Gaza Strip 'Cleared' In Fifty Days

By PFC Toby Prodgers

FSB LIZ — The stretch of South China Sea coastland just north of Duc Pho was recently the object of a massive land clearing operation undertaken by the forces of the Army, Navy and Marines.

The "Strip" has long been a festering sore in the side of the agriculturally rich lowlands of southern Quang Ngai Province and has long been used as a spring board for enemy activity in the area.

WWII Classic

At the onset of what turned out to be a 50-day job were all the makings of a WWII classic beachhead assault. First whistling artillery rounds destroyed the scattered coastal bunkers, and then an air prep by Shark and Dolphin teams of the 174th Helicopter Assault Company made 'dead' any 'quick' enemy around. A Recon platoon from Co. D, 1-20th Inf., 11th Bde. was C-Aed onto the beach moments after the shelling stopped. At sea the landing ships were forming in cinemagraphic style.

Army First Ashore

The platoon secured the initial landing site and gave the signal to the Navy flat-bottomed landing craft to begin the assault. The first ashore were the Army "Rome Plows" and Marine "Eimco" caterpillars.

Co. A 1-20th, 11th Bde. was air lifted to the beach by Chinooks from Chu Lai and assumed security duties for the clearing by the division's 39th Engr Bn.

10,000 Acres

Elments of A and E Trp.'s 1-1st Cavalry joined the operation later to assist in the land clearing and security of men and machinery.

In the end almost 10,000 acres (an average of 200 acres a day) was cleared in spite of the adverse weather conditions and enemy activity.

Relocation

Working with MACV and Vietnamese forces, the 1-20th Inf. 11th Bde., successfully relocated the civilians from the "Strip" (Gaza Strip) to highway one, between the villages of Van Troung and Tap An Bac. They were provided with living quarters and an adequate supply of food. CPT. Andrew Z. Lisowski, the officer-in-charge of the relocation program, said that the civilians are "adjusting very well to the relocation and their spirits are high."

Review

Tactically the operation has proven to be successful. As the strip was cleared to the south, the enemy's hiding places and bases of operation were destroyed, thus the enemy had to keep moving toward the mouth of the Tra Cau River where they were eventually hemmed into a small area, confined by the river to the west and south and by the ocean to the east.

59 Enemy KIA

Alpha Company took advantage of the enemy's limited mobility and in one week of sporadic contact accounted for 39 enemy dead, wounded, captured, or 'Chieu Hoied' to the allies. For the entire operation the number of enemy kills reached 59.

Enemy basecamps, bunkers, and fighting positions in the strip are now gone. 45,000 pounds of enemy rice was confiscated as well as substantial quantities of medical equipment, ammunition and supplies. (11th Bde IO)

SOUTHERN CROSS

AMERICAL DIVISION

Vol. 3, No. 3 | Chu Lai, Vietnam | January 16, 1970

New Year Brings New CSM

By MSG H. A. Bonesio

CSM Sam S. Borrelli has been selected as the Division command sergeant major upon the departure of CSM James P. Meade for assignment to Ft. Benning, Ga.

One of the main concerns of the new command sergeant major is the welfare of the troops. "Morale, health, proper clothing and equipment, in and out of a combat environment, should be a prime concern of all NCOs for their troops," he stated, "Senior NCOs should assist the juniors in doing their jobs with stress placed on corrections on-the-spot and supervision at all times.

CSM Borrelli, at 40 years old, is one of the youngest command sergeants major of a division size unit in the U.S. Army. He enlisted in the Army in 1949 and has served three tours in Germany with the 1st and 8th Infantry divisions and the 3rd Armored Division.

He was a member of the 3rd Infantry (Old Guard) in Washington, D.C., spent a tour of duty in Korea and returned to the "Old Guard." This was followed by an assignment to the 75th Inf. Regimental Combat Team (Merrills Marauders), on Okinawa, until that unit's inactivation in 1956.

In addition to service and campaign awards, CSM Borrelli holds the Silver Star, Bronze Star, Air, Army Commendation and Purple Heart medals and the Combat Infantryman's and ARVN Ranger badges. He has been decorated with the RVN Cross of Gallantry and the VN Air Force Honor Medal. (Americal IO)

The Blade

This distorted view of a CH-47 'Chinook' was taken with a 20mm extremely wide angle lens. The photographer's object was not only the unusual view but an expression of the strength and power of the hook's engine and rotors, the apparent frailty of the blades. The hook can lift anything, but what lifts up the hook.

(Photo By PFC Laszlo Kondor, Americal IO)

Two New COs

Div. Artillery Units Get New Chiefs

ARTILLERY HILL — COL Leslie B. Hardy (Annadale, Va.) commander of the division artillery recently welcomed an old acquaintance to his command.

LTC Grover A. Dubose (Atlantic City, N.J.), served under COL Hardy in Germany with the 36th Arty. Gp. during 1967-68.

After attending the United States Army Command and General Staff College in 1961, LTC Dubose was sent to Nationalist China as an artillery adviser. During this tour he completed 120 hours of instruction in the Chinese Mandarin language.

Other assignments include the Pentagon where LTC Dubose served as a staff officer and more recently the Allied Forces Central Europe (AFCENT), prior to his assignment in Vietnam.

The holder of many awards including the Legion Of Merit LTC Dubose assumed command of the 3-16th Arty. He replaced LTC Andrew J. Foster Jr. (La Mesa, Cal.) who will become the Asst. Fire coordinator for the division.

Before leaving his command LTC Foster was awarded the Legion Of Merit in recognition of his outstanding performance during the past year.

"LTC Foster maintained superb control over the three firing batteries," the citation read. "At times his howitzers were scattered on as many as ten fire bases throughout the division tactical area." LTC Foster was also awarded an Air Medal with the 2nd award.

LTC Eliseo J. Garcia (San Antonio, Tex.) a holder of the Vietnamese Cross Of Gallantry award with the Silver Star, has recently assumed command of the 1-82nd Arty.

For the past 14 months LTC Garcia was part of the Military Assistance Command, Vietnam (MACV) in southern I Corps. His assignments progressed from the Artillery Advisor to the Operations officer and finally to the position of Regimental Senior Advisor of the 6th ARVN Regt. In addition to the Vietnamese award he also received the Air Medal fourth award.

LTC Garcia served in Korea (1958-59) and later with the 35th Artillery in Germany for almost two years.

The departing commander, LTC James M. Compton (Springfield, Mo.) is returning to CONUS for his assignment in the Pentagon.

LTC Compton also served as the Executive Officer of the division artillery, for the first part of his tour in Vietnam. While in this capacity, in spite of the demanding responsibilities he found time to coordinate with Special Services and various supply units in an effort to build a craft shop. After months of endeavor, including many volunteer paint details and carpentry work, the division artillery crafts shop opened.

Featuring a 100 meter slot car track; photolab, and an arts and crafts sales outlet, the new center became a haven for field troops where they came to take up old and new hobbies.

Upon his departure LTC Compton was awarded the Legion Of Merit and the Air Medal 2nd Award.

ARVNs Cited Awards For Valor

LZ BRONCO — Twenty-one Vietnamese soldiers from Quang Ngai Province were decorated for valor here by MG Lloyd B. Ramsey (Somerset, Ky.), the division commander.

The men representing seven PF and RF units, received a total of 14 Bronze Stars with "V" device and seven Army Commendation Medals for valor.

Duc Pho District Chief MAJ Buu Toung commented after the ceremony: "We are all proud because this proves we can provide the support and cooperation for combined operations." MAJ Eric J. Mackintosh (Concord, Cal.) 11th Bde. PYSOPS officer, added: "It's a fine idea that we recognize the excellent and heroic actions of the local forces."

Also participating in the ceremony were COL Hugh F.T. Hoffman Jr., 11th Inf. Bde., commanding officer; COL Ton That Khieu, Quang Ngai province chief, LTC Richard A. Jacoby, province senior advisor, and LTC Le Ba Khiem, CO, 4th ARVN Regt. (11th IO)

Inside Pages

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8. Marine CAP Teams

Geneva Convention Establishes War Guide

By SP4 Stephen G. Frazier

It is late summer in 1949. The mountain-framed lake is alive with boaters, sightseers and lovers. The war has been over four years; Central Europe is in its primary reconstruction phase.

Throughout the Swiss city of Geneva black limousines are escorted by motorcycle mounted polizei. In each car sit the ambassadors of 61 nations. They are here to revise, proof, and ratify the four "Geneva Conventions For The Protection Of War Victims." Perhaps more basically they are here to find ways of making armed conflict more humane. To prevent suffering and bloodshed by allowing nations to agree that in war they will preclude certain inhumane acts and perform certain humane ones.

Guidelines

From their debating came the guidelines you receive as instruction today, establishing your actions as a soldier of your country in time of conflict. They outlined your rights and obligations under the Geneva Convention as a prisoner of war.

In Vietnam the four articles of the Geneva Convention apply to you. Though it is not a formally declared war the Conventions still apply. . . .

"The present convention shall apply to all cases of declared war or of any armed conflict which may arise between two or more of the High Contracting Parties, even if a state of war is not recognized by one of them."

As a prisoner of war you are granted certain rights. . . .

"As a prisoner of war you may be interned only in premises located on land and affording every guarantee of hygiene and healthfulness."

The Combat Zone

"No prisoner may be kept in areas where he may be exposed to the fire of the combat zone, nor may his presence be used to render certain points or areas immune from military operations."

"Prisoners of war shall be quarantined under conditions as favorable as those for the forces of the detaining power who are billeted in the same area."

"Food must be sufficient in quantity, quality, and variety."

The detaining power must let the other side know the location of POW camps. Prisoners must be assembled in camps or compounds according to nationality, language, and customs, but they cannot be separated from other prisoners.

You must be furnished with sufficient safe drinking water, and allowed to use tobacco. Restrictions on food as a form of mass punishment are forbidden.

In no case can your camp conditions be allowed to become dangerous to your health through disease.

Every camp must supply clothes, set up a canteen for the purchase of soap, food stuffs and tobacco at prices no higher than those charged in civilian areas.

You must be granted privileges to worship and physical exercise and the encouragement of intellectual and educational activities.

You must be allowed to send out a capture card to your family informing them of your whereabouts and your state of health. The completion of this card is not in violation with the Code Of Conduct. You are allowed to send letters as frequently as the censorship and postal facilities will allow.

Next of Kin

In this conflict no American's next of kin is known to have received a capture card forwarded by the North Vietnamese although some prisoners have been able to send letters home and been seen by foreign journalists.

Discipline while in the hands of the enemy is also covered by the Convention. Prisoners will show officers of the detaining power the same respect as provided in their own regulations. Prisoners must be permitted to wear their own rank and insignia. The Code of Conduct sets the guidelines for action while you are in the hands of the enemy.

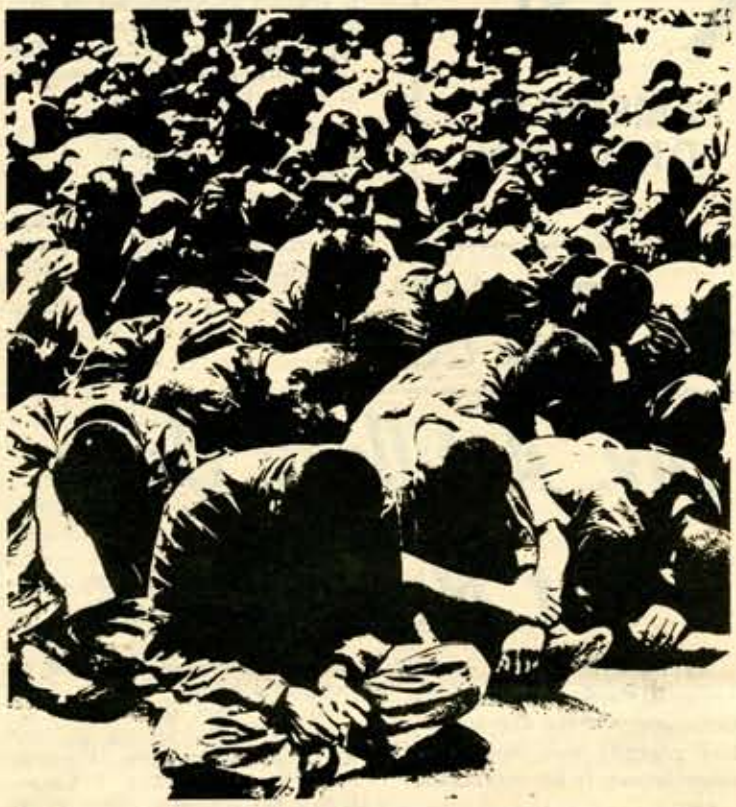
Any complaints you have should be based on your rights from the Geneva convention rather than the Code Of Conduct.

As a prisoner of war you can be punished by the detaining power for violation of the laws, orders and regulations of the powers' armed forces. The trial, assuming your offense warrants one, must be a military trial. There is a right to counsel and a competent interpreter, advance notification of the charges and the right of appeal.

The Convention provides that a prisoner who makes good his escape by rejoining his forces or by getting out of the territory and who is later recaptured, is not liable to any punishment for having escaped.

Attempt To Escape

If during an attempt to escape, a prisoner commits an act not involving violence to life and limb, for which his captors may take disciplinary action, the fact that he was trying to escape must not be used as an excuse to impose punishment more severe than otherwise authorized.



VIETNAM-STYLE

Mystical Animism

By SP4 Stephen G. Frazier

Animism though it is a descriptive term of western origin defines most accurately the religion of the Montagnards.

Animism is literally the belief that natural objects possess a soul.

Hypothetically if you approached a Montagnard and asked him of his religious beliefs it is doubtful that he would relate any word similar to animism. But what he would relate would be a 'belief' (as you would structure it in your mind) in spirits of inanimate objects and deceased persons. Since you are not quite sure of what he means he leads you to the village sorcerer. There the 'mystic' is presented to you as the 'medium' between spirit world and earth, the interpreter of the spirits' emotions.

The village sorcerer would explain that each man has a spirit that never dies. This spirit, as it is but the soul of the man who lived in the earth-world, retains all the peculiarities of that individual; and must be appeased at all times. He tells you it is important to remember that spirits may become very bitter when left to themselves and forgotten and they may try to re-enter earth life.

The sorcerer will tell you of the importance of devotion through thought and effort to the pacification and appeasement of the spirits.

The sorcerer suddenly leaves as he feels an 'ill-will' moving into the village. The young man you met earlier approaches you and tells of the importance of omens, premonitions and the oracle-like renderings of the sage. He elaborates on the rituals and ceremonies that are conducted as offerings to the spirit(s) and that they may go as far as blood sacrifices.

The young man introduces his friend, a married man who has an ill son. You wonder why the boy is dressed like a girl and wears an earring. The father says it is to fool the spirits because the male offspring is more highly regarded among Montagnards. The spirit will see a girl and will not aggrevate the illness but ignore it altogether. In the door of the home is a mirror which wards off bad spirits, and over the entrance is a red cloth which symbolizes the god of the threshold and also wards off evil.

As you turn to go the young man reminds you that in his belief everything has a spirit, trees, stones, water, and that he is afraid for in the village a man died a violent death and his spirit will be of the most angry kind. Your steps are hurried.

Bond Boost

The President signed into law legislation permitting interest rates on U.S. savings bonds to be increased to 5 percent when held to maturity. This 5 percent rate assures a more equitable return to the millions of purchasers of savings bonds. It will also permit these bonds to continue to make an important contribution to the sound structure of the public debt, by enabling them to remain competitive with other types of savings instruments.

All outstanding series E and H savings bonds now yielding less than five percent to their maturity, regardless of when they were purchased or in what maturity period they are, will have the interests increased to yield a full five percent from June 1, 1969 to their maturity. This means there is no reason for any savings bond owner to redeem outstanding savings bonds for new ones.

Sales of freedom shares, which already pay 5 percent interest, will be discontinued after June 30, 1970. The delay will give employees who buy freedom shares through the payroll savings plans an opportunity to change their deduction programs to savings bonds in an orderly manner.

The continued purchase of savings bonds is especially important today when we are engaged in an all-out effort to control inflation and restore health to our economy. The new interest rate of 5 percent should provide an added incentive to those Americans who find savings bonds an attractive and convenient way to provide for their own financial security and contribute to the sound financing of the nation's government. (Treas. Dept.)

Religion And You

Moral Standards

By CHAPLAIN (MAJ)
LEONARD LUKASZEWSKI
Asst. Div. Chaplain

Many Vietnamese know what Americans claim to believe about accepted moral standards. When they observe us in drunken or vulgar behavior which is outside these standards, they come to regard us as insincere and untrustworthy and will disbelieve our standards and intentions in other matters as well. The things we do speak so loudly that people cannot hear what we say in our idealistic speeches and publications. If you transplant the experiences mentally to your own home it becomes easy to understand Vietnamese resentment of increasing prostitution among their young women, of the growing "red light" and bar districts in their towns and cities, and of unwholesome advances toward their wives and daughters.

Our moral responsibilities must be maintained and expressed at all times. One morally irresponsible act can undo all the good acts that have been done.

SOUTHERN CROSS
AMERICAL DIVISION

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Orphanage Dedication: A Show Of Shows

By SFC Herb Nesmith

BINH SON—To the Vietnamese watching, it was an enjoyable show. To the Americans, most of whom understood little if any of the words, it was none-the-less enjoyable—and reminiscent.

The language was Vietnamese, but the setting, the atmosphere, the players, and the performance were all familiar to the men of the division.

The location was the town of Binh Son, 12 miles north of Quang Ngai City, and the event was the formal declaration of the Binh Son Orphanage, a "special" place to the members of the division's 5-46th Inf.

The battalion of the 198th Infantry Brigade a few months ago adopted unofficially the Catholic charitable institution, and its men have voluntarily been contributing portions of their monthly pay toward the support of the orphanage. Their total to date is around 150,000 piasters. In December they made their largest single contribution, adding more than 600 dollars to the total.

The orphanage is home to 60 children, and furnishes them a primary through high school education. Another 20 children from four hamlets in the Binh Son area come to the orphanage daily to attend school. A new wing has been added to the institution, giving additional space for living quarters and classrooms. Officials hope to add a second story to the new wing in the future to be able to care for more children.

While the emphasis is on academic courses, the school also offers homemaking classes for the girls and industrial arts subjects for the boys.

But on the morning of the dedication there were no classes held. The children were all neatly dressed in their school uniforms, or bedecked in costumes for the show they were about to present as a part of the dedication ceremonies.

A large red curtain parted on a lit stage, and the youngsters began their program of skits, songs and dances.

A group of small boys dressed in different national costumes, each carying a replica of a musical instrument formed an 'international' band. They beat a drum, knocked on a flat piece of wood cut in the shape of a large guitar (its oversize emphasized by the boy's under size), blew on a plastic flute, crashed small brass cymbals together, and sawed away with a bow on a facsimile of an ancient Vietnamese instrument that had the appearance of a one-string base violin. Their playing was highlighted by a few dance steps (or jumps) thrown in, and backed up by recorded music from offstage.

Five young girls in colorful costumes flourished fans as they performed the Vietnamese "Cherry Blossom Dance" to an accompaniment of a girl's vocal group in the wings.

Neighborhood children appeared at the doors and windows of the small auditorium to watch the orphanage's show, as six pre-teen boys dressed in white donned papier-mache rabbit heads—complete with simulated fur and long, pointed ears—hopped around the stage in a childrens dance.

The production of the show revealed some prior hard work by the small staff. The lighting effects were exceptional for such an amateur performance.

A girl's choir took to the stage to sing two songs; many were shy or nervous, their mouths barely forming the words, while others sang mightily while gazing intently at the air over the audience's heads, and one girl found something interesting to look at in the upper left hand corner of the stage.

It was like a school show back in the United States.

There had to be a technical problem of course, and it appeared in the form of a curtain bunching at the top and refusing to open or close completely. A Sister took immediate action from behind the curtain, manually pulling it to and fro between acts.

The time-honored "Rice Harvest Dance" was performed by six of the smaller children, the choir sang another number, and a girl clad in a colorful costume and carrying two fans as props danced to a Japanese recording of "China Nights" ("Shina No Yura")

The curtain pull corrected itself (or was repaired by the nimble hands of a stage-managing sister), and the next attraction swept onto the stage in a chop-stick-clacking dance about the gathering of cocoons for silk.

In the finale, five girls in long, white ball gowns danced to the "Blue Danube", as the audience mentally encouraged them whenever a girl was a little slow to pick up a cue here, or remember what the routine called for there.

In all, it was a familiar scene to the Americans. Although not a word of dialogue, not a single lyric was understood, the men—thousands of miles away from their country—felt "at home". (198th IO)

Awards & Decorations

SILVER STAR MEDAL

PFC Nicholas M. Ah Yo, 11th Bde; SSG Fredrick I. Ferguson, 11th Bde; SP4 Javier A. Velazquez, 11th Bde.

DISTINGUISHED FLYING CROSS

WO1 Humphrey F. Collin, 123rd Avn Bn; WO1 Byron H. Disney (1st OLC), 14th Cbt Avn Bn; WO1 Donald F. Farris, 123rd Avn Bn; CPT Donald R. Hawkins, 123rd Avn Bn; LTC Cecil M. Henry, 196th Bde; WO1 Michael C. Hurst, 14th Cbt Avn Bn; WO1 James D. Jessee Jr, 14th Cbt Avn Bn; MAJ Reginald A. Neuwien, 123rd Avn Bn; CPT Thomas F. O'Hara, 123rd Avn Co; CPT Theodore J. Shulsen (1st OLC), 14th Cbt Avn Bn; SP4 Kim A. Strickler, 123rd Avn Bn; WO1 William D. Wagner, 14th Cbt Avn Bn; SF4 Donald T. Wyper, 123rd Avn Bn.

BRONZE STAR MEDAL WITH "V" DEVICE

PFC Johnny L. Allen, 11th Bde; SP4 Loyd J. Asher, 198th Bde; SSG George Beach (1st OLC), Co G (Ranger), 75th Inf; PFC William Bivins, 11th Bde; SGT Roger L. Burks, 196th Bde; SP4 Charles E. Bush, 11th Bde; SP4 Alan J. Cap, 11th Bde; 1LT Robert W. Chestnut, 1st Cav; SP4 Ray Collier (1st OLC), 82nd Arty; SP4 James C. Conley, 196th Bde; PFC Dave P. Creviston, 23rd Med Bn; SGT Michael K. Dameron (1st OLC), 196th Bde; SP4 Ernest L. Davis Jr, 11th Bde; SGT Hiram W. Dicara, 196th Bde; PFC Eugene L. Dumesnil, 1st Cav; SP4 Gary T. Foster (1st OLC), 1st Cav; SP4 Douglas J. Fruetel (1st OLC), 11th Bde; SFC Charles R. Gallagher, 198th Bde; CPT Barry D. Gasdek (3rd OLC), 11th Bde; SP4 Dennis G. Haaf, 11th Bde; SGT Douglas L. Hatten (1st OLC), 196th Bde; SP4 Raymond E. Horstman, 198th Bde; PFC Perry D. Hughes, Co G (Ranger), 75th Inf; 1LT Robert K. Jobs, 198th Bde; SP4 Pablo F. Lopez, 11th Bde; SP4 Joseph Johnson Jr (1st OLC), 11th Bde; SP5 Bernard Kelly (1st OLC), 11th Bde; SGT Thomas A. Koch (1st (OLC), 196th Bde; SP4 William R. Krysconski, 196th Bde; SGT John H. LaFavor (1st OLC), 82nd Arty; SP4 Gary L. Lanbdin, 1st Cav; MAJ Eric Mackintosh (1st OLC), 11th Bde; SF4 John A. Matthewson (1st OLC), 1st Cav; SP4 Wayne H. McBurnett, 11th Bde; MSG Thomas W. Mull, 11th Bde; 1LT Ernest A. Muro (1st OLC), 198th Bde; SGT John W. O'Niell, 196th Bde; SP4 Joseph V. Palmeri, 198th Bde; SGT Rosolino Pizzillo (1st OLC), 11th Bde; SP4 William H. Pyatt (1st OLC), 11th Bde; SP4 Robert G. Ramos (1st OLC), 11th Bde; SGT William Rawlings (1st OLC), 11th Bde; SP4 Steven W. Rice, 82nd Arty; SP4 Norman G. Roberts, 11th Bde; CPT William Russell Jr, 82nd Arty; PSG Leonard Sartor (1st OLC), 11th Bde; PFC Edger Scraberry, 11th Bde; CPT James J. Schwebach (3rd OLC), 11th Bde; SP4 Lee L. Smith (1st OLC), 11th Bde; SGT Robert Taormina (1st OLC), 11th Bde; SP4 Jackie L. Taylor, 11th Bde; PFC David D. Tettleton, 11th Bde; SP4 Charles G. Tizano, 196th Bde; CPT Boudewijn Van Pamelen, 196th Bde; SF4 Larry C. Wigton, 196th Bde; PFC Barry Williams, 11th Bde.

Make Saving Easy
With Savings Bonds

ARVN Artillery A.I.T.

QUANG NGAI — In a one week course, 18 noncommissioned officers of the new 23d ARVN Arty. Bn. were instructed on the individual duties of cannoneers of a gun section.

The instructors, all veteran artillerymen from the division's 1-14th Arty. planned the course and drew up a lesson plan to make the training similar to that which artillerymen receive in Advanced Individual Training (AIT) at Fort Sill, Okla.

SGT John F. Gerarde (Tiona, Pa.) led the team of seven Americans. The instruction was accomplished by utilization of an interpreter.

A demonstration by the Americans of proper techniques was the initial phase of the training. All aspects of the crew working with a howitzer were covered from emplacing the weapon to the actual duties during a fire mission.

Throughout the week, the ARVN's were tested and retested on the procedures they had been taught.

The instruction was a segment of an overall plan developed at the division artillery headquarters. The result will eventually be a more modern and more efficient ARVN artillery providing needed fire power for the 2d ARVN division. (Div. Arty. IO)

No Sting

A Vietnamese youngster watches as SP6 Robert Loftus (Aurora, Ill.) dabs medication on a scratch. More than 8,000 villagers and refugees at Nui Lac Son, 16 miles northwest of Tam Ky, look to this 196th Inf. medic for help and guidance.

(Photo By SP4 Richard Merritt, 196th IO)

Liaison Is Novel Occupation

LZ WEST — The concepts of Vietnamization have found rich soil in which to root. The division has thrown immense support behind civil affairs work. A liaison team with the 196th Inf. Bde.'s 4-31st Inf. volunteered last month to live with the villagers of Son Hoa, who had requested American advisory support.

Living in the small village tucked beneath a lofty mountain range 22 miles northwest of Tam Ky, the three Americans say they enjoy this work, a novel occupation for all of them.

"Those men were chosen because they are well qualified in their field," said LTC Cecil M. Henry (Rome, Ga.), the battalion commander.

The head of the team, a specialist in fire direction control, is mortarman, SGT John Dugue of San Antonio.

"I've called in several fire missions for the popular forces (PFs)," said SGT Dugue. Local defense is provided by the Americans supporting popular and regional forces.

Among the people in Son Hoa are many "Hoi Chanhs," ex-VC who are used to trace out enemy hideouts and pass information of to the liaision team. This operation will broaden soon, with infantry elements slated to join the Vietnamese in ground operations.

With SGT Dugue is SP4 Fred Martin (Omaha, Neb.), a radio-telephone operator. He schools the villagers in local defense and the importance of intelligence information.

Medical aid instruction comes from SP5 David L. O'Neil (Earl Park, Ind.). His dispensary is an empty building restored with the help of the village.

"I want to make sure the word spreads that I'm here to help the sick people," he said. "When I get supplies, we're going to build a small clinic."

The people are pleased to have Americans with them.

"We are invited to eat at different homes every day," remarked Spec. Martin. "I was surprised to find that the food is very good."

ildren, Children

The Misogynist

CHU LAI—Children are children regardless where they may be. This refreshing thought was accentuated many times at the Children's Day festivities at Long Binh Ville Refugee Camp.

The festival, sponsored by the 6th Platoon of the 29th Civil Affairs Co., assigned to the Americal, was not without its humorous moments.

Family ties. it seems, can be broken very easily when it comes to sharing ice cream between brother and sister. Sharing the spoon may be OK, but when it comes to sharing ice cream, it is an entirely different story.

The entire day had the atmosphere of gaiety and laughter in the air as the refugee children enjoyed the treats and games.

While one young girl shed a tear for the ice cream that was slowly but certainly melting in her hat as she searched for her brother, others were interested in speeches and a U.S. Army published Vietnamese language news sheet.

Yes, children are the same the world over. Where there are children, you are sure to find laughter and fun. (Americal IO)

Children

Photos by PFC Lasylo Kondor
Americal IO

Soldiers Help Stop Rice Flow

Bad News For VC Tax Collectors

By PFC James Tannesen

LZ HAWK HILL — Most people talk about taxes being too high, but a squad of 196th Inf. Bde. soldiers decided to do something about it.

After the company interpreter for D Co., 2-1st Inf. received word that local Viet Cong working in an area four miles west of Tam Ky were moving into villages and expropriating recently harvested rice, the men of D Co. decided it was time to stop the VC tax collectors.

Searches in the area uncovered 3,000 pounds of rice in enemy caches which further convinced D Co. that the VC were extorting rice from the villagers.

"We expected them to move into the village that night," said PFC Oscar Truitt (Atlantic City, N.J.). The soldiers set up an ambush on a brushy knoll overlooking the main route into the village and waited for the tax collectors to appear.

It didn't take long. The sound of feet padding along the dike alerted the men. "We could hear them at first but couldn't see them," said Truitt. "The word was passed down the line to be ready."

A lone VC carrying an AK-47 strolled into view and passed right by. "We didn't want to blow the ambush," said SSG Steven Shaeffer (Kelley, Iowa), "just for one man." Another enemy soldier emerged out of the night, and still the infantrymen waited.

Then came the main force.

"There were 25 of them," said Shaeffer. "We could see them real well, because the moon was up."

The enemy was 25 meters away when the crack of an M-14 rifle triggered the ambush. Machinegun and rifle fire brought down four VC. Six more were wounded.

"About three-fourths were armed, and the rest were prepared to carry away the rice," said Shaeffer. But the soldiers of D Co. made the VC tax collector go away empty handed. (196th IO)

Fire Mission

LZ CENTER—Fifteen NVA set out on a mission near Tam Ky. Ten of these enemy will never go on another operation, thanks to the accuracy of alert Division artillerymen.

"We could see the NVA walking along a flat open area carrying packs and weapons," said 1LT Martin Snodgrass (Seattle), forward observer (FO) from B Btry., 3-82nd Arty. who called to B Btry. on LZ Center for artillery support.

"The first round was right on target," said 1LT Snodgrass. "It landed within ten feet of one NVA."

More rounds soon followed and the results were ten enemy killed. The five remaining NVA retreated, but not without serious wounds. There were several blood trails leading from the area.

Pointman

The pointman for an Americal infantry unit cautiously checks a path. Success of the mission depends in part on the ability of the pointman to detect mines or booby traps. (U.S. Army Photo)

Combat In Review

ARVN Rangers Aided By U.S. Pounds Entrenched Enemy

LZ HAWK HILL — Five helicopters dropped slowly to the jungle floor, then rose quickly, leaving the small band of infantrymen to set up a perimeter. The dense vegetation surrounding the rice paddy gave no indication of the danger that lay hidden within.

The infantrymen, members of the 2nd Bn., 1st Inf., were to set up a blocking position 13 miles northwest of Tam Ky in support of the 37th ARVN Ranger Bn.

Again the helicopters returned, depositing more men, and still all was quiet. But when the choppers descended a third time, they received a different reception.

"The choppers had nearly touched down when at least a platoon of VC cut loose with rifle, mortar, and machinegun fire," said SFC Harold Thompson (Springfield, Mass.).

The helicopter engines roared with the strain as the choppers halted their descent. The five ships rose above the rice paddies and out of range of the Viet Cong barrage. Air strikes were immediately called in of the entrenched VC.

The 196th Bde. soldiers, aided by helicopter gunships, fought their way through the elephant grass and up the hill, but met stiffening resistance.

"They must have been well dug in," said PFC Danny Velasquez (Ontario, Calif.), "to have come on so strong after the air strikes. Every time the resupply ship tried to land, the VC opened fire."

By this time the ARVN Rangers had arrived and preparations were made to assault the hill. U.S. jets and gunships pounded the enemy position, while the men of 2-1st Inf. raked the side of the hill with machinegun fire.

The ARVN soldiers moved forward. After 90 minutes of bitter fighting they pushed the Viet Cong off the hill. Left behind were nine VC killed in the encounter. (196th IO)

Escape And Evasion Fails To Foil 1-20 Inf.

FSB LIZ—A platoon of 11th Bde. soldiers, working with members of the 106th Popular Force (PF) platoon raided an enemy stronghold six miles northwest of Duc Pho, killing five VC and detaining four.

The 2nd platoon of A Co., 1-20 Inf. and the PFs were on a search mission in the Hwy. 515 Valley when the point man, PFC Frank Wootan (Fairfax, Okla.), spotted a VC evading into a hedgerow. The allied forces followed the enemy soldier and came upon a trail leading to a tunnel, which they blew with an explosive charge.

After an initial probe of the tunnel by one of the PF soldiers, Wootan and PFC Tom Thieson (Climbing Hills, Iowa) entered and spotted a VC lying wounded on the floor.

"Then another VC from the back of the tunnel threw a Chicom grenade at us. The explosion threw us against the wall. I turned around and threw a grenade and fired my rifle, then we scrambled out," explained Wootan.

The battalion's Command and control helicopter was flown in and unloaded 40-pound cratering charges. SSG Nguyen Hoa, the battalion interpreter, attempted to persuade the enemy inside to Chieu Hoi, but they refused. Hoa then told a Vietnamese detainee, picked up in the area, to enter the tunnel and explain to the VC the situation.

A few minutes later the detainee brought out the wounded VC as well as two AK-47s and a carbine. Three more enemy followed. The platoon discovered that five other VC had been killed in the initial blast. They also uncovered two radios and a medical kit from the tunnel.

Traffic Clog?

Heavy traffic plagues this 198th Bde. supply pad as a CH-47 Chinook helicopter appears to be hovering right above a CH-54 Flying Crane which is waiting to take a 2½ ton truck from the firebase. Both helicopters are supporting division troops 8½ miles south of Chu Lai. (U.S. Army Photo)

Cav. Unit Gains Power With Sheridans' Arrival

CHU LAI—"Prreeesnnt Arrmms," and the soldiers of the H Trp., 17th Cav. snapped to attention as the general mounted the platform.

MG Lloyd B. Ramsey (Somerset, Ky.), Americal commanding general, had arrived to present nine shiny new General Sheridan assault vehicles to H Trp.

"You have here one of the finest pieces of equipment that modern technology and skilled workers can produce. I want you to learn all that you can about this vehicle," said the general.

The Armored Reconnaissance Airborne Assault Vehicle (Sheridan) is equipped with a .50 caliber machinegun, two 7.62mm coaxial machineguns, and a 152mm gun that can fire either conventional rounds or the Shillelagh missile.

The Sheridan is not new to the Americal Div. though it was only introduced to southern I Corps a few months ago.

H Trp. immediately got its mechanized infantrymen training on the uses and capabilities of the new weapon. Members of the 1st Sqdn., 1st Cav. ushered them into the week long training period that includes firing, driving, maintainance, and safety.

At the close of the presentation, drivers mounted the Sheridans and moved them for the first time out to the training site. The Sheridans and H Trp. were rolling. (Americal IO)

Make the year "1970" a year of safety: Drive safe, use proper safety precautions with all weapons, and maintain machinery and vehicles in good and safe working condition . . . . So, guys make 1970 the safest year.

Efforts' Pay-Off

RFs Vanguard Village Defenders

By SP4 Ron Adams

FSB DEBBIE — Working side-by-side with a combined platoon of Regional and Popular Forces is D Co., 4-21st Inf. The objective of the Americal unit is to work alongside these Vietnamese troops until they are tactically proficient enough to manage the security of a village on their own.

Daily Patrols

"This program," explained CPT John Hawbaker (Paw Paw, Ill.), commanding officer of D Co., "is proving to be very effective. We are running daily patrols and we set up nightly ambushes in various locations around the perimeter. These small operations are being worked half by Vietnamese troops and half by U.S. troops, and the Vietnamese are cooperating very well and seem to be learning quite a bit. Of course," added CPT Hawbaker, "our biggest problem is communication with these people, but the fellas are doing a pretty good job of understanding the Vietnamese language and having them understand ours."

The 11th Bde. unit's medics are also working with their Vietnamese counterparts, D Co.'s senior medic, SP5 Daniel Thomas (Bradford, Ohio) who added "These soldiers have very little training in the medical field. At first they would shy away from bursting into the open to care for their wounded, but after working with them through a few minor contacts, they have shown greater self-confidence and are also learning many of the various medicines and their uses."

Reconstructing Fort

Another joint project is the reconstruction of an old French fort. 1LT Johnny Ray (Jackson, Miss.), platoon leader of the 1st Platoon, which has moved into the fort, said he combines his day and night operations fifty-fifty with the PFs and that they have been quite successful.

"I feel that in just the short period of time that we have been involved in this program, we have eliminated most of the VC infiltration and picked out the VC sympathizers," said 1LT Ray. "I feel the people of the village are growing in confidence and cooperation towards us. They really want to rid themselves of constant fright, and are willing to help us as much as possible in rooting out the enemy." (11th IO)

Cashing In On The Cache

A division soldier takes a count of enemy weapons captured by 11th Bde. troops west of Quang Ngai while on a search and clear operation. (Photo by PFC Daniel Plescott, 523rd Sig. Bn.)

A Polish Style Reunion For Two 'Ski's' At Liz

FSB LIZ — The high-pitched and varied tones of the Vietnamese language have most of us baffled, but at least it's possible to master the term "no bic." However, if you're around SP4 Joe Wrzesinski (Chicago) and SP5 Dennis Wisniowski (Dunelle, N.J.), you'd better learn how to say "nye rezumia."

Both "ski's" speak fluent Polish, and when they met for the first time they flew into a gutteral dialogue that immediately excluded everyone else from the conversation. Neither had encountered anyone who spoke Polish since they entered the Army.

Wisniowski left Poland five years ago where he attended technical school. After a stopover in Canada, his family settled in New Jersey where he worked at an auto center specializing in foreign cars.

Wrzesinski lived in West Germany until he was eight-years-old when his Polish-speaking family moved to Chicago. He attended Wright Junior College in Carbondale, Ill., and then worked as a product engineer before entering the Army.

Both possess extensive language capabilities. Wrzesinski speaks German as well as Polish and does pretty well with English too, in his job as the battalion commander's radio-telephone operator. Wisniowski, besides Polish, also speaks German, Russian and Ukranian.

You bic? (11th IO)

Earns Purple Heart

Red Cross Director Sees Red

FSB BRONCO — He turned down a tour in Germany to come to Vietnam. "I jokingly told my superiors that I wanted to go back to where the action was!" William B. De Putron (San Antonio, Tex.) learned that an assistant Red Cross field director, civilian that he is, can find action and a Purple Heart too.

Still in good humor, De Putron pointed to the right side of his neck below his jaw and commented, "I got my piece of the action, and I'm still carrying it." His "piece of the action" is a piece of shrapnel. "They say it was a 122mm rocket which exploded twenty feet in front of my office door. It was a little after 4:00 p.m. and I was just sitting here at my desk. All I remember is the tremendous blast, being hit, and hitting the floor."

De Putron, who serves as the 11th Bde. assistant field director, was notified after his "dustoff" to Chu Lai that according to Army regulations, a Purple Heart ". . . may be awarded to any civilian national of the

William De Putron

United States who, while serving under competent authority in any capacity with one of the United States Armed Services, has been wounded as a result of an act of any hostile foreign force."

There are other "souvenirs" of that day for De Putron: two metal desks, a Red Cross flag, a dictionary, and plywood walls — all drilled by rocket fragments. His mind also carries the frightening thought: "If I had been sitting but a few inches to my right. . . ."

The Red Cross veteran of four years has completed six months of his second tour in the Republic of Vietnam. His first stint found him in An Khe with the 1st Cav. Div. De Putron, a retired Air Force major with 22 years of service, is married and the father of four.

Today, he sits at his scarred desk and goes about business as usual, but with, admittedly, a few more sandbags around his office and a brand new blast wall at the entrance. (11th IO)

Duh, Uh-Huh

School Bells Chime For Marine CAP Teams

By SP5 A.C. Barnett

LZ GATOR—In spite of 20 months of combat, a medal for valor and a Purple Heart, a Marine sergeant recently found himself in a field classroom in Vietnam, learning how to fight.

SGT Thomas L. Robins (Louisiana, Mo.) and the rest of his Marine Combined Action Platoon (CAP) of approximately a dozen men, form one of 29 units scattered throughout the Americal's tactical area.

Under a new program initiated by LTC Clifford J. Phifer (Haddonfield, N.J.), commander of the 1st Bn., 14th Arty., the CAP's are being visited by Army forward observers (FO) who review the artillery capabilities and special radio procedures.

"These CAP's have an important mission and they are doing a great job," said LTC Phifer. "The CAP's have become prime target of the VC and it became vital that they should be able to make the most of our artillery firepower."

To ensure that the Marines were familiar with both the offensive and defensive support the artillery could provide, LTC Phifer selected two experienced FO's from his command to give each CAP a refresher course. Both men had been working in the field for six months.

2LT Barry A. Hill (Hillsdale, Mich.) one of the FO's picked to be an instructor has already completed the brief course with six CAP's.

"So far all the units have been really enthusiastic about the course," said 2LT Hill. "Most of the men have a good basic knowledge of how the artillery works, but every little trick I can pass on to them may save their lives."

The tactical mission of the CAP's is to conduct nightly patrols and ambushes with the local Popular Forces (PF).

A night never goes by without a CAP calling for artillery support, and every night they get the support they need, on time and on target. (Div Arty. IO)