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DAIM-FAR-RR # 19-amm DATE: 17 June 1987

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DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY  
HEADQUARTERS, 1ST AVIATION BRIGADE  
APO 96307

AVBA

20 January 1967

COMMANDER'S NOTES  
NUMBER 10

1. GENERAL: The following matters of information, guidance, command interest and policy are published for appropriate action of those concerned. Most of the items were covered at the Commander's Conference on 7 January 1967.

2. COMMAND: I have had two articles reproduced for distribution down to company level (inclosures 1 and 2). Inclosure 1, is a letter from General Oden outlining some of the current trends toward an increase in Army aviation. Inclosure 2, contains a speech made by General Johnson at the Medal of Honor Society Banquet in October 1966. Both articles contain information which is vital to all members of your command.

3. PERSONNEL AND ADMINISTRATION:

a. Liberalized Second In-country Promotion Authority. The new policy waiving time in service and time in grade criteria for second in-country promotions to grades E5 and E6 has been implemented by USARV message 42340 dated 23 December 1966. The intent of this liberalized authority is to recognize individuals who demonstrate outstanding leadership potential while occupying positions such as crew chiefs, line chiefs, or section chiefs at Brigade level or below. Promotion authorities continue to possess authority to waive other criteria in accordance with Paragraph 7-15, AR 600-200. I want to apply this authority with care to insure that the quality of non-commissioned officers is maintained. This should help us to promote some of our deserving E4's who have been denied a second in-country promotion, heretofore.

b. Applications for Flight Training. We have got to increase the input to the aviation school. I want all of you to continue to encourage applications for flight training. Concentrate on your enlisted men on second or subsequent enlistments who are now flying as crew chiefs and door gunners and encourage them to apply. A good active recruiting program will assure that our aviation units are manned with a group of warrant officers who have a broad background in the Army. While enlisted applicants are emphasized, more of our young non-rated officers should also be encouraged to enter the Army Aviation Program. Current DA policy prohibits commissioned officers in the grade of captain from applying unless they have served in Vietnam.

c. Uniformed Services Savings Program. I want you to place a real effort on encouraging all of your people to participate in this lucrative savings program. It not only helps cut down the economic

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impact on the RVN but also gives them a 10% interest on the money they save. Also, compile statistics on the number of individuals participating in this program. These will have to be turned in later.

d. Awards and Decorations.

(1) We are getting a lot of pressure from DA and USARV to comply strictly with the new procedures regarding the reporting and completions of posthumous awards. The main reason for this push is to relieve bereaved relatives from repetitive ceremonies which upset them. You must get these in immediately for consideration and approval so that they arrive at DA as soon as possible so that arrangements can be made for a one-time presentation of all awards to the next of kin.

(2) We are being criticized for prolonged delays in submitting recommendations for valorous awards. Some recent examples show that in three cases the recommendations were submitted six to eight months after the valorous act was performed. I'm sure you agree that this is an unreasonable delay. Let's get our people written up and the recommendation submitted as soon as possible -- two or three weeks at the most. There will be no delay in getting them through my headquarters.

(3) Thanks to the people you loaned my headquarters, we have reduced the 22,000 backlog of recommendations for awards to zero. From now on you should see your recommendations acted upon and returned to you within three weeks. For those awards that we cannot make, the time lapse will probably be just a little longer.

e. Extensions. We are getting good participation from our enlisted men on foreign service tour extensions. Continue to encourage our hard skill men to extend. I would like to see more of our key officers extending their current tour also. Emphasize this!

f. Morale. The Brigade Sergeant Major has spent a lot of time with me out in your units. He has talked to your NCO's and EM and has gotten a good evaluation of their attitudes. He tells me that their morale is high; your NCO's are using a lot of initiative; and esprit is outstanding. This has even overflowed into the units you support. He told of one conversation he heard at an NCO Club where a couple of Infantry NCO's were bragging about their aviation support companies. When the people from the Infantry divisions start bragging about how good the aviation units are, we can certainly be proud of the job that our units are doing.

g. Assignment of Wounded Returnees. When a guy is badly shot up, evacuated for medical treatment, and eventually returned to duty I want you to try to assign him to a less hazardous job. We have had a couple of cases where aviators have been seriously wounded and evacuated

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to Japan for treatment. When they returned to duty they were put right back into the cockpit, went out on CA's and received additional wounds. I think a less dicey duty assignment is due these guys when they come back from the hospital.

**4. OPERATIONS:****a. SOP and Safety.**

(1) I still observe our guys flying without gloves and with their sleeves rolled up. Perhaps a contribution to AAAA scholarship or AER might be in order for repeated violators. We have got to get the word across. In the same vein, an aviator recently lost the sight of one eye caused by bullet fragments from a round which struck the chest protector of the co-pilot. It is quite possible that had he been using the eye shield on his flying helmet this unfortunate accident could have been prevented. I might point out that the 12th Group recently conducted a test using the flak vest on the outside of the chest protector versus wearing it on the inside. Their results indicate that secondary fragments are absorbed by the flak vest when it is worn over the chest protector.

(2) There is still a lot of unnecessary equipment being carried on our birds which only cuts down on performance and in many cases is a safety hazard. It's a good idea to spot check every once in a while -- you might be surprised to see what you find tucked under the seats and back in the baggage compartments.

**b. Training.**

(1) VNAF training appears to be coming along real well after a somewhat rough start. A new class will begin shortly after 1 February.

(2) The UH-1 checklists, standardization guide and examination in Vietnamese were supposed to have been out by 31 December. We are still waiting on the VNAF to get them printed and back to the USAF and us. We will distribute them as soon as they are available. In the meantime, we will have to continue as best we can.

(3) USARV aviation units are now getting quotas to the USAF survival school at Clark AFB. Established priority is as follows:

(a) OV-1 companies.

(b) E&E officers at Group and Battalion.

(c) G-1 companies.

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Fill all your quotas. We need to train our people in this.

(4) AAMTAP School. When you can't fill quotas let my S-3 know immediately so that other units can get a crack at it. Additional quotas will be available when a new team arrives in-country this month.

c. Stationing. Leadtime is required for facilities planning and construction. As soon as possible, get information on stationing into Brigade and follow through with the Field Force headquarters. Since Field Force commanders retain OPCON, formal input through the Field Forces is necessary to make formal stationing changes.

d. Personnel. I know we can all justify more people, but there is a lid on troop strength at the present time and it's tight. Keep this in mind when asking for additional people in MTOE's or new requirements. For each new space asked, be prepared to name the space you are willing to trade off for it.

e. Standardization. I have found that we apparently are not standardized on our periodic standardization flight checks. We seem to be following several different procedures as to elapsed time between rides. I want our people to be given a standardization ride once every quarter. My guys are coming out with more on the subject of standardization in the near future.

f. Tactics. Helicopters inbound to an LZ, or operating in the vicinity to a proposed LZ, often experience difficulty in locating the artillery gun target line and determining when the preparation is completed. One of our units has been using the method of a base ejection smoke round fired at the beginning of the preparation to assist aviators in locating and identifying the GT line. Likewise, a smoke round fired at the end can indicate that the preparation is finished. Get with your supported units and try to make this SOP.

g. Aviation Support for Distinguished Visitors. A recent situation involving aviation support for a distinguished visitor resulted in some rather serious charges of lack of adequate command supervision in the selection of aircraft and crews for this support. I want each of you to be cognizant of any VVIP transportation support placed on your units and insure that the best crews and equipment are made available for this support.

h. Mines in LZ's. The VC have started emplacing mines in some of our LZ's. They have come up with some rather ingenious methods for detonating the mines as the helicopters land. One such method is a mine activated by a "wobble stick" in grass or a string attached to a tree that will bend under helicopter down wash. I think the consequences are quite obvious. Alert all of your people to this and have them take the necessary precautions. The best precaution is a damned thorough artillery and air prep of the LZ.

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i. Use of "Gravel" Mines during Extraction. While we are on the subject of mines, I would like to pass on a tactic with the use of the "gravel" mine which may prove very effective. When your guys are on an extraction mission, they can be sown around the area to prevent the VC from getting close enough to clobber your birds.

j. Low Level Navigation. We are not yet proficient enough to take a formation of helicopters into a landing zone which requires pinpoint landing of each helicopter from a low level formation. The type of landing zone I'm referring to here is one in which you may attempt to land in a village or confined area. Let the ground commander know your capability and strive to get additional aids, such as detailed photos, vector aircraft overhead before you try to go into these places. Even with these, it is essential to let each flight leader make a high visual reconnaissance prior to the flight, even if it's only a single pass.

k. Monthly Summary of Losses and Performance. Emphasis is required on getting the data for the "Monthly Summary of Losses and Performance in RVN", to Army by close of business on the 6th day following the last day covered in the report. Department of the Army requires the report by the 17th of the month to permit compilation of the:

Congressional Fact Sheet

White House Fact Sheet

Chief of Staff, U. S. Army Fact Sheet

These fact sheets have a deadline of the 25th of the month. Most of our units have been good on this, but some of you need to place more emphasis on meeting this suspense.

#### 5. SAFETY.

a. Accident Cause Factor and Significant Trends. The USARV Aviation Safety Division has recently gathered some facts concerning accident factors and significant trends. One factor which shows a significant increase is materiel failure. Some of the reasons for this are:

(1) The inability of our manufacturers to compute the exact failure point of the aircraft or components. They can only come up with an average life based on a set of given factors. The Boeing-Vertol people have indicated that the CH-47A dynamic components life span are reduced 80% by a one-time flight at 38,000 lbs and 90 knots.

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(2) Hotstarts and engine symptoms (high EGT) are not being written up. Failure to write up a hotstart borders on being a murderous act.

(3) Some of our failures are the result of human mistakes as many of our technical inspectors are very young and have very limited aviation experience. Two of our recent catastrophic accidents were due to this type lack of experience.

(4) I have heard that some of our engine failures are due to improper "tweeking". I want you to impress upon your mechanics the certainty of burning out the hot end by turning the wick up too high. These are basically the reasons and facts bearing on increased evidence of materiel failure. Most failures appear to be the result of operational environments and techniques, not faulty equipment. Let's jack our people up on this and see if we cannot eliminate these trends.

b. Weekly Summary of Aircraft Accidents, Incidents, Forced Landings and Precautionary Landing.

(1) We are still bending our birds from the same type cause factors and our accident rate is indicating a higher trend. An analysis of the accidents occurring during the past three months reveals significant increases in the following categories:

- (a) Weather.
- (b) Engine failures.
- (c) Autorotative technique during an emergency.
- (d) Wire strikes.

(2) No trend is evident in the relationship of new pilots to these increases. The more senior, experienced aviators shared approximately the same relative accident experience. The increase in engine failures is due in a large measure to operational practices such as high RPM (failure to "beep down" after take off), constant maximum power demands and simply overworking the engines to the point where early failure occurs. The increase in weather accidents and wire strikes indicates a serious lack of judgment and vigilance, respectively. Non-instrument rated aviators are flying into weather conditions that require instrument capability. Several older, more experienced pilots with many hours of instrument time have violated cardinal rules, such as ignoring instructions from controllers and attempting visual flight when it was impossible to do so and still maintain safe terrain clearance. Fatigue may be partially to blame in some of these mishaps. Wire strikes at low level occurred because the pilots were not vigilant enough to avoid the wires, even though they knew they were present in all but one case. There

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is a significant trend in faulty technique and slow reaction to emergencies, especially engine failures. This indicates a need for additional training and practice with loaded aircraft. Materiel failure and maintenance error show a slow, but steady increase for reasons previously discussed.

(a) I want to see an increase in training and periodic flight checks covering emergency procedures.

(b) I want you to continue refinement of operational procedures to make maximum use of the resources, consistent with tactical demands.

6. LOGISTICS:

a. Use of CH-47's for Recovery Operations. USARV is directing the 34th Group to place the CH-47's which they have been using for recovery birds back into the float. Our units will do their own recovery with our organic CH-47's. I want each Aviation Company to train a minimum of one rigging team to insure proper recovery techniques and operations, and I don't want any dropped birds.

b. Report of Survey Losses. Since December 1966, our headquarters has been the approving authority for Reports of Survey. In reviewing the surveys, it has been noted that in several instances weapons and other property could have been saved if proper security had been maintained. This indicates a lack of proper supervision by both individuals and commanders. Too many items, especially weapons, are disappearing or being lost from moving aircraft. There is little excuse for a man neglecting and losing his weapon. His life and the lives of others could depend on its being available when needed. Equipment is too scarce and too costly to be loosely handled, and I expect command emphasis to be placed on its proper security.

c. USARV Form 47R. Headquarters, USARV has established a new policy for requesting equipment in excess of authorized allowances. The Form 47 requests will only be accepted if the item is a combat essential requirement. If an item is required for other reasons, and fully justified, it can be obtained on either a loan basis for up to one year, or requested by MTOE. This is covered in USARV message AVHGC-OT 38411, dated 2 December 1966, and Brigade message AVBA-D 126155, dated 27 December 1966. A good, hard look must be taken on all excess equipment requirements and be fully justified in order to receive USARV approval.

d. Crash Rescue Equipment. I want emphasis placed on the rapid evacuation of repairable crash rescue and fire fighting trucks for repair and subsequent return to serviceable stocks. Also the use of fire trucks for other than authorized purposes increases maintenance

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and jeopardizes their availability for bona fide emergencies. (Reference: USARV Regulation 750-6 with Change 1.)

e. Penepime. Stocks of penepime should be sufficient for all needs. However, problems of distribution are still occurring. Keep pushing the local engineer unit for assistance in obtaining and applying penepime. Consult the local engineer for technical guidance before any jury-rigged distributors are used, as penepime has a low flash point. It can be used in this clime without heating.

f. Self-help. Future construction of troop billets will be on a self-help basis and the engineers have given assurances that they will provide the necessary technical assistance. Keep in close contact with your local engineer unit and maintain an aggressive attitude.

g. Generators. Generators of all sizes are in extremely short supply and those we now own must be kept in the best condition possible. There just aren't enough replacements around if one should break down. Establish and maintain Prescribed Load Lists on all your generators, and make sure required parts are on requisition. "Kid glove" treatment and proper preventive maintenance is your best guarantee to keep those you have operational. I want you to get those non-repairable generators back into supply channels for rebuild and repair.

h. Shoulder Patches. The Brigade patches received from Korea in December were totally unsatisfactory. The procurement people have been made aware of this and negotiations are underway to get a new production run started. My supply people will keep you informed.

i. Smoke Generators. An ENSURE requirement for Integral Smoke Generators was submitted in November 1966. Basis was two generators per assault helicopter company, plus a Brigade float of five. Twenty generators are scheduled to arrive in January. They will fit in the UH-1B, C, and D models. The distribution instructions will be published by USARV.

j. Individual Survival Kits. Our ENSURE request for 8,000 individual survival kits has been approved. We have asked that the initial 2,000 kits be made available by 31 January 1967, although we have no confirmation that production schedules will meet this required date. As soon as available, these kits will be issued to your units. Have your people made aware of this.

k. Strobe Lights. In addition to medical and food items and other survival gear, the kit contains a strobe light. A blue lens cover has been requested with this light which allows nighttime use without revealing a position to hostile ground forces. Strobe lights now in possession of units do not have lens covers. You can modify the white lens by marking with a blue felt pen. Get this local modification done as quickly as possible as the white light gives the illusion of gunfire and could draw fire from aircraft.

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1. Guidons. A proposed distinctive guidon for use by aviation companies world-wide was furnished to Brigadier General Robert Williams, in November 1966. He has passed it on to the Adjutant General for consideration but has indicated approval may be long in coming. A sample guidon has been manufactured in Saigon. The Brigade S-4 will procure similar guidons for all company size units to include Battalion and Group headquarters companies. Turn the funds for procurement over to my S-4.

m. Supply and Maintenance Newsletters. The Brigade and our aviation support units publish newsletters containing the latest up-to-date information and procedures concerning supply and maintenance items. Make sure these publications get down to the hands of your mechanics and supply specialists.

n. Rockets Prematurely Firing. During my trips in the field, I have heard of several cases where the rocket warhead exploded prematurely after leaving the helicopter firing tube. In attempting to pinpoint the trouble I find that we have not been following up and making the required ammunition malfunction reports. USARV Regulation 75-1, dated 21 July 1966 contains all the required information. Have your people read and become familiar with this regulation. We must find a way of being able to report lot numbers.

o. Aircraft availability versus Maintenance. A study of our UH-1D flying hours versus maintenance indicates that we can support about 80 hours per month. When we consistently fly more than 80 hours per month on the machines our maintenance curve goes completely off the scale. Let's strive to get our UH-1 utilization back inside the 80-hour curve as soon as we can.

7. SIGNAL:

a. Equipment Improvement Reports (EIR). We continue to receive reports from the field of unsatisfactory performance or component failure of avionics equipment. Most of these reports come in, however, through complaints during staff visits, at conferences, and in various correspondence. When we pass these complaints on to the personnel at USAECOM, we find that we catch them by surprise since no EIR's are being received. The EIR system is outlined in TM 38-750, and is established to provide a means for gathering product improvement requirements directly from the users. Unless we avail ourselves of this means, the people who design and procure our equipment have little reason to suspect that we are not satisfied with the merchandise. The 34th Group has requested that the control copy of the DA Form 2407 used for EIR's pertaining to avionics be forwarded to the Commanding Officer, 34th GS Group, ATTN: Avionics Officer, APO 96307. This will permit the GS people to get an early start on the problem and allow them to follow-up on USAECOM action. Let's make use of the EIR system to get some action on shortcomings which we discover.

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b. Avionics Publications. While we're on the subject of doing something about avionics problems, let me say a word about dissemination of helpful information given to us. My Signal Officer advises that upon investigation many avionics problems are caused by improper operator technique or improper maintenance procedures. This is understandable, particularly when new equipment is involved. What is disturbing, however, is that a lot of information which contains the solution to procedural problems is being sent to the field and it is not reaching the people who need it. Some examples are monthly avionics newsletters from the 34th GS Group, letters and messages from USARV, Brigade, and various regulations and circulars. I want all commanders to review technical publications of this type and assure their dissemination to, and use by, the people who work with the equipment.

c. New Regulation for Avionics Supply. USARV recently published a new regulation, 711-2, which deals with supply procedures and stockage levels for avionics maintenance units. The primary purpose of the regulation is to reduce the bookkeeping chore in the direct support maintenance units and to bring the system into alignment with AR 711-16. A letter is being prepared at this time to fully describe the implementation of USARV Regulation 711-2, and you may expect distribution early this month. All companies and avionics detachments will require the regulation and the letter. Sufficient copies of regulation 711-2 were mailed to Signal Officers of Groups and separate Battalions to assure distribution down to Company level.

**8. MEDICAL:**

a. Mountain Litter, Semi-Rigid, Poleless. The mountain litter, semi-rigid, poleless, FSN 6530-783-7600, is a medical item. Your people must requisition this item on the USARV Form 12 and not the USARV Form 47. The 32d Medical Depot is receiving these requisitions and supposedly have the litters on the way.

b. Medical Evacuation by Organic Aircraft. In order to assist our guys when they conduct a med-evac, we are publishing a list of all U. S. medical facilities here in RVN equipped for handling casualties. We should have this list distributed to all units in the near future. The list will contain the name, coordinates, radio call signs, and frequencies of each facility. Be sure the distribution gets down to pilot level.

c. Medical Restriction and Excusal, Suspension and Clearance Pertaining to Flight Duty. We recently had a case where a pilot was orally grounded by a flight surgeon but did not comply with the oral grounding and went out on another mission. He had an accident. The preliminary investigation indicated that he should have stayed on the ground per the flight surgeon's instructions. There are two regulations

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that apply to medical restriction and excusal, suspension and clearance pertaining to flight duty. These are AR 600-107 and USARV Regulation 40-45. When your flight surgeon grounds an aviator or returns him to flying status, be sure he gets in the written backup data, and that your flight operations is notified that the pilot is grounded. Get your flight surgeons read in to this and make sure they comply.

*Seneff*

G. P. ~~SENEFF~~ JR.  
Brigadier General, USA  
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DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY  
Office of Personnel Operations  
Washington, D. C. 20315

CPD

12 December 1966

Brigadier General G. P. Seneff, Jr.  
Commanding General  
1st Aviation Brigade  
United States Army, Vietnam  
APO San Francisco 96307

Dear Phip:

You are well aware of the increasing importance of the role of Army Aviation in your area and worldwide. Current studies underway in Department of the Army indicate that the number of Army aviator spaces will increase substantially over the present authorization.

I'm sure that you have read recent news articles which indicated a large proposed increase in training. Although I have no official word on whether or not an increase will be authorized, nor the size of any such increase, it is safe to say that an increase will be necessary if we are to gain any significant relief from constant short tours among the Army aviator ranks.

With sufficient advance notification, the Recruiting Command could probably fill all the present and future input requirements. However, I believe that we should continue our goal of providing a 50/50 mix of enlistment option and in-service applicants into the program. By this means we can assure that our aviation units are manned with a group of aviation warrant officers who have a broad background in the Army, not just aviators whose experience is limited to basic training and aviation warrant officer training. We can also reward some of our highly deserving enlisted personnel by providing them with a ladder to accede to the officer ranks. One other advantage, if my hypothesis is proven, is that the in-service applicant will have a better retention probability than the enlistment option applicant who may be more motivated towards beating the draft than pursuing a career in Army Aviation.

Although I cannot publicize any known increase in input at this time, I can emphasize the need for more in-service applicants and the possibility of an overall increase. To this end, I am desirous of reaching enlisted personnel with prior experience in aviation units, and those individuals who are on second or subsequent enlistments.

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This time last year we were in the midst of a concerted effort to increase the number of applicants for the Aviation Warrant Officer Program to meet a known programed increase into Fort Wolters. Through effort on the part of commanders and Army aviators worldwide, a large number of applications were received. However, since then the backlog of applicants has just about disappeared, while the application rate has dropped sharply.

Command emphasis for the program will be forthcoming. In the meantime, I feel that you can rekindle the fire right away with your commander. The opportunity now exists to produce new aviators and enable us to fill your and other requisitions which have had to be cancelled through an overall shortage of Army aviators. At the same time we are producing a large quantity of aviators, we want to maintain quality in terms of well rounded career Army personnel.

While I am emphasizing enlisted applicants, the officer applicant program could also use a shot in the arm. In the past we have had to make some minor adjustments, such as cancelling enlisted fixed wing classes and replacing them with officers, and a small pool of officer applicants makes these exercises somewhat difficult. Consequently, I would like to have more of our young officers encouraged to enter the Army Aviation Program.

Your wholehearted cooperation and active participation in this vital recruiting effort will be appreciated. I feel assured that you will respond to this call in 1966 as well, if not better, than you did in 1965.

Sincerely,

/s/ Delk M. Oden

/t/ DELK M. ODEN

Major General, USA

Director of Officer Personnel

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ADDRESS BY

GENERAL HAROLD K. JOHNSON

CHIEF OF STAFF, UNITED STATES ARMY

MEDAL OF HONOR SOCIETY BANQUET

SPONSORED BY THE FREEDOMS FOUNDATION AT VALLEY FORGE

AND THE LOS ANGELES JUNIOR CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

BEVERLY-HILTON HOTEL, LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 15, 1966 -- 8:30 P.M. (Local Time)

ABOVE AND BEYOND THE CALL

They say that a man is known by the company he keeps. If that is true, I would be willing to settle for a judgment based on my companions of this hour. I am delighted to be your speaker, and happy to bring you the assurance that the valor and sacrifice of the members of this Society are far from forgotten. They are tradition. They live as an inspiring challenge to the young lads who today carry the same banner to which you brought so much honor and glory.

People of all lands and ages have admired courage and have sought ways to honor those who displayed it. But I have always felt that their recognition of it was motivated by something a little more profound than mere hero worship. I believe they have been moved by a realization that every act of high courage holds implications for society at large, and that every hero, if only for a fleeting hour, personifies attitudes and traits to which all people aspire. I believe this has been -- and is -- particularly true in our own country.

The establishment of and the criteria for the award of the Medal of Honor illustrate exactly what I am talking about.

In our Nation's earliest wars there was no Medal of Honor. Our Colonial forefathers seemed purposely to have avoided the award of medals, because in their memory, decorations had been commonly used by European armies to heap honors on members of the nobility. The practice did not blend with the Revolutionary beliefs that all men are created equal, and are endowed by their Creator with inalienable rights including life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.

A touch of the same sentiment, mellowed by time and by the countless acts of bravery in the Civil War, prevailed when the Medal of Honor was created. When first authorized on July 12, 1862, by an Act of the 37th Congress and the signature of President Lincoln, the decoration was to be awarded only to enlisted men and solely on the basis of "gallantry in action and other soldierlike qualities." The Act was amended a year later to include officers, but the democratic intent to award the medal on the basis of individual performance, without regard for rank or station, was unmistakably clear.

The Medal of Honor has been won by private and general, but by many more privates than generals; by men of white, black, red and yellow complexions; by immigrants from 16 foreign countries; by Protestant, Catholic and Jew, one of whom was a Chaplain of his faith; by city boy and country lad from 15 years of age and up. Award of the Medal has been no respecter of person -- only of deeds.

To understand the criteria for which the Medal of Honor is awarded, one need go no further than the clause which is repeated in the first paragraph of each citation: "For conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity at the risk of life above and beyond the call of duty, in actions involving actual conflict with an enemy."

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The words "conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity at the risk of life" are significant. Every man values his life above all worldly possessions. As a gift from his Creator, it is paralleled by a love of life and an instinct for self-preservation that normally surpass all other human emotions. To overcome them and risk life for a cause is the supreme expression of selflessness. Countless acts of courage are performed every day in a fighting Army. Many pass unmarked. The level of individual performance, such as thousands of our newest generation of fighting men are maintaining today in Vietnam, becomes extremely high. Acts of courage are commonplace. Personal sacrifice becomes a fact of life. Thus, a feat of heroism singled out for recognition in these circumstances must be conspicuous in the most literal sense of the word.

"Above and beyond the call of duty" is not only a prerequisite for any notable act of heroism -- it is a rule of life in the military service. It marks a point in the performance of duty where excellence begins to pull away from that which is merely good. Striving for it makes fine soldiers out of men from every walk and station of life. It uncovers a will to excel in young men who are full of the freshness of life. It makes great commanders and staff officers out of men who, working under a less demanding rule of service, might never have risen above the easy-way-out level. It leads to acts of courage by men who would once have mocked the thought of becoming a hero.

In America the challenge to go "above and beyond the call of duty" is not the exclusive property of the military service. It has been the challenge to American society from its pioneering era to its present position as a Free World leader. In 1835, Alexis de Tocqueville made an observation which is as true today as the day that it was published:

"[Americans] have a lively faith in the perfectibility of man, . . . and they admit that what appears to them today to be good, may be superseded by something better tomorrow. [In] America . . . everything is in constant motion and every change seems an improvement. . . . No natural boundary seems to be set to the efforts of man; and in [the American's] eyes what is not yet done is only what he has not yet attempted to do."

Faith in the perfectibility of man is at the root of our American endeavor. It continues to be an endeavor to safeguard freedom for those who seek to be free, to spark and nourish progress where it has been smothered, to assure peace where it could not otherwise survive, to replace bondage and despair with human dignity and hope for a fuller life.

These objectives underlie our purpose in Vietnam. Our assistance along with that of 33 other nations in the Free World seeks to defeat communist aggression and to help restore a climate of order in which government under law can function effectively.

In Vietnam, it is important to remember that there are really two battles in which we are engaged and that we are making progress in both, although the dividing line between these battles is indistinguishable. We are endeavoring to restore through a nation-building battle the political and economic life of a nation. At the same time we are engaged in a military battle.

Now, just how well are we doing?

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I visited Vietnam for the sixth time in about two and a half years in early August of this year. What I saw filled me with pride and encouragement and contrasted sharply with what I found on my third trip a year and a half ago. In March 1965, things were pretty well falling apart, particularly in the central highlands area; there was, I believe, what almost might be termed despair on the part of the Vietnamese corps commander of the II Corps zone. At about that same time, actions were taken to arrest the deterioration. Today, that deterioration is a thing of the past; there is a sense of purpose, of accomplishment, of inexorable forward motion. Performance and accomplishment together have risen in a heartening manner. I might add here that the September elections in South Vietnam are bound to have had a salutary effect and further increased this feeling of hope, this growing confidence. But I would also be quick to add that we might perhaps guard against overoptimism for there is still a lot of enemy, there is still a long, long way to go, there is still a country to be reconstructed -- or, if you will -- there is still a country to be constructed.

Militarily, the Free World forces are doing a superb job. They have not lost a single battle involving more than 500 men since the conflict entered a new stage last summer. Up until June 1965, the communists -- the Viet Cong and the North Vietnamese -- were calling the shots; today Free World forces have the strategic initiative. We seek out and destroy the enemy whenever he will stand and fight. Between the first of January and the seventh of September this year, Army units have engaged in 167 battalion and larger-sized operations which have resulted in over 10,000 enemy killed in action out of a total enemy casualty loss of over 36,000. If they break contact or flee before we can fix and fight them we still move in and destroy the bases and seize supplies. In the first six months of this year, our forces on the ground captured or destroyed nearly 10,000 tons of rice, 500 tons of salt, and 280 tons of other food supplies. That much rice alone, based on a consumption rate of a pound per day per man, would feed about twenty Viet Cong regiments for almost three years.

The unseen and unsung part of the effort is the nation-building struggle. Historically, the Army has always played a significant nation-building role in our own country. We are builders. Today our advisors work and live side-by-side with the Vietnamese in every part of that country. And the combat units do this job, too. For example, during one single month -- this past July -- Army units, in addition to their normal combat duties, built 16 bridges, dwellings for 40 families, 21 schools, and numerous other public facilities. Our medical people provided more than 168,000 treatments of various kinds, including surgery, conducted personal hygiene classes for over 1,000 people, and trained nearly 300 nurses. Individual soldiers contributed around \$34,000 toward the construction of such establishments as hospitals, orphanages, and churches. In that one month our forces also redistributed more than 18 tons of rice which they had captured from the Viet Cong. Essentially what we are trying to do in this nation-building role is to help the people help themselves.

We are making reassuring progress on all fronts. There is a restoration in a lot of back valleys that is hard to measure. People are resuming a normal pattern of life, and regular commercial traffic between villages, district towns, and market towns is being restored gradually. The enemy has been hurt, his timetables and his plans badly upset.

Nevertheless, the North Vietnamese have infiltrated at least 16 regiments of regular troops into South Vietnam over the past 16 months,

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and have expended a tremendous effort to increase the capacity of the infiltration routes through Laos. The Viet Cong, for their part, have increased the frequency of terrorist attacks -- more than 24,000 in a recent 12-month period -- against the entire fabric of the Vietnamese society. But, even in this area there is encouragement when you consider the resolve and determination exhibited by the South Vietnamese in the election on the 11th of September. The vote got out in spite of the tremendous increase in terrorism and threats made against all who would vote. This just couldn't have happened in the Spring of 1965.

I would be less than candid if I did not say that the individual soldier is concerned with his chance to stay alive. Collectively, however, units are confident of their ability to whip the enemy in any engagement. I would only reiterate that the men do express a concern sometimes as to the understanding of the people at home of the nature of the fight and the determination and patience required to gain our objectives.

Will our Nation and our people be found wanting in this task? I have my own answer to that question and I will give it to you in a moment. But first, remembering what a blessing it is to see ourselves as others see us, let me quote from an editorial in a Swiss military magazine. In response to a letter from a reader suggesting that the United States would abandon Europe in case of war and make a deal with the Russians at the sacrifice of Western Europe, the editor wrote:

"As I read this absurd statement, the picture of the Honor Guard at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier in Washington came back to my mind. Again I could see the moved faces of the women, men, and children who were watching the changing of the guard. I saw once more . . . the huge fields of white crosses of the American cemeteries in Europe.

"I remembered that it had been the Americans who sealed the fate of the armies of the German emperor; that it had been the Americans who, with unheard of sacrifice in blood, aided the cause of freedom in the Second World War; that it had been the Americans who established the airlift for brave Berlin; that it had been the Americans who bore the brunt of the war in Korea; that it is the Americans who, with men and money (with the American taxpayer's money) strengthen the position of the Free World; that it is the Americans who commit the lives of their soldiers in the crises spots around the world; and that without the Americans, West Europe, the greater portion of Asia, and a good portion of Africa would have long suffered under the red banner."

"Clearly the Americans do this, or that, in their own interest also, but in pursuing their own interest they are defending and protecting everyone in the Free World -- our country included.

"Perhaps not everything the Americans do and allow is good, but that is outweighed by the fact that without them the Free World would not stand a chance today to enjoy that which we consider good and valuable."

We have never failed in the past, and I have an overwhelming confidence that we will not fail in the future. The same sort of spirit that inspired the members of your Society to go "above and beyond" in

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the performance of your individual duties lives on in the hearts of all our people and at the very core of our democracy. You can see it in all we hope for at home and abroad. You can see it in the sweat and blood of our men in Vietnam, five of whom have already won the Medal of Honor. You can sense it in the attitudes of their families who wait at home. I remember vividly a part of a letter that one mother wrote to me not long ago concerning her son who was killed in Vietnam. She said:

"David did not lightly value his gift of life, but he recognized when he enlisted that he might have to spend it on an idea. We are proud that you found him to be a good soldier."

Another of many similar letters, this one written by the bereaved parents of one of our soldiers, said:

"We have lost our only child -- a wonderful, devoted and dedicated son. Bowed down in grief as we are, we still stand erect in pride in the loss of our 'precious treasure,' . . . Now our prayers are for all those engaged in the struggle for which Joseph sacrificed his life. It must not have been in vain. These threats to freedom must be erased."

And there still rings in my ears the impassioned call I heard delivered last month before our Congress by President Marcos of the Republic of the Philippines when he said:

"America, the time has not yet come for you to lay down the heavy burden of leadership."

". . . For America by the inscrutable judgment of destiny has become the trustee of civilization for all humanity. And America cannot escape this role."

No, America cannot escape that Herculean role -- and would not if it could, for at its core America is truly a "Medal of Honor nation", dedicated to go "above and beyond" to keep men free.

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