HAWK

WINTER 1972

Edy Williams
Photo Courtesy of
20th Century Fox

(2842)

HAWK

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1st Aviation Brigade

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FRONT COVER: Hueys of the 128th Assault Helicopter Company provided mobility for these troopers of the ARVN 25th Airborne Division on a combat assault near Tay Ninh in October. Photos by SP5 Joe Kelley.

BACK COVER: War, like barbed wire, pens in the hopes and dreams of the Vietnamese. This little girl's face shows the result. Hawk Staff photo.

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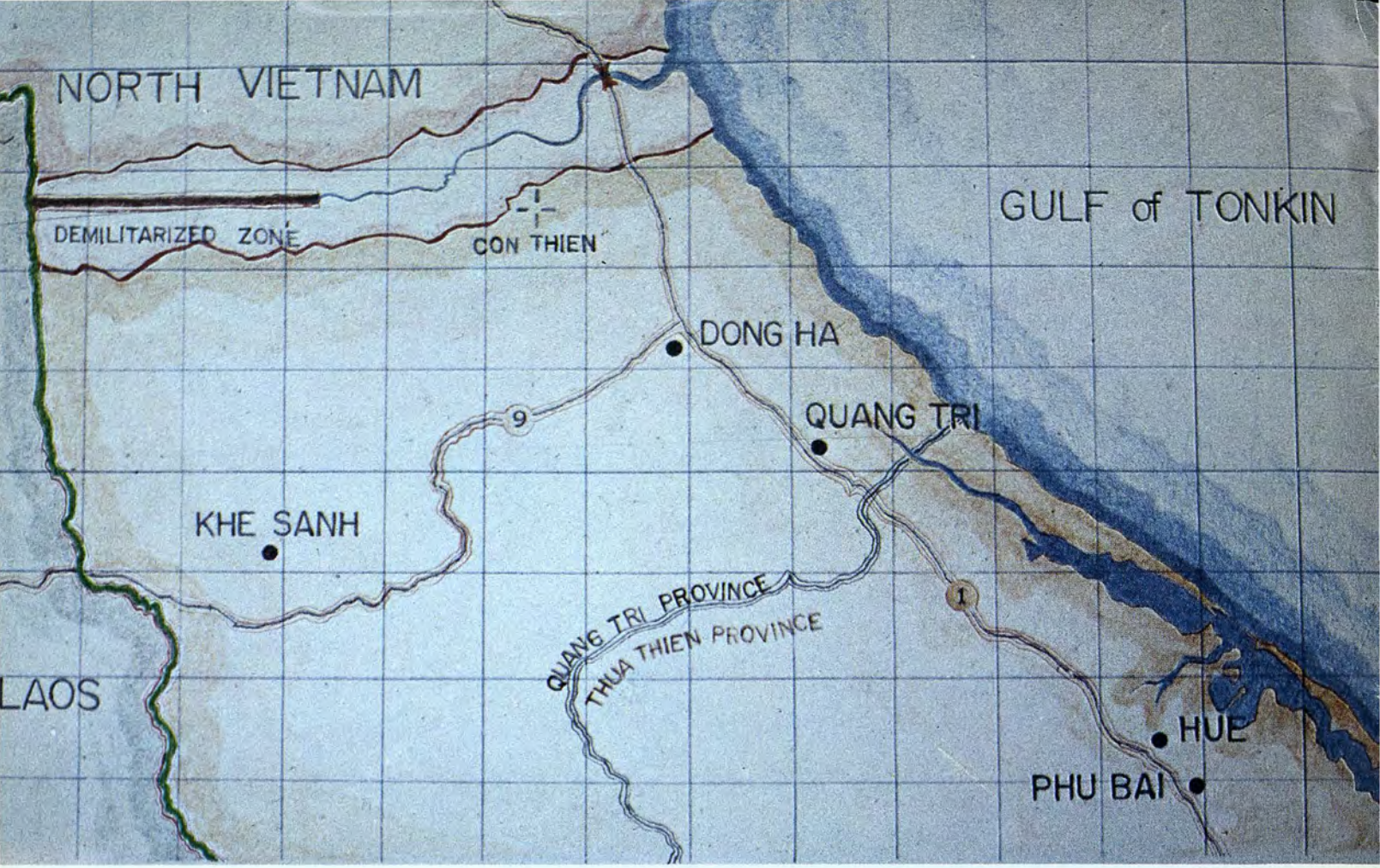


QUANG TRI

Province Without Joy

Story and Photos

by CPT James V. Soriano

The six-mile wide Demilitarized Zone (DMZ) girths the narrow waist of Vietnam like a belt, cinching the deep folds of the western mountains tightly to the bluish green Gulf of Tonkin. A straight coastline of white beaches and sand dunes runs northward from Da Nang Harbor to the DMZ, dotted with an occasional fishing village. A stretch of Highway 1, "the street without joy," runs through the lowlands, connecting a curious patchwork of hedgerowed villages between Hue and Quang Tri. To the west the rolling piedmont quickly rises into the thick rain forests of the Annamese Cordillea which spills over into South Vietnam from Laos.

The two northern provinces of Military Region 1, Quang Tri and Thua Thien, have always been a hotly contested arena throughout the Vietnam War. From their sanctuaries along the Ho Chi Minh Trail in Laos, North Vietnamese soldiers have traditionally infiltrated into South Vietnam, threatening the populated lowlands. The infamous A Shau Valley opens as a natural corridor to Hue, Vietnam's old imperial capital and third largest city. Farther to the north, the Ba Long Valley is poised like an arrow at the heart of Quang Tri City and nearby Dong Ha. Some of the fiercest battles of the war have been fought in the two northern provinces: Con Thien, The Rockpile, the battle for Hue during the 1968 Tet Offensive, campaigns in the A Shau.

As it approaches the area south of the DMZ, Highway 1 timidly turns into a dusty dirt road, traveled by only a few vehicles and the inhabitants of nearby hamlets. Snaking down a steep escarpment, it arrives at the threshold of the Ben Hai River, a narrow brackish stream which holds the dubious distinction of dividing North from South Vietnam. At one time connecting the commercial backbone of the

The Rockpile, an unmistakable landmark along the DMZ, was once described as "having enough flat space on top to accommodate at least two-medium-sized dinner tables."

CPT James V. Soriano has first-hand knowledge of MR 1, having spent nine months flying an O-1 "Bird Dog" on reconnaissance missions in the area. As a member of the 220th Reconnaissance Airplane Company "Catkillers," CPT Soriano took part in both Lam Son 719 and the Summer Offensive. He is now assigned to the Information Office, 1st Aviation Brigade.

nation, the bridge is now severed and stands silently, perhaps as a monument to the gap between the two countries. Across the bridge, on the northern side of the river, the North Vietnamese flag, a bright yellow star on a red field, daily waves in a steady sea breeze, in full view of those who man the defensive network just below the DMZ.

A series of Allied firebases hang like swords beneath the DMZ, Vietnam's northern line of defense. Wryly referred to as "the end of the world," these places are as remote and impersonal as the names they bear: Alpha 1, Alpha 2, Charlie 2.

Not far to the west, across a moonscape of water-filled bomb craters, the old U.S. Marine Corps stronghold of Con Thien is dug in along a fortified hilltop. Now called Firebase (FB) Alpha 4, Con Thien is Vietnam's northernmost firebase, a scant two miles below the "pink line," the southern boundary of the DMZ. West of Alpha 4, a series of ridgelines rises out of the lowlands, collectively dubbed "Rocket Ridge," an area habitually used by the NVA to launch rocket attacks against the firebases.

Southward at the base of Rocket Ridge, FB Fuller stands atop Dong Ha Mountain, allowing a full panorama to the South Vietnamese artillerymen stationed there: from Khe Sanh's red laterite plateau to the southwest, to the eastern lowlands and the remaining complement of Allied defenses.

On completion of operations during Lam Son 719 in Laos, which was supported by units of the 1st Aviation Brigade, the South Vietnamese Army (ARVN) lost no time in continuing its initiative in northern MR 1. Operation Lam Son 720, aimed at spoiling a possible Communist build-up in the crypt of the A Shau Valley, was launched on April 14, to prevent the NVA from entering the lowlands. Helilifted onto the eastern wall of the valley, the South Vietnamese infantry searched the rugged mountains for the enemy and cache sites.

While the NVA remained elusive in the A Shau, attention was turned farther to the north in anticipation of a Communist offensive along the DMZ. In late May, patrols from the 1st ARVN Division began encountering small NVA units in the area around FB Fuller. Evidence soon began to show a sizable NVA build-up north of Fuller in the Rocket Ridge area.

On June 4, the five northernmost firebases received the first of what was to be a series of coordinated NVA rocket and mortar attacks throughout the following weeks. Allied counter-battery fire quickly answered the rocket attacks, beginning a deadly summer-long artillery duel. The shellings were the heaviest the DMZ had received in months, and previewed the type of tactics the NVA would use during the summer.

Either unwilling or unable to commit large numbers of troops in a sustained offensive, the North Vietnamese appeared to rely primarily on indirect rocket and mortar attacks. Or perhaps, at best, they would be able to launch a determined effort against one or two of the firebases.

As the enemy threat became increasingly imminent along the DMZ, B-52 Stratofortresses were flying almost exclusively over Quang Tri Province, striking at suspected

The North Vietnamese flag is fully visible to the firebases just below the DMZ.

Playing a deadly game of cat and mouse

enemy locations and supply areas. South Vietnamese units operating near the A Shau Valley were helilifted northward to bolster the defensive network, and before the middle of June, South Vietnamese marines were operating in the rolling hills east of the Khe Sanh plateau.

By the middle of the month, rocket and mortar attacks along the DMZ were stepped up, climaxing in an increase of attacks on South Vietnam's Armed Forces Day, June 19, with FB Fuller bearing the wrath of the NVA gunners.

On Sunday, June 20, fighting once again surged around FB Fuller, followed by a series of ground probes along her defenses. For the next three days, Fuller weathered a continuous thunderstorm of rocket and mortar attacks. A driving rain of some 500 shells fell on her bunkers on Monday. The bombardment continued throughout the next day, culminating in a furious barrage of more than 800 rounds of rockets and mortars in a three-hour period early Wednesday evening, one of the most concentrated shellings in the war. When the barrage lifted, the NVA assaulted the mountaintop, pushing the South Vietnamese defenders down the southern side.

Fighting greatly subsided around Fuller the next day; however, some of the nearby firebases received an occasional sprinkling of rockets. On June 27, a company of 1st ARVN Division soldiers reoccupied the battered firebase and met no opposition.

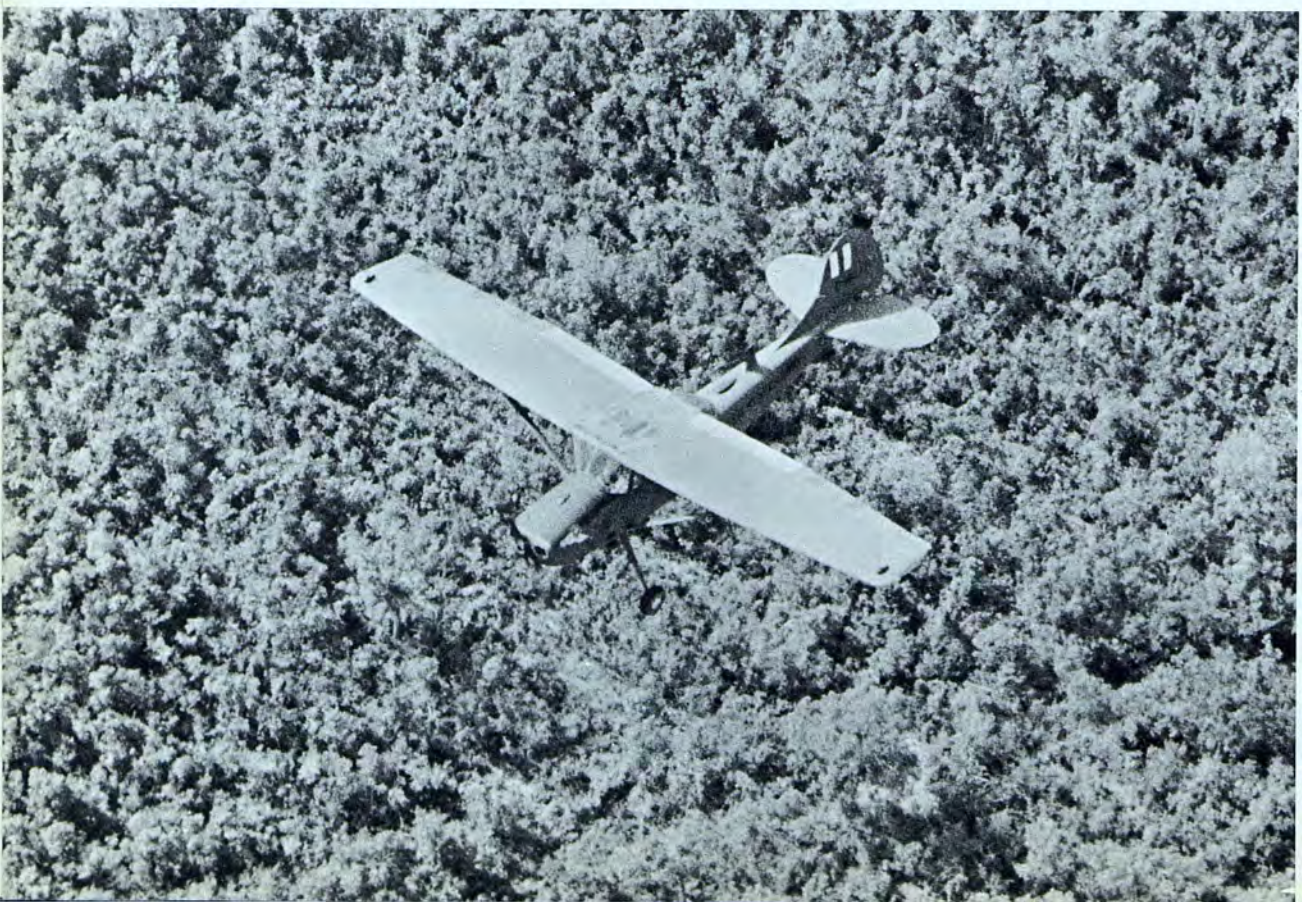
Sporadic rocket and mortar attacks continued for the next several days, but activity along the DMZ had fallen off to its monsoon season level. The NVA, who had paid dearly for their brief conquest, used the next several weeks for resupply and refitting.

In July, two developments occurred which again underscored the importance of northern MR 1. The 1st Brigade, 5th Infantry Division (Mech) had already begun to stand down as part of the eighth increment of troop reductions. After the departure of the U.S. 3d Marine Division the previous year, the 1st of the 5th Mech remained as the only American infantry unit charged with guarding the DMZ. Their stay in Vietnam was climaxed only a few months earlier when in February they spearheaded the drive to reopen Khe Sanh Combat Base in support of ARVN operations in Laos.

In a short ceremony at FB Charlie 2 on July 9, the final American firebase below the DMZ was turned over to the South Vietnamese (Con Thien had a change of command the day before.)

Second, there was a marked improvement of infiltration routes leading into western Quang Tri from Laos and North Vietnam. New roads began to appear from the DMZ southward to the Khe Sanh area, daily inching their way through the thick jungles like caterpillars. Bird Dogs from the 220th RAC, carrying ARVN observers, and armed helicopter reconnaissance teams began guarding the progress of road construction, playing a deadly game of cat and mouse with enemy troops and antiaircraft fire.

O-1 "Bird Dogs" of the 220th RAC search out enemy targets along the DMZ and call in either attack helicopters, artillery or B-52s.



Throughout July, air operations continued at an accelerated pace, interrupted only briefly by Typhoon Harriet and Tropical Storm Kim later in the month.

By the beginning of August the physical appearance of northern Quang Tri Province had changed dramatically from what it had been as little as two months earlier. In short, the absence of American troops along the DMZ left the ARVNs virtually on their own, and the introduction of an improved infiltration network appeared as a challenge to the South Vietnamese's new-found responsibilities.

The relative lull in ground fighting which followed the battle for FB Fuller ended in the middle of August with a new wave of rocket and mortar attacks directed against the firebases along the DMZ; the step-up in activity seemed to be a carbon copy of the tactics the NVA had used in June--coordinated rocket attacks on the surrounding Allied positions with a concentrated attack on one of them.

Although FB Fuller continued to be hit hard during the new surge of activity, the NVA appeared to zero in on a new target--Nui Ba Ho, a small mountaintop occupied by South Vietnamese marines not far south of Fuller.

By the middle of the month, Ba Ho was experiencing constant mortar attacks and ground probes. On August 14, after a running nine-hour battle, the NVA boldly attacked

This placid beach between Hue and Quang Tri was the site of a French amphibious group landing in 1953, aimed at dislodging the Viet Minh from "the street without joy."

in the middle of the afternoon, forcing the marines to evacuate the position. Fighting predictably dropped off the next day, with the marines reoccupying the abandoned mountaintop against little resistance.

The South Vietnamese sought their revenge the next day, when they trapped an estimated battalion of NVA on a ridgeline north of Ba Ho, and in the ensuing battle the marines killed more than 140 enemy soldiers.

By September, the NVA seemed to have spent its fury for the summer. Although there were some significant shellings of Allied positions during the final weeks of the dry season, these were isolated incidents, and for the most part activity dropped to an insignificant level.

Also in September, the South Vietnamese, who had been holding defensive positions for the previous two months, quickly seized the initiative and launched a counter-offensive in western Quang Tri, Operation Lam Son 910. The objective of the operation was to disrupt any storage or cache sites the NVA might be building during the upcoming rainy season for use the following summer.

For the most part, the NVA judiciously avoided contact with the ARVN soldiers, except for small skirmishes with the elite South Vietnamese Hoc Bao (Black Panthers) who were lifted into landing zones in advance of the main ARVN troops.

Although some sizable caches were destroyed, no large engagements developed with the NVA. After two weeks of searching the jungles around Khe Sanh, and with the start of the monsoon season only a few weeks away, the South Vietnamese returned to their base camps.

Soon low, heavy clouds would roll out of the northeast, enshrouding them in a gray mantle, with a light monotonous rain falling as a welcomed salve over the land. For the next several months in Quang Tri the enemy would be the rain, tiny bomblets splashing in the rice paddies, droning on the tin roofs like a machinegun.

In their camps soldiers work and wait, watching--until the day the skies clear and antlike they return to other fields.

As the monsoons begin, a temporary peace falls over "the end of the world."

Witch Doctor To Waiting Room

Story and Photos

by

1LT Donald E. Willoughby

Flying along the dirt road which leads to Bunard, a person notices a long gaping schism in the countryside, running parallel to the road. At one time this ground was level with the rest until the natives of Phuoc Long Province angered their gods.

Many years ago, various mountain tribes met in this area to celebrate an annual festival of leisure. They honored the gods with animal sacrifices and then drank and enjoyed themselves. A thousand people attended, bringing cows, water buffalo and pigs with them to be offered as sacrifices.

But someone opened the jars of liquor first and by the end of the first day of the festival, all the people were drunk and were killing their animals for food. Four days of singing and merrymaking ensued without a thought to the gods for whom the festival was intended.

Suddenly, a voice rang out from the sky. "You have been a disgrace to the gods and will be punished," it said. And the chanting and playing of bamboo and wooden instruments stopped. The ground shook, opened and closed, burying everyone and everything. No one survived the anger of the gods, and to this day, the people of Phuoc Long remain silent as they pass the famous falling ground of Bunard. 1

1 "The Falling Ground of Bunard", A Vietnamese Legend, The Hurricane, MARCH 1970, No. 29, pp 40-41.

Nature, fate and man had dealt harshly with them. The ravages and woes, the haunting of the falling ground had pushed into the 20th century while leaving the villagers of Da Deim Bunard in the Dark Ages. As tragic as the hunger, poverty and disease that bedeviled them was the acceptance by these people of woes that could be--and were--alleviated.

Tragedy, indeed, is the correct word to apply. The isolated village is composed of four hamlets, two of them Montagnard. The inhabitants of one hamlet had recently escaped from the NVA, who had used them as rice and munitions porters. This blackmail resulted in a shortage of food for the Montagnards; hunger, accompanied by its companion, plague, soon set in. The old beliefs and customs took the throne; the Montagnards blamed witches and evil spirits for their problems. In at least one recent case, they beheaded persons they suspected of being witches.

When potions and the execution of witches did nothing to change the situation and desperation had become a regular part of the Montagnard's day the 12th Combat Aviation Group's civic action team entered the picture.

In May, 1971, a Medical Civic Action Program (MEDCAP) for Da Deim Bunard was decided upon. The 12th CAG Civic Action Officer, CPT Reynaldo S. Cantu Jr., conferred with LTC Carl G. Smith, province senior advisor, and Bac Si (Dr.) Dick, province medical chief, suggesting a Vietnamese MEDCAP team sponsored by the 12th CAG. They chose the Song Be Province hospital as the main base of operations and selected the 35th Regional Forces (RF) Compound as the forward base.

Hunger was the first demon the MEDCAP team attacked. Province officials of the Government of Vietnam were empowered to initiate emergency resupply of food to nourish the villagers until harvest. In addition, the MEDCAP teams aided the sick at Bunard in an attempt to prevent hunger-connected deaths. American, RF and local medics undertook follow-up care, using medicines which the MEDCAP team had left.

The very young and the very old were suffering most because of their restricted diets. To counter this CPT Cantu procured a large amount of Food for Peace (a soybean high-energy food that can be mixed with anything to improve the nutrient intake) and powdered milk from the Catholic Relief Services. Pediatric vitamins and instructions as to their use were also distributed to the aged and to mothers of infants.

The MEDCAP team departed Plantation, unloading personnel at Bunard. From there they flew to Song Be to pick up the Vietnamese team plus medicine and medical equipment which 12th Group had deposited there. The Vietnamese teams suffered personnel shortages and so were unable to participate in the first two MEDCAPs.

A June addition to the province team was Dr. Susan Forlenza. A Volunteer Physician to Vietnam, she was assigned through U.S. Aid for International Development (USAID) to Phuoc Long Province as the advisor to the medical chief. Dr. Forlenza set up the necessary coordination at Song Be for easy execution of the MEDCAPs.

The initial MEDCAP was successful and improvement was evident as the missions continued. There was now an additional ingredient--trust--as the Montagnards and Vietnamese looked forward to the semi-weekly visits by the team. The villagers were energetic in seeing that their sick and injured were treated and that follow-up care was received.

Dr. Forlenza takes the blood pressure of a village elder.

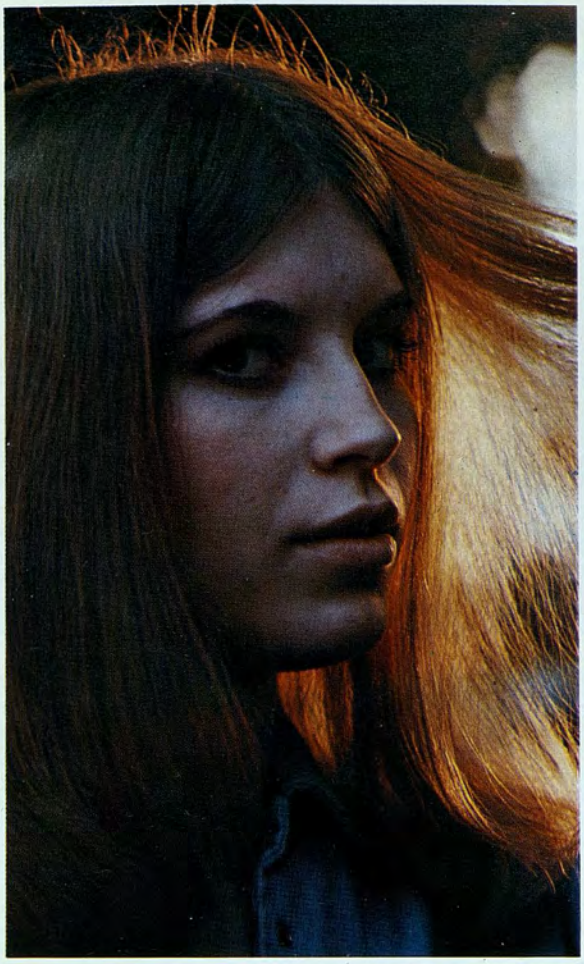
an additional ingredient—trust

A young village child watches in awe as SFC Smith prepares a novocaine injection.

The MEDCAPs continued to a point that sound health among the villagers was evident. Yaws, plague, malaria--these were some of the diseases the MEDCAP team treated. Infections, which could render a limb useless or steal a life, were prevented by treating simple cuts and scratches as soon as they appeared.

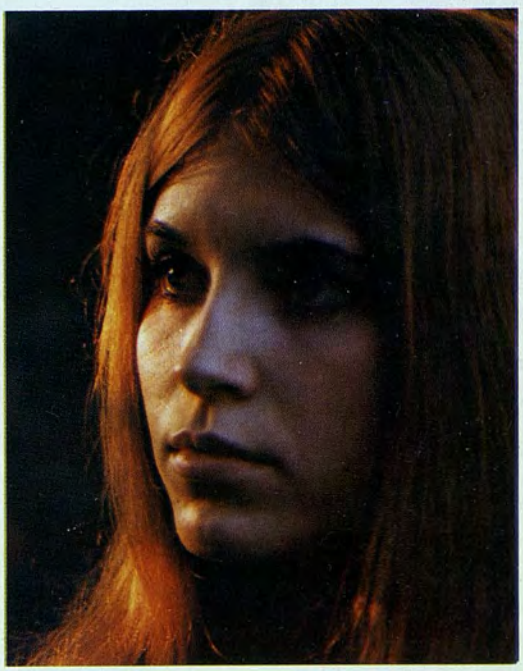
The combined efforts of the province, the MEDCAP teams and the Montagnards themselves were the reason for the program's success. The farmers were again able to look after their crops, and in doing so, they began to cut away at the surrounding jungle, creating more farmland. The new hamlet, at first almost devoid of animal life, soon had several herds of water buffalo grazing; the fenced-in gardens around the houses began to produce nutritious foods. And the rice was finally ready to harvest.

Humanity had been mapped out. Eliminating nutritional deficiencies was the charge of the villages and districts, because they now had the ability to tackle the problem. And the Montagnard had been convinced that going to a doctor or a hospital was not a delay-in-route to the burial ground.



HAWK HONEY

Former Hawk photographer
Tony DeStefano captured
British Miss
Diana Hendrick
on fillm while viewing the
sights of London.
She hails from Alconbury, England.

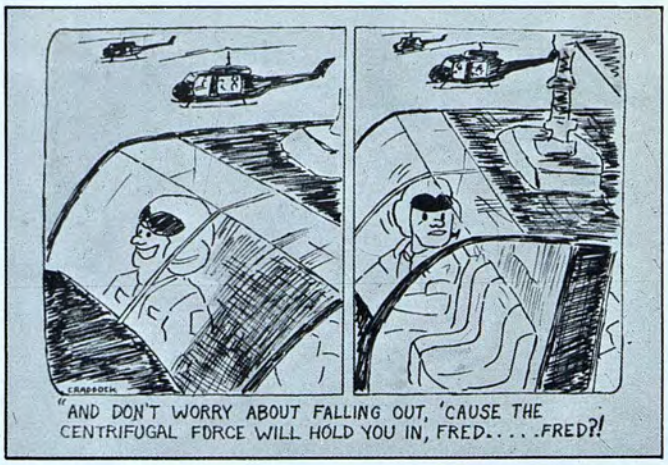


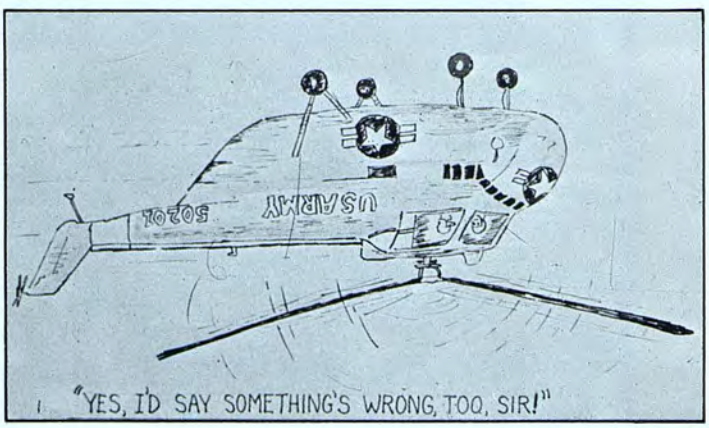
ON THE HIGH SIDE

Cartoons

by

PFC Van D. Craddock





DOWN DANGEROUS TRAILS

Hawk Staff Story

Photos by SP5 Joe Kelley

Screened by elephant grass, a shadow moves in the treeline along the river bank. Five more shadows materialize at the edge of the jungle. They wait. Silence. The river flows sluggishly in the afternoon heat, and the shadows become men as they move into the open to check the river bank.

The Charlie Rangers are on partrol. The patrol team of six men is from C Company (75th Infantry) Rangers. They are unusual men in a unique unit. The Charlie Rangers trace their origin to Merrill's Marauders of World War II fame, and at present they are the only Ranger unit serving at corps level in the U.S. Army.

Every man in the company is a volunteer, specially selected for his skill and experience in small unit patrolling operations. Only two men in the company are not infantry-ranger qualified: the communications sergeant and one of the cooks.

The Ranger team now on patrol was inserted into a valley near a highway. Their job: to find out if the North Vietnamese are moving men and supplies through the area.

The patrol began at dawn three days before. The men were waiting at the edge of the staging area, adjusting the heavy packs that would be their home for the next four days, checking their weapons and putting the finishing touches on their camouflage.

In the staging area, the Rangers make final adjustments of weapons and equipment.

A Huey from the 17th Combat Aviation Group of the 1st Aviation Brigade, to which the Charlie Rangers are attached, touched down, and the men moved quickly to get on board. They sat on the floor of the chopper, with packs on and ready to move. The Huey carries a 50-caliber machinegun and a minigun to provide gun cover for the insertion if it is needed. Speed and stealth are the Rangers' only security, and they would rather not advertise their presence in the area.

The tension mounted as they approached the LZ. They wondered, "Will this one land us in the middle of a fire fight or will we be able to slip in unobserved?"

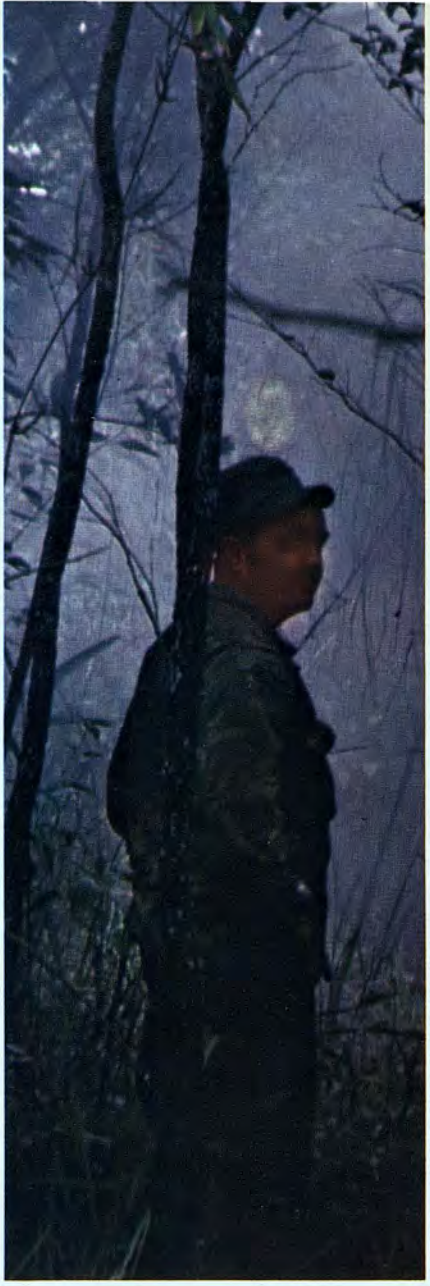
The ship drops down and hovers about three feet above the ground. The Rangers jump out and disperse around the LZ, waiting for the chopper to leave.

As the slick disappears over the trees, the team slips into the woodline, listening, watching for movement that will tell them they have been observed by the enemy. Everything is quiet. They move out stealthily through the jungle, searching for signs of the enemy as they go. Now and again they stop to listen and watch. They wait silently without moving for 10, 20, 30 minutes, then they move on.

The first objective of their mission is to check some trails that were spotted in a visual reconnaissance of the area and which the NVA may be using as infiltration routes. Slipping through the forest, alert for the slightest sound or movement, they move up to a trail. No sign of movement. The earth of the trail is soft and covered with old leaves. There are some animal tracks but no sign of enemy activity. The team moves on to the next area.

The pattern of the patrol continues: move, wait, listen, search, move on. Late in the afternoon, while there is still light, the Rangers set up for the night. They move into a thicket of dense undergrowth and gain cover. Two men retrace their route in for the last 100 meters, smoothing over tracks and erasing all signs of their movements into the area. They eat their LRRP rations cold, burying and hiding any trash or waste. No one smokes. Voices are hushed and conversation is kept to a minimum. No one digs in. The Rangers rely on secrecy and silence for protection.

As night falls, the team prepares to bed down. They lie in a circle, their heads toward the silenced radio in the center. One man remains awake. The night wears on, and the radio-mike



passes from hand to hand around the circle as each man takes his turn on watch.

Dawn. More cold LRRP rations and the team moves on, covering all signs of their presence as they go. The pattern of the first day is repeated. They check trails, dry steam beds, river banks. No contact.

On the fourth day their patrol is completed. No contact, no sign of enemy occupation or movement. The area is clear.

Using claymores to blast down trees for an LZ, the Rangers call in the helicopters to extract them. Tired and disgruntled, they climb onto the chopper. The patrol was successful, the area is clear, but the Rangers are disappointed.

It's been a while since they were in a good fire fight.

When they return to their base camp on "Ranger Hill" they learn that the team which had been inserted that morning was only in the area two hours before making contact and getting into a fire fight with an NVA patrol. Its whereabouts known to the enemy and with one wounded, the second patrol returned that day.

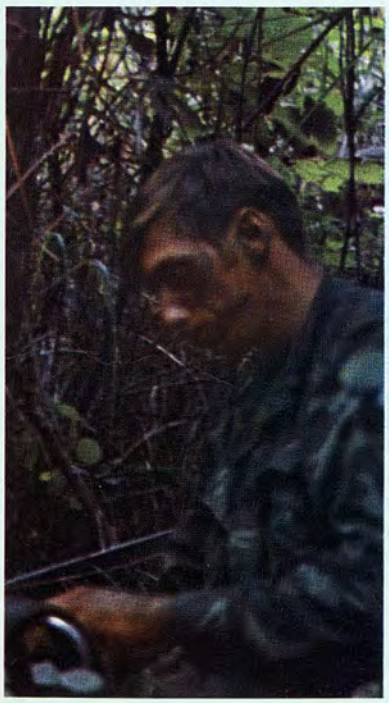
During the years the unit has been in Vietnam, it has served in many areas, including Bong Son, Pleiku, Nha Trang, Phan Thiet and Tuy Hoa. Ranger Hill is their first base camp with hootches; usually they live in tents.

In addition to performing patrolling missions, the Charlies have served as a training cadre for other ranger units. They have trained rangers for the armies of the Republics of Korea and South Vietnam.

The Charlie Rangers are justly proud of their accomplishments in Vietnam. They are also proud of the fact that relatively few men have been killed in action here. The reason for this unusual record may be that every Charlie Ranger is a specially selected, highly qualified volunteer. The men of the Rangers give their qualifications in their nickname--THE PROFESSIONALS.

Their patrol over, the Rangers board the Huey to return to base.

It's been a while since they were in a good fire fight.



The Charlie Company (75th Infantry) Rangers have adopted a young POW named Chieu Hoi as their company mascot. The young lady who lives in their base camp at Ranger Hill weighs 100 pounds and is six months old. She is a pig.

Chieu Hoi became a rallier one morning when she woke up to discover that her erstwhile NVA companions had deserted her in the middle of the night. Somewhat in a huff at being alone in the base camp, when she noticed the Charlie Rangers beginning their search of the camp, she stepped out of her bunker and chieu hoied. She has been with the Rangers ever since.

At first there was some talk of her becoming a Luc Luong Scout, but Chieu Hoi convinced the Rangers that she was really meant for the rear echelon. Since then she has had the run of Ranger Hill. Usually she can be found around the base camp making one of her frequent inspections of the mess hall or the garbage pick-up point. In the afternoon she often spends some time down at the EM club guzzling beer with her friends.

The Charlie Rangers are proud of their mascot. Her last name, PIG, is in the finest tradition of the Rangers, standing for Pride...Integrity...Guts.

When the Rangers stand down and return to Tuy Hoa, Chieu Hoi will go with them. However, there is some question about her DEROS, and she doesn't like the way the mess sergeant keeps looking at her.

From The Chaplain

Chaplain (MAJ) Gordon R. Prout
17th Combat Aviation Group

"Glory to God in the highest heaven! And peace on earth to men with whom he is pleased." Luke 2:14

It's a long time since the angels proclaimed "Peace on earth" when Jesus was born in the small village of Bethlehem. And here we are spending Christmas so far from home, living in a world which is certainly not experiencing peace.

What does Christmas mean? It means Christmas trees, sometimes with crooked trunks and misplaced branches, but always looking so dazzling when the tinsel, lights, ornaments, and icicles are in place. Christmas means a lot of hurrying, effort, remembering, working--and it also means the specially delicious feeling in finding that one perfect present for our One Very Special Person. Christmas means that our minds are flooded with memories: families gathered all together; an angels' choir singing of Jesus' birth; a blanket of snow hiding the ugly scars of the earth and cloaking barren trees with wondrous beauty; Wise Men from the East to see the Babe; roast turkey with dressing and plum pudding; candlelight Christmas Eve church services; the Bethlehem Inn with its "No Vacancy" sign; Santa Claus with his improbable task of toy-carrying to all kids in an even more improbable conveyance with only six-reindeer-power; the wild anticipation of what we would find under the tree; HOME!

Discouraging to be so far from home and remember all this? NO! And the reason is that the most basic meaning of Christmas is that it is the birthday of Jesus! God had been preparing a long time for this most significant event which took place in the manger at Bethlehem. Could the extravagant titles of Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father and Prince of Peace describe a man born in such crude, unpromising surroundings? The meaning of Christmas is that multitudes are finding that these titles fit exactly what they find in Jesus.

Underneath all our customs associated with the celebration of Christmas is the truth that God comes to ALL men through Jesus--even to us, the lonely Americans in Vietnam! Have a very merry and blessed Christmas! Let the angelic message of Christmas say to you--now--"Don't be afraid! I bring you the most joyful news ever announced, and it is for everyone! The Lord has been born!" (Luke 2:10-11).

Editorial

Temporary Relief—Permanent Damage

The desire to "get away from it all" isn't unusual at all; every one of us has experienced the feeling at one time or another, especially those who serve in the military. The vast majority of servicemen are content to wait for that long-awaited leave or R and R, but there are always the who, few for one reason or another (boredom, drugs, real or imaginary problems of military life or simply the inability to adjust), seek the alternate escape of unauthorized absenteeism.

Unfortunately, few servicemen fully understand the various punishments that can result from AWOL or desertion, just as they fail to see that their retribution most certainly will extend far beyond discharge and often amounts to a life-long penalty. Rejection by segments of our society, inability to find a suitable job, loss of entitlement to veterans' benefits--these are the real prices of AWOL or desertion.

Punishment under the provisions of the UCMJ vary with the offense. In the case of an AWOL charge, this depends on the length of time a serviceman is absent and the intent behind his absence. It can be as severe as a dishonorable discharge, forfeiture of all pay and allowances and confinement at hard labor for a year. Desertion is different from the ordinary AWOL in that there is intent to remain away permanently, avoid hazardous duty or shirk important service. It is a court-martial offense that can result in a prison sentence of up to five years, dishonorable discharge and forfeiture of all pay and allowances.

When a serviceman is released from active duty with an undesirable, bad conduct or dishonorable discharge, benefits that would otherwise come from his service are seriously affected. Most, in fact, are wiped out. For example, the government will not pay him for accrued leave, nor will it pay for sending his dependents and his household goods back home. Moreover, the man may lose substantial post-service Veterans Administration or other federal agency benefits. These benefits include:

--Educational assistance from VA, including high school completion and vocational, college or other authorized training.

--Disability compensation or, when income is very low, a VA pension.

--Medical and dental care for service-connected illnesses or injuries.

--Vocational rehabilitation.

--Special VA assistance or equipment for service-connected disability.

--Special VA insurance preference.

--Home loans and preference in farm loans.

--Certain burial benefits.

--Veterans preference in government jobs.

--Labor Department job and income assistance, including unemployment compensation.

--Credit for military service toward Social Security or Civil Service benefits one might be entitled to at separation or later.

A discharge under honorable conditions entitles the serviceman to all the benefits, the monetary value of which can amount to hundreds of thousands of dollars throughout the remainder of a man's life. Its value can also be an intangible, measured in personal satisfaction. Yet it is substantial for the holder and in the eyes of his friends, his fellow countryman and, particularly, potential employers. The importance of the honorable discharge is simply too great to risk a few days' "vacation" without the boss' consent.

Illustration by PFC John McCormick

Stop Sign Ambassadors

Story by MAJ Bill Smullen

An Army deuce-and-a-half loaded with supplies guns its way through a narrow Vietnamese street. A Honda tries to pass on the right as the truck driver swerves to avoid a rut. The impact of the two machines colliding hurls both cycle and driver against a pile of rubbish alongside the road. Realizing what has happened, the driver stops and goes back on foot to help the bleeding youth. A crowd quickly gathers and, led by activist students, begins chanting anti-American slogans. The GI, trapped by the now sizeable crowd, looks frantically around for help but sees no one.

This unfortunate scene has been repeated too many times during the American presence in Vietnam and portrays a trend which has the aura of a boiling cauldron ready to spill over at the slightest provocation. These confrontations involving American servicemen and the Vietnamese people have shown a marked increase throughout the past 12 months. And as more personnel and equipment are moved about Vietnam in the months to come, we lie susceptible to even further confrontations unless a great deal of prudence is exercised.

To point an accusing finger at any one cause is impossible; the factors vary from one incident to the next. In the case of some, it may simply result from careless highway habits or, moreover, a driver's being unfamiliar with basic traffic regulations common to Vietnam. It also appears that the Vietnamese are signalling more and more that they, as a people, possess a newly awakened pride and confidence. This may cause those who are characteristically quiet to demand respect and acknowledgment. A translation of these feelings may take the shape of retaliation against an American presence that has become too prominent.

Statistics for the first eight months of 1971 alone define the staggering proportions of the situation. Throughout Vietnam during that period, some 80 confrontations took place; nearly 90 per cent of these incidents resulted from traffic accidents involving American drivers and Vietnamese nationals. It goes without saying that a five-ton truck lumbering down the road is no match for a Lambretta with 10 people aboard; nor is a motorbike fair game for a moving jeep.

But watching out for the little guy in front simply isn't enough. Sitting behind the wheel of a moving vehicle calls for the concentration of a brain surgeon plus a constant awareness of what's happening in eight different directions. If a reminder in the form of a stenciled platitude across the

vehicle's dashboard isn't enough, perhaps thorough familiarity with Vietnamese highway regulations is the surest step in avoiding accidents and potential confrontations.

Characteristically we are creatures of habit. That alone is a danger, unless we know and follow basic traffic rules in Vietnam which are different from those we're accustomed to in the States. Did you know, for example, that in Vietnam all vehicles--except two-wheeled--pass on the left? Or, put another way, that Honda creeping up on your right side is following the law, which makes turning into a street to your right a somewhat precarious maneuver, unless there's a fellow passenger who can literally lend you a hand by signalling your approach as the motorbikes bear down on you. And how many are familiar with each of the nine different Vietnamese right-of-way rules, some of which are uncommon to stateside highways? The source for all regulations and driving tips is a USARV booklet entitled "Vehicle Operator's Guide for Driving in Vietnam."

TAYLOR

Realistically speaking, accidents (and therefore, confrontations) are likely to continue as long as the presence of American forces is felt here. So let's go one step further and think for a moment of our actions should we become personally involved in an accident. One driving precept is universal--stop immediately! It sounds basic, but GIs, fearing a crowd reaction or the consequences of being caught, have often fled the accident scene. In doing so, they have committed a serious offense under both Vietnamese law and the UCMJ (Article 134). Common sense dictates that the driver should stop, seek necessary medical assistance and contact the U.S. Forces Police. Vietnamese National Police will be summoned if civilians are involved, and they can help the driver seek medical and MP assistance.

One driving precept is universal- stop immediately!

Still another arm of justice designed as a responsive measure is the Reactional Assistance Team consisting of an interpreter, an MP and one or more responsible officers possessing legal, financial and investigative skills. These R.A.T. patrols have recently pervaded Vietnam in response to the increasing level of confrontations and serve the dual purpose of helping the individual GI while showing American concern for the damage incurred. Experience has proven that such a tool can do much to alleviate tensions reared by an accident, which in itself might be only a catalyst for long-harbored emotions. The team can help process and the appropriate claims commission can accept any claims resulting from death, injury or damage; the driver should never make an on-the-spot monetary settlement or, until specifically advised, sign any documents pertaining to the accident.

Springing up around the country are at least two more devices now available to preclude an accident from quickly turning into an unfortunate incident. The 18th MP Brigade has established a country-wide Military Police Administrative Radio Net for increased military police responsiveness to traffic accidents. This radio net is operational around the clock for use by any individual to expeditiously report an accident or incident which requires response by American or Vietnamese military police. Operated on a standard frequency of 69 megahertz, the net may also be used to request medical, fire, EOD and related emergency assistance.

In still another attempt to reduce misunderstanding between Americans and Vietnamese at the scene of an accident involving both parties, certain command headquarters now require that two forms--the Bilingual Accident Sheet and the Accident Identification Card--be in all vehicles when driven. The bilingual form, written in both English and Vietnamese, can be presented by the driver at an accident to express regret. It also lists choices of logical decisions and actions which he must take or which he suggests the Vietnamese national take. The accident ID card makes reference, in both languages, to the basic vehicle and driver information that is normally exchanged at any accident. This lends a degree of assurance to the parties involved. Techniques and procedures such as these go a long way in avoiding unfortunate scenes beyond that already experienced.

The scope of these confrontations has not yet reached crisis proportions, but the problem is serious enough to evoke mindful attention. Through the benefit of hindsight we can easily discern just how much anguish, energy and life itself has been needlessly expended by both sides facing the confrontation line. We must now all concentrate on efforts to avoid harmful incidents which can quickly set in reverse the firm American-Vietnamese relations our forerunners have so intently established. In retrospect, the time to turn back the tide of these confrontations was yesterday.

On September 1, 1971, the 242d Assault Support Helicopter Company started standdown. By October 1, they had

Packed Up And Gone

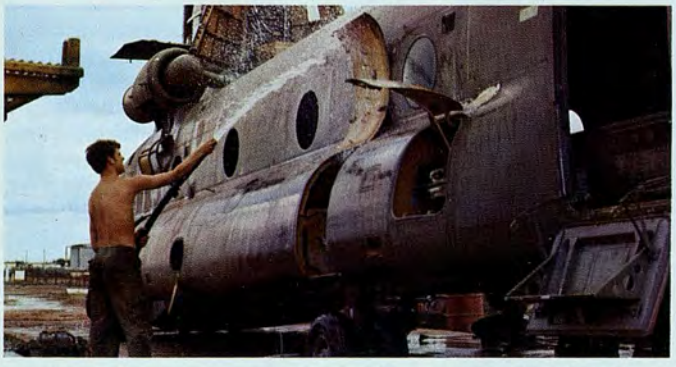
Story and Photos

by

SP5 Terry Ogle

APPLEBY

APPLEBY



APPLEBY

After cleaning, inspection and a final washing, this ship is ready to leave for the U.S.

"Standdown" is a common phrase in Vietnam, but one which is rather vague in its meaning. Since the beginning of the conflict, units have come in from the field to stand down for a few days or a week. This was a chance to rest, relax, get a hot shower and a cold beer and generally forget the war for a short time. As soon as the men were refreshed and weapons inspected and repaired, it was back to the field once more. Today, however, "standdown" conveys a sense of finality that was missing before. For if a unit stands down today, it means that it will soon cease performing its mission in the Republic of Vietnam.

Since 1967 the 242d Assault Support Helicopter Company has flown the CH-47 "Chinook," a mammoth, buslike helicopter capable of ferrying 33 fully equipped troops. A Chinook company rarely makes headlines; it lacks the elan associated with a Cobra unit or one that flies light observation helicopters (LOHs). Chinooks are neither gunships nor observation craft; they provide transportation. This is a massive, though unglamorous, job in a country where roads are often rutted, unsafe, or nonexistent. About the only time a Chinook company makes the news is when it wins an award, something the 242d has made into a habit.

Like a ponderous sumo wrestler before a match, this Chinook awaits its crew.

The 242d, part of the 145th Combat Aviation Battalion, 12th Group, is representative of the units that are now beginning to stand down in the Republic of Vietnam. For some time, infantry units have been reduced in strength and sent home, but few combat support units have received much publicity as they have closed out their Vietnam service. Combat support is becoming the only American role in Vietnam.

The record the 242d has compiled is an impressive one. Between November, 1968, and September, 1971--nearly three years--the company did not have a single accident while flying more than 32,600 hours.

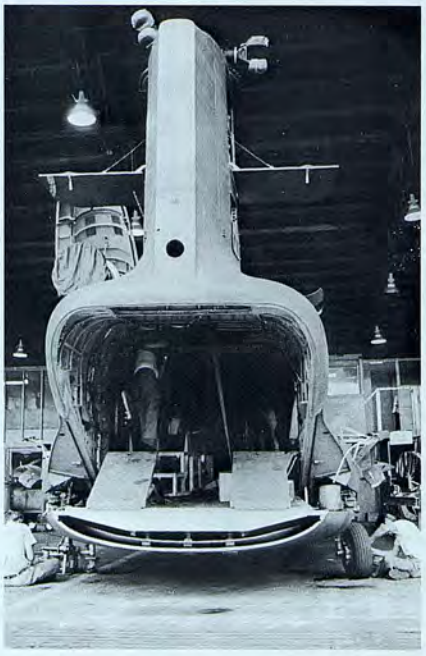
The unit has been awarded two Vietnamese Crosses of Gallantry and has flown throughout Military Region 3 in support of American, ARVN and Australian troops. In November, 1970, the unit was relocated from Cu Chi to Phu Loi, after the standdown of the 25th Infantry Division. The 242d "Muleskinners" extracted the 25th's "Tropic Lightning" troopers from the firebases they had been supplying, then brought in ARVNs to replace them. At the end of 1970, VNAF pilots began flying with the 242d.

Before the standdown, the CO of the "Muleskinners," MAJ Hayes Banks, was lavish in praise of his men. "We've got the highest morale in the battalion, the highest reenlistment and extension rate." The other "honchos" of the company, 1SG George Miller and CPT Edward Luttenberger, operations officer, nodded in agreement.

This view was not contradicted by the enlisted men, although some could hardly be described as "career types." "I don't really like it over here (Vietnam), but I guess this company was about the best one I could have chosen" was a feeling shared by many in the 242d.

The men of the 242d show a surprising dedication to their aircraft, surprising because of the Chinook's appearance. Nestled in revetments with smaller helicopters, the Chinook is a hippo in a herd of gazelles. For a more concrete analogy, imagine a boxcar with two oversized propellers stuck on each end. Each Chinook can carry 8,000 pounds of cargo, but propellers just don't seem powerful enough to lift the ship itself, let alone anything in it. One ride in a CH-47 will allay such doubts.

The rotors slice the humid air deliberately, then faster, until only a blur is visible. The noise of the powerful twin-turbine engine seizes the passengers and pounds them into immobility. Gradually, the ship begins to taxi forward, almost like the C-130s it resembles from the interior. After sufficient power is reached, the big OD monster struggles off the ground. The first time passenger, sure that the load is too much for the old machine, glances out the window to see if the wheels are clear. Then, amazingly, the ship leaps from the ground, and within seconds the airfield is a brown smudge on the verdant carpet below. The passenger shakes his head at the rapid rise; it just doesn't seem possible. Now, free of the ground, the Chinook is like the classic ugly duckling transformed into a swan--if not in looks, certainly in performance. Not quick or darting like the Cobra or LOH, the Chinook is like a battleship steaming through the sea, impervious to the disasters that befall flimsier craft.



With its tailgate down, this ship appears to be swallowing the maintenance man working inside.

The standdown of the 242d took less than a month. On Semptember 1, the company stopped flying. By October 1, the company area was deserted. Between these dates, the company was a jumbled montage of men and machines, trying to meet the deadline.

"When the news came about the standdown, I really didn't know how to react. I've only been in country five months, so I won't get a drop, and I really hate to go to another company. I'm all settled right here." For many in the company, this lament was common, but 27 enlisted men, one senior NCO, and six officers were fortunate enough to receive drops.

The main effort was preparing the big Chinooks for shipment back to the States, but the transfer of assets to other units and the paperwork that accompanied it was a major task in itself. To complicate matters, the 242d's colors were sent to Alaska to keep the high-performance unit overseas.

The choppers first had to be cleaned thoroughly to pass Department of Agriculture standards for entry into the United States. Then, looking almost new, the big veterans were flown, one a day, to Vung Tau, where they were prepared for DEROS. The rotor blades were removed and packed in bags. Then, after a second cleaning, the entire ship was enclosed in a huge yellow bag. Thus encased, each ship resembled a mutant banana.

The next step for this CH-47 is enclosure in a mammoth plastic bag, like the ships in the background.

Gradually, amid the confusion, things began to take shape. The ships were all wrapped in their plastic shrouds, awaiting resurrection in the States. The equipment, after a thorough technical inspection, was en route to new homes; four of the big choppers went to other units in Vietnam, and 12 were shipped to the States.

The few remaining soldiers in the company, busy until the very last, became aware of a sense of loss when looking around the area. This seemed strange, because although it is normal to miss old friends, GIs rarely admit an emotional attachment to a company.

The dust, laid thickly on the buildings as if by a giant mason's trowel, gave the empty area the sort of ghost town atmosphere that belied the bustle of activity that had taken place only the day before. The sluggish, damp wind tossed a few scraps of paper missed in the final police call against the orderly room door. They struck the wood and fell to earth, ineffectual reminders of the reams of paperwork generated by the unit.

The only living things in the area were a few rats, unable to believe that finally they were free of the treacherous giants who had done their best to exterminate them. The victory was pyrrhic, however, as there was no longer any food or garbage to get into.

Blind and impotent, this once-powerful helicopter awaits a useful life in the States.

The elephantine crew chief zipped up his nomex shirt and eased his bulk into the driver's seat of the three-quarter. As he started the engine and threw the vehicle into first, the men riding on back mustered a halfhearted cheer which soon dissolved into a cacaphony of joking and laughter. Lurching its way through the ruts, the truck reached the first corner. They suddenly grew silent, each lost in his own thoughts, as they caught their last glimpse of the company area. Their unit had stood down.

School spirit is evident as the cadets march, usually singing, to and from class.

Tiny Olympus

Story by SP5 Jim Woolsey

Photos by SP5 Joe Kelley

The library provides publications in three languages, giving the cadets the opportunity to learn from American, European and Vietnamese cultures.

Pine trees, green and full, usher sparkling mountain streams along their courses. With a bright sky at his back, a paternal sun ambles from east to west, holding the temperature at 70 degrees and making sure his children are healthy and growing.

The staple crops here are integrity, courage, pride and intellectual fluency. This is the Vietnamese Military Academy (VNMA) at Dalat. "VNMA believes it must train more than a junior leader prepared to fight against South Vietnam's enemies," reads the school's brochure. "It must also train an officer prepared to assist his country in the immense task of nation building."

To mold such a person, the academy has focused on four attributes which he should have: academic knowledge, moral strength, physical fitness and military skill. Nine months are dedicated to improving the intellect, while two are reserved for military training. The remaining month includes holidays and vacations, which occur at various times during the school year. Guidance and training in moral strength and physical fitness are interwoven into the academic and military phases.

Chemistry, physics, calculus, English, Vietnamese literature -- these and other courses are designed to shape finely honed, creative minds and at the same time provide the cadet

with the ability to build bridges and factories. As he spends hours in a modern laboratory, delving into the mysteries of the world, he gradually understands the brick and steel structure around him. He must; he'll be be called on to erect others exactly like it when peace has at last come to his nation.

The academy has undergone quite a face-lifting since it was established at Hue in 1948. Two years later it was moved to its present location under the name "Ecole Militaire Inter-Armes." The American advisory effort began in 1955, at which time the institution was called the "Combined Arms School," referring to the one-fourth of the class who will be sailors and airmen, in addition to the future ARVN officers.

VNMA was established as a four-year institution, producing a degree viable with those earned at Hue or Saigon universities, in 1966. A library was constructed, and now the cadets may thumb through "Les Miserables" (in the original French), Sports Illustrated or publications in their own language.

Laboratories and workshops for the physical sciences are also widely used at VNMA. Wood, tools, machines, instruments for measuring and drafting tables abound. The energetic cadets work with equipment that's already been invented or they go about inventing their own.

"These men didn't have the same sort of experiences we did," said MAJ Darrell V. Fowler, senior academic advisor. "They couldn't take apart cars or radios when they were kids. This gives them the experience of getting their hands dirty, and they learn a lot at the same time."

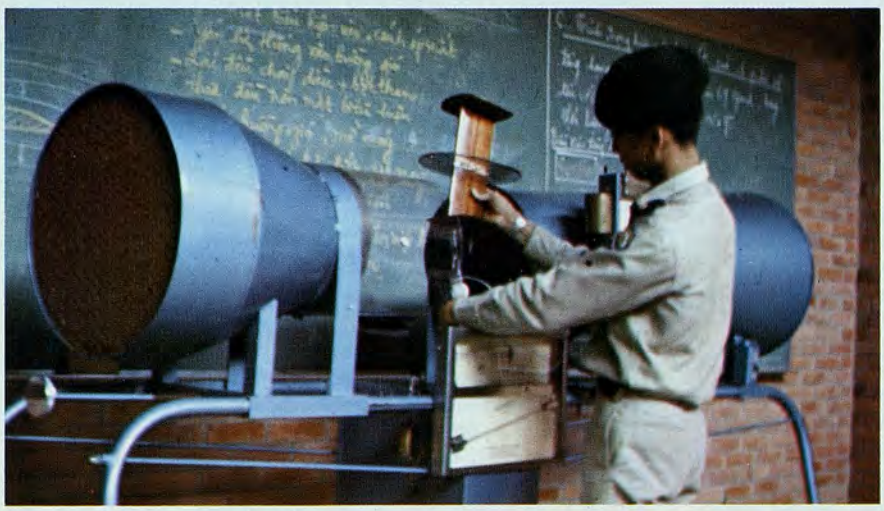
Symbolic of VNMA is a paper written by Cadet Nguyen Van Bao of Class 25, 1969. At times it seems like a routine letter home, as he details the school's facilities and the courses he'll be taking. In other parts, it's a diary, as incidents and details are penned merely so they won't be forgotten. Far more often, however, Nguyen's words reach out to others, proclaiming the thoroughness of the four-year program: "Culture can be defined as the evolution of the good and the beautiful--the knowledge of an educated man. Thus, besides the profession of fighting, it is not unusual that a military man should study academic subjects." And: "In wartime, we--the young men who have entered this academy--want to be sent to the battlefield as soon as possible in order to accomplish our citizens' duties. And when peace comes, we will try to rebuild the country which has been destroyed by war."

Whatever importance VNMA now holds, the measure will be greatly increased in the future. Those who study here and leave the military after their initial obligation will move out into the war-scarred countryside, building, repairing, creating. They will enter into business, engineering, teaching and all levels of politics. Their comrades, the ones who make the military their career, will have the same preparation as they. Communication will be swift and certain. The future of Vietnam will be progress.

The Communists are painfully aware of this importance. The academy was a major target during the Tet Offensive of 1968. A faculty member, MAJ Dao Thien Yet, was killed in VNMA's defense. The heavy engineering laboratory was dedicated to MAJ Yet's memory and bears his name.

Tet was a brutal, vital reminder that, despite the placid surroundings, VNMA is in the middle of a combat zone. Once a week the students shoulder weapons at various guard posts, keen eyes watching for signs of a night attack.

Signs and slogans, written and accepted with feeling, abound at VNMA, telling visitors of the design for tomorrow's Vietnam that is being prepared here: "Always proud, not discouraged by danger and hardship, not interested in glory"; "For the people"; "Comrades-in-arms." The most poignant sign rests on the check-out counter at the library; it depicts the tradition and inherent strength of the Vietnamese. The sign reads: "He who steals from this library cheats posterity."



The wind tunnel and other marvels of the engineering lab fascinate these students.

NEHF

Rank has no privilege in this line.

DELAY-IN-ROUTE

a look at the Army's drug detection program

Story by 1LT David P. Nehf

Illustrations by

SP4 Tom Giacalone and PFC John McCormick

They stand in line, from privates to lieutenant colonels, each with his ID card and four copies of his DEROS orders in hand.

The scene is the 90th Replacement Battalion's urine collection station, where every day roughly 300 male GIs who are about to DEROS provide a urine sample which is tested scientifically for the presence of certain drugs.

Negative results on the tests guarantee the soldier a seat on the "freedom bird." Positive results, however, can mean a delay-in-route for the GI who has not been able to refrain from using heroin the preceding five or six days, or who has relied on the illicit use of amphetamines or barbiturates to keep him going during that final week in 'Nam. When the DEROS flight passenger manifest is posted the next day, his name will not be on it. Instead he will most likely be on his way to Long Binh's TC Hill, site of one of the two in-country drug treatment centers.

There, medical personnel will help him through the difficult detoxification, or "drying out" period. His urine will be tested daily, and when the drug has disappeared from his system, he will be medically evacuated to CONUS for further treatment and rehabilitation.

All U.S. military personnel departing the Republic of Vietnam on DEROS status are subject to a urinalysis for drug use, and if the test is confirmed positive, may be detained for medical treatment. No one now serving in RVN is exempt from this extensive detection program, which began in mid-June as part of a massive campaign against drug abuse in the military.

The program also applies to GIs scheduled to depart on R and R, two-week leave or the new "7 and 7" combination of R and R and CONUS leave. Those individuals identified as heroin users will not be allowed to leave Vietnam and will undergo detoxification at a drug treatment center before returning to their units. Barbiturate and amphetamine users will be detoxified upon their return from leave or R and R.

Soldiers going on emergency or compassionate leave will also be tested but will not be delayed. If the results are positive, their units will be notified and will be responsible for insuring that the individuals are retested when they return. Those whose tests again yield positive results will be sent to a drug treatment center for detoxification.

Soldiers wishing to extend their Vietnam tours are required to provide a urine sample when they apply for extension. If the results are negative and their request is approved, they will be tested again when they report to the replacement station to begin their 30-day special leave. Positive results here will mean detoxification and revocation of their extensions.

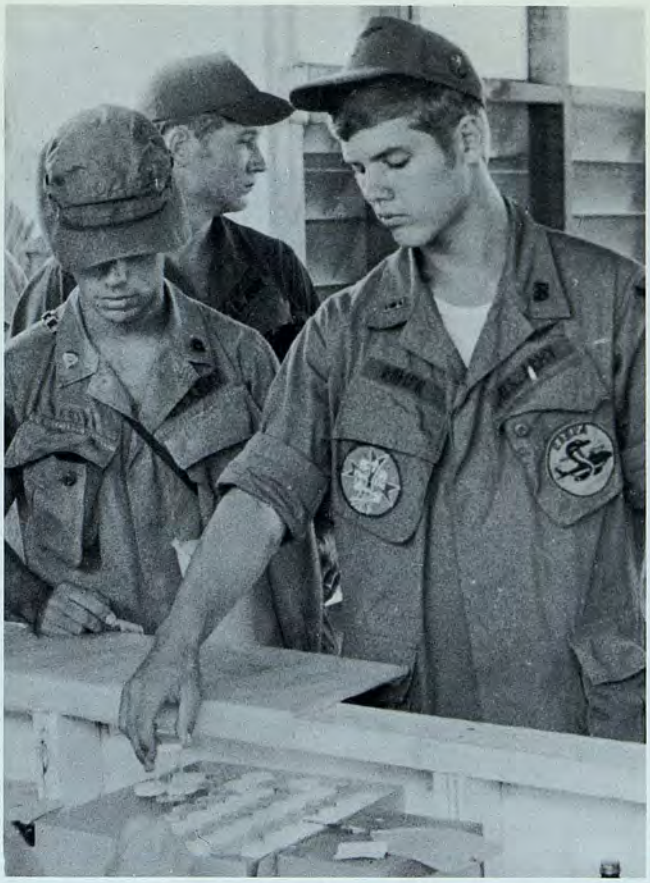
To the GI whose family has been anxiously awaiting his return from a year-long combat tour, detainment for drug use can be an extremely frustrating experience. He has just spent 365 days overseas and now his homecoming has been delayed because of a habit he may think he can kick on his own once he's back in The World. He may feel that he is being punished by the military.

However, this scientific drug detection program is not a punitive one. It is strictly a medical program designed not only to identify the individual with a drug problem but also to help him overcome his dependence. No disciplinary action is taken against the individual whose urine sample gives a positive reading, provided that no illicit drugs are found in his possession and that he makes no attempt to use or sell such drugs while he is a patient or at any time during his subsequent military service.

There are no military police patrolling the urine collection stations, waiting for a desperate GI to attempt some sort of hanky-panky, such as substituting a vial of what he assumes to be a heroin-free sample for the one handed him at the entrance. If the medical technicians observe any such deception, they simply confiscate the substitute vial and explain to the GI that he will have to return later and provide a sample of his own urine.

Every urine sample collected at the 90th Replacement Battalion and at other replacement centers in Vietnam is tagged for identification and sent to a medical laboratory. There it is subjected to two biochemical screenings, the Free Radical Assay Technique (FRAT) and the Thin Layer Chromatography (TLC). Should either or both tests indicate the presence of morphine (of which heroin is a derivative), the sample is then given a confirmatory test, the Gas Liquid Chromatography (GLC).

The FRAT is a very sensitive technique designed



NEHF

Labeling and identification of samples is a meticulous process and there is little chance of a mix-up.

NEHF

Technicians at the 9th Medical Laboratory perform various phases of the Thin Layer Chromatography (TLC) test. When sprayed, morphine will appear as a blue stain on the plate.

exclusively for the detection of morphine. The urine is mixed with an antigen-antibody complex which contains a specially labeled morphine, and the mixture is placed in the FRAT detector. Any morphine in the urine sample will attach itself to this complex, displacing the specially labeled morphine, which contains a free electron. The increased amount of electron spin caused by the displacement will be indicated on a pen-recording graph.

The Thin Layer Chromatography will identify not only morphine in the urine sample but also amphetamines and barbiturates. The organic extract of each sample is placed on a plate covered with a thin layer of silica gel, then subjected to a complex separation process. Spraying with various chemicals will cause each drug present to appear as a certain color at an exact position on the plate.

In the most discriminating of the three tests, the Gas Liquid Chromatography, the urine sample is inserted into a heated column filled with both a solid and a liquid substance. Each chemical in the vaporized urine passes through the column at a certain rate of speed, based on its affinity for the liquid. Any morphine in the urine will complete its journey in a pre-determined number of minutes and seconds, and the amount of time will be recorded graphically. As well as being the most accurate, the GLC is the most time-consuming of the tests. It is used in the drug detection program only to confirm positive morphine results from the FRAT and TLC.

The 9th Medical Laboratory, which is responsible for analysis of all urine samples collected from military personnel in Vietnam, has annexes at Long Binh, Camp Alpha, Cam Ranh Bay and Da Nang. Together these facilities test several thousand samples every day.

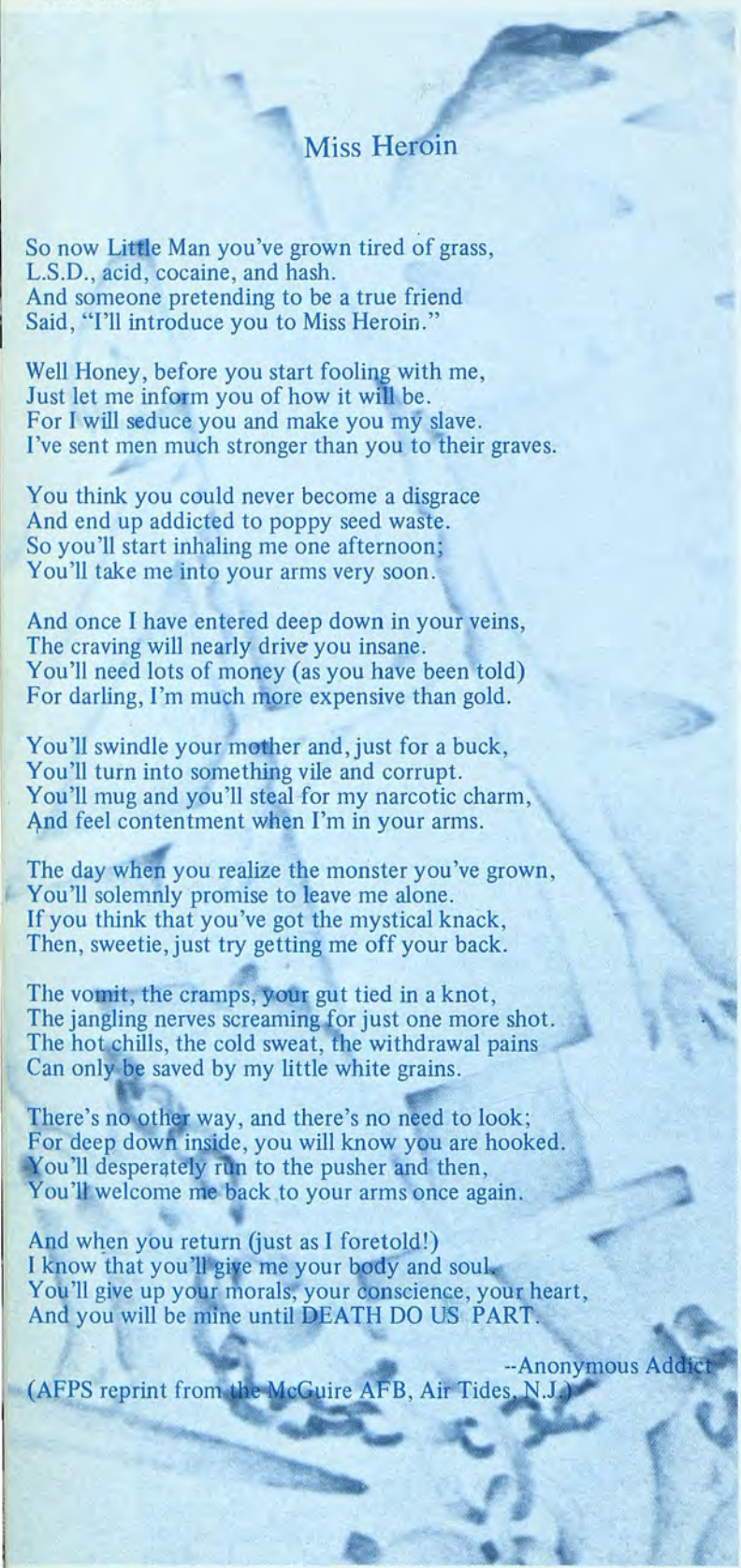
"Although the machines which perform the various tests are highly reliable, we are not tied completely to them," emphasizes LTC Charles H. Ertell Jr., chief of the Plans and Operations Division, U.S. Army Vietnam Medical Command and a member of the USARV S urgeon's Drug Operation Center. "That is why every individual brought to the treatment facility is evaluated by a physician. Perhaps he has been taking a medically prescribed drug which contains an opium base. If he can present his prescription and convince the doctor that he is not abusing the drug, he will be allowed to return to the replacement center and complete his normal DEROS processing."

The tests do not indicate the presence of marijuana in an individual's system, but the GI who smokes that "harmless J" the night before he gives a urine sample may find himself detained as a possible heroin user.

"Some guys will swear when they arrive here that they have not been on heroin, and to their knowledge they haven't," explains MAJ Jack S. Taylor, executive officer of the Long Binh Drug Treatment Center. "However, some marijuana cigarettes have been laced with the stuff in their preparation, and if the man smokes one of those the night before, it's going to show up on the tests."

GIs reporting to the replacement centers for DEROS processing are briefed on their obligation to provide a urine sample for analysis. Those with drug problems are encouraged to turn themselves in immediately for treatment rather than postpone the inevitable. It is stressed that the sooner a man begins his detoxification, the sooner he will be on his way back to the States.

MCCORMICK



Miss Heroin

So now Little Man you've grown tired of grass,
L.S.D., acid, cocaine, and hash.
And someone pretending to be a true friend
Said, "I'll introduce you to Miss Heroin."

Well Honey, before you start fooling with me,
Just let me inform you of how it will be.
For I will seduce you and make you my slave.
I've sent men much stronger than you to their graves.

You think you could never become a disgrace
And end up addicted to poppy seed waste.
So you'll start inhaling me one afternoon;
You'll take me into your arms very soon.

And once I have entered deep down in your veins,
The craving will nearly drive you insane.
You'll need lots of money (as you have been told)
For darling, I'm much more expensive than gold.

You'll swindle your mother and, just for a buck,
You'll turn into something vile and corrupt.
You'll mug and you'll steal for my narcotic charm,
And feel contentment when I'm in your arms.

The day when you realize the monster you've grown,
You'll solemnly promise to leave me alone.
If you think that you've got the mystical knack,
Then, sweetie, just try getting me off your back.

The vomit, the cramps, your gut tied in a knot,
The jangling nerves screaming for just one more shot.
The hot chills, the cold sweat, the withdrawal pains
Can only be saved by my little white grains.

There's no other way, and there's no need to look;
For deep down inside, you will know you are hooked.
You'll desperately run to the pusher and then,
You'll welcome me back to your arms once again.

And when you return (just as I foretold!)
I know that you'll give me your body and soul.
You'll give up your morals, your conscience, your heart,
And you will be mine until DEATH DO US PART.

--Anonymous Addict
(AFPS reprint from the McGuire AFB, Air Tides, N.J.)

Scientific detection... forces him to confront his first obstacle– physical dependence.

"Sometimes a guy will at first decide to take his chances with the tests," says CPT John A. Soyak, a drug operation control officer with the 9th Med Lab. "Then, while he is awaiting his turn at the collection station, he'll just throw up his hands in despair because he knows very well what the results will be. We simply take him aside and try to reassure him that he will not be punished and that we want to help him get off drugs. We then arrange for him to get to the drug treatment center as soon as possible."

At first glance, Long Binh's drug treatment center looks more like a prison compound than a hospital. However, closer observation reveals that the MPs guarding it do not carry firearms. The cyclone fence topped by barbed wire that surrounds the facility serves not only to keep the patients inside but also to keep illicit drugs out.

When a patient is admitted to the treatment center for detoxification, he is initially stripped and searched to insure that he is not carrying any drugs in with him. He is allowed to keep his wrist watch and wedding band, but his other valuables are retained by the registrar and, along with all money in excess of $10, are forwarded by registered mail to the stateside hospital to which he will be assigned. The $10 will be returned to him when he leaves the facility. Without money or other valuables he stands little opportunity of getting his hands on any illicit drugs during his stay.

There are other security measures in force as well. Members of the treatment center staff are required to provide urine samples periodically, and all visitors to the facility must register at the main gate.

Clad in shower shoes and pajamas, the individual is interviewed by a physician and a determination is made as to the extent of his involvement with drugs and his potential for rehabilitation. If detoxification is deemed necessary, he will remain at the center for at least three days. This period of detainment is designed to dry him out--to get him off the drug physically. Psychological rehabilitation is a more involved process which he will undergo when he returns to the States.

KELLEY

If these drugs show up in your urine sample, you'll spend more time in 'Nam than you counted on.

"We are solely a detoxification center," explains LTC (Dr.) James K. Aton, commanding officer of the Long Binh treatment facility. "We have a chaplain on hand, as well as a social worker staff, so if a man wants to talk about his problems, there will be someone to listen to him and counsel him. But detoxification must be the first step in an attempt at rehabilitation."

The first 24 hours are usually the worst for the patient who is strung out on heroin. When the withdrawal pains ease, television, a day room with ping-pong and pool table and a softball field are available to keep him occupied. But the big event of each day for the restless GI is the posting of the latest urinalysis results.

Remarks like "One more negative is all I need, man, and then I'm going home!" are heard frequently.

When he leaves the drug treatment center, the GI on orders for a new assignment will be evacuated to a CONUS military hospital at or near his next duty station, where he will receive further treatment. If as a result of this treatment his prognosis for rehabilitation is considered favorable, he will be discharged from the hospital and entered in a unit rehabilitation program, under which his progress will be closely monitored.

The soldier scheduled to ETS from Vietnam will be evacuated to a military hospital in CONUS, then admitted to a Veterans Administration hospital. He will be released from active duty, but will undergo further treatment and rehabilitation as a civilain patient in the VA facility. Should he prefer to be treated in a civilian facility, the Army may accommodate his request.

At the beginning of September the Army expanded its attack on drug abuse in Vietnam by implementing detection by urinalysis at the small unit level. A commander is given only a few hours' notice that a mobile medical team will be visiting his unit to collect urine samples from all of his men. Those found to be on heroin, or to be abusing amphetamines or barbiturates, will be required to enter the drug treatment center at Long Binh or the one at Cam Ranh Bay for detoxification.

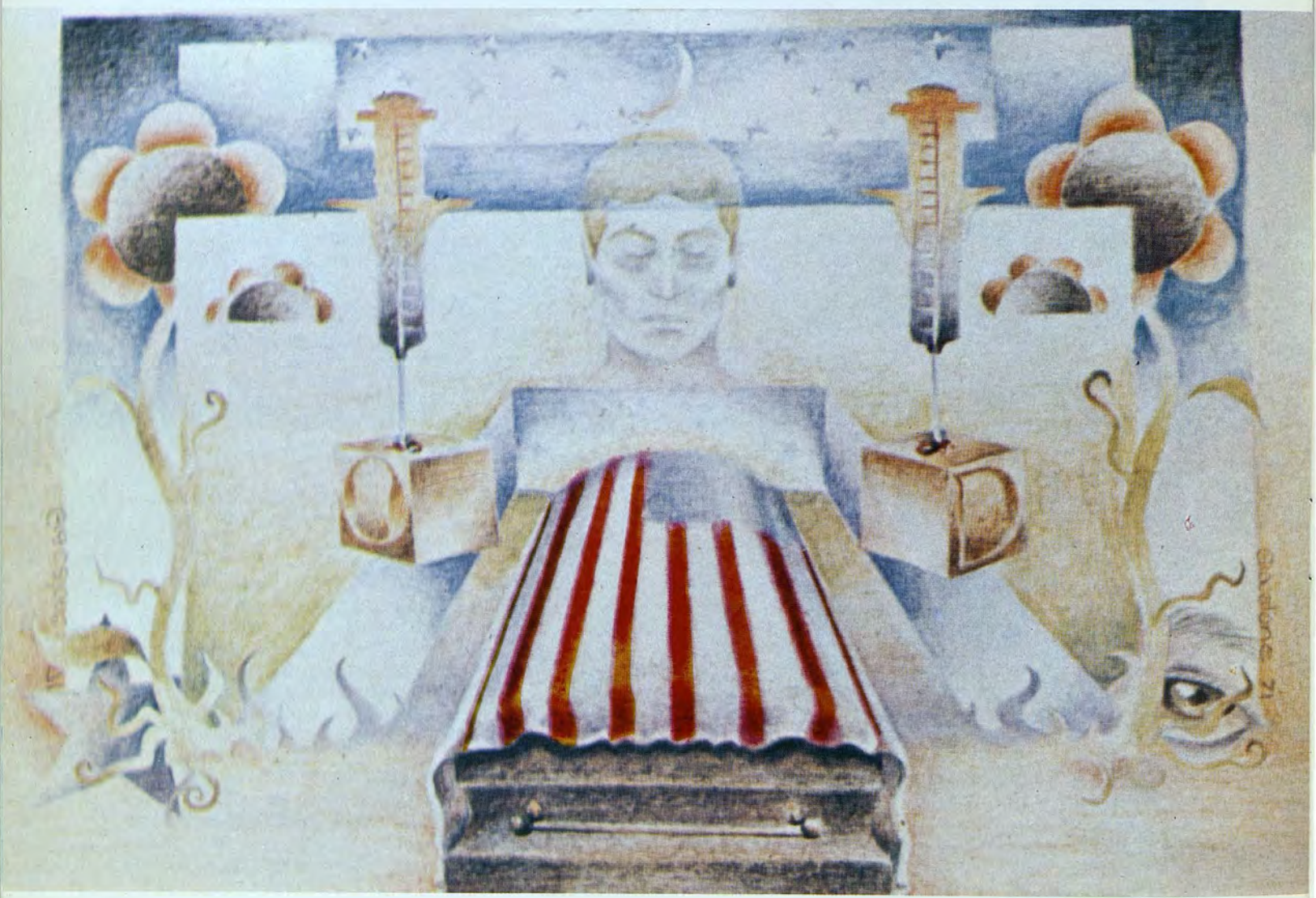
The Army is currently organizing a number of rehabilitation centers throughout Vietnam which the GI can enter voluntarily for two weeks of treatment, provided he has not been previously identified as a drug user. No disciplinary action will be taken against him for volunteering. The aim here is to encourage the individual to face up to his drug problem before he reaches the end of his tour or his unit is selected for the drug detection test.

GIs returning to their units from either a drug treatment center or a rehabilitation center will continue to receive help under the unit counseling program. Fellow soldiers trained as counselors will be available to make the going a little easier. Rap sessions and other rehabilitative activities will be scheduled to help the detoxified individuals "stay clean."

There is no denying that detainment for drug abuse at DEROS or any other time can be a most unpleasant experience. But many GIs who have left Vietnam convinced that they could kick their heroin habit on their own are finding that it is just not that simple. Those $3-a-day habits in Vietnam have in may instances become $100-a-day obsessions back in The World, where skag is neither as pure, plentiful nor as cheap.

Scientific detection of the GI's drug problem can be the first step in his rehabilitation, for it forces him to confront his first obstacle--physical dependence. Subsequent treatment and counseling either in Vietnam or stateside can be just what he needs to clear the final and highest hurdle--his psychological dependence--and rid himself at last of a most destructive habit.

GIACALONE



CPT Al Goodbary visits a young friend at the Vinh Long Orphanage.

TO HELP A CHILD

Hawk Staff Story

Photos by CPT R. N. Appleby

The walls around the courtyard are topped with broken glass and barbed wire, the buildings are pocked by shrapnel and shell marks, mementos of Tet, 1968. Inside, five sisters of the Vinh Long convent fight a never-ending battle against starvation and disease, trying to save the real losers of the war, the orphans of Vietnam.

Recently, the sisters of the Vinh Long Orphanage gained new allies in their fight when the Lighthorse troopers of C Troop, 3/17th Air Cavalry Squadron discovered their plight and decided to take a personal interest in the children's welfare.

When they first visited the orphanage, the men were appalled by what they saw: thin, undernourished babies lay in crowded wooden cribs with no padding. Clothed in diapers that were stiff and discolored from countless washings without enough soap, the infants flailed their tiny arms in the air to ward off the flies and mosquitoes that came in swarms through the open windows. Many were plagued with rashes and open sores.

The sisters were in need of virtually all the food, clothing, and medical items necessary for proper infant care. Diapers, sheets, powder, cotton, oil, towels, milk and disinfectants--all were in short supply. When the children became ill, there was little the nuns could do for them. Often they lost as many as five children a night as a result of malnutrition and lack of medical aid. The situation was critical, and the troopers were quick to respond.

Immediately they constructed screens for the doors, windows and porch of the orphanage, allowing the children fresh air without the annoyance of insects. On their next payday the men of C Troop donated more than $300 for the purchase of food and supplies.

. . .CARING FOR AND EDUCATING THE YOUTH OF THE PROVINCE. . .

New mats were stretched across the floors of the cribs. Doctors from the Vinh Long Army Airfield dispensary came to help out with donations of medical supplies. They made periodic visits to treat the children and to give additional medical instruction to the concerned nuns.

A letter writing campaign carried the troopers' concern outside Vietnam. Wives, parents and church groups back in the States were informed of the orphans' plight. Before long, boxes of diapers, sheets and infant ware were arriving at the airfield. A letter to Mead Johnson and Company expressing the children's dire need for milk was responded to with a shipment of 50 cases of powdered milk formula. The father of one of the men arranged for a shipment of diapers that had been salvaged from a derailed train in the States to be donated to the orphanage.

Overwhelmed by the displays of generosity from so many quarters, the sisters could hardly keep tears from their eyes as the donated articles began to arrive.

Dramatic as it is, the story of the Vinh Long orphanage is only one of the many projects of "Operation Angel," the civic action program of Vinh Long Army Airfield .

Organized in 1965 and supported entirely by voluntary contributions of the personnel of all American units stationed at the airfield, the program is dedicated to the social welfare and education of the people of Vinh Long Province. Under the guidance of a board of governors representing all the participating units, the consolidated program can undertake projects that would prove too much of a financial burden for individual units to tackle by themselves.

For six years, this program has been the Americans' "other weapon" in the war against Communism. Time and again it has proved to be stronger than the firepower of the enemy and the fear he has tried to instill in the countryside.

"During the 1968 Tet Offensive, these people were hit as hard as anyone by the Communists," explained Major Keric J. Cochran, chaplain of the 7th Squadron, 1st Air Cavalry. "They used every means at their disposal to try to win the people over but they were unsuccessful. I think the years we worked with and for the people were the major reason."

A jeep ride through the town market place brings to view much of the Viet Cong devastation. However, the bullet-scarred cathedral--from which the Viet Cong tried unsuccessfully to drive the people--is today contrasted with the prosperous Vinh Long countryside, the people hard at work in their fields and shops.

One example of how Operation Angel has helped the province to prosper and to prepare for the future is the Le Van Xua school project. The village of Le Van Xua is in a secluded section of the province, attainable only by boat or helicopter. Because of its remote location, the village's problem might have gone unnoticed. However, the situation

Sewing class is a favorite with these girls at the Good Shepherd Convent.

"We are most grateful, then, to be able to provide these girls with a home life they never experienced before."

Like school girls everywhere, this class at the Good Shepherd Convent enjoys a gabfest while the teacher is out of the room.

was brought to the attention of COL Duong Huu Nghia, the Vinh Long Province chief. He then conferred with the Americans and the project was presented to the board of governors of Operation Angel for consideration.

The project was approved, and last June, the elementary school was completed with contributions of $1,200 from Operation Angel. The school accommodates 150 children living within a radius of 10 kilometers. "Without this school," said Chaplain Cochran, "these children would all be working in the rice paddies and most would probably never receive any formal education.

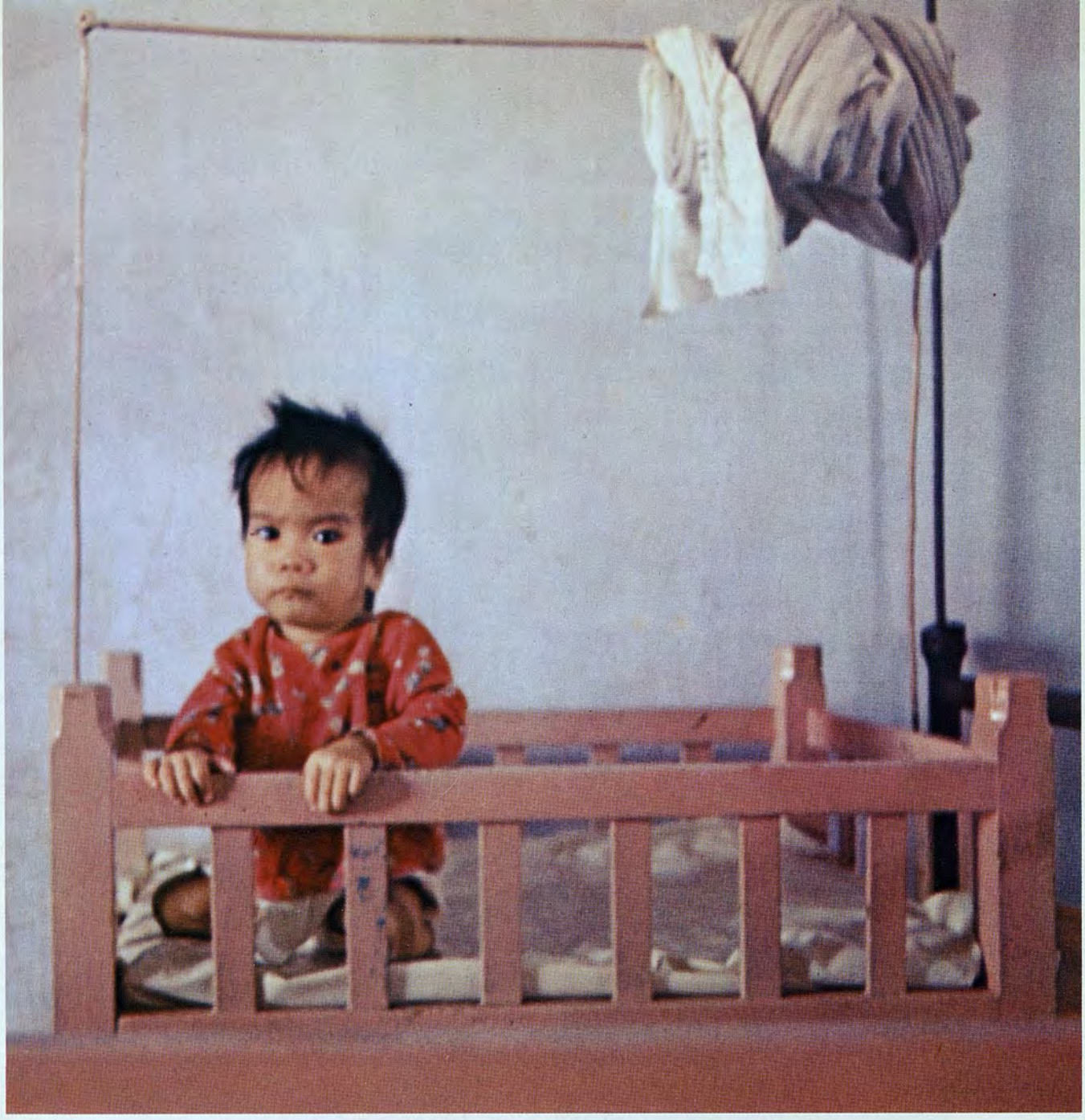
"Projects such as this one," he continued, "would not be possible in any other setup. A single unit could not begin to raise the $1,200 that was needed for this school or the $1,700 that was used to buy furnishings for the Long Duc District High School."

"I can't remember any request ever being turned down," Chaplain Cochran said. "This would certainly not be the case if a single battalion were to undertake all these projects alone, and we can avoid any overlapping of resources or wasteful spending."

The success of the Vinh Long program has not gone unnoticed. As civic action assumed an ever-increasing role in Vietnamization, Operation Angel found itself the object of numerous studies and visits by the civic action planners of other communities, who find in the project a coordinated means of attaining the long-range goals of Vietnamization with maximum effectiveness.

Operation Angel's main effort is directed toward helping underprivileged children. "It is by caring for and educating the youth of the province that we feel we are best preparing for the future needs of the community," the chaplain explained.

Projects such as the Long Duc High School, where the students receive instruction to become teachers themselves upon graduation, typify this type of planning. "This is a continuing process that will improve the province in the long run," he pointed out, "and in essence, this is what Vietnamization is all about. Programs dealing with immediate problems contribute to Vietnamization, but for consolidation of achievements and progress, programs that contribute continuously are necessary."



From the safety of his crib, a child looks out on an uncertain world.

Another example of the program's commitment to the future of the province through its youth is the aid given each month to the Convent of the Good Shepherd Home for Girls, a home and vocational training school for wayward girls. Of the nearly 300 girls attending the school, many had been in trouble with the law. "These girls are not basically bad," explained one of the sisters. "It is generally their families--or the lack of them--and the social environment that are at fault. We are most grateful, then, to be able to provide these girls with a home life they never experienced before. Without the continued generosity of the soldiers at the airfield, and our many other benefactors around the world, this would not be possible."

More important than a good home environment, the convent trains the girls, reducing their chances of becoming burdens on society when they leave the school. "We try to instruct the girls in all the skills they will need to become good housewives and mothers," continued the sister. "In addition to such courses as household management, cookery and baby care, our girls are also offered specialized training in hair-dressing, accounting, typing, secretarial and clerical work. These courses enable them to become useful, contributing members of the community when they graduate."

In addition to the $150 contributed each month to help maintain the facilities of the Good Shepherd Convent, an

equal amount is given to support 24 children from the Christian Children Fund. This organization places the orphans in foster homes in the local community. Also, $650 was recently given to the Vinh Long Normal School to aid in the renovation and expansion of the school library.

Even in the midst of their currently active program, the administrators of Operation Angel are planning for the future when the American units will have left Vinh Long. They have set aside a special fund to be held in trust by the American province advisor so that Vinh Long Army Airfield's project will continue to provide for the welfare and education of the children of the province long after the last GI has gone.

According to the chaplain, plans are being made to expand the present program to reach even more of the needy and helpless victims of the war. "Oftentimes the civilians of this country do not fully realize the great sacrifices we are making in the field on their behalf. They do see and appreciate the efforts we make in helping their poor, their sick and their orphans.

"The Communists are seeking a propaganda victory by wide-spread rumors that we are about to abandon the people of South Vietnam. Through our civic action program, we are not only helping to take this victory away from them, but we are also proving that our part in this war is not 'man's inhumanity to man' but a commitment to his fellow man."

John (in checked shirt) and his friends at the orphanage like the new clothes sent them from the States.

AT A GLANCE

Where There's A Will

The staff judge advocate suggests that you review what has transpired since you executed your will.

If any of the following items apply to you, ask your legal assistance officer if you need a new will:

--Change in marital status.
--Children born or adopted.
--Change in state of legal residence.
--No longer own certain assets mentioned in will.
--Received substantial gift or inheritance.
--Changed nature of assets.
--Value of total estate exceeds $60,000 if single or $120,000 if married.
-- Have made substantial advances of assets or cash to selected heirs.
--Individual executor, trustee or guardian has died or moved away.
--Witness to will no longer readily available.

The staff judge advocate draws up new wills and makes necessary revisions in existing documents with no charge to the service member.

Getting Short? Get VA Bennies

The Veterans Administration outlines the following timetable on benefits for personnel after their separation from military service:

--Notify within 10 days any local Selective Service board of address.
--Apply within 90 days to former employer if re-employment there is desired.
--Convert within 120 days Servicemen's Group Life Insurance to an individual policy without examination.
--Apply within one year for VA dental care or to request unemployment compensation from local state employment service.
--Complete within eight years education with GI Bill assistance.

Travel Pay For Trailers

In addition to guaranteed loans to buy a house trailer, GIs are eligible for financial assistance to move their mobile homes. Up to 74 cents per mile for moves within the continental United States is offered to members in pay grades E-5 to E-9 and E-4s with at least four years' service.

Selling Your House Or Trailer?

If that home was bought with the help of a GI loan, the Veterans Administration reminds you to get a "release of liability" before the sale is complete.

Failure to do so will leave you responsible for satisfactory completion of the initial GI loan obligation if the new owner fails to meet monthly payments.

Tax Time Again

Federal income tax returns normally must be submitted for the current year by April 15, 1972, but personnel stationed in Vietnam may elect to postpone submission up to 180 days after their return to the States.

If your wife is filing a joint return while you are in Vietnam, have her indicate in the space for your signature that you are serving in a combat zone.

MVA Blueprint

Modern Volunteer Army

The Modern Volunteer Army continues to receive increasing emphasis as the service moves to "expedite the development of a capably led, highly competent fighting force which attracts motivated, qualified volunteers."

The concept of molding a better Army is built around strengthening professionalism with positive incentives to service while improving Army life by reducing the sources of dissatisfaction. The Army will accomplish its goals through a more modernized accession system to attract volunteers to a revitalized, better Army.

Distinguished Flying Crosses

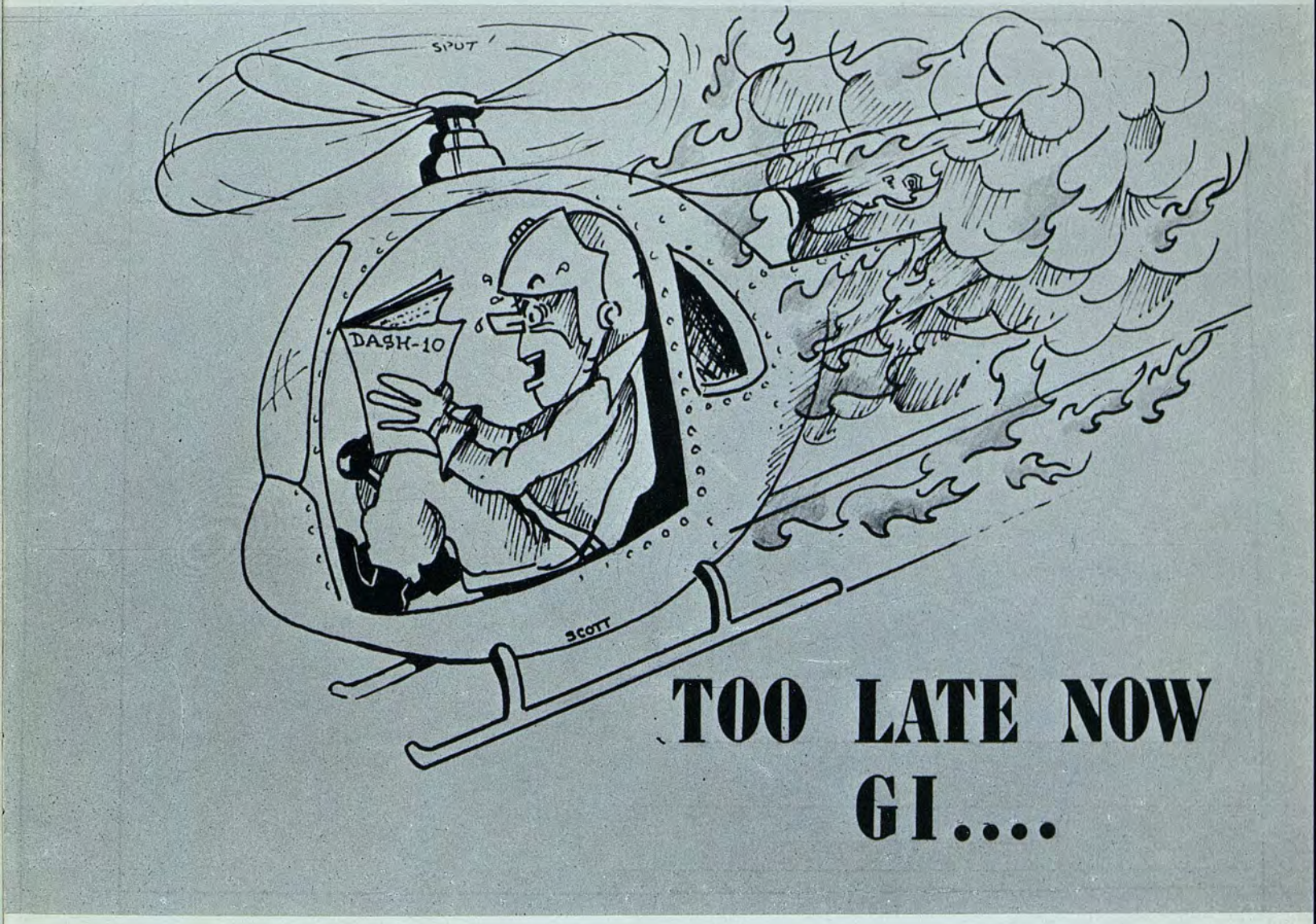
CPT Richard M. Dickerson
*SP5 Jimmie D. Hinton
WO1 John R. Oldham
SP4 James C. Groth
LTC Edward Tolfa Jr.
CPT Russell E. McCoy
CPT Thomas S. Swartz
*WO1 Robert G. Fortin
CPT William A. Reavis
*CPT James J. Shereck
WO1 Robert E. Robinson
CW2 David W. Jamieson
CPT Robert A. Goodbury
CPT John C. Nidiffer
SP4 Joseph P. Reilly
WO1 Robert R. Stevens
SP5 Steven R. Davis
*WO1 Gerald F. Vilas
*CPT Bruce A. Cannon
CPT James W. Halley

Silver Stars

CPT John W. Crosby
*CPT Larry R. Dewey
WO1 Robert L. Parker
WO1 Carroll L. Beasley
SP4 Glenn R. Nicholas
WO1 Stephen A. Williams
1LT Clifford C. Whiting
SP4 Barry L. Redington
SP5 Lyle E. Goeringer
SP4 James W. Condo
CWO Jack W. Brunson
*CPT Clinton A. Musil
SP4 Carlos E. Dearmon
CPT Jim G. Phillips
CW2 Daniel Grossman
SP4 James J. Spanel
CPT Russell E. McCoy
WO1 Michael A. Devaux
SSG Ronald L. Sneed

*Posthumous

WING TIPS...



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