

A black and white photograph capturing a scene from the Vietnam War. In the upper portion of the frame, the tail and rotor hub of a helicopter are visible, flying from left to right. Below the helicopter, two soldiers in full combat gear, including helmets and backpacks, stand in a grassy field. They appear to be in conversation. The foreground is dominated by a body of water, likely a rice paddy, which reflects the sky and the surrounding vegetation. The sky is filled with soft, diffused clouds, suggesting an overcast day. The overall mood is somber and reflective.

# AMERICAL

OCTOBER, 1968



## Commander's Message

**T**he history of the Americal Division in Vietnam has become a legend of thousands of men, from different backgrounds fighting against a common enemy and undergoing hardships together.

The very nature of our assignment here and the fluid and rapidly changing military situation requires that numbers of men work in close harmony to the end that the relationship of soldier to soldier is more informal than anywhere else in the world.

This atmosphere of closeness creates some unique problems, but by mutually respecting each others rights, we are able to solve them.

Courtesy then, common courtesy to the native population and military courtesy to each other, becomes an absolute necessity. I am sure you will reflect the dignity of the Americal Division by the manner in which you display military courtesy and adhere to military practices.

During my brief tenure as commanding general, I have seen and heard numerous accounts of valor and outstanding service among Americal soldiers. Graphs and charts, with cold, hard statistics, really cannot illustrate the heroism and vitality displayed by the men in this division.

The leadership and professionalism demonstrated by the officers and the noncommissioned officers, as well as the enthusiasm of the enlisted men, certainly does credit to the Division, the Army, and the Nation.

I am very proud to be the commander of the Americal Division, whose fighting men are among the best in the world. I believe the men may be justly proud of their role in the fight here.

**CHARLES M. GETTYS**  
Major General, USA  
Commanding



**Americal Division**  
**APO San Francisco 96374**

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*Commanding General*

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# AMERICAL

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Holtom—p. 11; Eilers—Front Cover, pp. 21-23; Farslow—pp. 19-20; Niklaus—p. 5; Haerberle—p. 6; Bragdon—pp. 16-17; Evanger—p. 6; Gmitter—p. 7 (artillery), pp. 12-13, 27; Goral—p. 3; Guerant—Inside Back Cover, pp. 2, 24-25; Hawkins—Back Cover, pp. 2, 4, 18; Ainslie—pp. 5, 14-15; Short—p. 9; and U.S. Air Force—p. 7.

#### The Cover

FRONT: An operation begins at dawn for soldiers of the Americal Division as helicopters carry them to meet the enemy.

BACK: The Stars and Stripes flies proudly over a bunker at Landing Zone West, high above the Vietnamese countryside.

A black and white photograph of two American flags flying on tall poles against a sky with large, dramatic clouds. The flag on the left is fully visible, while the one on the right is partially obscured by the first. The scene is captured from a low angle, looking up at the flags.

**THE FOLLOWING ARTICLE  
IS DEDICATED TO  
THE BRAVE MEN AND  
WOMEN OF SOUTH VIETNAM,  
THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA,  
AND OUR OTHER ALLIES,  
WHO HAVE GIVEN THEIR LIVES  
FIGHTING WITH THE AMERICAL  
DIVISION DURING ITS FIRST  
YEAR IN VIETNAM.**



Goral

# One Year In Vietnam

By 1LT CARY S. SKLAREN

**T**hree-sixty-five is a very special number. It signifies a year, a tour, a time span of separation, a time span of accomplishment.

For thousands of Americal soldiers who have fought in the southern I Corps Tactical Zone it means even more. It means a year of belonging and of growing up with an organization. It means that they participated in the second call to duty of the only named division in the United States Army, the Americal Division.

These men may originally have been a part of Task Force Oregon, forerunner of the Americal, and have already left Southeast Asia for their homes. Or they may have arrived after the former World War II division was reborn, proudly carrying the blue patch with the four white stars of the Southern Cross on their shoulders for their entire tour.

One year ago this month, Oct. 26, 1967, the unit commander, MG S.W. Koster, received the division colors in a ceremony at Chu Lai. In the months that have followed, the men of the Americal have participated in extensive tactical operations, taking them as far north as Dong Ha,

as far south as Gia An, and across Vietnam to the Laotian border.

At the time of organization, the division was the largest in Vietnam with five maneuver brigades. Three of these had formed the nucleus of Task Force Oregon: The 196th Inf. Bde., the "Screaming Eagles" of the 1st Bde., 101st Abn. Div. (Airmobile), and the 3rd Bde., 4th (formerly 25th) Inf. Div.

The remaining two were the 3rd Bde., 1st Cav. Div. (Airmobile), which was placed under the Americal's operational control on Oct. 4, and the 198th Inf. Bde. The main body of the 198th landed at Chu Lai on Oct. 22, and immediately began an in-country training program at Duc Pho before the brigade became fully operational.

The 1st Sqdn., 1st Cav., although a member of Task Force Oregon and operating in the Americal area, did not officially become part of the division until Jan. 10, 1968.

Prior to the organization of the division, two operations were begun which are still continuing. On Sept. 11, the 1st Bde., 101st Abn., embarked upon Operation Wheeler,



Hawkins

an offensive and security operation to destroy enemy base camps and fortifications west of Tam Ky. Three weeks later, the then newly arrived 3rd Bde., 1st Cav. began Operation Wallowa to locate and destroy enemy forces in the Hiep Duc-Que Son Valley area. On Nov. 11, these operations were combined to form Operation Wheeler/Wallowa and is now the longest continuing operation in southern I Corps.

The final brigade to join the Americal, the 11th Inf. Bde., arrived at Duc Pho on Dec. 20. It replaced the 1st Bde., 101st Abn., which left the division area on Nov. 26. Once again, the Americal became the largest division in Vietnam, five brigades strong.

Shortly thereafter, however, on Jan. 25, 1968, the 3rd



11th Bde.

Bde., 1st Cav. left the division. The 3rd Bde., 4th Inf. followed suit on Feb. 29. At that time, the Americal reached its present brigade organization: The "Jungle Warriors" of the 11th Inf. Bde., the 196th "Charger" Bde., and the "Brave and Bold" of the 198th.

During this first year, the men of the Americal have served under three commanding generals: MG S.W. Koster, BG George H. Young, Jr., and the present division commander, MG Charles M. Gettys.

In the pages that follow, some of the major highlights and accomplishments of the Americal in its first year of Vietnam service are listed—a chronicle of the continuing history of a proud, proficient fighting unit.

**Oct. 25**—General Order 175, Headquarters, United States Army Pacific, activates HHC, 23rd (Americal) Inf. Div.; BG S. W. Koster assumes command.

**Oct. 26**—The Americal Division receives its colors in a ceremony at Chu Lai as GEN William C. Westmoreland promotes the division commander to Major General.

**Nov. 1**—Vice President Hubert H. Humphrey visits the division.

**Nov. 11**—Operation Wheeler and Operation Wallowa are combined to form Operation Wheeler/Wallowa.

**Nov. 23**—Men from the 196th Inf. Bde., 1st Sqdn., 1st Cav., and "C" Troop, 7th Sqdn., 17th Cav. kill 128 enemy soldiers in a Thanksgiving Day battle in the Que Son Valley as part of Operation Wheeler/Wallowa.

**Nov. 26**—1st Bde., 101st Abn. Div. leaves the Americal as the 196th Inf. Bde. assumes responsibility for Operation Wheeler/Wallowa.

**Dec. 9**—In an air and ground battle five miles southwest of Hoi An, units of the 3rd Bde., 1st Air Cav. kill 102 soldiers of the 2nd North Vietnamese Army Division.

**Dec. 17**—Americal Combat Center begins operations at Chu Lai and assumes the mission of conducting in-country orientation and replacement training for the division.

**Dec. 19**—198th Inf. Bde. units and the 2nd ARVN Div. begin Operation Muscatine to extend GVN control to the area north of Quang Ngai City.

**Dec. 20**—11th Inf. Bde. arrives at Duc Pho from Qui Nhon to join the division. Co. E, 51st Inf. (Long Range Patrol) is organized and activated.

**Jan. 2**—3rd Bde., 4th Inf. Div. takes over control of Operation Muscatine from elements of the 198th Bde., which continues to defend the Chu Lai area.

**Jan. 10**—1st Sqdn., 1st Cav. officially becomes part of the Americal.

**Jan. 15**—The combat leadership course for the lower enlisted grades is inaugurated at the Combat Center.

**Jan. 22**—Task Force Barker, composed of units from the 11th Bde., begins operating north of Quang Ngai City in the Operation Muscatine area.

enemy near Chu Lai.

**Feb. 7-12**—Task Force Miracle, composed of battalions from the 196th and 198th Bdes., is sent to relieve enemy pressure on Marine units in the Da Nang area. It is placed under the operational control of the 1st Marine Div.

**Feb. 27**—3rd Bde., 4th Inf. Div.'s area of operations in Operation Wheeler/Wallowa is passed to the 196th Inf. Bde.

**Feb. 27-28**—Units of the 1st Sqdn., 1st Cav., supported by helicopter gunships of Troop C, 7th Sqdn., 17th Cav., defeat NVA Regulars,

Ainslie



**Jan. 25**—3rd Bde., 1st Air Cav. leaves the division and is replaced at LZ Baldy by the 3rd Bde., 4th Inf. Div., which is replaced in turn by the 11th Bde. in Operation Muscatine.

**Jan. 26**—1st Sqdn., 1st Cav. enters Operation Wheeler/Wallowa.

**Jan. 31**—Enemy forces launch the "Tet offensive" in the Americal area. The 198th Bde. kills 198

killings, 180, at the battle of the "Pink Vill" near Tam Ky as part of Operation Wheeler/Wallowa.

**Feb. 29**—3rd Bde., 4th Inf. Div. leaves the Americal.

**Mar. 3-9**—1st Sqdn., 1st Cav. and elements of the 196th Bde. kill nearly 400 enemy soldiers during Operation Wheeler/Wallowa seven miles northwest of Tam Ky.

**Mar. 16**—Elements of the 196th

Nikfous



Bde. operating in Task Force Barker kill 128 enemy as they raid a Viet Cong stronghold in the village of My Lai, six miles north-east of Quang Ngai City.

**Apr. 8**—Operation Burlington Trail, to open the road between Tam Ky and Tien Phuoc, is begun by the 1st Sqdn., 1st Cav. and elements of the 198th Bde. Operation Norfolk Victory to extend GVN influence to the Song Ve Valley is begun by the 11th Bde.

**Apr. 19**—Operation Norfolk Victory is terminated, as a major enemy base of operations is destroyed and a huge weapons cache is uncovered by elements of the 11th Bde.

**Apr. 20**—First anniversary of the formation of Task Force Oregon; GEN William C. Westmoreland speaks at a ceremony in Chu Lai. 198th Bde. assumes control of Operation Wheeler/Wallowa from the 196th Bde., which is temporarily placed under the operational control of the 1st Air Cav. Div.

**May 3-12**—Elements of the 196th Bde. operating under the 1st Air Cav., kill 579 NVA soldiers in the battle of Nhi Ha, five miles south of the demilitarized zone, as part of Operation Saline.

**May 25**—196th Bde. forces in Operation Wheeler/Wallowa kill 110



Hoeberle

North Vietnamese and 12 VC northwest of Tam Ky.

**June 3**—BG George H. Young Jr., assumes command of the division from MG Koster.

**June 12**—27th Surgical Hospital, with more than 140 beds for military and civilian war casualties, is dedicated at Chu Lai.

**June 23**—MG Charles M. Gettys assumes command of the Americal Division from BG Young in ceremonies at Chu Lai.

**July 23**—Elements of the 1st Sqdn., 1st Cav. and "F" Troop, 8th Cav., account for 61 NVA soldiers killed, 13 miles northwest of Tam Ky.

**Aug. 14**—"C" Btry., 6th Bn., 11th Arty. fires the 2 millionth round since the organization of Task Force Oregon.

**Aug. 17**—Elements of the 196th Bde. kill 44 VC and one NVA soldier five miles north of LZ Baldy in Operation Wheeler/Wallowa.

**Aug. 19**—Units of the 196th Bde. and gunships from the 71st Avn. Co. kill 140 VC in Operation Wheeler/Wallowa south of Hoi An.

**Aug. 24-26**—The 1st Sqdn., 1st Cav., "F" Troop, 8th Cav., a battalion of the 196th Bde. and ARVN units combined forces to kill more than 470 NVA regulars 4 miles west of Tam Ky as part of Operation Burlington Trail.

(press time prevents the listing of the highlights during September.)



Evanger

'Sav-A-Plane'  
Insures That

# Never The Twain Shall Meet



By SP4 MIKE KELSEY

Thanks to the efforts of a hard-working crew of Army and Air Force men, the grim story about the aircraft and the artillery shell that happened to meet in a strange airway has never been told here.

Working behind a maze of radios and huge maps, the crew is responsible for guiding aircraft safely through the artillery-filled skies from Quang Ngai to Hoi An.

"We have never had an instance of an airplane checking in with us and then being shot out of the air by our own artillery, and we're pretty proud of this," said 1LT Robert Owens, a former shift leader with the Americal's Air Warning Control Center, known to pilots throughout Vietnam as the "Sav-A-Plane" section.

"You might say our job is to keep track of artillery and aircraft and make sure they never meet. Though the natural chances for such an accident are pretty slim, no one wants to be the first pilot to be the exception to the rule, and we have a pretty heavy volume of business," the lieutenant commented.

All artillery fire is plotted on a huge map, and the men at "Sav-A-Plane" must clear proposed fire missions before the big guns are allowed to roar. As a plane

approaches the division skies, the pilot contacts the "Sav-A-Plane" section and informs the men at the radios of his proposed route.

"We will then either reroute him around the artillery, or postpone the firing while he is flying through, depending on which mission is the more important," LT Owens said.

Aircraft ranging from helicopters to jet bombers keep in constant touch with the men at "Sav-A-Plane," and with a new airplane checking into the division's 250 square miles of air space nearly every two minutes, added to a constantly changing artillery pattern, the job can get pretty hectic at times. Three enlisted men and one officer man the station at all times.

"You have to stay on your toes. About the most pressing problems occur when there is an immediate priority call for artillery fire, for then we have to be able to get in touch with all planes in the area and get them out fast. I think the hardest part is the continuous activity. There is never any letup, and we can never relax, not even for a minute," said the officer. ■

# PSYOP

## A WAR OF WORDS

By SP4 ROBERT BUZOGANY

"Sticks and stones may break my bones, but words will never hurt me."

This taunting adage might have proven true during childhood, but the men of modern warfare know that words can be used as a very effective adjunct to fighting with bullets and bombs.

However, unlike the finality of a shooting war with its body counts and battle statistics, the results of psychological warfare are harder to gauge.

Armed with loudspeakers and printed messages, the Army's psychological operations (PSYOP) units aim at winning over the hearts and minds of the enemy through persuasion rather than coercion. Achieving this intangible goal through a "war of words" presents a unique challenge to the PSYOP experts.

"It's a challenge because it (the effects of psychological warfare) is like a slippery fish. It's hard to get hold of," observed MAJ Stanley E. Holtom, PSYOP Officer of the

Americal Division.

MAJ Holtom emphasized that PSYOP is a slow, continuing process. "People who expect miraculous overnight results by PSYOP really do not understand our efforts."

**The basic requirement** for an effective PSYOP program is to insure that the propaganda distributed is credible. All claims or promises made to the target audience must be believable, so that credibility for the program will be established.

It must be remembered, MAJ Holtom said, that Ho Chi Minh has been broadcasting his message to the Vietnamese for more than two decades, but we have been telling our side since 1965, when the war effort was stepped up. "We have an uphill struggle to convince them," the PSYOP officer said.

The Americal PSYOP office accomplishes its mission through a five-pronged program. Three campaigns are directed at the enemy, while two are civilian oriented.

The Anti-North Vietnamese Army, Anti-Viet Cong, and Chieu Hoi (Open Arms) Campaigns are designed to instigate enemy defections by instilling doubt in the enemy soldiers' minds as to the worthiness of their position and goals.

**These three campaigns** also promote the benefits of the South Vietnamese government and point out the futility of continuing to fight a losing battle against the awesome Allied military power.

"If we can weaken the enemy's position, then we can reduce his threat against our forces," stated MAJ Holtom.

But to get the civilian population to believe in and support the South Vietnamese government also is an important function of the PSYOP program.

Through the Pro-Government of South Vietnam and the Rewards Campaigns, civilians are told and shown by presentation of movies the strides being made on their behalf by the government, and are given a chance to gain monetarily by aiding their government in locating enemy infiltrators and weapons.

After analyzing the vulnerabilities of the enemy and determining the type of message it wants to convey, the PSYOP office tailors its leaflets and broadcasts to specific audiences, such as a certain village or VC regiment.

Every day Americal PSYOP personnel drop more than a million leaflets of various kinds from Air Force C47s and O2s or Army helicopters.

**During the past year**, more than 500 million leaflets have been dropped in I Corps, with the largest single-month total, 69,667,000, distributed in March after the Tet offensive. In addition to the leaflets, PSYOP teams using loudspeakers broadcast about 12 hours a day from the ground and four hours a day by air.

This propaganda saturation has produced some encouraging signs of progress, especially in the Rewards

and Chieu Hoi Campaigns.

"In the months of May and June," according to MAJ Holtom, "we had more than 1,000 informants who responded to us by turning over weapons and armament."

**The Americal's application** of the Chieu Hoi Campaign, which is being carried on throughout the country and grants amnesty to VC or NVA who defect, has accounted for more than 50 percent (1,800) of the returnees (called Hoi Chanhs) in I Corps since the division was formed a little more than a year ago.

The largest total of Hoi Chanhs for a single month (307) was recorded last December. The second highest total (189) defected in January.

Two large mass defections came in December and this past May; 38 and 30 in a group respectively. Both of the mass defection groups were from Quang Tin Province.

There are 30 persons working throughout the Americal Division area of operation with psychological operations



Short

SP4 Charles Kinney examines two VC mortar rounds turned in during the PSYOP Volunteer Informant Program as SP5 Ken Gibson notes the find.

as their primary duty, but also in each battalion and company there are persons responsible for conducting PSYOP as a secondary function.

MAJ Holtom stressed that every individual in the division, whether he realizes it or not, is involved in a form of PSYOP. Merely by being here and being observed by the people, the individual's behavior speaks for himself, his unit, and his country.

But what kind of psychological warfare is being conducted by the enemy?

The major said there was quite a bit of propaganda being disseminated under the guise of the National Liberation Front, since the NVA do not want their direct involvement in the South provable through published material.

**Communist propaganda** directed at local villagers and their own soliders is unsophisticated and very localized in nature. Characterized by fantastic lies, scare tactics are substituted for logic, and brutal acts of terrorism enforce their point of view on the civilians.

In order to distribute their propaganda to our troops, it is left in obvious places where the VC are sure it will be found—on wooden signs along trails, under a rock on the main highway, or in piles along enemy escape routes.


**For the most part**, the messages aimed at U.S. troops

are crude and ludicrous. Typical signs read, "Don't die for the benefit of the U.S. warlords or lackeys of the U.S. imperialists" or "Let the Vietnamese settle their own affairs themselves without foreign interference."

However, some of the recent enemy propaganda, although still primitive and expressed in somewhat awkward English, has been more cunning and subtle in its approach.

Attempting to divide loyalties, this form of propaganda uses selected quotes from stateside news articles commenting on such topics as civil rights, war protests, or civil disobedience. The current dissension in the United States has provided grist for the communist propaganda mill.

But while the exaggerated claims and crude devices of the enemy appear to have limited influence on isolated villagers, MAJ Holtom commented that "their efforts to convince our troops are an exercise in frustration. If they knew how little effect they had, they wouldn't waste their time."

"There is not much glamor or excitement in PSYOP," said the major, who has been involved in psychological operations since 1964, "but properly used it has great effect, and in the long run its effects will be evidenced long after the troops leave." 

## The Psychological Operation "War of Words"

### Our Side

(Translated from Vietnamese)

**You have very little food to eat. How can you fight without food?**

**Attention soldiers of the NVA! The government of Vietnam knows that you are hungry and miserable. It is not necessary for you to needlessly suffer. Accept this invitation to Chieu-Hoi. You will be well cared for, and will receive food and clean dry shelter. Do not wait. Rally now!**

**Hide your weapon, then tell the GVN solidiers where it is hidden.**

**You will be paid an ample reward. Rally to any GVN or FWF unit or outpost today.**

### Their Side

(Printed without corrections)

*Yanks come home! That's what they're crying in the States. They're right There's no reason for you to be away from home.*

*Yanks go home! That's what they're should all over South Vietnam. They're right. There's no reason for you to be here where nobody except a few crooks who betray their own people want you.*

*No matter what you're told you're not fighting for the American people or the Vietnamese, why should you killed in Johnson and Mcnamera's war? You won't get rich from procurement orders for war materials. And your families and friends are mossaing you all time.*

*Yanks, come home! go home! —The SVNLAf*

This speaker truck is used to spread the PSYOP message to the people about 12 hours every day.



Holtom

These two methods, the back-pack speaker and face-to-face communication, are effective PSYOP tools.





*An Army Sergeant  
Builds A Lasting  
Memorial...*



Gmiter

# A Small Stone Chapel

By PFC KENNETH W. AINSLIE

11th Inf. Bde.

For most Americans a small chapel is the symbol of quiet worship. But when that chapel is 10 thousand miles from home, surrounded by the bloody horrors of war, it becomes a place to reaffirm hope for a peaceful world...a place of meditation for the weary infantryman...a place of guidance for the commander...a house of mental rebirth.

Such a chapel overlooks the Song Tra Cau Valley on the coastal plains of southern I Corps. It is the LT James E. Laird chapel, a small stone structure at Landing Zone Liz, a fire support base for the division's 11th Inf. Bde.

The idea of building a tent church for the brigade's 3d Bn., 1st Inf. was presented to SFC Julius S. Cross, the battalion's assistant operations sergeant. He recognized the need for a place of worship, but asked that he be given the time to construct a more lasting building—and a more beautiful one.

Having sampled the ingenious sergeant's architectural ability in the construction of a mess hall, a first aid station, and an officer's club-mess, LTC Henry I. Lowder, battalion commander, did not hesitate to give him a free hand in the building's design.

So, with the help of the local Vietnamese, Cross began his chipped stone chapel. "The people in Vinh Hein, a hamlet just below LZ Liz, have helped with the project

since it was begun in April," he said. "They gathered and prepared most of the stone for the building."

Among his helpers were a professional Vietnamese carpenter, Nguyen Mau, and two concrete workers, Nguyen Minh and Thai Tai, who build wells, headstones, and house foundations in the village. Their skillful direction enabled work to proceed at a rapid pace.

Contributions played a major part in the chapel's construction. "This chapel was built entirely by contribution," said the 48-year-old sergeant proudly. "Money to pay for the labor has come from contributions since the day we began, and we have never had to assign a detail to work on it."

But monetary help was not the only contribution. The men on the hill pitched in during their off-duty hours to give a hand with the construction. "Everyone did what he could to help," said Cross. "Men from the artillery and infantry units came over at night to give a much needed hand."

He also noted that the chapel was built almost entirely of scrap materials. "The only things that aren't salvage material in the chapel are the cement, the screen, and the light bulbs."

One of the most striking features about the chapel is the large stone cross at its entrance. The cross, which sits on a large rock overlooking the valley, is made of

small stones cemented together. Also surrounding the building are various types of fauna, adding an extra touch of life and beauty to the site.

**The chapel** is large enough to seat 70 people comfortably. Most of it is stone, including the inlaid pebble floor. But the roof and furniture are scrap ammunition boxes created into fascinating patterns and tinted a light green. This, too, is the sergeant's handiwork. Having made a beautiful altar and two lecturns, he hopes to add wooden ammo-box pews in the same pattern.

With beauty and cool comfort in mind, Cross has fulfilled his battalion's need for a quiet place to worship. The battalion's Protestant chaplain, CPT Richard C. Radde, has noted that he is extremely pleased with the new chapel. "This chapel is built on one of the prettiest spots at Liz," he said, "and there is usually a gentle breeze blowing in from the ocean. By staggering the hours of the various religious services, we are able to hold all services here."

During a formal dedication ceremony on Aug. 4 of

this year, Chaplain Radde accepted the key to the LT James E. Laird Chapel, marking it ready for worship services. "This chapel will be used to proclaim the glory of God," he affirmed.

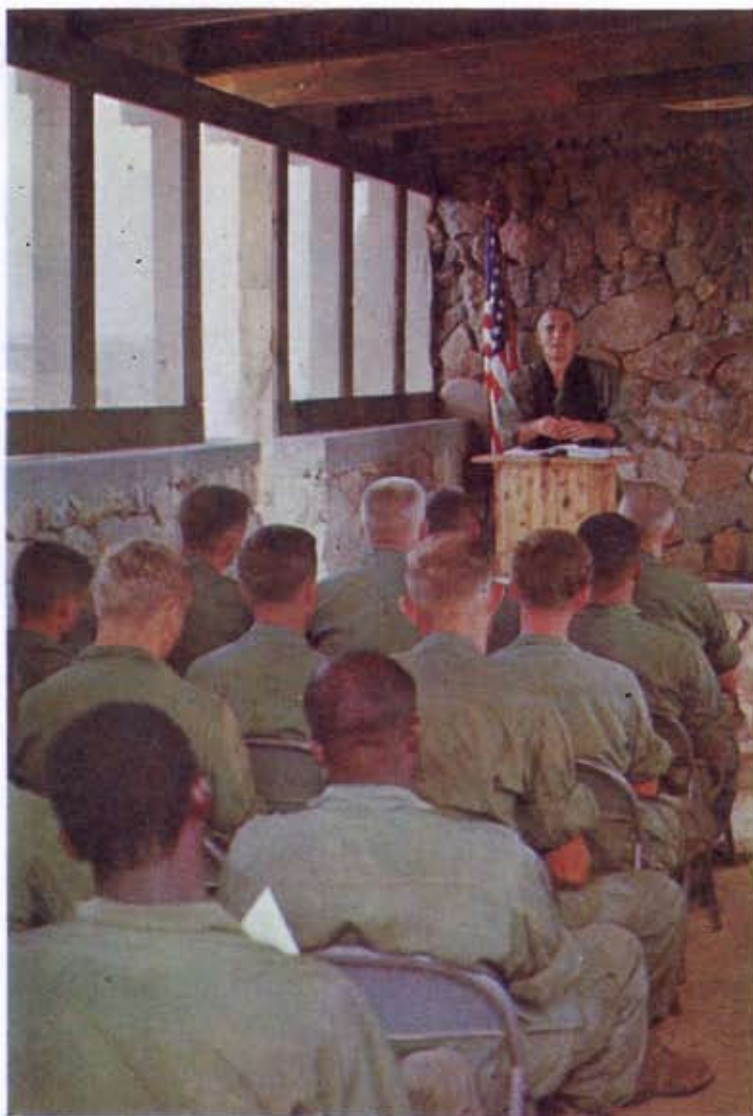
**At the ceremony**, LTC Lowder added, "This chapel, an important and worthy addition to LZ Liz, is dedicated to LT James E. Laird, who was killed near this site, and to all the men of 3d Bn., 1st Inf. who gave their lives to the cause of freedom."

This is not the first time that SFC Cross has helped beautify a war-torn country with a chapel. Twenty-three years ago, during World War II, he built a chapel in the Philippines for the men of the 25th Inf. Div. "That chapel was built of stone and bamboo, and sits in the Crow Valley on the island of Luzon," he recalls.

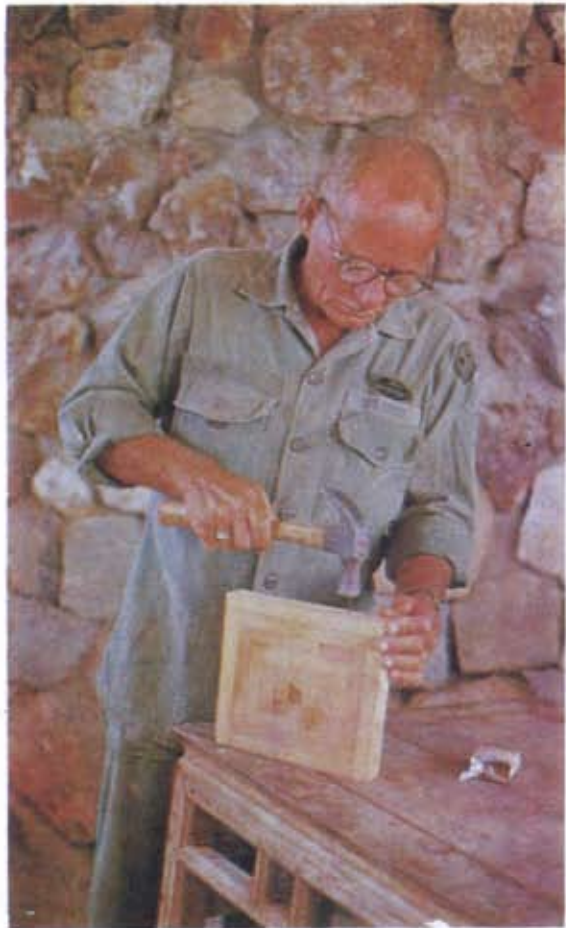
And when the day comes for the Americal's 11th Inf. Bde. to gather their belongings and return to America, they will leave behind them a symbol of the freedom they fought for—a small stone chapel along the coast of Vietnam.



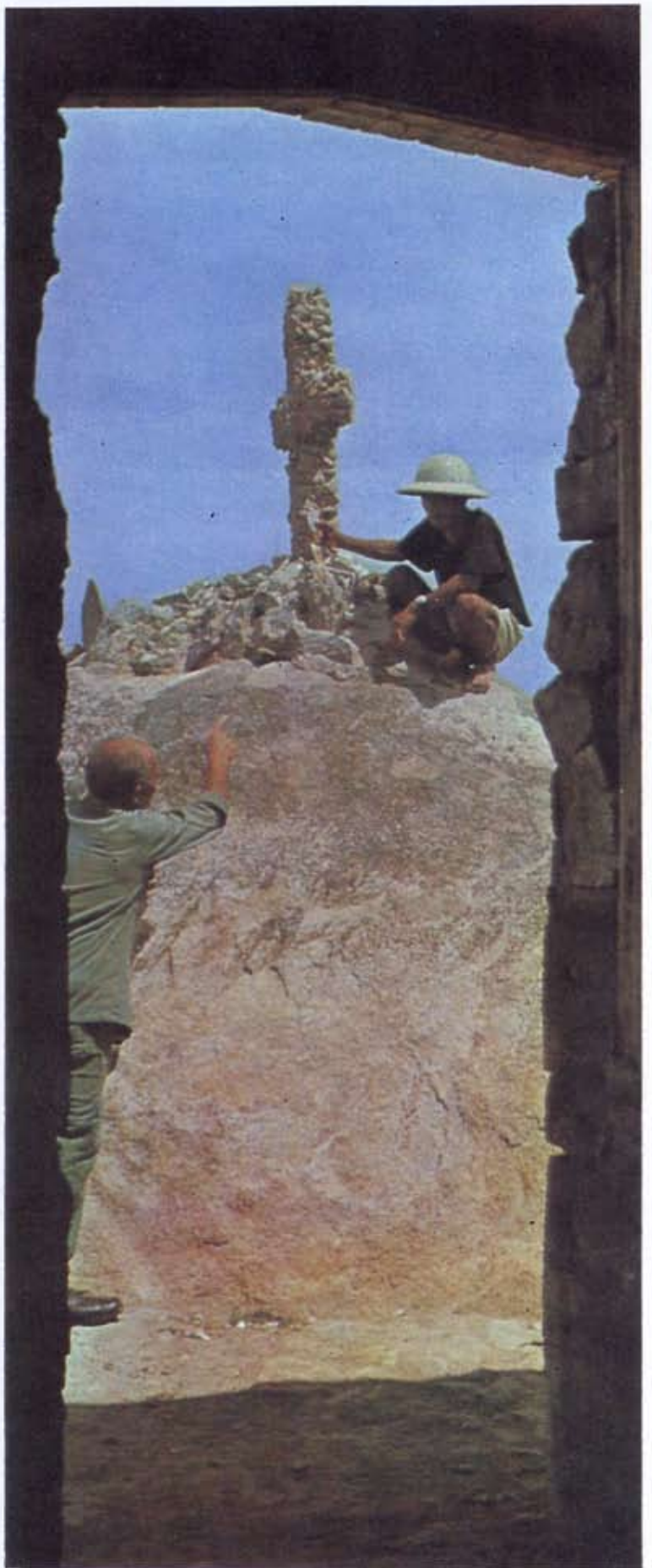
Organist 1LT Jeffery Howard, a pilot for the 11th Inf. Bde.'s Primo Aviation Ltd., plays at the dedication of the LT James E. Laird Chapel, as Chaplain (CPT) Richard C. Radde conducts the worship service.



All color: Ainslie



SFC Julius S. Cross gives careful attention to details, as he and his Vietnamese helpers put the finishing touches to the small stone chapel.



# \$12 Million Monthly Payroll

## The Americal Money

Does an infantryman really care about how many zeros follow a dollar sign on the account books of his division's finance office? Probably not, but he is concerned with the numbers that appear on his DA Form 2139-1—his monthly pay voucher. And this is the responsibility of the men of the Americal Division Finance Office.

From the pay clerk filling out forms to the agile adding machine operator to the cashier counting out the correct amount of change, the finance operation is a chain with each link depending upon the other.

"We are all interdependent," says Asst. Finance Officer CPT William Harris. "Each of our five sections in some way depends upon the accuracy and competence

of the others."

The sections that CPT Harris referred to are (1) the military pay team, (2) computation, (3) disbursing, (4) service control, and (5) replacement detachment processing.

**The Military Pay Teams** are divided into four groups, one for each of the three brigades and one for all other division units. They handle a man's pay records, prepare his vouchers and payments and try to clear up any problems he may have.

CW2 Donald G. Salo, chief of the 198th Inf. Bde. pay team stated, "One of our biggest problems is promotions. We often don't receive the orders in time to make the necessary changes on the records."



Bragdon

SP5 Scott F. Showalter types an allotment for a division soldier, while SP5 Perry L. Hayes (right) checks the payrolls to insure that entitlements, collections, and payments balance.



Bragdon

# Men



Bragdon

CPT Benjamin Sims, company commander of the 198th Inf. Bde.'s Headquarters Co., pays a member of his unit on the bunker line.

He cited an example. "If a man's promotion orders do not reach us by the 12th of September, the pay raise will not go into effect until October, the extra money will be carried over to the Oct. 31 payday."

"We work on enlisted pay records between the first and the twelfth of the month, then send them on to computation," the Chief Warrant stated.

**Trouble shooting** is another function of the pay team out in the field. The section sends a man to battalion level, at their request, to speak to anyone with a pay problem.

SP5 Douglas James of the 198th team has gone on such missions. "I generally coordinate my visit with the battalion S-1 and the Personnel Staff NCO," he stated. "It's the battalion's job to pass out the word that I'm coming and that anyone with a problem or complaint about their pay should see me."

"The most prevalent problem is a general uncertainty as to what their pay voucher means. The men want to be sure they're receiving everything entitled to them and so do we," James added.

Once the voucher and records are complete, the Computation section takes over. CPT Harris explains, "They compute the voucher, process it, and make what we call a change list. This list informs the disbursing section how much money is going to be involved in the payroll."

The section has no computers or electronic aids, so they must compute and check all their work manually.

**After computation**, the vouchers proceed to the Disbursing Section. This is the place where the 12 million dollar monthly payroll is sorted and broken down. Each Class A agent must be sure that he has the correct amount before beginning to pay the men.

This section also controls the dealings at the steel cages in the division finance office itself. SP4 James Warman is one of the men who works behind these cages. He says that he has handled more than four million dollars in the ten months he has worked at Americal finance.

**The Service Control Section** handles all special actions. It is subdivided into a number of specific departments, including allotments, travel, morning report teams, and officers records.

One of the special transactions this section handles is called an "Exchange for Cash." The serviceman may request that a treasury check in any amount up to and including all of his pay be sent to his dependents or a stateside bank. The service is free of charge.

"The only problem," said CPT Harris, "is that there may be a delay of two or three days because 1,000 to 1,500 checks must be manually typed and posted each month." The finance officer noted that the Service Control Section also handles local Class L Allotments, where the soldier may, for example, pay for a particular item at the PX.

**The Replacement Detachment Processing Sections**, unlike the other four, is situated at the Americal Combat Center, not at the Finance Office. All enlisted men coming into the division are in-processed there, and all problems in respect to pay are remedied.

"We try to pay all the men as soon as they come into the division," said CPT Harris.

The 115 men and officers of the Finance Office, under the leadership of LTC Harold R. Golden, do their best to live up to the motto of Americal Finance, "In Service We Excel."

*From The Field...*



Hawkins

*...To The Beach*

Hawkins





Forslow

"Charger Hotel"

# THE 196th TAKES STAND-DOWN

By SGT FRANK ELSTON

196th Inf. Bde.

What does an infantryman dream about? Hot showers; thick steaks and beer; maybe just a chance to relax and forget about war for a while. And that's exactly what he's going to get if he's a "Charger" of the 196th Inf. Bde. on stand-down.

Periodically, every line company of the brigade is given a three-day respite from the rigors of the field and sent to Chu Lai for a short stay at the "Charger Hotel." There's no charge at the "Charger," and no extra duties for the men. All they are required to do is rest and enjoy themselves.

Bde. Special Services Officer 1LT Gerry Kohl explained the program. "During their stay, the infantrymen have a chance to relax, enjoy recreational facilities, replace or repair worn or damaged equipment, and iron out various financial and personnel problems they have."

After the men have left the helicopters that picked them up in the field, they board two-and-one-half ton trucks for the short trip to the stand-down center. The hotel staff greets the men and gives them a briefing on what to expect and where everything is located.

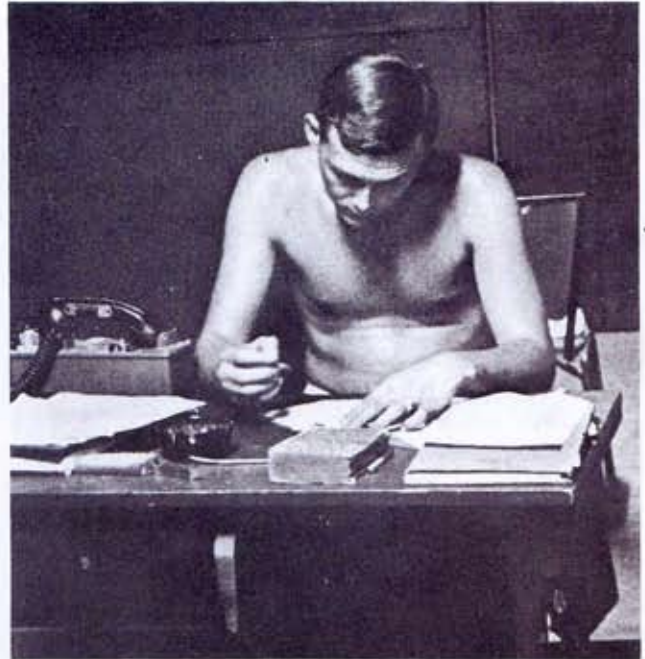
**Weapons and equipment** are then turned in for inspection by a detachment from the 723rd Maint. Bn., and all defective items are repaired or replaced. In addition, a medical team from the 196th's C Co., 8th Spt. Bn. is on hand to take care of any medical problems, and bring shot and medical records up to date.

In the afternoon, the men are offered the chance to visit someone many of them have not seen in a long, long time...the Chu Lai barber. After the haircut, the men have the rest of the day off to enjoy the varied activities available in the "Charger Hotel" area.

These include pool and pingpong tables, a basketball



Farslow



Farslow

### A Time To Read, Relax, . . .

court, and an area for playing cards.

"The shower room also gets plenty of first-day use," said LT Kohl. "For most of the men, this is the only time they are able to get a real hot shower except on R & R."

The second day, clerks from Finance and AG Personnel arrive to help the men solve any problems they may have. They may make out new allotments, review their 201 files, and have all their records screened. New dog tags and identification cards also are available to replace those which have been lost or damaged in the field.

At least once during the company's stay, religious services are conducted by brigade chaplains.

One very popular activity during stand-down is a visit to the Americal Central Post Exchange. Through special arrangements with the PX officer, it is pre-stocked with a number of hard-to-get or scarce items, such as cameras, watches, and tape recorders. The doors of the exchange are opened one-half hour early for the company, and no one else is allowed in till normal operating hours.

On the final day at the "Charger Hotel", a trip to one of the Americal beaches is organized. In addition to being able to swim and sun, the infantrymen are treated to a cookout with all the steak and side dishes they can eat. There is also plenty of cold beer and soda for the "Chargers" to drink.

The evenings during stand-downs are a busy time for the men at the hotel. There are many forms of entertainment available, such as TV, movies, live shows, or just lounging around in their two-man rooms.

### . . . Write, Think, Reflect

The live shows are the most popular form of entertainment and generally draw the largest crowds. As one "Legionnaire" from the 2nd Bn., 1st Inf. said, "This is the first real live show that I've seen since I've been over here, the girls are really wild!"

"Disbelief is the continual reaction of the soldiers from the time they first see the hotel until they leave to go back to the field," commented SGT Sam Leehe, NCOIC of the stand-down center. "When they see a two-story building with all these facilities they just cannot believe their eyes," he added.

In praising the hotel, also known to the men as the "Chu Lai Hilton," CPT John Wolfe, CO of B Co., 4th Bn., 31st Inf. said, "The hotel and aims of the program are beautiful. My men really enjoyed this rest, and they certainly deserved it."

The 196th obtained the facility in December, 1967, and the first unit to use it was D Co., 3rd Bn., 21st Inf.

"Few companies were able to use the hotel at first because of the constant heavy contact during the Tet offensive. Since the 196th moved back from Camp Evans in May, the stand-down area has really been busy," said LT Kohl. "If all goes well, each line unit should return every 90 days," he concluded.

The 196th stand-down program and "Charger Hotel" give the infantrymen of the brigade something to really look forward to. It builds morale and gives them a chance to relax before returning to the field as more effective fighters.

## From Spit and Polish To A Dented Helmet...

# THE COMBAT MP



Eilers

Just after nightfall in the quiet, inland waters of Truong Giang, a wooden boat silently glides through the reflected moonlight. A Vietnamese with a long, bamboo pole eyes the lush undergrowth warily. Beneath his catch of fish are hidden three 122mm rockets. Suddenly, from that same undergrowth, a machinegun growls and tracers blaze across the craft's bow. A military policeman comes aboard.

A gray, crowded minibus on its way from Quang Ngai to Tam Ky bounces merrily along Highway One. Its dozen passengers include children, pregnant women,

chickens, roosters, and a man with a green-canvas totebag. Just past the village of Chau Tu the bus veers sharply to the right and stops on the shoulder. A shout is heard and the passengers reluctantly emerge, poultry and all. The man hastily stuffs the bag behind a seat and follows the others out. A National Police-MP inspection team is waiting.

The incidents described are but two of the countless situations in which a military policeman of the 198th Inf. Bde. may find himself. He is a new kind of soldier—a combat M.P.

MP "River Rats" skim across the water during a searching operation along a southern I Corps waterway. PFC Lloyd E. Richmond, assisted by a Vietnamese National Policeman, checks the identification of a fisherman during the water patrol.



Eilers

The "Brave and Bold" MPs have three primary functions: river patrol, highway patrol, and detention of captured enemy soldiers and suspected enemy sympathizers. But in the words of brigade provost marshal, MAJ Gordon Moody, "You get a little bit of everything, tactical operations, police work, and civil affairs."

The waterborne military policemen patrol the An Tan and Tra Bong River complexes in 16-foot Boston Whalers outfitted with 80- and 85-horsepower motors and M-60 machineguns.

SP4 Jerry D. Lear, who has been patrolling the network of waterways north and south of Chu Lai for six months, commented on the challenging role played by the combat MP. "Here there's a job to do. Back in the States we were a lot of spit and polish, but over here we're in combat," Lear said.

A young MP, Lear has not issued a single DR since he has been in Vietnam. Instead he sports a steel helmet that has a large dent in it—a dent that came from an enemy AK-47 round during a firefight on the Tra Bong River.

Dubbed the "River Rats," the



Eilers

198th MPs man an outpost on each of the two rivers they patrol. It is a 24-hour job. At night, the "River Rats" set up floating ambushes to catch unwary Viet Cong sampans. No one is supposed to be on the rivers after dark, but often there are local fishermen trying to improve upon the day's catch. The MPs must be careful to separate friend from foe.

"We use two boats on a patrol," Lear said. "The first boat stops the sampans and junks while the second boat lags a short distance behind for security. Our boats are the fastest on the river. A Vietnamese national policeman from district headquarters accompanies the roving water patrols and checks identification cards and picks up draft dodgers."

"Security is the most important thing during river patrols," says PFC Kenneth C. Irvin, who is a machinegunner in the security boat during patrolling. "It's a challenge to be a combat MP. You've got to deal with a lot of different situations, the Vietnamese, the soldiers, and even the VC. You have to be alert at all times."

On road patrolling missions, the

198th MPs use quarter-ton gunjeeps with specially mounted M-60 machineguns. They patrol 32 miles of Highway One from Bridge 444 near Quang Ngai in the south to Tam Ky in the north, and all the towns, villages, and hamlets, with the exception of An Tan, in between.

"They are the eyes and ears of the Brigade," says MAJ Moody. "The men get to know the people in the area and learn who's missing, who has just arrived, who is scared, and of what!"

The patrols on the highway are so situated that they can get anywhere within a reasonable response time. Whether it's a serious traffic accident, lost soldier, land mine, or spotcheck, a gunjeep will be close at hand.

Checkpoints are set up in conjunction with the National Police to stop everything from a five-ton truck to a small motor scooter. The results of a recent check revealed 3,000 sticks of marijuana, hundreds of C-rations, cartons of American cigarettes, and cans of cooking oil. The roadside checkpoints have stopped most of the north-south flow of contraband and illegal goods along the 198th's portion of Highway One.

Gunjeeps are used by 198th Inf. Bde. MPs to patrol Highway One and enforce checkpoint security. SP4 Jack J. Anders mans the M-60 machine gun, while PFC Ronald E. Arvai drives to a roadside spot check point, where he searches a Lambretta for contraband and illegal shipments by local civilians.



Eilers

The third major function of the brigade MPs is control of the 198th detention facility. The large cage, in which personnel picked up mainly by combat units are detained, is manned around the clock. The detainees are fed and clothed there, and then examined by Military Intelligence.

Intelligence classifies the detainees as a prisoner of war (POW), civil defendant (CD), or innocent civilian (IC). The POWs then are transported to the division detention facility for further interrogation, while the CDs are turned over to the National Police and the ICs are set free.

Other duties of the 198th MPs carry them to the fire bases, far from brigade headquarters. This may involve a routine nighttime check of the neighboring villages or special tactical missions. They may act as a blocking force for the infantry during a sweep or swoop down in helicopters from a resources-control investigation. Such raids into remote areas often have uncovered illegal drugs and contraband, as well as stragglers and AWOLs.

The new look in being a military policeman in the 198th Inf. Bde. is definitely the look of combat. From skimming across the Tra Bong River to intercept a VC sampan, to bursting through an enemy ambush, the 198th combat MPs are adding a new dimension to the Military Police Corps.



Eilers

# REVOLUTIONARY

## *A Program For*

By SP4 JOHN NICHOLSON

Every hamlet in Vietnam seems just about the same as the next. The houses are small, mud-wall, dirt-floor dwellings with thatched roofs. The hamlet headquarters and school—if there are any—might have wooden walls, tile roofs, and tile or brick floors.

These structures, however, are usually old and badly in need of repair. The marketplaces are open except for some which have thatched roofing supported by bamboo.

By contrast, some hamlets boast new, large buildings with cement walls and floors. These are usually village headquarters and schools.

Other hamlets have marketplaces with cement floors and tin roofs. These hamlets have received aid from a program called REVOLUTIONARY DEVELOPMENT.

RD is the integrated military and civil process to restore and expand Government of Vietnam control so that South Vietnam can develop into

a stronger and more unified country.

The basic steps taken in the Revolutionary Development program are: liberate the people from the Viet Cong control, restore public security, initiate political and economic systems, extend effective GVN authority, and win the willing support of the people toward these ends.

The Vietnamese government has primary responsibility for RD, but it is assisted by the Allied military forces. The Americal Division is involved in the three phases of the program: clearing, securing, and developing.

Clearing is accomplished by the combat elements. They rid the area of Viet Cong and North Vietnamese Army main forces and permanently eliminate the threat of enemy attack.

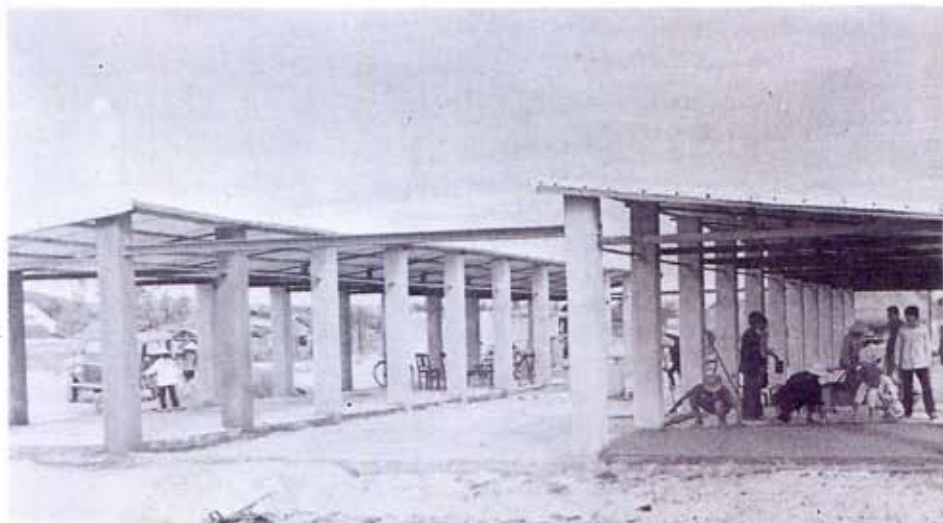
Securing is performed by the National Police, National Police Field Forces, Popular Forces, and Regional Forces with ARVN and Allied troops operating on the periphery of the area to prevent VC and NVA main

*Guerrant*



*Guerrant*

The Vietnamese take pride in working on projects for their local village. Above, a village carpenter from An Tay applies his skill to the construction of the hamlet headquarters. At right, the floor is laid to the new Khuong Hiep marketplace.



# DEVELOPMENT

## *Nation Building*

forces from returning to interfere with the RD activity.

The developing phase is the last, and, from the RD standpoint, the most important. It is now that nation building starts. This is also the phase that best lends itself to military civic action.

Each brigade and battalion has an S-5 assigned to the staff. His function is to coordinate military civic action projects in his unit's area of operations. He determines the needs and wants of the local hamlets, initiates and forwards a project request, and, if the project is approved, delivers the required materials and monitors the work.

All projects must be integrated into the province plan for RD. While military civic action is only one of the RD functions done by many different agencies, it is a most important one because most of the projects involve construction.

A dispensary does no one any good without a staff to operate it; the staff is provided by the province chief. A school without teachers wastes material and labor; the province chief assures teachers are available before approving a school.

**The following** is an example of the way a project should progress—

The population of the hamlet of Son Hai has increased steadily since 1965 mainly because of the refugees resettled there by the government. The hamlet's two-room primary school is now unable to handle the larger number of school children.

OCTOBER, 1968

Guerrant



SP5 William H. Heine of the 6th Civil Affairs Plt. talks to refugee residents of Khuong Nhon about their newly planted carrot garden, one of the RD self-help projects.

The district senior adviser informs the S-5 of a nearby infantry battalion of this situation. The S-5 contacts the hamlet chief to find out how he can help. They agree to add two more rooms to the school. The S-5 will furnish the construction materials, and the hamlet will build the classrooms.

**Before construction** can start, approval must be obtained from the village chief, the district chief, and the district senior adviser. Then a request is forwarded for approval through his brigade and division to the province chief.

The project is evaluated to insure it will support the provincial RD plan and not conflict or duplicate actions in progress or planned by other GVN agencies.

If everything is favorable, the project is approved and the necessary materials are issued to the battalion S-5 from the province warehouse. These materials actually belong to the Civil Operations for Revolutionary

Development Support (CORDS) member on the staff of the province senior adviser.

**The S-5** gives the materials to the hamlet chief as they are needed until the project is completed. When the two-room addition is finished it becomes the property of the hamlet, and the province chief provides additional teachers.

Conducting civic action projects in the division area of operation, in addition to the brigades and battalions, are three Civil Affairs platoons attached to the Americal. The 6th AA (general assistance) Plt. works in the Chu Lai area; the 51st AA Plt. operates from LZ Baldy; and the 4th AA Plt. covers the Duc Pho district.

Not attached to the division but working in this area are the 5th AA Plt., which formerly handled the Mo Duc district and is now doing extensive construction work in Son Tra, and the 9th AA Plt. and the 10th VA (refugee assistance) Plt., both based in Tam Ky.

**These platoons** coordinate all the civic action projects of U.S. units in their areas. They conduct surveys such as: population density, rice production, water resources, etc.; assist the brigade S-5 with projects; and initiate original projects.

It is these civil affairs platoons that actually work the closest with the Vietnamese. The villagers come to the platoon leader with ideas for projects. Then, after the project is approved, the men of the platoon distribute the construction materials and supervise the project.

In talking with a civil affairs platoon member, you are sure to notice the pride and tremendous satisfaction he gains from his work. As he tells you about some of the problems and the final success of his projects, you will understand why he enjoys his job.

He likes his close association with the Vietnamese and feels a great sense of accomplishment when he shares his knowledge and experience with people who are eager to learn. ♣

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## MAJOR REVOLUTIONARY DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS

**SCHOOLS**—Projects range in size from two-room additions on existing schools to a complete six-room schoolhouse. Many of the current projects replace schools destroyed during the Tet offensive.

**HOSPITALS**—A typical example has five rooms: an office, an examination room, operating room, a 15-bed ward and a dispensary, staffed by Vietnamese with foreign advisers.

**DIVERSION DAMS**—The dam in Mo Duc supplies three-fourths of the district with water—about 80 square miles. Built and maintained by refugees, every year before the monsoon season it must be dismantled, otherwise it would be washed away, and reassembled after the monsoon. It is estimated the same materials can be used for 10 years.

**RICE**—The GVN currently is experimenting with IR-8 rice, which matures much faster than the rice

now planted. It will increase rice production two to five times. Another project called "The Golden Fleece Operation" provides military security while refugees harvest VC rice, thus providing extra rice and depriving the enemy of his food supply.

**PIG FARMS**—Pigs are distributed to selected hamlet individuals, and material is provided to construct pig pens. One piglet from the first litter is given to the hamlet chief so that he may pass it on to another nearby hamlet, continuing and spreading the program.

**REFUGEE CAMPS**—One such camp built in Mo Duc provides refugee housing, a five-room primary school and a dispensary. CORDS has contributed sewing machines, and women are being taught to make clothes for their families.

**BRICK FACTORIES**—A Due Pho factory, operated by refugees, has

three brick machines which produce 1,100 bricks a day. The bricks are used for schools, wells, marketplaces, hospitals, police check points, and other civil affairs projects.

**ELECTRIC CO-OP**—In Mo Duc a 30-kilowatt generator provides street lights and electricity for village headquarters, Revolutionary Development headquarters, the police station and some homes. This is part of the "Rural Electrification Program."

**NEWSPAPERS**—The Vietnamese Information Service is responsible for the writing and printing of weekly papers, which provide local and national news, plus Chieu Hoi and Voluntary Informant Program items, education notices and dates when agriculture advisers from the province will be in the hamlet.

**MARKETPLACES**—These projects provide an improvement that affects the economy of an entire hamlet.

# Education In Vietnam

*This is the first part of a continuing series designed to acquaint the men of the Americas with the traditions, customs, and culture of the people of Vietnam.—Editor*

The Vietnamese always have had great respect for learning. From the beginning of their culture to the present day, education has been the key to position and success.

The educational system in Vietnam changed considerably with the arrival of the French. One of the major changes occurred at the turn of the 19th century when the French encouraged the Vietnamese to write their own language in the Latin alphabet.

What remains today is substantially the French school system. There are twelve grade levels below university study. The first five grades are called primary school, and the last seven are secondary school.

Secondary schools are further divided into a four-year course, followed by a three-year course. The three-year course, or second cycle, is equivalent to our high school.

The lowest grade in primary school is the 5th grade, and in secondary school it is the 7th grade; the highest grade in each is the 1st grade.

Children attend primary school between the ages of 6 to 11 and secondary school between the ages of 12 to 19.

Generally, the primary school year lasts from August to April, while the secondary lasts from September to June. Secondary school students attend five to eight 55-minute classes a day, depending upon their schedule. Classes are scheduled between 8 a.m. and noon and 2-6 p.m. There are from 60 to 100 students in each class.

The following list shows the courses taken by the secondary school students. The number in parenthesis



Gmiler

is the number of hours of class time devoted to that subject each week.

- |                                  |                                 |
|----------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Mathematics (5)                  | Geography (3)                   |
| Chemistry/Physics (5)            | Natural Science (3)             |
| Language (English or French) (4) | Composition (2)                 |
| Literature (4)                   | Civics (2)                      |
| History (3)                      | Philosophy (last year only) (3) |

Language is a mandatory course. Seventy percent take English; the rest study French. Some schools include one hour a week for music study and another hour for drawing in addition to the subjects listed above.

Graduates from secondary school are considered qualified to teach in primary school. A special summer course for graduates who desire this position is given every year at the local secondary school. Those who wish to teach at the secondary level must attend a teachers college in Saigon.

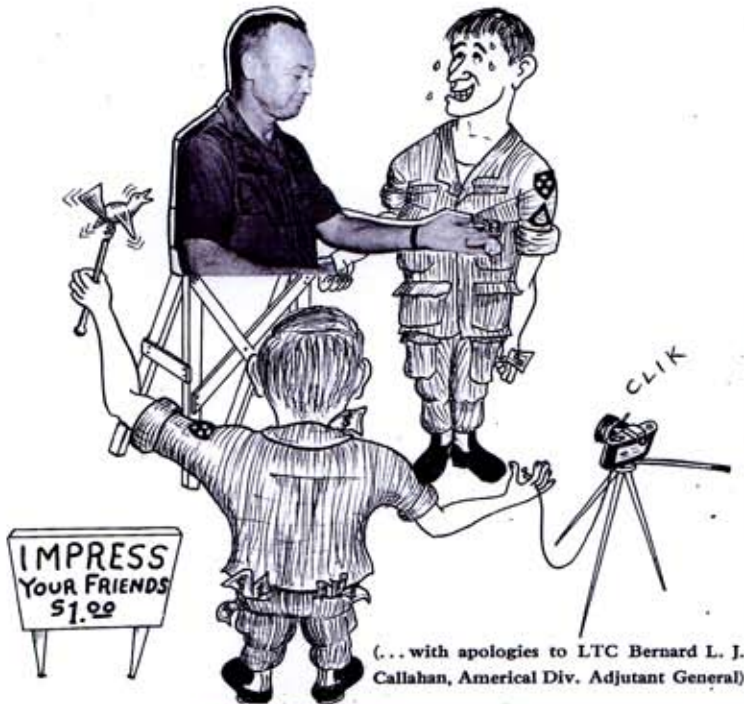
For admission to the five-year university program or to the advanced technical schools, students must pass a stiff baccalaureate examination. The main institution of higher education is the National University of Vietnam in Saigon.

There are other universities at Da Lat, Can Tho, and Hue, plus several technical schools of university rank, such as the National Institute of Administration in Saigon. Also, from 1,000 to 1,500 students study at foreign universities every year.

(Next: the Tet Holiday.)

# AMERICAL MIRTH

by Sp4 Dave McGown



We can't head west at this time of the day, Sarge! I'll be shooting into the sun and overexpose!

## Looking for "Things"

The AMERICAL is on the lookout. We are looking for "things" and we are looking for ideas. We are interested in photographs, color transparencies and black and white (plus negatives), which could be used in the magazine.

We also are interested in art work. Drawings, sketches, cartoons, charcoal, pen and ink, or color.

As for the ideas, we are seeking subjects for our feature series, "Americal Mirth." Current jokes or funny incidents which might be amusing to our readers.

All material and correspondence should be addressed to AMERICAL, Americal Information Office, APO 96374. All "things" will be returned.



*Curiosity...  
Bewilderment...  
Innocence...  
A Child.*

