Engineers Link Mo Duc To Hill 43

By PFC Peter R. Sorensen

FSB DRAGON—A joint operation of U.S. Army and Marine Engineers is turning a vein into an artery in the division's area of operation. An aged rice paddy dike is providing the foundation for a highway between Mo Duc and Hill 43, a civilian relocation village.

The landscape surgery is being preformed by the 26th, 39th and 9th Engr. Bns. Providing security for the engineers is a company of Mo Duc District PFs. When completed, the highway will snake its way three miles to Hill 43 and continue one mile east to the South China Sea.

The dike, which once allowed a mere trickle of passengers will when completed flow life sustaining food, clothing and medicine to the benefit of all inhabitants. Previously such materials were supplied by boat.

CPT William D. Williams (Canton, Ohio) CO of Co. C 26th Engr. Bn., stated, "This is the best construction type engineer project the 26th has done since it's been here. That road will be here forever."

As with any worthwhile project, the task has not been an easy one. Mine sweep teams working east have received hostile fire on three occasions. "Rain and threat of ambush have been our biggest problems," said SSG Joseph N. Ryan (Camden, Ark.).

Added SSG Rodney D. Drew (Mobile, Ala.), "Recently our mine sweep teams uncovered a 155mm Howitzer round packed with 20 pounds of explosives and wired with a pressure device. The VC are out there and they know we're coming."

Other than tactical dangers to the men laying culverts, "The greatest is leeches," said PFC Michael Charnel (St. Paul, Minn.), squirming unconsciously.

"Mo Duc Road as it is called, is expected to be completed in early January, but the three months already put in on the road have produced rewards. The rewards are in the area of human understanding.

Engineers are accompanied everyday by dozens of local villagers' children. They grab a shovel, and dig when the soldier will let them, collect laundry, swim in rice paddies, warn of VC in a tree-line, clench their fist to stop a dump truck for a ride, and trade fish and rice for C-rations.

The engineers reciprocate by handing out candy, soap, bandaging up a leech wound and taxing the children around the job site, all the while learning and practicing their Vietnamese.

The number of benefactors is growing daily. Merchants, traders, fishermen and farmers are among the 3,500 inhabitants of Hill 43 who are under government protection. When the road is completed the relocation village will be enlarged to accommodate refugees.

SP4 Dennis W. Meyer (Huron, S.D.), who drives a dump truck looked over at his passenger, who was wearing an Army baseball cap and said, "Duc is a Number One 'shotgun'. I could sit down under a palm tree and let these kids finish the road." Such is the joint effort that is changing a vein into an artery. (11th IO)

SOUTHERN CROSS

AMERICAL DIVISION

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Chieu Hoi Center Contents Vietnamese

By SP4 Rick Soehngen

QUANG NGAI CITY — For 384 "Hoi Chanhs" presently living in the Quang Ngai City Chieu Hoi Center, the days of hardship and demoralized spirits are over.

Voluntarily rallying to the government of the Republic of Vietnam (GVN), these men and women between the ages of 12 and 70 have decided that "The open-arms program" of political amnesty offered at the Chieu Hoi Center is preferable to living on the enemies' terms and the guerrilla way of life.

What makes high-ranking cadre and the rank-and-file of the VC infrastructure seek political asylum? The older, more experienced VC have cited many salient reasons. Mainly they rallied because the war has gone on too long and caused too many hardships for them. The younger, less idealistic, became quickly disillusioned with the shortages of food, medicine, and arms when pitted against the constant harassment and superior firepower of the opposing forces.

The promise of medical treatment, food and a "clean slate" broadcast over loudspeakers by earlier ralliers was the clincher for many.

Arriving in the compound, the Hoi Chanhs are briefly interrogated for information on arms caches and the location of their former units. One 19-year-old Hoi Chanh led division soldiers to a cache of 37 weapons two days after he came over.

For two to three months they (the Hoi Chanhs) study GVN policies and go to Vietnamese villages and division firebases to discuss their opinions of VC and NVA insurgency. During this period the Hoi Chanh and his family are provided with housing and medical care.

In addition the rallier may receive occupational training and take advantage of the chance to learn a trade. Classes in haircutting, tailoring and sewing, typing and carpentry are presently offered and well-attended.

The returnee can utilize the newly learned trade when he resettles; or if he is of military age he has the option to join the armed forces. Many choose to do so and are selected to work with U.S. Special Forces-controlled Mobile Strike Force.

There is an atmosphere of trust between the rallier and the U.S. forces and little overt control is exerted. Often the bunkers and main gate are manned by Hoi Chanhs themselves.

The people smile and laugh with good health. But the surest sign of success of the Quang Ngai Chieu Hoi program is that only three of the 1,000 ralliers over the past year decided to defect again. (11th IO)

Learning Combat Skills

Recondo School students on combat patrolling procedures are graded as they work through the mountains west of Chu Lai. Scanning the terrain while climbing are PFC John B. Murray and PFC James D. Russell. (Photo By MSG H. A. Boneiso, Americal IO)

'Musket' Gunships Strike Enemy

CHU LAI — "Musket" gunships of the Division's 176th Assault Helicopter Co. accounted for 48 enemy soldiers killed while in support of units of the 3-6th ARVN Regiment near Son Tin.

The assault began when ships from the 176th inserted the ARVN infantrymen into three different landing zones on the Batangan Peninsula 20 miles south of Chu Lai.

That afternoon, the "Musket" gunships were scrambled to the same location to support the ARVN infantrymen.

The fire-team made several target attacks on the area, placing heavy fire on all enemy positions. The gun-team, throughout its attacks, drew heavy fire from positions surrounding the besieged ARVN infantry unit.

As a spotter plane called in aircraft to bombard the enemy positions, the secondary gun-team was called onto station to allow the first team to rearm. The secondary team remained in the area until the seriousness of the situation lessened.

Late in the afternoon, after all gunships had returned to the company, the "Muskets" were, for the third time in 12 hours, called into the same location. After making several gun runs and drawing light fire, the ships were contacted by the ground unit for evacuating wounded.

As the "Muskets" continued to hammer the area with devastating rockets and mini-guns while the wounded personnel were evacuated from the area. (Americal IO)

Captures A Cache Of Rice

By SP4 Carl Ekengren

QUANG NGAI — Streaks of AK-47 fire sliced the air above the heads of the division infantrymen as they crawled toward the tree line. Taking cover behind rice paddy dikes, a fire team from the platoon of the 198th Bde. soldiers returned small arms fire while other infantrymen inched their way through the rice paddy 6½ miles northwest of this provincial capital.

Cover of Trees

Reaching the cover of the trees, the 1-52nd Inf. plt. waited for its fire team to rejoin them, then quickly formed a defensive perimeter around a group of five hooches in the wooded area.

The platoon leader, 2LT John L. Keaton (Milan, Tenn.), radioed for artillery support, and the first few rounds to fall convinced the VC snipers that they should quickly depart the area.

Checking Hooches

In checking out the five hooches, Keaton closely inspected one of the structure's walls made of large woven mats. It proved to be a false wall, masking a cache of 3,500 pounds of rice.

Keaton then led his platoon of D. Co. to a second group of hooches a half mile to the southwest.

"We could see two blood trails leading from one of the hooches," said PFC Roy T. Mains (Falmouth, Ky.) a rifleman with the platoon. "Inside the hooch we found five bowls of rice but only one Vietnamese woman to eat them."

A Dead Give-away

That was a dead give-away that something was wrong, and the D Co. infantrymen began a careful search of the hooch. They first uncovered hidden medical supplies, and then discovered another false wall. This one — made of mud — concealed a cache of rice totaling 4,000 pounds.

Later that same day the infantrymen found other soldiers caches of rice stored in 50-gallon aluminum drums concealed in treelines, making a total for the day of over 9,500 pounds of rice and medical supplies. (198th Bde. IO)

Sec. of Defense Speaks About Vietnamization

Early in its tenure the Nixon Administration did not believe it could stand pat with the past and went about shaping a new, alternative plan to influence the course of events in Vietnam.

The program that evolved was Vietnamization. And according to Secretary Of Defense Melvin Laird it has put some aces in the free world's poker hand."

He explained, "The Vietnamization program represents a major change not only in emphasis but also in objectives. Troop modernization until early this year, had the negative goal of partially de-Americanizing the war.

Positive Goals of Vietnamization

"Vietnamization has the positive goal of "Vietnamizing" the war, of increasing Vietnamese responsibility for "all" aspects of the war and handling of their own affairs. There is an enormous difference between these policies."

He then explained how previous modernization programs were designed to prepare South Vietnamese to handle only the threat of Viet Cong insurgency that would remain after all NVA forces had returned home.

"It made sense, therefore, only in the context of success at Paris. It was a companion piece to the Paris talks, not a complement and alternative."

On the other hand Vietnamization is directed toward preparing the South Vietnamese to handle both Viet Cong insurgency and regular North Vietnamese armed forces regardless of the outcome in Paris, Secretary Laird said.

"In other words," he added, "we felt we could stand pat with the past. Vietnamization has put some aces in the free world's poker hand."

Meaning of Aces In Hand

Here is what Sec. Laird means by aces in the hands of the free world. "It means, in South Vietnam, building a stronger internal security forces, a stronger government, and stronger military forces."

The secretary warned, however, that the American public must understand and support this if it is to be made to work in South Vietnam. "By making Vietnamization work," he said. "we create a powerful incentive for the enemy to negotiate meaningfully in Paris."

Then, too, he added, the enemy needs to know that time is not on his side, that the passage of time is leading to a stronger, not a weaker Vietnam.

Laird: Sec. of Defense

He said that in the Vietnamization program there were "high priorities" underway, and called them the four faces of Vietnamization. Here is a summary of those priorities:

Priorities In Vietnam

1 — In the economic field, a significant factor is the opening up of waterways and roads for farmers to bring their produce to market and the growing confidence of farmers in using them. In addition, South Vietnamese have replaced Americans in the operation of the civilian port facilities at Saigon and at supply and warehousing facilities in various parts of the country. South Vietnam is moving toward restoration of self-sufficiency in rice production.

2 — In the field of local security, the police force has been expanded and its training strengthened. Partly for this reason, the Viet Cong infrastructure is being weakened and rooted out in many areas. That infrastructure includes hard-line communists who control and direct the acts of terrorism, assassination, and kidnapings at the local level — as well as the military activities of the local guerrillas and main force units.

3 — In the political field, progress is measured by the extent of the peoples trust in their government. It is at the grass or "rice" roots level where we find encouraging signs. Locally elected governments are spreading throughout the country.

4 — The success of the whole Vietnamization program would be jeopardized without progress in the political field. The political system and policies of South Vietnam are not our responsibility but we are anxious to see them succeed.

Progress In Military Area

Secretary Laird believes the military area is where progress in Vietnamization has been most visible. "We have begun to replace American with Vietnamese troops. Already," he said, "this year, in two installments we are cutting the size of our forces by 60,000 in Vietnam, and in a related development, by 6,000 in Thailand."

Secretary Laird said that contingent on one or more of the three criteria expressed by the President —progress in Paris, progress in Vietnamization, and reduction in the level of enemy activity — additional numbers of Americans can and will be brought home.

All Aliens

With few exceptions all aliens in the United States and its possessions must report their addresses to the Attorney General during January.

Aliens temporarily absent from the United States during January should not report their addresses but must do so within 10 days of their return to the United States.

The Immigration and Naturalization Act provides serious penalties for willful failure to submit the report.

Cards with which the report can be made are available at any U.S. Post Office and at Offices of the Immigration and Naturalization Service during the month of January. The cards should be filled out and returned to the clerk from whom received.

Compliance with the alien registration act is one of vital importance to all aliens and Armed Forces personnel who have families who are not citizens of the United States but residents of the U.S. (AFPS)

Religion And You

Best Of Tidings

By CHAPLAIN (MAJ) CLINTON GRENZ
Americal Div.

In the midst of war "all" need cheering up. Christmas time brings the glow of good tidings of great joy. It is a time when we celebrate not merely a birth but an advent. An advent is a coming in; in this case the coming of God to earth. God came in the babe, in the youth, in the man—the personal Deity.

The joy of Christmas lies in the purpose of the incarnation. "God so loved the world that he gave His only begotten Son." This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners. . . .

Thus in the midst of loneliness, fears and anxieties the life of the Christian is a life of unconquerable hope. The life of Christians is set down on earth like one of the village churches in Switzerland where "the mountains look in at the windows." On every hand, there rise the summits of a glorious and lofty expectation.

Christmas time reminds us that Christians walk as strangers and pilgrims on earth because "they look for a city which hath foundations whose builder and maker is God."

The crowning hope of the Christian is the second advent of Christ. "Behold I come quickly"—that is the promise of Christ to His own. To that sovereign word of grace and good hope the Christian makes only one response: "Even so, come, Lord Jesus."

While the bells ring out at Christmas time let us find the humility in our hearts to sing the famous carol of Isaac Watts, "Joy to the world! The Lord is come: Let earth receive her King; Let every heart prepare Him room, And heaven and nature sing:' '

1-46th CO Replaced; Honored

LZ HAWK HILL—The firebase home of the 1-46th Inf., was a sparkling showcase. Starched jungle fatigues were the norm as the 196th Bde.'s battalion welcomed its new commanding officer.

LTC Peter J.R. Foss (Farmington, Mass.) accepted the battalion colors from departing commander LTC Craig Cloverdale (Manhasset, N.Y.)

BG Howard H Cooksey (Brentsville, Va.) then acting CO of the division, decorated LTC Cloverdale with the Legion of Merit, the Bronze Star with "V" device and Oak Leaf Cluster. During previous tours in Vietnam and in Germany LTC Cloverdale was awarded the Army Commendation Medal, the Bronze Star and the Purple Heart. He has led the 1-46th since June.

Before this assignment, LTC Foss was CO of the 1-508 Inf., 82nd Abn. Div. He is a graduate of West Point ('51) and holds a Master of Arts degree in journalism.

In a brief acceptance speech LTC Foss noted the excellent record of the battalion. "I am looking forward to a successful tour as the CO of this fine unit," he assured the men. (196th Bde. IO)

Awards & Decorations

SILVER STAR MEDAL

1LT Gary L. Byler, 198th Bde; CPT Ambrus D. Carnes, 11th Bde; SP4 Gary D. Chapin, 1st Cav; SGT Joseph A. Cintron, 11th Bde; CPT Gerald D. Cleary, 11th Bde; PFC Michael E. Dankert, 11th Bde; CPT Gerald E. Dixon 82nd Arty; 1LT William D. Dunbar, 11th Bde; 1LT Terry L. Ehrich, 11th Bde; PSG Robert E. Eickhoff, 11th Bde; SP4 James E. Fox, 11th Bde; CPT William H. Gayler, 196th Bde; CPT Darrell T. Henderson, 1st Cav; SSG Werner H. Hunley, 198th Bde; PSG Andrew K. Kalama, 11th Bde; CPT Alva R. King, 196th Bde; CPT Bernard A. Meier, 14th Cbt Avn Bn; 1LT Ronald Pinsenschaum, 11th Bde; MAJ Richard N. Smith, 196th Bde; PFC Jerry K. Stewart, 11th Bde; CPT Dwight D. Sypolt, 196th Bde; SP5 Mickey S. Yaw, 1st Cav; PFC Fletcher B. Zufelt.

BRONZE STAR MEDAL WITH "V" DEVICE

SP4 Terry L. Andreessen, 198th Bde; SP5 Michael B. Devlin, 196th Bde; PFC Robert P. Fitzhugh, 196th Bde; SP4 Ronald L. Mitchison, 196th Bde; PFC Michael C. Randazzo, 198th Bde; CPL David L. Swick, 196th Bde; PFC Larry M. Taylor, 196th Bde.

AIR MEDAL WITH "V" DEVICE

CPT Marvin R. Adams (2nd Awd), 14th Cbt Avn Bn; SP4 Eugene D. Day, 14th Cbt Avn Bn; SP4 Leonard Dubin, 11th Bde; WO1 Mark A. Garcia (2nd Awd), 14th Cbt Avn Bn; SP5 Charles D. Gholson (2nd Awd), 14th Cbt Avn Bn; WO1 Paul W. Huizenga (2nd Awd), 14th Cbt Avn Bn; SP4 Donald K. Kramer (3rd Awd), 14th Cbt Avn Bn; SP5 Joseph Lopez Jr (38th Awd), 123rd Avn Bn; WO1 James J. Morgan (2nd Awd), 14th Cbt Avn Bn; WO1 David M. Spahr (2nd Awd), 14th Cbt Avn Bn.

ARMY COMMENDATION MEDAL WITH "V" DEVICE

PFC Bruce A. Chester, 11th Bde; PFC Charles Dorsey, 196th Bde; PFC John A. Fedele, 196th Bde; SP4 Carl L. Flynn, 196th Bde; SP4 Richard D. Gastone, 196th Bde; 1LT Juan F. Gonzales, 196th Bde; PFC Benjamin T. Grimes, 196th Bde; SGT Gary W. Kauffman, 196th Bde; 1LT Robert J. Monaghan, 123rd Avn Bn; SP4 Robert M. Morrissey (1st OLC), 196th Bde; PV1 John A. Nottonson, 196th Bde; CPL Charles W. Papp (2nd OLC), 18th Arty; SGT Allen G. Pettengill, 196th Bde; PFC David K. Roland, 196th Bde; SSG Gerald W. Schaffer, 198th Bde; SP4 Ronnie E. Sears (1st OLC), 196th Bde; PFC William D. Shepard, 123rd Avn Bn; SP4 Paul H. Steving, 196th Bde; SP4 James H. Stewart, 11th Bde; SSG Samuel C. Tidwell, 18th Arty; CPL John D. Wade (1st OLC), 18th Arty; SSG William R. Willams III, 198th Bde; 1LT Richard F. Wood, 18th Arty; PFC Francis Zlatos, 11th Bde.

SOUTHERN CROSS
AMERICAL DIVISION

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Busy Village 'Doc' Pulls 24-Hour Duty For Viets

LZ HAWK HILL — SP4 Robert Loftus snapped upright in bed. He snatched on his boots and stumbled half-awake to the whining field radio.

"Charlie 63. This is 38 Bravo. Go!" He shouted into the phone. The answer came immediately.

"Roger. This is Charlie 63. I'm down in the ville. Two men just carried in a sick papa-san. I can't tell very much about him, because he's all wrapped up. You better get down here fast."

"Roger that. I'm on my way. Over."

"Negative further." The sergeant in the hamlet closed the transmission.

Loftus strapped on a bulging medical pack, locked the door to his hut, and wound his way down the hill to his aged patient.

Cares For 8,000 Villagers

Loftus, "Boxey" to the villagers, is a medic with the Division's 196th Inf. Bde. Since September 22, he has been assigned to the refugee center and village of Nui Lac Son, 16 miles northwest of Tam Ky. Loftus cares for a total of over 8,000 Vietnamese civilians, most of them refugee victims of VC terrorism.

The village's cement block dispensary, Boxey's domain, is fronted by rice paddies and a semi-circle of grass huts.

"The dispensary is accessible to everyone," the Bristol, Ill. native asserted. "On an average day I treat at least 30 cases here."

The busy medic sends more severe cases to the Province Hospital in Tam Ky. A radio message to nearby LZ Center, fire support base of the 3rd Bn., 21st Inf., brings an evacuating chopper within minutes.

Two Nurses

Two school-trained nurses, Miss Lien and Miss Tieu, live in Nui Lac Son and work at the dispensary. Each has been trained for a year at a medical school in Tam Ky.

"The nurses are just great when I have to dust-off one of the villagers," said Loftus. "They square everything away with the relatives by the time the chopper comes in. Sometimes the old people are stubborn and suspicious."

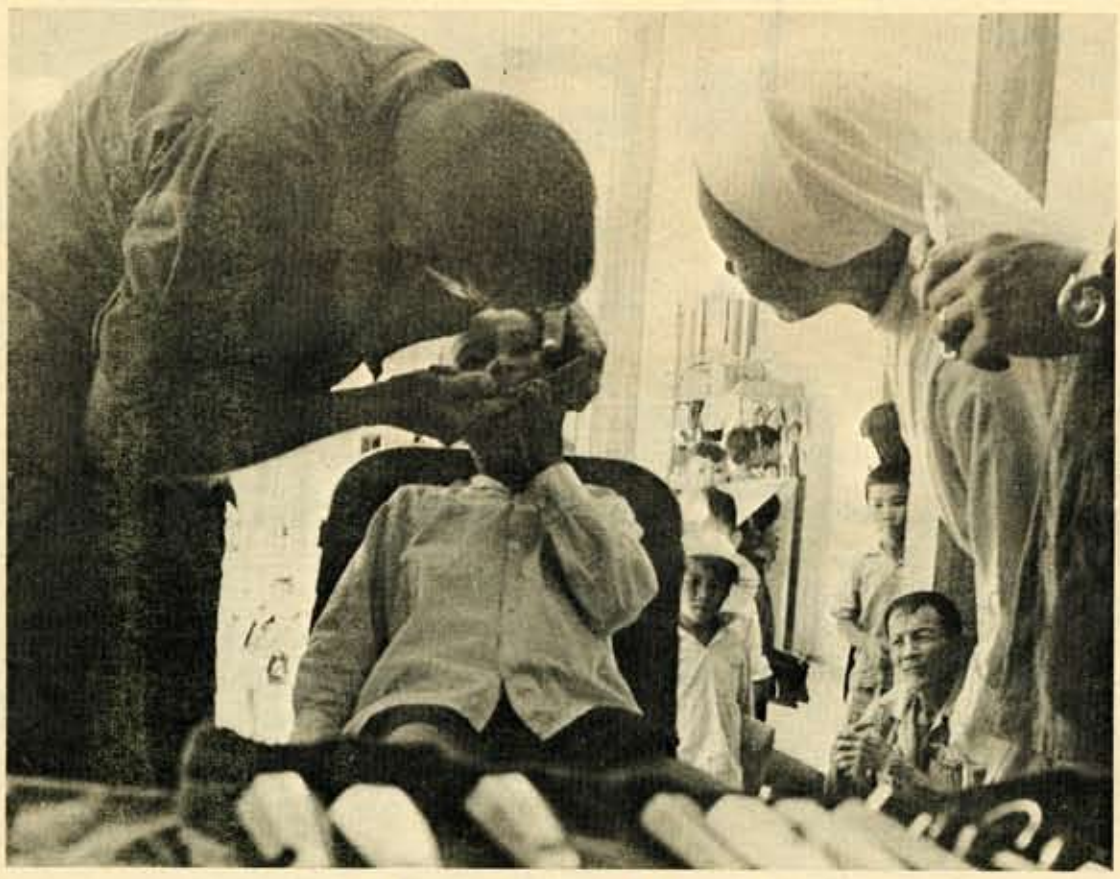
A common disease in the crowded village is hepatitis. "These people use the same water source for a variety of uses," explained Loftus, "thus, prompting the disease called hepatitis."

Sol: Refugee Orphan

Both of the Vietnamese nurses have unofficially adopted a refugee lad named Sol and plan to enroll him in school at the first opportunity. Sol, a refugee orphan, is 12 years old and has already mastered a pidgin English; he serves as a stand-in interpreter, a youthful "liaison" between Loftus and his patients.

An illustrated poster with letters stenciled in red is taped to the dispensary wall. Its lurid message conveys dramatically, yet simply, the basis of a commitment that has helped make this medical unit a success.

The translation reads: "This village is protected by American and South Vietnamese soldiers. If VC come here, the people will tell the Americans and PF-RF soldiers." (196th IO)



Open Wider, Please!

A dentist from the 198th Inf. Bde. examines one of 95 youngsters at the Binh Son Orphanage 10 miles south of Chu Lai. Looking on and available for assistance is Sister Gisele a Catholic nun at the orphanage. (Photo by 1LT Josef Hebert, Americal IO)

3-21 Civil Affairs

Team Aids Hamlet

LZ HAWK HILL—The work of a tiny but dedicated team of Civil Affairs personnel in I Corps has paid off with a deeper understanding between Americans and their Vietnamese neighbors.

Village of Nui Lac Son

SGT Gary McKinnon (Eureka, Calif.), of the 196th Inf. Bde.'s 3rd Bn., 21st Inf., attributes the rapport to a sense of social concern that the men of his small team feel for the people in the refugee village of Nui Lac Son where they live and work.

The hamlet is 16 miles northwest of the coastal city of Tam Ky. The settlement of 8,000 is a sanctuary for victims of enemy oppression.

Enemy Rice Caches

Reclaimed enemy rice caches are now filling the bare pantries of the hamlet. All the rice found in the 3rd Bn., 21st Inf., area of operations is channelled through the Civil Affairs section to the villagers. The rice is usually heli-lifted in, and is then further transported in woven baskets, buckets or sacks.

Each village chief helps supervise distribution. "They have lived here all their lives," McKinnon pointed out. "They know every household in the village as well as they know their own."

"The refugees are proud people," said CPT Boudewiin Van Pamelen (Waipahu, Hawaii), the battalion S-2 officer. "They always give us something in return for what we do. Sometimes it's nothing more than a warm soda, but I respect the feeling that goes along with the gift."

Social Workers

In one sense some U.S. soldiers here are social workers. At present they are urging parents to enroll their children in school, where attendance is haphazard at best during the rice harvest, for at that time the youngsters make up a large part of the labor force.

"Right now enrollment is set at 600," said CPT Van Pamelen. The fields claim upwards of 200 students a day for the harvest.

"Things will be back to normal by mid-December," predicted McKinnon. "We're planning a big Christmas for the kids." (196th IO)

A Soldier Rallies To New Future Happily Finds South Numbah One

LZ HAWK HILL — One morning in a wooded area 20 miles northwest of Tam Ky an NVA rallied to D Co., 4th Bn., 31st Inf. Having set off a trip-flare while approaching the company's perimeter, he immediately began shouting "Chieu hoi" and waving a leaflet.

When the Division infantrymen brought the rallier into the perimeter, he was extremely happy, shaking everyone's hand and smiling.

"He threw off his pack and sandals," related PFC Chip Hummel (Reading, Pa.). "Then he pointed to our rucksacks and boots with admiration, saying 'numbah one.' "

The rallier disclosed that he had been a Private First Class in a transportation and supply Bn. of the 2nd NVA Div. He had joined his unit in September by infiltrating through Laos. Since then his mission had been to carry rice from caches in the mountains to units located in Happy Valley, following a route along the ridgeline of Nui Chom Mountain.

Small groups of three to five men made this trip in a 15 day period. It was while on one of these trips that the rallier had walked away from his companions and turned himself in to the 196th Inf. Bde. element. He had carried a Chieu Hoi leaflet with him for a month looking for an opportunity to rally.

He said that the morale in his unit was very low. The 120-men battalion had only one medic, and ten per cent of the men were down with malaria. The unit was also short of food.

"As we fed him C-rations, he told us about the very small daily ration of rice he had been receiving," said 1LT Armond M. Darrin (New York).

The rallier also stated that the war didn't really mean anything to him. He had enjoyed working on his farm before he was drafted, but now all that was gone. Having rallied, he could look forward to building a new life in the south. (196th IO)

Easy Rider Loses Cycle To Inf. Unit

LZ HAWK HILL — Somewhere in the Phuoc Son area a VC is doing a lot of walking that he didn't plan on. He would rather be riding his motorcycle, but a company in the Division confiscated it.

While on a routine sweep of an area 23 miles west of Tam Ky B Co., 4th Bn., 31st Inf., made an interesting discovery. The 196th Inf. Bde. unit came across a late model motorcycle which lay camouflaged in a ditch.

"We have a suspected VC detainee — motorcycle," reported CPT Anthony W. Hall, Jr. (Houston), commanding officer of B Co.

LTC Cecil M. Henry (Rome, Ga.) is having the vehicle overhauled, and maybe sometime soon 4th Bn., 31st Inf.'s commanding officer will be seen "cycling" around the Battalion. (196th IO)

The Chief's Son Is No Exception

CPT Jeffery M. Katz (Minneapolis Minn.), Bn. Surgeon for the 11th Bde.'s 4-21st Inf., checks progress of the village chief's son during his weekly visit to Dien Truong five miles south of Duc Tho. (Photo by SP4 Donald Naughton, 11th Bde. IO)

Men Of 'Hill 76' Reflect Selves

Soldiers On "Hill 76" Are Like A Big Family

Round Going In Tube.

Sighting-In On the Mark With

Man's Best-Friend On Hand.

Photos By PFC Laszlo Kondor
Americal IO

Penciling Signs Can Be Artistic.

ecision,

Can Make Music With Guitar Or Machinegun.

THE RECONDO SCHOOL combat patrol students cover their flanks with M-16 rifles and a M-60 machinegun as they move down out of a tree covered ridge across an exposed area. Keeping a wary lookout are SP4 George L. Clark and PFC Robert W. Davis.

TAKING ADVANTAGE of a few minutes rest while orientating compass readings and terrain features on the map are Recondo School instructor SSG Jesus D. Moncada; PFC Ronald L. Ellis, student; SSG Lonnie D. Miller, NCOIC; and CPT Anthony Augoulis (back to camera), CO of the Americal Division Ranger Co.

Story And Photos By
MSG H. A. Bonesio
Americal IO

Combat In Review

Recondo School Trains Soldiers

A Making Of Recondo-Men

The Division Recondo course is administered by G. Co. (Ranger) 75th Inf., and consists of 260 hours of instruction according to the Ranger company "Topkick", 1SG Clifford Manning (Folkston, Ga.).

"Insertion and extraction by helicopter, rappelling, air operations and coordinating with artillery for fire support along with training on U.S. and foreign weapons compose part of the course," said SSG Lonnie D. Miller (Martinsville, Va.) Recondo School NCOIC.

Laden With Gear

Heavily laden with packs, M-16 rifles, M-79 grenade launchers, fragmentation and smoke grenades, an M-60 machine gun with additional belts of ammo criss-crossed about the shoulders of the ammo bearers, CPT Anthony Avgoulas (Flushing, N.Y.) CO of the G Co. Rangers, led the 13-man patrol through the mountains west of Chu Lai.

SSG Jesus Moncada (Los Angeles, Calif.), known as "The Chief," acted as point-man. He shared duties with a student while constantly checking land navigation principles.

Instructors, SGTs Andrew J. Pack (Pittsburgh, Pa.) and Joseph E. Fohler (Indianapolis, Ind.) rotated duties of maintaining patrol security procedures and obtaining intelligence. This type of patrolling was not new to SP4 Thomas E. Boggs (Aurora, S.D.), who had served a year with the division's 11th Inf. Bde., before extending for Recondo School.

Moving Towards Graduation

Later the patrol moved into the vicinity of the pick-up area and after setting up a perimeter defense, made contact with SGT Frank R. Cole (Westbury, N.Y.), who was manning the radio aboard the command and control chopper.

All that remained was a dash to board the choppers, while maintaining cover with weapons.

SSG LONNIE D. MILLER (center), school NCOIC, checks-off the Recondo School students, PFC Ronald L. Ellis (left) and SP4 George L. Clark, as they prepare for the "final exam."

THE LAST DAY before becoming Rangers find Recondo students being inserted into the "classroom" by choppers from D Trp., 1st Sqdn., 1st Cav. Charging for cover are instructors SGT Joseph E. Fowler and SGT Andrew J. Pack Jr., followed by students—SP4 Thomas E. Boggs, and PFC James D. Russell.

Caught Off-Guard

Clash Nets 4 NVA

By PFC John Calderonelle

FSB SAN JUAN HILL—When the rolls are called by the 305th Second NVA Sapper Bn., five soldiers will not answer to their names. An encounter with the Div.'s 11th Inf. Bde changed the status of four to "detainee" and of the fifth to "killed in action."

That day, A Co., 4th Bn., 3rd Inf. was working an area seven miles west of Duc Pho. The action began as SP4 Mike Shields (Kearny, N.Y.) was walking point for the 1st Plt.

Around A Bend

"The trail we were following was covered with thick underbrush," said Shields. "As I rounded a bend, an NVA carrying rice was moving towards me."

The weaponless NVA was captured by Shields, PFC Ed Harris (Atlanta), PFC Harville Morris (Boise, Idaho) and PFC Jeff Coats (Forest, Miss.). The quarted questioned the surprised NVA. "He revealed that more were coming down the trail," said Coats.

A short time later, a second NVA was observed moving down the trail. He too was quickly over come by the infantrymen.

Fifteen Minutes Later

The final two were captured fifteen minutes later as a five man NVA element moved into the area. "We were in a L-shaped ambush as they approached. The first and last NVA were armed," explained Morris.

The lead NVA discovered Shields and started stepping back. In his anxiety to flee, the NVA tripped over his own feet. Floundering on the ground he vainly tried to get up, but his heavy rice load kept him down during the firefight.

Into Darkness Of The Jungle

One NVA was killed and another wounded. The last two fled into the darkness of the jungle. When the struggling NVA finally regained his footing, he was surrounded by the "Old Guard" soldiers.

The NVA detainees were quickly sent to the rear for interrogation. For the 305th Second NVA Sapper Bn. it was a bad day. One of the detainees said he wished to become a Kit Carson scout. When asked why, he stated "food." (11th IO)

How about a little more exposure of Kathy MacDonald, the March '69 Playmate in "Playboy" Magazine. Kathy visited several Americal installations not long ago and was warmly greeted by Division troops. It's easy to see why.

Special Services Contributes To Soldiers' Morale

By PFC Dennis L. Selby

CHU LAI—From golf to movies, swimming to basketball, division Special Services provides these sport activities and services, plus many others for you—the soldier.

Weather permitting, perhaps you'd like to cool off with a dip in the South China Sea—or if you'd like—try your hand at sailing or water skiing. Of course, with the monsoon season upon us, the beach facilities are limited due to "rough water" but a Division "long-timer" with a little luck, will be able to enjoy these services in March or April.

More Vigorous Nature

If activity of a more vigorous nature is your bag, perhaps the Special Services tennis court near the USO will suit your fancy. If not, then a rigorous game of handball in the court located behind the main officer's club will help you unwind. Reservations should be made by calling Special Services 24 hours in advance for the use of either of these facilities.

Golf addicts abound even here in Vietnam, and if you are so inclined, you're sure to enjoy the miniature golf course at the Special Services Beach, also located next to the Chu Lai USO.

On The Drawing Board

CPT Guy Camuso (Atlanta, Ga.), special services officer, explained: "Organized sports will soon be on the drawing board for the Division. Various sports teams will be formed from all units, right down to company-size, with participation from every unit being encouraged."

Most Division movie buffs are surprised at the quality and quantity of films offered for viewing by Special Services. The section distributes and repairs films for over 250 accounts holders throughout I Corps. According to CPT Camuso, "Our philosophy is to get the entertainment to the troops in the field where it is needed most. We like to have the movies shown nightly, but on the smaller, more isolated firebases and landing zones, this is impractical because of enemy harassment."

Music Room

For those that are musically inclined, Special Services offers a "music room." Located at the service club in the 723rd Maint. Bn. area, soldiers can create their own "jam sessions" with piano, drums, guitars and various wind instruments available for use—free of charge.

Another little-known function of Special Services is the sponsoring of choral groups, two of which are presently entertaining Division troops.

If a person is of a creative nature, Special Services' five crafts shops are sure to please, with activities ranging from model plane construction to painting and leatherworking.

For the many division camera bugs, there are five photo labs now in operation, with a sixth scheduled for completion soon. There's a slight charge for printing paper, but developing and printing facilities are free of charge.

Book Worms

For the "bookworms" in the division, Special Services has just completed construction of a 15,000-volume library that should be available for use in the very near future.

Once opened, hard-bound books of every description will be available to division troopers, as well as periodicals and newspapers. With a range of selections such as "Alice in Wonderland" to the "Rise and Fall of the Third Reich," the new library is sure to cater to the tastes of almost all readers.

For the infantry and artillerymen located on firebases that find it difficult to get to the division area, "craftfield kits" are offered by the section.

The kits contain model crafts, glue, paint, cutting blades, and come in two sizes. The larger kit will service 32 men; the smaller, 16 men. Provided by Special Services on request, are field libraries containing a 2,000-volume paperback book selection. At present, there are 25 such libraries distributed among Division units. And, of course, all special service facilities are available for use by field troops on "standdown."

Little Red Riding Hood As Told By 'Old' Sergeant

Once upon a time there lived a female personnel whose nomenclature was Hood, Riding, Red, Little, one each. She was a girl, little, happy. Her duty uniform consisted of the following named items: (1) Dress, red, cotton, shade 76, one each; (2) Cape, HBT, red w/hood, one each. Her MOS was 94B4S; Foodhandler.

One day Hood, Riding, Red, Little, received a TWX from her Mother, Grand, Old, who was billeted off-post in a cottage, brick, red, Capehart type, w/chimney, wo/TV, initial A/DEPN issue, one each. The TWX read as follows:

"Dear Hood. This is to advise that morning report should read: DY to SK, conf to qtrs as of 0100 hrs, 1 Jan. 68. Went on sick call yesterday (LD: yes), conf for indef pd. However, I am feeling somewhat better. Love, related type. Mother, Grand, Your. Added . . . Pls see about Sep Rat for me. MGY."

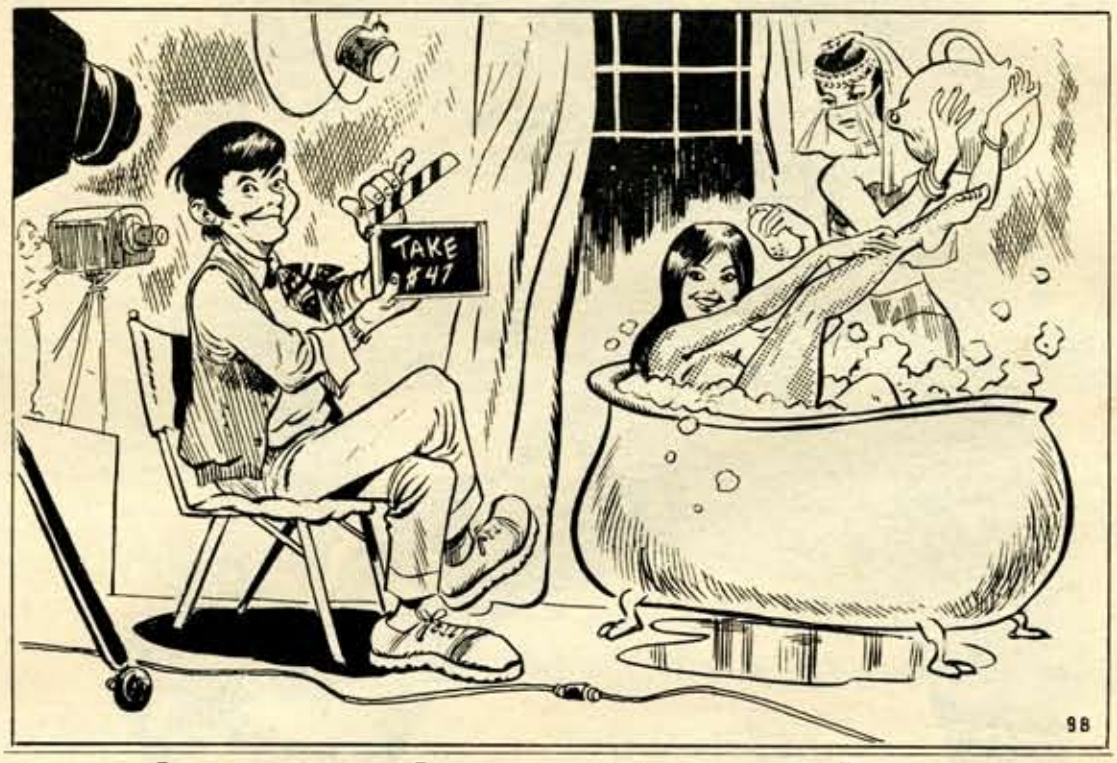
Hood took the TWX to the message center with the following 1st indorsement: "Basic communication complied with. ETA your station approx 1600 hrs this day."

While enroute to TDY destination, personnel concerned came to a forest, thick, primeval. Suddenly out of the thicket, briar, emerged a wolf, brown, bad, big, one each. Wolf said, "Halt, who goes there and what are your last four?"

Hood answered, "Hood, Riding, Little, 4032; I am enroute to TDY point, and am looking for the house of my Mother, Grand, Old."

"It is two clicks down the road, turn left at Bldg 2355," instructed the wolf.

"How do you know where she lives?" questioned Hood.



"I've pulled guard duty in those parts," says wolf, who then catches a bus to Granny's. Upon arrival, wolf, bad, swallows Granny with a gulp, single, one each. Wolf then polices up the area including butt cans, and jumps into the bed, initial A/DEPN issue type, and pulls on Granny's AC 146-92's.

Hood enters. "Hello Mother, Grand."

"The fool, little, stupid, does not know that it is really me the wolf, bad, big," chuckles the wolf.

"My what big E E N T you have," exclaims Hood, Riding, Red, Little.

"All the better to maintain maximum efficiency at minimum cost with Zero Defects," replies the wolf.

Then . . . enter the chopper, wood type, handsome. Chopper kills wolf with blow, one each, and performs necessary surgical procedures to remove Mother, Grand from the stomach of the wolf, bad, big, dead. With allowance for quarters and rations, they all live after, ever, happily.

Throwing Lite On Problem

LZ HAWK HILL — A battalion in the division has thrown some light on the ever present sapper problem.

It all started when CPT Stephen Thacher (Madison, Wis.) signal officer of the 196th Bde.'s 2-1st Inf., spotted four unused searchlights in a supply conex. CPT Thacher suggested that the lights be used to illuminate the perimeter.

In order to install the lights, the Bn., commo plt. had to lay 20,000 ft. of electric cable. The plt. completed their task of providing a lighted perimeter in five days. (11th Bde. IO)

Combat Tracker Is Pro Jockey

By SSG Vern Kaiser

CHU LAI — What are jockeys doing this year? At least one former jockey is serving with the divisions' Support Command at Chu Lai.

SGT John R. McKnight (Kilgore, Tex.), 63rd Inf. Plt., (Combat Tracker) was a jockey before he entered the army.

This former 112-pound jockey, who has been around animals most of his life, is presently one of the five specially trained dog handlers in the division.

McKnight stated, "Most of my riding was done at small tracks throughout the southwest, but I have worked some of the larger tracks."

Known as the "Pro" among his team members, the ex-jockey and his dog "Ince" have been together for six months. During this time they have come to know and depend on each other for their lives.

"When I came to Vietnam, I came as an infantryman and had no idea I would get a chance to work with animals. But while I was at the Combat Center, I heard about the dog teams and volunteered. And I wouldn't trade places with anyone in Vietnam," commented McKnight.

The sergeant's dog is a 65 pound coal black British Labrador Retriever valued at more than $12,000.00.

"I guess I like my job, because you can depend on each and every man. Our unit has never had a man so much as seriously wounded during the whole time it has been in Vietnam. Each dog team is like a close knit family. Everyone has been highly trained and knows his job as well. As for the dog, well "Ince" is the best friend any tracker in Vietnam could have," concluded the jockey turned dog handler. (SPT. CMD-IO)

Nam Tour Old Timer

LZ BRONCO — A division soldier recently topped the 1,300,000 minute mark for time spent in Vietnam. The average soldier will spend only one-third this total in a normal one year tour. SGT Robert Sherer (Sarasota, Fla.) a member of the 11th Bde.'s security platoon, is currently in his 32nd month in Vietnam.

Sherer entered the army in 1966 and headed overseas the same year. His first duty was with the 1st Division at Loi Khe. Since that time he has served in Germany and returned to Vietnam on a second tour.

Sherer has spent only 100 days in the "world" since June 1966. He will soon head back to the states, but only for a thirty day leave.

"Since I entered the Army, overseas duty has always appealed to me," said Sherer. "I've put in for another six month extension," he added with a smile. "After this perhaps I will go back to the states."

However, Sherer has two objectives before he reaches the end of his Vietnam tour. One is to surpass the 11th Bde. record of 48 months and the other is to marry a Vietnamese National.

AMERICAL SPORTS

Americal 4-Wall Handball Champions

Division Special Services held a division wide four- wall handball tournament 6-14 Nov. 69. There were 25 entries in the singles tourney and 11 teams in the doubles tourney. Winners were recognized with trophies presented by BG Edwin Powell. Left to Right, Back Row: CPT Barry Nickerson, MAJ Michael Downes, Gen. Powell, CW2 Harry Groppel. Front Row: CPT James G. Hergen and CPT William Horton. (U.S. Army Photo)

Combat Supply Team Handles Many Jobs Alien To Supply

LZ HAWK HILL—Helicopter crews, infantrymen, artillerymen, mortarmen; these individuals all report directly to SGT E. C. Muratore (Kenilworth, N.J.) and he knows the reason why.

SGT Muratore is the ramrod of an eight man S-4 (supply) team at the firebase headquarters of the 196th's 1-46th Inf. He demands total cooperation and gets it.

For this division supply unit, perched on a remote mountain base 15 miles southwest of Tam Ky, life can become a maelstrom of activity that at times has nothing to do with supplies.

To make sure our helipad functions smoothly," said SGT Muratore, "we all pitch in and work." The helipad operation is a unique service of the team, since part of their mission is to insure the safe arrival and departure of all airships flying the 1-46th AO.

SGT Muratore pointed to a CH-47 "Hook" coasting to a set down on the supply pad, it was obvious the operation was running smoothly.

"Looking at another portion of our mission, we have to OK all rounds sent out and establish their trajectory," said Moratore. This prevents outgoing mortar and artillery rounds from cutting those big ships in half."

It's only another part of the total job.

"Supply also radios all information on ground condition and wind direction to incoming chopper crews," said the sergeant.

Within the company team are five men picked to obtain supplies for each line company in the battalion. Even this by-the-rope task calls for unusual industry. Every morning the resupply choppers helilift a half-ton of supplies to each company in the field. The vital food and gear must be equally divided by these men for pick-up and woe be to the man who doesn't send his company enough cold milk. (196th Bde. IO)