



THE HURRICANE

FEBRUARY 1968

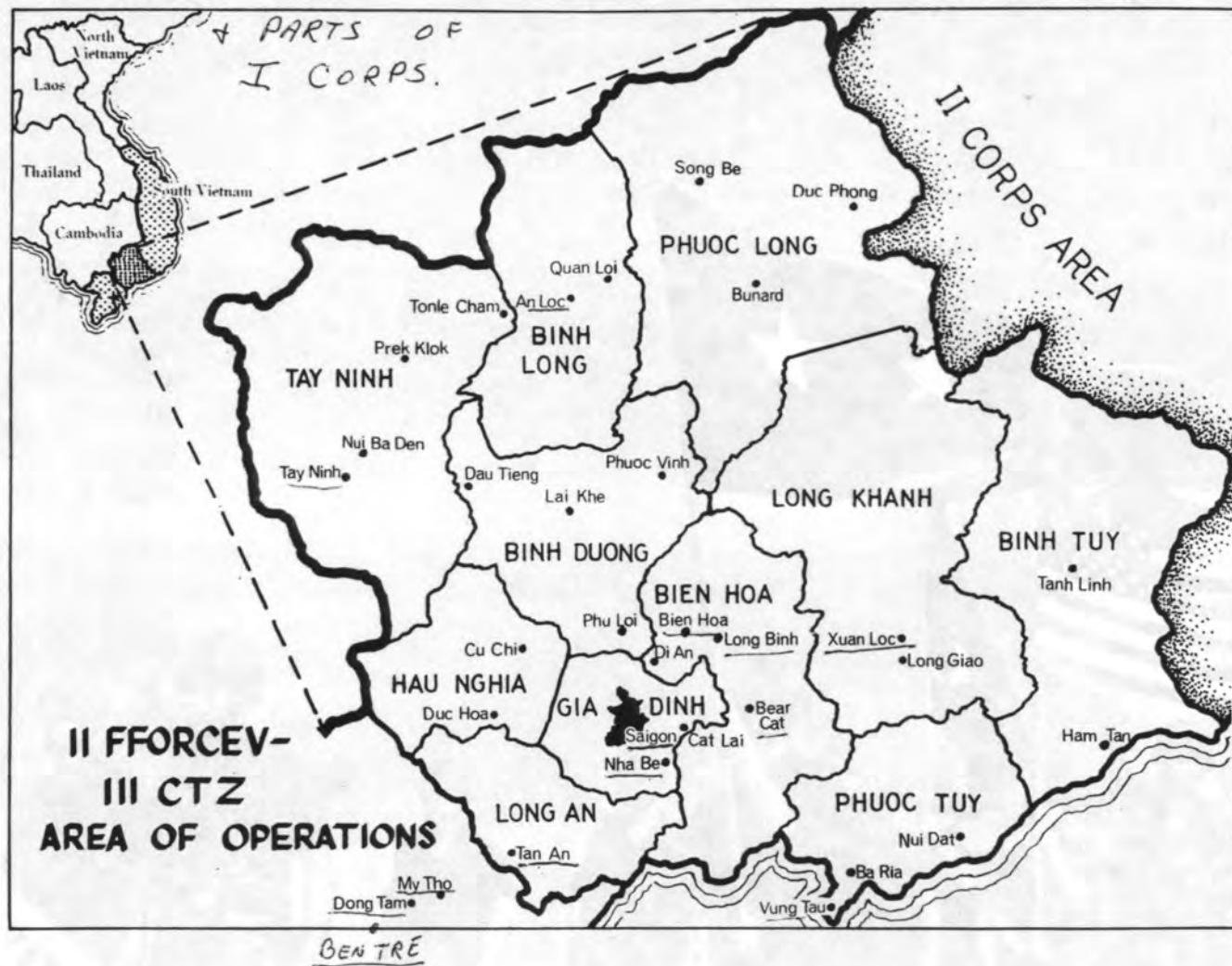
NUMBER FOUR

A PUBLICATION OF II FIELD FORCE VIETNAM



Screaming Eagles Arrive
Story on page 14

The II CORPS IS OUR OPERATIONAL AREA



Next month in **THE HURRICANE**: "Long An-Gateway to the Delta," the first in a series of 12 articles on the provincial organization of III Corps Tactical Zone.

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"The Philippine Civic Action Group is in South Vietnam to pursue an honorable peace, a peace that promotes human dignity and freedom as much for the Filipino generations yet to come as for the suffering people of Vietnam". These are the words of Philippine President Ferdinand E. Marcos. Read "PHILCAG", by SP4 Peter Bie, on page 2.

Our cover, photographed by SP5 Beecham Cockroft, shows Maj. Gen. O. M. Barsanti leading his staff from the C-141 Starlifter that brought them from Ft. Campbell to Vietnam. Read about the arrival of the 101st Airborne Division on page 14.

In Vietnam, fact has overcome superstition and hope for leprosy victims. Much of the credit belongs to Father Victor G. Berset, a Swiss with 15 years service in Vietnam. Read SP4 Peter Bie's story, "Ben San Leprosarium," on page 22.

2LT Michael L. Gerson
Editor

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II FIELD FORCE VIETNAM

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53D SIGNAL BATTALION *Photo Support*

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PHILCAG

Story By SP4 Peter Bie

Revolutionary Development has a marked Filipino accent in Tay Ninh Province.

The province, furthest west of the twelve in the II Field Force Vietnam tactical area of operations and one of four bordering the Cambodian border, has approximately 285,000 inhabitants.

Assisting the Government of Vietnam in bringing a viable governmental structure to the province—until recently Viet Cong dominated—are the same organizations found throughout the III Corps Tactical Zone: Civil Operations and Revolutionary Support (CORDS); USAID; and U.S. Civil Affairs units. The Filipino accent, however, comes from a unique organization called PHILCAG I.

PHILCAG stands for Philippine Civic Action Group. The Roman numeral indicates that it is the first of a series of such groups planned for assignment to Vietnam as long as the GVN wants them.

Housed since October 1966 in a model base camp—a camp which will hopefully one day be the site of a major Vietnamese university—PHILCAG I quickly established contact with all governmental and military units in the area. They made a thorough assessment of the needs and desires of the populace before they began fanning out in different directions.

Refugees, they were told, were a major problem to the hard-pressed provincial authorities. Tay Ninh was attracting those fleeing VC-dominated areas; those escaping military operations, and those who merely wanted to build lives around a major urban center.

In the conferences that followed, it was agreed that a major PHILCAG project would be the construction of a model refugee center—actually a brand new community designed for permanent occupancy.

The site chosen was the VC-infested Than Dien Forest, just a few kilometers from Tay Ninh City. It meant that the VC had to be routed from the forest and the forest had to be leveled to provide virgin farm lands and an area for the community.

PHILCAG went to work. As their engineers

plowed down trees, they encountered mines, booby traps, and firefights with the VC. Two PHILCAG members were killed in the operation and four others have been killed in other PHILCAG activities. In all, 600 hectares (about 1,500 square acres) were cleared. Some of the forest was left intact to provide the occupation of wood cutting for the new settlers.

Conferences were held with the new inhabitants so that the community would be built to meet their desires. Than Dien village was laid out in a one kilometer square, with 600 duplex buildings to house 1,200 families. Additionally, each family was given a plot of land for farming and livestock breeding. The foundations and ceilings of each duplex were constructed by PHILCAG engineers using funds and material donated by the GVN, CORDS, and USAID. The individual inhabitants finished building their homes, assisted with a 10,000 piaster (about \$100.00) allowance from the GVN and the expert advice of PHILCAG engineers.

Than Dien is built around a community core containing market places, hamlet office, dispensary and maternity clinic, power house and a 10-room school house for 700 students. Presently, the village has a 700 family population totaling more than 4,000 persons.

In the once forest land adjoining Than Dien, the farmers are beginning to plant the increasingly-famous IR-8 (Improved Rice). Developed in the Philippines and first introduced and harvested at Than Dien, the "miracle rice" grows to maturity in four months (versus six for Vietnamese strains), has a shorter and stronger stalk, and produces from four to ten times as much yield.

But not all Than Dien villagers will be rice farmers. Urban skills are being taught through PHILCAG inspiration. A permanent party of engineers and civic action specialists are attached to the site to help the village begin the entire Doi Moi (New Life) process.

PHILCAG activities have spread to other areas also. The large military operations in the area had overloaded the limited road net-



SP4 PAUL TEMPLE

These PHILCAG doctors and nurses prepare another Vietnamese patient for an operation. This is part of the daily routine for the surgical team working closely with the Vietnamese staff at the Tay Ninh Provincial Hospital.

work. The energetic Filipinos built a new 160-foot bridge bypass over the Tay Ninh River to divert heavy convoy traffic from the center of town. The bridge not only reduces the congestion, annoyance, and dangers of military traffic, but provides a vital link to Highway 22, a main artery leading to Saigon. Other improvements were made to more than 70 miles of highway in the Tay Ninh area, including one to the rock quarry at the base of Nui Ba Den (Black Virgin Mountain).

Vietnamese effort is part-and-parcel of all PHILCAG activities. Civic action, they say, requires the partnership of both sides. It cannot be a gift. When PHILCAG engineers plan improvements to a library, or a school, the Tay Ninh authorities and labor crews are a part of the planning and construction. When the task is completed, the provincial authorities have demonstrated again that the Government of Vietnam is interested in improving the lot of all its people.

This "total involvement" has boosted the Chieu Hoi (Open Arms) Program. More than 100 Viet Cong have returned to Government

control by "rallying" to PHILCAG soldiers. Some have come from deep in the Delta (over a hundred miles away) specifically to report to PHILCAG. One reason, PHILCAG authorities are quick to point out, is that the Tay Ninh Chieu Hoi Center is one of the most modern in the III Corps Tactical Zone. PHILCAG helps at the center by giving on-the-job training to Hoi Chanh (GVN returnees) who wish to learn such engineering techniques as bulldozer operations.

While the engineers help build material prosperity in Tay Ninh, Filipino medical teams help improve and save lives. The teams are a successor to the original PHILCON (Philippine Contingent) which consisted of PSYOP, civic action, and surgical-rural health teams.

The Filipino medics work with quiet dedication. At the Tay Ninh Provincial Hospital's frequently overcrowded 40-bed surgical ward, PHILCAG's doctors, nurses and technical aides join with their Vietnamese counterparts teaching sometimes, learning at other times.

(Continued on following page)

PHILCAG

Initiating a system of patient care and follow through in conjunction with the Vietnamese staff has been one task of the surgical team. New equipment is being sought from the GVN, while more doctors, nurses and aides will be arriving to bolster the Vietnamese staff.

At present the PHILCAG-Vietnamese teams have managed to air-condition the operating room and are looking forward to the day when the surgical ward will be enlarged and the hospital well on its way to being self-sufficient. Ideas flow between the Filipinos and the Vietnamese and even off-duty periods are filled with shop talk.

Several other Filipino surgical-rural health teams operate within the III CTZ—in Binh Duong and Hau Nghia (adjoining Tay Ninh on its southeast corner) and in Din Tuong (about 35 miles south of Saigon) in the IV Corps Tactical Zone. These teams support Vietnamese hospitals and dispensaries and give sanitation classes.

In two years they have been responsible for more than 225,000 Vietnamese treating respiratory and gastro-intestinal disorders, nutritional defects, skin diseases, cardio-vascular cases, parasitic problems. They have also performed minor surgery. Dozens of babies have been delivered with their assistance.

Even while those teams work out of hospitals

and clinics, PHILCAG Medical Civic Action Teams fan out into the hamlets and villages. But a PHILCAG MEDCAP is like no other...

Watching one is like being mixed up in a county fair—a carnival with a purpose. On one side of the road are the medical and dental teams. Both come with enough equipment to establish a practice for any medical specialist. Dentists have metal folding chairs for their patients and are able to treat three at the same time. They sterilize their equipment in the field between treating patients.

The doctors have a special area cordoned off to give their patients more privacy. It looks like a dispensary without walls. Each patient—medical or dental—is given a medical history card. This permits frequent follow up by the doctors, who cover more than 60 villages on a recurring basis.

While the medical-dental teams go about their business, crowds gather around a demonstrator on the other side of the road. He is showing the young and old how to make drinking glasses out of San Miguel beer bottles.

The technique is simple. A loop of wire is heated red hot and slipped over the neck of the bottle to a point just above the label. Pressure is applied for several seconds, and the bottle is immersed in cold water. A neat break is made, and the cut is quickly sanded. Presto! Instant drinking glasses. Actually, the motive is two-fold. The main reason is to deny the VC the casing for a booby trap, but a secondary reason is to increase the Vietnamese supply of sanitary drinking glasses.

Further up the road from the glassmakers is a crafty station for giving baths to the children and hygiene classes to their mothers. The bait consists of hundreds of Batman T-shirts and undershorts. To receive one of the coveted sets of underwear, the youngsters must step into a portable scrub. By the time a hundred children have been through the process, the scene is one of psychedelic confusion. Blue is the most popular colored T-shirt, but greens, reds and yellows add to the kaleidoscope effect.

By adding MEDCAPS to the number of patients seen by the medical-dental-surgical teams, Filipino representatives have treated more than half a million Vietnamese in two years.

For the dedicated members of PHILCAG I, now in their 14th month and awaiting the arrival of PHILCAG II, the tour has been rewarding and educational. Rewarding because they sincerely believe their motto: "To build—not to destroy...to give life—not to take it!"

Or, in the words of Philippine President, Ferdinand E. Marcos, "The Philippine Civic Action Group is in South Vietnam to pursue an honorable peace, a peace that promotes human dignity and freedom...and to assure the future of freedom as much for the Filipino generations yet to come as for the suffering people of Vietnam."



The PHILCAG band strikes up another number during one of the many concerts held in Tay Ninh Province by the group.



For this Vietnamese woman, a painful toothache will soon be gone thanks to the efforts of PHILCAG dentists. A PHILCAG soldier (Below) shows a young Vietnamese boy how to make drinking glasses from San Miguel beer bottles. New drinking glasses may be seen in the immediate background, while more bottles are waiting to be heated and cut.



CHARLIE BROWNE'S BRIDGE

Story By SGT Gary Livengood

PFC WILLIAM LEVERINGTON



CHARLIE BROWNE'S BRIDGE—Charles W. Browne Jr., Assistant District Advisor at Lai Thieu, is flanked by Regional Force/Popular Force soldiers who guard "his" bridge. The bridge has been destroyed three times by the Viet Cong, once while Charlie was standing on it, but each time it was rebuilt through the determined efforts of Charlie and Vietnamese workers.

Good old Charlie Brown! Everyone likes Charlie Brown, especially in the comic strips. For that matter, everyone likes Charles Browne in Vietnam. Well, almost everyone.

The Viet Cong don't.

An example of his unpopularity with the VC is the time when he stood on a bridge which he and a few Vietnamese had built. The VC blew it sky-high.

Vietnam's Charlie Brown is Charles W. Browne, Jr., a member of United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and presently serving as the Assistant District Advisor for Lai Thieu, Binh Duong Province.

The incident on the bridge also exemplifies his determination to assist the people of Vietnam. As the story goes, there is a bridge near the village of Bung on Highway 13 which had been destroyed by the Viet Cong before Charlie Browne's assignment to Lai Thieu. This bridge was important to the surrounding villages for getting produce to market. Browne decided to rebuild it, but could only find a few Vietnamese willing to risk VC wrath and help him.

Soon after the bridge was rebuilt, the VC destroyed it again. That was in April. Mr. Browne rebuilt again and in May held a dedication ceremony. The Viet Cong attended and blew the bridge with Browne standing on it. Huge chunks of concrete and wood soared skyward. Browne wasn't hurt, but a few of his crew received slight injuries.

Local governmental officials, impressed with his determination, put a new crew on the job, rebuilt the bridge and assigned Popular Forces soldiers to guard it.

Building bridges is just a small part of Browne's job. In his role as an advisor, Browne—a member of the Peace Corps for two years—helps bring Revolutionary Development to the people of the Lai Thieu District. One of his continuing accomplishments is the Bien Hoa refugee hamlet. He was a driving force in establishing the hamlet for the 6,000 refugees evacuated from their homes in and around Ben Suc prior to Operation CEDAR FALLS last January. Coordinating with other agencies to insure that the refugees had sufficient food, clothing and medical treatment, the 35-year old advisor also had their houses partially built and a functioning school ready.

Largely through his efforts the refugees are now enjoying homes as good or better than their previous ones. They have better medical treatment, schooling for their children, economic opportunities never envisioned before the move and, perhaps of greater importance, a sense of security from VC domination.

"There haven't been any VC incidents here since the opening of the hamlet," beams Charlie Browne.

In real life, a Charlie Browne can win ball games.

25th Infantry Division

TROPIC LIGHTNING

Story By SFC Roy Doupe, 25th Div.
Photos By 25th Div., I0

The 25th (Tropic Lightning) Infantry Division ranged far and wide over the area west and northwest of Saigon to the Cambodian border in its continuous search to find and destroy the elusive Viet Cong foe during 1967.

From its home base in Hau Nghia Province the division staged operations, ranging from company-size search and destroy missions to multi-division operations, throughout the adjoining provinces of Long An, Tay Ninh and Binh Doun. And, as the year drew to a close, combat-hardened elements of the 2nd and 3rd Brigades were deployed north in Phuoc Long Province to counteract a flare-up of communist activity in that area.

During operations such as FAIRFAX, CEDAR FALLS, GADSDEN, JUNCTION CITY and MANHATTAN the Tropic Lightning troopers penetrated the Pineapple Patch, the Fil Hol and Michelin Plantations, the Iron Triangle, the Ho Bo and Boi Loi Woods and War Zone "C" where VC

influence had reigned supreme for 25 years. They met and defeated the enemy in his own back yard, destroying fortifications systems and base camps that had taken him years to construct and, through continuous and relentless pursuit, denied him the time needed to build new areas where he could rest and recoup his losses.

The Pineapple Patch, once a prosperous plantation that was reduced to a swamp by the VC and heavily fortified, is now merely a swamp filled with destroyed bunkers.

The Fil Hol Plantation and the Ho Bo and Boi Loi Woods, sanctuaries where the VC formerly mounted their raids on Saigon and retreats where he could lick his wounds and rest and recuperate for further terrorist activities, are now just names on a map as engineer land clearing teams have laid low the rubber trees and dense undergrowth on approximately 17,000 acres.

Two members of the 2nd Battalion, 14th Infantry, 1st Brigade, 25th Infantry Division keep low as an Air Force jet fighter-bomber provides close air support against a well dug-in Viet Cong force during Operation BARKING SANDS in Hau Nghia Province.



TROPIC LIGHTNING

In addition to the major operations each brigade conducted monsoon offensives that ran from May to November. The 1st Brigade's Operation BARKING SANDS covered the north half of Hau Nghia Province, the west edge of Binh Duong Province and southeastern Tay Ninh Province. The 2nd Brigade conducted Operation KOLEKOLE in the rest of Hau Nghia and Long An Provinces while the 3rd Brigade during Operation DIAMOND HEAD held its combat assault and Revolutionary Development (RD) missions in Tay Ninh and northwestern Binh Duong Provinces.

Since the beginning of the year the 25th Division has destroyed more than 20 VC base camps while killing more than 3,900 Viet Cong. Other figures show that 25,000 fortifications and 1,900 tunnels were found and blown up with an additional 10,700 meters of tunnels destroyed.

Among the myriad items of material that were captured and either destroyed or evacuated were: 1,200 tons of rice, 7,900 mines and booby

traps, 1,400 individual weapons and 1,097,000 rounds of small arms ammunition.

An integral part of the combat operations were the pacification and RD programs aimed at winning the confidence of the people of the provinces. Medical Civic Action Programs (MEDCAP) were conducted throughout the division's area of operations and 148,000 persons were treated for illnesses ranging from the more serious sicknesses to minor cuts and scratches.

Surveys of villages were made to determine their needs, schools were rebuilt or repaired, dispensaries were opened, wells were dug or cleaned out to insure an adequate clean water supply. Whenever possible the local villagers supplied the labor, but when the project was beyond their capabilities, Tropic Lightning troopers stepped in to get the job done. The whole program was designed to demonstrate to the Vietnamese people that the Division is here to help them rebuild their country instead of destroy it as VC propaganda has led them to believe.

Two of the most notable accomplishments during the year occurred during DIAMOND HEAD, at Dau Tieng in Tay Ninh Province, and BARKING SANDS, at Phu Hoa Dong in Binh Duong Province.

The VC used three villages near the Division's 3rd Brigade Base Camp at Dau Tieng as stopping points for supply trains headed for War Zone "C." to eliminate these rest stops the 334 residents of the villages were relocated to the resettlement area at Lai Thieu just outside Saigon. Nothing was left behind as they took along oxen, water buffalo, chickens, dogs and all their household goods.

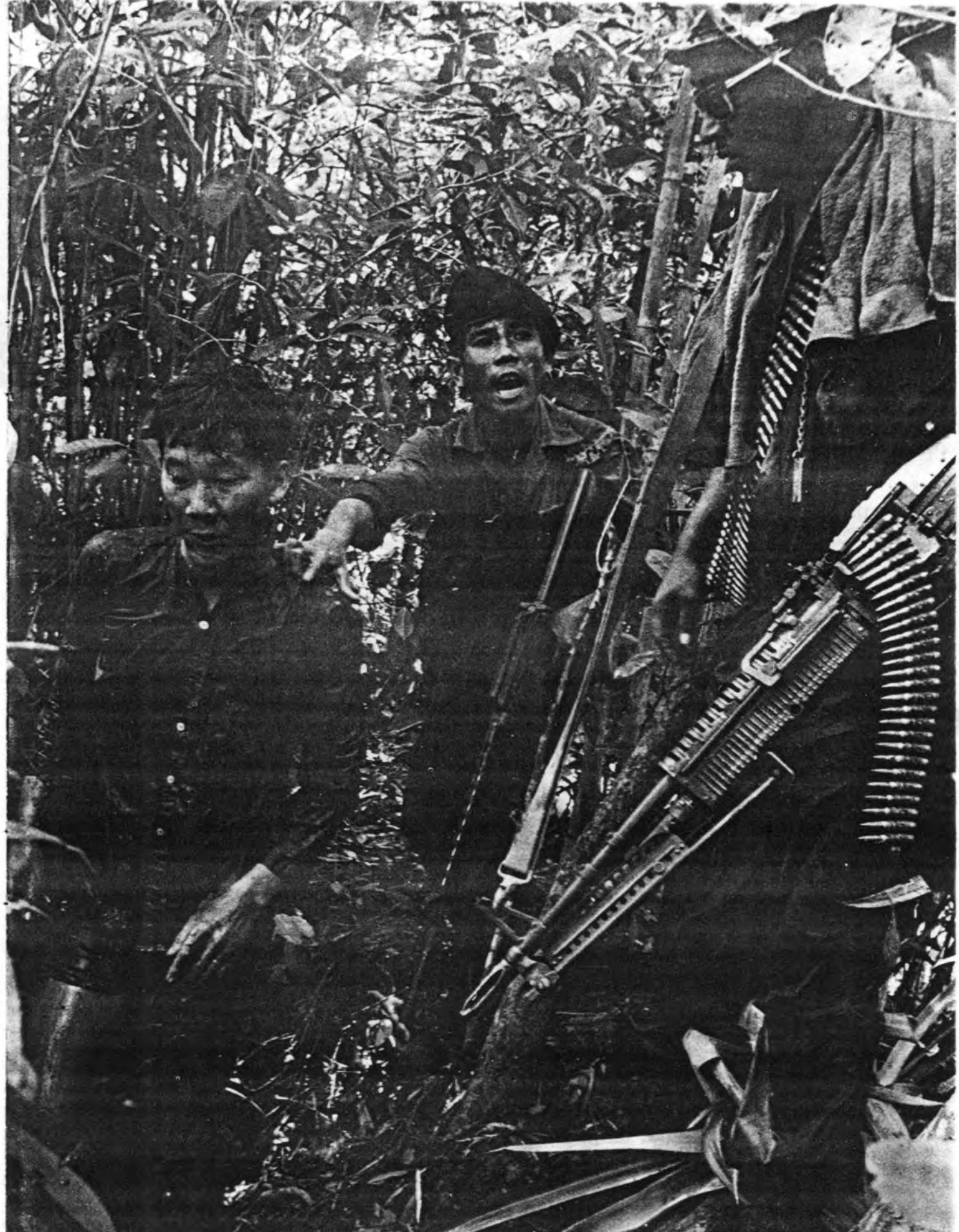
Phu Hoa Dong, a village of 10,000, was estimated to be 80 percent VC or VC sympathizers and was a vital link in the supply route into Saigon. Following a seal and search of the town every resident was registered and ambitious civic actions program initiated. The town was quite spread out and the inhabitants that lived in the heavily forested north and west sections were relocated to the more open southeast section. The vacated sector was then leveled in a land clearing operation that included part of the Fil Hol Plantation.

As 1968 begins the 25th Infantry Division stands ready to strike anywhere, anytime to demonstrate that the VC's terrorist tactics cannot succeed and to show the Vietnamese people that their lives need not be made up of days waiting for the VC tax collectors to come around or sleepless nights waiting for the next raid.



Tropic Lightning troopers of the 25th Infantry Division's 3rd Brigade cross one of the many canals that lead to the Saigon river near Dau Tieng in Tay Ninh Province.

A Vietnamese member of the 2nd Brigade's Combined Reconnaissance Intelligence Platoon (CRIP) brings in a VC suspect that he found hiding in a canal near the Oriental river.



Red Cross

Story By Robert Woodbury
Photos By Mark Stevens
American Red Cross



The slender young blonde was a pretty girl despite her work-clothes: olive-drab military fatigues and jungle combat boots. "Once a week we wear dresses, which may be our biggest contribution to morale," she smiled. "Of course, the majority of the patients want us to do this every day."

The speaker was 25-year-old Brooke Berry, one of a trained staff of four women serving as American Red Cross hospital workers at the 93rd Evacuation Hospital in Long Binh, South Vietnam.

The purpose of the 93rd Evac. is to give immediate medical care to wounded soldiers and stabilize their condition until they may be safely moved. Those with minor wounds are able to rejoin their units after a short stay. Of the remainder, some are moved to convalescent centers elsewhere in Vietnam while the more seriously wounded are evacuated to military hospitals in the United States.

The mission of the Red Cross women—Brooke Berry, of Seattle, Wash.; Judy Scruggs, of Bartow, Georgia; Frankie Lee Osborne, of Long Beach, Calif.; and Elizabeth English, of Willsboro, Pa.—is to assist the military by providing patients with the kind of personal attention that doctors—struggling to save lives and repair the human damage of war—are too busy to give. These women do their best to make hospitalization more comfortable for sick and wounded by furnishing needed personal articles, medically-approved recreation facilities and supplies, and by helping to ease the patients' minds about the things that trouble them, such as problems of communication with home.

The Red Cross workers at the hospital are not alone in their efforts to make life easier for wounded soldiers. The American Red Cross chapter in San Diego has "adopted" the 93rd Evacuation Hospital at Long Binh. Through a program called Operation Helpmate, the Red Cross volunteers at home are busy gathering magazines and paperback books, toilet articles,

cigarette lighters, games and playing cards, recording tapes for messages to worried families at home, and a variety of other personal items to make hospitalization easier for patients at the '93rd.'

These articles are shipped to the Red Cross women at the hospital and distributed to the patients when they make their regular rounds in the wards. Since last summer, the San Diego Red Cross chapter has sent at least three large cartons each month to the 93rd Evacuation Hospital. "If anybody needs anything that can't be requisitioned, they ask us," explained Brooke. "We either come up with it or improvise."

Among the more unusual Helpmate items sent by the San Diego Red Cross chapter are letters to patients written by schoolchildren. Most come from Red Cross Youth members at elementary schools in San Diego. "The patients love these innocent letters from schoolkids," said Frankie. "We receive approximately 75 letters per month and distribute them to the patients who ask for them, especially those who say they'd like to answer them. 'The children say things like, 'I understand the work over there is very hard,' which the patients get a big kick out of. One the other day asked, 'You are so far away—do you have any friends?' Most of the kids thank the men for 'what you are doing for us over there,' and some enclose a package of koolaid, a stick of gum, or some riddles. Many letters have the child's photograph attached, and many have drawings made by the child. I'd say these letters are the things we give out that are the most appreciated and enjoyed by the men."

The Red Cross workers also handle letter-writing chores for men who are unable to write themselves. "This is one of the most satisfying things we are able to do for them," explained Frankie. "And it's meaningful when a next-of-kin writes back to thank us for acting as a go-between while the man is incapacitated. We write 6 to 7 letters a day—not a great deal—but



these letters are the important ones."

There are more than fifty young women now serving 1-year tours of duty with the Red Cross at U.S. military hospitals throughout Vietnam. All are college graduates trained in social work and recreation, and all worked in military hospitals in the U.S. before assignment to Vietnam.

Their duties are manifold: they visit each man shortly after his admittance, bring him a 'comfort kit' so he may wash his face and shave (patients arrive at the hospital directly from the field with no personal belongings), and see if he has any special needs or wishes to contact his unit for any reason.

The Red Cross workers operate the recreation lounge within the hospital complex where convalescing patients may gather to read, listen to music, play ping-pong or pool, have a game of cards, or simply enjoy a chat with an American girl.

They make daily rounds to talk to patients in the wards, go shopping or buy money orders for them, arrange phone calls (the military provides each patient with one telephone call home free of charge), and distribute the aforementioned recreation materials and needed personal articles.

They handle individual problems and give casework services normally provided by Red Cross Field Directors serving with able-bodied troops. And perhaps most important of all, they give the men the individual attention and comfort which is so psychologically necessary for speedy recovery.

As long as the Vietnam war continues, the Red Cross workers at the 93rd Evacuation Hospital in Long Binh will continue to comfort its casualties, daily bringing smiles and encouraging words to every wounded man. They hope that, through the people of San Diego who support the Red Cross Helpmate program, they can continue to supply these men with the things that help to make their hospitalization a bit more comfortable.



Red Cross hospital worker Brooke Berry writes a letter home for left-handed patient Michael Walker at the 93d Evacuation Hospital.



1LT Tom Richardson, a patient at the 93d Evacuation Hospital in Long Binh, Vietnam, selects a book from the cart of Red Cross hospital worker Judy Scruggs.



Mounted searchlights with 125 million candle-power have been a valuable asset to the success of Duster and Quad .50 night fire missions.

Steeped in proud tradition since its inception during the War of 1812, the 5th Battalion (AW) (SP) 2d Artillery is presently engaged in the vital new mission—providing automatic weapons fire-power and searchlight support to the elements of II Field Force Vietnam in the III Corps Tactical Zone, Republic of Vietnam.

From its first participation in combat, during the Battle of Chippewa in 1812, to its more recent accomplishments in Vietnam during Operations SANTA FE, ATLANTA, and LAMSON 67, the Battalion has earned 46 honor streamers for its outstanding service.

Presently under the command of Lieutenant Colonel Lake G. Churchill, Jr., the Battalion is composed of a Headquarters Battery, four firing batteries of 16 tracked twin 40 mm "Dusters" each, and two attached units: D Battery of the 71st Artillery—Quad .50 caliber machineguns, and I Battery of the 29th Artillery—searchlights.

Primary firepower for the Battalion is provided by the M42 Duster. Each Duster carries two 40 mm guns capable of firing a total of 240 rounds per minute. This weapon was originally designed for deployment with armored divisions as a means of anti-aircraft protection, but because of its rapid rate of fire, it has proved a valuable infantry support weapon against ground targets. The M42 full track vehicles also are highly maneuverable, capable of traveling at speeds up to 45 miles per hour, and able to negotiate the most difficult terrain.

With the attachment of D Battery, 71st Artillery, in June, 1966, another element of strong firepower was added. The battery consists of 24 M55 Quad .50 caliber machine guns. They are mounted on the rear of armored 2½ ton trucks and each Quad .50 is capable of spitting

1812—

5th Battalion

Story By PFC Ronald Pejsa

out more than 2,000 rounds per minute.

I Battery, 29th Artillery, joined the Battalion in March, 1967. It contributed 36 searchlights of 125 million candlepower each. The brilliant illumination provided by the searchlights has greatly increased the effectiveness of the Dusters and the Quad .50's during night missions.

By combining the three elements; Dusters, Quad .50's, and searchlights, the Battalion has been effectively accomplishing its mission. Besides providing direct fire support for infantry and armored cavalry operations, missions include perimeter security, convoy escort, ready reaction force, and road security.

The devastating firepower of these weapons has been used very effectively in defending remote fire support and patrol bases. A few automatic weapons properly placed can release large numbers of infantrymen from a defensive role and make them available for finding and destroying the enemy. The Dusters can accompany the infantry and armored cavalry on the ground and the Quad .50's can be separated from their prime movers to join in heliborne and mobile operations.

Also, besides escort of road clearing and convoy operations, the automatic weapons provide a heavy volume of quick direct and indirect fire in support of friendly forces in the area. Their quick reaction in delivering counter-mortar and counter-ambush fires has saved many American lives and has proven very distasteful to the enemy.

Elements of the 5th Bn (AW) (SP) 2d Arty have supported every major unit in the III Corps Tactical Zone and may be found in as many as 40 locations at a time. Although the elements at each location may be relatively

1968

n 2d Artillery



The Quad .50 caliber machinegun mount is capable of unleashing more than 2,000 rounds per minute.

small, collectively they are playing a major part in defeating the enemy forces in the II Field Force area of operations.

Fierce battles and firefights at Suoi Tre, Nui Ba Din, and Song Be are but a few of the encounters which will be long remembered by gunners of the Battalion.

Members of the Battalion are just as determined in their efforts to aid the South Vietnamese as they are in stopping the aggressions of the North Vietnamese. In the Battalion's MEDCAP program, the Surgeon, Captain Richard W. Abuhl, and his staff have treated more than 4,100 Vietnamese within the past three months. They operate two clinics daily, one for adults at 8 a.m. and one for children at 10 a.m. Approximately 45 people are treated daily.

Through the use of antibiotics the medical staff has been able to curb many diseases and illnesses which had previously run rampant. The most common illnesses were diarrhea, tuberculosis, pneumonia, colds, and various skin infections.

The base camp aid station serves an area occupied by approximately 10,000 Vietnamese. In the first few days of the Medical Aid Program only a small number of villagers appeared. Within a brief period of time, however, when the local villagers realized what good the medicine could do for them, residents of six local villages began visiting the aid station daily.

Through these and other contributions to American military efforts during its 155 years of service, the 5th Battalion, 2d Artillery, has proudly earned its motto of being "2nd to None."



Poised in perimeter security along Highway 13, this M42 Duster secures a possible Viet Cong avenue of approach.



101st Airborne

SCREAMIN'

Story By CPT John Born
Photos By USAF 600th PI

"Sir! The 101st Airborne Division reports for combat in Vietnam." "Airborne Sir!"



borne Division

NG EAGLES

T. John Bornholdt, 101st I
SAF 600th Photo Sq., Det. 6

The father of the airborne once claimed the Screaming Eagles have no history, only a "rendezvous with destiny." This destiny is being met, as Maj. Gen. William C. Lee predicted more than 25 years ago, with the quick arrival into III Corps tactical area of the remaining paratroopers from the 101st Airborne Division.

The division minus one brigade was organized at Ft. Campbell, Ky., under the control of Maj. Gen. O.M. Barsanti, its commander, and flown to Vietnam with a majority of its basic combat equipment. This is the first time that more than 10,000 troops have been flown directly into the Vietnam combat zone. The entire airlift took 41 days.

This rapid deployment resulted from the best efforts of all division staff and command personnel, members of the Military Airlift Command and Military Sea Transportation Service. The planners of operation "Eagle Thrust" were successful in airlifting over 14,000 pounds of basic combat equipment with the paratroopers.

The remaining elements of the 101st come to Vietnam eager to continue the Vietnam odyssey of the division's First Brigade. Since it arrived at Cam Ranh Bay on July 29, 1965, this brigade has maintained a reputation with the enemy as being one of the most feared units among U.S. forces in Vietnam.

Used primarily as a "strike force," these paratroopers have participated in numerous operations with other divisions and separate brigades in the three main tactical areas of Vietnam.



General Cao Van Vien, Chief of the ARVN Joint General Staff, welcomes the 101st to Vietnam.

The people of An Khe, Dak To, Pleiku, Ben Cat, Phan Thiet, Phan Rang, Nha Trang, Tuy Hoa and Quin Nhon have seen the shoulder patch of the 101st and know what it means.

The fresh troopers with the 101st have come to Vietnam with one thought in mind: to help win the war and to capture the hearts and minds of the people. The men of this division have done it before on other battlefields and will do it again in Vietnam.

The Screaming Eagles had their initial "rendezvous with destiny" during the invasion of Normandy on June 6, 1944. Nearly 7,000 officers and men were dropped into occupied France to clear the way for the successful invasion of Utah Beach.

The 101st then headed southeast into Carentan to link with friendly forces coming off the Utah and Omaha Beaches. After 33 days of continuous combat, they were pulled back to England for replacements and resupply. Of the 13,000 men from the 101st who went into Normandy, more than 3,800 were casualties.

Eight weeks later, they parachuted into Holland in the largest airborne operation of the war. Their mission was to secure and hold the southern third of a corridor from Eindhoven to Arnhem. Seventy-two days later, (Nov. 28, 1944) the 101st, weary, battered, and exhausted but victorious, moved back to rest at Meurmelon

(Continued on following page)



The first of 37 U.S. Army UH-1 Iroquois helicopters arrive at Tan Son Nhut Air Base aboard an Air Force C-133 Cargomaster, for use by elements of the famed "Screaming Eagles" 101st Airborne Division, which was airlifted from Ft. Campbell, Ky. to Bien Hoa Air Base during Operation Eagle Thrust. The helicopters, to be assembled

Le Grand, France.

On Dec. 18, they went back into the lines at Bastogne to hold that town and to stop the German thrust toward Brussels. They were immediately surrounded by troops from eight German Divisions. After a week of heavy fighting, the 101st lacked food, ammunition, and medical supplies. Their situation seemed hopeless.

It was then that the German commander demanded surrender and received Gen. Anthony C. McAuliffe's famous reply of "Nuts." After counter attacking to win the Battle of the Bulge, the paratroopers of the 101st helped to drive the enemy back into Germany.

After World War II, this division was deactivated for a short period before it was reactivated as a training unit and finally, in 1956, as a self-sustaining fighting unit. Since then many of its commanders have initiated unique self-help courses for the men assigned to the division.

In June, 1960, General William C. Westmoreland, then division commander, began the 101st Recondo School. This course has continued until the deployment of the division. Since this training was established, millions of small unit Infantry leaders have been able to learn the proper techniques of patrolling under a gruelling facsimile of combat conditions.

In recent years the men of the 101st Airborne Division have participated in many joint training exercises, taking them from Puerto Rico



and test flown at Tan Son Nhut, will be used to support combat operations of the 101st Airborne Division. Grim determination (Left) is reflected on the faces of the men of the 3rd Brigade, 101st Airborne Division as they file aboard an Air Force C-141 Starlifter. Military Airlift Command aircraft air-lifted more than 10,000 troops of the 101st to Vietnam.

to the Carolinas to the Mojave Desert. Members of the division participated in airborne assaults in all of these exercises.

Earlier this summer the Second Brigade of the 101st was quickly and effectively airlifted from Ft. Campbell to Selfridge Air Force Base, close to the riot torn city of Detroit. After six days of patrolling the riot areas, the paratroopers from the division gained the respect and gratitude of the people from Detroit. Many of the paratroopers from the 82D Airborne Division who participated with the 101st in the Detroit operation are now serving with the Screaming Eagles.

The remaining two brigades and supporting units of the 101st Airborne Division come to Vietnam stocked with veteran leaders and men who are considered the best trained in the Army. They have all the benefits of the latest combat equipment the Army has to offer.

A high degree of spirit, indicative of any airborne unit, exists throughout this division. After reviewing the pre-deployment status of the 101st, Army Chief of Staff, General Harold K. Johnson said, "I can only say that I am even more impressed than ever with the undeniable dedication of the Screaming Eagles. I have always been proud of our soldiers in Vietnam, but the fact that approximately 1,000 members of the 101st who have already served in Vietnam—from battalion commanders to E-2's—have volunteered to return to that country with the division has intensified my pride and es-



THE LONG HAUL—PFC Richard B. O'Brien, Royal Oaks, Mich., waits for his 3/4-ton truck to be loaded on a Military Airlift Command C-141 Starlifter. The four engine jet brought O'Brien to Bien Hoa Air Base in 26-hours and 55-minutes, via Alaska and Japan.

team."

Prior to the division's deployment from Ft. Campbell, many individual skills were reviewed or learned in many on post or off post schools. Many of the squad and platoon leaders received specialized jungle training in Panama or Florida. A special squad leaders course was taught by RVN returnees at Ft. Campbell stressing map reading, demolition setting, and patrolling skills. Another course tested the reaction of each squad leader as he directed his men through a live fire exercise which culminated with an assault on a designated objective.

The skill of rappelling from many of the Army's different helicopters was also learned by members of the long range patrol squads in each of the brigades. Other paratroopers were sent to Ft. Rucker, Ala., to learn the vital skills of helicopter maintenance. Still others learned how to be door gunners.

Aside from combat and maintenance training, many of the division personnel have come to Vietnam with strong backgrounds in civil affairs. Civil operation and revolutionary development teams have already been formed to handle refugees and to rebuild what the war has torn down.

With a proud heritage to live up to, the paratroopers of the 101st Airborne Division have arrived in III Corps tactical zone with the following mission on their mind: win the people, win the battle, win in Vietnam.



INWHAT HATH

Story By MAJ C. E. Mosley
Photos By 53rd Sig. Bn.



Samuel Morse developed the telegraph in 1844. The first message he sent via this revolutionary means of communications was from Baltimore, Maryland, to the Supreme Court, Washington, D.C. By a special code developed by Morse, the receiving party decoded his message which said, "WHAT HATH GOD WROUGHT." From this very humble beginning (for which the Federal Government had allotted \$30,000) signal communications have evolved into a multi billion dollar, indispensable necessity in the twentieth century.

On today's three dimensional battlefield, filled with supersonic jet aircraft, helicopters, far ranging armor columns, and other highly mobile forces, a major commander must have the means to keep in close contact with commanders at all levels in order to coordinate and direct their actions.

II Field Force Vietnam receives signal support from its Signal Section which is organized as a Standard Corps Signal Section under the operational control of COL John D. Hartline. It provides timely and effective communications to the headquarters and reliable forms of communications to all units under the operational control of II Field Force Vietnam, to include radio, wire, and communication center facilities.

The tactical communications system is pro-

GOD WROUGHT



vided by the 53rd Signal Battalion (Corps) commanded by LTC Robert L. Miller. The 53rd distinguished itself during the conduct of major II Field Force operations by providing communications support during operations TOLEDO, ATTLEBORO, and JUNCTION CITY. It was the first unit of its type in Vietnam to provide and control all communications for a multi-divisional operation (JUNCTION CITY). The 53rd has been recommended for the Distinguished Unit Citation for its accomplishments in support of combat operations in Vietnam since June 1966.

Photographic support is provided by the 16th Photo Detachment which is attached to the 53rd. Commanded by 1LT Joe Leach, this unit sends combat photographers throughout the tactical zone of operations. Its personnel provide support to the Information Officer, II Field Force, through photographic coverage of news events.

From the very humble beginning in 1844 by Samuel Morse in Baltimore, to the dusty battle fields of Vietnam in 1968, communications technology and sophistication has progressed in such an astounding manner so as to defy the imagination or dreams of the early pioneers. Morse's first message "WHAT HATH GOD WROUGHT" is being answered daily by the professional soldiers and technicians assigned to II Field Force Signal units.





DUTY—HONOR

FROM THE NAPOLEONIC ERA
ATION OF DECORATIONS HAS
EFFORTS....

Story By CPT Warren English
Photos By 53d Sig. Bn.

While leading his platoon on a search and destroy mission, First Lieutenant Leslie H. Colegrove encountered two claymore mines along the trail. Moving forward, he was preparing to disarm them when a Viet Cong force unleashed an intense volume of small arms and automatic rifle fire on the advance elements. Without hesitation, he moved carefully through the enemy fire in order to maneuver his platoon to a position from which it could deliver effective suppressive fire. Calling for artillery fire near his perimeter of defense, he forced the enemy to break contact, leaving behind a wounded Viet Cong soldier. Directing his platoon to lay down a base of fire, he and two men moved through the heavy enemy fire to capture the wounded insurgent, extracting from him intelligence information which was of considerable value in dealing further blows to the enemy forces.

As a result of his bravery, Lieutenant Colegrove, a former member of the 173rd Airborne Brigade, was awarded the Silver Star for gallantry in action.

That is only one example of the many awards processed daily by the Awards and Decorations Division of II Field Force Vietnam. Each day, across the desks of the members of the division pass numerous accounts of heroism, dedication to duty and meritorious service and achievement. Each is processed promptly to provide immediate recognition to personnel for deeds or service beyond the normal expectations of their jobs.

The Awards and Decorations Program of the United States Army traces its history to the days of Emperor Napoleon when he "popularized" the presentation of awards to the common soldier. Prior to that time, decorations were awarded only to nobility and aristocracy. Wisely recognizing the morale building value that

was engendered by a medal and ribbon, he decreed that decorations would be presented to all deserving members of the service, regardless of rank, as tangible evidence of their outstanding contributions.

Since Napoleon's time, the awards program has continued, developing into an extremely important component of effective military leadership.

Presently, Army Regulations provide for the award of eleven decorations.

The Medal of Honor, Distinguished Service Cross and Silver Star are awarded for acts of valor while engaged in combat with an armed hostile force. The Distinguished Service Medal and Legion of Merit are awarded in recognition of exceptionally meritorious service. The Distinguished Flying Cross and Air Medal are presented to persons who display heroism or achievement or complete a certain number of missions and hours while participating in aerial flight. The Bronze Star Medal and Army Commendation Medal may be awarded under three conditions: heroism, meritorious service or meritorious achievement. The Soldier's Medal is awarded in recognition of heroism not involving conflict with an armed enemy, but presenting a risk of life to the individual. The Purple Heart is awarded to those who are wounded as a result of hostile actions.

Any person having knowledge of an act, period of service or achievement may recommend an individual for award of an appropriate decoration. A detailed description of the degree of achievement, service or valor required to merit an award of the decoration may be found in AR 672-5-1 or USARV Reg 672-1. Recommendations should be submitted to the commander of the individual for whom the award is intended.

R-COUNTRY

RA
S TO VIETNAM, THE PRESENTA-
MOTIVATED MEN TO GREATER



Field conditions frequently make it inconvenient for tactical combat commanders to spend the time necessary to produce polished recommendations, completely free of errors in grammar and typing. Awards authorities make allowances for such problems, provided the facts are presented clearly enough to enable the Commanding General and the Awards and Decorations Review Board to determine whether award of the decoration is warranted. Recommendations may even be written in long hand, provided they are legible and adequately describe the service or deeds.

To aid in preparing recommendations for service or achievement awards, the II Field Force Vietnam Awards and Decorations Division has developed a three-part checklist which may be used as a tool to insure that the recommendations contain sufficient information to support award of the decoration. Each action or deed for which the individual is cited should be described as required by the formula. The elements are as follows:

1. What the Individual did—A description of the acts or deeds performed by the proposed award recipient which are considered to have been of major importance to qualify him for the award.

2. How the Individual Performed the Acts or Deeds—A description of how the individual's performance exceeded that of his contemporaries and demonstrated a skill or knowledge not normally encountered in a person of his grade and military experience.

3. The Outstanding Results—A description of how the individual's actions contributed materially to the task at hand and aided in the accomplishment of his unit's mission.

For example, one portion of the recommendation for award to Private First Class Jones, a

vehicle driver might be written as follows:

"Assigned as driver of the company's supply truck, Private First Class Jones worked long hours maintaining his vehicle in a high state of readiness. Learning of the shortage of assigned mechanics and recognizing the need to develop a comprehensive knowledge of automotive mechanics, he studied all available manuals during his off duty hours so that he soon became capable of repairing many of the mechanical deficiencies which frequently recur. He shared his newly gained knowledge with his fellow drivers, teaching them also to make minor repairs. As a result, the professional competence of the unit's drivers was raised, thus considerably decreasing the time that vehicles were not available because of mechanical difficulties.

Other portions of the narrative description would similarly apply the three-part check list in describing other elements of PFC Jones' service.

Used as a valuable tool of leadership, decorations serve as tangible evidence of recognition for heroism or a job well done and inspire others to emulate the example that has been set and motivates the award recipient to continue in his endeavors.

To be most effective, awards should be presented as soon as possible after the act of valor or achievement or meritorious service. In this way, the accomplishment is still fresh in the mind of the awardee's contemporaries when they see the commander pin a medal on his uniform and hear the words ring out...

"His achievements are in keeping with the highest traditions of the military service and reflect great credit upon himself, his unit and the United States Army."

IN ANCIENT TIMES DEVILS WERE THOUGHT TO CAUSE DISEASE. IN CHINESE LEGEND CH'UNG KUEI WAS A MIGHTY DEMON KILLER.

IN MODERN TIMES ANCIENT MISCONCEPTIONS REGARDING LEPROSY STILL PERSIST, CALLING FORTH UNREASONING FEAR AND HARSH TREATMENT OF THOSE AFFLICTED WITH THIS DISEASE.

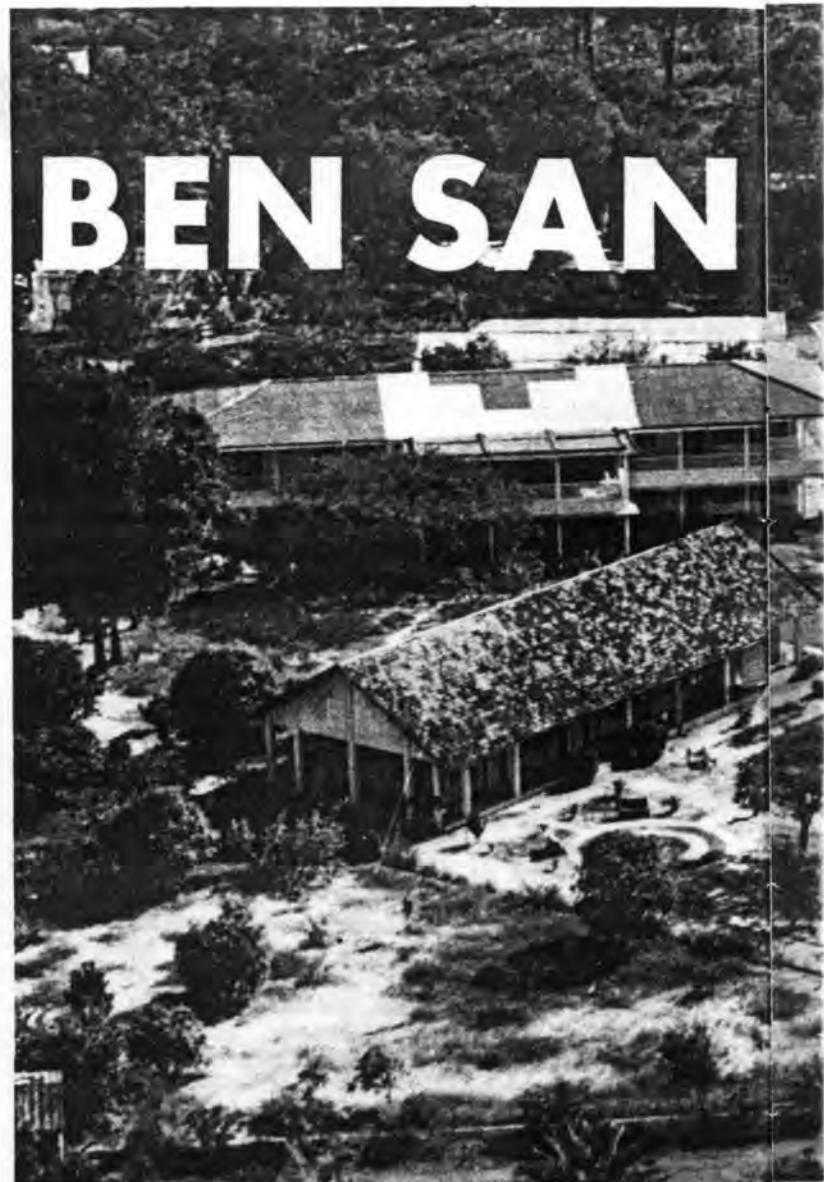
KNOWLEDGE HAS LIGHTENED MANY CORNERS WHERE ANCIENT DEMONS WERE THOUGHT TO LURK. KNOWLEDGE, UNDERSTANDING, AND COMPASSION ARE, IN TRUTH, MIGHTY DEMON KILLERS.

Story By SP4 Peter Bie
Photos By SP5 Beecham Cockcroft

Through centuries of history, leprosy more than any other disease, has occupied a peculiar position in human thought and has persistently incited intense social reaction in diverse societies. For most of the victims of Hansen's disease (so named for its discoverer Dr. Gerhard Hansen, a Norwegian physician) life is one of outcast and rejection by family and friends. Without treatment, most will decay and soon die.

It is only within the last 15 years that the plight of the leper has been fully recognized and men and women have begun to dedicate themselves to helping and curing the victim's of the disease.

In Vietnam, fact has overcome superstition, and hope for Hansen's disease victims—where hope was once non-existent — is building

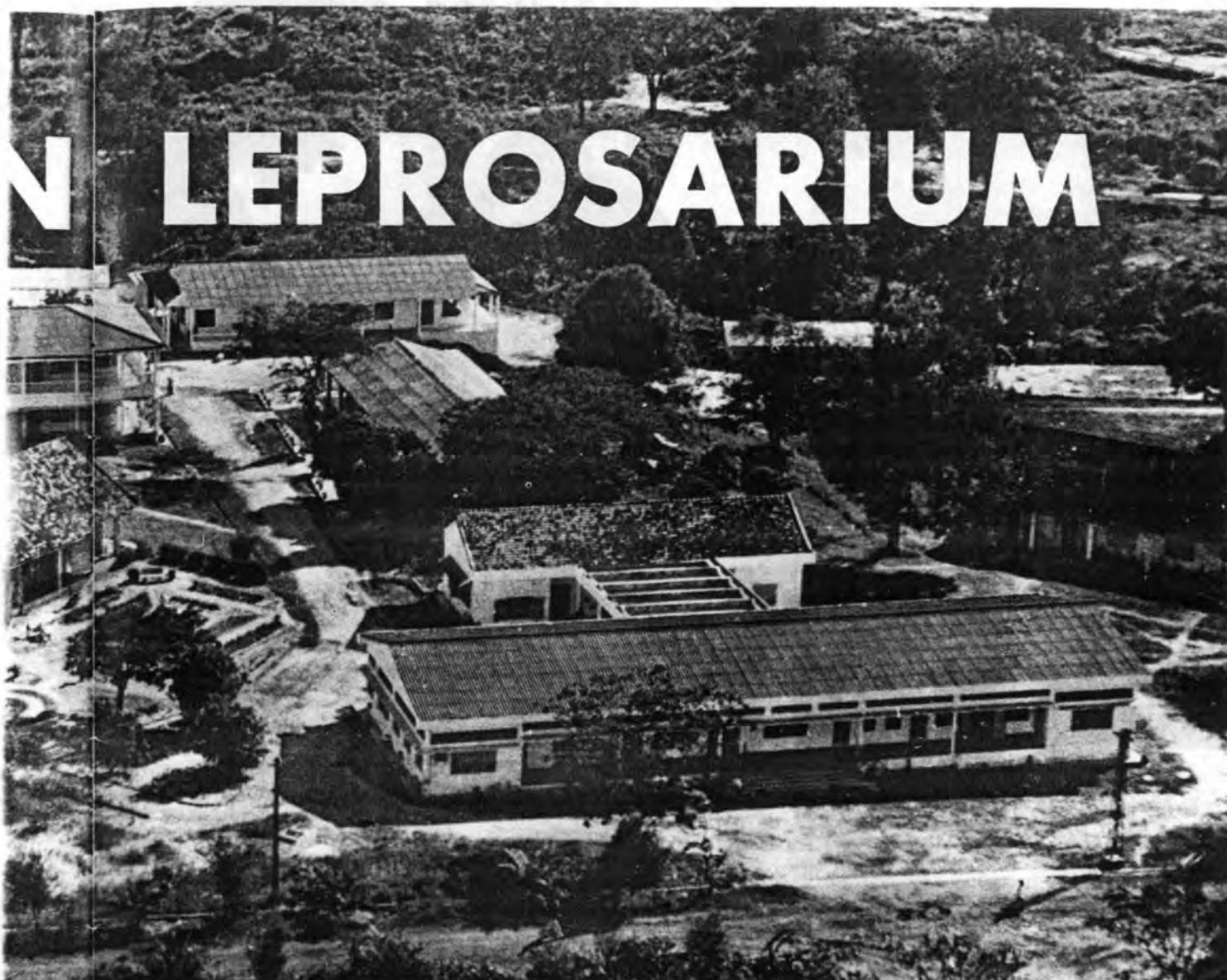


throughout the country. And at the Ben San Leprosarium, 25 miles north of Saigon, it has become a full fledged drive to help and restore many persons to lead useful lives.

Established in 1957 by Father Abel Garreau, the leprosarium is now a 40-building complex, directed by Father Victor G. Berset, a Swiss with 15 years service in Vietnam. Father Berset recalls that in 1954 his predecessor fled Red China, where he was to be "tried" by the communists.

Entering Vietnam, Father Garreau moved south, seeking areas where lepers congregated, either through banishment by superstitious kinsman or self-embarrassment. He found several such places where the lepers were being treated much as they were in the days of Christ.

BEN SAN LEPROSARIUM



Following days of driving through what is now the III Corps Tactical Zone, Father Garreau found a locality where it would be possible to build a leprosarium—Ben San. But protests from the local community were loud.

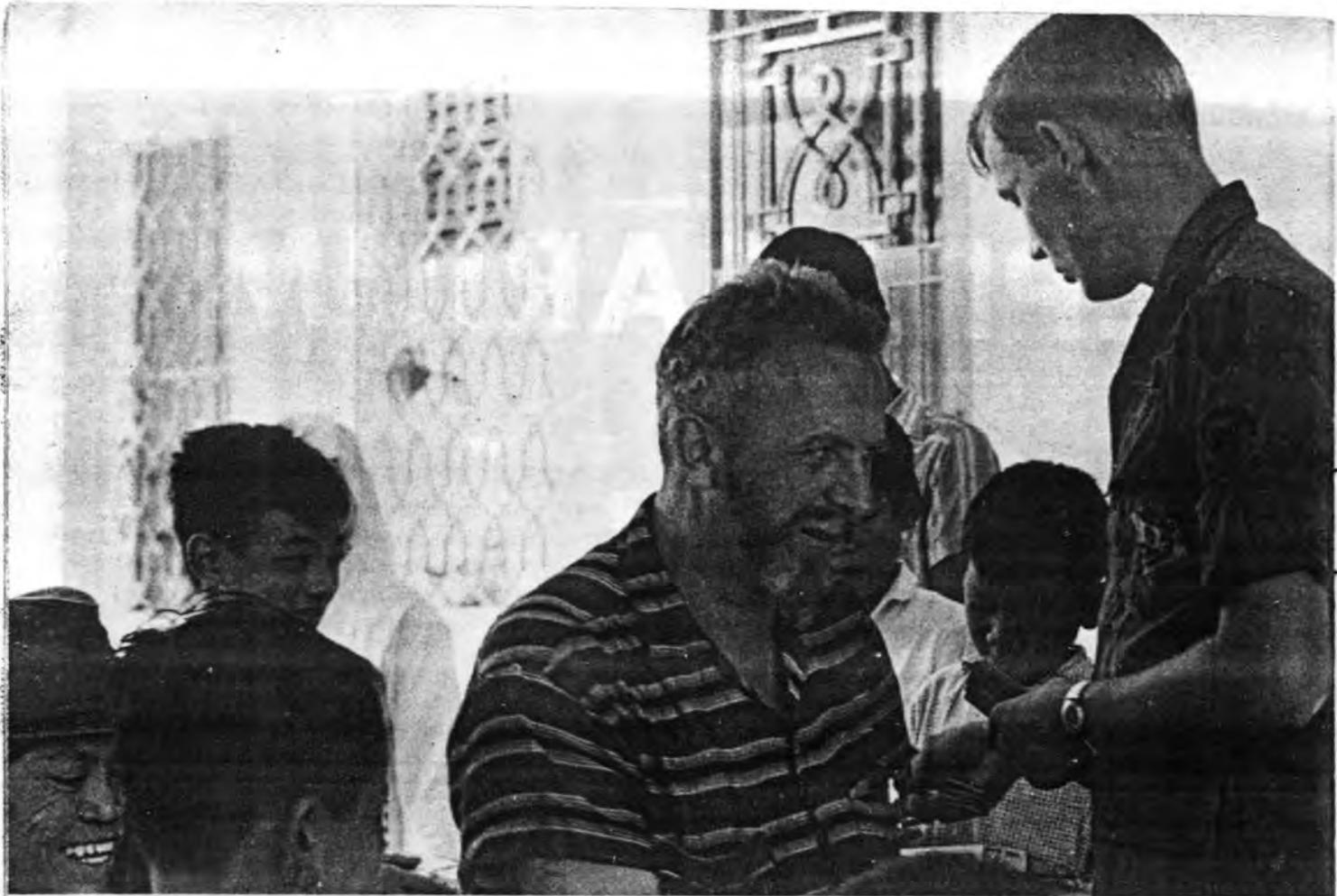
It later turned out that the objections were Viet Cong inspired and that the village chief was a member of the infrastructure. But Father Garreau approached the problem with persuasion and perseverance.

The Government of South Vietnam was first to grant the father the needed land for the project through the Ministries of Health and Welfare. Additional land was given by the Bishop of South Vietnam. So, within the grounds of an old rubber plantation in late 1957, construction started on the Ben San Leprosarium.

"It is impossible for one who wasn't there to imagine the protests and troubles the father and sisters had while completing the building," notes Father Berset. "Many times they were harassed by the local people. On several occasions Viet Cong attempted to intimidate them into abandoning the project."

In fact, construction stopped several times in 1958 because of VC pressure and lack of funds. But fresh contributions flowed in from such countries as Denmark, France, Canada, Germany, South Vietnam and the United States. The Catholic Relief Society channeled the contributions to the persistent group and the South

(Continued on following page)



Father Victor G. Berset, a Swiss with 15 years service in Vietnam, helps to pass out school supplies along with a soldier of the 1st Battalion, 7th Artillery, 1st Infantry Division. The unit had brought several boxloads of the supplies to the leprosarium for use in the Ben San school. These children attend the school, reaching the elementary level.

Vietnamese Government assigned a security element to guard them.

The growth of the leprosarium was unfortunately paralleled by the expanding power of the Viet Cong in Binh Duong Province. The first showdown came in 1963 when the VC raided the institution, stealing everything.

"We were frightened that day," recalls Father Berset, "but we were concerned that the medicines taken by the VC, were, in many instances, of no use to them. The patients needed daily doses of many drugs, but the VC took it all. We found our cars several days later... all burned." The first country to react to the incident was Germany, sending a check for 20,000 piastres (\$200.00). More countries quickly followed suit and the leprosarium was soon on its feet and functioning.

From that time on, Ben San grew rapidly—both in facilities and patients.

In the spring of 1966, government forces trapped and killed the local VC company commander and most of the harassment ceased. Now a contingent of Regional and Popular Forces (RF/PF) guard the institution. Additional

security comes from the 1st Battalion, 7th Artillery, 1st Infantry Division.

Ben San, considered one of the most modern leprosariums in Southeast Asia has eight spacious wards erected by the patients with little outside help.

Several more buildings are planned.

"Incidentally," says Father Berset, 47, "even the materials used were manufactured by the patients in our tile and brick making factory. Our most necessary outside supply is cement, that coming from several organizations."

With its own wood and metal shops, Ben San's patients are able to refurbish many discarded items. Dressers, chairs, crates and ammunition boxes are turned into usable items. Metal chairs, old metal lockers and other items can be overhauled by the skilled craftsman.

Even several trucks used by the leprosarium are worked over within the shop and put back on the road.

What makes this so amazing is that many of the patients are fingerless; some are handless—the shop foreman not only has lost his fingers but part of his left leg as well.



This Vietnamese nurse wraps bandages around the foot of one of Ben San's 315 patients. Daily bandaging keeps infection down and prevents the disease from spreading. Although leprosy is ruled a contagious disease, the staff at the leprosarium (some being there as long as ten or more years) have shown no signs of contracting the disease.

A steady source of electricity comes from the two-250 kilowatt generators (a gift of the United States) to supply the surgical and dispensary wards (completely equipped with operating rooms and supplies) as well as the rest of the village.

Adding to the self-sufficiency of Ben San are the piggery and chicken brooder. These enable the patients to have fresh meat and eggs. Presently there are about 20 hogs and an equal number of chickens. All of the animals will be consumed by the patients since, for sanitary reasons, they cannot be sold.

Father Berset, who replaced the founder as director when the latter assumed higher duties in Saigon, proudly describes the improved physical condition of the patients.

"Many came to us wrapped in bandages from head to foot. They couldn't move. They suffered from the alienation of their own families and friends and many were simply outcasts."

"Now many of them are able to do chores around the facilities and lead useful lives," added the father.

Ben San in no way represents the stigma

attached to the disease. Streets are wide and lined with large shade trees. The buildings are large, roomy and cheery in appearance. The patients move about without self-consciousness in the knowledge that within the leprosarium they are receiving care and giving hope to themselves and each other.

They are visited several times each month by doctors of the First Australian Task Force who perform skin grafts and plastic surgery.

Several children—members of families at Ben San—are also patients. But for them the stay will not be as long as it is for others. When Hansen's disease is found in the early stages, the patient is more susceptible to treatment and arresting (total curing) of the disease is much faster.

In more advanced stages, the patient may have the disease secured (held in check but not cured).

"Most of the children here will be able to leave Ben San in a few years," says Father Berset.

(Continued on following page)

"They will return to a world which, in many cases, would have rejected them."

In the meantime the children receive treatment and attend school through the elementary level. Even the adults attend school, mostly at night, to study reading and writing. The only illiterates are the blind—unable to learn.

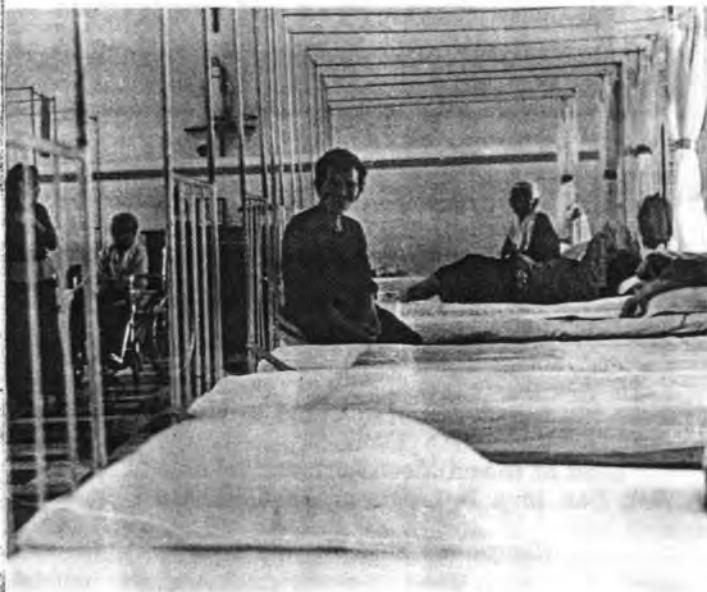
Father Berset scoffs at the idea that he and his staff (two French nuns and five Vietnamese sisters) are brave. During the many years at Ben San, none have shown any signs of contracting the disease.

Although the leprosarium receives support from many sources, more is always needed. Little items, such as bandages, medicines, toilet articles and coasters for the 120 beds are always needed.

For the inhabitants of Ben San, life has become a union of hope, faith and determination that the cure for leprosy will one day be found. Until then, they will continue with the faith and determination that has brought them this far, and will certainly carry them further.

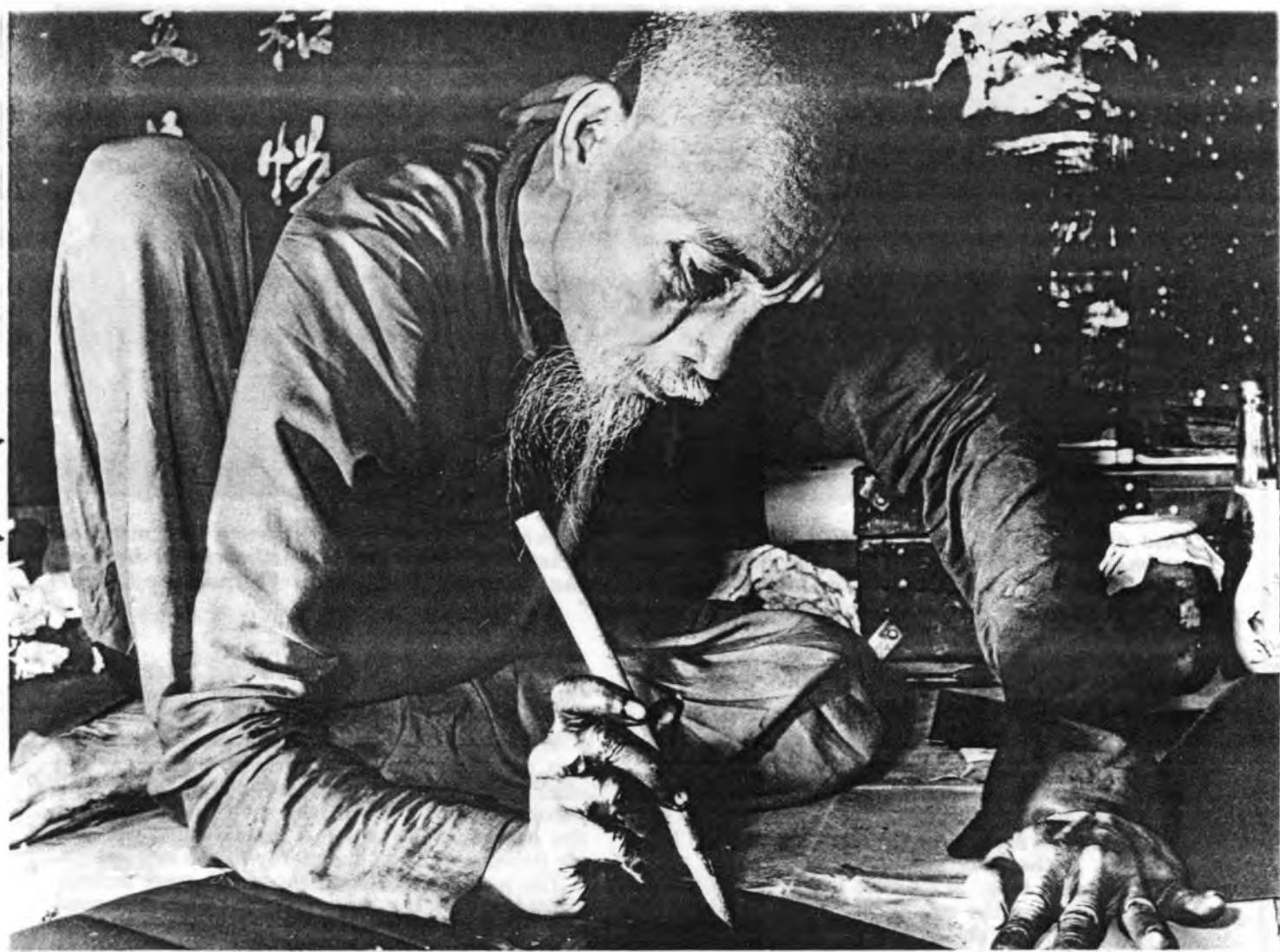
Performing for several of her friends is this young girl, also a patient at Ben San. Many children—members of Ben San families—are being treated. When caught in its early stages, leprosy can be arrested (cured) and the patient is able to lead a productive life.

The large, roomy and clinically-clean atmosphere in this ward is certainly unlike conditions that Hansen's disease victims lived under at one time. At Ben San, there are eight such buildings complete with showers and toilets for the patients.



For this man, life has not passed him by. He is able to do much in the metal working shop of the Ben San Leprosarium, turning out useful items for the patients. Himself a victim of Hansen's disease, he is on the way towards possible arrestment (cure) of the disease. Many of the patients at Ben San have been able to work with their hands—although many are fingerless—to produce items that normally takes a person with full dexterity to accomplish.





TET

It's everybody's birthday; Merry Christmas and Happy New Year; Easter Parades and Thanksgiving dinning; fireworks on the Fourth of July; and a time to reflect on the past and the future. This is Tet: Vietnam's biggest celebration of the year.

Tet marks the beginning of the lunar New Year and Spring simultaneously. The holiday usually falls in late January or early February due to the fluctuations of the lunar calendar. Observed from January 30 to February 1 this year, Tet will be celebrated from February 17-19 in 1969.

Chinese in origin, the first observance in Vietnam probably occurred around 200 BC during the long domination of Vietnam by the Chinese. However, the rites that accompany Vietnamese

Photos Courtesy of JUSPAO

Tet have changed during the ages and now show only a remote resemblance to the original Chinese festival.

Tet is a mixture of religion and mythology and, like all holidays in the United States, this Vietnamese holiday is family oriented.

Tet is a time when everyone wants to be at his own home, which should be sparkling clean and decorated with flowers. New clothing is desired for everyone and presents are given.

According to legend, in the closing days of the old year the good spirits report to the Heavenly Jade Emperor on events of the past year. Thus, during the pre-Tet period, the good

(Continued on following page)



One of Tet's more popular features is the colorful unicorn dance. The unicorn is a mythical animal that symbolizes kindness and wisdom in Vietnam. The ceremonial unicorn is made of cloth and paper stretched over a bamboo frame. During Tet, many Vietnamese (Right) burn joss sticks in temples for spirit offerings.

spirits are absent leaving men vulnerable to the evil spirits. Taking advantage of this opportunity, the evil spirits are sent from Hell for seven days. The need to ward off or protect against these evil spirits until the good spirits return from their visit with the Heavenly Jade Emperor explains many of the customs of Tet.

An ancient symbol of Tet, seen mostly in the country, is the "cay neu," a clean bamboo pole about 30 feet long. This pole is erected in front of the house on the eve of Tet. A small basket of gifts is placed on the top for the good spirits. Over the top, a small square of woven bamboo is placed as a symbolic barrier to the evil spirits.

Another traditional method for stopping the evil spirits dates back to the Emperor Dinh-Tien-Hoang. After uniting the country, a plague broke out and he requested help from Heaven. A genie appeared. The genie advised that lime powder be scattered in a circle outside each house and that the outline of a bow and arrow be drawn in the powder. This was done and the plague stopped.

The decorated Christmas tree holds much symbolic value during the holiday season in the States. In Vietnam, it is the Apricot tree that receives all the attention. Though the branches are now used mostly as an ornament, they were originally used to scare off evil spirits.

The Vietnamese people love to hear stories of long ago. It is a common sight to see little children sitting with their grandparents listening with awe to tales passed down through countless generations. (see picture on following page) The legend of the Apricot tree is a popular one.

Once upon a time, there was a huge Apricot tree, larger than all the others. Two good spirits lived beneath the tree and mercilessly

exterminated all the demons and phantoms in the entire area. Because of this, people living in the area were protected from the demons.

When the end of the lunar year came, the two good spirits, like all others, had to go and offer their respects and good wishes to the Emperor of Jade. They left their home beneath the Apricot tree for a few days leaving the people living nearby at the mercy of the evil spirits.

The people knew that the spirits were deathly afraid of the big Apricot tree where the good spirits lived, so they each went and picked a branch from the tree and placed it on their door to scare away the evil spirits.

During Tet, practically every family forgets thrift. Large quantities of food are bought for the holidays, not only to eat, but to place on the ancestor's altars. During this holiday season, the Vietnamese enjoy many dishes they do not prepare at any other time of the year.

Tet ceremonies begin the afternoon before the New Year when the family welcomes back the good spirits of the home from their visit with the Jade Emperor. The same afternoon a special ceremony is held during which deceased relatives are invited to join the festivities.

At midnight, small firecrackers herald the new year and chase away evil spirits. A midnight ceremony is held for the good spirits and family ancestors at a candle-lit altar in the open air near the house. After this, the family may go to the pagoda to burn incense, and pray for a prosperous new year.

Tet is Vietnam's biggest celebration of the year. It corresponds to America's Christmas, New Year, Easter and Fourth of July combined. It is a family reunion, a spring festival, a national holiday and everybody's birthday.



AWARDS AND DECORATIONS



TOP ROW: Distinguished Service Cross, Distinguished Service Medal, Medal of Honor, Silver Star and Legion of Merit. BOTTOM ROW: Distinguished Flying Cross, Soldier's Medal, Bronze Star Medal, Air Medal, Army Commendation Medal and Purple Heart.

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