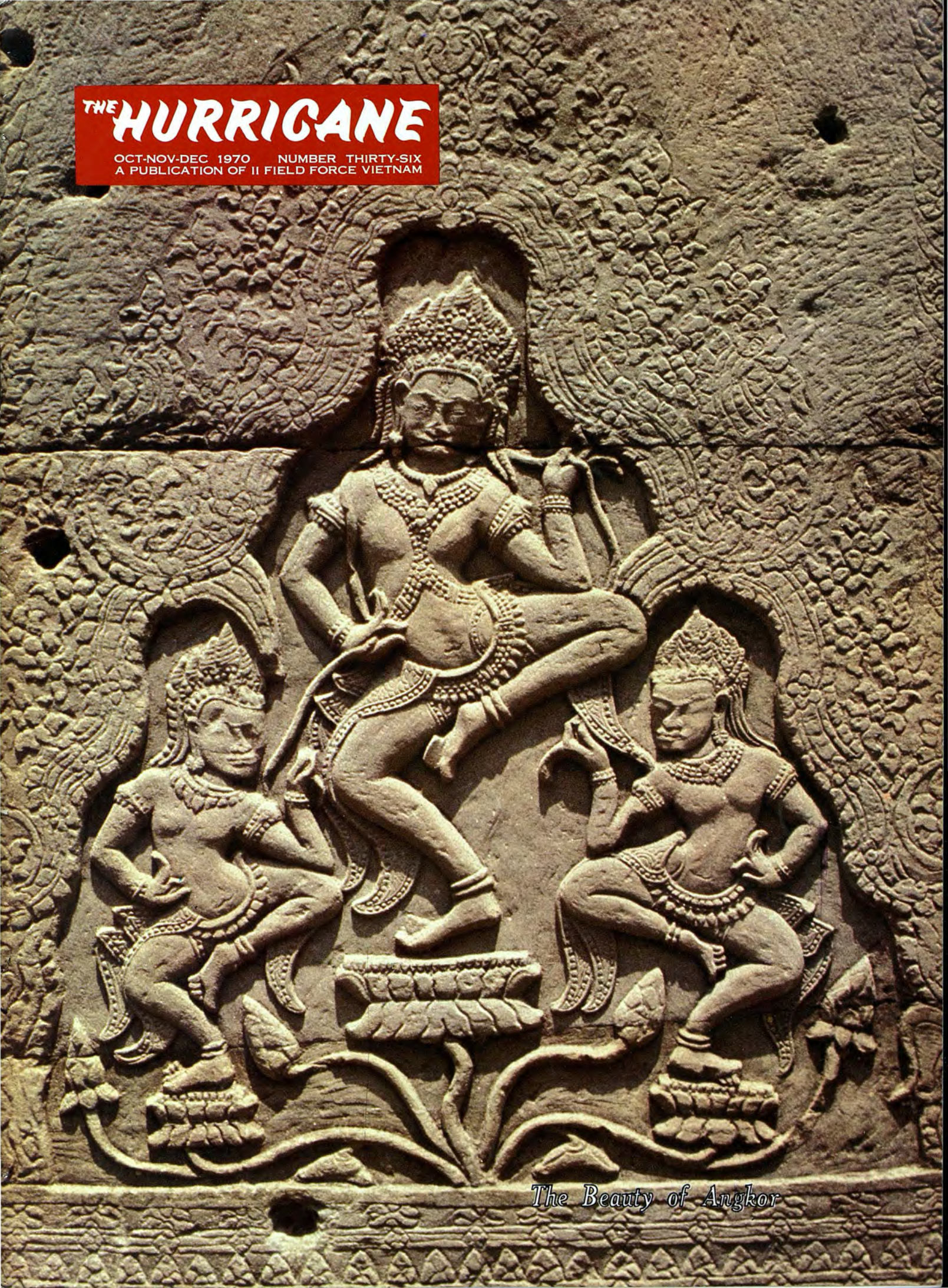

THE HURRICANE

OCT-NOV-DEC 1970 NUMBER THIRTY-SIX
A PUBLICATION OF II FIELD FORCE VIETNAM

The Beauty of Angkor

Bridge Over Troubled Waters

For some unfathomable reason, the Americans insist on calling it "The Monkey Bridge." The local Vietnamese and Chinese more sensibly refer to the bridge as either Chua Cau *(Pagoda Bridge) or* Lai Vien Kieu *(Bridge of People Coming from Far and Wide).*

Very little is known of the structure except that it is the oldest bridge and the only covered bridge in Vietnam.

No one knows exactly how old the bridge is, but it predates the arrival of Antonio de Faria, a Portuguese sea captain under the Duke of Albuquerque in 1535. De Faria established at Hai Pho (now called Hoi An) what is believed to be the first permanent contact between Vietnamese and Europeans.

The bridge is noted in early European chronicles but no light is shed on its origins.

According to popular legend, the bridge was built by the Japanese to appease either a giant turtle or a dragon, depending on the version told, that lived in the Hoi An River and caused tidal waves. The bridge was later remodeled by the Chinese to fit their architectural preferences.

The bridge, after more than 450 years, is still the principal link between the two halves of the village: silent witness to over four centuries of torment.

THE HURRICANE

OCT
NOV
DEC
1970

NO 36

A PUBLICATION OF II FIELD FORCE VIETNAM

In a nation torn by centuries of war, the reality of death and the manner in which the people relate to it become an integral part of the culture. In this issue of *The Hurricane,* Staff Sergeant Jerry Van Drew takes an in-depth look at the Vietnamese way of death and those customs practiced to console both the living and the deceased.

Rusty Brown, ex-staffer turned civilian freelancer, reports on the efforts of Dr. Elias Hanna at the US Army Third Field Hospital in Saigon to save military and civilian cardiac patients through open heart surgery.

Also in the Saigon area, Specialist Ron Haugen surveys the Vietnamese press and its efforts to maintain journalistic integrity under the pressure of open war and subtle shifts of political thinking.

On the lighter side, Specialist Phil Schieber visits Long San Island and the Allied forces fighting their own microcosmic war there; Jerry Van Drew provides a detailed history of the traditional Vietnamese dress, the ao dai; and recently-turned-civilian Mike Tharp reports on the Freedom Birds at Bien Hoa Airbase and the crews who fly them.

Also in this *Hurricane* are reports on the Vietnamese Army's Officer Candidate School and the new look of the Viet Cong Infrastructure, both by Specialist John Perry, as well as an eight-page color photo feature on the spectacular ruins of Angkor in Cambodia shot by Captain Dave Givens.

Dave photographed the front cover while visiting the Angkor ruins. Ex-staffer Pete Ginder took the rear cover photo while on assignment in Saigon.

The Hurricane is an authorized quarterly publication of II Field Force Vietnam. It is published by the 16th Public Information Detachment and the Information Office, IIFFV, 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.

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■ CONTENTS

BEVERIDGE

The Vietnamese Way of Death

The End and Beginning of Life

by Staff Sergeant Jerry Van Drew

IN VIETNAM as in America, death is a time of great sadness and sorrow. Large funerals are held, great expenses are incurred, final respects are paid at the graveside, and the dead are buried.

But despite these general similarities, there are considerable differences between funeral customs and practices in the two countries. Perhaps the most basic difference is the emphasis each people places on birth and death.

Americans are birth-oriented. The day of birth is the most significant day in person's life. It is the date from which his age is reckoned; an element of personal identification; a day to celebrate—although sometimes begrudgingly—every year. It is the date for commemorating his memory after death. Americans thus honor Washington, Columbus and Lincoln on the annual anniversaries of their births.

Vietnamese are death-oriented. For them, the day of death is the most significant day of a person's life, and death is the most sacred and solemn event of life. Quite often, the exact date of birth is not even known. Ages are calculated from the year of birth, when the newborn are in their first year. Everyone adds an additional year of age on Lunar New Year's Day (Tet). A Vietnamese born on the last day of a lunar year is thus said to be "two years old" on his second day of life.

The Vietnamese, however, record the exact date and moment of death. This information is maintained on the family ancestral scrolls in the family altar. Special commemoration of the deceased is made on the annual anniversaries of the date of death. The South Vietnamese thus honor their national heroes Hung Vuong, Tran Hung Dao and Le Loi

A Vietnamese woman mourns the death of her husband at the hands of Viet Cong terrorists.

THIBAULT

on the annual anniversaries of their deaths.

The Vietnamese social and economic structure supports and gains support from this emphasis on death.

The immediate family of parents and children is considered part of an extended family unit, or "clan," which includes all male descendants and their offspring for four generations. This clan is the basic social unit, and the interests of the clan transcend those of the individual. The clan includes both the living and the dead members of the four generations, and the two groups communicate through the daily worship of the living members.

The clan is a self-sufficient economic unit which owns its own land or business. The clan leader is the oldest living member of the extended family, and there is a complex hierarchy based on age and relationship within the group.

The entire clan, including the spirits of the deceased members, are consulted on any transaction that effects the interests of the extended family. The primary interest of the clan is to continue and expand the communion between living and dead. Large numbers of children are thus encouraged, to provide more worshippers for the deceased and more laborers to contribute to the economic well-being of the living.

There is little specialization of labor. Each clan provides for its own needs, and many of the common services performed by specialists in the West are individually performed by each clan for its own members. Particularly, the clan traditionally cares for its own members through times of sickness and at the time of death.

Funeral homes are a relatively new institution in Vietnam, and they provide only limited services—hearses, pallbearers and temporary storage of remains. Coffin makers, funeral musicians and actors, and mourners meet other special needs at the time of death. But embalming services are not available. Perfumes and incense are used in all funeral rites, and remains must be interred within days.

The extended family with its communion between living and dead members is an outgrowth of Confucianism, as adapted by the Vietnamese from the Chinese. These

Disheveled garments of rough homespun cloth signify the bitter sorrow of losing a loved one. White is the traditional color of mourning in Vietnamese custom.

Confucianist beliefs are superimposed on a strong, indigenous belief in "spirits."

The Vietnamese believe, of course, that each person has his own spirit which continues to live beyond the person's physical death. In addition, they believe in spirits associated with many non-living entities —spirits of water, rocks, the sky, trees, forests, ad infinitum. These spirits can interfere with human activities, so they must be respected and—at times—appeased.

The spirit of the individual is most important. If the person lives to an old age, prepares for his own funeral, and leaves many descendants to worship him after death, his spirit will be content, and will not interfere with the living if its spiritual needs are provided through the customary ceremonies.

But if any of these elements of a content life are missing, the spirit may cause trouble, especially for still-living members of the extended family.

So old persons in Vietnam make as many of their own funeral arrangements as they can. They often purchase their own caskets, and sometimes keep them in the house. In previous times, caskets for those awaiting death were used as benches to sit on. They pick the site of their own grave (married couples choose sites side-by-side). And they design their own tombs.

When an old person becomes sick, and death seem imminent, the entire family clan gathers and waits quietly, looking after the needs of the person and listening carefully for any last words. The old person is never left alone, and if death seems to take place, his breath is tested with incense smoke. When the smoke is no longer effected by the breath, breathing is presumed to have ceased and the person is considered possibly dead.

A single chopstick is placed between the person's teeth, to hold the mouth open. The exact time is noted, and the entire clan is gathered.

The body is placed briefly on the ground and then replaced on the bed. This act symbolizes the philosophy: "From the earth you came, to the earth you shall return." It is performed, though, with the hope that Mother Earth (the source of life) will revive the person, or cause his rebirth.

If the person does not revive, the family members place a large white cloth over his face to hide their grief from him.

But the relatives still hope for revival. The male children take the dead person's clothes, climb to the roof top with them, and call out to the "spirit and life principles" of the deceased, hoping that the appeal will bring the return of the spirit to the body. If after this attempt the person has still not revived, death is presumed to be absolute.

The clan members then begin a series of complicated rituals to prepare the body for the funeral. All of the rites are accompanied by prescribed prayers and worship.

First, the body is washed, the hair is tied back from the face, and the toenails and fingernails are trimmed. The nail trimmings are placed in packets attached to the hand or foot from which taken. Everything used in the bathing ceremony, including the water, is buried. The deceased is returned to the deathbed.

Then a handful of rice and three polished coins are placed in his mouth, and the chopstick is removed so that the mouth can go shut. The rice is for sustenance and the money is for transportation and refreshment expenses during the journeys of the spirit. Wealthy families may make more elaborate offerings.

Next the coffin is prepared to receive the body. The inside is slashed three times with a knife to drive away any evil spirits remaining in the wood. A handful of uncooked rice or salt is thrown into the street to placate these and any other spirits lingering there.

A layer of sawdust, dried tea leaves, or other absorptive material is placed on the bottom of the casket. A piece of wood is added to place a spell on undesired spirits. Various items such as playing cards, history scrolls, etc. are provided for the use of the deceased.

The body is then wrapped with shrouds. After prayers and worship, the entire clan places the body in the coffin. They check the casket carefully for last notes or personal items hidden there (old persons anticipating death customarily hide such things—even in their own coffin—so that they will be found when the final hour has arrived) and the coffin is sealed shut. Only then do clan members begin to mourn their loss.

The sealed casket is placed in the center of the house, and a bowl of cooked rice and a boiled egg is placed on it. It is continuously guarded to insure that nothing jumps over it, since the Vietnamese believe that if a living animal jump over the coffin, the corpse will tem-

THIBAULT

Family members gather at graveside while a funeral attendant prepares gifts of food and drink to sustain the soul of the deceased on its journey through eternity.

porarily revive. Special ceremonies are then necessary to placate the disturbed spirit.

After the coffin is sealed, any pending marriages by family members are hurriedly conducted. Otherwise, the marriages must be delayed until the end of the mourning period, which doesn't formally begin until the mourning clothes are donned. There are even special words in the Vietnamese language *(cuoi chay tang)* describing a wedding taking place earlier than scheduled because of a death in the family.

A special music group is contracted to provide appropriate music during condolence visits, during the funeral procession, and at the graveside. A banner is prepared showing nicknames, "lucky" names, and any official titles of the deceased. It is made with white letters on a red silk background, and is posted to the east of the family altar.

After the funeral banner has been prepared, the mourning clothes are donned. Five different types of clothing are worn, indicating the exact relationship of the mourner to the deceased. Generally, they are white in color, made of poor quality cloth, are poorly sewn, and are sloppily worn. The slovenly appearance presented by the mourner is evidence of his disturbance because of the death.

Only after the mourning clothes are put on can condolence visits be made by friends. Traditionally, donning mourning clothes acted as the family's proclamation of the death. There was no notification system. Word simply traveled by mouth, or discreet inquiries were made of the family. Condolence gifts consisted of spoken words or honorary scrolls with two appropriately written sentences. Sometimes money was given to help the family during the time of need.

Nowadays in the cities, deaths are sometimes announced in the newspapers, and flowers are considered appropriate gifts of condolence.

The bereaved family keeps complete lists of all gifts received and visits made, and a member of the family returns each visit sometime after the funeral.

Before the funeral is conducted, the sealed coffin is taken to the family altar for presentation to the spirits of the ancestors. If the house doesn't have a special altar room, the family altar is brought to the casket, and the casket is turned about in place. All of the family members participate in the casket movement, which is conducted in a very exacting manner.

On the day of the funeral, the clan members pay their last respects to the deceased, and a ceremony is held for the spirit of the streets, asking permission to proceed with the funeral. Hamlet or village authorities are contacted for permission to conduct the burial. Then the procession begins.

It can consist of up to twelve elements. In days past, the first element was masked or costumed actors representing friendly spirits chasing evil spirits from the procession route. Today's funeral processions usually do away with these "ghost chasers", and are led instead by a religious personage, such as a Buddhist Monk.

Next comes the generation banner, a huge white cloth banner held high in the air by a stick on each end, each stick carried by a person. The banner lists the name and title (if any) of the deceased, and the words "the mountains are obscured by the clouds."

After the generation banner comes the funeral banner of the deceased, draped on the family altar. This is followed by the condolence scrolls written by relatives and friends. Then comes the funeral altar set, containing ritualistic paraphernalia, flowers and foodstuffs (including sometimes an entire roasted pig).

Next are the funeral musicians, followed by special banners proclaiming the sex of the deceased.

Then comes the hearse, either led or followed—depending upon local custom—by the dead person's oldest son. If the deceased was his father, the son carries a straight bamboo cane representing uprighteousness. If the deceased was his mother, the son carries a curved cane symbolizing kindheartedness.

Modern hearses are generally motor vehicles, often highly decorated. But the "hearse" of olden days was simply a decorative paper covering for the coffin, which was carried suspended from bamboo poles shouldered by the pallbearers.

The hearse is followed by the pallbearers or the shoulder-carried casket is followed by relief pallbearers), and then by the remaining members of the bereaved family. They stagger and stumble down the street, bewailing their loss to show the extent of their sorrow for the death.

Behind the family, if the deceased was Buddhist (about 70 percent of the ethnic Vietnamese are Buddhists), there will be "dragon bridges" carried on the heads of Buddhist nuns, so that the soul of the dead person can cross over to the "western paradise."

Finally come the friends and distant relatives attending the funeral.

All along the funeral route, "votive" papers—scraps of paper symbolizing money—are thrown out to distract evil spirits that would otherwise disturb the coffin. Legends tell of burned votive paper buying the revival of some dead persons at the gravesite.

In the cities where the distance to the gravesite is often long, only the beginning of the procession is conducted on foot. Or sometimes long processions on foot are provided with resting stations along the route.

When the procession arrives at the gravesite, prayers are recited to the spirit of the soil, asking permission to bury the dead person.

There is often a funeral oration, followed by each person present throwing a handful of dirt into the grave. Then the casket is lowered into the grave and incense sticks are imbedded all around the open hole. The traditional "hearse" (the decorated paper cover for the shoulder-carried caskets) are set on fire. This paper and the rice offerings for old men and women are considered to

THIBAULT

Funeral musicians play mourning music while the wife of the deceased pays her last respects.

be lucky, so that there is often a struggle for these things.

Family members stay at graveside until the grave is filled in and the dirt mound above is shaped. They then pay their final respects, and the procession returns to the clan home with family members still staggering, stumbling and bewailing their loss.

Some families hold an additional ceremony after returning home, called the "crying backward" ceremony. Condolence scrolls are read again and the virtues and qualities of the deceased are reminisced.

Then there is a funeral dinner, furnished by the bereaved family for all who attended the funeral. The size and turn-out at this dinner is thought by many to represent the esteem that was felt for the deceased, so that many families go deeply in debt to provide a pretentious feast.

After burial, there are daily visits to the grave for three days, offering food to the spirit. On the third day, a "grave opening" ceremony is held, during which a young chicken is dragged around the grave three times to "open" the way for the spirit of the dead to come out. The grave mound is then reshaped, and is only revisited on Buddhist religious days (the days of new and full moons, falling on the first and fifteenth of the lunar months), on certain anniversaries of the day of death, and on special holidays like Tet.

At home, however, veneration continues, at first on a daily basis. Offerings of food are made twice daily for either 50 or 100 days. The grave is revisited on the 50th and 100th days following death, and the first and second annual anniversaries of death are specially celebrated.

The mourning period for the closest relatives lasts 27 months, during which time some indication of the mourning status is worn as part of the clothing, and mourners cannot remarry. For female daughters or widows, the mourning period lasts the full 27 months (widows do not normally remarry in Vietnam, out of respect for the families of their first husbands). For male children or husbands, the period is lessened to one year.

Ancestor veneration continues for three generations beyond the generation of the deceased. Persons who have especially distinguished themselves in some manner may also have special pagodas erected in their honor, and their veneration will thereby continue throughout the life and use of the pagoda.

Special observances are made for those persons who have not been fortunate enough to live to an old age, raise a large family, select their own gravesite, or die at home under the care of the extended family. And most deaths in Vietnam are unfortunate in one or more of these respects.

In 1965, for example, the average life expectancy in South Vietnam was estimated to be 35 years (not including deaths from war). In some places in the country, a family is considered fortunate if three of ten children born live to adulthood. The war, of course, adds greatly to the number of "unfortunate" deaths.

When a Vietnamese person meets an unfortunate death—when he dies while young or before his family is raised, etc.—his spirit is considered to be dissatisfied, and likely to cause problems for the still living. So in addition to conducting as many of the normal ceremonies as possible, special rites and ceremonies are conducted to placate the dissatisfied spirit.

One of the most common of these rites is reinterment of remains (reburial) during the first three years following death. If the original grave is disturbed in any respect, if certain misfortunes occur in the family, or if the death of an individual is "unfortunate" in any respect, the family may consider it necessary to exhume the body, clean the skeletal bones, and rebury them in a clay urn at a new and better site.

Reinterment is commonly conducted for all who die in North Vietnam, with the belief that the spirit will be happier if the bones are cleaned and rearranged. It is less common in South Vietnam, and is done only as an exception.

For the Vietnamese, death is a sacred and solemn event. It is a time of extravagance, to show the extent of affection for the deceased. It is a time of reverence toward his memory. And if the death was unfortunate in any respect, it is a time of placation of his spirit.

The time and date of death are considered more important than the date of birth. They mark the beginning of a changed relationship with the dead person's spirit, a new relationship between the spirit world and the real world, between the ethereal and the mundane, that will continue throughout eternity.

Test Your GIQ

by Specialist 5 Phil Schieber

THE FOLLOWING hypothetical situations were designed to determine how well a soldier would fare if he were sent to Vietnam. Some, all, or none of the answers may be correct since we lost the answer sheet a few days ago. Simply choose the answer which you feel would be most correct for the situation:

(1) As a private first class in a line company, you are entitled to walk point for your platoon. In this capacity, you are hacking your way through the jungles one day when you peer through the foliage and see the Champs Elysees teeming with people and traffic and the Eiffel Tower thrusting upward in the background. You rub your eyes, but the scene does not go away. You should:

(a) Check your compass.
(b) Write your Congressman.
(c) Say "Lafayette, we are here," and then start brushing up on your French.
(d) Turn around and go back since you obviously have been going in the wrong direction.

(2) As a lieutenant assigned to the Saigon Command, you receive the opportunity to escort a visiting Congressman on a tour of the city. Much impressed with the security and progress in the city, the Congressman offers to buy you lunch at the Continental Palace Hotel. While sitting at a table on the terrace, a small boy passes by selling cigars. The Congressman buys two and you both smoke. You are about to order another round of drinks when the Congressman's cigar explodes. He is uninjured, but fairly shaken. To calm him you should:

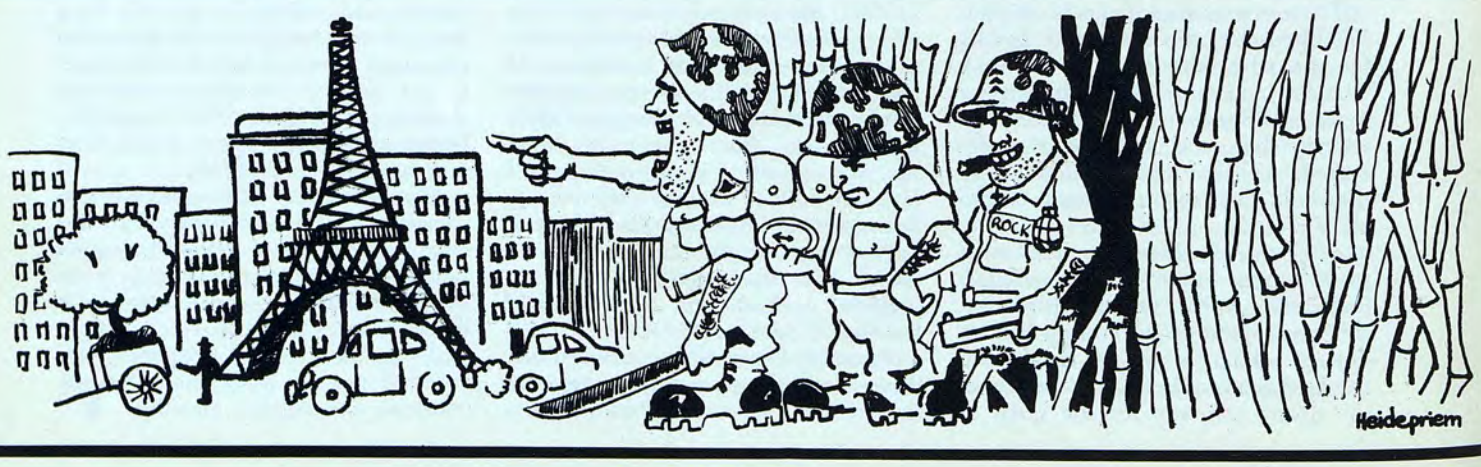
(a) Say, "That sort of thing happens all the time."
(b) Offer the Congressman your cigar.
(c) Say, "Damn these Cuban cigars."
(d) Crawl out from under the table and act as if nothing had happened.

(3) Serving as a combat photographer, you are on the scene at what proves to be one of the decisive battles of the war. Applying all your skills as a professional photographer, you shoot 22 rolls of color film during the clash. When the battle is over, and the smoke is settling, you discover much to your chagrin that the lens cap had been on the camera all the time. Knowing the big brass will want pictures of the battle, you should:

(a) Ask the battalion commander if his unit could run through it again.
(b) Smash your camera and report it as a combat loss.
(c) Return to your base and photograph the next war movie that plays there.
(d) Catch the next helicopter headed for the next decisive battle.

(4) As a military policeman, you are given the task of guarding the trailer in which seven lovely ladies from the chorus of Bob Hope's Christmas Show are spending the night. It is near midnight on Christmas Eve when a man dressed in what seems to be a Macy's Santa Claus suit rappells from a helicopter, lands on the roof on the trailer, and goes in a side window with a bag over his shoulder. Your police training leads you to be suspicious of this individual. In order to protect the chorus girls, you should:

(a) Swear off eggnog.
(b) Take off your boots and hang your socks up on the trailer.
(c) Check with headquarters on VIP arrivals.
(d) Disguise yourself as an elf and enter the trailer, carefully taking notes on the progress of the party.



(5) You are a projectionist at your base's Special Services Club. After showing the evening's double feature, "Ma and Pa Kettle Boil Over" and "Dracula Raids the Bloodmobile," you and several of your friends decide to stay late to watch stag films. Right in the middle of "Cool Sin," the chaplain walks in. You should:

(a) Tell him you're watching an Army training film.
(b) Do something to the projector so the film breaks.
(c) Ask him the topic of this Sunday's sermon.
(d) Ask the chaplain if he would like a drink.

(6) As commander of one of the Army's rare patrol boats assigned to guard that vast waterway, the Mekong River, you are staying up late one night, working on a case of beer. On board the boat is a valuable cargo of captured Chinese Communist lichee nuts, which for some reason, intelligence wants to examine. Much to your chagrin, the boat strikes a submerged hippopotamus and begins to sink rapidly. You should:

(a) Think of a better one than that since hippopotami are not indigenous to the Mekong River.
(b) Eat the lichee nuts lest they fall into enemy hands.
(c) Appoint an enlisted man as acting boat commander and have him go down with the ship.
(d) Get the hippo's service number and duty station.

(7) A problem arises when a male water buffalo falls in love with the tank you are driving. The lovestruck buffalo follows the tank everywhere, thrashing about and mooing romantically. The element of surprise inherent in your tank's performance is being greatly hindered, and the bull's bellowing keeps you awake at night. To rid yourself of the buffalo without hurting his feelings, you should:

(a) Tell him it would never work out.
(b) Introduce him to a good-looking APC down the line.
(c) Shoot the bull.
(d) Refer the bull to a chaplain or social worker.

(8) While on R&R you become acquainted with a beautiful woman named Bubbles Savon. She is holding down two jobs, one as an exotic dancer whose shtick is to jump scantily-clad out of the pouch of a live kangaroo, the other that she is an international spy in the employ of an organization dedicated to the overthrow of the United States government. Bubbles offers you a ride to her apartment, and the three of you (you, Bubbles, and the kangaroo) bounce home together. Bubbles slips into something more comfortable, which makes you very uncomfortable. She plies you with wine and homemade cookies while soft music plays on the stereo. The only other sound is the process of osmosis going on in the plants in Bubbles' bedroom. "What do you know about water flouridation?", Bubbles whispers provocatively in your ear. This and other questions make it obvious to you that she is trying to convert you to the other side, and become a spy. She also makes it clear that her kangaroo has taken lessons from Oddjob and is going to stomp you flat as a pancake unless you agree to become a spy. You react in one of the following ways:

(a) Ask Bubbles to marry you.
(b) Call for Chicken Man.
(c) Promise her anything, but give her Arpege.
(d) Refuse adamantly, safe in the knowledge that you can always get a job in the world as a manhole cover.

Ratings:

(The correct answer in each case was C).

7–8. You are obviously ideally suited for duty in Vietnam, which is why you are reading this article in Germany or anyplace else.

5–6. You exhibit some imagination, and probably sincerely believe in your horoscope.

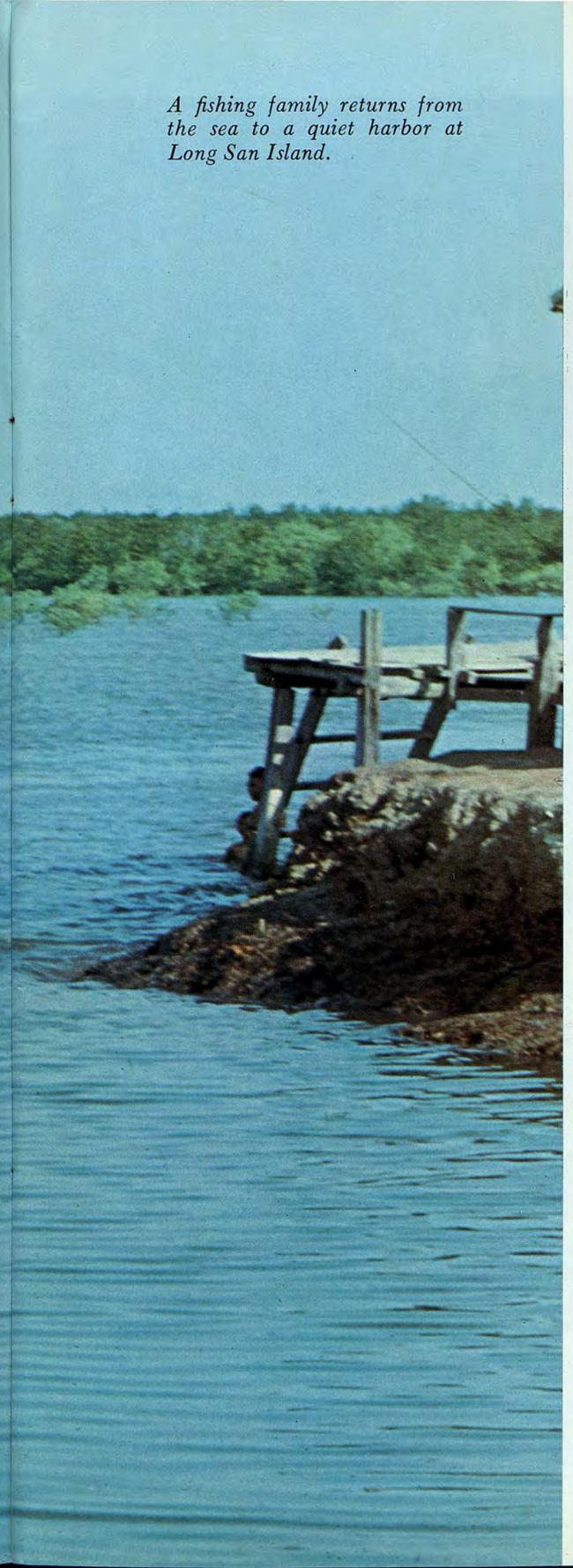
3–4. You just squeaked by and your mother worries about you brushing your teeth. You have a knack for following orders and getting seconds in the mess hall.

1–2. You drink beer and eat peanuts and refer to your wife as "the old lady." Your wife refers to you as "the old man."

0. You display a great deal of common sense, which, unfortunately for you, has no place in this modern world. You think this whole test was a waste of time in the first place. And you are right.

CAVANAUGH

A fishing family returns from the sea to a quiet harbor at Long San Island.



LONG SAN

AN ISLAND IN THE STORM

by Specialist 5 Phil Schieber

LONG SAN is an island situated in the tidal swamps on the South China Sea. Long San would just be another piece of marshland were it not for a single mountain which seems, as mountains usually do, to rise directly from the sea. The mountain is curved, and its steep ridge runs from the east to the north. The Vietnamese say the mountain looks like a dragon. The Americans on the island think the mountain resembles a horseshoe, and to the Australians it is a boomerang. But dragon or whatever, the mountain is there, dominating all those who would be its king.

In the middle of the island at the base of the mountain is the Ba Trao temple. With its straight, smooth lines and Baroque Oriental fringes, it is a structure of reserved magnificence. The rippled backs of dragons arch in the sun at the corners of the roofs where most western men would have placed lions or gargoyles. Constructed by a mysterious Mr. Tran some 60 years ago, the temple has survived war and weather. Today visitors to the island can explore the interior of the temple, which is lavishly decorated with ceramic elephants and dragons, pleasant-smelling cedar and mahogany furniture, galleries of ancestral pictures, and a multitude of clocks, ticking away the minutes and hours of the last six decades. The caretakers at the temple are well-preserved ancients who walk around barefoot, their hair drawn back in pony-tails. They look on indifferently as strangers reverently browse among the artifacts, trying to understand what Confucious really said. Mr. Tran was a Confucian, and the temple is dedicated to that religion.

Although a guerrilla war has settled over the island, the Ba Trao temple remains untouched and uninvolved. There is a legend surrounding the temple which everyone on the island seems to take seriously. Like all legends, its details are somewhat shrouded, but the gist of it is that whosoever disrupts or damages the temple

will die violently. Men may laugh at this, but they think about it too.

There are roughly 5,000 people living in four hamlets on Long San Island. Until the war is over, the population estimates will continue to be rough ones because the numbers of a certain hostile nomadic group on the island fluctuate with the tides.

"Not long ago we received an intelligence report that 40 Viet Cong disguised in Regional Force/Popular Force uniforms moved onto the island," said Staff Sergeant L. T. Tennessee, a member of the 5-man Mobile Advisory. Team III-70. "We thought things were going to get pretty interesting there for a while, but so far," he said, knocking on wood, "if they're on the island, they've been laying pretty low."

The Mobile Advisory Team (MAT) lives in a compound built around an old French fort that juts into the sea at the eastern edge of the island. The fort's gray-brown walls are laced with barbed wire, and several watchtowers peer out towards the mountain and the sea. Like a medieval castle, it offers protection and dreariness. Forts like this were built to last a lifetime, and a lifetime is an unreliable time index.

A canal runs by the compound. When the tide is out, the canal becomes a muddy ditch, and the sampans and boats are beached in the ooze. Several fiefdoms of the kingdom of the sea reveal themselves at low tide. If you stand on the berm at the compound, you can see fish that have front fins which enable them to crawl through the mud at speeds slightly less than amazing.

Visitors to the compound try to amuse themselves by chucking dirt clods at the fish, who scamper untouched across the mud. After throwing several pounds of clods at the fish, most visitors tire of the sport and are ready to leave the island.

Long San is an island, but definitely no paradise for the allied troops living and working there. If W. C. Fields once spent a month one Sunday in Philadelphia, a day on Long San, any day of the week, would not pass as quickly.

A walk around the compound reveals how unconventional the Vietnam war is. Besides the MAT, there are platoons of RF/PFs and Australian engineers occupying the same compound. With a few fountains, some flagpoles and tourists, the Long San compound could become a miniature branch of the United Nations.

At the entrance to the Australian quarters there is a sign which seems to sum up the rather bleak existence which the troops must endure:

Long San Island
Boatel Hotel
Cook Wanted

"We're here to provide water for the people of Long San," said Staff Sergeant Herb Taylor of the 17th Construction Squadron Group, Royal Australian Engineers. "Over the years the hamlets have never had much water," he continued. "In the height of the dry season they must import their water from Phuoc Le, the province capital. So now we're laying a pipeline from a good well on the island to all four hamlets. The job's going to take about 11 thousand feet of pipeline."

The pipeline is being laid with the help of volunteer labor from each of the hamlets on the island. Every morning a procession of soldiers and civilians heads off to work on the pipeline. The scene is reminiscent of one of those war movies where the townspeople and the soldiers pitch in and build the bridge or raise the house. Barking dogs, children of assorted sizes, and men and women with homemade shovels, hoes and rakes work alongside the soldiers.

This community project, however, has met with resistance from the Viet Cong. Using hit-and-run tactics, the VC have been harassing the workers ever since the project began. But the pipeline is still advancing, despite the ever-present threat of death or injury to those involved in the work.

"The VC have damaged the pipeline," said Sergeant Taylor, "and occassionally they fire on you. I guess it's just one of those occupational hazards."

Although the island is small, it is large enough to hide the VC. Life on Long San becomes a series of familiar games: cat-and-mouse, hide-and-seek, watch-and-wait. The VC are there, but their impact lately has been minimal.

"On the first day of Tet, the Viet Cong raised a huge National Liberation Front flag on the top of the mountain," said Captain William Cox, commander of MAT III-70. "The whole island could see it."

The red and blue flag with the big yellow star now hangs in the MAT compound, next to Captain Cox's bunk.

"That," he said, indicating the flag, "was their Tet offensive for 1970."

For the Viet Cong guerrilla, life on the island is not exactly a picnic.

"We keep them on the run," said Captain Cox. "We also get some help from the Cobras that fly out of Vung Tau. They use the mountain for target practice. Rockets and mini-guns are pretty effective psychologically."

CAVANAUGH

Volunteer laborers work on a new 11,000-foot water line on Long San Island.

"Since we've been here," he continued, "we've had 17 VC rally. I suspect it's hell out there for them. One fellow who came in had been living out in the swamps in the Rung Sat for three years. Even though his family lived on the island, he hadn't been home in those three years. In any case, he thought it over for quite a while; then he decided to come in."

"The big problem is that blood is thicker than water," said Captain Cox. "Although a lot of people on the island support the present government, some of their sons are out there living in the Rung Sat. So they probably take food and supplies out to them in their sampans."

The Australians also patrol the canals and shorelines of the island in assault boats, flat-bottomed tubs that are propelled by outboard motors. A recent addition to their fleet was a Viet Cong sampan, which they captured along with three VC one night in the mangroves of the Rung Sat.

While the war lingers about the island, pacification is progressing in slow, even strides.

A new maternity dispensary was buiilt on the island this year by engineers working with the Civic Action Unit of the 1st Australian Task Force. Now, once a week, Dr. (Captain) Ian Elder, a physician serving with the Task Force, visits the island and treats his patients at the dispensary.

Close by is a large two-room schoolhouse, also built by the Task Force. The resident's of the island are already talking in terms of another new schoolhouse, and electrification of the hamlets on the island.

There is another *Bac Si,* or medic on the island full-time. He is Sergeant First Class Johnie L. Johnson, the MAT's medical advisor. Sergeant Johnson makes house calls.

"If somebody gets sick, and I can't handle it, I call in a medevac, and we fly them back to the mainland hospital," Johnson said.

Helicopters are the most practical way for the allied forces to travel to and from Long San. Food and fresh water are brought out daily. The only other traffic is that of sampans and barges.

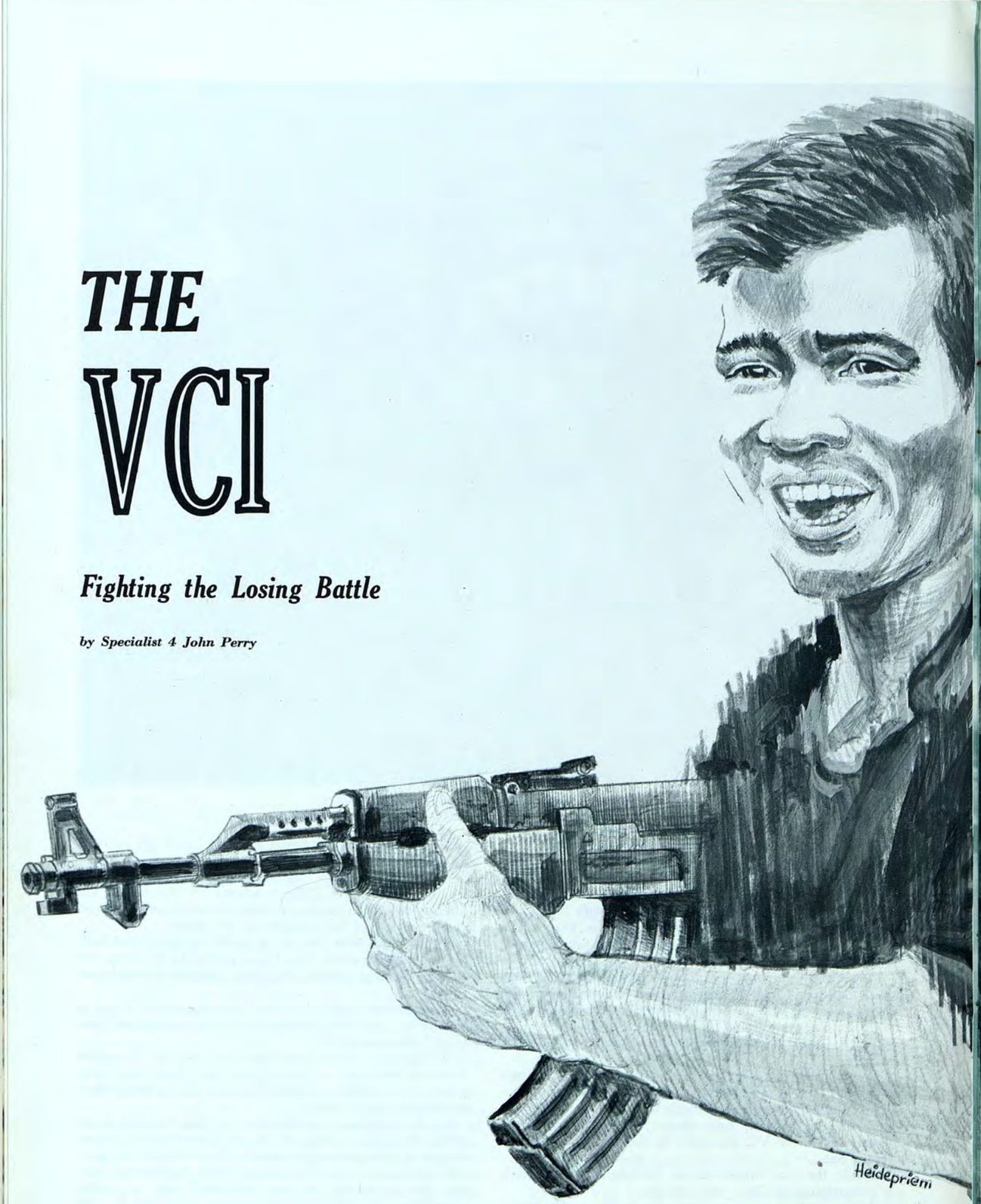
In the evenings, candles can be seen burning from within the solemn walls of the Ba Trao temple. In the silence of the surrounding night, the clocks fill the temple's halls with a low volume of steady mechanical ticking, the monotony of time translated into a precise unwinding of the spring. The war, the temple, the mountain, the pipeline all become matters of time.

And after a few days on Long San, a helicopter seems like a freedom bird.

THE VCI

Fighting the Losing Battle

by Specialist 4 John Perry



TO THE THIEU GOVERNMENT, the Viet Cong Infrastructure is hardly the Opposition, but the opponent's role is precisely the part in which the VCI has cast itself. The VCI is a shadow government in the strictest parliamentary sense, hoping to obtain at least a share of the government through its efforts in the jungle and at the peace table.

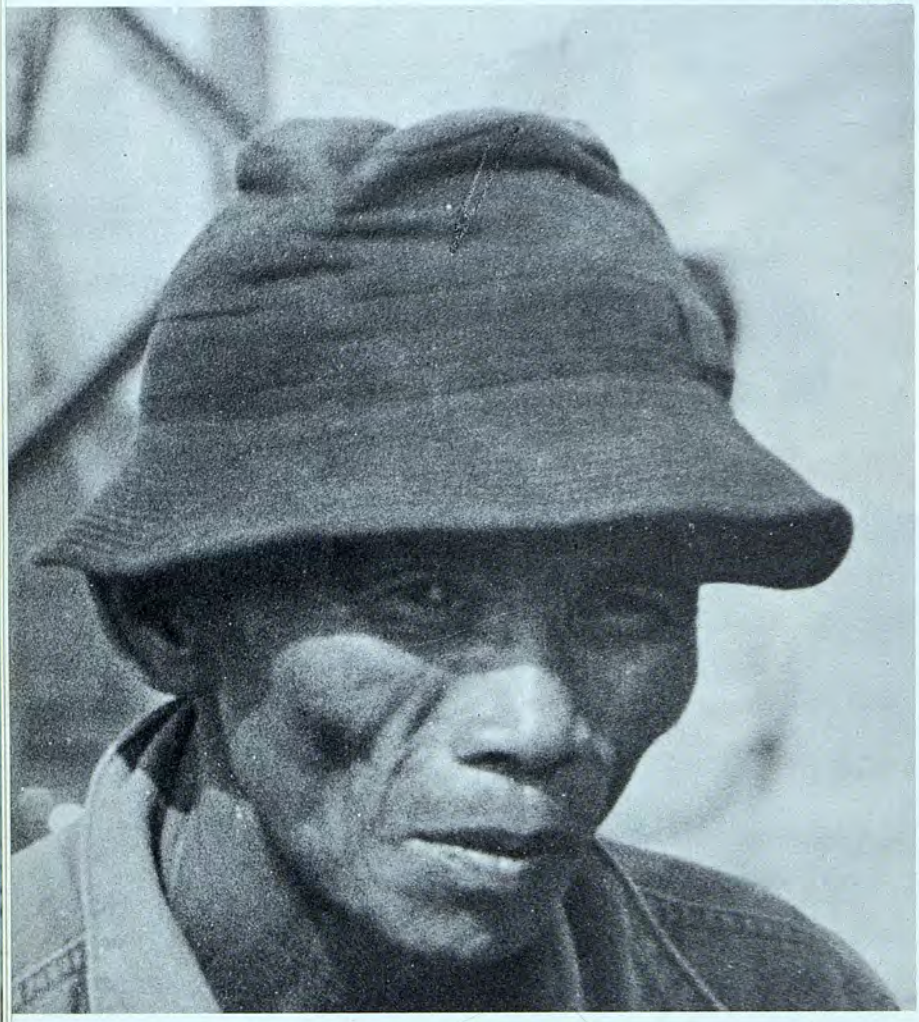
Increasingly, however, the efforts have ended in failure as neither South Vietnam's soldiers or diplomats show signs of buckling under. Stepped up military pressure and diplomatic maneuvering has combined to force the shadow regime into the twilight zone of Southeast Asia.

Deserted by growing numbers of followers, shorn of supply channels and rebuffed in attempts to recruit local villagers, the Viet Cong Infrastructure is a mere skeleton of its once robust self. Only through the loyalty and determination of the hardened Communists who form its core has it failed to expire altogether.

Dedicated as it is, the VCI leadership numbers only 6,000 and has not expanded in 15 years of operation in South Vietnam.

Its lack of size, however, has been no deterent in spreading the gospel of Ho Chi Minh, the fiery revolutionary who took

CLEAVELAND



"There can be no mistake that the frayed fabric of the Viet Cong Infrastructure is rent from without and within. . .

control of North Vietnam when the French fled in 1954. With Ho's backing, the VCI went to work in the South that very year and began applying the techniques of revolution he had ridden to power.

The blend is a masterly concoction that begins with the carrot and ends with the stick. To be sure, there are fresh twists to the game, but the rules of play have not been altered for centuries.

The Communists began by playing on the fear, the pride, the suspicion of a people sick of generations of foreign rule. Instead of colonial oppression, the VCI would offer collective self-government. There was, of course, nothing collective about it. The Infrastructure called all the shots and refused to brook any opposition.

Terrorists known as Armed Propaganda Teams—a term, incidentally, also used by Allied forces—roamed the countryside suppressing dissention. Their methods were hardly original. Attila the Hun had used them. The favorite trick was extortion, a crime the VCI took to calling "tax collecting." Unlike the Internal Revenue Service, its agents did not trouble themselves with overdue payments. They simply killed the recalcitrant man.

The result was a reign of terror throughout the nation that forced the government to seek foreign military assistance.

The United States responded, and went to work to end the terrorism, a task that began with clearing out Communist military forces who supply the muscle for the revolutionary operation.

Viet Cong and North Vietnamese Army soldiers not only supply VCI agents with the arms and ammunition to bully its prospects, they posed a not-so-veiled threat themselves. Indeed, as the bitter decade of the 60's progressed, the war spread throughout the nation as Allied forces pressed the Communists.

As any student of the Indo-China War knows, a victory did not emerge overnight for the U.S. and South Vietnamese troops. But the pressure did limit the VCI's ability to roam the countryside with abandon and did weaken the vital supply lines to Hanoi.

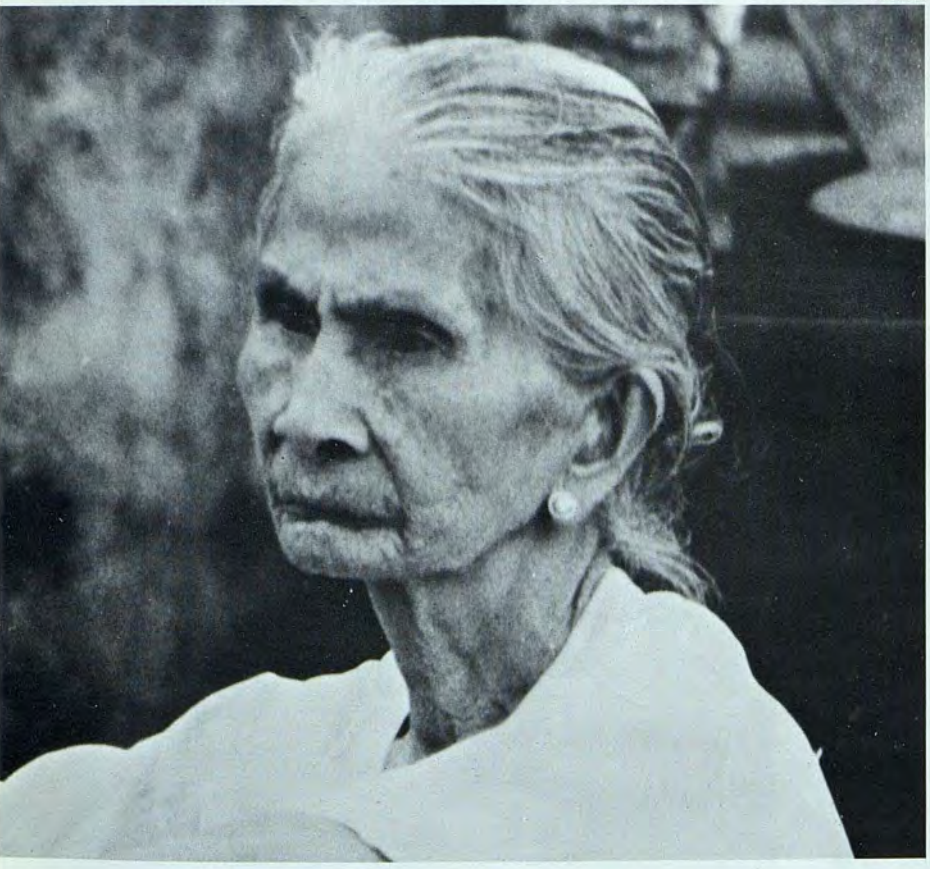
And it gave the Allies the impetus to start a fresh program that would undermine the Infrastructure itself. The result, in 1968, was Phung Hoang—a project carried out by the Vietnamese but assisted by U.S. advisors. To the advisors, working through the Civil Operations and Rural Development Support (CORDS) pacification effort, it was "Phoenix."

Phung Hoang gave the VCI and its Armed Propaganda Teams a dose of its own medicine.

The program established intelligence and operations coordination centers which still function at the regional province, district and village level to compile data on the VCI. That information serves as a spotlight that has wiped the shadows away from the pretend regime and exposed its most vulnerable point: The Armed Propaganda Team.

. . .and is only a remnant of the cloth the Communists had hoped to unfurl as a brilliant tapestry."

GINDER



The APT's, well informed on both local problems and personalities, are the grass roots practitioners of Communist politics who work its persuasion and punishment on the local citizenry. Without them, the VCI is minus a sensitive antenna and an effective weapon. These team members, however, are not the hardened Communists fired by the rhetoric of Uncle Ho and Chairman Mao. They simply are Vietnamese who became Communists because they saw it as a better way of life for themselves, their families and their country.

Knowing this, Phung Hoang plays on their human frailties—homesickness, hunger, fear—to convince them they are mistaken.

The success of Phung Hoang is borne out in the booming Chieu Hoi program, which welcomes the returning Communists with—as the name implies—open arms.

But the surge of ralliers grew to a flood last May when U.S. and South Vietnamese troops routed the VC and NVA from their Cambodian strongholds.

During that month a record 1,342 Communists rallied to the government. In Military Region 3 the border provinces of Tay Ninh and Hau Nghia alone accounted for 1,004 of them.

The pace has since slowed—a mere 393 Communists turned up at Chieu Hoi centers during August—but the continuing flow is an indication of growing Viet Cong attrition.

There can be little doubt that the Cambodian Operation, a combined U.S. and South Vietnamese venture for 60 days which the Vietnamese have continued on their own, has limited Viet Cong activity.

With their supporting military units on the run throughout Indo-China, the VCI's vital supply lines have been stretched painfully thin, almost to the breaking point. That has limited the mobility of the Infrastructure, already understaffed by the massive defections of the spring and summer.

And when the VCI is able to move, it often finds that the village which would have fallen victim to it five years ago is able to fight off its agents.

Through the diligent efforts of U.S. and South Vietnamese military advisors, the nation's villages and hamlets have developed a militia capable of defending their homes against a Communist takeover.

For the Viet Cong Infrastructure those developments have meant the worst setback since it sprang up in the South 15 years ago.

But by no means has the VCI surrendered. The word is unthinkable and will never be uttered.

Still, there can be no mistake that the frayed fabric of the Infrastructure is rent from within and without and is only a remnant of the cloth the Communists had hoped to unfurl as a brilliant tapestry.

PARKS

ARVN OCS

by Specialist 4 John Perry

FOR JUST A SECOND the Infantry School at Thu Duc looks all the world like Fort Benning, Ga.

The streets are clogged with double-timing troops, the parade grounds are blanketed with grids of drill and ceremony and the classrooms are filled with weaponry.

Then the focus sharpens, and the eye contrasts the scenes of officer candidate training in Vietnam and in the United States. The candidates are smaller and the climate is hotter, but the pace is no slower and the grind no softer. And the goal is the same: a commissioned officer.

Since the French retreat from Indo-China in 1954, the Vietnamese have sought the advice of the U.S. Army in upgrading its own armed forces. The training of officers is no exception, and for almost 15 years the Army of the Republic of Vietnam has trained enlisted men for commissioned service with techniques developed by the U.S. Army at Fort Benning.

The techniques are based on pressure designed to bend a man or break him—depending on the stuff he's made of. "That is what OCS is, putting men under tremendous pressure to see if they can function," said Captain John P. McIlwain of Logansport, Ind., a battalion advisor.

At Fort Benning the pressure is applied through contrived harassment, artificial devices such as pushups and verbal abuse designed to place a candidate under the physical and mental stress of combat. At Thu Duc the harassment is not contrived. It arises out of the very stresses that flog a nation at war.

A Vietnamese officer candidate receives only 56 piastres a day for food, hardly enough to buy a cup of soup. His 3,000 piastre-a-month salary can barely keep him in uniforms with fatigues selling for 500 piastres a set.

Yet the Vietnamese government, fighting for its economic life, cannot afford to increase the meal allowance or the wages. Nor can the government spare line troops to provide security for the school. The candidates themselves must man the bunkers without a break from training.

It is a grueling schedule which places the candidates on the perimeter every third night and on the training field six days a week, 11 hours a day. Nonetheless, the tired, hungry and disheveled candidates—mostly disgruntled draftees chosen simply because of their high school diplomas—do emerge with commissions after 23 weeks.

The French, who operated the school during their colonial rule, ignored guerrilla tactics in the classroom just as they did on the battlefield.

When the Vietnamese themselves assumed operation of the school after the last Tricolor was lowered, they sought out the United States, which had developed counter-revolutionary tactics in wars hot and cold. The United States agreed to import its tactics and its training techniques, and now all that remains of the French reign are shabby, gray stucco buildings with high ceilings and slow fans that barely stir the humid air.

Outside the air is alive with the sounds of intensive preparation for leadership from 7 a.m. to 6 p.m.

First there are general subjects: map reading, intelligence, first aid, chemical warfare, political warfare. Next is weapons training: small arms, heavy weapons, mines. And finally comes tactical training.

Since most candidates are new in the army, the subjects at the beginning of the training cycle are elementary. With freshly shaved heads, unpolished boots and still baggy fatigues, they have been abruptly ushered into an alien society.

In his first days in OCS the candidate is introduced to the M-16 rifle, squad formations and guard duty.

Eight companies are needed each night to secure the school, three on the outer perimeter and three on the secondary perimeter. Another guards key installations within the compound and the remaining company is on 50 percent alert as a reaction force. When the compound is secured at 6 a.m., the candidates have only an hour to prepare for the day's training.

It is a grind that intensifies every week.

In the second week, a candidate is introduced to map reading and squad tactics of attacks, patrols and ambushes. In the third week, survival and evasion techniques are taken up along with the fundamentals of offensive fire. By the fourth week the candidate is studying military correspondence, logistical organization and field wiring.

For a high school graduate, like 24-year-old Ha Quoc Thanh of Saigon, the subjects are easy. But those four

Inspections (left) and Double Time—integral parts of Officer Candidate School in Vietnam as well as the United States.

PARKS

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Drop, Candidate! Pushups are a painfully regular part of the daily regimen at the ARVN Officer Candidate School in Thu Duc.

weeks still are the hardest of the entire training cycle.

"In the beginning, the senior candidates all jump on you and harass you," he said.

By Fort Benning standards the harassment is scant. An indiscretion at Benning brings 100 or more pushups. The same infraction at Thu Duc is punished by only 10.

Some of the cadre—especially Fort Benning-trained tactical officers like Lieutenant Truong Huu Ly, think discipline should be harsher. But Ly realizes why it cannot be. "In the States we had enough food, but here we don't have enough food and there isn't time for PT," he said.

Indeed, the shortage of time is a complaint echoed throughout the school. Said Ha Quoc Thanh, "If more time were given we could do much better." Yet an officer commanding troops in combat will never have enough time to prepare his men and he must prepare himself within equally stringent limitations.

The training of an officer includes 20 hours of leadership training, mostly human psychology, but it also requires practical application.

During the training cycle each candidate is given the chance to command a squad, a platoon and a company for three and one-half days each while his company is in the compound. The candidates are also rotated in the same positions during field training exercises. "They're two entirely separate rosters, but the requirements are the same," said Captain McIlwain.

The candidates spend three and a half days in each command position and at the end of their tour they are evaluated by their tactical officer. The evaluation covers the entire spectrum of criteria by which a commander is judged: military bearing, command voice, initiative, intelligence and presence of mind.

That the candidates take heed there can be little doubt. "I try to remember what my officers tell me because I want to be a good officer, too," said 21-year old Nguyen Vin Thuy of Nha Trang.

Nguyen Vin Thuy and Ha Quoc Thanh are typical officer candidates. Both are well educated by Vietnamese standards, both are draftees and both are determined to be good officers. "As an officer you can show your good points," said Thanh. "As a private, although you may have good points, you can't show them all."

Thanh worked for four years as an administrative assistant and interpreter at MACV for VN $35,000 a month after graduating from high school in 1965. Then, early this year, he was drafted and sent to OCS.

The road to Thu Duc for Thuy was similar. Born in Hanoi, he fled with his family to Nha Trang after the Communist takeover in the north and grew up as the son of a prosperous physician.

He was a student in Dalat until last December, but he flunked out and—to his chagrin—was promptly drafted. Like Thanh he was sent to OCS and the 3d Platoon of the 31st Company.

To supplement his meager Army pay he has to call on his father for a monthly stipend of VN $10,000. Yet, in spite of it all, he has matured. "When I was a civilian I depended on my family," he said. "Here I have to do everything for myself."

The candidates are admonished to learn their lessons well. "They must try to do the best they can. If they do, they will be good officers when they graduate," said Lieutenant Ly.

Although the Officer Candidate School is part of the Infantry School, the candidates are commissioned in other branches of service by competitive examination. Candidates may also be commissioned in the Navy, Air Force and National Police.

Since its doors were opened by the French in 1951, the school has commissioned more than 41,000 officers.

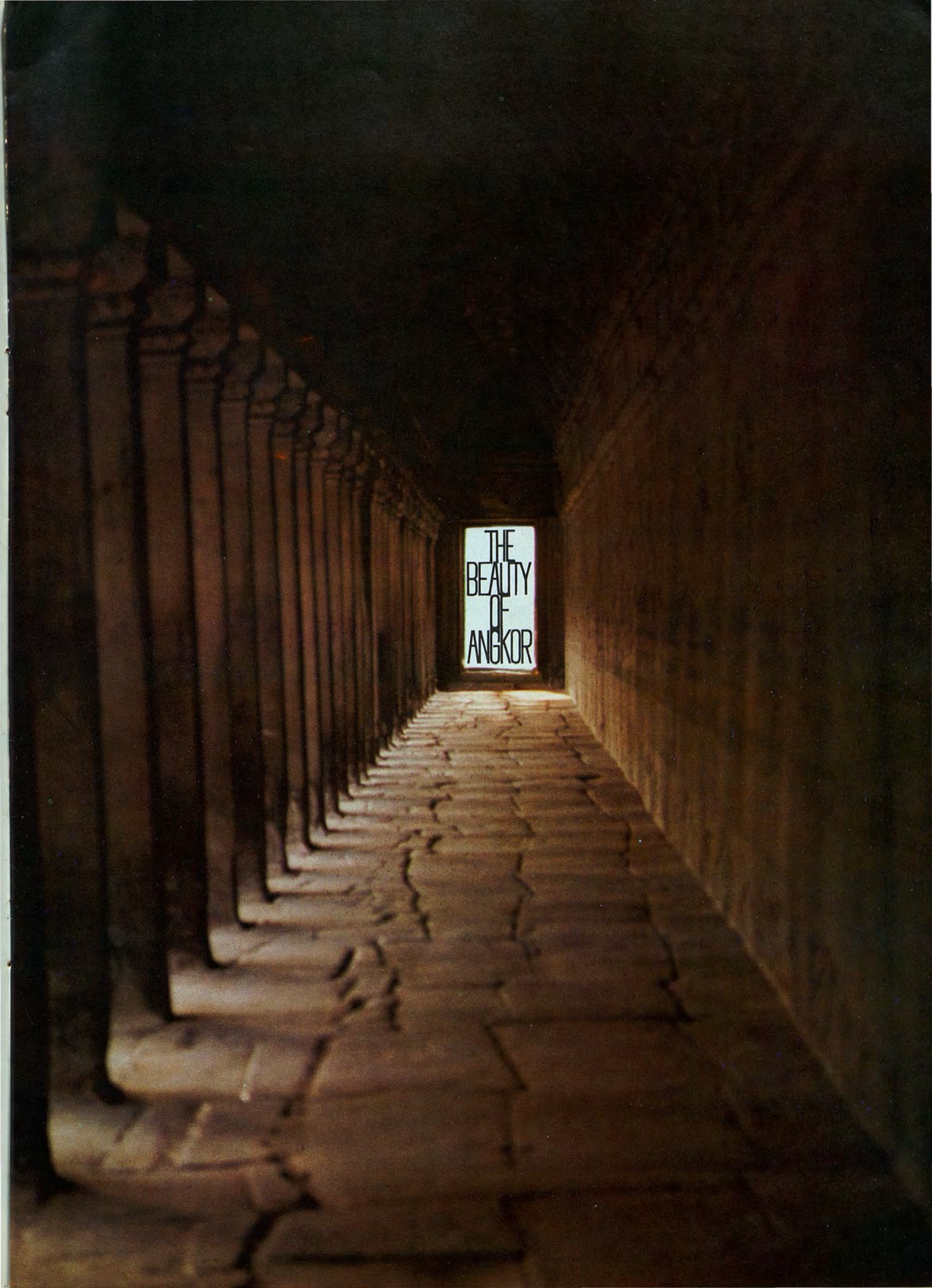
The candidates are, indeed, tired and hungry and disheveled for 23 weeks. But they do graduate in spite of the hungering, wearying pace.

The training atmosphere is not as good as Fort Benning's.

"You don't have to worry about the VC there," said Captain McIlwain.

But Thu Duc does offer its candidates a benefit that Benning cannot—and in wartime Vietnam it may be the most important training aid of all.

"One thing this school offers that our OCS did not is combat experienced cadre," said Captain McIlwain. "Most company commanders and tactical officers have had combat experience."


THE
BEAUTY
OF
ANGKOR

story and photos by
Captain David T. Givens

THE EXPANSIVE TEMPLE complex of Angkor Wat and Angkor Thom in north-central Cambodia symbolize the zenith of the Cambodian empire, and paradoxically, represent one of the major causes of its downfall.

The Cambodian empire evolved from the ancient Funanese Kingdom in the Mekong Delta. The first Cambodian monarchy is generally dated from 802 A.D. with the reign of the Khmer King Jayavaraman II who revolted against the Funanese overlords and eventually overthrew them.

Cambodia's early history was characterized by sporadic local wars against the Siamese and Javanese. Culturally, the ancient Khmers were strongly associated with the Indian civilization and Brahmen religion.

The Cambodian civilization reached its zenith during the reign of Suryavarman II (1113–1150). During this period the temple of Angkor Wat was constructed. Angkor Wat is the largest of the monuments in the Angkor complex and remains as the most spectacular example of Hindu architecture, unequalled in the world.

Angkor Wat was erected by Suryavarman II in the belief that its construction would enable him to ascend directly to the supreme paradise of Vishnu after his death.

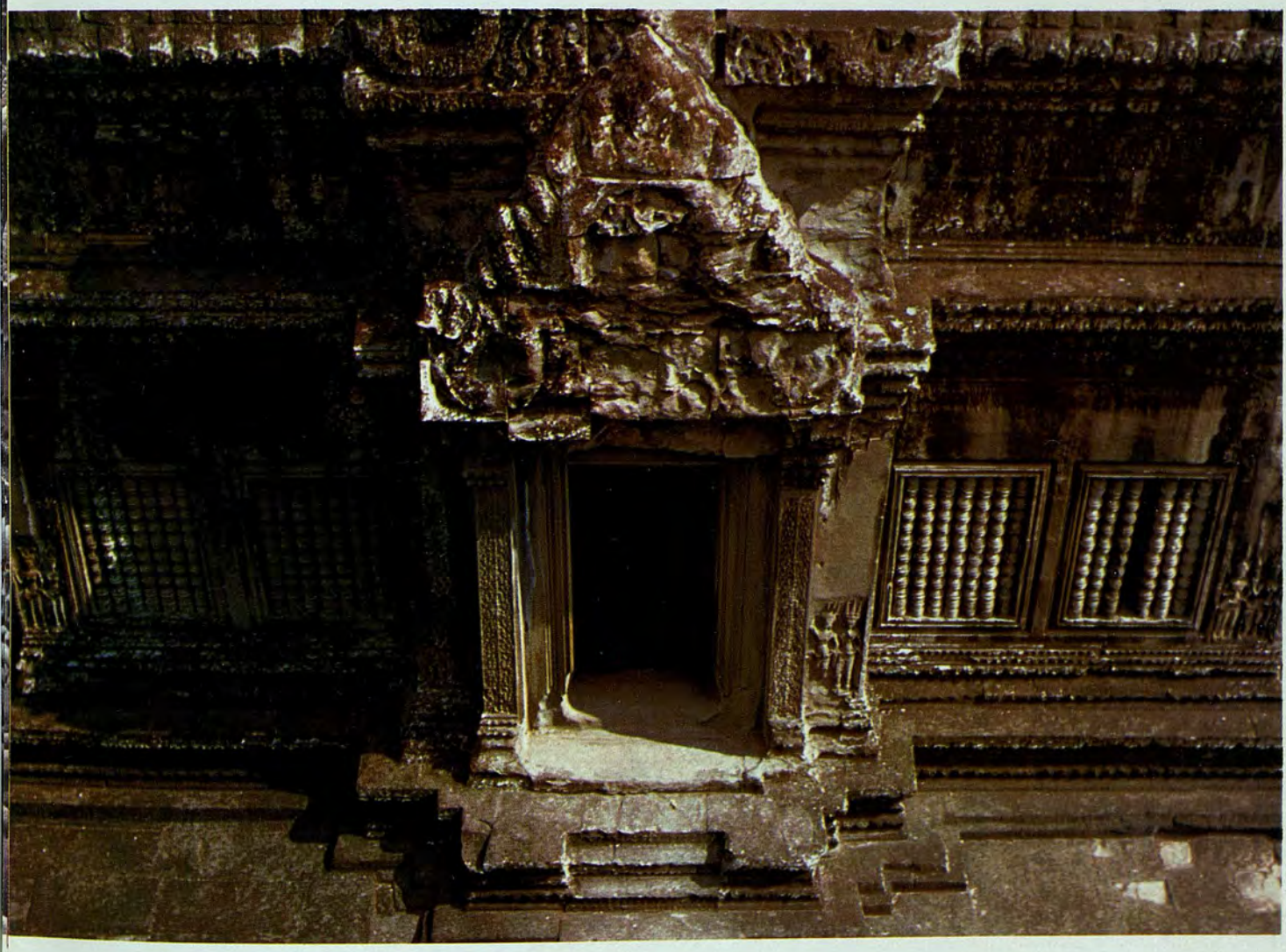
Angkor Thom, though not as well known as Angkor Wat, is perhaps more interesting. Erected by the last great Khmer king, Jayavaraman VII, Angkor Thom is a system of monuments covering an area of 3,000 square yards. Although none of the monuments compare in size to Angkor Wat, the large number of separate buildings in the Angkor Thom complex represent an immense human effort. More stone was used to complete Angkor Thom than was necessary for any other monumental project in history.

In the center of the Angkor Thom complex is the Bayon, the strangest and most complex of the Angkor ruins. Built as a tribute to Buddha, the Bayon's central area is a cluster of 50 towers each bearing four faces of Buddha in the likeness of King Jayavaraman VII.

The monuments of the Angkor complex, although the greatest accomplishment of the Khmer civilization, were

A spectacular array of sweeping collonades and soaring towers characterize the central complex of Angkor Wat (left), while the detailed facade of an entranceway to the main temple portrays painstaking artistry amidst massive grandeur (lower right).

Four faces of Buddha glare from the entranceway to Ta Prohm in the Angkor Thom complex (upper right). Buddha's visage also dominates a view from the interior of a tower in the Bayon at the center of Angkor Thom (far right).



Angkor Wat—the main temple of the Angkor complex

the primary cause of the downfall of that ancient empire. Expenses incurred in material and labor to complete the construction at Angkor drained the empire to a point where it could no longer defend itself against its traditional enemies, the Siamese and Annamese.

Angkor was overrun and sacked by the Thais in 1432 and subsequently abandoned. The Khmer capital was moved from Angkor to Phnom Penh. The beauty of Angkor was lost to the world for over four centuries, hidden by the dense Cambodian jungle. The temples were uncovered once again in 1860 by the French naturalist Henri Mouhat, who revealed to the world the spectacular beauty of the ruins of Angkor.

Amidst the massive beauty of the Angkor complex are numberless detailed works which speak of the individual artistry and devotion that inspired the total grandeur of the Angkor ruins.

A bas-relief of minor goddesses (devatas) grace the walls of Angkor Wat (left), and a statue of Shiva, Hindu god of asceticism, stands a lonely vigil in the main temple (far right). A reclining Buddha basks in the twilight glow filtering through the ruins of Angkor Wat (right).

A bas-relief on a wall in the Bayon at Angkor Thom depicts King Jayavaraman VIII, mounted on a royal elephant, leading his subjects to war against the ancient Vietnamese Chams (below).

The central complex of Ta Prohm

Ao Dai

The Traditional Dress of Vietnam

by Staff Sergeant Jerry Van Drew

WATCHING VIETNAMESE GIRLS in their native dress, the ao dai (pronounced "ow yigh" rhyming with "how high"), can be an enchanting pastime. The long front and rear flaps of the long dress wave in the slightest breeze. The white or black satin trousers ("quan" or "pants") ripple and shimmer with the slightest motion. The colorful undulations of the cloth charm the movements of the passing limbs.

When outside, the long dress flaps flow with the air. When in the act of sitting down, the wearer puts the flaps into motion by gathering the rear flap into one hand and folding it around her body and into her lap.

When riding bicycles or motor bikes, the girls usually sit on the end of the rear flap, allowing the rest of the flap to billow up behind. The front flap is held or fastened to the handlebars, and the two outspread flaps flutter as the rider wheels along.

These outspread flaps on motor bikes led Mrs. Ann Caddell Crawford, in her book *Customs and Culture of Vietnam,* to refer to the girls as "beautiful butterflies." A Vietnamese writer, Mr. Nhut Chi Mac (writing in the Vietnamese magazine *Customs*) compared the girls in their colored ao dai to "fairies in fairyland." But whether they are perceived as butterflies or fairies, the Vietnamese girls wearing their native dress are pictures of beauty and delicate grace.

The ao dai of Vietnam is a type of apparel unique to the Southeast Asian countries (similar garments were worn in the now defunct country of Champa, which overlapped present day South Vietnam and Cambodia.) It was first shown to the West through drawings contained in the published journals of George Finlayson, who visited Central Vietnam in 1821 and 1822.

At that time, the dress was loose-fitting, it was black or brown in color, and its flaps extended only to the knees. The trousers ballooned out, were black in color, and were tied tight at the ankles. There were only two exceptions to the garment colors: members of the Vietnamese royalty wore royal blue ao dai (in the Vietnamese language, there is no plural; thus "ao dai"


GINDER

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means either one or more than one long dress) and members of bereaved families wore all-white mourning clothes. (White rather than black is the traditional mourning color in most Asian countries.) These color standards remained until the 1930's.

Throughout most of the Nineteenth century, Vietnamese men also wore "long dresses" similar to those of the women. However, contact with the French between 1870 and 1930 led to adoption of Western-style clothing by the men, while women's clothing remained traditional.

Finally, after 1930, colors were introduced for women's long dresses, minor style changes were made, and the ao dai started to become the tight, form-fitting tunic that can be seen today.

As presently worn in South Vietnam, the woman's ao dai is form-fitting above the waist, and its long flaps extend almost to the ground. It has tightly-tailored, full-length arms, and it fastens on the right front of the body at the neck and right shoulder, and between the armpit and waist on the right side. The accompanying trousers are loose-fitting, and extend from the waist to the soles of the feet.

It is not a dress to be worn while performing manual labor. It would be too hot, too restricting of movement, the flaps would get in the way, and its fine materials would be easily soiled and difficult to clean. So the wearer of the ao dai is marked as a person who doesn't have to perform manual, outside, or dirty labor.

The long dress and pants cover virtually the entire body of the wearer, leaving only the hands, toes, face and neck exposed. Wearers are thus protected from the sun (leaving their skins untanned as further evidence that they don't have to work outside for a living) and from public view (fitting the Vietnamese concept of

proper feminine modesty).

Despite these culturally encouraged qualities, the ao dai is far from being a fixed and unchanging costume. Indeed, rather extensive changes have been made during the past two generations.

The early twentieth century was a time of increased contact between Vietnam and the West. New ideas, new materials, and new philosophies were assimilated, and men's clothing in Vietnam radically altered. Women's clothing and women's rights, however, remained those of pre-colonial Vietnam.

Then, in 1925, the French established the College of Fine Arts in Hanoi. New ideas and new clothing materials began to be applied to the native women's dress. Wider strips of cloth were available for making long dresses without vertical seams. The European dye technology furnished cloth of all colors.

Mr. Nguyen Cat Tuong, the Christian Dior of Vietnamese fashion during the 1930's and one of the early graduates of the College of Fine Arts, led the way in reforming women's clothing. He criticized the traditional "long dress" and suggested modifications which would make it more utilitarian and attractive.

He considered the high mandarin collar of that day hot and restrictive, and offered various open-collar styles as substitutes. He criticized the skin-tight sleeves which prevented the girls from moving their arms back to brush their hair, and offered alternative sleeve-cuff styles (at the ends of sleeves that were still tight). He objected to the drab brown and black colors, and encouraged free color choice for the ao dai and its accompanying trousers, even permitting royal blue for commoners.

The new styles created controversy on the streets and in the press. In 1935, Miss Hong Van modeled one of the new style dresses at the Saigon Fair. She was attacked by a middle-aged woman, who slashed the front flap of the dress with a knife.

Critics felt that the "modern" styles reflected a decline in morality. One of them, Mr. Vu Trong Phung, showed this feeling in his ironic comments. Sir, he wrote, "observe the woman who is honest and upright. She is certainly not very modern!" Or, paraphrasing a dress-designer talking to his wife, he said "It's okay for other persons, but you, you're my wife. You can't be modern like other people!"

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On the other hand, some writers praised the new styles. Miss Phan Thi Nga, for example, reported in the *These Days* newspaper: "At the Lac Thien Fair, the Hoi An sisters used face make-up wore high-heeled shoes, colored dresses and thin shawls, and gathered their hair on their heads or did it in new ways... The Cat Tuong clothing fashions gave the sisters additional grace, rounded their figures, and gave additional suppleness to their bearing."

The people slowly adopted some of the new ideas (like white trousers) while rejecting others (like colors other than white or black for trousers). The mandarin collar of old was reduced in height, but remained preferred over the more open style collars. Tight sleeves were maintained, and the long dresses were made to fit the upper body more closely.

In olden times, Vietnamese women had bound their breasts tightly to the body to de-emphasize their size. The new ao dai styles of the early 1930's revealed the curves of the upper female figure, and marked the

transition from binding breasts to wearing Western-style brassieres.

Although College of Fine Arts graduates led the way in the ao dai fashions—the College was in Hanoi in the northern portion of the country—the changes themselves took place mostly in what is now South Vietnam. This was the portion of Vietnam that had the closest ties with France during the colonial period, and the portion where Western materials and concepts of freedom were best received.

Before 1930, wear of the ao dai in north and south had been quite similar. Southerners usually wore the conical straw hat of the farmers in the delta, while northerners wore a turban-like hat. Also, in the north, a scarf was generally draped around the shoulders and tied around the waist. It could be placed over the head, when needed or desired.

Differences between northern and southern climates also influenced the reformation of the long dress. The north has four distinct seasons, and winter temperatures dip as low as 50 degrees Fahrenheit. The women there consequently wear several layers of ao dai to cope with the colder weather. Chiefly because of the weather, the northern women resisted styles making the ao dai tighter, which would prevent its versatility when worn in layers.

The difference between northern and southern styles was already great in 1954, when north and south split in accordance with the Geneva Agreement. Many of the northern Vietnamese who expatriated to the south had never seen a colored ao dai. So those northern boys who enrolled at a school nick-named "the girl's purple dress school" were understandably curious on the opening day of their first term.

"They gathered together waiting impatiently at the gates, in the hallways, and at all the windows throughout the building," reported Mr. Nguyen Van Luan in an article *A History of Vietnamese Women's Clothing Styles*. "Up until noon, they had seen only a few short dresses and loose trousers...Waiting longer, they never did see a purple dress flap, but the young boys continued to think that they must be very pretty indeed."

Mr. Luan added, "Only a few years later, the girl students adopted white ao dai uniforms. Only on Mondays did they still wear graceful and charming blue and azure colors."

Because of their form-fitting fashion, ao dai must be tailored by hand to fit the individual customer.

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Today, most school girls wear a simple white ao dai. Looser fitting than adult models, it slips on over the head instead of fastening around the body. It fastens only at the neck and shoulder on the right side.

The stress on individual freedom in the south since 1954 has further extended the tendency to change clothing styles. Between 1954 and 1963, the flamboyant Madame Ngo Dinh Nhu, wife of President Ngo Dinh Diem, often set style examples which were followed by other women.

At a social function on December 6, 1958, Mrs. Nhu wore an open-necked dress with short sleeves and long gloves, which she later described as a revival of an ancient Vietnamese dress style. Mr. Luan set the record straight by saying, "The dress neck was really open, but essentially it was the ao dai style of the Cham people in the Ninh Thuan region, and certainly not the ancient dress fashion of the Vietnamese people like Mrs. Nhu wrongly stated."

Numerous ao dai tailor shops have proliferated in South Vietnam to provide the custom-tailoring necessary to make the form-fitting styles presently in vogue. "No one else can wear one of my long dresses," explains Miss Nguyen Thi Hoa, Special Services Librarian at II Field Force Headquarters. "They are made to fit only me."

The owner of one of the more fashionable ao dai stores (the Hoang My store on De Tham Street in Saigon), Mrs. Bui Thi Thu, carries a tape measure around her neck while at work. "The measurements must be very exact," she says. "To make an ao dai, I must know the neck, shoulder, waist and breast girths; the upper arm, forearm and wrist sizes; the length of the arm measured from the back of the neck to the wrist; and the distance from the person's waist to the ground."

Although she can make a dress from the measurements alone, several fittings are preferred. If only the measurements are used, it takes her shop about a week to make the long dress. If trial fittings are made, it takes longer,

"The customers purchase their own material and bring it to me," Mrs. Thu states. "Material for an ordinary quality ao dai costs about 2,000 piasters ($17.00), and we charge 800 piasters ($6.78) for cutting and sewing it."

Less expensive ao dai can usually be purchased through the gift shops at most military posts in Vietnam for prices ranging from ten dollars upward.

Noting that, "Many Americans have become so fond of the dress that they have some specially made to send home to their families," Mrs. Crawford suggested in her book on Vietnamese customs that, "They make excellent hostess gowns."

And what changes will occur in the future development of the ao dai? In his article, Mr. Luan presumed that, "The long dress will remain long, and will still carry a sweet and good-natured character...I would expect that in the field of fashion, clothes will not lose their soft and graceful appearance, or take away those qualities with which nature endowed the Vietnamese girl in olden times."

Mini-skirts and other Western-style dresses are already widely worn in many of the cities and towns of South Vietnam, and these styles will probably increase in popularity and use. But when a Vietnamese woman wants to be in her Sunday best, she takes her clothing from that part of her wardrobe reserved for the traditional and culturally-encouraged long dresses, the ao dai.

The Vietnam Daily Mirror

THE SAIGON POST

The Vietnam Guardian

The Press In Vietnam

by Specialist 4 Ron Haugen

RECENT ADMINISTRATIONS IN VIETNAM "have obediently implemented foreign policies which destroy the economy of this country and let foreign capital have a monopoly in our markets. The war killed millions of boys and destroyed the achievements of labor. Our sovereignty must be restored, the war must be ended. . . ."

It is easy to picture the scene. Thousands of long-haired students with beards and wild clothes listening to the music and shouting encouragement to the speaker at the podium. A speaker at any antiwar rally could have spoken those words reported in a Vietnamese newspaper, but he didn't.

A Vietnamese judge wrote them. They appeared in an article in the newspaper *Tin Sang* (Morning News) last June. The paper is published and distributed in Saigon. Eight months ago in Vietnam the paper would not have been allowed to run that article.

The editor of the *Tin Sang*, Mr. Vu Thuy Hoang, gives some insight into one aspect of Vietnam's unusual newspaper. In Vietnam, "people like newspapers that criticize the government. In the past, newspapers that were critical have always been most popular. Even pro-government papers feel a need

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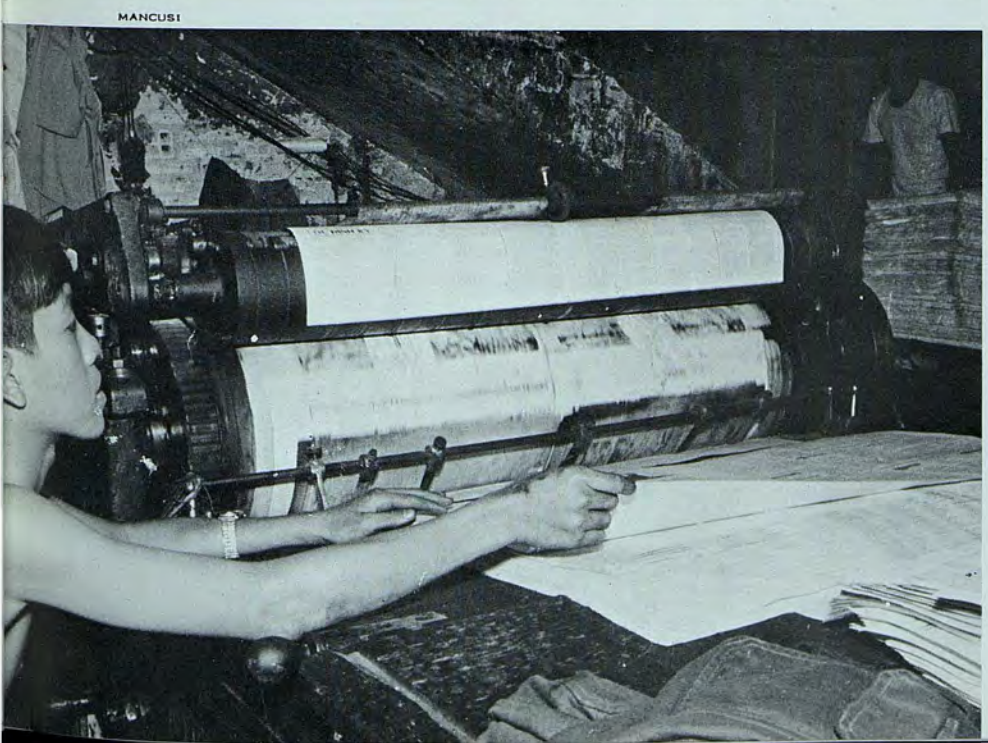

to be critical occasionally, just to keep a hand in."

Vietnamese newspapers used to be closed down for writing anti-government stories. The *Tin Sang* was closed down for nearly half of last year.

But in the last years and in recent months there have been dramatic changes in Vietnam's newspaper industry.

The first presses in Vietnam started to print newspapers when the American Civil War was ending in 1865. In its first century of development, the story of the Vietnamese press, in the language of the *Vietnam Newsletter,* a government publication, was one of "constant struggle, few glories, small achievements and dubious causes." The first newspapers were born in an era of colonialization and subject to French "supervision." Western press traditions of keeping the public informed were not taken East by the French administrators.

The *Gia Dinh Bao* was the first Vietnamese newspaper. It tried to develop into an independent news organ but colonial politics soon forced the paper away from current events to literary creations. The pattern was set for Vietnamese newspapers for the next century. Mr. Tran Nha, the editor of the English-language *Saigon Post,* notes the pattern—"a dearth of news and an abundance of fiction."

The status of the Vietnamese press has only recently changed to raise it to an honorable position in Vietnamese society. Mr. Nha has been aware of his professional status in the eyes of the community. "Probably nowhere else in the world have representatives of this most noble profession (journalism) been accorded so little consideration by public and official circles. . . Newspapering in Vietnam until the early 1960s was considered as a lowly occupation that could only enlist the services of those good at nothing except distortion of truth."

Over the last decade the stature of the press has grown. President Nguyen Van Thieu recently visited and addressed the Newspaper Editors Association (NEA) banquet in Saigon. The *Vietnam Newsletter* noted that "by succeeding in inviting the chief executive to attend the banquet, NEA scored a *coup de maitre,* proving the press is no longer a negligible force the government can afford to ignore."

The government is not now ignoring newspapers. It is doing quite the opposite. The newspaper *Tin Sang* has been seized, according to the government's count, 29 times in a recent three-month period. The paper claims it has been confiscated 34 times during those same three months. The battle of words between government and newspapers continues. The *Tin Sang* paper has only once had its copies confiscated by the government and taken to court. The judge threw the government's case out of court, claiming it had insufficient evidence. But the editor of *Tin Sang* was a member of the Army reserve and he was called to active duty recently. The government was within its legal rights to call the editor to serve. Those on the paper are convinced he was activated because he was the editor of the *Tin Sang.* The battle continues.

Historically, the Vietnamese government used a stacked deck in its game with the press. Prior to 1949, suspension or confiscation of a publication was the right of colonial censors. It was not until that year that the Vietnamese information minister was given the power to issue or to withdraw a license to publish a newspaper.

In 1956 the first National Assembly spelled out the freedom of the press. As the war grew, however, special decrees overuled these Constitutional freedoms. In 1964, political parties were granted the right to publish newspapers after declaring their intentions to the attorney general.

The 1969 press law now in effect is the most liberal newspaper legislation in Vietnam's history. It spells out the freedoms and limitations for publishers. A newspaper can be suspended only by a court decision. The case must be reviewed within eight days of the order of confiscation. If found not guilty, the publisher can file for compensations of losses suffered because of the ban. Publication, for example, of matter that instigates rebellion against the government or the "fighting spirit of the Army" is prohibited.

It would seem that the government certainly must have the upper hand in these battles, but the newspapers seem to be holding their own. The government has every right to prosecute but often it does not. Experience has taught officials that the editors of a closed paper have little difficulty in opening another paper and continuing publishing.

The government can confiscate an edition that it believes to be harmful to the state, but this decision, it has been learned by the publishers, has to be made at a high level of government. Since all papers give their proof pages to the government only hours before publication, the papers are often being sold on the streets when a decision has been made by the government to prohibit the publication.

The 1969 press law has had a significant influence on the Vietnamese publishing industry. Mr. Tran Van Tuyen, an ex-minister of information, argues that although there are imperfections in the new law, "censorship. . . of the newspaper is dead, at least on paper. Confiscation and suspension of the newspaper is no longer the exclusive right of the executive branch of the government. The competence of the court over these measures is curbing the arbitrary power of the officials."

The battles between press and the government will continue. They tend, however, to overshadow other persistent problems that characterize the Vietnamese press.

Depending on which day the count is taken, there are between 25 and 35 daily newspapers published in Saigon. The dailies are published in English, Chinese, French and Vietnamese. The reason for the estimate is explained by the editor of the *Saigon Post,* Mr. Nha, "Anybody with a publishing license and a couple of million piasters to spare can launch a daily newspaper. Of course, with so little capital and with an editorial staff often limited to five or six persons and printing facilities confined to two or four hand-fed Yoda presses, the result is a newspaper hardly worth its name."

Many Vietnamese have the mistaken idea that publishing a paper is an easy way to make money. The Vietnamese Ministry of Information files are full of deceased newspapers that lasted only a month or two.

Still, the myth of quick riches persists. Only one year ago, over 250 applications for publishing licenses were on file with the Vietnamese Ministry of Information.

If the businessman takes the chance and does publish a paper, he may be able to make ends meet by selling only 5,000 copies. If he keeps the costs down, anything more than that is pure gravy. The largest daily in Saigon, the *Chinh Luan* (Political Commentator), circulates only 23,000 copies.

Selling newspapers, especially if the newspaper is an exceptionally good one, is difficult in Saigon. All of them use newspaper boys to sell copies on the streets but sometimes the newsboys go into business for themselves. If a customer wants to pay 10 piasters for a newspaper to read, then throw away, that's fine with him. However, if the customer wants to merely "look at" the paper for a couple of hours without ac-

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tually paying for it, the newsboy is willing to help him out.

A reader can "rent" a newspaper for several hours for two piasters, if he brings the paper back to the boy. The newsboy is two piasters richer than before and when he turns in another "unsold" newspaper, the publisher has lost a potential 10 piasters.

It is difficult to say how much "renting" takes place in Saigon, but it was deemed a serious enough problem to include a provision in the 1969 Vietnamese press law which could level a fine of 50,000 piasters on any vendor "renting" his newspaper.

Vietnam has certain newspaper practices that seem diametrically opposed to American newspaper ideals. It is not considered at all improper or out of the ordinary for a senator in the National Assembly to own his personal newspaper in which he will not hesitate to advance his ideas.

News as such in American papers is given major emphasis throughout the paper, but in Vietnamese papers the news is usually confined to the front page and part of the back page. The inside pages of most Vietnamese newspapers attract readers more than the comics and sports pages could ever hope to do in American papers. In the middle two pages of the typical four-page Vietnamese paper lies adventure of the sort that make James Bond look chaste. Sex, intrigue, romance, cloak and dagger adventures—it's all available daily for 10 piasters. The stories, Chinese novels for the most part, are serialized in typical soap opera fasion to insure the reader will buy again tomorrow.

Some newspapers carry eight to twelve spicy serialized stories in each day's paper. Even the Catholic-operated *Xay Dung* ("To Build") and the Buddhist-operated *Quang Duc* Journal deem it necessary to print Chinese author Kin Dung's novels in installments.

Although Vietnamese papers may be racy in content on certain pages, the industry's technological speed is 19th century. None of the dailies in Saigon use the modern rotary press that is available to all major American newspapers. Type is laboriously set by hand. To slow the printing process even more, many dailies must use several different printing houses to produce the same paper.

The process of "news dissemination" is only half complete as the papers begin their journeys to the readers. The war has made the distribution of the estimated 340,000

copies of Saigon's daily papers very difficult.

For the people of Saigon it is relatively easy to buy the newspapers of their choice, but 15 million other Vietnamese remain scattered throughout the country. More than three-quarters of South Vietnam's people live outside the urban Saigon area, but they receive only one-quarter of the papers. Even major cities in Vietnam, connected directly by daily air flights, often sell newspapers "off the rack" that are several days old. Many of the smaller hamlets and villages scattered throughout Vietnam do not receive regular newspaper delivery at all. Virtual news blackouts are common in the countryside as the distance from Saigon increases. Papers distributed at 5 p.m. in Saigon will be taken to provincial cities like Quan Loi or Hue on the following day. The following day the papers will be carried to outlying districts for distribution to hamlets and villages.

Vietnamese newspapers use international wire services, including UPI, AP (American), AFP (French) and VTX (Vietnamese), as well as employing their own reporters.

Vietnamese reporters are a diverse group ranging from the young to the very old, those with little formal education to college graduates. Regardless of age or education, Vietnamese reporters find they support themselves by writing for several newspapers. Only a very few papers can afford to pay their writers enough to have them work only for their paper. The average reporter beginning to write for a paper can expect to earn between 15,000 and 30,000 piasters a month. It isn't a great salary when the construction worker outside the reporter's window can earn 700 to 1,000 piasters a day for his labor.

Mr. Tran Trong Hung, publisher/editor of the *Mekong Features* paper, is well aware of the need for young reporters in the industry. "Technically Vietnam's press is in tragic condition," he says. "Even more important is the loss of our best young journalists to military and government duties. The tasks of journalism have fallen to older men who lack the élan, the energetic fervor, which comes from bright young men. Education of new journalists in a serious way is only a recent development, and the supply of trained reporters, photographers and editors falls short of the nation's needs."

An effort is underway to bring younger, more educated people into the newspaper industry. Van Hanh University will graduate almost 100 students schooled in journalism this year. The government is helping to train newspapermen by offering journalism courses at the Business Management School at Da Lat. During the student's fourth year, he may study at the Vietnam Press School and graduate with a journalism degree. Thirty students will graduate this year under the program. A Vietnamese reporter training school, begun in 1965, will graduate 20 reporters this year.

What, then, is the state of the Vietnamese press? The best answer may be from a Vietnamese newspaperman. Mr. Hung said at a recent Asian Press Seminar:

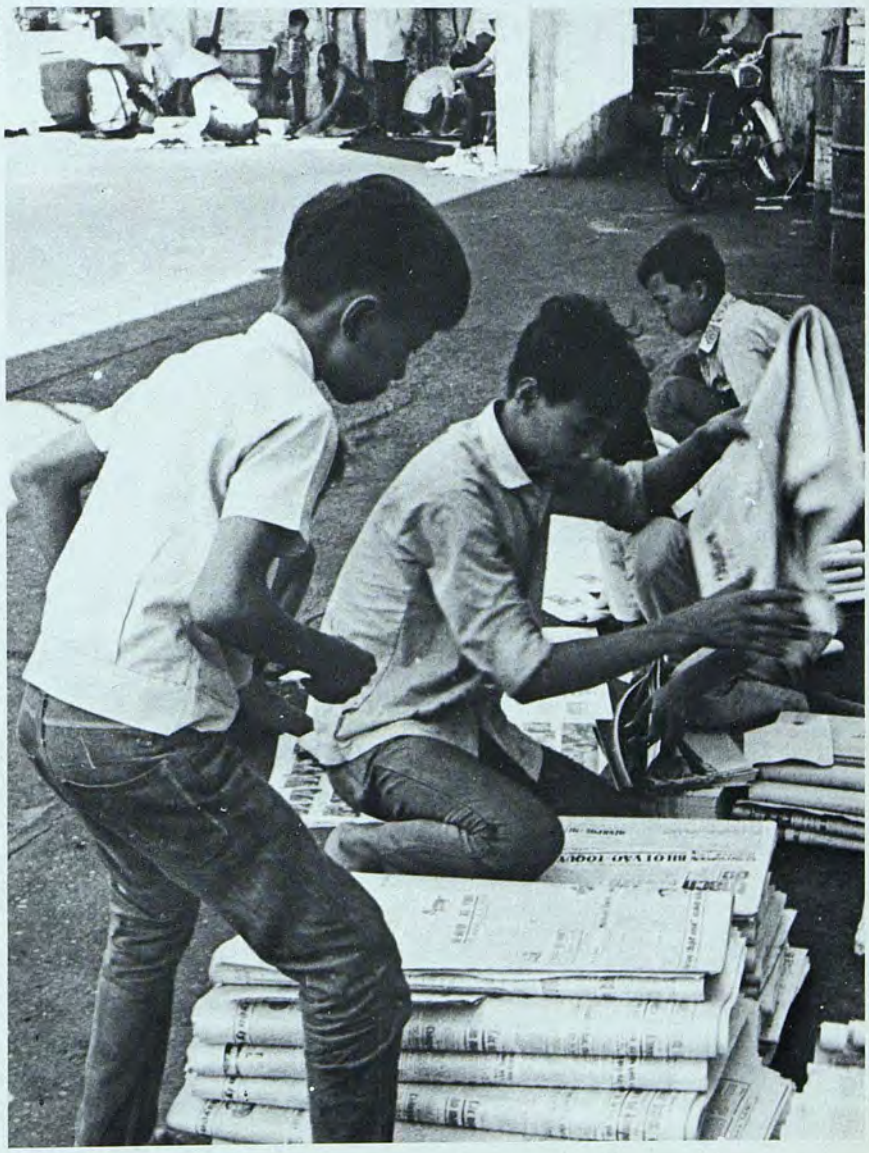
"When one looks at the chaos of Vietnam's newspaper press, at its cluttered array of small sheets, poor technical quality, and often narrow editorial content, one is apt to be first shocked, then pessimistic that order, progress, vitality, quality can ever emerge here. We of the Vietnamese press corps should not despair at the current state of our profession. The future beckons dramatically."

Mr. Hung's advice to the press is idealistic but at once it is an outline for the future that is fundamental to any prospect for a vigorous fourth estate in his country.

The insightful journalist continued:

"There is only one common basis on which journalists can stand. They must be committed to uncover and present the truth...And let us be honest: truth does not lie in government, nations, cultures, or the other aspects of life in which man puts his faith... All other possibilities pale if we cannot achieve this commitment... The most modern printing plants, the latest television science, the most elaborate communications networks are for nought if we fail to provide this one essential ingredient."

Paperboys rush to get the latest edition on the street.



MANCUSI

Freedom Birds

by Mike Tharp

UP, UP AND AWAY.... FLY THE FRIENDLY SKIES.... MAKES THE GOING GREAT.... EASIER TO FLY....
SHORT!

All these famous slogans point to one thing in a GI's mind, heart, glands and any other part of him—going home. Fini Vietnam. He's gotta get out of this place.

He leaves the same way he came—on an airplane. Except this time instead of a slave ship landing, it's a freedom bird taking off.

And there to help make his trip back to The World even more enjoyable are the crews of the airlines providing the magic carpet ride home.

They've got it and they flaunt it. And the soldiers can handle it—the ones with stars on their shoulders, the ones with mosquito wings on their collars. They all undergo the velvet glove, red carpet, tender loving care from 15 airlines serving the shortest of short-timers.

Military Airlift Command (MAC) DC-8s and 707s fly in and out of Bien Hoa, Da Nang, Cam Ranh Bay and Tan Son Nhut. They stop over at Yokota Air Force Base, Japan; Kadena Air Force Base, Okinawa; Clark Air Force Base, Republic of the Philippines; Guam; Anchorage or Honolulu before arriving at Travis or McChord or McGuire. CONUS. The World. Home.

Six stewardesses and four men in the cockpit cater to the whims and satisfy most of the needs of these Very Important Passengers.

Six stews. Round-eyes. The GI has seen their Mae West routine before, on the way over, but now he's receptive an never before. They're escorting him home.

"I feel relief for the guys," says Artie-Lee Kowalski, a doe-eyed brunette from San Francisco flying with Airlift International Airways. She's made the Vietnam run about 50 times in her seven months of flying.

"Military guys are better passengers—they're always polite," she continued. "The ones coming over are still chippy and have a love for life. Going home they're tired. They're changed people."

She thinks it is "more important for the guys to be talked to on the way home than on the way here. They're uncertain. They don't know about their wives or their girlfriends. They don't know what dances are in or what styles are in for clothes and hair. We can help them."

Flying with the same airline, Bonnie Sanford recalled her first trip to Vietnam. "We landed at Da Nang and I was exhilarated. The guys showed us the bunkers and everything."

In her three months experience coming here, the Fairfield, Calif., blonde has often been hugged by GI's arriving in country. "They'll say something like, 'I love you but I can't see you for another year.' It's a very good feeling to know you're appreciated."

What does she think about flying here? "At times it makes me very sad—the expressions on the men's faces and their remarks."

Like most of her comrades, Bonnie said she was "a little more jovial" and tried "a little harder" on the MAC flights.

Without exception, the stews are effusive in their praise of the passengers they serve. And their comments reveal an attitude that fosters instant rapport.

"We get no complaints about the year of the wine served," laughed Delores Hanson, a TWA stew with 13 years service. "Everyone is so nice, marvelous, going and coming on these flights."

"I prefer these to commercial flights by 500 percent," echoed beribboned Helen

THARP

Zeidner, a San Franciscan with 19 months flying experience to the Republic.

Sitting with her hands in her lap and biting her lower lip one recent afternoon, Barbara Louise Trens of World Airways didn't have to try very hard to recall her first trip here—this was it.

"I could cry," she said. "I wish the war was over. I'm just a little worried and upset, that's all. It's a reminder that real live people, some pretty nice people, are in a war."

The pert brunette, a double for Liza Minnelli (but without Liza's nose), said two soldiers gave her an "I love you" note on her maiden voyage. "The happiest trip would be taking them all home," she said.

Adding a continental flavor to one Overseas National flight is Angelica Wolfert, a fraulein now catching California rays at Manhattan Beach. She packed four trips to Vietnam in her first weeks of flying.

"I get a bit sad at all these soldiers coming here," she said. "When I stand at the bottom of that ramp and they all come down, I feel horribly lost." Angelica joined two English girls and one Swiss-Italian miss in bringing the Old World to the Far East and GI's to The New World.

Nearly all the stews treasure at least one vivid memory from their TDY in Southeast Asia.

Margerie Sikes has seen flak out the window and watched a bomb run—graphic reminders of the war she has helped shuttle soldiers to and from for five years on World Airways.

Diane Bailey and Barbara Morton, a pair of bubbly blonde California girls, have been brightening the Seaboard Airlines MAC flights for two years.

Barbara feels she "relaxes more" with GI's, while Diane says, "Navy Seabees are fun to fly with." Both mentioned lumps in their throats every time a planeload of returnees lurched into a loud, lachrymose rendition of "America, the Beautiful" when landing in CONUS.

Man does not live by beauty alone. Besides the contributions of the stews, pros in the cockpit aid in the repatriation process.

Captain George Walker has flown with TWA 33 years, the last three to Vienatm on bimonthly runs. "It's no different from going to Chicago," he asserts. "We've never had anything but routine."

Standing under the wing of his aircraft while checking the fuel load, the tall, distinguished Californian said he favored MAC flights because of "less traffic." How does he feel about flying here? "I've never left Vietnam with a disappointed troop, he mused.

George and Beverly Costanzo team up on Captain Walker's TWA flights as purser and hostess. Beverly has flown to Vietnam for four years and has collected over 150 unit crests and other medals during her stint.

"It's great to take the guys out and that's why we enjoy it," said George. "No matter how often we do it, we still have that feeling."

United Airlines Captain J. B. McKelvey, Seattle, Wash., has skimmed the friendly skies for 36 years, more than three of those to and from Vietnam. He makes two MAC trips a month and prefers these to domestic runs. "You're on your own—it's a free operation and pilots like it better. It's tough but we've got a good safety record."

Citing communications and navigational problems as part of the trips, he said, "We just take a heading and I tell my people to get their nose in the windshield and look for airplanes. A midair collision is the worst possibility of the war for us. I'm charged with getting my passengers there safely."

TWA engineer John Hendrickson said one aircraft once lost its hydraulic system shortly before landing at Bien Hoa. "We were able to taxi off the runway and the pumps were changed. All of it took only four hours."

Responsible for navigating the wide open trans-Pacific spaces is William W. Berg, a 29-year veteran with United. While most other airlines now use inertial or Dual-Doppler navigational systems, Berg relies primarily on celestial navigation.

"I know two stewardesses who married homeward-bound GI's."

"The ones we take out are so much older than a year—and older than the ones coming in."

"They'll say something like, 'I love you but I can't see you for another year.' It's a very good feeling to know you're appreciated."

"The happiest trip would be taking them all home."

"It's great to take the guys out and that's why we enjoy it. No matter how often we do it, we still have that feeling."

"I wear the peace symbol because I wish all the guys could go home."

"They all make you feel appreciated as an American girl."

"I've never left Vietnam yet with a disappointed troop."

"I wish the war were over. I'm just a little worried and upset. It's just that real live people, some pretty nice people, are in a war."

"The worst part of their year tour is on the aircraft coming over. There's so much time to sit and think."

Tired but smiling troops board a Freedom Bird at Bien Hoa Airbase for that long-awaited trip to The World.

THARP

Greeting the GI's is Overseas Airline hostess Wendy Welsh. What a way to run an airline!

On a few of his trips he thinks the enemy has jammed the aircraft's radio signals. "They're still usable, though," he said.

With few exceptions, the 90 flights per month at Bien Hoa are turn-around missions—the aircraft arrive with incoming personnel, disgorge them and ingest jubilant returnees.

During the 45 to 90 minutes on the ground in Vietnam, the crew cleans house, preparing the props for lifejacket and oxygen mask demonstrations, retrieving magazines, folding blankets, fluffing pillows, and generally getting the big bird airworthy for the 20-hour flight home.

At Bien Hoa, in an air-conditioned lounge near the runway, they then relax with sodas, popcorn or ice cream while the aircraft is loaded with fuel and baggage.

Not all layovers in the war zone are routine. Ann Learnihan, a senior stewardess for Overseas National, remembers a rocket attack when she was on the ground at Da Nang.

"I was excited, not scared," she insists. "But I wouldn't want to be a man."

On another stop in May 1969, she and her five helpers wound up dancing with "about 100 guys" to the heavy sounds of a Filipino rock band near the Tuy Hoa terminal. "It was really fun," she said, "and I wish we could have taken them all home with us."

Like most of the stews, she likes flying out better than flying in. "The ones we take out are so much older than a year—older than the ones coming in. They all make you feel appreciated an American girl."

Doris Hadorn is a transplanted Swiss stew who speaks "four and a half languages." Radiating warmth and interest in her charges, the classically sculpted brunette tries, "to make the time happy for them." It is little wonder she now writes to a GI she met coming over.

A peace symbol dangles conspicuously outside the red minidress of suntanned Wendy Welsh, an Overseas Airline hostess from San Jose, Calif. "I wear it because I wish all American guys could go home," she explains.

Yale School of Nursing seems an unlikely background for a stew in Vietnam but Pat Parlette, a senior hostess for Seaboard, claims this among her many credentials.

The elegant 15-year veteran has averaged two missions a month to Vietnam over the past three years and terms GI's "the best passengers in the world."

She views the job of the stewardess as a "go-between. We go between the war and home. It's a sad mission coming in but in an hour . . . it's a schizophrenic emotion—suddenly you see a lot of smiling faces.

"The worst part of the year's tour is on the aircraft coming over," she opinions. "There's so much time to sit and think."

Describing the ride home as a "symphony," the Darien, Conn., hostess said each leg has a different atmosphere. "The first movement is the spontaneous applause" as soon as the aircraft leaves the runway.

"Emotional exhaustion gives way to sleep after that. Then the pitch and tempo increase at Tokyo. It becomes a crescendo of feeling when we land in California or Washington."

In 1968 she was on a freedom bird that Russian MIGs forced to land on one of the Kurile Islands for allegedly violating Soviet airspace. "We were confined to the ship for 52 hours and Russian guards surrounded the plane. But the spirit of the GI's was just great. Some had guitars and we sang protest songs. Then a few of them got off, stood outside the aircraft and sang 'America, the Beautiful' at the top of their lungs. It was great."

Whatever else the Vietnam war is, it is a study in contrasts. The sterilty of a year comes close to being erased in 20 hours by the concern and gracious beauty of people on the MAC Aircraft.

And there's always the chance your freedom bird trip will turn out even better than you expect.

Open Heart Surgery in Saigon

New Hope for the Hopeless

by Rusty Brown

PFC DONALD LIGHT said he felt like he had been kicked. "It didn't hurt very much, but after about five minutes I began to feel woosey." The kick was an AK-47 round; it hit him in the left shoulder, broke through his ribs, went through a lung and made three holes in his heart. Two hours and three quarts of plasma later he was on an operating table at the 3rd Field Hospital in Saigon. Dr. Elias Hanna, a surgeon, rolled him on his right side and made a two-foot incision along the rib line from chest to back. "The X-rays," Dr. Hanna explained, "showed quite a bit of internal bleeding and we could see the bullet. It was somewhere under the sternum—we couldn't tell exactly where—and for some reason it showed up very blurred."

After repairing the lung and mopping out the blood, he cut through the pericardium and found three holes clotted with blood. "The clotting and some natural constriction probably saved his life," he said, "When we removed the clots there was a tremendous amount of bleeding." He quickly stitched the first two holes and then went for the third. The last was just a nick, lower down by the base of the heart. Grasping the heart between his index and middle finger, he squeezed it to occlude the blood flow and "that's when I found the bullet. The blur on the X-ray was caused by the bullet's movement with the heart throb. We should have known, but it was incredible that the heart wasn't shattered by such a high-velocity bullet.

"It couldn't be left in there, arrest or infection would occur. But what worried me most was the bullet's moving. If it went up the pulmonary artery to the lungs it would be fatal. I was even afraid to take the time to get the people and machine to do open heart surgery."

He wasted little time deciding.

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Making a fourth hole in Don Light's heart, he removed the bullet and quickly sewed it closed. "It wasn't a very complicated procedure," he said, "just very rushed and bloody without a heart-lung machine."

Three nights later doctor and patient were together again, this time in a much less sterile atmosphere. They were watching *Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid* and the mention of the operation still brought a look of wonder to the soldier's face, "I didn't believe them when they first told me. I feel fine now."

Don Light left Vietnam ten days later, looking, except for his two-foot scar, like any other GI who finally has climbed aboard a freedom bird. In August, Elias Hanna left also but with a touch of reluctance that his patient never felt. The Vietnamese had asked him to stay and had even gone as far as the American Embassy to see if he could remain. His operation on Light had made the papers back home but, more important, the nearly 100 operations he had performed on children in Vietnam had made a lasting impression on the people who had watched his work.

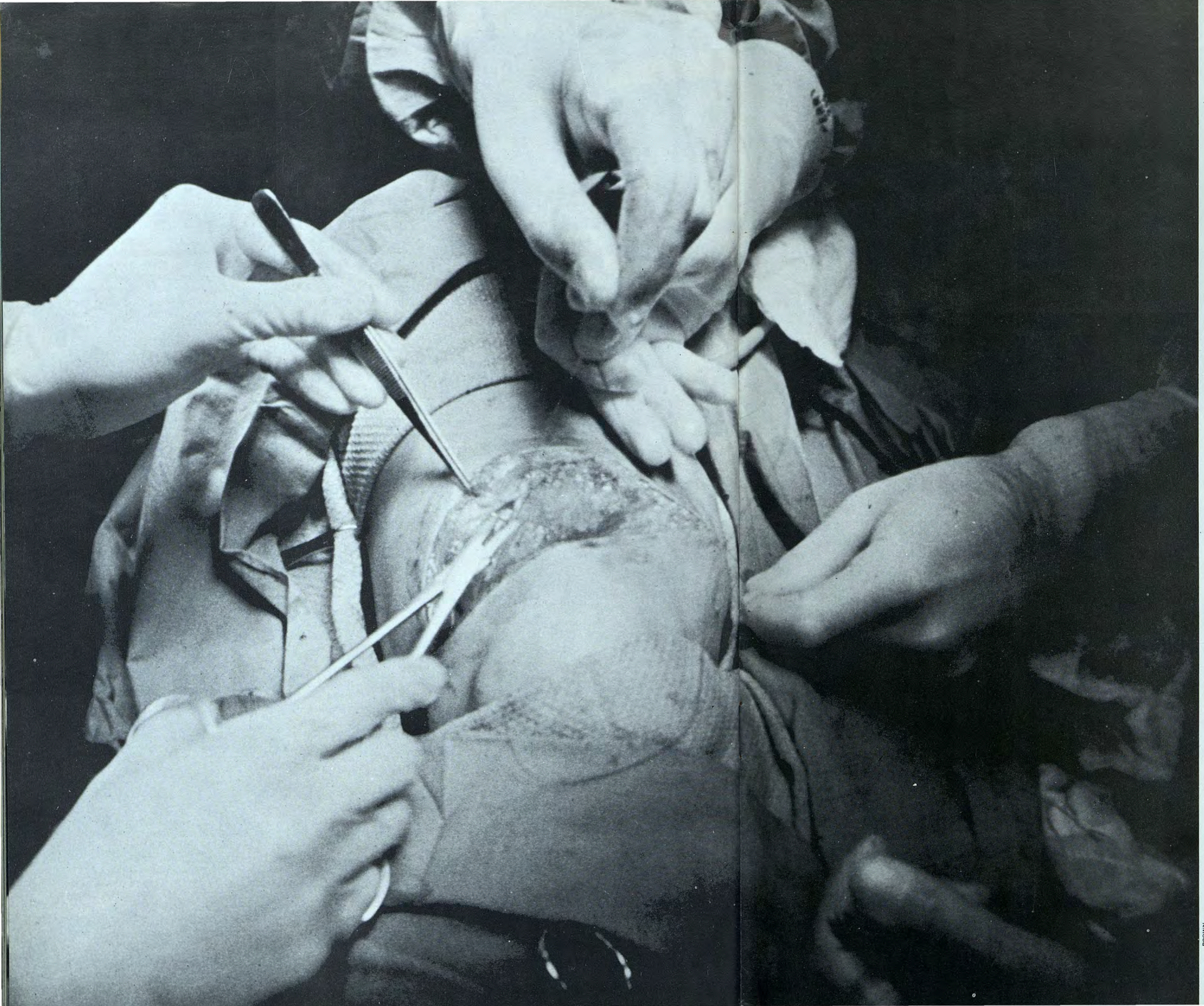
While his prized patient was still recuperating on June 13, Dr. Hanna went to Nhi Dong Children's Hospital in Cholon where, assisted by nurses there, he performed the first heart operation ever done in a Vietnamese hospital. During the drive from 3rd Field to Nhi Dong he explained why, after 60 similar cardiac procedures at 3rd Field, he chose to operate at Nhi Dong.

"We've been leading up to this for a long time. In January, after coming up from the Delta (he had been stationed at 3rd Surgical Hospital at Binh Thuy), I organized cardiac conferences at Cho Ray and Nhi Dong. Some of our doctors came along to discuss the X-rays and electrocardiograms and to help recommend treatment. There was reluctance at first but after we brought the first patient to 3rd Field Hospital confidence grew and now all the seminars are well attended. The doctors, both American and Vietnamese, are benefiting from the experience, and the patients—well, before this began they had to be sent to Switzerland or France. Now it's a matter of showing them that they can have many of these operations performed in their own hospitals. Dr. Di, who works at Cho Ray, has been assisting us and I hope he will be able to do some of the operations himself. With training, most good thorasic surgeons could."

Nhi Dong Children's Hospital looks like an old courthouse. The peeling paint along the high ceilings lends a green tint to the halls and the people. Parents, mothers and grandmothers wander the halls. The hospital allows them to stay with their children, supplementing the small attendant staff. The lone operating room is located on the third floor in an uncluttered wing with the postoperative ward. In the unlit corridor a small girl was lying in the center of an old green stretcher. She wore faded cotton print pajamas and bit her lower lip trying to return Dr. Hanna's smile as he approached her. After a moment he lowered his stethoscope and stepped back. "This is Pham, my patient," he said, "Here, put your hand on her heart." I did, for about three seconds. And then as the blood drained from my face, I gave a little gulp and he moved in with a more reassuring bedside manner, easing me away. Where the "thump thump" should have been, there was "gurgle gurgle", as though the blood was swishing about in a tiny washing machine or rushing through a rotten hose, instead of being pumped.

"That noise is what we call continuous machine murmur," he explained. "The blood flows differently through the heart before a baby is born. But there's a small duct in the heart that should close at birth. If it doesn't close there is a lot of back pressure and eventually the heart becomes enlarged. Sometimes a child can live 15, 20 years, or more but is usually very sick. She's only ten but pretty far along, that's why we took her here. I don't think she'd last another year. All it takes to close that duct is a few stitches; then she'll be a perfectly normal child."

The air-conditioner in the operating room wasn't too efficient but not even the afternoon heat could warm the cold, green atmosphere. Doctors, nurses, residents—more than 20 people stood waiting. Pham was wheeled in and while being transferred to the table she gave a quick glance around. With a look of controlled terror her eyes fixed on the huge light above. The heavy set Vietnamese scrub nurse left her table of sterile instruments and stood by the child's head, patting and



whispering like a new mother while the doctors went about their preparations. She was silent until the doctors, unable to find a usable vein in the back of her left hand, began probing the right. Tears overflowed the corners of her eyes and there were quiet sobs just before the anesthetic black mask covered her face.

As the operation began more people came in, peering over one another's shoulders and jockeying for position to get a better look. The scrub nurse, like an old nun in a kindergarten class, ruled her half of the room, chasing the latecomers from her instruments and directing the small corps of nurses behind her. In little more than an hour it was over. Afterward, Dr. Hanna discussed postoperative medication. He reassured the mother and then thanked the Vietnamese assistants before leaving. Returning to 3rd Field, he was effusive about his team: "They were every bit as good as our American team was the first time—that big nurse is one of the best I've seen."

Three days later we returned to the hospital for a cardiac conference. In the back of the room parents stood by shyly as their children went one by one to be examined. A radiologist pointed to ominous dark spots on the X-ray behind him and asked for random diagnoses. In broken English or through an interpreter the answers came. Three American doctors gave their opinions and each listened to the tiny hearts. The patients sat obedient and fretful, alternately embarassed and inquisitive with their examiners. The fifth and last child, a six year-old boy, was lifted to the chair and squirmed around to face his audience more comfortably. Dr. Hanna turned to me as the diagnosis began, "This child is another *patent ductus arteriosis* like the girl. I examined him last week and I think we'll do him next."

After the conference, he went up to the post-op ward to see Pham the girl whose heart he had just sewn up. As he leaned over the bed with the stethoscope, her anxiety drifted into distraction, and she looked past her mother through a near window. After a moment, Dr. Hanna looked up and gave a satisfied nod: "very good." Then he turned, smiled and handed me the stethoscope. "What to listen? I don't think you'll frighten her now." ↟

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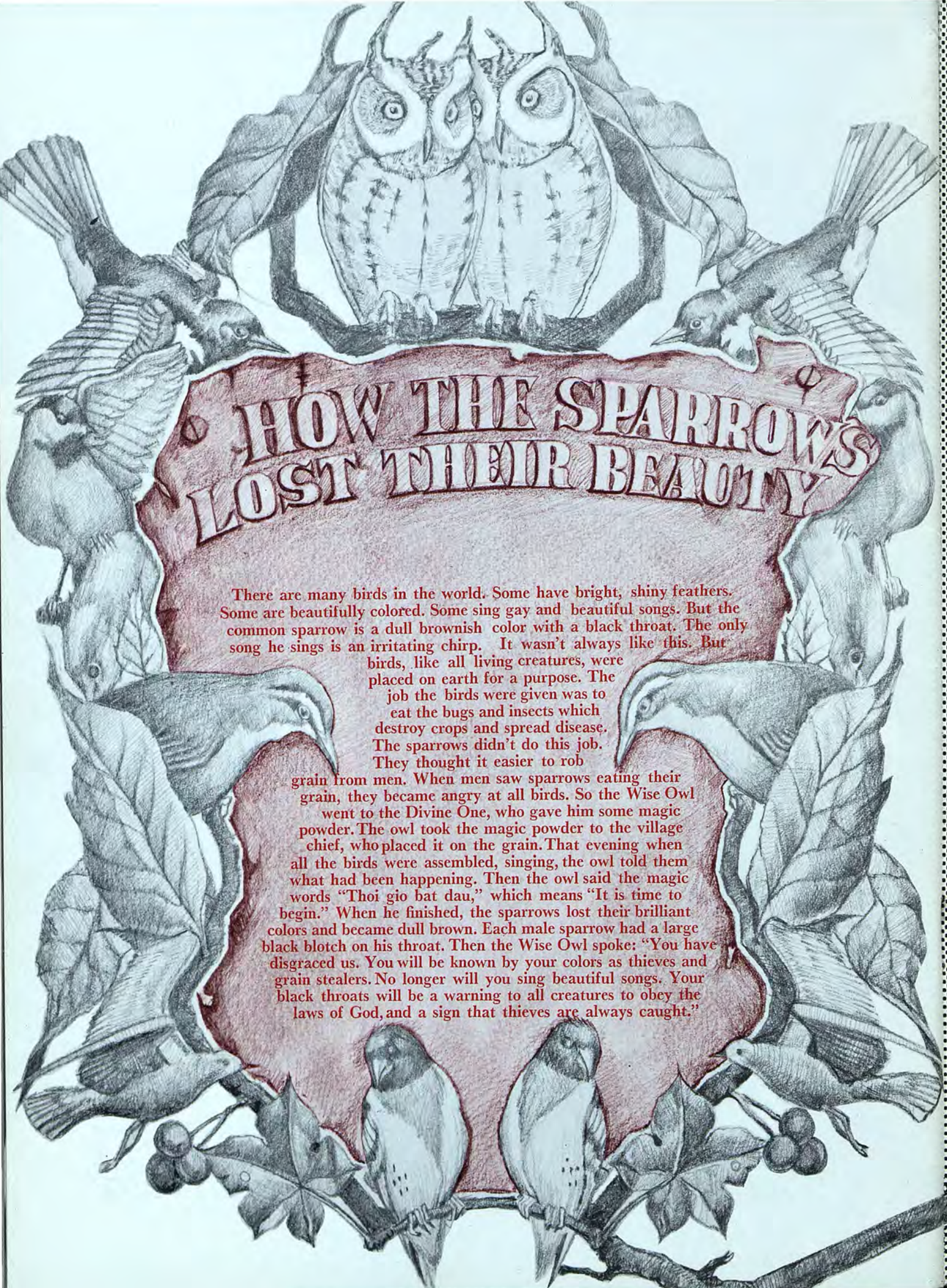

HOW THE SPARROWS LOST THEIR BEAUTY

There are many birds in the world. Some have bright, shiny feathers. Some are beautifully colored. Some sing gay and beautiful songs. But the common sparrow is a dull brownish color with a black throat. The only song he sings is an irritating chirp. It wasn't always like this. But birds, like all living creatures, were placed on earth for a purpose. The job the birds were given was to eat the bugs and insects which destroy crops and spread disease. The sparrows didn't do this job. They thought it easier to rob grain from men. When men saw sparrows eating their grain, they became angry at all birds. So the Wise Owl went to the Divine One, who gave him some magic powder. The owl took the magic powder to the village chief, who placed it on the grain. That evening when all the birds were assembled, singing, the owl told them what had been happening. Then the owl said the magic words "Thoi gio bat dau," which means "It is time to begin." When he finished, the sparrows lost their brilliant colors and became dull brown. Each male sparrow had a large black blotch on his throat. Then the Wise Owl spoke: "You have disgraced us. You will be known by your colors as thieves and grain stealers. No longer will you sing beautiful songs. Your black throats will be a warning to all creatures to obey the laws of God, and a sign that thieves are always caught."

The Vietnamese
Ao Dai