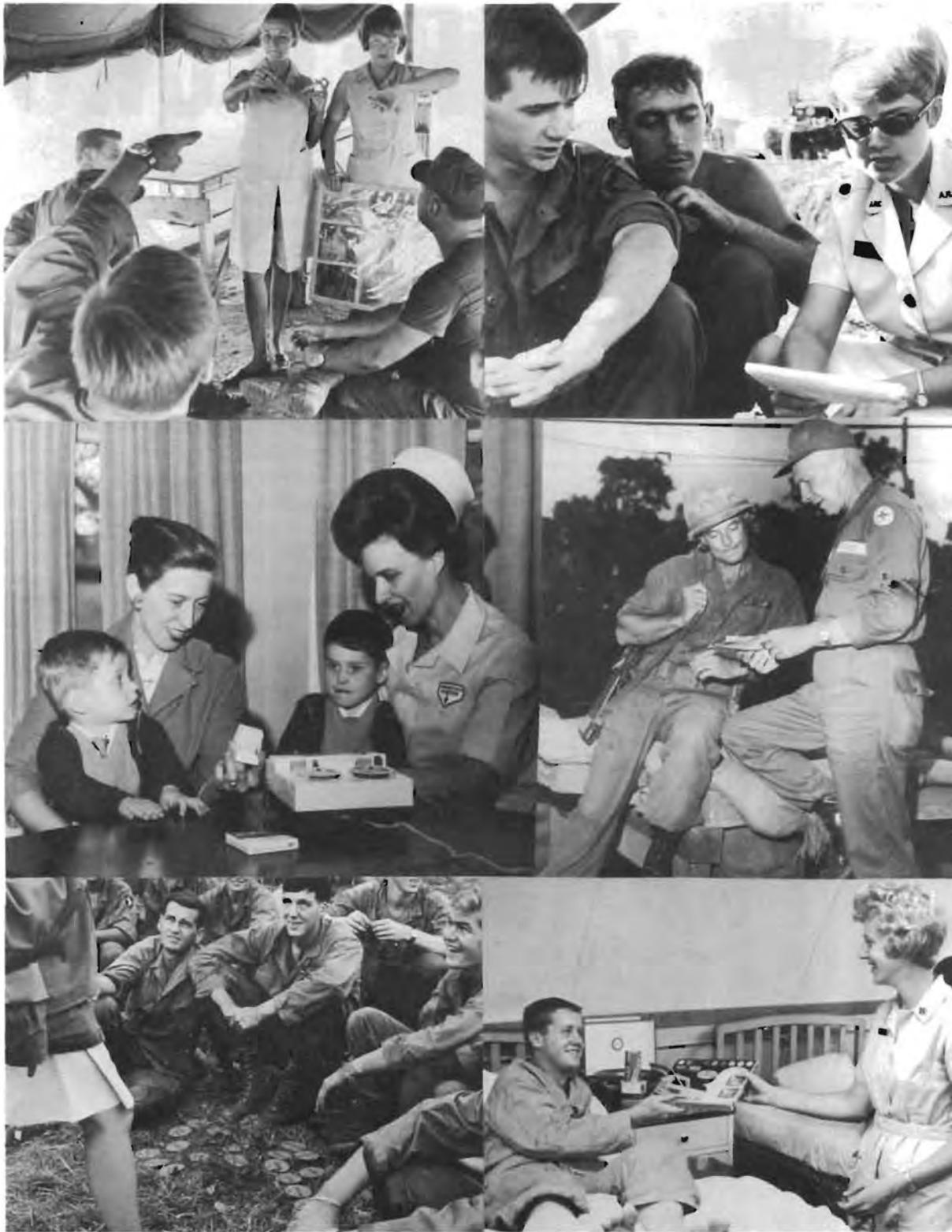




**BY
YOUR
SIDE**



The

RED CROSS



The **RED CROSS**

Personalized Service

Since the escalation of the Vietnam conflict, in March 1965, the American Red Cross (ARC) has been helping literally hundreds of U. S. servicemen each day.

Many servicemen have individual personal problems which the government cannot handle with taxpayers' funds. This is where the Red Cross comes in. What the Red Cross does for the men in service are personalized acts—it's what a man would do for his family or what the family would do personally for him, if they were not separated.

For example, take SP4 William R. Neher of the 1st Air Cavalry Division. On January 30, 1969, while Neher was on patrol guard of perimeter defense "Green Line," a wire was received at the Phuoc Vinh ARC field office from the Red Cross Chapter in Denver, Colorado. The message said that Specialist Neher's mother, Mrs. Thomas F. Hart, was to undergo open heart surgery the following day and the presence of her son was requested.

The Red Cross field director immediately contacted Neher's First Sergeant and asked that Neher be brought to the Red Cross office. When he arrived at the field office, Neher was advised of the wire. He requested emergency leave, which his unit had already begun to prepare and process.

Before dark, Neher was on his way to Bien Hoa Air Base where a chopper was waiting to take him to Tan Son Nhut. That same night he was on a jet back to the states. He arrived at El Toro, Calif. the next morning and contacted the local Red Cross field director and requested a loan for transportation to Denver. The loan was quickly approved and Specialist Neher arrived in Denver that same day. He was standing beside his mother's bed in the hospital before she regained consciousness from the operation. After his mother was well on her way to recovery Specialist Neher was able to return to his unit the following month.

Specialist Neher's emergency leave is only one actual case history. There are many more in the American Red Cross files in Vietnam. Today, in the Republic of Vietnam, more than 400 Red Cross men and women provide services from the DMZ to the Delta. Of these, 175 Red Cross field directors and assistant field directors live and work with their assigned units at more than 65 major installations throughout South Vietnam. On call 24 hours a day, this group handles nearly 30,000 requests for Red Cross assistance each month. By early 1969 the emergency communications between the U. S. and South Vietnam, involving serious personal and family problems of servicemen, averaged 1,075 a day.



"Voices From Home" through ARC



Most popular with the serviceman in the field is the center clubmobile program, a recreation service which is staffed by over 100 young women recently graduated from college. During each month of 1968 the clubmobile staffs averaged 2,700 visits, traveled 29,500 miles and reached some 114,000 U. S. servicemen. The centers, which they also staff, provide a place where servicemen can relax, talk, write a letter, listen to records, read or take part in planned programs. Recreation center attendance in 1968 averaged 138,000 men per month.

ARC Field Directors

In any situation where a serviceman in Vietnam is needed at home, the Red Cross field director assists by obtaining information needed for emergency leave. Facts of the emergency are relayed by the Red Cross chapter in the serviceman's hometown to help him decide if he should go home and to help the military decide about emergency leave. In this sense the Red Cross is the communication channel between the serviceman and his family at home.

If needed, financial aid to pay for transportation and other expenses arising from an emergency are also provided. Depending on the circumstances, the assistance is usually an interest-free loan than can be repaid in small monthly payments over an extended period. If repayment will result in additional

problems or hardship, funds can be made available as an outright gift.

The Red Cross field director in Vietnam is also prepared to help the serviceman with counseling in personal and family problems; provide him with assistance and information on obtaining government benefits; and provide referral to other agencies which may be able to assist him.

Hospital Hospitality

The American Red Cross in Vietnam also staffs major evacuation and field hospitals including the two hospital ships, REPOSE and SANCTUARY. There are over 60 Red Cross hospital workers providing the same communication and financial services as field directors, plus recreation programs in hospital wards and recreation lounges where available.



The U.S. Navy Hospital Ship SANCTUARY at anchor off the South Vietnamese Coast is one of two hospital ships where ARC have professional hospital social workers.



American Red Cross chapters throughout the U.S. annually conduct project "Operation Shop Early", designed to brighten the Christmas holiday season for the men serving in Vietnam. The goal each year is to make and fill enough "ditty bags" with small practical gifts and give one to each serviceman.

Red Cross youth members in the U. S. also assist the Red Cross in Vietnam. They prepare and send hundreds of thousands of friendship kits and needed items of supplies to Vietnam each year. These are distributed by Red Cross representatives to South Vietnamese children in schools, orphanages and refugee centers. Since September 1965 the value of civilian relief has amounted to more than \$2.5 million.

Help For Refugees

In July 1966, the ARC in cooperation with the U. S. Agency for International Development (USAID), the government of South Vietnam and the Red Cross Society of South Vietnam, began to operate camps for South Vietnamese refugees. Today, there are two Red Cross teams working in Quang Ngi and Quang Tin Provinces caring for 96,700 re-

fugees in 48 camps and four resettlement hamlets. The team consists of ten specialists from the ARC assisted by 24 counterpart trainees from the VN Red Cross. Substantial material aid for the program is provided by the GVN, USAID, and the two Red Cross Societies (U. S. and Vietnamese).

In addition, local chapters in the U. S. are helping to provide educational and recreational equipment and supplies, dietary supplements, first aid kits and clothing to be used in programs in South Vietnam.

Hope For Prisoners of War

Of constant concern to all Americans is the welfare of those American servicemen being held prisoner by either the North Vietnamese or the Viet Cong. Through the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC)



American Red Cross hospital workers provide tender help for seriously wounded servicemen in Vietnam who tape record messages to their families. Professional hospital social and recreations workers are on duty in 18 military hospitals in Vietnam and two hospital ships.

and other channels, the American Red Cross makes a continuous effort to open the line of communications to these men. The ARC sends to the ICRC the names of U. S. servicemen missing and believed captured, as well as mail from their next of kin. This group in turn sends the mail and information to North Vietnam. To date, no successful arrangements regarding these communications have been reached. Although the North Vietnamese government is a signatory of the Geneva Conventions, they claim they are not at war and that their American prisoners are "criminals" and therefore are not entitled to the protection of the Geneva Conventions. The Viet Cong have never signed the Geneva Conventions.

Both the Viet Cong and the North Vietnamese further claim that the prisoners are being treated with humanity, but neither group has permitted the ICRC to inspect prisoner facilities in the North as is provided under the Geneva Conventions.

On the other hand, the ICRC has a delegation in Saigon whose mission is to inspect prisoner of war facilities in South Vietnam and insure that prisoners held by the GVN are treated humanly and in accordance with the Geneva Conventions. ICRC delegates, medical doctors and interpreters make regular inspection visits to the six POW camps in South Vietnam, to the prisoner collecting points operated by the Free World Forces, to the interrogation centers of the Vietnamese Army and to U. S. military hospitals where prisoners are hospitalized.

ARC - "Home Away From Home"

In summary, the American Red Cross in Vietnam today provides these services for U. S. men and women in uniform and veterans of military service:

1. Direct assistance at military installations around the world through the Red Cross field directors. This includes counseling and help with personal and family problems, emergency communications between the serviceman and his family, application for emergency leave and financial aid.

2. Service in military and veterans hospitals, supported by an extensive volunteer program where possible.

3. Supplemental Recreation Activities



ARC Field Directors provide personal assistance to servicemen no matter where they are.

Overseas through recreation centers and the clubmobile program.

4. Service to military families provided through local Red Cross chapters. Close communication exists between these chapters and field directors across the world.

5. Service at Veterans Administration offices. The veteran may be counseled on a variety of problems and receives assistance in a number of ways.

As the recipient of these services, the serviceman should know what is offered to him and where he can contact the Red Cross field director stationed with or near his unit. He should also be certain his family knows how to contact their local Red Cross chapter at home in case an emergency arises in which his presence is required. But most of all, the serviceman should know that the Red Cross is his "home away from home."

As Melvin R. Laird, Secretary of Defense, stated . . . "For the American serviceman there just has to be a Red Cross."

THE AMERICAN RED CROSS

SERVING MEMBERS OF THE U. S. ARMED FORCES
 IN THE REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM
 AND WORLDWIDE

