Though much of the city's downtown section has been undergoing a rebuilding program due to the '68 Tet offensive, the French influence in the structures, schools and tree-lined boulevards is still evident. Other nationalities affect the population more subtlely.

Cambodians, mostly farmers, make up seven per cent of the Delta population. Chinese, a scant three per cent of the population, are more noticeable, however, as almost all live in the cities. Many own their own small businesses. Historians say that the Delta people migrated from the north bringing the names of their former villages and hamlets with them.

Another not-so-subtle difference can be noted in the South. Sewers, normally dug many feet below the surface, are channeled just inches under the sidewalks due to the flat lowlands contributing to the overall *aura* of the city.

To the east the rivers flow into mangrove swamps and mud flats at low tide.

To the south the land gets higher, rougher and the

FEASE

Old woman with the family wash

COX

The Delta capital's economy is heavily dependent upon river traffic

FEASE

Downtown Can Tho

Woman dumping garbage in stream at Can Tho

COX

GIẶC CỘNG ĐỐT PHÁ NHÀ CỬA, GIẾT HẠI ĐỒNG BÀO. *Thanh Niên* HÃY TÒNG QUÂN GIẾT GIẶC, CỨU NGUY NƯỚC NHÀ.

Recruiting poster in Can Tho—undermining an ancient VC stronghold

FEASE

jungle noticeably thicker. The lower portion of the continent has always been wild, uncultivated. It is an uncontested Viet Cong stronghold except for isolated areas.

West, the land rises slightly only to meet the Gulf of Siam on a lovely, sandy coastline. The channels are deeper here, allowing large fishing boats with deep drafts passage into the land's interior. Forty-five miles west of Can Tho is the city of Rach Gia.

There is a marked difference in the western cities. The crops are more diversified with bananas, coconuts, mungo beans, sweet potatoes, tobacco, manioc, pineapple, soybeans, corn, sugar cane and peanuts growing along the highway. The cities are cleaner, less crowded; the venders are more friendly.

Forty to 50 truck loads of dry fish daily wind their way along muddy roads to Saigon from the port city. In the early morning before dawn, fisherm n slip through the maze of channels to the Gulf where they set their nets for the daily catch. They work hard during the day. As the sun turns orange in the afternoon sky amidst feathered lilac clouds, stevedores unload the painted boats, etched with two eyes on the bow, permitting the boats to see through the night.

For a Vietnamese city, Rach Gia is slow-paced, and almost quiet. There are no major American units in the area and few people work for (or businesses cater to) the military.

If Rach Gia is friendly and prosperous, the village of Duong Dong matches those qualities two-fold. The small city sits in a large bay on the island of Phu Quoc, close to fifty miles off the mainland. Phu Quoc measures 14 by 30 miles and is covered with forrested mountains. It is the largest island under Vietnamese control.

The chief's house and the old hotel are practically the tallest structures around; each is two stories high. The town's roads run not in a straight line but follow wherever the property owner sets his low fence. The main bridge is only wide enough for one jeep at a time but no one minds backing up to let you pass. Children don't beg and people smile just because they are glad to see you. Prices in the market are the same for soldiers as they are for the native populace. In short, with the war in the background, people are not afraid to be themselves.

Acclaimed as the world's best, Duong Dong produces nuoc mam sauce, the potent fish sauce used often in Vietnam. It brought in close to half a milion dollars to the fishing community last year making the area largely middle-class.

A second major industry, black pepper, also contributes to the economy. The financial security reflected in the city's schools and hospitals on the island paradise shows the pride and success the people feel for their community.

Classically these Delta "cities" are not really cities at all. They will never have the historical significance of Hue, the beauty of Dalat, the military importance of Da Nang, nor the political importance of Saigon. Yet to the Delta, they are important. To the provinces as well as to Vietnam, they are real and alive. They are Vietnam.

BATCHELDER

According to superstition, eyes painted on boats' bows permit mariners to "see" through the waters at night

Supersabre!

Bien Hoa's "Pair-O-Dice"

by Lieutenant Chuck Babcock

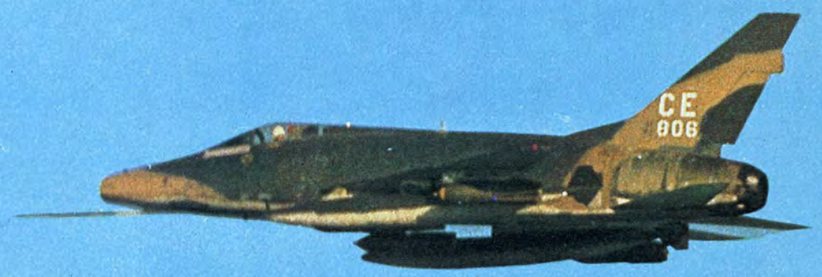
A FLEET of smoke-trailing motorbikes led the F-100 jet fighter back from the runway. From the cockpit, First Lieutenant Ben Smith, of Philipsburg Montana, smiled and waved. He had just completed his *champagne flight*—his 225th, and last, mission in Vietnam.

By tradition, he was greeted by his fellow pilots, toasted with champagne by his CO, Lieutenant Colonel Robert F. Houlahan, and hosed down by a hidden water truck.

"It was kind of sad coming in for the last time," Smith said later. "I'm going to miss the old 'Hog!'"

During his tour with the 90th Tactical Fighter Squadron at Bien Hoa Air Base, "Snuffy" flew his Supersabre against many targets, but supporting "troops in contact" meant the most to him. "That's what it's all about for us," he said. "We bomb a lot of bunkers and base camps, but when we help the guy

USAF



on the ground—that's when we've really done our job."

And more than the soldier on the ground may realize, the job is an exacting one. While the infantryman trains for four months, the jet pilot spends a year learning to fly and six months more specializing in the fighter. "At first," said First Lieutenant Doug Shale, of Morgantown, West Virginia, "your reactions are so far behind those of the plane, you wouldn't even get hurt in the crash."

Tactical air support involves a blend of this specialized training, a high-spirited esprit and teamwork between the flyers and their maintenance crews. The "Dice" of the 90th seem to have found the right mixture.

Founded in 1917, the squadron is the Air Force's oldest. The "*Pair-O-Dice*" nickname evolved, according to the squadron history book, "from the influence of certain members, who, through this symbol, cornered the money market after each payday."

The dice symbol is still worn by all the pilots, but the planes and techniques have changed considerably, of course. Most missions are daytime preplanned strikes (usually against bunker complexes and base camps). Scrambles off the alert pad (usually for troops in contact) must be airborne within fifteen minutes and are available anytime, in any weather.

"We'd all rather fly the alert missions," said First Lieutenant Denis Leuters of New Canaan, Connecticut. "We get to fly more where we're really needed that way. Besides, the food on the alert pad is the best on base."

Before each preplanned flight, the pilots discuss their mission, while ground crews arm and inspect the plane. This hour and a half briefing can boggle the mind of the uninitiated with its attention to detail: mils and angles of dive on the bomb run; air temperature increases that require a higher take-off speed, and even an emergency of the day, like "what-to-do-if-your-engine-dies."

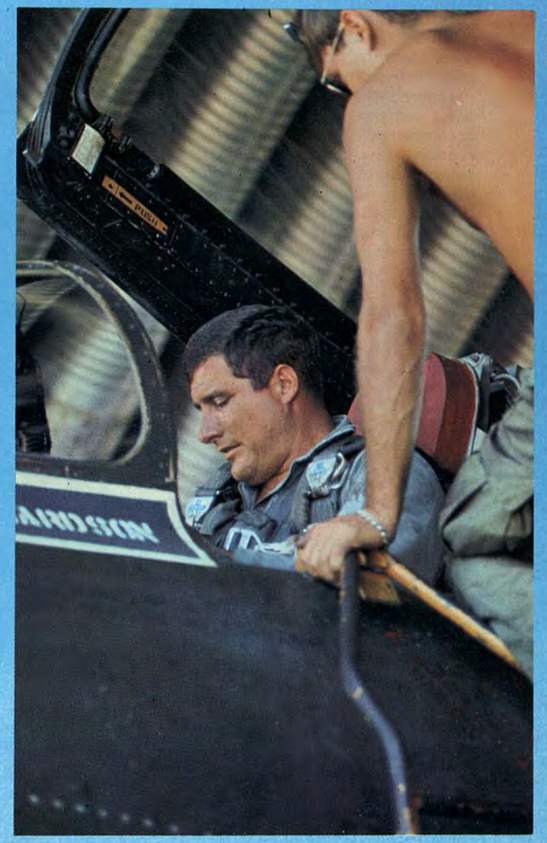
Meanwhile on the flight line, the maintenance crews are busy trying to keep the maximum number of planes flyable, no easy task when one considers the average age of the F-100 is twelve years.

Captain Arnold J. Kampe, of Galveston, Texas, and Technical Sergeant (E-6) John Nix, the expedite driver, move about, shuffling their lineup of jets like football coaches beset with injuries. Small talk among the old maintenance sergeants resembles a discussion of cars, except the relative merits of North American and Lockheed are argued instead of those of Ford and Chevrolet.

Each jet has its own personal crew chief, responsible for the overall health of that particular aircraft. As Sergeant Bobby Halstead, of Phoenix, N.Y., said, "I just know a little bit about everything on the plane. If something is seriously wrong, a specialist will fix it."

The importance of maintenance

BABCOCK



Air Force "Pair-o-dice" pilot, Lt Ben Smith straps in for his last flight in Vietnam (below) F-100s to the attack

shows in the organization of the 3d Tactical Fighter Wing. To support the "Dice" and the three other fighter squadrons, it has avionics, munitions and field maintenance squadrons. Their specialists are expert in fields ranging from sheet metal to turbines, from hydraulics to weapons systems.

New, sophisticated methods are assisting the preventive maintenance program too. In one, called SOAP, oil samples are taken daily and analyzed by a spectrograph. A computer then calculates the amount and type of metal in each sample, making it possible to identify wear in critical engine parts.

In comparison, the pilot's pre-flight check may seem rather perfunctory. He reads the log books for deficiencies and then, according to Captain Bob Rosenbach, of St. Louis, "We walk around kicking tires and making sure the bombs won't fall off."

The mission may take the "Dice" anywhere in IV, III or parts of II Corps. Regardless of the area, a FAC (forward air controller) will be there and his importance cannot be overemphasized. He must mark the target and identify Allied forces. The fighter pilots simply will not drop their ordnance until friendlies are safely identified.

After a mission, while the crew chief

goes through a detailed checklist, the pilots debrief and then often retire to the club. Here the personality of the fighter pilot really comes to the surface.

Conversation, to the surprise of no one, centers around flying, usually accompanied by hand motions that represent dive-boming jets. There is the veteran flight commander going over the finer points of flying the F-100 with the new lieutenant awaiting his first-check-out ride. There is the ex-B-52 jockey comparing the ride in the two planes to that of "a 1949 Chevy versus a Stingray."

And there are the tall tales: of the pilot who, in an effort to get "spending" money, told his wife he needed $50 a month to make sure his parachute was checked every day; of the wingmate who bailed out and created a traffic jam—Army helicopters racing in for the rescue; of the color scheme of the tracers they fly through: green for AK, red for .30-caliber machine gun and white for .51-caliber machine gun.

And there is the silence that comes over the room when "Startrek" is on television. Perhaps jet pilots feel a special closeness to the space explorers.

It's a certainty that ground troops feel a certain closeness to the "Dice" and tactical fighters like them when they are in a tight spot.

Champagne flight BABCOCK

Scramble Hawk 15

THE TELEPHONE RANG. "Scramble Hawk 15," the voice said. Sprinting for the F-100 was reminiscent of a scene from an old movie. The newcomer climbed breathlessly into the back seat of the F-model (the usual D-model is a single seat fighter) and struggled to snap-in, hook-up, tighten-down, and turn-on all his equipment—chute, ejection seat, radio, oxygen mask.

With a near-nauseous explosion, the pilot, Major Vince Evans cart-started the aircraft. The usual starting procedure, hooking up a compressor hose, would take too long. Hawk 15 and 16 rolled toward the runway, other traffic moving aside.

After a quick stop to arm the 20 millimeter cannons, a last check of the instruments, and engaging the after burner, the alert birds rumbled down the 10,000-foot concrete strip at nearly 200 knots and were airborne. It was eight minutes after the phone rang.

Climbing above the clouds, they received a brief on the target, a VC base-camp north of Cu Chi that had signs of recent activity. After rendezvous with the FAC (Forward Air Controller), they circled to get rid of the fuel in the wing tanks, extra weight which might put too much stress on the wing during a bomb dive.

A pre-planned strike of B-57 Canberras from Phan Rang had been diverted to the target and got there first. So the Hawk element circled some more. The mid-morning sun at 12,000 feet softly played on cotten candy clouds, hardly the atmosphere for a war plane. In contrast far below, occasional glimpses of the far side of the moon were visible—B-52 craters.

Then the "Magpies" were finished and the FAC called the Supersabres down. They rolled in, careful not to run down his light plane and listened carefully to his brief. He ran the show. There were no friendlies within three kilometers. He marked the target with a rocket: "Hit my smoke."

Captain Glenn Davis made the first pass. Major Evans banked to follow and could easily watch the approach of his mate and the explosion of the two 500-pound high drags—bright yellow enclosed in billows of black. (High drags are equipped with collapsible fins that pop out to slow their rate of fall. Otherwise they might explode directly under the low diving jets.)

Major Evans rolled in at 450 knots, so low it seemed like a landing. The Gs built up and (then with a physical shudder) the bombs were gone and the jet was pulling out and banking sharply.

With the force of five times the weight of gravity tugging on you, the G-suit has a battle keeping all the blood in a man's body from being dragged down to his feet. To the uninitiated, the feeling was that of someone standing on your stomach and kicking you in the kidneys at the same time.

And there's that guy in the front seat whistling a tune and diving for another pass. The FAC was parked at 1,500 feet playing cheerleader: "Beautiful bomb!"

Twice more the F-100s screamed in on bomb runs and then each made two strafing passes on hedge rows, trying to detonate booby traps. The plane shook with the bursts of 20 mm. Ordnance expended, they climbed up while the Bronco went in for the Bomb Damage Assessment (BDA).

The FAC radioed the pilots: "100 per cent of ordnance on target; 100 per cent of target destroyed." Still it didn't seem like much to scramble for. As Captain Davis later said: "We got three bunkers, four fighting positions, 20 meters of trench line and a partridge in a pear tree."

The Hawk flight turned for Bien Hoa after checking each other over for possible battle damage. Fifteen minutes later they were back on the ground. Ground crews rebombed and refueled the planes; they were still on 15 minute alert. Major Evans and Captain Davis went back to wait for the next call.

THE VCI

A II-PART REPORT ON THE VIET CONG INFRASTRUCTURE, THE INTRICATE AND ELABORATE COMMUNIST SHADOW GOVERNMENT, COMPILED FROM INTERVIEWS AND VC DOCUMENTS.

by Lieutenant Tom Sileo

THE VIET CONG Infrastructure (VCI). It has an ominous ring to it. While the VC try to strengthen it, the Allies try to destory it. And so the struggle goes on.

The VCI is both an organization and personnel. It is the political and administrative organization through which the Viet Cong (VC) seek to control the people. It is also those insurgent Communists in Vietnam who are not main combat forces, such as NVA or guerrilla. The infrastructure, embodying the Communist party control structure, is sometimes called Vietnam's "shadow government" and refers to how those insurgents are organized to do their jobs.

The VCI has both political and military aims, and according to one captured VC document, "In the hamlets, fields and plots of land we must make people participate in the political struggle at the same time they become effective guerrilla fighters. We must turn a hamlet into a fortress against the aggressors."

HISTORY

Time, and circumstances like the military situation, bring changes in strategy. Hence some of the methods and tactics used by the Communists in Vietnam in the 1950s have been discarded or modified. The VC Political Orientation of 1965, for example, discarded small guerrilla-type military victories and placed major emphasis on large scale attacks. "The mission," it said, "of winning large victories is becoming greater and more pressing. The combat requirement is to annihilate more of the enemy than over."

Though the VCI is pliable and subject to change, the Communist doctrine in Vietnam has always been to engage the maximum number of people in the insurgency, the old, the young and the women included, to divide those sympathetic to the cause into groups, and then to give them each a specific task to perform. An entire family for example, might be responsible for making bamboo sticks for use in booby traps.

There are four fundamentals for a successful insurgency—a command organization, an overall strategy or plan of takeover, a doctrine or "cause," and the means of controlling the friendly forces involved in the insurgency. The VC cause in Vietnam is communism. The means of control is contained in the complicated VCI. The strategy too, is well-planned and has been carried out since 1954.

After the Indochina War in 1954, the Communist North Vietnamese had a highly developed political-military organization. Following the Geneva Agreement, most of the some 90,000 military troops employed in South Vietnam returned north, but numerous arms and weapons caches were left behind—for future use. About 6,000 hard-core Communists went "underground" in South Vietnam and 1954 to

1960 was characterized by terrorism and sporadic efforts by the Communists to organize the farmers and the poor. Some returned from Hanoi, trained in subversive tactics, and the harassment of government troops increased.

During 1960–1965, a period of consolidation, the Communists achieved some sophistication in their organization. They established the National Front for the Liberation of South Vietnam (NLF), their "front" organization, and their combat troops began attacking large size GVN units.

In effect, what the Communists tried to do in the early stages of their insurgency was what they are still attempting to do now. Under the control of specially-trained VCI propaganda personnel, the insurgents tried to convince young Vietnamese to avoid the draft, to downgrade the ARVN and to build an informers' apparatus to provoke desertions.

ORGANIZATION

While the VCI consists of a number of committees, sub-committees and sections, the primary and simplest organization is the cell. It links the party with the workers and peasants and carries out party work among non-party members. By doctrine, if the cells are strong the party is strong.

The cell is assigned the job of provoking political motivation, encouraging its members and promoting confidence in the "cause." It consists of three people who may or may not know anyone in the chain of command other than the members of their own cell. The cell leader reports to his next higher superior and, according to the party document on "In Place Military Proselytizing Cells," . . . "An in-place cadre (anyone in a position of authority) system will control the cell leader who controls his cell members . . . who will control the sympathetic people."

The VCI has three-man cells, six-man half squads and 12-man squads. In the village there is the VC chapter, usually a five to 15 man body, governed by a standing committee of three or four persons. Here at the village level, the VCI village party secretary (the VC counterpart of the legitimately elected village chief) works with the district party secretary and is concerned with all village activities, especially the use and mobilization of the local guerrilla forces.

Each village also has a village security chief, supposedly elected by the villagers but actually appointed from one of the "front" organizations. If necessary, the villagers are forced to vote, even when not sympathetic to the VC. At the village level, the identity of the security chief could not very well be kept a secret due to his frequent association with his superiors. So, mock elections are held. Everyone is forced to vote and are thus implicated with the VC.

Each resident of the village must commit himself. Even the undecided may end up running with the VC for fear that


VCFOTO

Political cadreman addressing village rally

allied soldiers may suspect them of being VC anyway. "Guilt by association" is a common ploy.

After months of proselytizing and working in the hamlet, if it is taken over, families are organized into cells. Then a campaign of party control begins. Village administration is put under the control of Communist party members and the secretary of the party chapter committee becomes the prominent figure. When necessary, pro-GVN officials are either discredited or assassinated.

One level higher, at district, the VCI is more flexible and adaptable. Here, the district party secretary converts party policies and directives into specific actions.

But while the actual missions are carried out at village and district level, the key level of the VCI organization is the province. Here the important planning and consolidation take place. The province party secretary heads the province party committee, which hands down policy directives and maintains liaison with regional headquarters and with the Central Office for South Vietnam (COSVN) in Hanoi and Cambodia.

Directly under the party committee is the current affairs committee (the party secretary, deputy secretary and a few section leaders) which directs current, and plans future operations. It has its own organic personnel support, security section (bodyguards) and the all-important commo-liaison section. It directs the forward supply council, which supplies civilian labor, porters, food and planning services for the VC military units. On the other hand, the current affairs committee directs the procurement of civilian support as well, through the separate proselytizing sections.

To help operations, permanent liaison stations are maintained at all these levels, usually in the homes of local inhabitants. They are often operated by women and teenagers who transmit written messages and review ID cards, documents and letters of introduction. They arrange contacts for, and escort Viet Cong personnel traveling through their areas.

At each level, the Communists have agencies responsible for every phase of the insurgency, from communication, propaganda and finance to supply and security. Corps-wide rear-service-groups give food, clothing, medical, quartermaster, financial and weapons support for Viet Cong troops in their areas. (See *The Hurricane*, July 1969, for further details on rear-service-groups.)

At the top of the hierarchy is the National Liberation Front (NLF) Central Committee, ultimately controlled by the North Vietnamese Communist Party.

METHODS OF OPERATION

Obviously an insurgency cannot be successful without a successful military force. But in a Communist insurgency, military force is only one of several instruments used. It must be coordinated with activities like agitation, propaganda, terrorism recruitment and mass organization efforts. Hence the military portion of the insurgency is controlled by the political structure. Many military channels parallel party political channels, with the political chiefs being the more powerful.

The importance placed on non-military activity is noted in an indoctrination booklet:

"Because of their prestige, the members of the armed forces have great propaganda potentiality. If the fighter with a rifle in his hand knows how to make propaganda, to praise the political struggle and to educate the masses about their

VCFOTO

Party secretaries at a district plenary meeting

part in making the political attack, his influence may be very great. But if he simply calls on the population to join him in the armed struggle he will cause great damage."

But while this may be true, military victories help form world opinion favorable to the insurgency.

There are many elements in the Communist military structure. They have been called various names: the professional forces of the Peoples Army of North Vietnam (PAVN), main force units (VC and NVA units), territorial armies (indigenous personnel that operate in no larger then province size areas), the People's army, irregulars and guerillas (local militia units).

Whatever they are called though, their pattern of operations is similar. After the infrastructure has implanted Viet Cong in a village, a buildup is begun. The activists form armed propaganda teams (APTs), and indoctrination teams recruit additional personnel to form regional units. Part-time village militias are formed and, when necessary, village people are "promoted" into regular Viet Cong units. Once taken over, every villager is given a job, however menial.

The APTs usually agitate and distribute propaganda, though they are equally capable of collecting intelligence and often ambush, kidnap and assassinate. At times they arrive in a hamlet, burn a young man's ID card and tell his friends that he has come over to their side. They alienate him from both his friends and the possibility of going to the GVN for help.

But whatever the approach, the Viet Cong are bound by certain restrictions and policies. One such restriction is the Interprovince Inspection Team. Usually a five man team, its task is to examine the village organization and determine how well it is working. It is empowered to change what it wants and can be an effective checkup tool.

Other checks are secret agents im-


VCFOTO

Indoctrination—attempting to win a popular base

planted in villages and selfcriticism talks held to discuss the shortcomings of Viet Cong leaders. Hence the Viet Cong have many eyes and ears, making it virtually impossible for an activity to go unnoticed in a certain area.

The Viet Cong mind is sometimes difficult to understand. While VC have a strict policy never to steal from villagers, always to respect old people and not to take advantage of women, they have no qualms about assassinating anyone, women and children included, who cannot be won over to the "cause." But while assassination and intimidation are used extensively, they are not used indiscriminately. For example, usually officials who are either unpopular with the people (the ideal situation) or dangerous to the "cause," are assassinated.

"Public admonitions, killings and humiliations are used on anti-Viet Cong officials some of whom are taken away and never heard of again. The VC call it "re-education."

Great stress is laid on making inroads in "strategic" hamlets and villages, those that are pro-GVN. Various methods are used to make these inroads. Armed attack from the outside is a possibility as is organizing an underground and politically overthrowing it. Winning members of the hamlet defense force and making them act as proselytizers, or waiting until GVN forces have left a hamlet they considered pacified to begin operations are also likelihoods.

Tax collection (extortion), carried out by finance and economy sections, is another necessity for Viet Cong survival. By paying, the people provide much needed supplies and implicate themselves with the VC. There are taxes on production, property, travel, livestock and just about everything. And for those without money, there is forced labor, since their most valuable asset is their time.

Long An Province, in 1965 had a VC tax quota of VN $60,000,000. Only 47 percent of it was collected. In 1966, the quota was doubled and still less was collected. Methods became harsh and villagers either fled or purposely reduced production. And during that year there was an increase in the number of informants on the Viet Cong. So, the Viet Cong stop at times and evaluate what they are doing. While terror is quite an incentive, uncontrolled terrorism is not.

The Viet Cong also use "front" organizations like the Liberation Farmer Association to try to give the people a sense of pride in the VC struggle.

The Farmers' Association for example, collects taxes, summons people to meetings, and provides manpower and sabotage for the Viet Cong. The distaff parallel to this group is the Liberation Women's Association. Its members try to persuade young Vietnamese to join the Viet Cong. They cook and mend clothes for VC units and even send letters to units in the field to try to maintain morale. They compile files on local villagers, including such information as how many pigs and cows they have and if they have any relative working for the GVN.

NEXT MONTH

- VCI STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES
- USE OF PROPAGANDA
- OUTLOOK FOR THE FUTURE

The Cao Dai of Tay Ninh

Religion for Everyman

by Specialist 4 Don Sockol

THE SMALL PRIEST gathered his white robe before being seated, spoke a few words, then smiled expectantly.

"He says he will be happy to answer any questions you may have about the Cao Dai religion," said the interpreter, "but he will not discuss politics."

The priest's refusal to discuss politics is itself a political decision—a safe one. The decision has its roots in an event which took place in 1955. In that year, a Cao Dai general, Nguyen Thanh Phuong, under orders from President Diem, moved into the Cao Dai Holy See in Tay Ninh Province, disarmed the Papal guard and deposed the religion's acting Pope. A Cao Dai army, 80,000 strong, was disbanded and the sect's military power broken.

What is this religion? A religion few in the West have heard of, but which claims three million believers, most of whom are in Vietnam. A religion which has been given a grant of land in Tay Ninh Province that encompasses more than 1,000 acres and includes the legendary Nui Ba Den Mountain. A religion followed by more than 85 per cent of Tay Ninh's 320,000 people. A religion which preaches pacifism but whose military might had to be crushed by the Saigon government if, in fact, Saigon was to be the government of all the people in the Republic.

What is this religion?

It happened on Christmas Eve, 1925, in Saigon. According to the religion's official history, a small group of Vietnamese scholars at that time "dabbled in Spiritism." They sought the counsel of the spirits through a medium. Spirits were contacted, establishing "the existence of the occult world."

On Christmas Eve, one of the spirits, "particularly noticeable by his high level of moral and philosophic teachings . . . revealed himself as the 'Supreme Being,' coming under the name of Cao Dai." (Cao Dai is the

Detail from column at the Cao Dai Holy See

COX

religion's symbolic name for God. Literally translated, the two words mean "High Palace," the place from which God reigns.)

The message that Cao Dai taught was this. All previous religions were only partial revelations of God. Since the people of the world lacked contact with one another before, five branches of the Great Way were founded at different times: Confucianism, the worship of Genii, Catholicism, Taoism and Buddhism.

Now that all parts of the world are explored, the message continues, it is due to "the very multiplicity of those religions" that men cannot live together in peace.

Therefore, the religion asserts, Cao Dai revealed himself in Saigon that day so that all people could learn there is one God and One Way, under which all men could be united. The religion, however, is not exclusive, and preaches that one can be a follower of Buddha, Christ or Muhammed and still be a Cao Dai.

The Cao Dai preach that their followers must observe five basic principles during their lives:

—Not to kill living beings since the spark of life is in them all. (The higher clergy are strict vegetarians.)

—Not to be materialistic.

—Not to practice high living.

—Not to be tempted by luxury.

—Not to sin by word.

In addition, the Cao Dai must also keep four principal observances: obedience, modesty, honesty and respect.

Baptism is one of their sacraments and divorce is forbidden. A man may not keep a concubine in his house, but he may take a second wife if his first wife does not bear him children and consents to sharing him with a second woman.

The religion honors three saints. The first is Nguyen Binh Khiem, a great Vietnamese poet who lived in the 16th century. The other two, famous world figures, are seen as his disciples. Victor Hugo, the well-known French author of *The Hunchback of Notre Dame* and *Les Miserables*, is one; the other is Sun Yat Sen, nationalist leader of the first Chinese revolution which deposed China's line of emperors and established a short-lived democracy.

The organization of the Cao Dai church resembles the Catholic hierarchy. The church's acting pope, Cao Hoai Sang, is assisted by cardinals, archbishops, bishops and priests. The religious content of Cao Dai more closely adheres to Eastern thought, reflected in the three branches into which the Dignitaries, or executive body, of the church are divided. These are the Buddhist, Taoist and Confucianist branches, each signified by different colored robes—yellow (the color of virtue) for Buddhists; azure (pacifism) for Taoist, and; red (authority) for Confucianist.

A Japanese student of the Cao Dai, Takashi Oka, commented on its sometimes confusing mixture of East and West:

"I have the feeling," he wrote, "that Cao Dai represents an attempt to resolve a dilemma common to the non-Western intellectual."

He went on to say that those not from the West have had to recognize the West's great material power and technology.

"It used to be the fashion," he observed, "to say Western technology is superior, but Eastern philosophies are more profound. But . . . those who delved, soon saw that Western technology was the result of Western patterns of thought. Could one absorb Western technology . . . while keeping one's own inherited thought

A young boy learns prayer from his sister

HAWK

The "All-Seeing Eye" surveys humanity from altar of the building of the Holy See (below) of the Cao Dai south of Tay Ninh

BOHL

The reigning pope, Cao Hoai Sang, flanked by two high priests at a recent feast

patterns? . . . . Could not one find some way of thought to bridge the gap between East and West?

"Some such line of thinking, I feel, must have been in the minds (of the religion's founders). This combined with nationalism, spread the ambition to show that light came from the East, not merely from the West, (and that even Western religious leaders) had actually been disciples of the Supreme Being who revealed himself, in Saigon, to Vietnamese, in Vietnamese, as Cao Dai."

Whatever its motivations, Cao Dai began to flourish. The church was recognized by the government in 1926 and given a grant of land in Tay Ninh Province.

A Great Temple was begun at Long Hoa, within Tay Ninh city, and construction, financed by contributions, was completed eight years later. The Temple and its grounds are known as the Holy See.

Tay Ninh, at that time a sparsely populated province, was virtually settled and ruled by the Cao Dai. Their now disbanded army was established for self-protection in the territory they owned, rather than in opposition to the central government.

"Until a little over 10 years ago the national government didn't even come into this area," said Gene Marshal of Lisbon, N.H., deputy district senior advisor for Phu Khuong, in which the Holy See is located.

Since the national government has established its authority in the area, the Cao Dai, concentrated primarily with the growth of their own religion, have been a definite asset.

"Probably what means the most," said Marshal, "is that these people are already organized. The people are used to organization (because of the efficiency of the church) and know how to work within an organizational structure. When we want to organize something here, the people already know how to do it."

Although the Cao Dai avoid public politics even to the extent of not making outright statements of where they stand in the war, "If the Cao Dai weren't here, the VC would be much more in evidence," said Marshal.

As one Cao Dai official conceded privately, "We will continue to assist the government, for if the VC win, our life would be very difficult." Admitted another,

FEASE

"Eventually they hope there will be a system of roads leading from the Holy See in Tay Ninh all the way to Rome."

"Communism and Cao Dai are incompatible."

At the same time, the Cao Dai insist that the sanctuary of their Holy See, which includes extensive grounds, remain inviolate.

Up to two thousand draft dodgers and an undetermined number of Viet Cong are known to be sitting out the war inside that sanctuary.

"Last fall," Marshal recalled, "they did allow a police operation into one of the small pagodas to arrest draft dodgers, but this has never happened in the Holy See."

This insistence on sanctuary however, is a religious not a political matter.

The Cao Dai have a great interest in developing the area in which their people live. It is said that their last acting Pope presided over the blueprinting of a master plan for the entire area.

"The Cao Dai wanted a road out in front of their temple," said Major John D. Ricketson of Lawton, Okla., district senior advisor for Phu Khuong. "So they invited Vietnamese officials and American civil affairs officers from all over the area to the temple one day. They brought 6,000 people out with hoes to show what they could do if they received help."

Although the road was not one of the province's pacification priorities, it is being built.

"When you figure the Cao Dai religion includes at least 85 per cent of the people," the major conceded, "if they want something it's not just the church, it's the people talking."

Roads, in fact, are an important part of the Cao Dai "master plan." Eventually, according to Gene Marshal, they hope there will be a system of roads leading from the Holy See in Tay Ninh all the way to Rome, center of Catholicism. Such a road would go through Cambodia, Thailand, across the Indian subcontinent and link up with Europe. Since many countries along the way have highways already, the eventual total link-up is not, according to Marshal, an impossible dream.

There are other areas as well in which deference must be paid to the Cao Dai.

"Twice last June an NVA battalion and at least one VC company came into the city," said Major Ricketson.

FEASE

Ornate columns inside the Temple—faith for everyman, beauty for everyone

"The military had to destroy some homes in the fighting. After it was over, the district and province chiefs went to see the Pope to explain why the homes were destroyed."

Despite the white-robed priest's refusal to discuss politics, the Cao Dai cannot help but be "included in," in a country where the conflicts of men are a part of every man's life.

But publicly, they try to remain strictly a religion, aloof. Inside the lands of the Holy See, the poor may come to be fed. Those who seek sanctuary may find it there. Good works are carried on by the Cao Dai in the two hospitals and the orphanage they operate and children are educated in their two high schools.

In the Great Temple, the only sounds that can be heard are the chirping of the birds flying about within. The Holy See is peaceful and serene.

"The Cao Dai believe all people are of one family," said the white-robed priest. "Our job is to help people understand and love one another."

NEVER GIVE A LADY A HANDKERCHIEF

...unless you want her to cry

A Survey of Vietnamese Customs

by Specialist 4 Don Sockol

EVERY CHRISTMAS EVE, when he was back in Pittsburgh, Specialist 4 Andy Dyakon and his family would visit his Russian-born grandmother for a big holiday dinner.

At the door, they would be greeted with an old Russian custom. Grandma, who didn't touch a drop all year, would present each arrival with a shot of whiskey, insisting it be downed before the visitor could enter her home.

"I imagine if I refused to take the whiskey, my grandmother would be pretty put out," Dyakon admitted.

People the world over, like Dyakon's grandmother, have their own customs. Most of the customs, like the shot of whiskey, are easy to go along with if you know how much they mean to the other person.

The people of Vietnam have many different customs. By stepping on their toes, through ignorance of these customs, there may be a loss of good feeling. That is why it is important to know and understand these customs.

The first Vietnamese customs one should be aware of are those having to do with religion, because these are probably the most important.

Religion over here is not a one-hour-a-week affair. They don't meet in the local pagoda on Sunday and forget religion until the following Sunday. Religion is lived 24 hours a day. Since creed often leads to deed, if one doesn't understand how a man believes he may have difficulty understanding how he acts.

For instance: It has been found that a man who has a Buddhist background, (and that includes about 70 per cent of the population), is a much better artilleryman than he is an infantryman. The reason for this is that the Buddhist believes in reincarnation. When he dies his soul will leave his body and be reborn into another body. If he gets out there on the battlefield, face to face with the enemy, his body might be mutilated if he is killed. His soul will no longer have a resting place to await reincarnation. His soul may wander forever and ever and never come to rest. And then he may not come back in the next life. So he's a little leary of this; he doesn't like that personal contact with the enemy.

Another example of religion playing a part in the military is Tet.

Tet is the most important holiday for the Vietnamese people. During Tet, some of the military forces go AWOL. The Vietnamese feels he has to be with his

family, because this is the New Year. It is considered a sin if one is not with his family.

Westerners may look at these people and say, "Well, you can't just call off the war because of Tet." But these people feel the war can almost be called off because of it. Tet is a time of the year when everyone is supposed to love one another, to forgive their enemies and to pay off their debts.

The question may now arise: Then why do the Viet Cong—after all, they are predominantly Buddhist—why would they do something during Tet?

When they did, during the Tet of 1968, which was their big offensive, they probably lost more, psychologically speaking with the Vietnamese, than they did in any other military campaign.

The Vietnamese people felt that the VC wouldn't dare do anything during Tet. But they did. This was totally unexpected. When they violated Tet the people realized the enemy would go to any extreme, even to violating the most sacred religious customs. The backlash against the enemy was monumental. The VC made a very serious mistake.

What about religion in specific reference to Americans, though? The first thing that comes to mind concerns Americans being camera bugs. Americans in a foreign country love to take pictures. They have a tendency to go right inside the pagoda and take pictures, or pick up holy articles, because often consider these places to be tourist attractions.

They are not. They are places of worship, just like the churches and synagogues in American society.

A man should not walk into a pagoda, start picking up things, and say to his buddy, "Hey, look at this. Isn't it beautiful? Look how old it is." One should not touch holy articles. This is a very impolite thing to do.

A second case points out how local custom can sometimes be a frustrating thing.

The Vietnamese people have a tendency not to want to "Medevac" a person they believe is beyond help. If a helicopter comes in and takes a person away and he dies in the hospital and his body is not returned, this is considered very bad. (And this has happened, unfortunately.) If a person cannot die with his family, the Vietnamese believe, he should at least be buried by his family. Otherwise his soul may never find a resting place.

A case where this belief affected an actual situation involved a village in IV Corps that was mortared. A small girl happened to be a casualty. Her head was almost blown off, but she was still alive. American advisors wanted to call in a Medevac, but it took anywhere from 30 to 45 minutes to convince the girl's father she might be saved. By the time the Medevac got there, the young girl had died.

The fact that Americans are camera bugs has already been referred to. When one is taking a picture here, he should not take a picture of three individuals. The Vietnamese believe that if a picture of three persons is taken, one of them will die or become very sick soon.

Another thing one should not do is to sit with legs crossed, exposing the bottom of his foot to the person sitting beside him. The Vietnamese believe the bottom of the foot to be the bottom of the soul. It is insulting to show another person the bottom of one's soul.

By the same token, the top of the soul is located at the top of the head. Many people here believe that patting a child on the head may disrupt the child's soul—perhaps even dooming that soul to endless wandering.

There are other customs involving children. For instance, if a woman gives birth to a baby in a hospital, the Vietnamese believe the most susceptible time for the baby to be hurt by the 'evil spirits' is during the trip from the hospital to home. The wife of a liaison officer at Di An, a few miles from Saigon, recently gave birth in a Saigon hospital. On the trip home from the hospital, she carried the baby in one arm and a knife in the other to protect her baby against the evil spirits that might harm it.

In addition to this, it might be of interest to know that this woman's baby was one-year-old when it was born. It's difficult to understand the ages over here. When a person is born, he is one-year-old. But everybody celebrates his birthday, from then on, at Tet. So at the first Tet of his life, he is two. For instance: this

past year Tet occurred on February 17. If a baby was born on February 16 at 11: 55 p.m., that baby was one-year-old. Six minutes later, on Tet, that baby was two.

Another interesting area is personal relations.

The Vietnamese are very hospitable people. They may not be rich, but they will borrow from all their neighbors—chairs, food, money—just to give a guest a proper meal. What should one do if he is honored with an invitation for dinner?

When one sits down at the table, a number of serving plates will be brought out. When these are put down, one should not touch anything. The senior ranking, or elder, Vietnamese, has the right to touch the serving plate first.

When one takes something from the serving plate, he should never take it from the serving plate into his mouth. He should take it first to the bowl in front of him—then to his mouth.

Anything one puts in his bowl he should eat—all of it. If he leaves some, it is an insult. On the other hand, if toward the end of the meal the guest's bowl is empty, and he sees another piece of chicken left on the serving plate that he would like, he should not take it! Even if it's offered, he should politely decline. To take the last piece on the serving plate is to tell that person, "You came up short, pal. You didn't make enough food." But if he leaves it, he is saying, "You've been too gracious. You've given us too much good food." It's a compliment to the host.

The soldier here may eat with a Vietnamese in a restaurant someday. There is no 'Dutch treat' in this country. If one asks a Vietnamese to join him for a beer, or for lunch, the asker is expected to pick up the tab. Likewise, of course, if he asks you to join him, he pays.

Whether one eats in someone's home or in a restau-

rant, next to the dish will be a pair of sticks. When using chop sticks, it matters in which hand they are held. They should be held in the right hand. The reason is that the left hand is considered your "dirty" hand. Now, if you're left-handed, as some Americans of course are, don't be afraid to eat with your left hand. This is a Vietnamese custom, but they understand that there's something "wrong" with you, that you've been "cursed." And they know Americans do crazy things from time to time anyhow.

Now let's skip over from eating to drinking. Many Americans feel they have to chug-a-lug with every Vietnamese who says let's chug-a-lug. Vietnamese know the Americans consider themselves able to drink anybody under the table and hold their own against any nation. And sometimes they goad Americans into it. One does not have to feel he's insulting anybody or losing face if he doesn't feel like drinking, or feels like stopping.

There are other miscellaneous items, some things Americans should know if they don't want to unintentionally step on any toes.

Standing with hands on hips: Americans don't mean anything by it when they do this while talking to somebody, but here it is considered an insult. It is a sign of superiority, of arrogance.

Also, when talking to an individual, one should talk on the same plateau. If one happens to be on higher ground, he should step down. If he does not, this is also taken to be a sign of arrogance.

Pointing is considered an insult. If one wants to indicate something, he should do so with his fingers extended and joined, rather than with one finger. Also, if one wants someone to approach him, wiggling his finger at the person is insulting. This is the way animals are beckoned in Vietnam.

Beeping the horn doesn't mean the same thing here as it does in the United States. At home, when one beeps at the car in front of him, the car moves over or slows down. Here, when the horn is beeped, it is telling the person in front: "Don't worry. Do exactly what you're doing. I see you. I'm going around you." If you sound your horn and the person in front of you continues just as he is doing, this is the reason.

Misunderstanding what a smile means here can sometimes result in purposeless bad feeling. For instance: If one is lucky enough to be in a place where he has a hootch girl to do his laundry, he may return one evening to find that she has put her iron through his shirt. Needless to say, this does not make the soldier too happy. So he asks her what happened. She looks at him and starts to smile. Now, if one does not understand why she's smiling, he may find this very offensive—as if she thinks the whole thing is funny. This is not the case. The reason she is smiling is rooted in Confucianism. Confucious taught that the quickest way to get rid of embarrassment was to smile. She is smiling, not because she thinks anything is funny, but because she is embarrassed.

Another thing: when the Vietnamese speak to a person, they will not look in the eye. This is not because

they are "shifty." They feel that looking a person in the eye is arrogant; that it's a sign of disrespect.

Apropos of respect: When one comes across an older person, instead of saying, "Hey, how you doing, old man?" One should treat him with respect, just as he would treat his mother or father. Give him a slight bow, maybe. This is a sign of reverence to him. And this is a country where elders are held in reverence.

This might be a good place to stop and give an example of how a real understanding of the customs of the Vietnamese can solve problems which really shouldn't be causing trouble.

The Vietnamese, as mentioned before, are predominantly Buddhist. One of the precepts of Buddhism is the 12-year calendar. Life repeats itself every 12 years. For instance, the year 1969 is the Year of the Rooster. Twelve years from now, the Year of the Rooster will be back. The whole thing is based on a combination of animals. Certain combinations are considered bad. For example, if one person is born in the Year of the Dragon and another in the Year of the Dog, these people should keep away from each other, because the Dragon will kill the Dog.

There was an American advisor to a district in IV Corps who happened to be born in the Year of the Dragon with a counterpart who was born in the Year of the Dog. This counterpart really believed that this sergeant was going to kill him. It caused a lot of friction, so much so that the district senior advisor finally had to move the sergeant to another district. This is one instance where animosity existed for no apparent reason until the Vietnamese beliefs were considered.

After all this talk about customs, the question might be

rightfully raised: Why should we go to so much trouble to understand the Vietnamese? Why don't they learn our customs?

There are three primary reasons.

First, Americans have had extensive experience with other cultures. We've been all over the world. The Vietnamese do not have this experience. Most Vietnamese have never been out of their own province.

Second, Americans have got an education. They have the capability of understanding another man's thought patterns. The Vietnamese does not have this education.

Third, Americans are in Vietnam. That brings us back to the old saying, "When in Rome, do as the Romans do." This is not to say Americans should act or think the way the Vietnamese do. But they should try to understand the Vietnamese.

You may be walking through a field, and step around a grave. You may enter a pagoda and not knock things down during a search. You may be polite to an old woman.

Weeks later, perhaps a villager may give you some valuable information or maybe even save your life with a warning.

You may wonder, 'Why did he tell me?'

It could be the result of your trying to establish a rapport, trying to follow the customs and traditions of the Vietnamese people, and their realizing that you are sincerely trying to be their friend—that you are here to help them.

BATCHELDER

Many customs are associated with funerals such as this procession in Saigon

The Saigon Racetrack

a la Viet Sport of Kings

by Captain Jim Haney

RACING AND BREEDING horses is as old as history itself. Probably as long as there have been horses and men to argue which ones were faster. The earliest records of horse racing on an

Race horses start to the gate—not Churchill Downs but a pleasant Saturday afternoon

BOHL

SILEO

Off and running—the Saigon Derby in the "wrong" direction

oval track under the supervision of officials dates back to the sixteenth century in England and has since spread throughout the world.

And in 1930 when the French built the Truong Dua Phu Tho Racetrack in Saigon the "Sport of Kings" was introduced to the Vietnamese.

With a system of betting much the same as the rest of the world, horse racing today is enjoyed by the Vietnamese people. The betting windows beneath the large concrete stadium range from 10 to 200 piasters. Farmers, businessmen, cyclo-drivers and little old ladies form the line in front of them. Vietnamese horse racing is enjoyed by everyone, no matter his income.

Each Saturday and Sunday the track is packed with from 5,000 to 9,000 Vietnamese cheering on their favorite horse. Not all the people come to place bets; many come just to meet friends and spend a leisurely day away from the crowded streets of Saigon.

Everywhere men are staring at racing programs, discussing the qualifications of different horses or the outcome of the previous races. It's much the same as a track in the United States. Except that when the horses come around the track, they come from the "wrong" direction. The Vietnamese run the horses clockwise rather than in the traditional counterclockwise way of the English and Americans. One track official said this was because of an old Vietnamese custom, but he did not specify which one.

As one pays his 20 piasters to enter the track, he immediately confronts popcorn, balloon and peanut pushers. A short trip through the heaps of used ticket stubs brings him to the horse's walking circle. Here, he can observe the horses and jockeys before the start of the race. Occasionally a horse will bolt causing a cheer from the onlookers.

Unlike in the United States, where only owners and trainers are allowed in the stables, race fans can stroll into the stables and get a closer look at the horses or give moral support to the horse they want to win.

The horses range in age from three to 12 year olds, and are placed into five categories, depending on size. A committee selects which categories will run in which race. The horses are not as large as American ones, but nevertheless the length of each race is the same.

Although the art of riding and racing has not been perfected, jockeys do attend a school sponsored by the racetrack. The jockeys, usually between the ages of 15 and 18, weigh about 100 pounds so an average U.S. jockey would be considered, a heavyweight.

The tricks of racing such as hugging the rail on curves or bunching up near the inside to save precious yards has not yet been mastered. This is evident when the horses come around the curve into the straight-a-way and are spread like rabbits across a field.

Absent are names like *Seabiscuit* or *Man O' War*, but the jockeys sit straight and tall on their mounts as they parade on to the track. As the horses are led across the tall unkept grass inside the oval track to the starting post, no mechanical starting gate can be seen.

BOHI

Betting is as important in Saigon as in other racing centers

The voice of the loudspeaker and the roar of the crowd indicates the race is beginning. Quickly people rush from the little snack and soft drink stands to the edge of the rail. The horses are off at the Saigon Racetrack.

The Kentucky Derby it's not, but horse racing has gained popularity as a spectator sport in this country.

HURRICANE BRIEFS

In 1968, 32,379 tourists from 22 countries traveled to Vietnam. The United States led in the number of tourists with 12,805 with France (3,173), Taiwan and Hong Kong (3,100), England (2,027), Japan (1,568) and Australia (1,366) following.

"Before entering Vietnam," said Mr. Ta Thein Thanh, Chief of the Tourist Information Center in Saigon, "all tourists must meet certain requirements. Transient passengers entering Vietnam need no visa if they stay in the country less than 72 hours and no exit visa is required if they stay less than seven days. But for a longer period an easily-obtained tourist visa, valid for 30 days, may be gotten from Vietnam's diplomatic or consular missions."

Like most countries, Vietnam has certain customs regulations but travelers may retain such goods as tobacco, liquor and medicine duty-free, provided they are for personal use and do not exceed posted limits.

"The cities of Saigon, Hue, Nha Trang and Vung Tau attract the vast majority of Vietnam's visitors," concluded Mr. Thanh. "Saigon is noted for its lively marketplaces and residential quarters, Nha Trang and Vung Tau for some of the finest beaches in the Far East. Then, of course, visitors enjoy the historic monuments of Hue, which bear the mark of past elegance."

Vietnam, with its beaches, pagodas, temples and history is attracting tourists at a brisk pace. Its blend of old and new holds a certain attraction for people around the world.

"Caddy Boo!" shouted the Boy and Girl Scouts, pointing wildly at the two U.S. Air Force C-7A (CARIBOU) aircraft hovering over the Hon Quan airstrip near An Loc, some 70 miles north of Saigon.

There was good reason for excitement among the 50 Scouts that hot afternoon.

The CARIBOU roared down the strip, accepted their eager passengers and whisked them from the lush rolling country of Binh Long Province to the South China Sea at Vung Tau. For many of the Scouts the three-day adventure was their first encounter with the sea.

On arriving at their campsite on the pine-dotted dunes overlooking the beach, the skilled campers pitched the tents within minutes and hit the sparkling water en masse.

Right behind them were Captain Merle Hoffman, civic action officer for the 23d Artillery Group's 6th Battalion, 27th Artillery at Quan Loi, Mr. Tong, the Province Youth and Sports Director, Miss Tieng, the Girl Scout leader, and several lucky GIs (acting as security guards).

At Vung Tau the Scouts did what Scouts the world over do on camping trips—had fun! There was a lot of swimming, singing, soccer playing but very little sleeping.

Scattered showers failed to dampen their enthusiasm. Campfires brightened the evenings. A bus tour of Vung Tau, including some time to shop in the marketplace, scored a big hit.

As a change of pace, Long Range Patrol (LRP) rations were served one night instead of the traditional rice. Happily, the candy bar inside the packet saved the day for what would have otherwise been a not-so-popular meal.

When the inevitable time came to pack up for home, the Scouts, still bursting with energy, had only one thing to say—"When do we come back again?"

Bien Hoa's version of Halloween

Many centuries ago, on the fifteenth night of the eighth month of the lunar calendar, Emperor Duong Minh Hoang was inspired to visit "Sister Hang," as the moon is poetically called.

With the help of a magician who knew of a secret bridge connecting the moon with the earth, the emperor got his wish and was received on the moon with gaiety, poetry and music. When he returned to earth, he decreed that the night he went to the moon was to be a day of festivities. So the old Vietnamese legend states.

Recently, Vietnamese celebrated the festival of Trung Thu, or the Feast of Mid-Autumn. (This year the festival fell on September 26th). About two hundred Vietnamese, mostly children, gathered at Nguyen Du school in Bien Hoa city to celebrate.

Various dignitaries awarded toys (airplanes, spaceships, boats and animals) to the schools having the most imaginative creations of bamboo and paper. Model moons, ships, animals and replicas of Vietnam were judged and later carried by the children in a night parade through the streets of Bien Hoa.

Throughout the city it was a night of laughter and fun for the children, the equivalent of the American child's Halloween. Some carried stars, lit with lights or candles. On Trung Thu, also called the Feast of Children, special emphasis is placed on animals, in keeping with the many Vietnamese stories about animals and the moon.

Raguhbir Singh is a man with a prayer. The 25-year old New Delhi native is bicycling around-the-world-for-peace.

"What I am spreading is not a religion but a way of life," Singh said in excellent English. Quoting Gurunanak, the founder of Sikhism and India's most famous prophet, he said: "He who realizes himself is in himself the supreme self."

This belief has led him to a true finding of life's purpose, he says, a way of life that has led him through the Tribhuvan University in Nepal, as an advisor to an American missionary in India and a true master of languages. When he left his home in October 1968, he spoke 14 languages fluently; now he can converse in 21 including Sanskrit!

Singh feels to meet the common man he must use a bicycle for his mission. To understand them, he must learn their language.

While in Vietnam, he has traveled to Long Binh and Bien Hoa and many cities near Saigon. It was on one of these jaunts that the Viet Cong took him for an American agent and tortured him for 23 hours. He survived the ordeal receiving an apology from a Viet Cong officer who finally understood his travel.

In Thailand, a pair of thugs posing as policemen stopped him and went after his luggage. This time the young Indian had a quick trick up his sleeve; he blew chili powder into their eyes, then climbing aboard his unusual black bicycle, whirled away.

"Obstacles come to every man but with strong will-power he can handle all these," he said with a shrug of his big shoulders.

Raguhbir Singh—realizing the supreme self

The Division of Military History, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C., is interested in obtaining samples of unofficial insignia used by American units.

Unit designatiors such as the various recondo devices, the tan beret, black beret, 1st Division insignia given to point men, etc. Official uniforms and insignia are obtained in Washington, but unit designed and authorized special insignia or wearing apparel can only be obtained by unit or individual contributions. Contributions should be accompanied by a narrative explaining the article, its significance and history, and may be sent to: Division of Military History; ATTN: Mr. Craddock R. Goins, Jr.; History and Technology Building; Smithsonian Institute; Wash. D.C. 20560.

Miss Jessie Roskoski leaned forward and, carefully enunciating as she always does, pleaded earnestly. "Please," she urged. "Please don't talk about the things I have done.

"I could be here advising the Vietnamese 60 minutes to the hour and if they were not receptive, what would my advice be worth? It is not me. It is the people."

Miss Roskoski, a registered nurse from Central Falls, R.I., is advisor to Vietnamese nurses at the Binh Duong Provincial Hospital at Phu Cuong, eight miles north of Saigon.

She has been here since June of 1968 advising nurses on matters relating to patient care. The only American woman assigned to the hospital, she is one of only two U.S. civilian women working in all of Binh Duong Province.

She is here because, while working at Central Fall's Notre Dame Hospital, she heard of the USAID program and it interested her.

Another motivation for coming, she put in the form of a rhetorical question: "On a nurse's salary, what would my chances of seeing the world be?"

The hospital at which Miss Roskoski is an advisor is the only one in the province. It treats an average of 6,000 outpatients and 2,000 in-patients a month, she said.

Miss Roskoski encountered a different medical world when she came here.

Due to the lack of trained nurses, for instance, the hospital has only one nurse per ward.

"Consequently, they can not do everything an American nurse does." The family, she said, takes on the custodial duties normally handled by the hospital staff in the United States.

"The family comes with the patient," said Miss Roskoski. "And if a patient is too sick to feed himself, the family does it. The nurse just takes care of the medical work."

In other ways, Vietnamese medicine is behind ours. One of the procedures put into effect on Miss Roskoski's advice is that family members visiting patients in the hospital clean up before coming.

But, Miss Roskoski said, the nurses are very receptive to ideas that will improve care for their patients.

"We have gone on trips to American field hospitals," she said. "The nurses were very impressed. Anything they liked they adopted. No suggestion even had to be made."

PHILCAGV

Filipino Civic Action

by Lieutenant Tom Sileo

NOT EVERYONE INVOLVED in the Vietnam War uses guns to defeat the enemy. Some are here "to build, not to destroy; to bring happiness, not sorrow; to develop goodwill, not hatred," without fighting.

Who? The 1,500 volunteers from the Republic of the Philippines who make up PHILCAGV, the Philippine Civic Action Group, Vietnam.

As early as 1953, there were Filipinos in Vietnam. Doctors, surgeons, nurses and rural development workers lived with the Vietnamese. Then in 1966, PHILCAGV was activated to extend increased assistance to the Republic of Vietnam as it was requested to.

Philippine President Ferdinand E. Marcos formed PHILCAGV "so that democracy could be given the chance to develop freely in our part of the world." Promoting the welfare of the Vietnamese increases the odds.

Brigadier General Ceferino S. Carreon is PHILCAGV's top man and under his control operates in six provinces. Working mostly in Tay Ninh, PHILCAGV headquarters, Filipino "Plan Pagasa" (hope) is accomplishing everything from road construction and airstrip repairs to teaching the Vietnamese children how to play basketball.

According to Filipino Major Lope Rimando, Assistant G-3, "All our activities are carried out during the day. We don't fight unless attacked, but we are ready." An infantry special forces officer, Rimando thinks that most of his fellow Filipinos would rather be fighting with guns rather than with MEDCAPs, and bulldozers, but believes in what he's doing.

"Sure, building schools, operating experimental pig and poultry farms and giving out soap and tools is just as important to this war as killing Viet Cong."

But PHILCAGV's major concern is not killing but saving lives. Doctor (Captain) L.R. Cristobal heads the Filipino Surgical Team in Tay Ninh City. He's been busy. In the past few months his team (four doctors, four nurses and five technicians) performed thousands of operations.

"We receive mostly civilian and CIDG casualties. Most of them have shrapnel wounds. A few months ago we had 1,300 operations, 113 major ones, all in one month," said the doctor.

But not just doctors and bulldozer drivers carry out "Plan Pagasa." Take Major Reynaldo Salvaleon for instance. He's the PHILCAGV signal officer and his job is to maintain good commo. Yet he knows all about the new Tay Ninh Girls High School that his countrymen built and about the hamlets that MEDCAP teams visit.

During their free time Salvaleon and

Ramon Magsaysay

Man with a Mission

Ramon Magsaysay was a man with a mission. Born the son of a Filipino shoemaker, the now legendary soldier-statesman serves as an example of the Filipino concern for people and justice.

Magsaysay served with the U.S. Army in World War II until the Bataan surrender in April 1942. He then became a guerrilla leader in central Luzon, one of the Philippines' principle islands. Later, as Philippine Secretary of Defense (1950–1952), Magsaysay fought and defeated the Communist led Hukbalahap movement in the Philippines. With ceaseless energy he greatly reduced the strength of these insurgent terrorists who had operated mainly on Luzon.

Elected President of the Republic in 1953, Magsaysay's term was marked by peace, pacification efforts in his country, and many land reforms which gave the Filipino poor what they rightfully deserved. When Huk leader Luis Taruc surrendered in 1954, Magsaysay's popularity reached a height unattained by any other Filipino president.

Throughout his term as president, Magsaysay maintained close ties with the United States, ties which are still strong.

But in the early morning hours of March 17, 1957, Magsaysay's plane crashed near Cebu City, Cebu Island, Central Philippines and the soldier-statesman died. But today, like an American John Kennedy or Martin Luther King, he is not forgotten, nor is the zeal he showed trying to help his fellow man.

his signaleers built an experimental pig and poultry farm in Tay Ninh and still teach classes to the local farmers on how to improve their stock and production. And this type of involvement is not unusual.

"We're not killing any of the enemy but I'll tell you what we are doing. We're making progress with the Vietnamese. We're breaking down some of the barriers between them and us. We're making progress; it's as simple as that," stated the affable major.

The Filipinos here now are going home in a few months. They usually come for a year and go home. This particular group had some interesting training for their Vietnam assignment. Before they came they had some "on the job" (OJT) training back home. Obviously not all of the Philippines' over 30,000,000 people are healthy, or wealthy. So, the Vietnam-bound soldiers built roads, repaired buildings and cared for the sick back home; OJT in every sense of the word.

For its work in Vietnam, PHILCAGV has received the Philippine Presidential Unit Citation Badge and the Vietnamese Presidential Unit Citation Badge, twice.

People like Captain Nicanor Paragas get the results needed to win the honors. He and his MEDCAP team treat little children, five and six years old who come to them and ask for help. They're not afraid of the team and even try to get the doctors to examine them when they are feeling fine.

"They're brave little guys," said Paragas. "In the rainy season they come out in the heavy rains even when there's nothing wrong with them, just to see us. But they do have a lot of problems, even more than the older people do. They get a lot of colds and stomach problems. There's also a lot of skin disease and malnutrition."

Paragas' eight man team goes out without any security troops. Unbelieveably they have never been attacked, even in remote hamlets, unaccessible by road, where they are airlifted in. Why not?

"Probably because the Viet Cong realize that it would not be good for them to attack us. The people would turn against them if they did because they realize that we are trying to help them," ventured Paragas. "And then, of course, some Viet Cong come to us for aid, disguised as local villagers."

SILEO

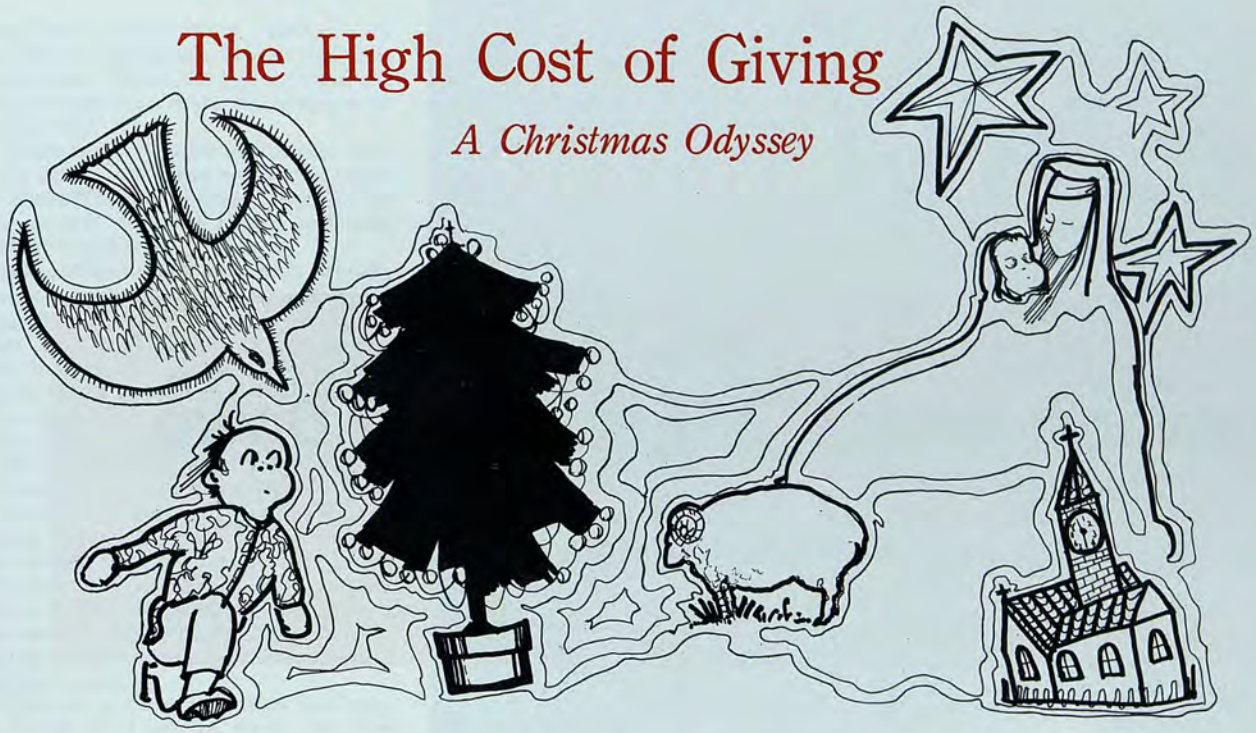
PHILCAGV Medcaps at work—plus local VC disguised as villagers

With the PHILCAGV-to-People programs, the Filipinos have managed to get over 200 Viet Cong to "Chieu Hoi" and come over to the Government of Vietnam side. This is one of their proudest accomplishments.

And so the work goes on. Sometimes it gets monotonous and tiring. But the "funny-hats" from the country of over 7,000 islands, the country that, according to President Nguyen Van Thieu "has greatly contributed to the Revolutionary Development Program of the Republic of Vietnam . . . and helped give the Vietnamese confidence in the national cause," keep building roads, training sawmill operators, giving out school books and saving lives.

The High Cost of Giving

A Christmas Odyssey



THE ENGLISHMAN who sent his true love exotic gifts on each of the 12 days of Christmas would need the Bank of England behind him to do it at today's prices.

According to Bureau of Labor Statistics figures released at the end of November 1969, the over-all increase in the cost of living for this year may end up another whopping 4.5 per cent.

Ever wonder while listening to that famous 18th century English Christmas ballad, "The 12 Days of Christmas," just how much all those leaping lords and swimming swans might cost a lovesick swain? From the Information Office of XVIII Airborne Corps, Ft. Bragg, North Carolina comes the grim truth of the price of love at Yuletide 1969.

To update the list for this Christmas season, all one needs to do is multiply the prices by the new cost of living index—4.5 per cent.

On the first day of Christmas, as is well-remembered, the lady received a partridge in a pear tree. Total cost from most State Wildlife Commissions and a local nursery: $16.25. Today that same partridge and pear tree would cost a mere $17.00. Not bad for a pretty lady.

The second day's gift, two turtle doves, ran $70 from a New York pet store but this year they'd be $73.15. She'd *better* be pretty!

Three French hens, genus gallus gallus, were valued at $165, but today $172.43. And we thought the price of chicken was down.

The fourth gift, four calling birds, would be a problem. According to the Encyclopdia Brittanica, there was a species named "Calling Bird" but it is extinct. The last known pair was purchased by the London Zoological Society in 1911 at a cost in today's dollars of $17,230, which, if you add on the 4.5 per cent increase, would make those birds worth $18,005.35. Zap! She'd better be pretty *and* bright!

Five golden rings were $175 in a local jewelry store last year, now those same rings would cost $182.88. What's another hundred at this point!

Six geese a-laying would cost $80 according to a State Wildlife Commission. This year they would be $3.60 more. Might as well go first-class.

Seven swans a-swimming would be a bit more. The flock cost $315 last year; $329.18 this year. Maybe if you mated them you could get some of your money back.

Eight maids a-milking, paid the federal minimum wage for an eight-hour day, ran $89.60 last year. The new federal minimum wage, put in effect early last year, would make this run $102.40. Eight registered milk cows added up to $4,400 originally, today $4,598.

Figuring there was no need to pinch pennies at this point, the New York City Ballet became the standard for nine ladies dancing. The cost was $3,239 but due to the increased cost of living they would be $3,384.76 this year, not including meals and transportation.

Ten lords a leaping meant round-trip transportation for 10 members of the House of Lords in London. British Overseas Airlines tickets cost $5,997.66 but now they would be $6,267.55. Tax included.

As an economy measure, eleven pipers piping would come from the New York Philharmonic rather than Edinburgh for a nifty $4,869.40, but tack on that 4.5 per cent and you have $5,088.52.

Finally came 12 drummers drumming and they cost the hapless giftgiver only $50 because he could get the talent from a local infantry division band, but alas the troops get more for their services today and it would cost our friend $52.25 this year for those drummers.

This all comes to $38,357.15. But, wait, according to the ballad the partridge in the pear tree is sent not once, but 12 times. The two turtle doves are sent 11 times, the French hens 10 and so on. Only the inexpensive drummers are sent once.

Figuring it up this way, true love, are you ready? The cost is $234,877.86. or $10,156.38 more than Christmas 1968. Only you know if she's worth it, but it's a good thing Christmas only comes once a year! Maybe the prices are cheaper in the PX.

Newport Bridge is not Falling Down

The Engineer's Pier Protection System

by Specialist 4 Jack Pites

THE PREDOMINANCE of inland waterways in Vietnam dictates extensive use of bridges, the lifelines of the country, for travel as well as supply routes.

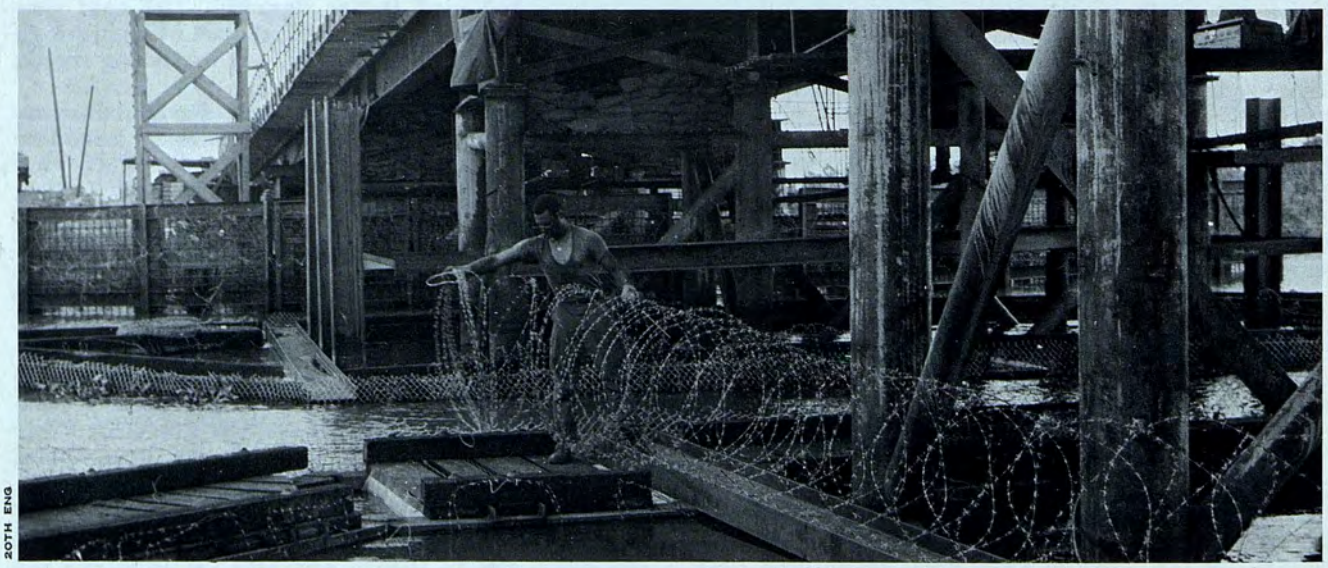
But at night, a few pajama-clad Viet Cong sneak to a newly built bridge. They light a fuse on a satchel charge; the bridge is gone.

A few years ago it was realized that a method had to be devised to protect what men had labored over for so many months. Bridge security had to be strengthened and became first priority.

Since one of the hardest enemies to fight is one you can't see, the 46th Engineer Battalion decided to turn night into day with lighting. At first the lights were temporary and did not afford much illumination for the bridges.

As the lighting advanced though, it took the form of the permanent system being used today. Large base 1200 volt, 500 watt beams, suspended from the bridges, now give ARVN soldiers patrolling the bridges and the surrounding areas fair warning of floating objects and enemy soldiers.

"Our job is to make sure the lights are working and the generators run-



20TH ENG

Pier protection system at the Phu Cuong Bridge north of Saigon

ning," said Aubery Wiley, mechanic on one of the battalion's bridge maintenance crews. "When the lights go out, the bridge areas are a much easier target for the enemy."

Other methods used to frustrate Viet Cong demolition teams are combinations of anti-swimmer devices, mine booms and several types of bridge and pier protective systems.

An anti-swimmer device is usually composed of concertina wire suspended from floating buoys and secured on the river bottom. Tidal fluctuation, prevalent in most of Vietnam's waterways, causes the concertina to shift and agitate unpredictably, prohibiting swimmers from passing through it.

Mine booms are employed to arrest or detonate mines intended to float with the current into the bridge pilings. The booms are composed of timbers the size of railroad ties, attached to steel cables and extended across the river a short distance from the bridge. Hanging from the timbers, there are usually several feet of chain-link fence to arrest slightly submerged mines.

The pier protection system itself may be constructed in two ways. The first type that was tried was called a "chain-line fence stand off." Steel beams were driven into the river's bed and fencing and concertina were hung from the beams. This type of system is still used in deep water of 40 feet or so.

"This system had its problems," stated First Lieutenant John Frontroth of Bravo Company, 46th Entineer Battalion. "The tides and currents would dislodge and bend the beams. Also, the waterway's rocky and muddy bottom presented difficulties in achieving equal penetration for the beams."

To meet the expedients of cost and practical application in deep water and in extreme tidal variations, a low-cost, highly flexible floatation system, a "floating catwalk," was designed.

The system utilizes either styrofoam or floating steel balls called "ping pong" balls as bouyants. The "ping pong" balls are replacing the styrofoam in many cases because they are easy to get and because organic polution on the water was found to dissolve the styrofoam.

The "ping pong" ball system is prefabricated and then floated to the bridge site for installation. Once in place, the system, capped with wide wooden platforms, is connected with chain-link fence and the interior filled with concertina wire.

This system provides more advantageous observation posts for the guards in that they can walk completely around the bridge pilings at water level.

"The floatation system has drastically reduced the time required for installation and thus saved in overall costs," emphasized Captain Evan Lilygren, the 92d Engineer Battalion assistant operations officer.

Maybe the protective systems are in place. Maybe the lights are turned on and everything is secure.

But no matter how secure our systems are, the men guarding the bridges decide whether they will succeed or fail.

Large base permanent lighting inhibits enemy movement and demolition efforts

LITTLE STATESMAN LY

THERE WAS ONCE a famous Vietnamese statesman whose name was Ly. He was very short of stature; in fact, he was so short that the top of his head was no higher than a man's waist.

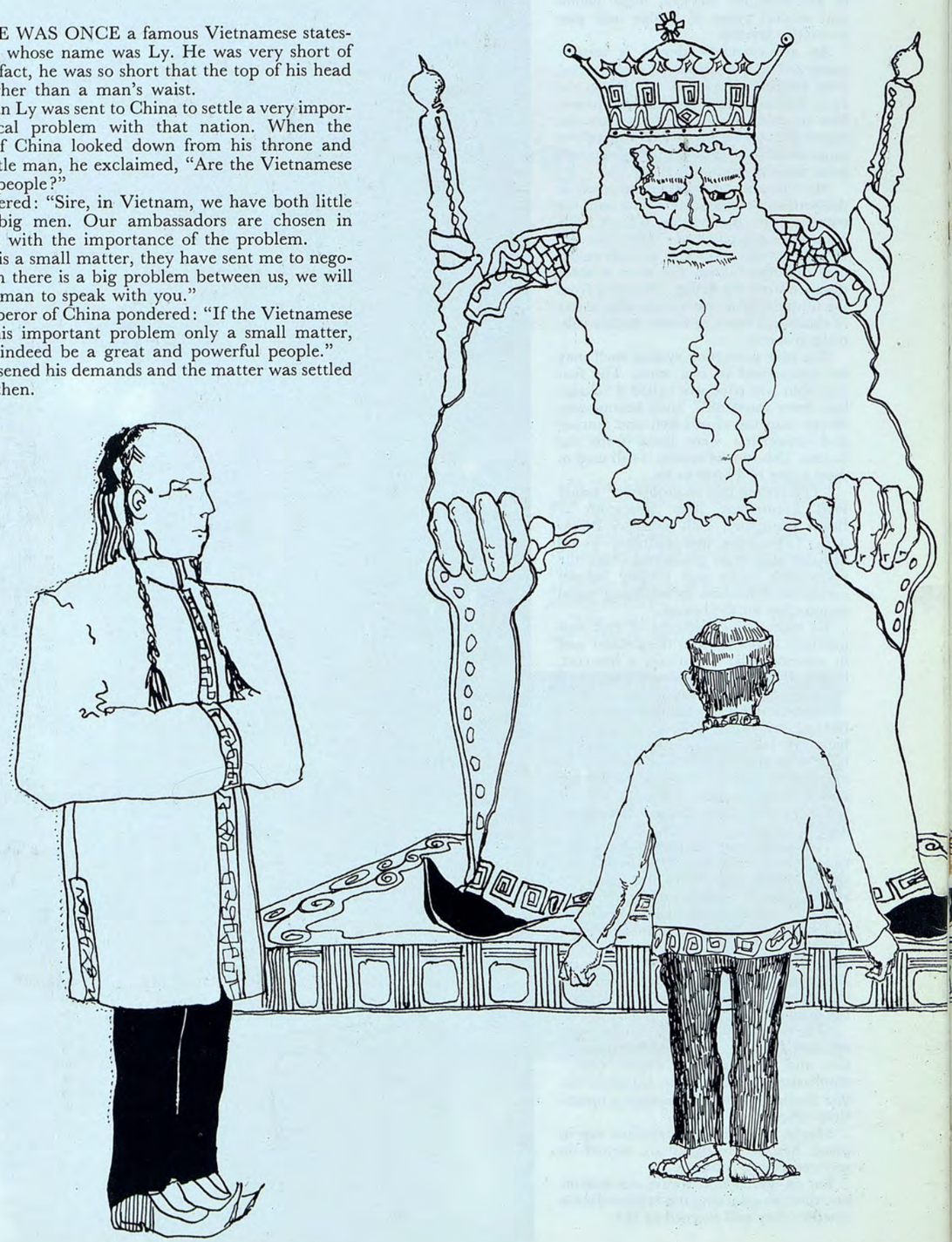
Statesman Ly was sent to China to settle a very important political problem with that nation. When the Emperor of China looked down from his throne and saw this little man, he exclaimed, "Are the Vietnamese such little people?"

Ly answered: "Sire, in Vietnam, we have both little men and big men. Our ambassadors are chosen in accordance with the importance of the problem.

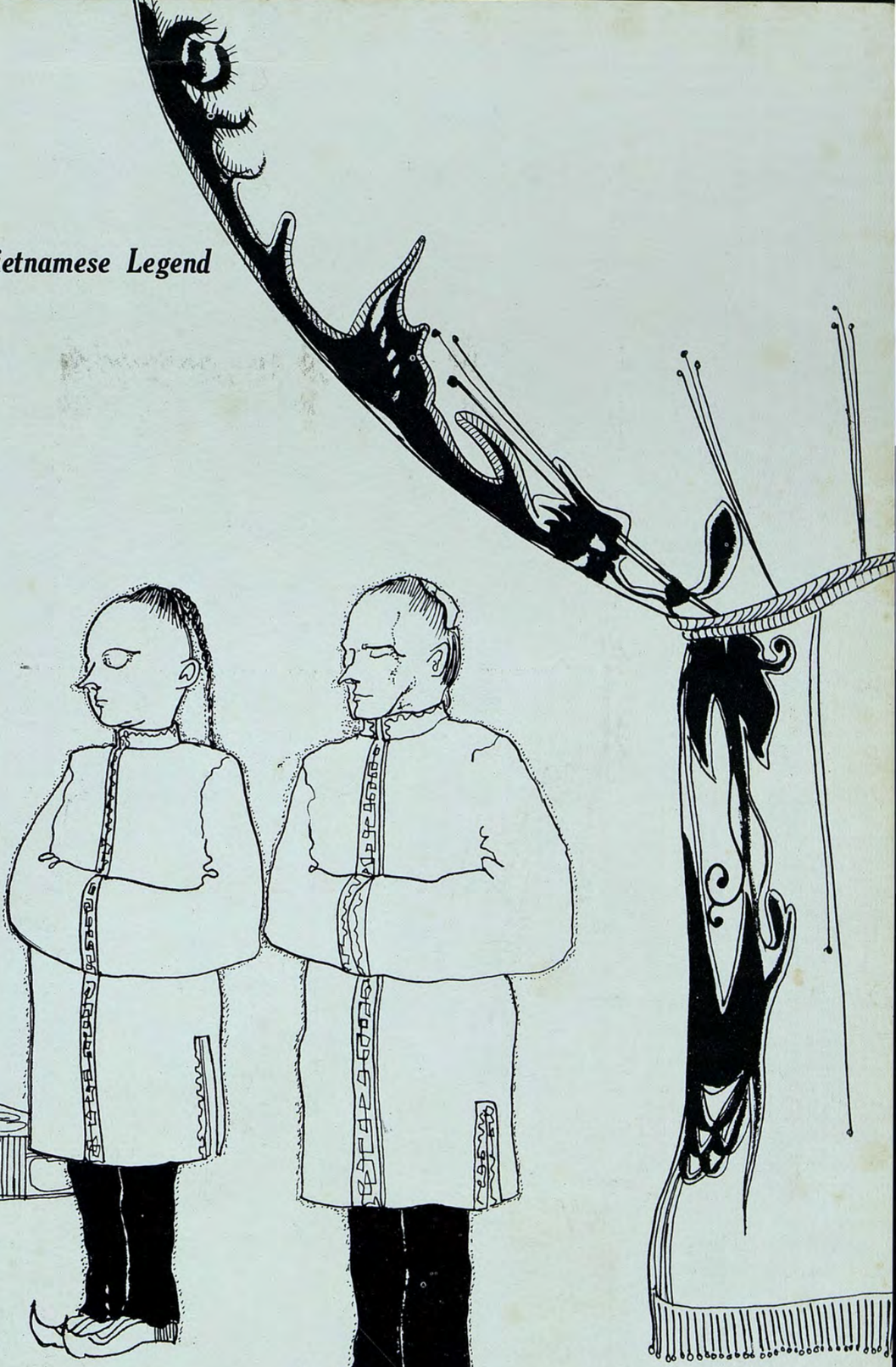
"As this is a small matter, they have sent me to negotiate. When there is a big problem between us, we will send a big man to speak with you."

The Emperor of China pondered: "If the Vietnamese consider this important problem only a small matter, they must indeed be a great and powerful people."

So he lessened his demands and the matter was settled there and then.



A Vietnamese Legend




Filipino Medcap