Americal Soldiers Turn Back NVA

By 1LT ROBERT R. KRESGE

QUE SON VALLEY — Combat between Americal soldiers and enemy forces from the 2nd NVA Div. tapered off almost as quickly as it had begun. The initial flare-up of fighting left 435 NVA soldiers dead at the end of the battle, which centered around the newly resettled village of Hiep Duc, 35 miles northwest of Chu Lai.

With enemy resistance slacking, infantrymen from 196th Bde. managed to get to the site of a helicopter downed by .51 cal. machine-gun fire. Eight persons were listed as missing in the crash, including the commander of the 3rd Bn., 21st Inf., the battalion SGM and Associated Press photographer Oliver (Ollie) Noonan.

Forces committed in the week-long conflict were divided into two battalion-size task forces to overcome enemy resistance at two points in the valley. One force, under the control of the 4th Bn., 31st Inf., fought the NVA near Hill 118, 2 miles north of Hiep Duc. The other element was south of LZ Center, east of Hiep Duc.

First Contact

The first outbreak occurred in the 4-31 area when a company surprised an estimated NVA battalion. Supported by gunships, air strikes and artillery, B Co. of the 4-31 linked up with C Co. of the same battalion late in the evening. Bodies found on the next day comfirmed that the combination of infantry and supporting elements had killed 91 NVA soldiers.

"I believe the enemy's move is part of a co-ordinated attack on the Hiep Duc refugee center, which the NVA have sworn to destroy since the refugees moved in last March," commented LTC Cecil M. Henry (Rome, Ga.), commanding officer of the 4-31.

During the next three days, fighting was heavy at the base of mountains that form the Que Son Valley and the boundary between Quang Tin and Quang Nam provinces. LTC Henry directed his task force, made up of companies from his own battalion as well as units of the 1st of the 46th Inf., and the 2nd of the 1st Inf., from a tactical command post in the field.

Retaliate

For several nights, the enemy made probing attacks and mortared the companies' night defensive positions. Enemy mortar fire was also directed against LZ West, home of the 4-31. In each case, U.S. counter-mortar radar enabled supporting artillery to strike back quickly at the enemy's firing points.

In directing the attacks against the NVA fortified positions, LTC Henry said his forces were "seeking to destroy them (the NVA) while they are massed in this area."

"All available air and artillery are being brought in to support the ground operation which has been slowed by fierce enemy resistance. The NVA has numerically superior forces, excellent reserves of ammo, supplies and fortified positions," he added.

In spite of the enemy's advantages, U.S. air power and artillery and the determination of the infantrymen forced the NVA to withdraw from the fight. Soon the soldiers were able to provide security for combat engineers who began demolition work on the abandoned positions. The 4-31 task force had killed 212 NVA in eight days of almost continuous combat.

Other Units Join Fight

For the forces operating south of LZ Center, the action began when another company of the 4-31 contacted another estimated NVA battalion. Late that afternoon, a company from the 2nd Bn. of the 1st Inf. was combat-assaulted into the area to develop the contact. As enemy resistance increased, two companies of the 3rd of the 21st also joined the fray.

Because of the forces already committed to the northwest of this action, another task force under the command of the 3-21 was constituted, made up of three of the battalion's companies, and the originally engaged companies, D of the 4th of the 31st and A (later relieved by C Co.) of the 2nd of the 1st.

Helicopters supporting the ground units began to receive heavy enemy automatic weapons fire, both heavy and light caliber, as they carried in supplies and carried out casualties on "dust-off" missions.

Late in the afternoon, the command and control ship of the 3-21 carried three replacement soldiers to the field along with some much-needed supplies. The helicopter picked up photographer Noonan, who had spent the day with the ground units and headed back to LZ Center.

Downed Helicopter

The craft was barely airborne when it became the target of heavy NVA ground fire. According to witnesses, the ship caught fire and fell from an altitude of over 1500 feet into dense foliage atop a small knoll two kilometers away from the American troops. Killed in the crash were: LTC Eli P. Howard, Jr., 41, of Woodbrige, Va., the battalion commander of the 3-21; Command SGM Franklin D. Rowell, 36, of Lexington, S.C., the sergeant major of the 3-21; Associated Press photographer Oliver C. (Ollie) Noonan, 29, of Norwell, Mass.; and also the helicopter crew.

As U.S. ground forces met continued resistance in the area, the 3rd Bn., 5th ARVN Div. came into the area to open another "front" in the attacks on the enemy positions. The commandant of the Division Combat Center, LTC Robert C. Bacon (Falls Church, Va.), took over command of the task force.

Making determined assaults on NVA positions, the infantrymen were able to force the enemy to withdraw under cover of darkness. Meeting no resistance later, four companies of the task force made their way to within 1,000 meters of the crash site by nightfall.

While one company stayed behind to destroy an enemy bunker complex on Hill 102, the other three pushed on to locate the downed chopper.

SOUTHERN CROSS
AMERICAL DIVISION

Vol 2, No. 24 CHU LAI, VIETNAM September 10, 1969

Keeping Watch

A soldier of the 196th Inf. Bde. cautiously looks for signs of enemy movement during the heavy contact between Americal units and forces of the 2nd NVA Div. near Hiep Duc.

(Photo by SP4 Bill Crawford, 196th IO)

'Saturday Night At The Movies'

Villagers Wild Over Flicks

By SGT Alfred Anthony, Jr.

KUONG MY — One time the show was so exciting a Montagnard shot an arrow through the movie screen.

Things were more routine in the small village of Kuong My, four miles west of Chu Lai when the division's mobile audiovisual team "HE-35" was showing its nightly movie.

CPT William D. Hyde (Merced, Calif.) and 1LT James Porter (Washington, Mo.), 1st Bn., 6th Inf. civil affairs officers for the 198th Bde., had brought the team to this small hamlet.

"The purpose is to bring information on recent government changes," said CPT Hyde. "The people in most of the villages in the brigade's AO have no means of keeping informed — they don't get newspapers," he said.

"During the election," added LT. Porter, "we showed films where the candidates spoke their views directly to the people — it was a big help."

For many villagers the American movie team is their only link with the outside.

The backbone of the team is an ingenious three-quarter ton truck with its familiar "Snoopy on the doghouse" painted along the sides. The audio-visual container on the back houses its own generator, portable screen, projector and film library.

In Kuong My, during the real changes the Americans got shouts of "Batman! Superman!" from the children swarming around the truck, while the village elders sat raptly in front of the screen, interested in the current news features about their country.

"These movies are all in Vietnamese," said 1LT Homer T. Hodge (Paramount, Calif.), "but a lot of times we show westerns and as long as they've got good action we've got a good audience."

"Part of our job is to provide entertainment," CPT Hyde interjected, "It's not propaganda — we just show the films and hope they enjoy them, we've found enthusiastic audiences everywhere."

"In a Montagnard village we found the most enthusiasm ever," said Lt. Porter. "We were showing a cowboy and Indian flick and the tribesmen actually thought the movie was real. They got so caught up in it that in a scene where the Indians were charging toward the audience, two men got up and put crossbow arrows through the screen."

SSG Loy, a Vietnamese interpreter—and the projectionist—is an indispensable part of the team. Before the showing, Loy calls over the loudspeaker, introducing the show. He's not Ed Sullivan, but he certainly fills the house — or the street, as the case may be.

When the show's over, the village square takes on an atmosphere strangely reminiscent of old, familiar movie houses. The crowd thins and files between the dark houses to the outer reaches of the village and Kuong My goes to bed — a little more informed. (198th IO)

Walks Past Enemy

By SP4 BILL CRAWFORD

LZ WEST—The enemy impact area was flashing with activity. Mortar rounds swished overhead and exploded close by seconds later. Taking the only available cover impulsively, PFC Marion Feaster (Deland, Fla.) plunged into a nearby stream.

During the combat confusion as mortar rounds continued to fall, the rest of Feaster's unit, B Co., 4-31 Inf., pressed toward their night defensive position, unaware that they were leaving the soldier behind in enemy territory.

"I don't think it really ever hit me how bad a shape I was in. It never occurred to me that I might be captured and not be able to return to my buddies," Feaster remarked later.

He grabbed a damaged radio to keep it out of enemy hands, then clutching it under his arm, he waded upstream as quietly as possible. The soldier hoped to rejoin his unit since he knew approximately where his company was to form its night defensive position.

"But I miscalculated," laughed Feaster. "When I came out of the stream I came face to face with another group of NVA. My lucky stars must have been shining that night because they had mistaken me for an advance point man, leading an American element."

Thinking that Feast would lead a larger element into their ambush, the NVA let him pass.

"They realized their mistake too late. By the time they began firing at me I had almost made it to my unit's perimeter," said the 196th Inf. Bde. soldier.

What password did PFC Feaster use to get by the infantrymen guarding his company's perimeter?

"None," replied Feaster. "I just ran like mad into the perimeter area. My buddies were too busy blasting the NVA to worry about me." (196th IO)

Religion And You

Strength In Hard Times

By CHAPLAIN (CPT) JAMES W. COSNER
Combat Center Chaplain

Life has its moments of achievement, and times of defeat. There are times of happiness, and there is sadness. All men deal with these realities of life—there are no exceptions.

But different people are affected by experiences in their own separate way. One man interprets a moment of failure as a challenge and is strengthened by the experience. And the person, in a moment of success belittles himself by minimizing the moment of achievement and loses something of himself in that experience. The tragedies and joys of life cause the one man to grow, and the other to shrink.

The optimist and the "loser," both need to find a personal sense of certainty in a world that is full of surprises and sudden experiences, either pleasant or tragic. In order to stay in the fight, we need to have a certain faith that sustains us.

Faith is the inner-stuff of which life is made. Faith in one's self, faith in others, and faith in a Eternal God. Faith can be interpreted as "stick-to-it-iveness," in the way it affects us and in what its results are in our lives. It is the staying power of life—the ability to see things through. Sticking with ourselves, others, and God, through thick or thin for better or worse.

Do you remember the words of the Old Testament book of Ecclesiastes: "For everything there is a season . . . a time to weep and a time to laugh; a time to mourn, and a time to dance . . . a time to seek, a time to lose . . . a time to love, and a time to hate. . . ." (3:1-8)

Worship of God does not give us immunity to the hardships, disappointments, discouragements, or sorrows of life. But through God we are assured the ultimate victory over immediate moments of defeat. "Surely you know that in a race all the runners take part in it, but only one of them wins the prize. Run then, in such a way to win the prize." (I Corinthians 9:24) The prize is the assurance of, once having begun and run the race, God will see us over the finish.

"If God is for us, who is against us? . . . Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? . . .

"No in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am sure that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord." (Romans 8:31-39)

Moving On Up The Ladder

By SP4 JAMES WM BROWN

You're moving on up the ladder of success. The distance that you can go — only you know. But it is wise to also know the official process by which enlisted men are promoted, because your progress through the ranks depends greatly upon the fairness and quality of this system.

In August 1968, the Department of Army introduced the present enlisted promotion system. Theoretically, the best-qualified soldiers are readily promoted by this system; in accomplishing this, however, there must exist a great degree of standardization.

Moreover, the new system was instituted to make sure that all candidates for promotion to grades E-5, E-6 and E-7 are judged according to the same criterion.

The number of soldiers needed in a specific grade and MOS is determined by the Department of Army on yearly basis. Known is the number of men that will be lost through separation, retirement, or promotion to a higher grade.

Fills Vacancies

Where the men will be found to fill vacancies is also known: in the next lower grades. The Army will promote only enough men at one time to fill the positions which are vacant or will become vacant in the near future.

But the first step toward a promotion is recommendation. And this is done by your unit commander or immediate supervisor. You can be recommended, however, no one can speculate how well you'll stack-up against other people in similar jobs elsewhere.

To determine how well you stand against others and meet promotion standards, a point system is used. Each standard is assigned a point value, depending on how important the Army feels that particular area is.

A total of 1,000 points is possible under this system. The promotion board itself is worth 200 points. Administrative factors determine the other 800 points.

Point System

The administrative factors and maximum point value are as following: active federal service (100), time in grade (100), enlisted evaluation score (150), civilian education (75), military education (100), physical fitness (25), and enlisted efficiency report (250).

The promotion board is composed of several officers and senior NCO's. You can receive up to 25 points for personal appearance; another 25 points depend on how well you express yourself and respond to the board's questions.

You can earn an added 15 points, depending on your knowledge of world affairs and the Army's information program, and 50 points more for knowledge of general military topics.

The board's overall evaluation of you, an American fighting man, totals the remaining 85 points. Awards and decorations you've received, general attitude, notable achievements such as selection as soldier of the month or high class-standing in service schools or unit training courses, are factors that influence the board's decision.

Soldiers that are not recommended by the board will be so notified through their unit. They will be informed by their commander or his representative exactly why they were not recommended, and will be told how they can improve themselves in those weak areas.

The number of vacancies or "slots" expected the following 60 days after a board convenes will dictate the number of soldiers that it can recommend for promotion.

Carried Over

When the Department of Army allocations are received, the men on the promotion list are promoted according to their position on the list. Those for whom allocations are not received are carried over to the next list.

Soldiers having been placed on an approved recommended promotion list, but feel their scores are too low, may, after one year, request to appear before another promotion board. If the score is higher or lower, position on a promotion list is determined by the score awarded by the most recent promotion board.

The Department of the Army will be notified that you are on an approved promotion list by your commander as soon as you are alerted for reassignment.

You will not leave your present duty station until your reassignment instructions are confirmed by DA, except for reassignment from a combat zone.

Those who are not placed on the list by the board will be considered again the next time the board is convened. Such a system insures that individuals are considered for Army-wide vacancies, rather than for the limited vacancies which occur in smaller units.

The present promotion system clearly excels its forerunner. It is a system of fairness which stresses the individual and his personal abilities rather than on his location and other factors.

RE-UP! ARMY — Variety Of Good Jobs Now Open

The Americal Reenlistment Office has a source of career and reenlistment information available to each troop. An impressive variety of jobs express the many opportunies that are within the soldier's reach.

Cloak And Dagger Work

Does "cloak and dagger" work interest you? This opportunity is available to men with less than four years of service, through the Army Security Agency (ASA).

The mission of ASA is to provide electronic communications security in support of our national defense effort. You can reenlist for ASA if you are trained or qualified for training in electronics, languages, communications, and other technical and administrative fields.

Some of the positions you might fill with ASA are: field radio repairman, morse interceptor, radio teletype operator, electronic warfare equipment repairman, or foreign language interceptor.

To qualify, you must reenlist for 3, 4, 5, or 6 years; be an E-5 or below, a high school graduate or equivalent and have a GT score of 100 or higher. If this option appeals to you, visit your unit career counselor.

Metalworking

The welder-blacksmith forges and welds ferrous and nonferrous metals using acetylene or arc systems. He cuts, draws, upsets, bends, punches, and twists metal; forges, heat-treats, and grinds tools.

The machinist fabricates, repairs, and modifies metallic and non-metalic parts, utilizing normal machineshop practices and equipment.

The marine hull repairman repairs wood and steel hulls, superstructures, and internal structural elements for Army harbor and landing craft. He operates and maintains power tools and machinery.

Armament Maintenance

The turret artillery repairman repairs and rebuilds turret mechanisms and weapons of tanks and other combat vehicles. This includes the electrical, hydraulic, and mechanical components. In testing procedures he might fire the weapons.

The aircraft armament repairman inspects, tests, maintains, repairs, and loads aircraft armament systems. He orients and synchronizes weapons to insure that firing is safe and that weapons operate normally. He handles ammunition, missiles, bombs and rockets—in short, he checks out the complete firing system.

The small missile system repairman performs maintenance and repair on small missile systems including the related launching, handling and simulator equipment. He utilizes special electronic and mechanical test equipment and replaces faulty components.

The decisions that you make concerning your career today, will very much determine the degree of success you will have in the future. Today's progressive Army could be the keystone to your tomorrows. Act now! Phone, write or see your unit counselor, or contact the Americal Division Reenlistment Office.

SOUTHERN CROSS AMERICAL DIVISION

THE SOUTHERN CROSS is an authorized periodic publication of the Americal Division Information Office for division units in the Republic of Vietnam. Opinions expressed are not necessarily those of the Department of the Army. Contributions are encouraged and may be sent to the Information Office, Americal Division, APO 96374. Tel: Chu Lai 2414. The editors reserve the right to edit all contributions.

Major General Lloyd B. Ramsey ..... Commanding General
Major John T. Pauli ..... Information Officer
Captain Cecil A. Green ..... Officer-In-Charge
Master Sergeant H. A. Bonesio ..... NCO-In-Charge
Private First Class Terry Mack ..... Editor
Specialist Four James Brown ..... Managing Editor
Specialist Four Paul F. Palmer ..... Staff Artist

Awards & Decorations

SILVER STAR MEDAL

SP4 Oliver Anderson Jr., 11th Bde; CPT George R. Blake, 123rd Avn. Bn; SFC Charlie R. Bradley, 196th Bde; 1LT Stephen A. Carbonetti, 196th Bde; 1LT William D. Castille, 11th Bde; 1LT Michael D. Clark, 196th Bde; PFC Michail K. Crowe, 196th Bde; SP4 John W. Curtis, 196th Bde; 1LT Bruce M. Draudt, 196th Bde; PFC Terrance M. Eckel, 11th Bde; SSG Richard Haas, 11th Bde; SP4 Bruce E. Holland, 11th Bde; SP4 Michael E. House, 196th Bde; SP4 Roy H. Johnson, 11th Bde; 1LT Lawrence M. Marlowe, 11th Bde; 1LT Lawrence V. McNamara, 196th Bde; 1LT Allan J. Ostrow, 196th Bde; SP4 Gary A. Phillips, 196th Bde; SFC Robert L. Shanahan, 11th Bde; SGT Robert J. Simpson, 11th Bde; PFC Vincent J. Sitoski, 198th Bde; SP4 Alfred M. Smith, 196th Bde; CPT John R. Stolfi, 11th Bde; Chaplain (CPT) Max D. Sullivan, 11th Bde; CPT Kenneth L. Veeder, 11th Bde; SP4 Eldon R. Williams, 196th Bde.

DISTINGUISHED FLYING CROSS

CPT Lavern M. Austin, 123rd Avn. Bn; WO1 Richard Cichowski (1st OLC), 14th Cbt. Avn. Bn; WO1 Thomas N. Dana, 14th Cbt. Avn. Bn; WO1 William E. Grant III (1st OLC), 14th Cbt. Avn. Bn; CPT George H. Handley, 123rd Avn. Bn; WO1 Steven F. Moy, 14th Cbt. Avn. Bn; CW2 Ronald E. Olivotti, 123rd Avn. Bn.

BRONZE STAR MEDAL WITH "V" DEVICE

SP4 Gregory S. Adams (1st OLC), 198th Bde; SP4 Curtis Allred, 11th Bde; SGT Philip L. Behe (1st OLC), 11th Bde; SGT Edward J. Brandt, 198th Bde; 1LT Robert F. Callahan (1st OLC), 11th Bde; SP4 Gary M. Casper, 26th Engr Bn; PFC Gordon O. Cellum Jr, 198th Bde; SP4 Bill Coats, 11th Bde; SP4 Michael D. Coleman, 198th Bde; PFC Thomas W. Connellyy, 11th Bde; PFC Noel R. Cultice, 11th Bde; SP4 Nicholas J. Digiorno, 11th Bde; PFC Terrance M. Eckel, 11th Bde; SP4 Johnnie W. Edwards (1st OLC), 198th Bde; SSG James R. Frost, 11th Bde; SP4 Vincent J. Gucciardo, 11th Bde; SP4 Frank H. Hewitt, 11th Bde; SP4 Roberto G. Jiminez, 198th Bde; SP4 James H. Kaholo, 196th Bde; CPL Daniel K. Laizure, 198th Bde; SGT Charles W. Leidner (1st OLC), 196th Bde; SP4 Ronald H. Luther, 11th Bde; 1LT Joseph W. Machen II, 11th Bde; SP4 Howard W. Meredith, 11th Bde; SP4 Herbert L. Messer Jr, 198th Bde; SP4 George Miller Jr, 55th Arty; 1LT Robert J. Mocarski, 196th Bde; SP4 Gary R. Morton, 196th Bde; 2LT Donald F. Munch, 198th Bde; SP4 Norman H. O'Hara, 198th Bde; SP4 William C. Packard, 523 Sig Bn; SP4 John W. Pryfogle, 198th Bde; SSG William B. Quinn, 196th Bde; SP4 Lynn R. Reynolds, 11th Bde; PVT William H. Ridley, 11th Bde; 1LT Joel D. Salyers, 198th Bde; SP5 Theodore L. Schlepp, 635th MI Det; SP4 Price Sebastian, 11th Bde; SSG James D. Shara, 196th Bde; PFC Eugene Smith, 198th Bde; SP4 Thomas Smull, 11th Bde; 1LT Philip Spackman (1st OLC), 11th Bde; MAJ Larry F. Spargo (2nd OLC), 11th Bde; PFC John M. Spohn, 11th Bde; SP4 Raymond J. Straub, 75th Inf (Ranger); SP4 Donald H. Stuge, 11th Bde; SFC Anthony P. Sunnekalb, 198th Bde; PFC Stevan A. Sweetland, 198th Bde; PFC John W. Troutman (1st OLC), 11th Bde; SP4 Johnny Vargas, 11th Bde; SP4 Terry H. Walker, 11th Bde; SP4 Jeffrey D. West, 198th Bde; SP5 Robert A. Whitcomb, 11th Bde; PSG Timothy D. Williams, 198th Bde; SP4 Olin G. Wilson, 11th Bde; SGT Daniel E. Wood (1st OLC), 198th Bde.

AIR MEDAL WITH "V" DEVICE

WO1 Barry K. Alexander (1st OLC), 14th Cbt Avn Bn; SP4 Timothy M. Healy (1st OLC), 14th Cbt Avn Bn; CPT William J. Shugrue (1st OLC), 123rd Avn Bn; MAJ Thomas B. Vaughn (1st OLC), 11th Bde; CPT Banta M. York II, 198th Bde.

ARMY COMMENDATION MEDAL WITH "V" DEVICE

PFC Stephen C. Andrews, 11th Bde; PFC Francisco Baldonado, 11th Bde; SP4 Kenneth L. Bauer, 11th Bde; PFC Kenneth J. Biby, 11th Bde; SP4 David W. Bloom, 198th Bde; SP4 Wayne L. Bradley, 11th Bde; SP4 Jerry L. Brickey, 11th Bde; SP4 Mark D. Callahan, 11th Bde; PFC William A. Colantoni, 11th Bde; PFC Larry R. Cook, 11th Bde; SGT Carl E. Copeland, 11th Bde; SGT Hans G. Deutschmann, 198th Bde; SP4 Nicholas DiGiorno, 11th Bde; PV2 Freddy J. Eason, 198th Bde; SP4 Vinona H. Farnworth, 198th Bde; SP4 Jake Faverman Jr, 11th Bde.

ARVNs Honored By U.S.

CHU LAI—In a ceremony held in Chu Lai, 26 soldiers of the Army of the Republic of Vietnam (ARVN) received awards as the Americal Division Band and troops paid tribute to the occasion.

The awards were credited to the numerous joint U.S. and ARVN operations executed with the Americal Division units and the 1st Bde. of the 101st Airborne Div.

CPT Nguyen Van Be was awarded the Bronze Star with "V" device and 1LT Nguyen The Loc received the Army Commendation Medal for valorous actions while on an operation with the 11th Inf. Bde. Both officers are assigned to the 3rd Bn., 4th Regt., 2nd ARVN Div.

There were six awards presented to members of the 5th ARVN Regt., who served on joint military missions with the Americal troops of the 196th Bde. CPT Nguyen Thong, CPT Nguyen Dang Quy, WO Nguyen Manh Tan, SGT Ong Van Tung, PFC Than Mo, and PFC Nguyen Minh Ho were awarded the Bronze Star with "V" device for courage and meritorious action when engaging hostile forces.

The five members of the 2nd ARVN Div. working on operations with the 198th Inf. Bde. made accomplishments that reflect their pride and service to country.

There were six Bronze Stars with "V" devices and seven Army Commendation Medals with "V" devices presented to ARVN soldiers serving with the 1st Bde., 101st Airborne Div. The awards were presented for valorous service and action while under hostile fire.

The Bronze Stars went to CPT Than Kim Bang, CPT Huynh Hao, 1LT Vuong Van Cu, 1SG Do Van Tuyet, CPL Nguyen Van Vinh, and PFC Nguyen Binh.

The Army Commendation Medals were received by SSG Loi Quong Vinh, SSG Phom Sung, CPL Nguyen Ngo, PFC Nguyen Luon, PFC Vo Khac Thin and PFC Hynh Van Moc. (Americal IO)

RECEIVING THE BRONZE STAR with "V" device from MG Lloyd B. Ramsey, Americal commander, is CPT Nguyen Van Be of the 3rd Bn., 4th Regt., 2nd ARVN Division. CPT Be, who distinguished himself in a joint U.S. and ARVN operation with the 11th Inf. Bde., was one of 26 ARVN soldiers awarded medals by the U.S. Army at ceremonies held in Chu Lai.

(Photo by PFC Joseph Campbell, 523rd Sig. Bn.)

Prayers On 26 Scrolls

War Beads Protect Soldiers

By SP4 RICK SOEHNGEN

LZ BRONCO — Many soldiers wear colorful ornaments and "lucky" charms, but two officers wear a necklace that makes them invulnerable to enemy fire and also assures them a place in paradise as leaders of warriors.

A Cambodian priest of the Hoa Hao sect pilgrimaged from his homeland to venerate CPT M.A. Moore (Dallas, Tex.), commanding officer of the 11th Inf. Bde.'s A Co., 4th Bn., 21st Inf., and 1LT Tanh, who leads the 327th RF Co. Following a 12-day fast, the priest presented the two men with the symbolic necklaces.

The story of the necklace began some time ago when CPT Moore was on his first tour in Vietnam as an advisor to an RF company led by 1LT Tanh. They were on an isolated outpost in Thanh Binh District, Kien Phong Province, located 100 miles south of Saigon, when two main-force Viet Cong battalions mounted a costly all-night assault against their positions.

The company, numbering 74 men, withstood an attack by over 300 enemy soldiers, and killed 164 of the insurgents while losing 18. For the action, the unit was awarded the Presidential Unit Citation, 1LT Tanh was decorated with the Silver Star, and CPT Moore received the Bronze Star with "V" Device.

To the members of the RF company, all belonging to the militantly anti-Communist Hoa Hao sect, the battle was a great victory.

Their prophet, Huynh Phu So, whose teachings parallel those of Jesus Christ, was assassinated by the Viet Minh in 1946 when he refused to form a coalition backing the Viet Minh against the French forces in Indochina. Ever since, the sect has represented a strong anti-Communist influence in Vietnam.

After battle, by Hoa Hao custom, those who have proven worthy and have shown outstanding leadership in the face of great danger are presented the sacred war necklace.

So it happened then that a Cambodian high priest journeyed to the company's encampment and began his fast in honor of CPT Moore and 1LT Tanh.

Each day the priest prayed for several hours in a temple where he remained throughout the entire 12 days. Each day, CPT Moore and 1LT Tanh joined the priest and meditated silently for several minutes, and concluded the service with an oral prayer in Annamese, the language of the Hoa Hao.

During the 12 days, each man was given silk scrolls inscribed with powerful symbolic inscriptions to be recited in private each night. Following the conclusion of meditation on the 12th day, the high priest presented the two soldiers with the necklace, a sign of courage of the highest order and an assurance of everlasting life in the world to come. Both necklaces contained 26 engraved lead scrolls which are a composite of the 12 prayers.

CPT Moore was honored further when he was invited by the district chief to accompany the annual pilgrimage of the sect to the village where Phu So began his crusade in the 1930's.

This visit became a unique experience for CPT Moore, who was invited to visit the mother of Phu So, the last foreigner to see her before her death.

Does the necklace really insure good luck in battle? After a few close calls, CPT Moore swears by it. (11th IO)

Ranger Group Is Fool-Proof

By SP4 TONY SWINDELL

LZ BRONCO—A new type of Long Range Patrol (LRP) team has taken to the field in an effort to refine even more their pathfinder skills and techniques in the varied terrain around the 11th Bde. headquarters and to also integrate ARVN soldiers into the LRP missions.

New-type LRP Team

Eating, sleeping, living and fighting together the men of G Co., 75th Inf. (Rangers) and the Vietnamese Rangers from the 2nd ARVN Div. have already proven in just two patrols that the concept can work and work well.

"The ARVN Rangers have provided a sharpness to our patrols that we did not have before," said 1LT Harrison Jack (Woodland, Calif.), a platoon leader. "They usually walk point and provide rear security on our missions because they have a real knack for spotting enemy activity or movement."

Combat Veterans

All the ARVN Rangers are combat veterans, having received training which parallels that of their American counterparts. Following service in the field with a regular ARVN line unit, they attended the Vietnamese Recondo School, Ranger and Airborne schools, and the special Military Assistance Command Vietnam (MACV) Recondo School.

PFC Ivan MacDonald (Boston), who worked with the ARVN Rangers on a mission, spoke highly of the elite Vietnamese group. "They were really good, and it's hard to believe how quietly they can move through the jungle and detect even faint signs of enemy activity."

"Developing mutual confidence is one of our goals," said 1LT Jack, "and I think we have made significant progress in the short time the ARVN Rangers have been here. The language barrier is a problem, but you don't need words to express the confidence all my men show to these Rangers."

Hand Signals

In spite of the language difficulty, the American-Vietnamese teams function smoothly with a set of hand signals.

"It's the little things I like about them," said MacDonald. "They are really alert out in the bush. One of them detected a large group of enemy soldiers about 50 meters from our night position, and another spotted enemy movement on an insertion that possibly saved our lives." (11th IO)

Chaplain Brings Forth Message Of God T

CPT James B. Richie (Atlanta), battalion chaplain for 1-52 leads men of D Co. in prayer.

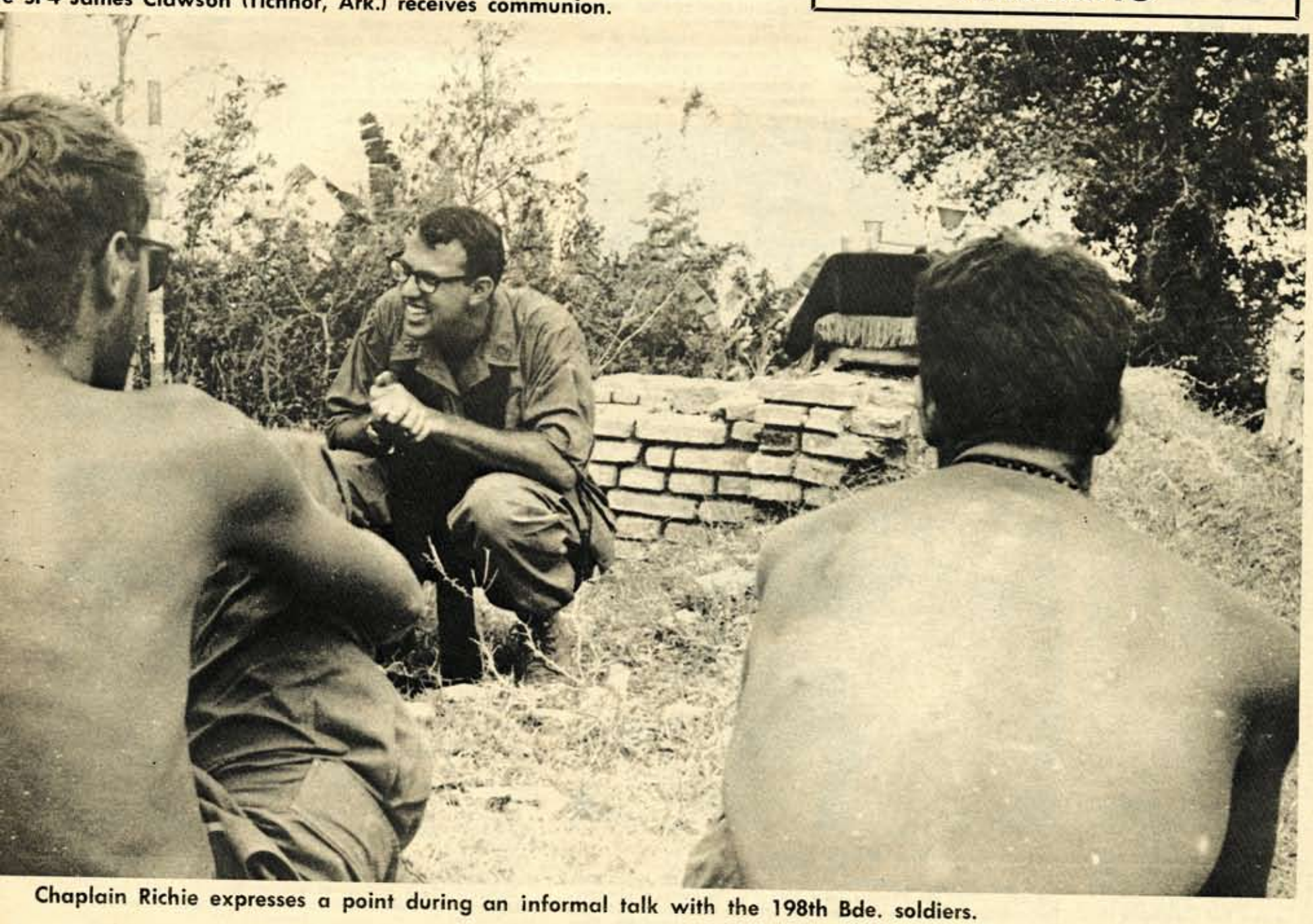
God reaches all. H

To The Forward Area

re SP4 James Clawson (Tichnor, Ark.) receives communion.

A Bible means a lot to a field soldier.

Photos By
PFC D. K. Williams
Americal IO



Chaplain Richie expresses a point during an informal talk with the 198th Bde. soldiers.

Ranger Thrust Demolishes Enemy

By SP4 RICK SOEHNGEN

DUC PHO — A pre-dawn surprise attack on a heavy concentration of enemy soldiers successfully concluded a three-day mission for a six-man ranger team from Co. G, 75th Rangers, operating on a patrol in an area six miles from here.

An insertion at dawn brought the team within 250 meters of their planned OP site and also a well-worn enemy trail.

Setting up quickly, the team headed by 19-year-old SSG Robert J. Pruden (St. Paul, Minn.) took up position overlooking the trail and a wide expanse of valley below.

Using high-powered binoculars, enemy movement was observed 3,000 meters away near the base of a hill to the southeast. SSG Pruden and SP4 Ralph Cole (Warrington, Mo.) adjusted artillery fire, killing two surprised NVA.

Again during the afternoon several well dispersed NVA were seen leaving their position, moving down the slope into the rice paddies below.

After continuous observation for several more hours, another concentration of enemy soldiers appeared carrying weapons. A quick call for pre-plotted artillery resulted in three dead enemy and several wounded. This interdictory fire disrupted enemy movement into the valley and by noon the second day, no further contact had been made.

A decision was then made by the sergeant to move the team down from the OP site into the valley below and set up an ambush near the point where the enemy movement had been observed.

With SP4 Cole walking point, the team moved silently for several hundred meters along a dry stream bed that merged with a well-used trail. Numerous enemy positions, an RPG-6 rocket and an unidentified mine were found as the team worked its way through the dense jungle before emerging into the flat expanse of the rice paddies.

"This is when it will get a bit ticklish, since we have very little cover for the night," whispered SP4 Spurgoon (Ed) Beattie (Salisbury, N.C.) as the team prepared to night laager in the open rice paddy 300 meters from goal.

Moving out before dawn, the team was just nearing the ambush position when eight enemy soldiers were spotted 20 meters away. As the enemy opened up with a barrage of AK-47 fire, Cole and Pruden killed two of the enemy as they attempted to seek cover back up the slope.

Combat In Review

Scramble

Infantrymen from the 11th Inf. Bde. scramble from their chopper in a combat assault near LZ Bronco. The soldiers made the assault behind a smoke screen, hiding them from unfriendly eyes. (Photo by SP4 Lou Pearson, 523rd Sig. Bn.)

Rice Bin Fires Up Hot-Place

LZ BALDY — An infantryman serving with the Americal Division, SP4 Larry Small (Georgetown, S.C.) peeped through a hole in a storeroom wall and saw a pile of rice.

Knowing that he had to gain entry, Small threw his shoulder against the wooden door and crashed into the room. More than 2½ tons of grain were contained in the large bin; enough to feed a company-size enemy element for more than a month.

Small Arms Fire

Small's unit, E Co.'s recon platoon of the 2nd Bn., 1st Inf. of the 196th Inf. Bde. was taking part in a cordon and search of a small village located 14 miles northwest of Tam Ky. Approaching the village from the other end was a platoon from B Co.

As the two units neared the hamlet, they received small arms fire. The infantrymen retaliated with a devastating barrage of automatic weapons fire. Four VC were killed. Then the soldiers moved into the village.

The village itself was rich in artifacts symbolic of the era of French occupation. There were ornate wood carvings and cement courtyards — now shrouded in jungle growth. But not all of the art work dated from the French period.

Paintings

Crude paintings on whitewashed walls depicted U.S. helicopters being shot down. Other paintings and drawings showed American tanks being attacked by ground forces armed with AK-47 rifles.

"It was only a temporary cache," said 1LT Mike E. Holyrod, commander of the recon units. "The rice was surprisingly ill-concealed. They usually bury it in crocks. Personally, I think they put it there after harvest and planned to ship it out to their troops." (196th IO)

At His Best In Battle

'Coconut' Explodes Into Hero

LZ BALDY — When the chatter of AK-47 and M-16 rifles echo through the triple-canopy jungle, SP4 James Kaholo is at his fighting best.

"Since he comes from Honolulu, we nicknamed him 'Coconut'," said PFC Charles Hall (Jasper, Ala.), a rifleman with A Co., 3rd Bn., 21st Inf. of the 196th Inf. Bde.

Last March, members of the 3-21 were sent into an area about 12 miles west of Tam Ky to aid in defense against the NVA. On a search and clear mission, A Co. received small arms fire from a bunker complex.

"We were all pinned down and it looked as though we might stay that way. The enemy was well dug in and in good positions. I don't know what got into me, but I jumped to my feet and ran up the trail," said Kaholo.

He threw an M-26 hand grenade, then opened up with a burst from his M-16, killing two NVA in one bunker and one in another. In addition to clearing the company a path, Kaholo personally accounted for the capture of three AK-47's and over 100 rounds of ammo

For this courageous act in which he risked his life for his fellow infantrymen, Kaholo was presented with the nation's third highest military award, the silver star.

"He is a great soldier to have around, and naturally one of the best team leaders I have," said Kaholo's squad leader, SGT John Borrelli (Lawrence, Mass.)

"He is definitely one of our best men," said CPT Dennis Chudoba (Cleveland). "He does just about everything correctly and sets a good example for our new men." (196th IO)

RTO Runs

A radio-telephone operator bends the antenna of his radio down and away from the whirling rotor blades as he leaves a chopper. The soldier is on a combat assault with the 11th Bde. near LZ Bronco. (Photo by SP4 Lou Pearson, 523rd Sig. Bn.)

VC Dream Backfires

LZ BALDY — A platoon of VC had stayed up all night attempting to ambush a RF platoon that had been working with Americal Division units in the area.

The VC were walking sleepily down a trail after sunrise, completely sluggish from the uneventful night before.

Just down the trail meanwhile, the RF's under the command of SGT Nguyen Bien were discussing the pros and cons of leaving their ambush position, now that light had signalled the beginning of another day. They had established their ambush in heavy brush off a side trail at 11 o'clock the previous night.

When the VC platoon came strolling down the trail the RF's couldn't believe their eyes.

"We had reports that local VC guerillas were working in this area," said Bien, an eight year veteran, "so we just set up an ambush and waited for them."

Six VC were killed in the ensuing firefight and the platoon leader was taken prisoner.

The commander was bearing a SKS rifle which was confiscated. Also captured were 200 AK-47 rounds, 15 Chicom grenades and other small arms. (196th IO)

A Duty Beyond Danger

CHU LAI—It seemed as though the day would be a normal one for members of the 71st Avn. Co. resupply helicopter.

The crew had been resupplying units of the 4th Bn., 31st Inf., four miles west of LZ Ross, when they were asked for emergency replenishment of medical supplies and ammunition.

With the supplies on board, the chopper was forced to circle the drop area for half an hour because of enemy mortar fire slamming into the proposed landing zone.

The gunship pilots leaving the area to replenish their supply of ammunition told the aircraft commander, WO1 James A. Waterbury (Mt. Kisco, N.Y.) and pilot WO1 Frederick T. Morreall (Oakridge, Ind.) that the situation on the ground was too "hot" to attempt a landing without gunship support.

Then, the report of casualties came to the crew. Waterbury decided that, "gunships or no gunships," the casualties had to be evacuated.

Upon landing, the emergency supplies were quickly unloaded and the wounded men were helped aboard the chopper.

Rising through a wall of enemy fire, the resupply-turned-medevac roared to the nearest medical aid facility and dropped the casualties off for treatment. (Americal IO)

Learning Site In 11th Bde.

LZ BRONCO — Soldiers will now be able to complete their high school or brush up on college courses at the Army Education Center here at the 11th Inf. Bde. headquarters.

With the arrival of Mr. Joseph F. Cavanaugh (Many, La.), the Education Services director, the Americal Division's 11th Inf. Bde. can now provide an education program comparable to larger military installations.

The center provides educational counseling for courses offered by the United States Armed Forces Institute (USAFI) and information on college programs in the U.S.

The General Educational Development High School Test (GED) is available for men who wish to acquire the equivalent of a high school diploma which is recognized by the Army and many state educational systems.

"At the present I am giving these tests twice a month on Thursdays, but when we are completely set up, the test can be given any day of the week," commented Mr. Cavanaugh.

Correspondence courses offered by USAFI are available for those who want to broaden their education at both high school and college levels. These courses can he used as a refresher study program as well as to obtain credits for a variety of subjects.

The initial cost for the first course is five dollars and following successful completion of the first course, there is no charge for subsequent studies. The individual is then free to take whatever other courses he may desire.

With the new center located at LZ Bronco, the men of the 11th Bde. will be able to further their education while serving in the Republic of Vietnam. (11th IO)

Best Crew Earns Rest

CHU LAI — In July, the 178th Aslt. Hel. Co. started what is now known as the "Crew of the Month" award.

On the basis of "prior planning, attention to detail, and conscientious efforts to keep the aircraft in the air and on schedule," a flight engineer, crew chief, and door gunner are selected as the crew of the month.

The crew is chosen by MAJ Kenneth Sines (Columbus, Ga.), commanding officer of the 178th ASHC, and the aviators of the company.

For July, the crew of aircraft 105 was chosen for the award. The door gunner, SP4 Thomas Izzarelli (West Madison, Ohio), SP4 Paul McNeill (New Orleans), the crew chief, and SP5 Carl Harrison (Escondido, Calif.), the flight engineer were selected as the top crew.

Each man received a tie clasp which bears a miniature Chinook helicopter, a letter of recognition from MAJ Sines and, best of all, each man received two days off.

When the crew members were asked about their plans for the two-day vacation, their reply was unanimous, "sleep."

The award was initiated by the company to develop a sense of pride and responsibility within the crews. The award comes as a well-deserved pat-on-the-back for a job well-done.

The beach can be a ball, as 19-year-old Lynne Charles beautifully demonstrates. But it can be dangerous, too. If you're in for a swim at Chu Lai, play it safe.

Part V In A Special Series On R&R Sites

Manila Pulsates With Fast Spanish Beat

By PFC TERRY MACK

If you want to relax on R&R and get away from it all, then by all means head for the Republic of the Philippines.

Where else but in the Philippines can you find 7000 islands to content the combat-weary soldier. The islands offer peace and quiet for the visitor, however, if you yearn for excitement which only a teeming and hot-blooded city can provide—stay put in Manila, the capital city and R&R Center.

Almost completely devastated by World War II, Manila once again claims her place as one of the most attractive cities in the Far East. You will find Manila an intoxicating mixture of Spanish and Asian cultures, producing a comfortable atmosphere of friendly people.

At the R&R Center you must change your "greenbacks" to the local currency: pesos and centavos. The rate of exchange fluctuates from 3.85 to 3.90 pesos per U.S. dollar.

One of your first stops after leaving the R&R Center should be the modern, air-conditioned USO, located in the world famous Manila Hotel, overlooking a captivating view of Manila Bay and the grandeur of this bustling city.

The USO will further assist you in getting acquainted with Manila. Take advantage of information about sightseeing tours, restaurants, and accommodations, as well as discount tickets for the visiting serviceman.

One of the most popular services offered to you through the USO is an invitation to have dinner, play a round of golf, go boating, or swim as guest of an American family living in Manila.

When you leave the USO and step out onto the sun-baked streets of Manila you will find an abundance of busses and taxis to transport you around the city.

Hotel accommodations are excellent. Most of the hotels offer special rates to personnel on R&R. Prices range from $6 to $10 US. Highly recommended hotels are the Bayside, Nile, and Sportsman's.

As night approaches, Manila is transformed from a city of concrete and steel into a bright galaxy of colorful neon signs flashing a welcome invitation to the fun-seekers.

American singers, bands, and other entertainment groups frequently perform in the better night spots. Several that host these entertainers are the Sky Room, the Champagne Room, The Jungle Bar and the Key Club. Most of the large splashy clubs are located on Roxas Blvd. They have a cover charge of about $2.50 US.

In addition to the night clubs there are bars and more bars. It is possible there are more night clubs and bars in Manila than in any city in Southeast Asia. There is no real closing time, but most clubs tend to shut their doors around 3 a.m.

Pleasing your palate as well as your thirst is definitely part of R&R. And the cuisine of Manila will not disappoint you. Try some of the tempting dishes characteristic of Spain, France, and the wide variety of Filipino dishes.

For a little homestyle food try Max's on Roxas Blvd. or Di Mark's on Menlo Rd.

For camera bugs, Manila offers a photographers paradise. There are many names and places which found a permanent place in American history as a result of World War II: The sandy beaches of Batangas and Bataan; Intramuros, the Spanish Walled City, which now lies in ruins; and of course the island fortress, Corregidor, at the entrance to Manila Bay.

Sixty miles southeast of Manila is Pagsanjan. The main attraction is shooting the rapids of the Pagsanjan gorge. The scenery is breath-taking and accommodations are excellent to stay over night if you desire.

Shopping in Manila is not as profitable as in most other R&R locations. This is because most articles sold in the larger stores are imported from the United States. Naturally, you pay more for them in Manila than you would in the States. There are, however, excellent buys on many local products—lace fabrics, and wood carvings.

As your R&R draws to a close, you will leave with many memories of this exciting city with its strong Spanish influence. Memories to cherish the rest of your life. (Americal IO)

Our Profession Is Keeping You Going

By 1LT JOHN P. SHULTES

LZ BRONCO — "We handle anything from canteen covers to a wrecker," commented CPT Joseph H. Murray (Houston, Tex.), commanding officer of the forward support element, 23rd Supply and Transport (S&T) Bn.

CPT Murray estimates that his element handles between 30,000 and 40,000 pounds of goods per week in support of the 11th Bde. at Duc Pho.

Their primary responsibility is the distribution of new equipment and fuel, plus the means to transport these items. However, the 23rd S&T has lately been handling everything that comes to LZ Bronco. This is a pretty tall order for the 29 men and ten trucks that make up the FSE.

Attesting to their diligence is the fact that in the last six months the supply of new equipment for the fighting man has doubled here.

The men run supply convoys to all the brigade's LZs accessible by road. They maintain an ammunition supply point at Quang Ngai City and Minh Long Special Forces Camp, as well as fuel supplies for the helicopters working in the area.

The FSE convoys run to Chu Lai and Sa Huynh, which are resupply points for the brigade.

The shower point pumps out about 1,000 gallons of chlorinated shower water daily. The ten-man facility can handle the water needs of an entire company in less than one hour, which are supplied by FSE.

"The war may be fought with guns and ammo in the field, but someone has to supply them and that's our job," concluded CPT Murray. (11th IO)

Hairstylist In Chu Lai!

CHU LAI — On Sunday afternoons while the echoing sounds of combat in the distance fuse the air, PFC Joseph DeStasio (New York City) styles hair.The professional hairstyling techniques employed by DeStasio is endearing to the nurses of the 91st Medevac Hospital in support of the division.

The hairdressing project has been successfully operating for more than a month. Before entering the Army, DeStatio was a hairstylist for the La' Sacla beauty salon which is located in the busy New York City area.

"The hairstyling tends to make the nurses happy and they seem pleased to have someone doing something for them for a change. Also it helps them to maintain their sense of femininess which is very important to them," concluded PFC DeStasio. (Americal IO)

THE PROFESSIONAL HAIRSTYLING techniques employed by PFC Joseph DeStasio (New York City) brings a smile to 1LT Katherine Sprinter, who is a nurse with the 91st Evac. Hospital. (Photo by SP4 James Wm. Brown, Americal IO)

11th Bde.'s TOC, A Monument To Heroic Courage

MG LLOYD B. RAMSEY, Commanding Officer of the Americal Division, snips the ribbon formally opening the 11th Bde.'s new TOC. The general is assisted by COL Jack L. Treadwell, CO of the 11th Inf. Bde. (Photo By SP4 Phil Tipton, 11th Bde. IO)

LZ BRONCO — The 11th Inf. Bde.'s new Tactical Operations Center (TOC) was formerly dedicated in memory of PFC Jimmie R. Green (Keota, Okla.) in a colorful ceremony held here.

In November of 1968, while serving as a rifleman with A Co., 4th Bn., 3rd Inf., Green gave his life in defense of freedom and to save the lives of his fellow soldiers.

CPT James R. Grube (San Jose, Calif.), 11th Bde. Assistant Adjutant, gave an elequant, moving eulogy on behalf of the fallen soldier.

The brief ceremony included remarks from the Division Commanding General, MG Lloyd B. Ramsey and COL Jack L. Treadwell (Snyder, Okla.) 11th Inf. Bde. Commander.

Music was furnished by the Division band and Chaplain (MAJ) Clyde J. Wood (Birmingham, Ala.) led the invocation and benediction.

The ceremony was concluded with a ribbon cutting by MG Ramsey and COL Treadwell officially opening the 11th Bde.'s new nerve center.

A narrative description of Green's heroic actions that earned him the nomination for the honor is as follows:

During the early hours of November 27, 1968, A Co. came under intense and accurate hand grenade and small arms attack in their night defensive position.

Green saw two grenades fall a few feet from a position near him. Leaving the safety of his own position, he ran under intense automatic weapons fire to knock one of his comrades down and shield him from the subsequent explosions with his own body. This unselfish act of courage fatally wounded the soldier but saved the life of a fellow soldier and perhaps several others.

A simple gold plaque was unveiled at the conclusion of the ceremony in mute tribute to Green's action above and beyond the call of duty. (11th IO)