SOUTHERN CROSS

AMERICAL DIVISION

Vol. 1, No. 12 | CHU LAI, VIETNAM | November 24, 1968

Americal Wraps Up 2 Major Operations

CHU LAI—Vietnam's longest continuing operation, Wheeler/Wallowa, ended quietly Nov. 11 after one year to the day of steady action.

A sister operation, Burlington Trail, which ran seven months, ended the same day.

Both had been conducted in southern I Corps from the coastal lowlands north of Chu Lai to deep within the rugged, mountainous interior west of Hoi An and Tam Ky.

Operation Wheeler/Wallowa accounted for 10,013 enemy dead and 2,048 weapons captured. Operation Burlington Trail had a total of 1,944 enemy killed and 545 weapons captured.

"The significant losses, both personnel and weapons, inflicted on the enemy during the two operations represent losses which North Vietnam is finding more and more difficult to replace," stated LTC A.E. Adkins, Div. G-2.

Establish GVN Control

MAJ Colin L. Powell, Div. G-3, said, "as a result of these operations, enemy plans to attack the population centers of Quang Nam and Quang Tin Provinces have been repeatedly thwarted."

"A major achievement of these operations," the major continued, was the reopening of the Que Son and Tien Phuoc Valleys and the extension of GVN control into these important areas.

Operation Wheeler/Wallowa began as two separate operations designed to seek out and destroy elements of the 2d NVA Division.

Fighting Begins

Operation Wheeler was launched on Sept. 11, 1967 by Task Force Oregon shortly before its reconstitution as the Americal Division.

On Oct. 4, the 3d Bde, 1st Cav. Div. (Airmobile) joined the Americal and immediately launched Operation Wallowa in the northern sector of the division's area of operations.

Operations Wheeler and Wallowa were combined on Nov. 11, 1967. In recent months the 196th Inf. Bde. and the 1st Sqdn., 1st Cav. have been the major participants against weakening enemy forces.

First Major Battle

Shortly after the operation's start, "Chargers" and "Dragoons" killed 128 enemy soldiers in a three-day battle in the Que Son Valley, west of Tam Ky (See account of the battle, p.6).

The largest battle was a 48-hour action during February, when men of the 1st/1st and 196th killed 180 NVA soldiers at "Pink Ville" near Tam Ky.

Burlington Trail Mission

Operation Burlington Trali was begun April 8, 1968, north of Chu Lai, under the control of the 198th Inf. Bde. The mission was to open Highway 533 from Tam Ky to Tien Phuoc, a road controlled by the enemy for four years. Heavy fighting by the 198th and 1st Sqdn. 1st Cav. allowed elements of the 39th and 26th Engr. Bns. to rebuild and repair the highway.

Elements of the 39th and 26th Engr. Bns. accomplished the task, with security provided by "Brave and Bold" units.

"Charlie's on the way down now," said MAJ Powell.

The kill ratio in Wheeler/Wallowa was more than 14 to 1, and in Burlington Trail, more than 15 to 1.

ALL-STAR FIRST BASEMAN, ERNIE BANKS EXPLAINS ONE OF THE GAME'S fine points to SP4 Larry Caulder, 39th Engr. Bn., a patient in the 27th Surg. Hosp., Chu Lai. Pete Richert, Orioles pitcher, looks on approvingly. (Photo by SP4 Bill Guerrant)

Star Ballplayers Visit Fans Around Division

CHU LAI—Two top-notch major league baseball players, Ernie Banks of the Chicago Cubs and Pete Richert of the Baltimore Orioles, recently completed a whirlwind hand-shake tour of the Americal area.

"It's a pleasure to see all the guys here," said Banks, "and it is a really rewarding experience to me personally.

"I know what the GIs are doing for us, and we want to do something for them," the two-time National League's Most Valuable Player concluded.

Besides visiting the "Sandpiper" Service Club and the USO, the athletes talked baseball and cheered up the patients in all the area hospitals.

Richert, an Orioles star relief pitcher, added, "These are really great guys and they seem to have real 'heart.' Our reception has been splendid, and these fellows know their baseball."

In addition to bringing greetings from all the participants in the national pastime, the sports stars showed films giving the highlights of last season's baseball action

A left-handed first-baseman, Banks will be back at the same stand in Wrigley Field next season pounding out the long drives that have enabled him to register 474 homers during his 15 major league seasons.

Richert came up to the major league through the Los Angeles Dodgers.

★ ★ ★

Call 'Doc' Richert

During the baseball stars' tour of 312th Evac. Hosp., Pete Richert practiced psycotherapy without a license.

While in the recovery ward, a fatigue-clad nurse led the pitcher to a soldier who hadn't spoken since he was wounded several days before.

"Hi, I'm Pete Richert, Baltimore Orioles. What's your name?"—No answer.

"Look, you want to meet Ernie Banks?" — nothing. Then his bitter eyes began to widen as he focused on the husky ballplayer.

Struggling to pull himself up in the bed, the young private fiercely said, "What the hell are you doing **here?"**

Without a pause Pete said, "I'm here because you're here!"

The rapid questions that came forth made it tough for Pete to meet the other patients. But the nurse says that one man's recovery is now certain.

Thanksgiving Day-Yummy

CHU LAI—When the men of the Americal sit down to a hefty Thanksgiving Day dinner this week, it will be the result of some tight coordination and 12 months of advance planning.

The expansive menu, which includes the traditional turkey with all the trimmings, three desserts, and a wide variety of side dishes, was programmed for procurement a year ago, and provisoins have been coming in for more than a month.

"The intent of this program is to see that every man in this division gets a hot Thanksgiving meal," said CW2 Anthony T. Muscente (Providence, R.I.), division food service adviser.

CW2 Muscente stressed that meeting the logistical problems involved in issuing and transporting the food will take a team effort of all the food service personnel.

"It will be up to the commanders and mess personnel of each unit to see that the program is carried out smoothly," he said.

To add an extra touch, Muscente hopes to provide each unit with a whole roasted turkey for garnishing purposes to dress up the serving lines, while the meat of boneless and frozen turkeys is dished up. Special printed souvenir menus will be given to each man.

To insure that each mess gets an equitable distribution of the increased supply of goodies, the warrant officer and his two staff members, SFC Oliver Bond (Beattysville, Ky.) and SFC Rudolph Smith (Massillon, Ohio), will visit as many chow lines as possible prior to the dinner.

The same procedure and menu will be used next month for the Christmas dinner.

"Everybody's set, and we are all experienced in this type of project to bring it off without a hitch," Smith commented.

(However Smith will not be around to see the fruits of his efforts. His DEROS comes in time so that he will be back in the States for a home-cooked Thanksgiving dinner.)

THANKSGIVING MENU

Shrimp Cocktail
Crackers
Roast Turkey
Cornbread Dressing
Turkey Gravy
Cranberry Sauce
Mashed Potatoes
Glazed Sweet Potatoes
Buttered Mixed Vegetables
Assorted Crisp Relishes
Hot Rolls, Butter
Fruitcake
Mincemeat Pie
Pumpkin Pie w/Topping
Assorted Nuts
Assorted Candy
Assorted Fresh Fruit
Iced Tea, Milk

'Professionals' Roundup Rice

LZ BAYONET—Rice, rice, and more rice was the situation recently when a 198th Inf. Bde. company discovered and confiscated 29,500 pounds of rice during an operation in an area 10 miles southwest of Chu Lai.

Besides the large rice cache, the "Professionals" of Co. D, 5th Bn., 46th Inf. also killed four Viet Cong and detained 12 VC suspects during the operation.

"It took more than three Chinook loads to evacuate all that rice," said CPT Michael R. Smith of New Lebanon, Ohio, the company commander.

Varying quantities of rice were found in 24 different locations in the area. The largest of the caches was about 2,500 pounds.

From The Commander

This Thanksgiving

By MG CHARLES M. GETTYS
Commanding General, Americal Division

Cicero, the Roman orator, said more than 2,000 years ago, "A thankful heart is not only a great virtue, but the mother of all other virtues." His words still have meaning for us today.

Our nation has always acknowledged its dependence upon God. One facet of this acknowledgement takes the form of an officially designated National Day of Thanksgiving each November.

On one side of the ledger, this Thanksgiving Day may appear as a day of privation for you. You will be absent from family reunions and neighborhood gatherings. However, on the other side of the ledger, your unselfish spirit and service here guarantees a continuance of our nation "under God."

While eating our traditional turkey dinners, we must give thanks for all of the wonderful things our nation stands for and has enabled us to enjoy. Look to the future with confidence and hope, with full knowledge that our heritage will prevail against those who would deny it.

When I compile my personal list of things for which I an thankful this year, the officers and men of the Americal Division will head the list. May God bless us all on this Thanksgiving Day.

Religion and You

Our Day of Thanks

By CHAPLAIN (LTC) JACK G. RANDLES
Asst. Div. Chaplain

The practice of observing a Thanksgiving Day is uniquely American.

In the fall of 1620, the Mayflower crossed the unpredictable Atlantic. After 65 days of agony and uncertainty, the ship unloaded her passengers at Plymouth, Mass. on Dec. 21, 1620. Of the 102 souls who made the trip, one half of the group did not survive that first fierce New England winter.

It was the survivors of this ordeal who gathered in the fall to plant the seed and example of a Thanksgiving Day. They gathered to thank God for their lives, their freedom, their harvest, and for the hope that beat in their breasts.

God was not incidental to this hearty group. He was not an appendage to life. He was their life. Nothing seemed more appropriate than to render their heartfelt thanks and gratitude to Almighty God.

How well have their children followed their example? I suspect each child will have to answer that for himself. It is obvious that a spiritual heritage is not propagated by a biological process. God has to be learned and experienced by each new generation. It is the responsibility of the old generation to be the teacher of the new. This is to be accomplished by precept and example.

We who are to spend this Thanksgiving Day 1968 in Vietnam will be deprived of family gatherings and family traditions. One could sit down and wallow in the puddle of self-pity because of this. Or, one could thank God that he has the privilege of marching with that noble band of the ages who have repeatedly demonstrated there are some things more important than comfort.

I am confident that the band of courageous pilgrims who came to Plymouth 348 years ago did not come merely for personal gain. They sought a land and a governmental institution that would give freedom to their children and their children's children. The soldier should not find it difficult to understand this motive. It is traditional that the efforts of the soldier are projected beyound himself. His service is not selfish; it is selfless.

"Let all the people praise Thee, O God; let all the people praise Thee. Then shall the earth yield her increase and God, even our own God shall bless us." (Psalm 67: 5-6)

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Major General Charles M. Gettys ..... Commanding General
Major Paul B. Parham ..... Information Officer
Captain Cary S. Sklaren ..... Officer-In-Charge
Sergeant First Class Larry Babitts ..... NCOIC
Specialist Four Robert Buzogany ..... Editor
Specialist Four Bill Guerrant ..... Photo Editor
Specialist Four Dave McGown ..... Cartoonist
Private First Class Dean Norland ..... Reporter
Private First Class Thomas D. Rice ..... Editorial Cartoonist

THOUGHTS ON TURKEY DAY

"I get hot chow . . . My loved one's remember me with mail . . . And I'm alive! Why shouldn't I be thankful today?"

Be A Good Grunt

Pride's The Real Answer

By SFC Larry Babitts
Staff NCOIC

The first thing that PFC Herby Goodgrunt would like to do when he comes off a patrol is take a good, hot shower. A shave with steaming hot towels and "boo-koo" shaving lotion would be nice too.

Herby would also like to "spit-shine" his jungle boots, get his uniform starched and pressed and then sleep about two days worth.

Now, he'd like to do all of this, but he can't. So, instead Goodgrunt gets washed in a basin of water, shaves with whatever razor and cream he has on hand, plain polishes his boots and wears the cleanest uniform he owns.

Poorcruncher Protests

Another thing about good, old Herby, he knows his military courtesy. He salutes the officers whenever he is supposed to, and calls them "Sir."

"Nah," says PFC Peter Poorcruncher, scratching his fuzzy chin, "Herby sounds like a hill-humping brownie."

"Tsk, tsk," replied SGT Wolfgang Happylifer, the 2d squad's fearless leader, "such language! As you know, Herby is a very fine soldier. He is hell on a patrol, capable as an infantryman, a dependable sort and an all-around nice guy."

What's It Got Him?

"Bull!" exclaimed Poorcruncher, scratching under his armpit, "What's he want to be so sharp for? I mean like what's it got him?"

Pride is the answer. Personal pride. Good, old PFC Herby Goodgrunt knows that personal cleanliness and personal appearance are really a reflection of his own, true personality. He knows this, and he knows how good it feels to be freshly shaved and to wear his jungle fatigues as properly as he can under the present conditions.

"O.K., O.K.," mumbled Peter Poorcruncher, reaching for his basin and towel, "I read that loud and clear. But what's this saluting and military courtesy nonsense? I mean, like, this is a war zone, isn't it?"

Right So Far, But...

"You are one hundred percent right," SGT Happylifer answered while handing him a soap and a razor, "at least the part you say about being a war zone is correct. Yes, I guess it's safe to say that Vietnam is a war zone."

"Aha!" shouted Poorcruncher, tripping over his extra-long boot laces and spilling the basin, "I knew I was right!"

But Goodgrunt also knows the really vital reason for military discipline in a war zone.

Where all of our actions are dependent upon one another, PFC Herby Goodgrunt, like good grunts all over the Army is aware that any break-down of discipline in a war zone could be hazardous to health and welfare. He also knows that the time honored custom of saluting is really an important display of discipline and respect.

That's A Rog

"Alright, Fearless Leader," puffed overweight Poorcruncher "I'm convinced. Let me recap this situation. You're saying we should keep as clean as possible, shave at least once a day, wear the uniform with pride and remember our military courtesy. Right?"

"That's a Rog," smiled SGT Happylifer.

"Oh, Sarge, one more question," grinned Peter Poorcruncher.

"Yes?" Happylifer asked helpfully.

"How do I go about changing my name?"

"Dung Lai"

Identity papers of a villager are checked by a Vietnamese National Police Field Force interrogator, SGT Thinh, in southern Quang Ngai Province. Thinh is a member of the National Police Field Force Platoon presently assigned to the 11th Inf. Bde. (Photo by SP5 Al Holloway, 11th Inf. Bde.)

Tactful Arty. Captain Dines For Diplomacy, Not Hunger

LZ BAYONET—CPT Leon Cosby Jr. is a combat veteran who has been under small arms and mortar fire a number of times. One of his most difficult moments, however, arose out of a completely different set of circumstances.

CPT Cosby, who is commander of Headquarters and Service Btry., 1st Bn., 14th Arty., was walking with a group of his men near his base camp late one morning. They had just reached the limits of the village of Tri Binh on Highway 1 when one of the hamlet chiefs approached them.

He greeted the captain, told the interpreter that his name was Bin Thang, and cordially invited CPT Cosby and his men to eat lunch with him and the village elders.

Calls for Tact

The "Brave and Bold" officer immediately realized that the position he was in would call for a great deal of tact and diplomacy. He was aware of the importance of winning the friendship of the Vietnamese, but also knew that eating unfamiliar food could possibly cause discomfort to him and his men.

Bin Thang and the elders didn't wait for an answer, however, and they produced bowls of uncooked rice in water, chunks of broiled pork, and diced chicken meat. CPT Cosby had only moments to propose an alternative.

Moment of Truth

"Tell the chief that the captain will eat with him, but the troops must stay on guard outside for security," the artillery officer instructed his interpreter.

The men immediately dispersed around the area as the captain, the chief, and the elders walked into a schoolroom to eat the midday meal.

"I looked at the food and remembered what I had been taught about Vietnamese food," said CPT Cosby. "I decided on rice for openers, and it really wasn't too bad."

All's Well That Ends Well

The 198th Inf. Bde. captain sat for over 20 minutes with his hosts, only one of whom spoke halting English. He smiled at the proper times and chewed at the proper times.

The meal concluded with the American captain and his Vietnamese hosts parting as better friends.

Several days later, CPT Cosby was able to report no ill effects after playing his unscheduled dual role as village gourmet and U.S. diplomat.

'Self-Help' Builds Village A Market

CHU LAI—Over a period of three months the people of Khuong Hiep, a village a little more than a mile north of the An Tan River bridge on Highway 1, worked diligently mixing and laying cement, constructing pillars, and roofing their new marketplace.

Finally late in September, the marketplace, one of the projects supervised by the 6th Civic Affairs Plt. based in Chu Lai, proudly was opened with an elaborate ceremony.

Gifts Presented

With flags flying atop the main entrance and an honor guard of American and Vietnamese soldiers, district officials and civil affairs soldiers sat on a platform, while gifts were presented to the men who supervised the construction and those who provided materials.

The CA platoon provided the lumber, sand and gravel and transportation for some materials. The 3rd Bn., 16th Arty. gave bricks, and the CORDS organization (Civil Organization for Revolutionary Development Support) supplied roofing and cement. All the construction was done by the people of Khuong Hiep.

'One Of Our Better Projects'

"Really the people have to build it themselves to give them the feeling that it is their project. They drew up the plans themselves—we modifed them only slightly because of available materials," said platoon leader 1LT Phillip M. Ostenso.

"I feel it's one of our better projects. And judging from the reactions of the hamlet chief and elders, they too are quite proud of it."

Extensive Program To Reduce Damages

CHU LAI—The 198th Inf. Bde. has begun a comprehensive quarterly re-training program designed to reduce equipment damage caused by improper servicing and operation.

Classes are being given in maintenance of generators, refrigerators, wheeled and tracked vehicles and all types of communications equipment. Special emphasis is being placed on inspection and maintenance techniques during the classes.

Experience Factor

"The big problem we are trying to avoid," said CPT Kenneth Kraus, the assistant S-4, "is getting replacement personnel, who are trained to do a particular job, but who have little experience in actually doing it.

"Combine that with the particular set of terrain features and climatic factors and maintenance becomes a big consideration.

"We initiated this program to give the lower echelon personnel additional training and experience in maintaining the equipment they must operate every day of the year."

Classes On Care

The responsibility for preparing the lesson plans and administering most of the classes has been delegated to the individual battalion concerned.

Co. B, 9th Spt. Bn. conducts classes for the entire brigade on equipment with special maintenance requirements, such as refrigerators.

A specific number of hours of instruction each quarter is required for operators of designated equipment. In addition to this, daily "motor stables" have been set up, during which operators of trucks and jeeps check the vehicle for deficiencies which could lead to loss of operational status.

Preventive Maintenance

A program of driver training also is conducted. Drivers are being tested and re-tested before licensing, and remedial training is being given where necessary.

"We are trying to instill in our men a consciousness of the necessity for preventive maintenance," CPT Kraus said.

He concluded, "We try to teach them what problems they will have with a particular piece of equipment so that we may eliminate these problems. We want to make preventive maintenance second nature to these people."

Hand Signs

Crossing your fingers may be a sign of good luck to the Americans, but to our allies, the South Vietnamese, it is considered to be the most vulgar digital expression possible in their language.

The raising of the thumb above a clenched fist is often used by the children and elderly peasants we see along the road and this has the exact same meaning of our "thumbs-up."

He's My Brother

Not knowing quite what to make of the situation, an orphaned brother and sister wait impatiently as "Brave and Bold" soldiers of the 198th Inf. Bde. distribute gifts to the village children in the brigade area of operations. (Photo by SP4 Richard Kinder, 198th Inf. Bde.)

Notified by telephone only moments before, two medical corpsmen (above) wait for a 'dustoff' Huey to land on the hospital's helipad. Followed by his brother (right), an injured Vietnamese boy is rushed to the emergency room by former salesman PFC Robert F. Howard. A careful examination (far right) by 312th doctors reveals the need for delicate eye surgery. A MEDEVAC is called.

312th Skill In Res

Photos And Story B

CHU LAI—A plumbing salseman carries a wounded Vietnamese boy from a roaring "dustoff" chopper; an installment loan manager records data from sensitive laboratory equipment; a tobacco buyer prepares a soldier for surgery—just daily routine for the recently activated 312th Evacuation Hospital now providing expert medical care for all of I Corps.

Only months ago the men and women of a medical reserve unit in Winston-Salem, N.C., were attending weekend meetings and then returning to their jobs and families through the state.

Then, on May 13, the 312th Evac. Hosp. was called to active duty and subsequently moved to Ft. Benning, Ga., where it underwent training prior to overseas movement.

"The activation affected former accountants, trust officers, building contractors, teachers, doctors, nurses and members of various skilled trades. However, our transition from civilian to military life was very smooth," said LTC Eston R. Caldwell, unit commander and former physician from Statesville, N.C.

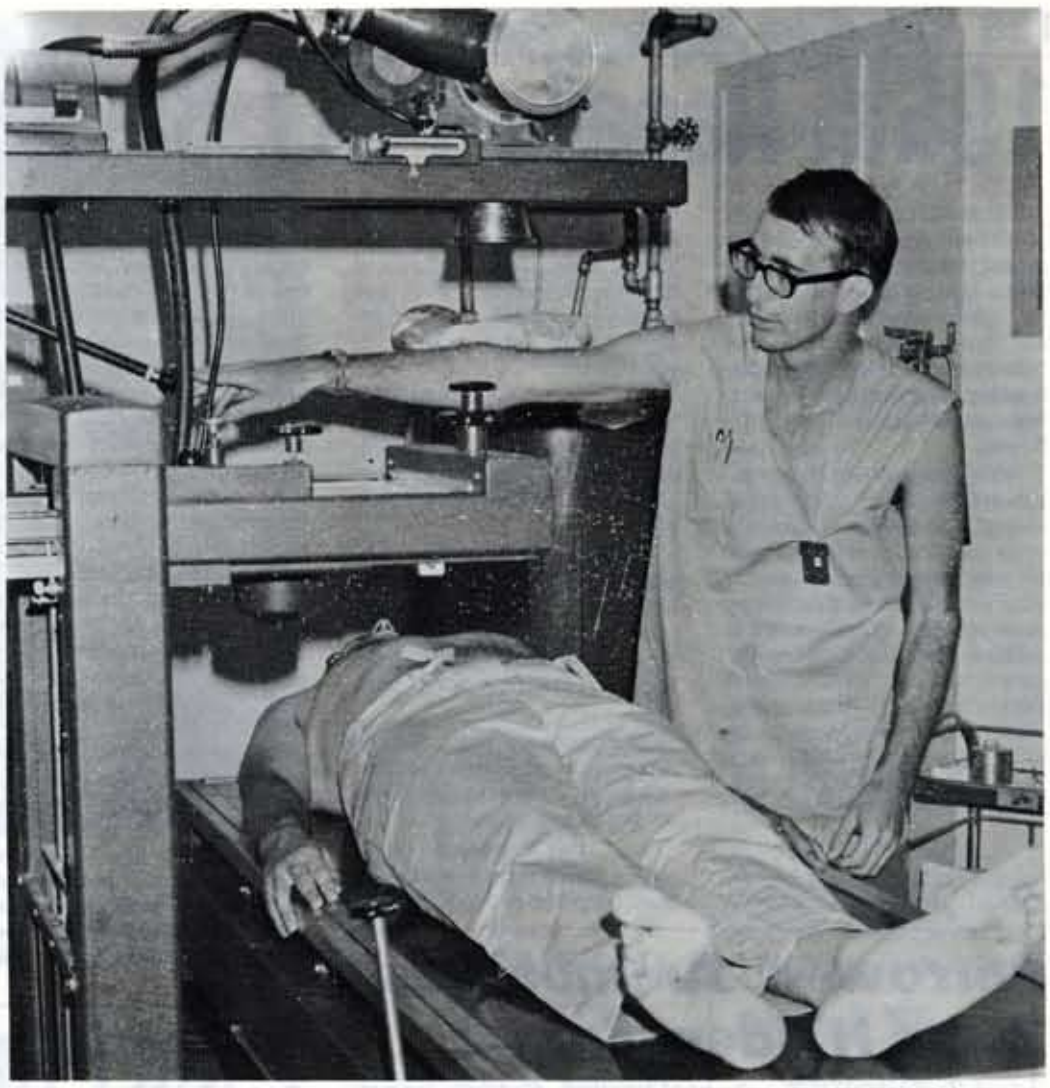
At Ft. Benning regular Army NCOs with years of experience in the medical corps were added to the unit, bringing its strength to more than 200 men and women.

"By mid-September the unit had jelled into an efficient and unified evacuation hospital capable of providing medical care for 400 patients," remarked chief ward master, SFC Lawrence W. Blanc (Norwalk, Conn.).

Starting on Sept. 21, three huge jets were required to airlift the unit to Chu Lai. Temporarily, they lived

Industrial engineer SP4 Michael Shore measures elixir

Data charts are reviewed by CPT Michael



X-ray is adjusted by former supervisor SP4 Charles F. Spry

erve(s) To Vietnam

SP4 Bill GUERRANT

in vacant patient wards until members of the unit they replaced, the 2nd Surgical Hospital, were prepared to move.

"I guess everyone was a little skeptical about their ability at first. When a patient needs your help you don't stop to think about it," mused senior ward specialist SP5 William B. Crain, a tobacco buyer from Versailles, Ky.

The 312th officially took over from 2nd Surg. Hosp. on Oct. 1, and by the end of the month it had become a fully operational evacuation hospital capable of diversified medical treatment.

During the first month of operation 902 American and Vietnamese patients were admitted and more than 600 major and minor surgical procedures were performed.

With 40 college graduates and the overall education level very high, the members of the 312th "felt obligated to prove that a reserve unit was just as good as an 'RA' one. I have worked with both. The 312th is doing an outstanding job," said CPT Barbara A. Hafner (Cincinnati, Ohio), a nurse previously with 2nd Surg. Hosp.

To supplement the specialized staff of the 312th, five medical teams—the 48th, 305th, 378th, 889th and 915th Med. Det.—were added to the growing hospital.

Now at home in its modern facilities overlooking the South China Sea, the 312th Evac. Hosp. has settled down to the task at hand. That plumbing salesman, loan manager and tobacco buyer go about their work with a professional confidence and skill that makes them look like old veterans.

. Carey while ward specialists attend patients

Skilled surgeons complete operation on Americal soldier

128 Killed In Turkey Shoot

196th Recalls 1967 Battle

LZ BALDY—The memory of Thanksgiving, 1967 for most infantrymen of the 196th Bde. is filled with turkey dinners, their families, and good friends. But those "Chargers" who were in-country a year ago remember something entirely different.

NVA forces had been infiltrating into the then newly launched "Operation Wheeler/Wallowa" area and it was the brigade's job to stop them. In the first major confrontation between these soldiers and the "Chargers," called the "Thanksgiving Day Battle,," 128 enemy were killed (including 36 by air strikes) and 47 individual and nine crew-served weapons were captured.

NVA Move In

Intelligence reports had indicated that the 3rd NVA Rgt., which was on R&R along the coastal plains of Thang Binh Dist., had moved into the mountains west and northwest of LZ Ross to regroup, train, and receive replacements.

To repel them, brigade units moved out early on Thanksgiving morning to Hill 63, a thickly vegetated peak, 15 miles northwest of Tam Ky.

As soon as B and D Co.s, 4th Bn. 31st Inf. began to advance, they came under intense small arms and automatic weapons fire from strongly fortified NVA positions.

The enemy was dug in directly to the front of the "Chargers" and to the west on scattered islands.

Cav Connects

The infantrymen, with support of vehicles from A Trp., 1st Cav. and F Trp., 17th Cav., pounded away at the enemy who were firing from one and two-man foxholes just above the rice paddy level of the islands.

Marine and Air Force jets dive-bombed and straffed the NVA and forced them to seek cover. Seventy-five tons of bombs were dropped.

At night artillery concentrations hit enemy escape routes.

Mopping Up

On Nov. 24, the combined infantry-tank units resumed their slow methodical clearance of the islands. That night, the aritllery again continued firing.

On the third and final day of the battle, "Charger" companies gathered weapons, documents, equipment, and bodies from the contested area. Then they gathered up their own equipment and went back for a delayed but welcome Thanksgiving dinner.

Combat In Review

Calling About 'Charlie'

A "Charger" RTO from the 196th Inf. Bde. calls for artillery support from the 3rd Bn., 82nd Arty. during recent action south of Hoi An. (Photo by SP5 Dave L. Tyler, 523rd Sig. Bn.)

Borrowed Ammunition Zaps Hidden Sniper

LZ THUNDER—A cool-headed platoon leader from the 11th Inf. Bde.'s 1st Bn., 20th Inf. silenced an harassing enemy sniper recently during a search and clear operation near here...but it took some backtracking and borrowed ammunition to do it.

Moving his platoon through heavily vegetated terrain, 1LT Arthur Teele of Tallahassee, Fla. ordered his men to sweep the area when they began receiving sniper fire.

The battalion command and control helicopter was in the area, and was called to give aid. In the chopper, the battalion CO, LTC William Guinn of Greeneville, Tenn. spotted three evading enemy soldiers and opened fire killing one.

Retraces Steps

As the lieutenant colonel kept the other Viet Cong under observation, the lieutenant on the ground had completed a search of a hedgerow without contact and continued moving forward in search of the hidden snipers.

LTC Guinn radioed down to 1LT Teele that his platoon had just passed through an area where one of the VC was hiding. Although a little dubious of the report since his platoon had just searched the hedgerow, the lieutenant halted his unit and marched the 50 meters back to the hedgerow for another look.

"When I reached the hedgerow I heard heavy breathing about 15 feet from me," 1LT Teele related. "Using Kentucky windage and Tennessee elevation, I pulled the trigger but it just went click. My heart hit the ground."

Retraces Steps Again

Stunned, but keeping calm, the lieutenant walked back to his men and borrowed a magazine of ammunition from his platoon sergeant.

"I walked back slowly toward the heavy growth making sure I didn't look in his direction," he said. "I was right on top of him before I spotted him crouched in the hedgerow."

Apparently confident of his hiding place since the entire platoon had walked past him and unaware that he was detected by the lieutenant, the sniper was permanently silenced before he could use the M1 carbine with three loaded magazines or the grenade he carried with him.

'Gimlet' Ends VC's Vacation

LZ BALDY—A VC company commander's R&R came to an end abruptly recently when "Chargers" of the 196th Inf. Bde. came on the scene.

D Co., 3rd Bn., 21st Inf., with the help of a Hoi Chanh, found a weapons cache consisting of two K-44 rifles and an M-60 machinegun. The unit then moved out in an attempt to find the owners.

SP4 Joseph Cooper had the job of hiding in the brush and watching the trail. "I didn't wait long," the infantryman noted. "After several Vietnamese kids had passed carrying ric,e an enemy soldier came walking by with his .38 caliber pistol drawn."

In a brief exchange of fire, the "Gimlet" soldier ended the VC's vacation plans.

"The VC commander was identified by the R&R orders in his shirt pocket sending him to this location to recover from battle wounds," said CPT Seth R. Orell, CO of D Co. "He just picked a bad day to begin R&R."

Cautious Enemy Caught Unaware

LZ BALDY — An alert "Charger" from the 196th Inf. Bde. owes his life to a safety-minded, but absent-minded Viet Cong who had his rifle on safety during a recent surprise face to face encounter.

D Co., 3rd Bn., 21st Inf. had set up a defensive position in a rice paddy in "AK Valley" deep in the vital Que Son Valley rice region.

1LT Keith L. Young of Berryville, Va. moved out along a dike to check his platoon's security when the company came under enemy fire.

"An enemy soldier stood up on the dike about 10 meters away and pointed his AK-47 rifle at me...I thought it was all over," the lieutenant said.

"I drew my .45, fired and saw him fall," he added.

When the enemy's weapon was examined, the safety was still on and a full magazine was in the rifle.

The young "Charger" platoon leader will always be thankful his .45 caliber pistol was not on safety.

R&R Exchange

Have you taken R&R yet. If so, you have valuable information which those who are looking forward to going will want to know...

Since this information is constantly changing and being updated, your newspaper could act as a go-between for those who want to know the inside stuff about the R&R sites.

If you have a question or a tip to pass on concerning R&R, write the Southern Cross, c/o Div. IO, and we will print them in future issues.

Engineer's Reaction Saves Buddy's Life

LZ BRONCO—A quick-thinking combat engineer was credited with saving the life of one of his fellow soldiers recently, when the 2½-ton dump truck in which they were riding struck an enemy mine planted in Highway 1, just north of Duc Pho.

SP5 Edward Salscheider (Tacoma, Wash.), a combat construction specialist in the 26th Engr. Bn.'s C Co., assigned to the 11th Inf. Bde., was on his way to one of the brigade's fire support bases.

He was travelling with SP4 Glen Villanueva (Tampa, Fla.) and six other engineers to relieve another combat construction crew when the incident occurred.

Eruption Of Flame

"We were about 800 meters outside the Duc Pho city limits," related Salscheider, "when suddenly the truck erupted in a nightmare of flame and twisted metal."

The force of the blast threw the truck 120 feet and tossed the occupants free of the blazing wreckage.

Fiery Rescue

Salscheider, dazed and injured, picked himself up from the ditch alongside the road. "I saw the demolished truck ahead of me," he said, "and stumbled toward it to see if there was anybody left."

The others escaped with minor injuries, but Salscheider noticed Villanueva lying in a ditch. "His clothing and hair were on fire so I carried him to a nearby rice paddy and put out the flames by rolling him in the water," the young engineer said.

Something Burning

"I was kind of dazed when it happened," remarked Villanueva. "The first thing I remembered was feeling someone lifting me up and smelling something burning. The next thing I knew, I was in the water.

"If it hadn't been for Ed," he continued, "it would have been a lot worse."

Fast Support Ends Ambush

CHU LAI—A company of "Chargers" from the 196th Inf. Bde. found out how valuable good support is when "Charlie" is making the going tough.

As a 2nd Bn, 1st Inf. company moved toward its night defensive position, the VC sprang a lethal ambush.

"They had a good position on an island and seemed to have plenty of ammo," said CPT James Schmit (Brooklyn, N.Y.), D Co. commander.

Not long after the first enemy shot was fired, the big 105mm howitzer rounds from the 3rd Bn., 82nd Arty. began to rain on the enemy's fortified positions.

While sporadic fire was continuously sprayed at the "Chargers," two F-104 jets swooped out of the sky with their 500-pound bomb payloads to silence the last of the VC guns.

The "Charger" company moved out with the reassurance that there is always someone there to help—and fast.

NEW HERO

CHU LAI—With America's "Miracle Man" scheduled to rotate back to the world before Christmas, a new cartoon hero is scheduled to replace him.

Surprise 'Citizens' By Mail

New Orleans Adopts GIs

LZ BALDY—A humble request from a division first sergeant for some reading material for his men resulted in more than he or his company expected.

FSG Maurice Kilpatrick of Co. C, 3rd Bn., 21st Inf., 196th Inf. Bde. wrote a letter to New Orleans Mayor Victor Schiro with hopes of getting books and magazines from his hometown for the men of his company to read when not conducting operations.

More Than Bargained For

"Reading material is difficult to obtain in the field, so I thought of writing to my hometown mayor," Kilpatrick explained.

The people of New Orleans not only responded by sending boxes of books and magazines periodically, but their Louisiana hospitality also extended to including varieties of canned food and cookies in the packages.

But an even greater surprise was in store for the "Charlie Tigers" of C Co. when Mayor Schiro wrote back to the first sergeant.

Included with the letter was an official certificate making the members of C Co. "honorary citizens of the New Orleans International City." Just one letter and the 11,000 mile gap between New Orleans and the "Charger" unit was bridged.

Fellow Citizens

Commanded by CPT Jay E. Pry (Sacramento, Calif.), the "Charlie Tigers" enjoy reading all the materials sent by their interested "fellow citizens," and many of the men are expressing an even greater interest in their adopted home in the bayous.

Oh, Brother!

LZ BRONCO—When SP5 Dan Brettelle (Oswego, S.C.) heard that a medic had arrived in the unit, he was most anxious to meet him because this new medic would be his replacement.

Brettelle, who had served as a field medic with Co. A, 4th Bn., 3d Inf., eagerly volunteered to pick up the new man at 11th Inf. Bde. Headquarters.

When he met the new replacement, he was, as he put it, "completely surprised—even stunned," for the new medic turned out to be his brother Don.

Don, also a SP5, had rotated to Vietnam from duty in Germany. He had requested the Americal Div. because he knew his brother Dan was here.

Dan knew nothing about Don's applying for this division, nor even of his transfer to Vietnam.

Dan commented on the situation, "It was really great to see my brother here; but, I would much rather had met him in Oswego."

SHORT-TIMER

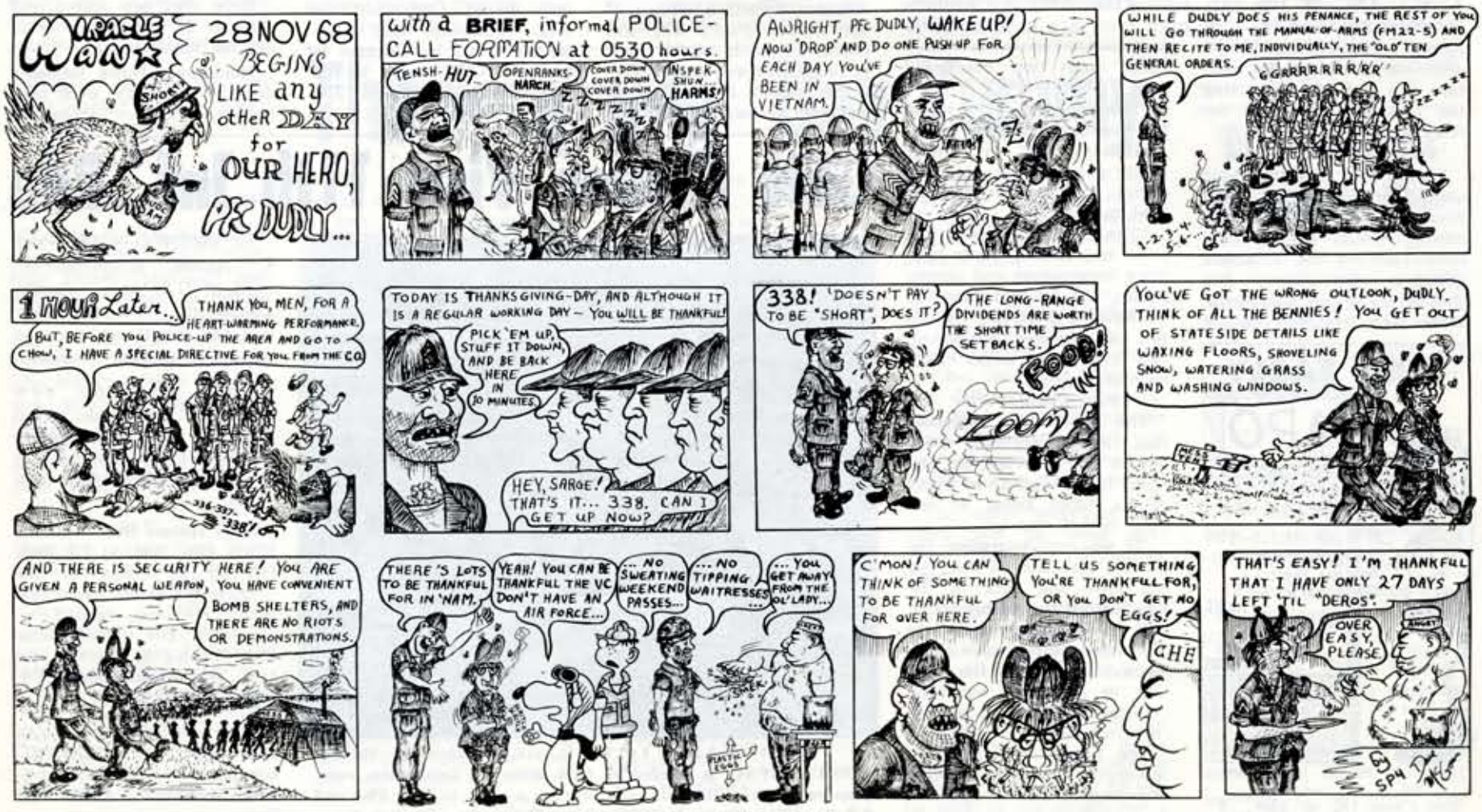
So you're short. Now what? Do you know what you must do before you leave Vietnam? Check to see if you've done these things.

- All reassignment orders should reach you 45 to 60 days before your DEROS. If your orders do not come within 30 days of your DEROS date, visit your personnel office right away.
- You are authorized to take back to the states 66 pounds, plus you may be permitted an additional 134 pounds of baggage. This is not Hold Baggage and can be carried on the plane.
- Upon receiving your reassignment orders report to your Hold Baggage area for crates. If you do your own packing, have eight copies of your orders on hand. If Hold Baggage personnel do the packing, have 11 copies.
- Pick up DA Form 137 Installation Clearance Record from your orderly room and have it properly completed.
- Have your shot record up to date.
- Fill out three locator cards in the mail room so that any back mail will reach you after you are back in the states.
- Your uniform for returning to the States will be khakis.
- And if you have any personal weapons, they must be registered with the appropriate provost marshall, and you must have an export license.

Don't get caught short, short-timer!

Roxanna Bonilla

This chick's no hayseed. A singing miss from Costa Rica, Senorita Roxanne Bonilla recently toured the Americal area with the Eddie London Show. Now living in Southern California, Roxanne is fluent in three languages: English, Spanish, and French. (Photo by SP4 Bill Guerrant, Photo Editor)



A LRP They Call The 'Guv'ner'

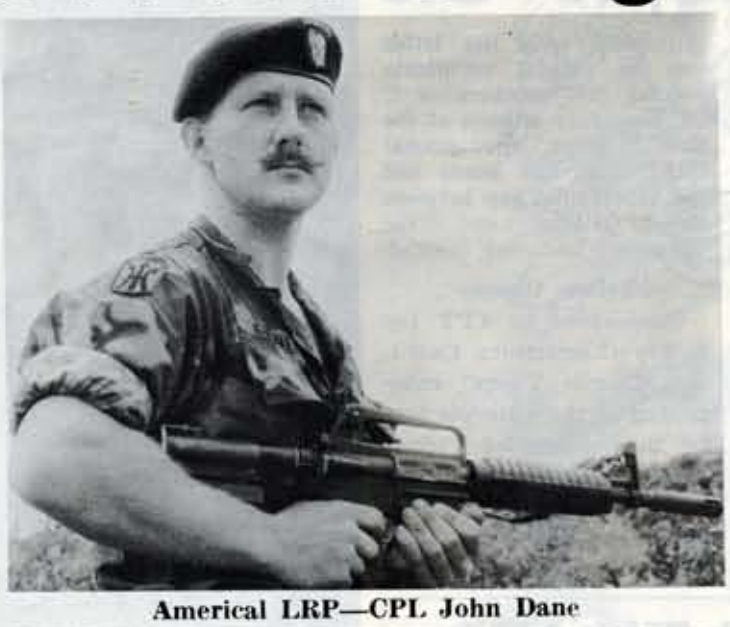
Briton Is A Travelling Man Of Action

Story and Photo By PFC Dean Norland

CHU LAI—CPL John Dane is the kind of guy you read about in novels. You tell yourself he can't be for real, but he certainly is.

The 26-year-old world traveller has been an artist, designer, ordained minister, salesman, skin diver, newspaper correspondent, and now an Americal LRP.

Dane's adventures had an Oliver Twist beginning. Born in London during World War II, his family was killed during a German blitz and the child was taken to an orphanage.



Americal LRP—CPL John Dane

Hunger Begins His Quest

"One tends to move around a lot when he is a displaced person," the soldier recalled in his tweedy British accent.

After a year at Leeds College of Art in the north of England, a shortage of funds forced him to leave. "The old growling stomach decided my next move."

He went to work as a department store clerk, but this job was too ordinary for the enterprising Englishman.

Painting Paris

He seized an opportunity to go on a mission for the Church of Latter Day Saints, traveling through England, Wales, and Ireland as an ordained minister. He went from door to door asking the people of the British Isles if they were aware of or interested in the word of God.

In 1964, Dane crossed the English Channel to experience the European continent. "I started living in Paris taking the conventional attitude of an artist," he reminisced.

"I lived in an attic-type studio and sold my paintings to tourists on the boulevards."

From the City of Light, he travelled to Germany, the Netherlands, Scandinavia, Italy, Greece, and some of the communist bloc nations. Then he decided to return to his homeland.

Queen's Oilman

He got a job with a London oil concern as a senior technical representative, although still in his early twenties. The well and oft travelled Britisher soon became bored, however, even though one of his accounts was Queen Elizabeth's home, Buckingham Palace.

His next stop was Kuwait on the Arabian Gulf, but finding the Middle East too quiet, he voyaged to North Africa. During this period, Dane supported himself by editing travel brochures, scuba diving to place underwater explosives, and freelance writing for the London Times.

Congo Correspondent

While in North Africa, he became interested in international political affairs. "I consider myself a citizen of the world. That's why I'm concerned with what's happening in other countries.

"So called free countries suddenly seemed to lose their freedom when I actually saw them and talked to their citizens. This was upsetting," Dane commented.

One of the world's trouble spots at this time was the Congo. Carrying press credentials, Dane managed to enter this land of turmoil. "While I was down there, I became concerned with the lack of truthful press coverage. I wrote articles about what I actually saw, but they were not published as such."

In May 1967 John Dane decided he wanted to see for himself what was happening in Vietnam. Planning to go to America by way of Europe, he set off across the African continent by car.

The Midst Of War

When he reached Egypt and the Middle East, it was not as quiet as when he left it. He found himself in the midst of the six-day war between Israel and the Arab countries.

Egyptian officials refused to let him cross the Nile River. At one point during the confusion, his car was sniped at and one of its tires punctured by a shotgun blast.

Travelling by night and paying bribes to stubborn officials, Dane finally made his way back to Morocco, there selling his automobile for ship's passage to the United States.

Next: The Army

Within two hours of setting foot on U.S. soil, the Englishman had volunteered for the draft. After clearing technical hurdles, he entered basic training six weeks later at Ft. Jackson, S.C.

With an infantry MOS he went to Ft. Ord, Calif. for AIT. "I already had volunteered to go to Vietnam so from Ft. Ord I went to Hawaii to join the 4th Bn., 21st Inf., 11th Inf. Bde."

Dane arrived in country last April. After spending some time as a gunner on a fire base and going out into the field as a foward observre, he volunteered for the LRPs.

What Next 'Guv'ner'?

"Perhaps I volunteered for Long Range Patrol because of the way I'm made or perhaps it's because I get a kick or thrill out of doing this type of work."

Known as "Guv'ner" to his unit, Dane's exploits tend to fit the description of a certain Ian Fleming fictional super hero.

His reply: "People like Mr. James Bond most certainly do not exist."

Hometowners

CHU LAI—During the last six-month period, more than 6,500 men of the Americal Division had their name in their hometown newspaper.

Another, nearly 400 men have had radio-tapes aired over local radio station at home.

The brief newspaper articles were usually initiated during the men's short story at the Americal Combat Center. A form was given to each man processing through the center and when he completed filling it out, the form was delivered to the division Information Office.

Here, the Hometown News Section reads, corrects and verifies the information on the forms. When the skilled writers complete this chore, the releases are sent to the Army Hometown News Center in Kansas City, Mo.

Here they are edited and sent to the newspaper nearest the man's home.

Hometown News Releases are also made for each promotion, award, or decoration.

Radar Checks 'Charlie'

Unit Hits Back Fast

LZ BRONCO—The counter-mortar radar unit high atop Mt. Montezuma here makes the life of a Viet Cong mortarman a dangerous if not short one.

CWO Charlie Hardaway (Colorado Springs, Colo.), OIC of the 6th Bn., 11th Arty.'s counter-mortar unit, and his nine-man crew are in their 11th month of providing target detection for return fire mortars and artillery supporting the 11th Inf. Bde. base defense system.

Totals Hard To Assess

During that time the radar unit, working closely with 81mm mortar crews on the hilltop, which are rotated from each of the brigade's infantry battalions, has chalked up 20 confirmed locations, four captured mortar tubes and two confirmed kills.

"This figure may not sound too impressive," CWO Hardaway says, "but we usually can't get anyone to the enemy mortar site until the next morning.

"The infantry checks the sites and usually finds base plate impressions and aiming stakes, but by that time the VC have removed any casualties or damaged equipment. Our kill figure could easily be much higher."

Fast Counter Fire

The radar crew explained that the VC normally work with a pair of tubes, but the radar has picked up as many as six tubes firing at one time in different areas.

"If we can determine the general direction of fire, we can have the data to the guns before the enemy round hits. If we can get immediate clearance, we can have counter mortar fire on the position in minutes," said the veteran of 10 years experience in radar.

The radar unit covers a 360-degree range around Montezuma, and is effective even in the heavy rains.

"AIR, ol' PAL, send this by SAM. I mean PAL, ol' SAM...?"

GEN Haines Visit 11th Inf. Bde

FOUR-STAR VISITOR, GEN Ralph E. Haines, COMUSARPAC, is briefed by COL John W. Donaldson, commander of the 11th Inf. Bde., during a visit to Duc Pho and LZ Bronco. (Photo by SP5 Albert Holloway, 11th Inf. Bde.)

LZ BRONCO—GEN Ralph E. Haines, commander-in-chief of U.S. Army, Pacific, visited the 11th Inf. Bde. late last month while on an inspection tour of Vietnam.

This was the new USARPAC commander's first trip here since assuming responsibility in July for the Army's largest specified command.

GEN Haines flew from the 173rd Abn. Bde. at LZ English in II Corps to the "Jungle Warriors" base camp here. He was hosted by Americal Div. Commander MG Charles M. Gettys and 11th Bde. Commander COL John W. Donaldson.

After a briefing on division operations, the USARPAC commander visited the brigade's newest FSB, LZ Dancer.