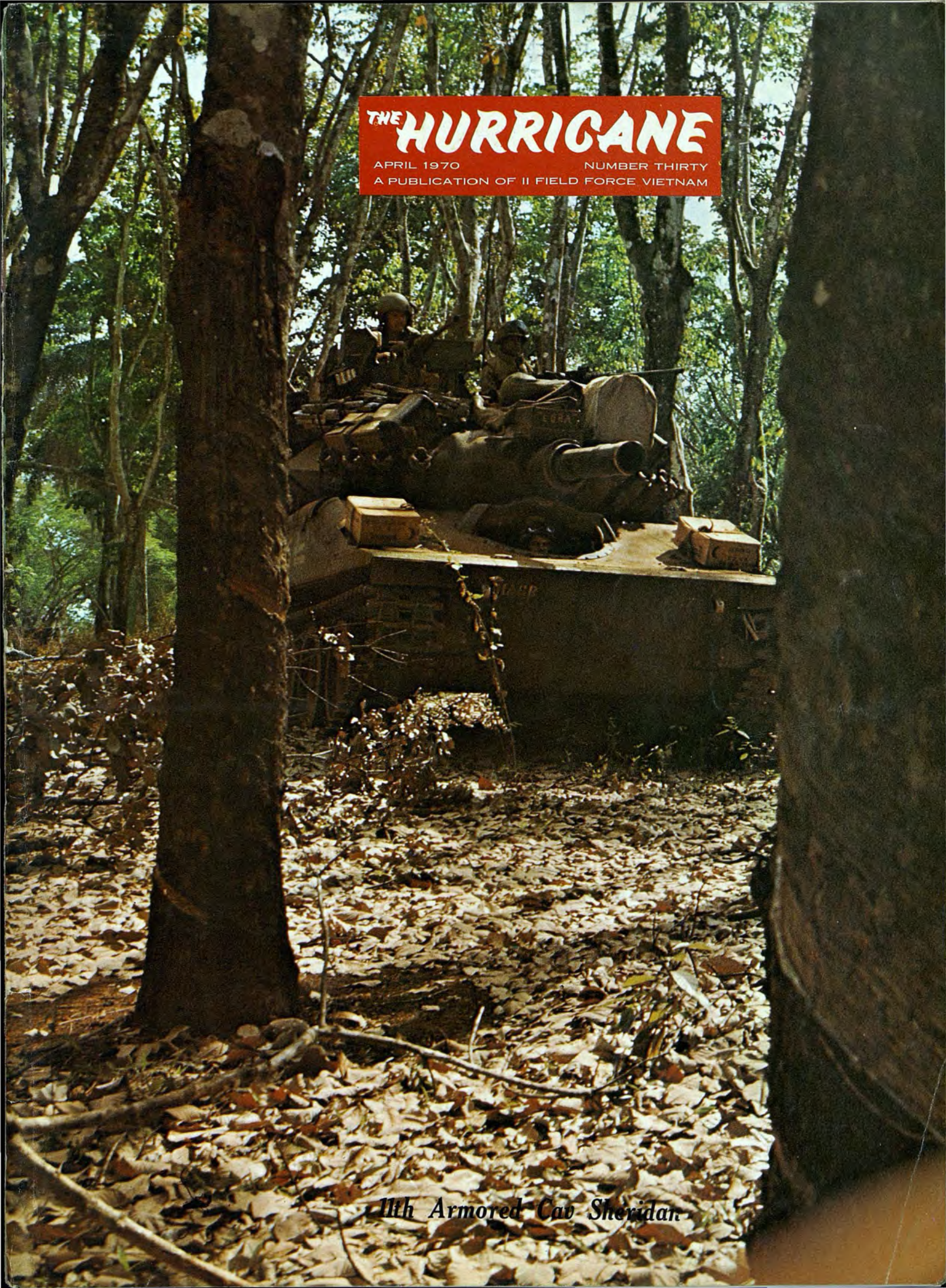


THE HURRICANE

APRIL 1970 NUMBER THIRTY
A PUBLICATION OF II FIELD FORCE VIETNAM

11th Armored Cav Sheridan

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
HEADQUARTERS, II FIELD FORCE VIETNAM
APO SAN FRANCISCO 96266

AVFB-CG

15 April 1970

TO ALL MEMBERS OF II FIELD FORCE VIETNAM

On the eve of my departure from Vietnam, I wish to express to each of you my admiration and thanks for the tremendous job you have done during my tenure as Commanding General, II Field Force Vietnam.

It has been a privilege and honor to have commanded both the 9th Infantry Division and II Field Force during my two years here. No one could ask for finer and more dedicated commanders, officers, NCOs, or soldiers. I leave with a sense of pride and humility in having worked with such fine people. My regrets at leaving are tempered by the knowledge that my successor, General Davison, fine commander and soldier, will receive the same outstanding support which I have enjoyed.

It has been a distinct honor and pleasure to have worked with the Government and Army of the Republic of Vietnam as they prepare themselves to take on greater responsibilities and to build a better life for their people. I feel privileged to have had this opportunity to assist the Vietnamese people in their efforts to fight off Communist aggression in order to seek their own way of life.

I particularly wish to commend the soldiers of II Field Force. You have borne the brunt; you have met each challenge; you have overcome difficult obstacles; and in each case you have performed magnificently.

My new job at the peace talks in Paris will hopefully provide an opportunity for me to continue to assist the Vietnamese people in bringing peace to their beautiful land.

As I leave, I send each of you my thanks, good luck and best wishes. May God bless you all.

Julian J Ewell

JULIAN J. EWELL
Lieutenant General, USA
Commanding

(2842)

Kit Castello

THE HURRICANE

APRIL 1970 NO 30

A PUBLICATION OF II FIELD FORCE VIETNAM

This month's Hurricane features an exclusive interview with the outgoing commanding general of II Field Force, LTG Julian J. Ewell. His candid comments reflect the experience of 26 straight months of high command in Vietnam. (story p. 2)

SP4 Phil Schieber spent several days recently bouncing along the dusty trails of northern III Corps with a troop of the 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment. His report of a day in the life of the Blackhorse appears on page 25. PFC John Skiffington snapped the back cover shot of a Sheridan in a rubber grove.

In sharp contrast is Lieutenant Tom Sileo's story of the islanders of Lai Son (p. 20), a people separated from the war by the waters of the Gulf of Thailand. The inhabitants of these idyllic islands are staunch supporters of the GVN and their prosperity is an indication of what life could be like throughout Vietnam without war.

Also this month, a look at Phuoc Long Province, the biggest and most thinly-settled in III Corps, by SP5 Don Sockol (p. 6). The front cover shot of Montagnard boys was taken there by Captain George Cox. The tactics of the litterbugs of III Corps, the 6th PSYOPS Battalion, are also examined (p. 10), as is the motorcycle phenomenon in Saigon (p. 34).

The Editor

The Hurricane is an authorized monthly publication of II Field Force Vietnam. It is published by the 16th Public Information Detachment and the Information Office, II FFORCEV, APO San Francisco 96266. Views and opinions expressed in this publication are not necessarily those of the Department of the Army. Feature stories, photographs and art work of general interest to II Field Force personnel are invited.

LTG EWELL P.2

PHUOC LONG P.6

LAI SON P.20

11TH CAV P.25

FATHER DU P.36

II FIELD FORCE
VIETNAM
LTG JULIAN J. EWELL
COMMANDING GENERAL
LTC A.R. MORGAN
Information Officer
MAJ G.E. POWELL
Deputy Information Officer
SGM E.C. BRADLEY
Sergeant Major
16TH PUBLIC INFORMATION DETACHMENT
CPT G.T. COX
Press Officer
1LT C.R. BABCOCK
Editor, The Hurricane
CPT D.T. GIVENS
Radio-TV Officer
2LT W.K. WATSON
Assistant Information Officer
SFC R. Britton *Radio-TV Supervisor;* SFC S. Schwinn *Information Supervisor;* SSG J. Van Drew *Information Supervisor;* SP5 J. Herman *Information Specialist;* SP5 A Dyakon *Information Specialist;* SP5 E. Parents *Broadcast Specialist;* SP4 F. Gottlieb *Broadcast Specialist;* SP4 P. Schieber *Information Specialist;* SP5 R. Anderson *Information Specialist;* SP4 J. Naylor *Clerk-typist;* SP4 R. Wiesenhutter *Administrative Specialist*
53D SIGNAL BATTALION
Photo Support
SSG J. Principie *NCOIC;* SP5 R. Shultz *Photographer;* SP4 B. Seitz *Photographer;* SP4 S. Mancusi *Photographer;* SP4 P. Finnegan *Photographer;* SP4 T. Fease *Photographer;* SP4 T. Lynce *Photographer;* SP5 R. Reimer *Photographer;* PFC T. Skiffington *Photographer*

CONTENTS

LTG Ewell: heading home after 26 months of command

A Summing Up

A Commander Leaves for Home

On April 15, LTG Julian J. Ewell, commanding general of II Field Force Vietnam, formally turned over his command to LTG Michael S. Davison.

General Ewell's next assignment is as the senior military advisor to the Paris Peace Talks.

In this exclusive interview with The Hurricane, General Ewell reflects on the past two years of the war and offers some candid predictions about the future.

HURRICANE: *General Ewell, you have completed 26 months of duty in Vietnam, including command of the 9th Infantry Division and II Field Force, the largest combat command in the Army.*

Looking back over your months here, what, in your opinion, are the most significant developments since your arrival?

EWELL: Of course I arrived here right after the great Tet battles of 1968, and the most significant thing at that time was the recovery of the Vietnamese forces and allied forces from the surprise of Tet, and the tremendous drubbing they gave the Communist forces at that time.

Looking at it from a longer range point of view, however, there are four things that strike me as being important. The first is the massive deterioration of the enemy forces in the whole III Corps Tactical Zone. Second, and probably even more significant, is the impressive strides that have been made in pacification in the last 18 months.

Third, from a technical, military point of view, there has been an almost complete changeover from large unit to small unit operation, and, fourth, I think what's very encouraging is the improvement in the effectiveness of not only the Vietnamese Army but of the government of Vietnam in general.

HURRICANE: *A few years ago newspapers were filled with battle reports containing bits about Operation Junction City, Operation Cedar Falls and the like. These operations were brigade-sized or larger. Today you don't read about such large scale operations.*

Why is this? Have U.S. battlefield tactics changed in the past two years?

EWELL: Yes, both the Communist tactics and ours have changed. Two to three years ago you had large, tough enemy units wandering around and it took big, friendly units to beat them down to size.

In the last two years, the enemy's taken such a lacing that they've had to break down into very small units —platoon, squad and even smaller to stay alive, and the few tough, big units or battalions left are in the deep jungle where they can be dealt with on their own terms.

As the enemy began to fragment, the U.S. and allied forces followed them down, and we are now operating at generally platoon level in the daytime and even squad level at night.

HURRICANE: *In Tet of 1968 and again last year, the enemy chose to attack major population centers—particularly Saigon. But recently there seems to have been a trend toward the outlying regions nearer the Cambodian border, at least in the III Corps Tactical Zone (III CTZ).*

Has there been a change in the enemy's primary objective since your arrival? Why has the enemy chosen this course of action?

EWELL: I think his recent tactics and strategy have been a combination of necessity and choice. When he attacked the big population centers, he received very heavy casualties and he just couldn't stand it.

In addition, about a year or year and a half ago, we began to go in on his supply lines all the way up to the Cambodian border and by a combination of finding and destroying his caches and interdicting his supply lines, we made it more difficult for him to supply himself down country.

So, if you look at the battle, starting last February, which was his last real attempt to attack the Saigon-Bien Hoa area, you will see the battles each month getting farther and farther away from Saigon, and now the only sizeable battles we've had since June (when we had some around Tay Ninh) have been up within 15 to 20 kilometers of the Cambodian border.

HURRICANE: *With regard to Vietnamization in the III CTZ, project Dong Tien ("Progress Together") was begun shortly following the first American troop withdrawals last year. Has Dong Tien worked? Has the project met the objectives set for it at the start?*

EWELL: Yes, I think both the Vietnamese and the U.S. are very pleased with the Dong Tien program. Its three main objectives, which were largely achieved, were, first, to teach the skillful use of firepower to battalion and regimental commanders on the Vietnamese side, and I think they've picked this up very readily.

Second was to help the ARVN work their way down into small unit operations. They went to company very easily and are now working down to platoon, somewhat hampered by being a little thin in radios. But they seem to be making this jump all right.

The third point was to insure that the ARVN commanders, at the battalion level in particular, were able to grasp the idea and fully accept the responsibility for more larger-scale operations, and I think this is getting across quite well.

The outstanding ARVN commander is no problem. Their outfits are top-notch. The average ones do quite well and the poor ones soon find themselves out of a job. Actually, at this stage of the game, the Dong Tien program is being progressively phased out and my guess is that by next summer there won't be any need for it any longer.

HURRICANE: *The America of the 1960s was turbulent, troubled, and often a violent society. During those years, the military came under increased criticism from the press, the young, and even from former career officers. In your opinion, General Ewell, what effect, if any, has this had on the combat soldier?*

EWELL: I think the bulk of the criticism in the last few years has not been so much of the Army *per se,* but of the Vietnamese war, and I think some of the more vocal and less thoughtful members of U.S. society would criticize motherhood if they thought they could attack the Vietnamese war by so doing.

So I think you have a combination here of what you might call turbulence in our society in general, plus possibly some criticism of the Army itself.

I guess it's had some effect. I think you can measure it from the front. In front-line battalions where people are very busy and know they're doing a worthwhile job, they couldn't care less (about the critics). I would say it has no effect or perhaps just inconsequential effect.

When you get back to Saigon and Long Binh where people are punching a time clock and don't have a lot to do, they have time to get into trouble. I suppose you do have some active unrest.

The only incident I can really think of was in a hospital, where their casualty load had gone down so much they were sitting around twiddling their thumbs. And I guess a few doctors of the more fruitcake type just talked themselves into having a sort of protest rally. It seems a little juvenile and undignified, but I guess they got something out of it.

I think that's a good measure of the farther you are away from the front, the unrest, the criticism in the States affects things. But I'm happy to say as a Field Force commander

that it hasn't really affected our men at all.

HURRICANE: *Many new task forces and organizations have been developed in the course of this war. One of these is the Civil Operations and Rural Development Support, better known as CORDS. What is the significance of CORDS to the overall military effort?*

EWELL: Well, I think it's very important. Actually, we're not here to fight a war, we're here to win a peace. And CORDS' basic job is to plan, advise, and work with the civil side of the Vietnamese government out in the provinces and districts. Their most urgent task at present is pacification, the bringing of security

REIMER

"I think it's a fair guess that the U.S. role in Vietnam will become less and less significant."

and the rebuilding of society to the Vietnamese people and they play a very critical role in this.

Actually, pacification is very important to the military side of the war, because the greater the success of the pacification program, the less support the Communists are able to extort from the people and the more difficulties they get into not only militarily, but politically and in every other way.

HURRICANE: *Airmobility has proven itself in Vietnam. But what about the helicopter's role in a conventional environment? Also, as a master parachutist and former Screaming Eagle (101st Airborne Division) commander in World War II, how will the airmobile concept change airborne employment?*

EWELL: There's no doubt that now and in the future there's just less a need for airborne. The chopper is so much more flexible in a tactical sense that the airborne's just not very helpful in fighting a battle once you get to it. However, it still does have a role. In strategic operations where you have to go thousands of miles and make an opposed landing, airborne still has some utility. Getting to the airmobile concept itself, there's no doubt that the helicopter will be useful in conventional operations, but not as important as it is here in Vietnam.

Take Europe for instance. The weather most of the time is just horrible, and there are periods when you just can't fly at all. The battlefield is dominated by tanks and other very heavy equipment which tends to put the helicopter at a disadvantage.

Until they get more advanced helicopters, like the Cheyenne or something similar, their firepower just isn't great enough to be highly effective against heavily-armored vehicles. So I think the helicopter would be very useful in any war, but nowhere near as important as it is here in Vietnam.

HURRICANE: *General, what about other sophisticated devices in this war? How has the utilization of technology such as the Rome plows, electronic sensor devices, and light amplifying "starlight scopes" helped the combat situation?*

EWELL: I think some of these technical devices have been very useful, although it is odd that when they're first introduced they're very useful for a period of three to four months and then they begin to tail off. I think the middle range radar is a good example. When we first introduced them and got them working well, we just shot the brains out of the Communists. And then, after two or three months of that, they'd catch on and begin to get lost and although the radars now are quite useful, they aren't as decisive as they were during their early months.

I think this is true in practically any new technological device. The enemy is quite clever and observant and, as he catches on, he devises some way to guard against it, even if it's just to get lost.

I think probably at this stage of the game, the most effective device is the Rome plow. The enemy is gradually getting into more and more inaccessible base areas and about the only way you can get him out of there is open it up with a Rome plow, plus infantry operations.

Another useful device is the small starlight scope, which makes it possible for a well-trained allied unit to operate better at night than the Communists do and this has been a really shattering experience for the Communists. It just drives them crazy.

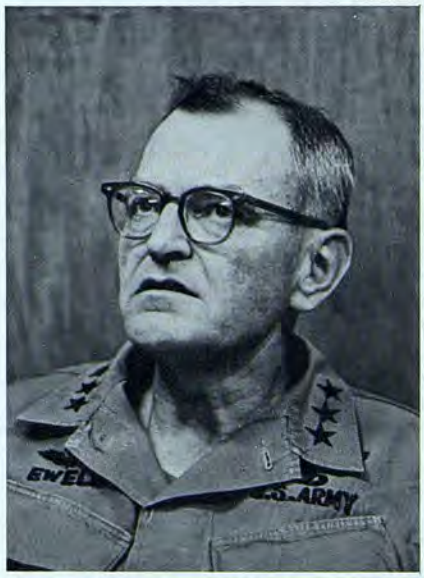
Looking at the other side of the coin, however, in the last 6 to 12 months, the most effective device or weapon, call it what you will, we've had in Vietnam is the small infantry unit armed with a rifle. I don't think it's well-known, but for months now we've been dealing more damage to the enemy with small infantry units then with everything else put together and all this exotic stuff is useful and helpful, but it hasn't been carrying the decisive load.

HURRICANE: *Tactical B-52 raids have been used for some time now. General Ewell, just how effective have they been?*

EWELL: Well, they're like everything else, they're very useful and I'd hate to have to do without them, but they're just a part of the overall picture. The way you get results around here is sort of like a symphony orchestra. You put all the instruments together and it sounds right.

And B-52s are very important and useful parts of this overall picture.

REIMER



"The helicopter would be useful in any war, but nowhere near as important as it has been in Vietnam."

At this stage of the game, though, we mainly use them to strike enemy command posts, enemy base areas, enemy assembling areas, big, cache sites and there's no doubt they do a lot of damage. Not the least of their effects is the psychological effect on the enemy. It's sort of has

removed the aura of being able to be completely safe in a very distant isolated jungle secret base and no doubt the enemy just hate the B-52s with a holy passion.

HURRICANE: *Sir, when and how do you think the war will end, and what will be the post-war role of the U.S. Army in Vietnam?*

REIMER

"The way you get results around here is sort of like a symphony orchestra. You put all the instruments together and it sounds right."

EWELL: If I knew that, I'd write a book and make a million dollars. But just from reading and my general knowledge of the war, I think there's no doubt that in Asia or anywhere else in the world, it's important that the United States, one of the largest, most powerful countries in the world, play a role to try to balance things off and try to hold the level of conflict down to where it doesn't break out in larger and larger wars.

Of course, Asia, particularly the Far East, is in a real mess, you might say, from India out, and it'll probably be like it was in Europe years ago. It'll probably be 50, 100, 200 years before they get themselves sorted out and pasted together where you don't have a war going on every week on Saturday.

And until the aggressive countries cool down, until the weak countries gain some strength and can stand up for themselves, the U.S. will have a role to play.

Now whether this means we'll help them with money, whether we'll have to be forced in certain instances to help them with troops, is something you can't judge in advance.

I think regardless of how much screaming and moaning you get from some parties in the States, when the President and the Administration feel the U.S.' national interests are challenged, they're going to have to put in whatever seems appropriate at the time.

As to what'll happen to the war here in Vietnam, specifically, that's hard to say. President Thieu has speculated the war will just sort of wind down and dwindle away. That of course would be the best development, from both the South Vietnamese and the U.S. point of view, that could come about.

And if the North Vietnamese ever decide that the cost of the war to them is just too great, in whatever terms, casualties, money, or effort, and that the South Vietnamese are too strong to take into camp by aggression, then the war will dwindle away.

However, I think it's a fair guess that the U.S. role in Vietnam will become less and less significant, that we'll eventually back off into an advice and support role, and finally probably advise them only when some particularly new or complex matter comes up where our expertise is essential. How long that process will take is hard to say.

HURRICANE: *General Ewell, in a few days you will leave Vietnam for your new assignment. Do you have any final words to pass on to the men of your command?*

EWELL: Yes, I'd like to congratulate every officer and man in II Field Force Vietnam on the tre-

REIMER

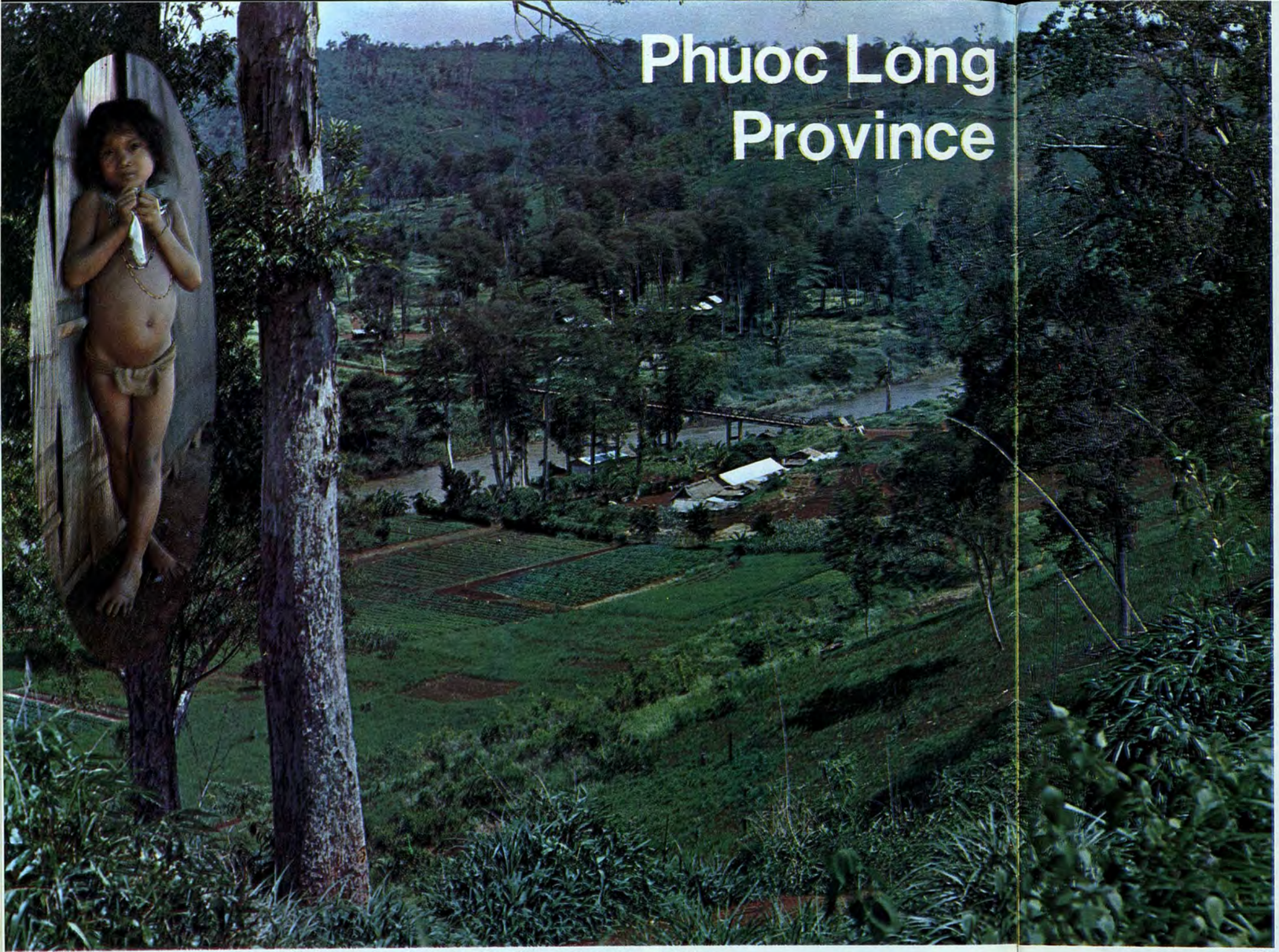
"The most effective weapon we've had in Vietnam is the small infantry unit armed with a rifle."

mendous job they've done, particularly since Tet '68 in whittling the enemy down to size, while helping the Army of Vietnam and the Vietnamese government and people to help themselves.

Each and every man in II Field Force deserves the gratitude and admiration of both the American and South Vietnamese people for his gallant service here in Vietnam. From my point of view, it has been a privilege and an honor to work with all the officers and men. I send them all my thanks and best wishes and know that they'll do as fine a job for my successor, General Davison, as they've done for me and my predecessors.

LTG Ewell reviews RD cadre graduation: "Pacification is going well."

Phuoc Long Province



Phuoc Long is open spaces, small villages and Montagnard children

COX

By Specialist 5 Don Sockol

AN AMERICAN OFFICER in Dong Xoai waved his arm over a field of high grass and pointed out its possible connection with John Wayne.

"There used to be a Special Forces camp here," he said, squinting in the sun. "It was overrun in 1965. I'm not sure, but I've been told the battle in the movie, The Green Berets, was based on what happened here."

In one corner of the ghost compound a humming saw mill services a recently reborn lumber industry that out-produces all the rest of III Corps put together. Dong Xoai, after five years of sleepy isolation imposed by the enemy, is a booming timber town.

The boom is a strong indication of hope for the future. After five years of strangulation by the enemy, it indicates that several fingers have been pried loose from the throat of Phuoc Long, the northernmost province in III Corps.

After 1965, all roads connecting Phuoc Long's four districts had been cut. The highway from the south, the link with Saigon, was pinched closed less than 12 miles inside the province.

"Getting a vehicle to a fire base seven kilometers from Song Be (the capital) would have required a battalion-sized operation," said Lieutenant Colonel Robert T. Hayden, the province senior advisor (PSA).

In 1968, U.S. advisors reported: "Phuoc Long is an outpost province supplied entirely by air." Saigon was airlifting 350 tons of rice a month into the province, whose farmers were clustered for protection around five population centers.

The enemy was virtually uncontested in the countryside. Allied

COX

Gambling in the Song Be marketplace

Lumber—a booming industry for modern Phuoc Long

FEASE

Montagnard villager—a throwback to the older Phuoc Long

FEASE

operations were aimed at keeping the towns secure. A battalion of the 1st Infantry Division stubbornly held what is now LZ Buttons and fought to keep the enemy outside a 10-mile radius of Song Be. "The VC used to walk around Song Be with AKs," said Colonel Hayden, whose predecessor was the first PSA to leave the province alive.

The military situation was, at best, bleak. "There were really not sufficient forces available to carry the fight to the enemy," admitted Colonel Frederick C. Krause, military senior advisor to III Corps.

But as early as the fall of 1968, a prescient enemy commander could see signs of change.

In November of that year, the 1st Air Cav started raiding Phuoc Long from its base in Binh Duong. "For the first time," said Colonel Krause, "long range operations into major enemy base areas were possible."

But 1969 was the year the Allies really began a major effort. Last summer, two brigades of the Cav moved into the province. In December, elements of the 5th ARVN Infantry Division and the 1st ARVN Airborne Division entered the area.

The real turning point, though, has been the reopening of Phuoc Long's network of roads. In June, the first convoy since 1965 rolled from Dong Xoai to Song Be. On November 27, one tri-Lambretta carried goods to Duc Phong. The road linking Bo Duc to Binh Long Province was opened in January. Military traffic may soon move between Song Be and Bo Duc.

Daily buses now shuttle between Song Be and Duc Phong and between Saigon and Song Be. "The minute the roads were cleared, commerce began," said Mort Dworken, New Life Development advisor.

"There's been a temendous change in the attitude of the people," said Colonel Hayden. "As soon as the road to Duc Phong opened, flags went up in the village."

Said another U.S. officer in Song Be: "If you were here a year ago and came back today, you wouldn't recognize the place."

The economic boom is reflected in tax revenues, based on business. In 1968, the province collected about $71,000 in taxes. The first half of 1969 brought in $44,000. During the last half of 1969, when roads were carrying commerce again, almost $600,000 was collected.

After five lean years, 10,000 cubic meters of lumber are being exported from the province each month. Teak, mahogany and other Asian woods from Phuoc Long sell for up to $50 a cubic meter in Saigon. The sales of bamboo, charcoal, some citrus fruits, fish and coffee are adding to the economy of the province which once exported five times as much as it imported.

That great symbol of economic development, the motorcycle, has begun to make its mark in Song Be. Sister Mary Thomas, a nun who has lived in the area since 1967, remarked, "You see a great many more Hondas now."

But despite economic gains, the province, shaped by years of short supply and long demand, still claims the dubious distinction of having the highest cost-of-living in III Corps.

Things are getting a little bit better, though. Last fall, when a gallon of gas was selling for 100 piasters in Saigon, it cost 640 in Song Be. By the beginning of the year it was down to 450 piasters.

cox

Province headquarters at Song Be, a change for the better

The cost of living is one reason it's hard to attract government cadre to work in Phuoc Long, according to Thomas J. Wajda, deputy province senior advisor (DPSA). He gave another reason. "Phuoc Long has long been considered 'the Siberia of Vietnam.' "

This tradition may have begun in colonial days, when the French ran a reputedly brutal prison camp for political prisoners on Ba Ra Mountain, the sister peak of Tay Ninh's Nui Ba Den. Sister Thomas was told by a local resident, who was a prisoner there himself, that former President Ngo Dinh Diem was once incarcerated at Ba Ra until he escaped to Cambodia with the help of local Montagnards.

At any rate, Wajda said, if someone isn't performing up to snuff, he's sent to work at Song Be. "And if you really mess up in Song Be, you get assigned to Bo Duc."

It's ironic that Phuoc Long enjoys such an unsavory reputation. The province was once one of the finest natural hunting preserves in Asia. Tigers, leopards and bears have caused U.S. casualties in the area. Herds of elephants have been sighted by chopper crews. Deer, wild boar, monkeys, baboons, peacocks, pheasant and wild grouse abound in the province, four-fifths of which is covered by forest.

(Less enticing attractions are cobras and deadly bamboo vipers, which are reckoned to be second to the enemy as a threat to the U.S. soldier.)

On the border of II Corps, Phuoc Long is lush, green country containing the first foothills of the Central Highlands.

The hills were once full of Montagnards, who have now been resettled around the towns. "They'll go back as soon as they get the chance," said a U.S. official. "But they know they're in danger out there now." Some 18,000 Montagnards, the largest population in III Corps, are among the 30,000 rural people who were resettled around the towns in 1968 and 1969. Now virtually all of Phuoc Long's 45,000 people are living in a handful of highground settlements.

Phuoc Long has fewer people and more land than any other III Corps Province. "The GVN has all the people and the enemy has all the land," an officer at Duc Phong simplified.

In fact, the enemy's title to the land is not quite as clear as it once was.

Last September, the U.S. command estimated there was a VC regiment operating around Song Be. A few months later they started referring to it as the Song Be Battalion. "Now we call it the Song Be Company," said Colonel Hayden. "The Song Be guerrillas have been decimated."

Additional evidence can be found in Chieu Hoi figures. From January to September last year, 62 enemy rallied. In mid-January Colonel Hayden claimed 612. "And I only count arms-carrying soldiers. I don't buy this theory that if a man comes in with his wife, 10 children and an elderly old uncle, you've got 13 ralliers."

Phuoc Long's first Chieu Hoi hamlet was occupied last month, less than two years after province officials were reporting: "The enemy

has little reason to rally; the government is not hurting him."

By the end of 1969, the enemy was being hurt. Official figures list 3,400 enemy killed in November and December. Credit for results is freely shared by American and Vietnamese soldiers. "Within two weeks after the ARVN airborne got here they ran into an enemy regiment," said DPSA Wajda. "After four days of fighting they killed 208 of the enemy."

An American NCO commented: "Those ARVNs are as good as the Cav, and you can ask the Cav and they'll say so too."

Still, the equivalent of one NVA division and some local force units keep enemy strength in Phuoc Long above the 3,000 mark at all times, Wajda said. At times it fluctuates up to about 7,000.

The Bu Gia Map area in the northeast is presently such a secure enemy base area that some enlisted pundits call it "the Long Binh of the NVA."

And the enemy is still using three major infiltration routes through the province—the Surges Highway, Adams Trail and the Jolley Jungle Trail. The first two have been harassed seriously enough though, said Colonel Krause, to force the enemy to open the Jolley Jungle route during the last half of 1969.

(Surges Highway, incidentally, is puzzlingly named for the father-in-law of the Forward Air Control pilot who discovered it, prompting the comment, "You haven't lost a daughter, you've gained an infiltration route.")

The enemy was still game enough in January to demolish the MACV compound at Song Be with mortars and rockets (casualties were remarkably light) and to keep U.S. soldiers in a fire base at Bo Duc shouting "Incoming!" quite regularly.

But Phuoc Long no longer belongs to the enemy. Attacks on NVA lines of communication and supply routes "have made him more dependent on secure bases in Cambodia," said Colonel Krause.

With characteristic American optimism, PSA Hayden is an enthusiastic booster of the real estate. "This is beautiful country," he cries expansively. "It abounds with wild game. You can catch 20-pound fish in the Song Be River. The land is rich and there's plenty of water. I'd buy land up here tomorrow if I could. I'd put all my savings in it. This area is really going to go places."

The future course of the war in Phuoc Long is open to speculation. But the most significant analysis right now is this: For the first time since 1965, there really *is* a war there. The other team has been forced onto the field.

FEASE

American doctor treats a Montagnard woman during MEDCAP

FEASE

A crowded bus in Song Be: a year ago the roads weren't safe to travel

CUNG CHÚC TÂN XUÂN

ĐỪNG LỠ BƯỚC SONG ĐÔI...

"Happy New Year. Don't miss our lives together."

III Corps' Professional Litterbugs

"Attention members of the 84th Rear Services Group."

PHÁO ĐÀI B.52 CÓ THỂ XUẤT-HIỆN ĐỂ TIÊU-DIỆT CÁC BẠN BẤT CỨ LÚC NÃO.

"B-52 bombers can appear and destroy you at any time."

"Brother Bai Van Trung has found a new life through the Chieu Hoi program."

By Specialist 4

Phil Schieber

THE B-52S FLEW through the night, in another world between earth and space, at least half a mile ahead of the sound of their screaming jet engines. The only warning the Communist soldiers of the 268th Regiment heard was the rushing whistle of falling bombs. It is impossible to run from that sound.

The bombs hit and spread death through the unlucky patch of jungle. No one probably heard or noticed the plane that followed the B-52s, flying much lower and dropping leaflets.

The plane was from the 6th Psychological Operations Battalion, and the leaflets spiraling from the belly of the plane landed near survivors who were ready to listen, ready to seriously consider the alternatives to fighting for the Communists.

The 6th Psychological Operations Battalion has its headquarters in Bien Hoa and its 33 field teams distribute propaganda by public address systems, movies, and face-to-face confrontations, as well as leaflet drops like the one on the 268th Regiment.

Psyops people enter a contested hamlet armed to the teeth with pamphlets, balloons, and flags. Their big gun

is a 16mm movie projector that flashes out pictures and sounds of Mickey Mouse at the cyclic rate of 32 frames a second. They are political missionaries, and their job is to convert Viet Cong, NVA regulars, and Communist supporters to the allied cause.

Psychological warfare is not new to the battlefield. The walls came tumbling down at the battle of Jericho when Joshua and his men used psychological tactics on the entrenched enemy. In World War II, Tokyo Rose and Lord Haw-Haw used radio broadcasts in futile attempts to undermine the morale of British and American soldiers.

The Korean War saw the Communists introduce a psychological tactic on prisoners of war which is now commonly known as "brain washing." And in Vietnam, allied soldiers near the DMZ have been subjected to clandestine broadcasts from a female disk jockey dubbed "Hanoi Hannah" by the GIs.

Although the psyops of the Communists in Vietnam has seldom risen above the level of terrorist tactics or an occasional crudely crafted leaflet, the allied forces have come to rely heavily on psychological warfare. If psyops previously operated on the periphery of war, in Vietnam it has entered into the heat of combat.

Psyops teams often accompany infantry units in the field, with bullhorns or loudspeaker systems strapped to their backs. An "Early Word" system has been developed which allows for maximum psychological exploitation of a Hoi Chanh or a prisoner of war.

Psyops worker plots new target area

When an enemy soldier rallies, he is immediately placed in front of a microphone which relays his message to an aircraft flying overhead. In the plane, electronic equipment simultaneously records and broadcasts the message. In such instances, the sound of the former comrade's voice appealing to his friends has resulted in additional ralliers.

Aside from waging war with the minds of the enemy, psyops is directly engaged in the pacification program. Propaganda movies, public health films, highway safety reminders, all fall within the realm of psychological operations. Psyops also provides tremendous amounts of information to the Vietnamese civilians.

"Three years ago there were no such things as newspapers in the countryside," said Colonel Irving O. Barker, commander of the 6th PSYOPS Battalion. "Now there are news sheets, leaflets, and all sorts of pamphlets. At the time of President Nixon's policy speech in November, extracts from his speech were spilling from the sky. As a result of psyops efforts VC propaganda is now falling on dubious ears."

The 6th PSYOPS Battalion prints an average of five million leaflets a week and designs a particular leaflet for a particular target. The message is printed on a 3″ by 6″ leaflet, which rotates on its own axis in a free fall, thus allowing for more accurate drops. Each message is the product of a panel analysis by Vietnamese and U.S. sociologists and military personnel.

There are a few basic guidelines which the panel follows in the preparation of any text. Blue and violet are very popular colors in Vietnam, and a leaflet printed with these colors is pleasing to the Vietnamese eye. Any drawings must be accurate representations. The language must be simple, yet not condescending.

The mood of the messages range from friendly persuasion and strums on heart strings to one of the more blunt leaflets which shows a picture of a reclining Viet Cong with the simple text: "Is this VC sleeping? No, he's dead."

Psyops people admit that it is difficult to measure the effectiveness of a leaflet on a man's mind. Playing on the hopes and fears of the enemy, the only tangible indication of success is in the number of ralliers. Since 1963, approximately 130,000 of the enemy have rallied.

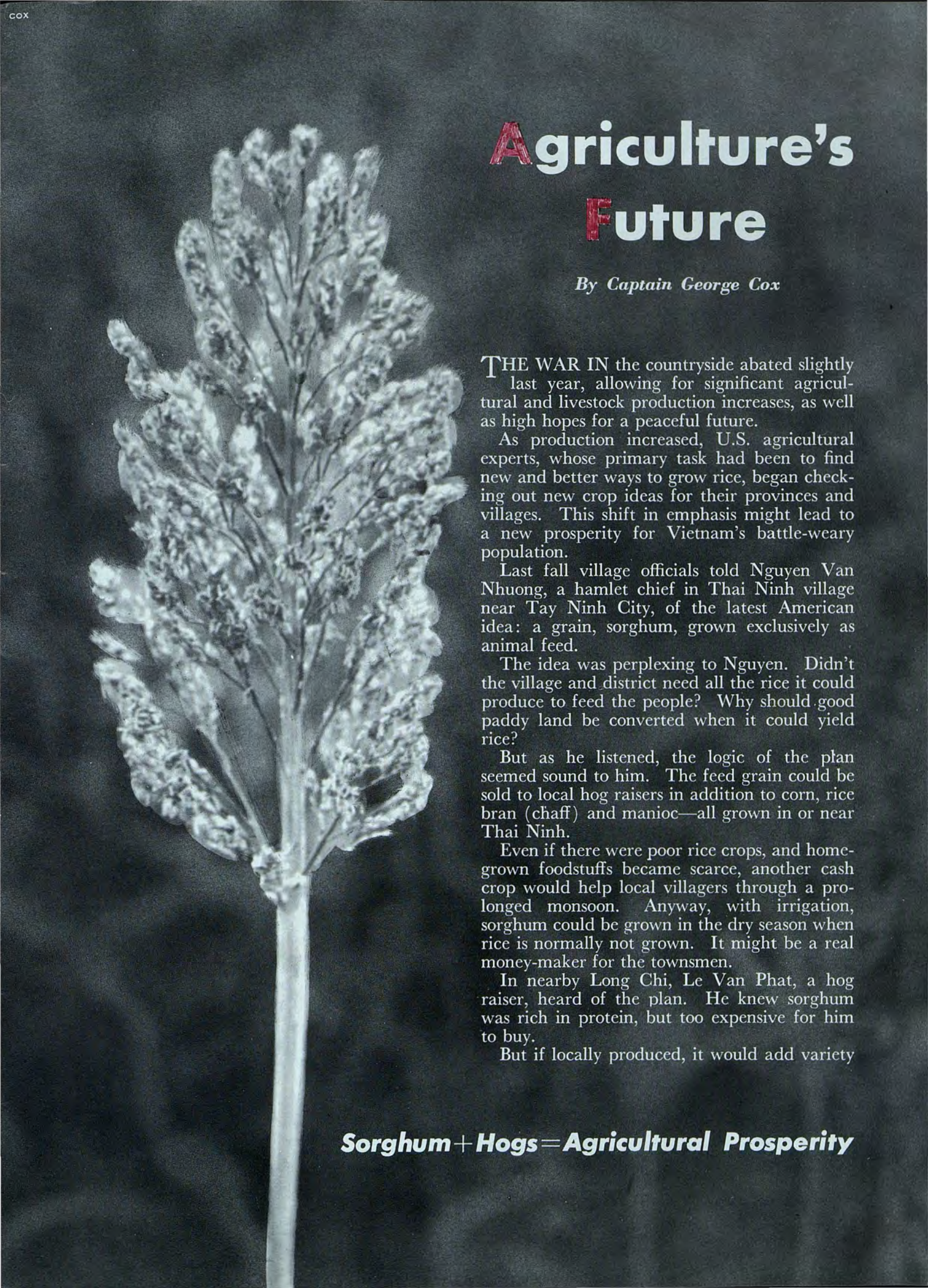
Psyops people point out, though, that most of these ralliers have been Viet Cong. Psychologically speaking, the NVA soldier has proven a tough nut to crack. Ignorance of the Chieu Hoi program, largely stemming from the tough discipline of his officers, in many cases prevents a potential NVA Hoi Chanh from rallying even if he wanted to.

Enlisted men are told that the Chieu Hoi program is a hoax, and that if they rally they will become prisoners of war, if they're lucky enough to survive the tortures devised by the imperialists. The NVA seem to have a brain-washed fear of the United States and the other allied forces.

This acute paranoia is of course reinforced by hostile fire and the normal fear any combat soldier has for his enemy. And it is difficult to overcome when the NVA enlisted men are led to believe that Saigon is in rubble, that allied units practice cannibalism on prisoners of war, and that any day now the GVN is going to collapse.

If the waging of psychological warfare is a frustrating job with few tangible results, the psyops people can comfort themselves with the successes of their historical predecessors, ranging from Thomas Paine to Vladimir Lenin, whose pamphlets and words were eventually translated into deeds.

cox



Agriculture's Future

By Captain George Cox

THE WAR IN the countryside abated slightly last year, allowing for significant agricultural and livestock production increases, as well as high hopes for a peaceful future.

As production increased, U.S. agricultural experts, whose primary task had been to find new and better ways to grow rice, began checking out new crop ideas for their provinces and villages. This shift in emphasis might lead to a new prosperity for Vietnam's battle-weary population.

Last fall village officials told Nguyen Van Nhuong, a hamlet chief in Thai Ninh village near Tay Ninh City, of the latest American idea: a grain, sorghum, grown exclusively as animal feed.

The idea was perplexing to Nguyen. Didn't the village and district need all the rice it could produce to feed the people? Why should good paddy land be converted when it could yield rice?

But as he listened, the logic of the plan seemed sound to him. The feed grain could be sold to local hog raisers in addition to corn, rice bran (chaff) and manioc—all grown in or near Thai Ninh.

Even if there were poor rice crops, and home-grown foodstuffs became scarce, another cash crop would help local villagers through a prolonged monsoon. Anyway, with irrigation, sorghum could be grown in the dry season when rice is normally not grown. It might be a real money-maker for the townsmen.

In nearby Long Chi, Le Van Phat, a hog raiser, heard of the plan. He knew sorghum was rich in protein, but too expensive for him to buy.

But if locally produced, it would add variety

Sorghum + Hogs = Agricultural Prosperity

COX

Papayas, jack fruit. bananas—"Anything will grow in Tay Ninh."

to his hog's diet. Presently his hogs were fattened with only high energy feed like rice bran and manioc with little protein supplement.

He was interested. Protein would add more ham to his pigs. Also, cheaper feed could mean increased production and increased market sales—which are soaring at 450 piasters per kilogram (2.2 pounds) in the Saigon marketplace.

Nguyen returned to Thai Ninh and informed the townsfolk. Some laughed. But others thought it might work. So by early December small pilot plots of sorghum were sprouting in Thai Ninh and hog raiser Le was anxiously awaiting the spring harvest.

COX

Agricultural advisor Lenz surveys experimental sorghum

This incident not only forecasts growing agricultural and livestock industries in post-war Vietnam, but represents a dynamic shift in the U.S. agricultural advisory effort. The new direction focuses on needs decided at the village level instead of by directives from some office in Saigon telling provincial and district officials what to raise and plant.

As Dr. Luther A. Fahrlund, regional livestock advisor for CORDS, said, "We in agriculture and livestock are making the village the arena, where it has not been before."

By late 1964 Vietnam's rice bowl was empty—exhausted by the war's toll in men and land. As a result Civil Operations and Rural Development Support (CORDS) officials directed that rice be given top priority.

Crash programs in "miracle rice" (IR-8), land reform and rice importation helped stem the tide and by the end of the decade the country's shell-shocked paddies showed signs of recovery.

Today as the rice crop approaches Vietnam's subsistence level and imports decrease, provincial officials are finding time to delve more thoroughly into the rich paddy lands. Not surprisingly, some have discovered other investment possibilities. In most provinces, rice will remain the main endeavor, but in others there is less certainty about it. Such is the case in Tay Ninh.

Tay Ninh is an agriculture goldmine. It is fertile, and capable of supporting sweet potatoes, rice, sugarcane, a myriad of truck crops, peanuts, manioc, feed grains like sorghum and corn, as well as cattle, pigs, chickens and ducks. And Mr. Fred Lenz, provincial agricultural advisor, is out to prove Tay Ninh's potential.

Lenz, the chief "new look" exponent in Tay Ninh, is a tall, peppery man who looks more like a midwestern campus coach than a farmer. And his agricultural game plan is just as complicated as anything Woody Hayes could devise. Diversification is the name of the game and "a couple of successful operators is about all we need," said Lenz. His current priority is the feed industry.

According to a recent joint American and Vietnamese

Nguyen Thi Bay uses ancient farming technique to separate chaff from rice

study, "South Vietnam has the potential to be a very important producer of animal protein—chickens, ducks, swine, buffalo and cattle. But to do so will require a greatly expanded feed growing industry."

With this in mind, Max Sauerbry, agricultural advisor in Bien Hoa province, and Lenz began exploring the potential of the sorghum project. They suspected that the climate and laterite soil would make it ideal.

"This is an operation to find out what farmers will do and what results are possible," Lenz said. "At first, it was hard to convince people that growing a crop only for feed grain could be profitable. But the Vietnamese farmer has the ability to understand and the ability to produce."

Still, the initiative had to come from the Vietnamese. If Nguyen Van Nhuong had not been convinced of the value, however risky, no amount of American advice would have convinced his hamlet of sorghum's value. "We suggest what should be done," added Lenz, "and it's up to the farmer to do the job."

Said Bien Hoa's Sauerbry, "We are planting 35 varieties of sorghum in quite a few locations to find out the height each variety will attain, and which ones resist disease the best." Due to military security, officials are hesitant about introducing varieties which could conceal enemy movement, especially since, Sauerbry said, "some kinds of sorghum grow to heights of two or three meters."

What sort of profits could a crop harvest for Bien Hoa's farmers? "The net return after considering cost of production," estimated Sauerbry, "should be between 60,000 and 75,000 piasters ($510 to $635) per hectare. In fact by planting sorghum in the dry season farmers should net as much from sorghum as from the new IR-8 rice." The sorghum would be sold to local pig raisers, and added Sauerbry with a grin, "to the Chinese who make a rather strong wine from sorghum."

But it will take more than sorghum for Tay Ninh, Bien Hoa—or Vietnam—to achieve full agricultural potential. Paramount are two items not directly concerned with agriculture or livestock—the stability of the piaster and security.

Security has improved remarkably in the past year. And to agronomists, who bounce along provincial backroads daily, security is a necessity.

"Today we are working pretty close to a peacetime environment," commented the Tay Ninh advisor. "Agricultural assistance in this area is treated much like any other Asian or African country."

By decade's end, U.S. aid had prevented runaway inflation, but the piaster remained shaky; security was

COX

Sorghum-fed hogs will bring more in the marketplace

Tay Ninh farmer proudly shows off his first sorghum crop

reasonable in many former Tay Ninh hot spots, but not along every dusty trail. Thus, although improvements have been made, it is only with the end of the war that provinces like Tay Ninh and Bien Hoa will really flourish.

Then all arable land can be cultivated and, in the opinion of many CORDS advisors, displaced farmers will flock away from the congested urban centers as roads open as permanent communication links between major population hubs and the agriculturally-rich farm lands.

"As roads are developed and trade with Saigon increases," said Dr. Fahrlund, "new crops will appear, based on supply and demand. For instance, manioc and rice are the staple crops now in Tay Ninh, but others will become cash crops in the future." Sorghum is viewed as such a crop.

No estimate can accurately predict the future of the livestock and grain industries in Tay Ninh or throughout the Republic of Vietnam—the parameters are too varied. One CORDS estimate states that Vietnam will produce enough food for itself by 1972.

The American-Vietnamese study quoted previously states that 10 years after cessation of hostilities hog production should be up 100 per cent. If the feed industry catches hold, thus allowing more investment in livestock, it should grow much higher than expected.

Also with increases in animal husbandry, Vietnam will need many more livestock specialists and extension workers. Japan has the same livestock density as Vietnam, but has 60 times the specialists.

Today, Vietnam's agricultural and livestock industries are embryos in village arenas like Thai Ninh. With full use of available land, with ample agronomists and veterinarians, and above all, with an end to the war, Vietnam should once more become a major exporter of foodstuffs in the larger arena of Southeast Asia.

Small Boat Orientation School

By Specialist 4 Ray Anderson

A HOTEL IN downtown Saigon hardly seems the setting for a program designed to strengthen the Vietnamese Navy, but it is.

The Small Boat Orientation School operated by Naval Forces Vietnam (NAVFORV), is teaching Vietnamese sailors English so they can operate the U.S. coastal and river fleet.

The school was organized by Navy Lieutenant Bernard J. Donohue, who later became its civilian director. He had one year of combat experience on the Navy's small boat fleet before being assigned to the program, and he vividly remembered the rather austere beginnings: "I had a chair in the lobby for an office and I used my left and right fatigue pockets for a combined in-out box, filing cabinet," he said.

Many of the hotels walls had to be removed for classrooms, and the

Classes over, students take to the water SCHULTZ

SCHULTZ

Studying engine maintenance

students pitched in to complete the remodeling. "We'd have a little PT during the day and the students would be given a hammer and knock out a section of the wall," mused Donohue. Amid clouds of dust that sometimes forced classes to the roof or the street, the structure's "higher" education facilities were completed.

The mission was simple enough. Teach the Vietnamese enough English so that he could understand the American boat captain. The 12-week course, therefore, concentrates on basic English, nautical idioms, and fundamental instruction in small boat operation, including weaponry. The instruction relies heavily on audio-visual techniques and repetition.

School facilities include a sophisticated language lab, and a shortened PBR (Patrol Boat, River) mockup, which is used to familiarize the student prior to actual boat operation. The PBR was designed as a fast surveillance craft, but with its heavy armament, it has been used extensively for ambushes and small troop insertions.

The course also orients sailors who will be operating PCFs (Patrol Craft, Fast), and RACs (River Assault Craft). The PCF's mission is similar to the slower but more heavily-armed PBR, while the RACs are a variety of self-propelled, barge-type craft used for large troop insertions.

A separate, but equally important program is preparing Vietnamese midshipmen for officers candidate school. These junior college equivalent graduates strive for 70 per cent conversational English proficiency which enables them to attend the U.S. Navy's OCS at Newport, Rhode Island.

The school's success depends on the quality and motivation of the instructor and the ingenuity of the curriculum. "We try to inject imagination into the teaching program," said Donohue. The instructors are volunteers and prior to teaching a class they are given 100 hours of preliminary instruction.

Enlisted instructors are used because the language taught is the language spoken on the rivers. And they have weekly discussions with professional teaching consultants in an effort to improve teaching techniques and curriculum.

Petty Officer 3d Class James J. Downey, of Riverhead, New York, has been with the school since its inception, and taught English weapons terminology for four months. He speaks Vietnamese well enough, but he doesn't feel it is a prerequisite for capable teaching. "Some of our best instructors don't speak a word of Vietnamese, but they are able to motivate the class."

Most of the Vietnamese are right out of boot camp, so motivation is a challenge. "As long as we can get along with one of them, and give him a sense of purpose the remainder usually come around." Downey continued.

Originally the school taught 60 per cent language and 40 per cent physical skills, but feedback from boat captains indicated need for more emphasis on linguistics. "The students did very well on what we taught them, but they didn't know enough English to handle their jobs during combat situations," Downey said.

The problem was corrected by changing the curriculum to a 75–25 ratio, and sending the graduates on a cruise off the coast at first, where there isn't as much chance of enemy contact. "When you are patrolling canals 14 hours a day you may not have the time or ambition to train someone who can't understand what you are saying," commented a veteran boat captain who is now instructing patrol boat operation.

After completing the 12-week course the Vietnamese trainee will begin working with the small boat's four-man American crew, where he is groomed for the position of boat captain.

The commanding officer of a small, advanced tactical support base near Tay Ninh praised the Small Boat Orientation graduates he had worked with. "They've been very good sailors, and I've put them in for medals, due to their outstanding performances during firefights," he said. The students he received are being trained to operate the RACs in the capacity of gunnery, engine, and bosun's mates.

The school has thus been in the Navy's rapid command and asset turnover, which should be completed by August. Donohue said happily, "We've more or less worked ourselves out of a job."

The Navy feels the school is too valuable to lose, however, and intends to begin training the Vietnamese in the mechanical aspects of river boats following the combat unit turnover.

SCHULTZ

Concentrating in the English language lab

SCHULTZ

Field-stripping a .50 caliber machinegun

Islands without a War

By Lieutenant Tom Sileo

MOST PEOPLE, at one time or another, dream of escaping to a peaceful tropic island with good fishing, white beaches, sea breezes and a leisurely life —away from it all.

For the 1,600 Vietnamese villagers of Lai Son, this is a reality. They occupy seven islands off Vietnam's west shore, in the Gulf of Thailand—away from the mainland, away from the war.

Vietnam has hundreds of off-shore islands. Some are known and visited. Hon Tre (Turtle Island) has become quite a vacation spot while Phu Quoc is known as the origin of some of the best *nuoc mam* (fish sauce) in all Southeast Asia. Others are just dots on a map. Lai Son is such a dot.

Lai Son Island's inhabitants belong to a unique village. Two of Lai Son's three hamlets are there, Bai Bac (North Cove) and Bai Nha (Home Cove). The people of the third hamlet, Cu Tron, are scattered across six islands 25 kilometers further west.

Located some 50 kilometers off the coast from the port city of Rach Gia, small, peanut-shaped Lai Son Island is unspoiled, an original mother nature masterpiece. Lai Son has twin volcanic mountains and a scenic mountain pass connects its two hamlets. Wild monkeys roam about the 240 acre island and there is an abundance of coconut-bearing palm trees.

Not surprisingly, fishing is Lai Son's main livelihood. Besides fish, some shrimp, lobster, crab and oyster are also caught. The waters of the Gulf of Thailand also provide a good shark catch, a valuable commodity since the Chinese in Vietnam use shark fins in making medicine.

The island's small harbor is filled with anchored fishing vessels at dawn and dusk, but is usually empty during the day. The boats, usually from 25′ to 45′ long, lack compasses and radios, but are the main means of existence for the villagers. All their energies and resources go into keeping the boats, and their nets, in good condition.

Whether it's fishing in choppy waters or going to Rach Gia to sell or trade a catch, the fishing boat a man pilots is his status symbol and a sign of his respectability.

The average Lai Son fisherman makes about 3,000 piasters ($25.00) a day, making the entire village an oddity—rich, and self-sufficient. But though financially rewarding, fishing is strenuous and dangerous, as any fisherman who has been caught in the gulf's unpredictable weather will attest.

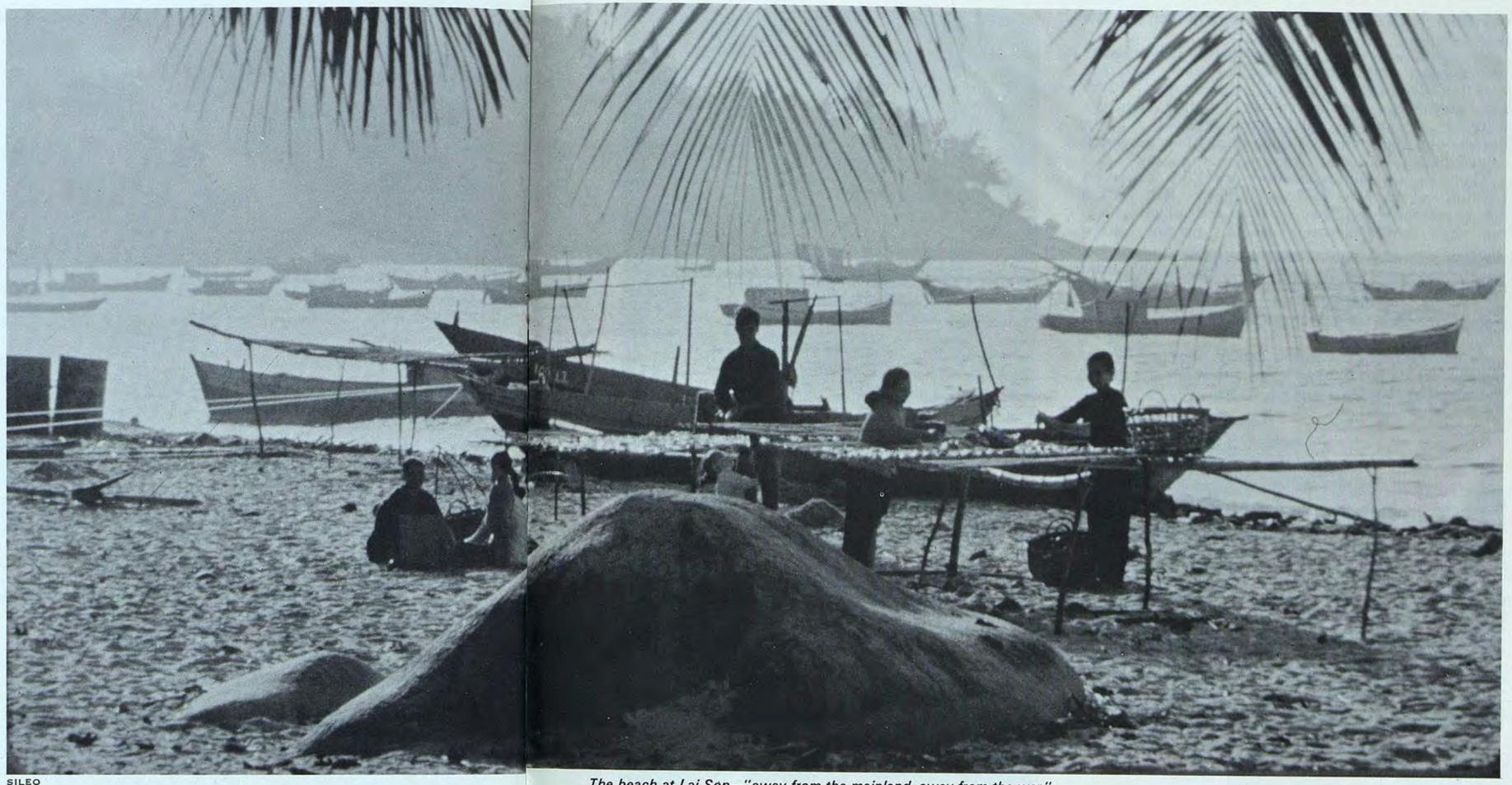
Lai Son has a secondary industry—making *nuoc mam* . Decaying fish and anchovies, basic ingredients of good *nuoc mam* , send out distinctive odors from the island's factories, really little more than huge storehouses filled with giant *nuoc mam* vats.

According to Merle Moore, New Life Development advisor for Kien Giang Province, "The island's *nuoc mam* rivals that of Phu Quoc and the people are very proud of it. They give it as a token of friendship to visitors."

Visitors though are rare to the islands. Moore, a former Peace Corps volunteer with service in Thailand, is one of the few regular visitors Lai Son gets and is accorded an even warmer welcome than most others. Any helicopter bringing visitors is met at the beach by hundreds of villagers, waving and shouting excitedly.

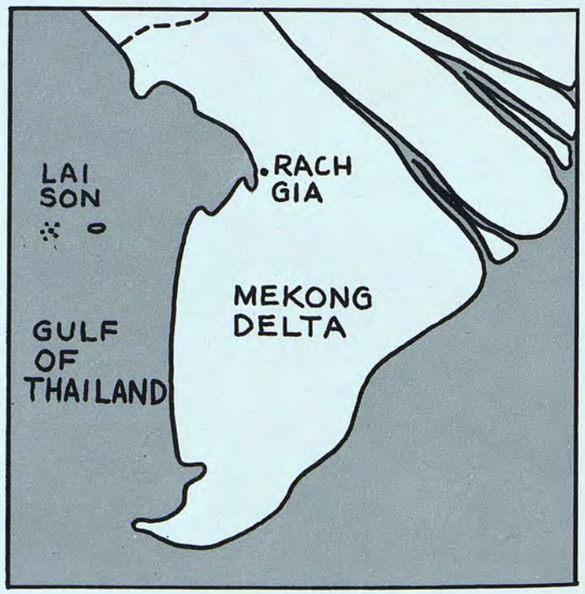
The Vietnamese of Lai Son are curious and interested in their country even though they are isolated from it by a five-hour fishing boat cruise. They hear a little about the mainland, and the war, and look upon Saigon as a great center of activity and culture.

One villager remarked though, "I have seen pictures



SILEO

The beach at Lai Son—"away from the mainland, away from the war."



Villagers repair fish nets: the tools of self-sufficiency

SILEO

of Saigon, but I don't want to go there. There are too many people."

Perhaps it is the prospect of living in a village where there is peace that makes Lai Son so attractive to those who don't live there. A tanned, leathery-necked fisherman remarked, somewhat embarassed, that "Once, a while ago, the province chief came here to tell us about the war and about the Viet Cong. But, I have forgotten what he said and I don't know who is fighting."

There are no military advisors or ARVN troops on Lai Son and the some 30 Regional Force (RF) soldiers are mainly for show. They serve no real military function since there has never been any fighting on the islands.

"The only shots fired here are those signaling that a fishing boat crew, anchored off-shore, needs someone to come out to dinghy them in," said Kent Paxton, senior American advisor for Kien Thanh District, of which Lai Son is a part.

"Those islands," continued Paxton, another regular visitor, "are unaffected not only by the war, but by the changes that have taken place throughout Vietnam in

SILEO

Fish hooks and drying fish: 3,000 piasters a day

the last decade. In some ways, of course, this is a drawback; in others it's a blessing in disguise."

Though it is inconvenient to travel between the six islands of Cu Tron hamlet, island-hopping is exciting and gives a sense of adventuring among people and places which are essentially the same as they were 100 years ago.

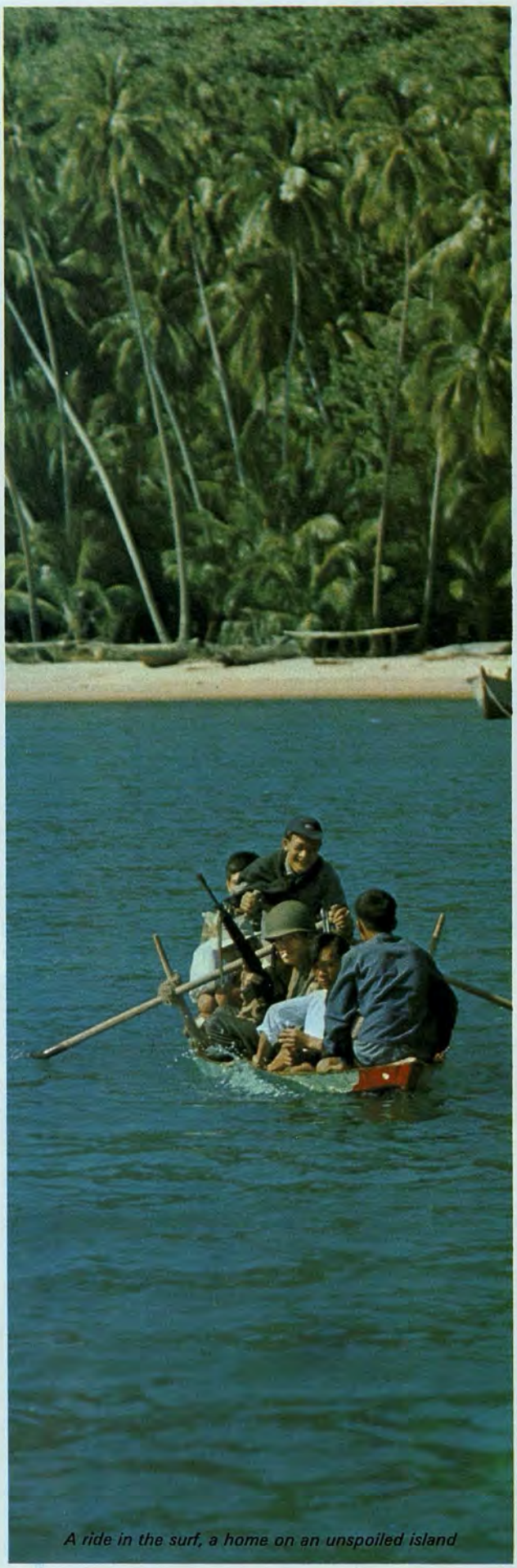
A spirit of pride and cooperation is evident among the villagers and trips between islands are made often, just to visit friends. Cu Tron hamlet dwellers traveled across the waters to help build Lai Son Island's school and everyone cooperated by chipping in their ideas when fresh water wells had to be dug.

The first problem was where to find fresh water. One villager suggested that rice bowls be placed upside down throughout the island and left that way for a day. Bowls that had moisture under them after one day would be likely places to dig for water, he reasoned.

Another suggested using a divining rod and yet another said he could tell where the water was by the way the ground felt under his bare feet. Unsophisticated? Maybe, but by using these methods (and an engineer) Lai Son now has six fresh water wells.

Having once walked the beach bare-footed, visited the thatched fishing homes, eaten and fished with the villagers and traveled among the islands, a visitor to Lai Son cannot be disappointed in the islands without a war.

SILEO



A ride in the surf, a home on an unspoiled island

Riding with the 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment

By Specialist 4 Phil Schieber

"NOW I KNOW how Pigpen in Charlie Brown feels," said a begrimed trooper from B Troop, 1st Squadron, 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment as he jumped from his track at the end of an all-day mission. "This damned dust is blowing my mind," he grumbled as he knocked the red powder from his clothing.

The damned dust hung over Fire Support Base Dennis like an inpenetrable cloud, and red ghosts moved about in green uniforms. The soul brothers were strawberry blondes with orange-red eyelashes, and tongues searched for dust that stuck to the roofs of dry mouths—Vietnam peanut butter, low in calories, rich in minerals.

The men and tracks were home again for another night at Dennis. Here they would rest, after pulling maintenance on their vehicles and weapons, read their mail and yesterday's copies of the *Stripes,* drink a beer, maybe even a *cold* beer, and later try to wash off some of that dust.

Thirty miles north of Quan Loi, Fire Support Base Dennis was simply a large circular earth embankment thrown up by bulldozers. Later there would be barbed

Dusty trooper changes machinegun barrel: the firepower of a battalion

SKIFFINGTON

Maintenance is a 24-hour job

wire, but for now the only thing that stood between the jungles and the center of the base were 31-.50 caliber machineguns, 44 M-60 machineguns, nine 152mm guns on the Sheridans and those proponents of the scorched earth policy, the "Zippo" flamethrower tanks.

The overwhelming physical presence of the armor with all that firepower made one feel that Dennis was the safest place in Vietnam, because no one in their right minds would want to mess with these guys.

No one, that is, except an estimated division of NVA who lurk in the jungles and rubber plantations between Loc Ninh District and Cambodia. The area has long been an infiltration route from Cambodia to the south.

"Things get a little hot sometimes," said Private First Class Ray Covarrubias. He's a loader on a Sheridan tank in B Troop. "They (the NVA) throw everything they have at us when they get the chance. Rockets, RPGs and .51 calibers." He spoke softly, with a California dreamin' look in his eyes.

"A platoon of cavalry has the same fire power as a battalion of infantry," said Staff Sergeant Loren Alford, platoon leader of B Troop's first platoon, "so if they ambush us, those first 10 seconds give us the

Lunchtime in the rubber: the security of a 152 mm "Peace Pipe"

SKIFFINGTON

Finding a mine the easy way

most trouble. Then we establish our fire superiority."

Riding atop a tank or an ACAV (Armored Personnel Carrier) is a wild experience. The tracks roll down the roads like battleships in a heavy sea, crashing and careening with graceful brutality.

The only man who gets down inside the vehicle is the driver. Everyone else rides on the top. "In a firefight a few weeks ago, the only guys who were wounded were hit because they were standing in the holds of their ACAVs and the bullets went right through the sides," said one tanker.

Someone new to the cavalry usually feels like a sitting duck perched on top of a track. Either the troopers don't mind it, or they get used to it.

"The grunts are really weird sometimes when it comes to working with us," observed another trooper. "They gripe about having to walk around all the time and they honk about how easy we have it riding around but when they're with us and we make contact, wow, they sure get back on the ground in a big hurry."

If you put an infantryman and a cavalryman together, before long there is a good chance they'll be haggling over who has it tougher. And the cavalry does have

SKIFFINGTON

advantages over the infantry in some respects. Rain or shine, the tank or ACAV is somewhat like a mobile home. Cots, ice chests, care packages from home, collections of *Playboys*—all these little comforts are carried along in the vehicles. But as a home, a track is still not much of a castle.

After bouncing around all day on hard steel, the troopers must pull maintenance. If an ACAV throws a track, the troopers have to get it back on. Batteries have to be checked, and running out of gas has to be avoided at all costs.

A healthy rivalry exists between the crews, mainly because each crew feels that everyone else is riding a piece of junk in comparison to its pride and joy.

The day's routine at Fire Support Base Dennis begins shortly after sunrise and a big breakfast cooked up by a mess sergeant wearing a tanker's helmet.

Early morning in Vietnam is chilly, like a frostless fall morning back in the States, and the coffee, yes, even *Army* coffee, tastes good. Men walk around with their hands in their pockets, while others start up their tracks and sit above the engine vents, catching the heat from the idling motors in the poncho liners they wrap around themselves.

In less than an hour Dennis is trembling from the roar and rumble of the 1st Platoon moving out. Leaving the Fire Support Base in a cloud of dust, the tracks churn down the road and into a rubber plantation.

The missions vary from day to day. Sometimes the platoon will run a mine sweep of the roads in the area. On those days the tracks creep along behind those all-important men up front—those who walk down the roads slowly swaying mine detectors back and forth. Trudging down a road looking for mines isn't exactly a glamorous assignment, but it beats finding them the hard way.

But this day, the mission was a reconnaissance patrol, a trip of a approximately 20 kilometers, 20 bouncing, deafening kilometers that would lead B Troop back to the scene of a hard-fought battle three days earlier. It was a long journey, but not a sentimental one.

After cruising through the groves of the rubber plantations in the morning, the platoon headed for the scene of that last contact, partly as a show of force, and partly because they wanted to see what the enemy had been up to since his last drubbing.

Barreling along the roads, the Sheridans and ACAVs can approach speeds of 40 miles an hour, a little less than half the speed at which your body seems to be vibrating. Late in the afternoon, the tracks headed north out of the rubber and into thick underbrush on the edge of the jungle.

Slowly pushing down the jungle in its path, the 18-ton Sheridan on the point stopped suddenly, and several troopers dismounted, M-16s in their hands. It was about to run over a bunker.

While the men searched the bunker, four other tracks came up on line and began scouring the area for other bunkers. Soon it was evident that they had discovered a small complex.

The bunkers were deserted, but the persistent troopers managed to salvage a few trophies of the hunt—several NVA canteens, belts, battle dressings, parts from a .51 caliber machinegun, and a Chinese Communist hand grenade. After thoroughly searching the area, the tracks destroyed the bunkers by grinding them into the ground.

Mission accomplished, they returned to Dennis, home for another day.

So it goes. Another day in the cavalry, long hours of dust and grime. Not exactly in keeping with the technicolor visions that usually come to mind whenever someone mentions cavalry. There is no Errol Flynn here, waxed moustache glistening in the sun, charging with the Light Brigade into the jaws of death, like they used to do at Balaclava. No jingling spurs, honking bugles, or fluttering guidons.

The thunder of horses' hooves has been drowned out by the roar of clanking steel and exploding cylinders in the modern cavalry. Bugles have been replaced by radios, and nobody carries a sword anymore.

SKIFFINGTON

ACAV crew on the ready: nobody inside but the driver

SKIFFINGTON

SSG Alford: "The Sheridan has proven itself in Vietnam."

Portrait of a Professional

HE STARTED OUT in the National Guard in 1958. In 1962 he joined the Regular Army, and ever since Staff Sergeant Oren L. Alford has been riding tanks and ACAVs.

In 1966, Sergeant Alford served his first tour in Vietnam with B Troop, 1/11 Armored Cavalry Regiment. Now on his second tour, he requested and was assigned once more to B Troop—as platoon sergeant of the First Platoon.

At 29, you expect to detect a hint of a paunch, but he is still lean and tough, no doubt from all that roughriding with the 11th ACR. He works long hours, and his job is a demanding one. He's a tank commander, the guy who sits behind the .50 caliber on the turret of a Sheridan. He's not only responsible for his tank, but he also has to keep tabs on the nine other vehicles and 45 men in his platoon.

The platoon leader usually rides up front in the column, while the platoon sergeant is further down the line. When the platoon leader calls for the tracks behind him, Sgt. Alford has to get them up there. Often referred to as the backbone of the platoon, Sgt. Alford is really the foot that gets things moving.

Usually men on their second tour in Vietnam have a lot to say about what it was like when things were really flying back in '65 or '66. But Alford characteristically shrugs off 1966 as just another year in the life of a career soldier.

"Today the tactics are the same as they were in 1966," he said. "The big change was the introduction of the Sheridan. Each platoon has dropped three ACAVs and replaced them with Sheridans."

When first introduced in Vietnam, the M-551 Sheridan (officially designated an Armored Recon Airborne Assault Vehicle) was the subject of much controversy and criticism.

"They whooped and hollered when the M-16 was first introduced, too. But both the Sheridan and the M-16 have proven themselves in Vietnam," said Alford. "With those tanks, we've got our own artillery riding there with us. And the Sheridans take mines real good, too."

Does the platoon sergeant stay on his tank all the time?

"On mine sweeps I'll get on the ground with them," he replied. "We've got a lot of young fellows and everybody gets a little edgy on a minesweep now and then."

When asked what was the biggest problem the cavalry had in Vietnam, Alford answered simply: "The monsoons restrict us a little. That's about it."

HURRICANE BRIEFS

The Hurricane was named the best magazine in the Army for 1969 in worldwide competition sponsored by the Office of the Chief of Information in Washington.

Army in Europe, the monthly publication of the U.S. Army, Europe, was second.

Highlighting Vietnamese culture and life as well as military operations, the II Field Force magazine has been published monthly since November 1967.

The award is a mounted certificate signed by the Army Chief of Staff and the Army Chief of Information. In addition, the magazine bested the 4th Division's *Esprit* to take top honors in USARV competition as the best Army magazine in Vietnam.

The Hurricane is distributed to all U.S. combat units in III Corps—three infantry divisions, two separate brigades and an armored regiment. In addition, there must be a small readership among Vietnamese civilians in Saigon. Somehow, copies of The Hurricane have filtered into magazine racks operated by vendors down Tu Do Street, and for 50 piasters a slightly used copy can be purchased.

The first joint ARVN-U.S. land clearing project began recently in War Zone C. ARVN engineers are running Rome plows alongside their U.S. counterparts in the dense vegetation that has long been a haven for the enemy.

The 318th ARVN Engineer Company has been training since December with the U.S. 62nd Engineer Battalion, the only land clearing battalion in the world.

Described by Lieutenant General Julian J. Ewell, II Field Force commander, as "the most powerful tool we have in frustrating and defeating the Communists," land clearing has become one of the key tactical and strategic developments of the Vietnam conflict.

Enemy forces can operate effectively only when their supply routes, their base camps, and their staging areas are concealed from observation. On the other hand, U.S. and ARVN forces can take full advantage of their superior mobility and firepower only when operating in open terrain. Land clearing provides a double benefit by taking away the enemy's advantage while simultaneously enhancing the capabilities of friendly forces.

In the III Corps Tactical Zone alone, about 340,000 acres of jungle have been eliminated and opened for effective allied operations.

The land clearers have pushed the jungles away from the highways and opened up hundreds of miles of roadway to commercial traffic, thus aiding the pacification program.

Flying FDC: an added dimension for artillery

In this age of speed and mobility the artillery is not to be outdone. The 2d Battalion 12th Artillery located at Phu Loi has designed and developed an air mobile fire direction center (FDC).

The "flying FDC" is constructed from Conex containers, with sheet steel flooring, interior lighting, communications equipment, including switchboards, terminal boards and conduits for wiring. Also inside the containers are map and chart boards and other necessary FDC equipment.

"The air mobile FDC can be made functional within 20 minutes after drop," said Major Milton Newberry, assistant S-3, II Field Force Artillery.

"The fire and direction analysis computer (FADAC) is not dropped with the initial FDC because of its sensitive nature," Major Newberry continued. "But it is not difficult to install once it arrives at the fire base."

Instead of working in a tent or in the open until a bunker can be constructed, FDC personnel now can be assured of bunker safety instantly. Sandbags are placed along the outside and on the roof-top of the Conex.

A group of investors near Bien Hoa is finding out it pays to be "chicken" about its investment.

Their firm, the Vietnam Poultry Farm (VINAPO) began as a modest investment 30 months ago with a purchase of 200 hens from nearby Di An. The farm mushroomed and when the current expansion is complete, VINAPO will sport 50,000 squawking hens and roosters.

VINAPO is a breeding farm. At Bien Hoa, the eggs are gathered and incubated. Then the chicks are shipped to the farm's Saigon branch prior to sale. The current selling price is 70 piasters apiece (about 60 cents) and the farm sells 5,000 chicks a week.

According to VINAPO manager, Le Van Hong, the big expansion began last year when VINAPO imported 10,000 leghorns and Rhode Island reds as breeding stock from the United States. This month, VINAPO will import more breeding stock to keep up with its chick demand. Still, prospective buyers must wait up to eight weeks before their orders can be filled.

It is business ventures like the Vietnam Poultry Farm which will help Vietnam produce enough food for itself and advance into commercial food production in Southeast Asia.

It paid to be "chicken" about this investment

A Connecticut Yankee with a hanker to tinker has constructed a clunker to mix concrete.

Sergeant William S. Goss, of East Windsor, Conn., recently became NCO in charge of the labor pool at II Field Force Headquarters at Long Binh.

Confronted with the job of paving sidewalks all over the installation without the use of a cement mixer, Sergeant Goss used his Yankee ingenuity.

"I knew there had to be an easier and faster way to mix concrete than in a mortar box," said the New Englander.

After some hard thinking, Goss scrounged up the parts he needed for his concrete mixer. A 55-gallon drum served as the hopper. It was powered by a washing machine motor which gets current through an electric cord plugged into a 110 volt outlet in a nearby office. Gears came off a power lawn mower.

"I never thought I'd be able to do it," said the inventor of the machine which is now effectively doubling production of the mortar box and requiring a fraction of the effort.

A small farmer in Bien Hoa decides he wants to start farming eight hectares (19.8 acres) instead of just one. But he doesn't have the money to invest in new machinery. Is there anywhere the farmer can borrow the money?

Yes! During the past few months, four new rural banks have opened throughout Vietnam to help farmers help themselves.

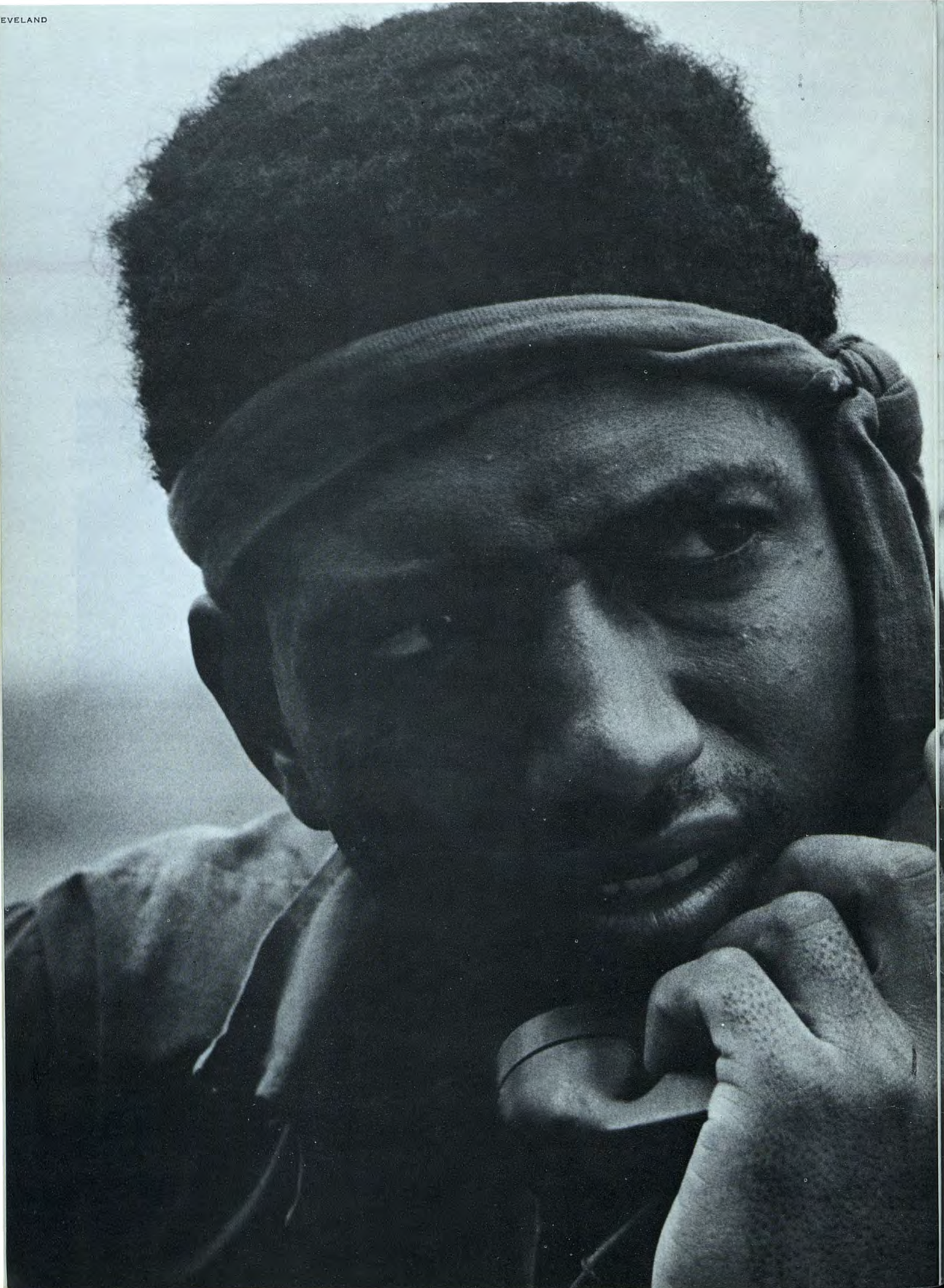
"Those new banks are private, but were organized with government financial and technical assistance," explained Max E. Sauerbry, agriculture advisor for Bien Hoa Province. "Their main objectives," he continued, "are to extend credit to small farmers, operators of small industries and essential rural business enterprises and to eliminate the high cost of rural credit (Commercial banks are devoting only one per cent of their loans to agriculture and the interest is high)."

Loans are intended to make it possible for small farmers to modernize their techniques. Any farmer who owns less than 10 hectares of land is considered a small farmer in the eyes of the rural bank.

"Since beginning operation in mid-September, over 180 farmers have borrowed 15.5 million piasters," said Mr. Thanh. "These loans are broken down into three sections: short, middle range and long range but all loans must be repaid within one year."

The outlook is now improving for the small farmers in Vietnam thanks to the development of this new banking system.

EVELAND



Forward Observer

By Lieutenant Bill Watson

"THE FORWARD OBSERVER (FO) is an invaluable asset to the artillery and to the infantry company; neither could live without him," said Major James C. Jewell. Major Jewell is battalion S-3 with the 2d/40th Artillery located at Xuan Loc and has had experience as an FO.

"I remember the FO stayed right in the company commander's back pocket. He and I would work together maneuvering the ground troops and calling in fire," he said.

Ground tactics are an important part of the FO's training. There are times when platoon leaders become wounded in action and the FO may find himself in charge of 20–40 infantrymen leading ground attacks.

Although just being with an infantry company on search and clear missions makes him part ground pounder, the FO is not authorized to wear the combat infantryman's badge (CIB), which boasts that a soldier has been in contact with the enemy. The FO has seen his share of action, regardless.

First Lieutenant David E. Carr is an FO with Alfa Company, 2d Battalion, 3d Infantry, of the 199th Light Infantry Brigade. Lt. Carr told how he spent one day recently.

"We were doing bomb damage assesments east of Bearcat and came upon a deserted base camp. One platoon moved in to search and clear. They made no enemy contact, so they signaled the rest of the company in. Security was posted and a platoon was assigned to search the bunkers. As the search element moved toward the front bunkers an estimated 4–6 enemy opened fire from a nearby tree line."

Lt. Carr continued, "I was in the rear and ran forward where contact was being made and fired a couple of clips of my M-16. The enemy was within 100 meters of our position so I motioned for my radio man and he joined me. I've called rounds in closer than 100 meters before, but when I do I make sure the whole company knows I'm doing it. I called in the mission and within three minutes rounds poured on the enemy." The next morning a search patrol counted four enemy dead.

The preceding account is a good example of infantry-artillery teamwork and of the speed in which steel is placed on the target, although, Lt. Carr said, "There have been times when it has taken 45 minutes to get off the rounds.

"Our company came upon a tree line late one afternoon and the CO and I thought it best to clear it with artillery before we entered. Because we did not have enemy contact my call for fire had to be cleared through Aussie, Thai, ARVN, U.S., and U.S. Air fire direction centers. Forty-five minutes later rounds hit the tree line."

When the company moves back to the base camp for "stand down" the FO continues to work. It is common for him to conduct "call for fire" classes for platoon leaders, platoon sergeants, and squad leaders. It is not like the 23 week course he received at Fort Sill, Oklahoma, but he stresses the basics—radio procedure, spotting rounds, and shifting fires. Many times the platoons are split and the FO cannot be "where the action is," so the lead platoon must be able to call for artillery help.

The Army has long been aware of the FO's importance. The brass refer to him as the eyes of the artillery. Many enlisted men have won commissions while serving as FOs during World War II and the Korean War. Lieutenant Colonel Robert H. Harrington received such a commission while serving as an FO in Korea in 1950. He is now commanding a battalion of the 199th near Xuan Loc.

How does the ground pounder feel about his FO? One specialist thought for a moment and then commented, "What can I say? It's like playing poker, only for my life. I'm playing seven-card stud and have a pair of aces in the hole. That pair of aces is my FO." ⬆

Easy Rider East

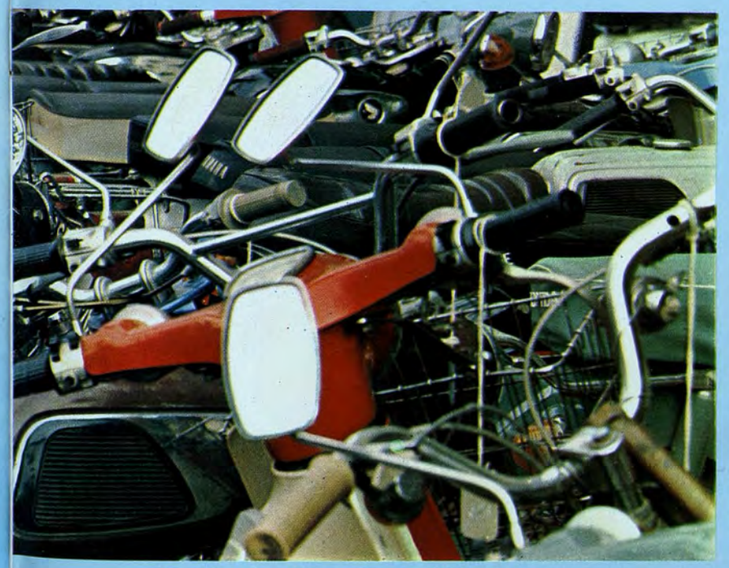
By Specialist 5 Don Sockol

Not everyone prefers the speed of the motorbike

How many can you get in your VW?

REIMER

Ao dai and cycle: past meets present



Saigon's parking lots—just as crowded as L.A.'s

FOR CENTURIES UNTOLD, people in Vietnam had to rely on the cheapest, simplest form of transportation known to man.

Feet.

Today, an indication of advancing technology and increasing prosperity, more and more Vietnamese are cutting a quicker swath across the country.

On motorcycles.

Goro Narita, a Honda representative in Saigon, estimated there are about a million motor cycles in South Vietnam. To others, that figure seems low.

The motorcycle has put Vietnam on wheels and its effects on society, like the impact of the car on America, are far reaching.

It enables people to travel to their jobs and has become so important to city dwellers that one man said, "Without a motorcycle, the average man cannot work at all."

It brings people closer together. "Before I had a motorcycle," said a young man in Saigon, "I didn't know the city streets. Now I travel everywhere and make good friends all over."

And while the back seat of a Honda might not give a fellow lots of room, the motorcycle is a boon to the young Casanova. "I can take girls out to more and more places now," said one.

On the negative side, the bikes have given birth to packs of "cowboys," young cycle-riding hoods who amuse themselves by stealing and beating up people. But the bikes can't really be blamed. The gangs were around before they made the scene. The motorcycles have just made them, like the rest of Vietnamese society, more mobile.

Despite the rising costs, more and more people are buying bikes. They can't get credit, so they save until they have enough, or borrow from friends and relatives.

Not long ago, the 50 cc vehicle most Vietnamese own could be bought for less than $200. Now, the same cycle costs at least 75,000 piasters ($635). The increase is due partly to inflation—mostly to taxes.

But the boom goes on. People who were in Vietnam five years ago and return today comment on how many more motorcycles there seem to be.

So despite the expense, motorcycles have definitely replaced the ox-cart in the popular imagination.

After all, an ox is not particularly known for its fast pickup when the light changes.

THE PRIEST OF CAO XA

MANCUSI

Father Du: a mixture of religion and rifles

By Specialist 4 Ray Anderson

TRAVELING DUE WEST from Tay Ninh City, one passes through the gates of an apparent Vietnamese military compound. Concertina embraces both shoulders of the narrow entry.

This first impression, although justified, is not exactly true. The visitor is inside the perimeter of Tay Ninh Province's only "A" rated hamlet.

This is Cao Xa hamlet, a relocated Catholic refugee center led by Father Nguyen Huu Du. The dynamic individual that presides as spiritual, military, economic and governmental head of Cao Xa looks unpretentious, with grey-streaked, thinning hair, and dark, deep-set eyes. But his aggressive nature and

achievements have made him a legend in his time.

Cao Xa's story, as many others concerning refugees from the north, began in 1954 following Vietnam's division. Many Catholics packed their worldly belongings and began a long trek southward rather than stay in the north where they were faced with diametric ideological and theological differences.

The exodus included the inhabitants of Cao Xa hamlet, located 20 miles north of Hanoi, where Father Du and 2,000 followers began the arduous journey. They walked 400 miles before being transported to Vung Tau by the United States Navy's 7th Fleet.

During this immigration the government in South Vietnam began a refugee resettlement program. Father Du and his parish were granted 400 acres of uninhabited land in Tay Ninh Province that was to become the nucleus for the new Cao Xa. With little more than a desire to succeed, Father Du and his "children" created a viable community out of the barren land.

The ensuing years brought relative prosperity to the small hamlet, before Viet Cong encroachment began taking its toll in the early 1960s. The "People's Revolution" had no appeal to the relocated refugees, but having fled from communism once, Father Du had no intention of fleeing again. Communist infiltrators were bodily evicted and a peoples' self defense militia was formed.

The primitively-armed, motley-uniformed inhabitants began training in Father Du's church. The priest's military training was minimal, but the assistance of two Vietnamese-speaking strangers provided the key for a secure future. The two, American Green Berets, laid the ground work for Cao Xa's highly successful military defense.

During the intervening years Cao Xa built a military capability that was the envy of many RF and PF companies. The inhabitants' early weapons were gathered from nearby government outposts, or taken from the enemy, but now most are provided by the Americans. The hamlet's women are armed with M-ls and carbines while most of the men have automatic weapons.

Nighttime perimeter defense is maintained by the hamlet's unmarried men and women. The women are limited to the early evening hours, while the men remain at their posts for the entire night.

Sleeping on guard is a serious offense, but the citizenry has been imbued with a sense of duty and "a slight cuff around the ears" is a sufficient reprimand said one of the knowing villagers.

Should an attack occur, Father Du assumes the role of military leader, and directs countermeasures from a centrally located public address system. Immediately beneath the central parish's 75-foot tower and lookout point is a 106 mm recoilless rifle which can be transported to an attack's main thrust. The church also contains four heavy machineguns.

This stringent military attitude, plus a restrictive visiting policy, are responsible for the Hamlet's 'A' security evaluation rating.

Cao Xa staunchly supports policies of the GVN but the military readiness only contributes a portion of the autonomy for which Father Du's hamlet is noted.

Father Du's economic progress can be attributed to his capitalist outlook. He appeals to the units in the nearby Tay Ninh base camp and they provide the hamlet with a great deal of support.

Father Du does not accept money, but uses anything the U.S. Army throws away. Many Americans who sympathize with his objectives have been known to "dispose" of things he needs or wants the most.

Views of Father Du by the local American contingent vary considerably because he is foremost a Vietnamese seeking a better life for his people. Sometimes his desires conflict with missions of GIs.

One helicopter crew chief who has worked with him said, "Once he's got his mind made up about going somewhere, it's impossible to explain that we're on a mission and can't take him." He generally gets his way, and it has helped the 4,000 citizens of Cao Xa.

MANCUSI

The ice factory—
just one of Father Du's many projects

The hamlet is among the most prosperous of Tay Ninh Province, if not all Vietnam. "He's a throwback to 17th century Catholicism," stated one leery GI. Like Cardinal Richelieu, he rules with an iron fist, but his benevolent tyranny has been dictated by war.

Many individual Americans are going out of their way to see that the prosperous, progressive village continues to grow as a model for others.

This can be seen in the streets as numerous people work with pick and shovel to repair the roads. In other areas new homes are being built and fresh paint applied to the older buildings. Captain Owen Manning, S-5, 2/32 Artillery, added, "Father Du is attempting to create an economic unit that will be able to sustain itself after we leave. He hopes to diversify the economy by creating industry that will change the agricultural set up."

One recently completed project typifies this diversity and desire to create jobs. It is an old age home that will serve as a model for the remainder of the village. Here 100 of the hamlet's aged will live in comfort while contributing to the community and outlying area.

A group of buildings down the road house a bakery and an ice plant, both owned by the old age home. They also bundle paper collected from base camp refuse points, and resell it in Saigon.

These facilities in Cao Xa presently supply all the densely populated southern portion of Tay Ninh Province with bread. The ice plant fills the cooling needs of Tay Ninh City and other villages reasonably close, and Cao Xa pork is exported all over the province.

Father Du recently purchased Brahma cattle for breeding purposes. He hopes this stock will eventually eliminate the need for imported beef. Another proposal, still in the planning stage, is a grainery and silo for an abundant supply of fodder when American garbage will no longer be available for pig food.

A Cao Xa resident with an American-equivalent nursing degree has been working with the 2/32 Artillery MEDCAPs to insure the populace continued scientific medical care after the American departure.

Captain Manning noted the emphasis on education. "Father Du has instilled these people with a social pride for education we normally associate with the United States." Cao Xa has one small high school,

but there are plans for a larger one that will accommodate all the hamlet's high school students.

Another educational project which is receiving support from the American base camp is a library study center. Upon its completion high school students will be required to study two hours daily. Other Americans are contributing to Father Du's efforts by teaching youngsters English during their spare time.

The majority of the village is endowed with Father Du's aggressive business attitude. Captain Manning feels they could become an important economic factor in heavily populated Tay Ninh, somewhat similar to the Chinese in Cholon. "Everything we throw out is somehow converted to piasters by these people," he commented.

Major James D. Petty, of Fort Worth, Texas, spoke reservedly about Father Du. "As district advisor I try to assist the poorer hamlets of Phuoc Ninh, because they need it. He gets everything he needs without going through us."

Praising the priest with a little caution, Major Petty continued, "His People's Self Defense Force is effective, and we'd like to see one like it in every hamlet, but regionally his methods create problems."

He explained that since most of Father Du's forces are used to protect the village, it gives the Viet Cong ample chance to work in the countryside where they can plant booby traps and intimidate people.

But the Texas native felt Cao Xa's emphasis on education created an atmosphere conducive to new ideas. "This is probably the only area in our district where psyops leaflets do any good, because people in other hamlets don't read them, or can't understand what we are trying to say."

Some Americans who deal with Father Du feel he doesn't exactly convey a priestly image, but there are others who work in the hamlet church tower as forward observers for the Tay Ninh base camp that have pride and respect for the priest and his people.

Mike Zaccagnino, of Chester, New York, has lived in Cao Xa for three months. "I had the impression that everyone over here was waiting for a chance to cut my throat, but these people have been just great. My attitude toward all Vietnamese has changed."

Citing an example of their sincerity he continued, "They held a special mass for one of the guys that was wounded in the field after working up here."

Though working in the midst of war the hamlet continues to grow and spread its influence throughout the province. Still Cao Xa townsfolk fear an American withdrawal. For with it would go much of their wealth.

MANCUSI

Peace: a visit from the bishop of Saigon

Quang Tran Van, an interpreter for Father Du, feels the hamlet will assuredly be poorer when the Americans leave, but he optimistically added, "We are used to working hard, and after the Americans go we will work hard again to improve ourselves."

He mentioned earlier days and years when Father Du toured the country searching for ways his people could sustain themselves in an alien environment. "He is the father, and when the children are unhappy it is the father who must bear the sorrow."

James Teague, province development advisor, is aware of these problems, but seems to think the industrious villagers with the rallying force of Father Du will continue to grow despite the loss of American aid. "I was told to look out for Father Du when I first arrived, but when we met and saw what he had accomplished I was extremely impressed. Quite frankly, he is the type of man we need here, and I just wish there were more like him despite our differences."

Father Du stood on the steps of his church contemplating these questions as Vietnamese children sang prayers of peace inside. Finally speaking in soft, broken English, he said, "I don't know what to do when the soldiers leave, because so many of my people are poor and there is so much to do. I need electricity! With electricity I can build a factory and there will be no more poor."

THE THREE DROPS OF BLOOD

A Vietnamese Legend

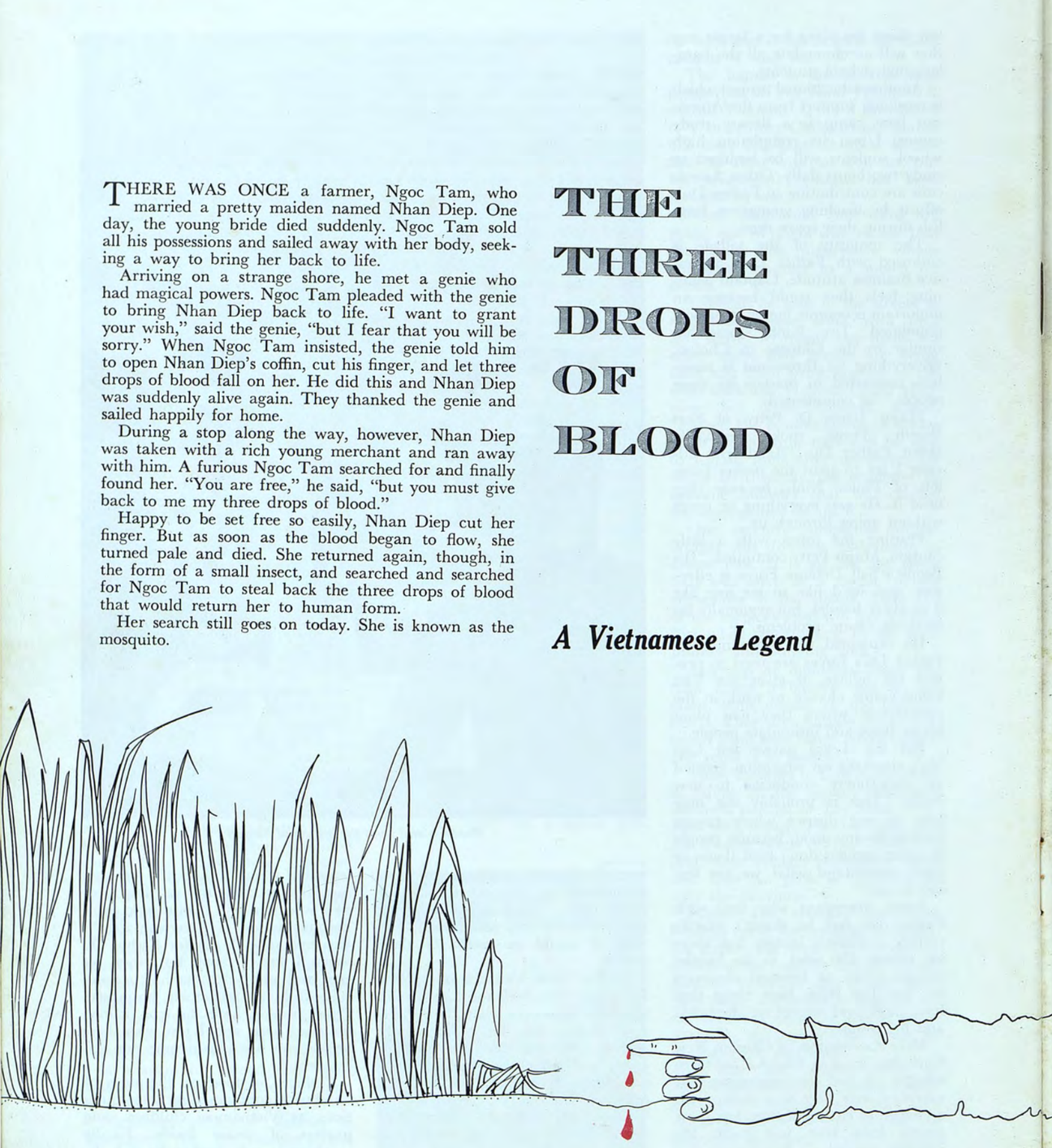
THERE WAS ONCE a farmer, Ngoc Tam, who married a pretty maiden named Nhan Diep. One day, the young bride died suddenly. Ngoc Tam sold all his possessions and sailed away with her body, seeking a way to bring her back to life.

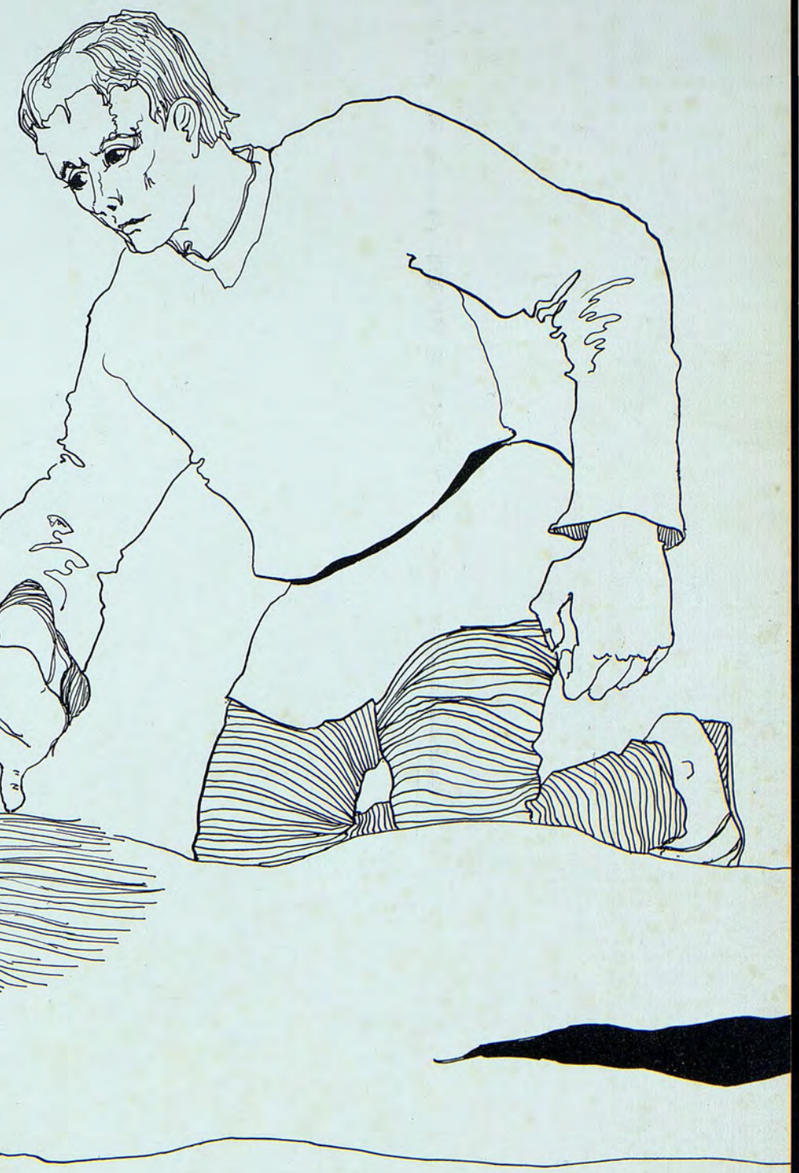
Arriving on a strange shore, he met a genie who had magical powers. Ngoc Tam pleaded with the genie to bring Nhan Diep back to life. "I want to grant your wish," said the genie, "but I fear that you will be sorry." When Ngoc Tam insisted, the genie told him to open Nhan Diep's coffin, cut his finger, and let three drops of blood fall on her. He did this and Nhan Diep was suddenly alive again. They thanked the genie and sailed happily for home.

During a stop along the way, however, Nhan Diep was taken with a rich young merchant and ran away with him. A furious Ngoc Tam searched for and finally found her. "You are free," he said, "but you must give back to me my three drops of blood."

Happy to be set free so easily, Nhan Diep cut her finger. But as soon as the blood began to flow, she turned pale and died. She returned again, though, in the form of a small insect, and searched and searched for Ngoc Tam to steal back the three drops of blood that would return her to human form.

Her search still goes on today. She is known as the mosquito.





Montagnard Boys of Phuoc Long