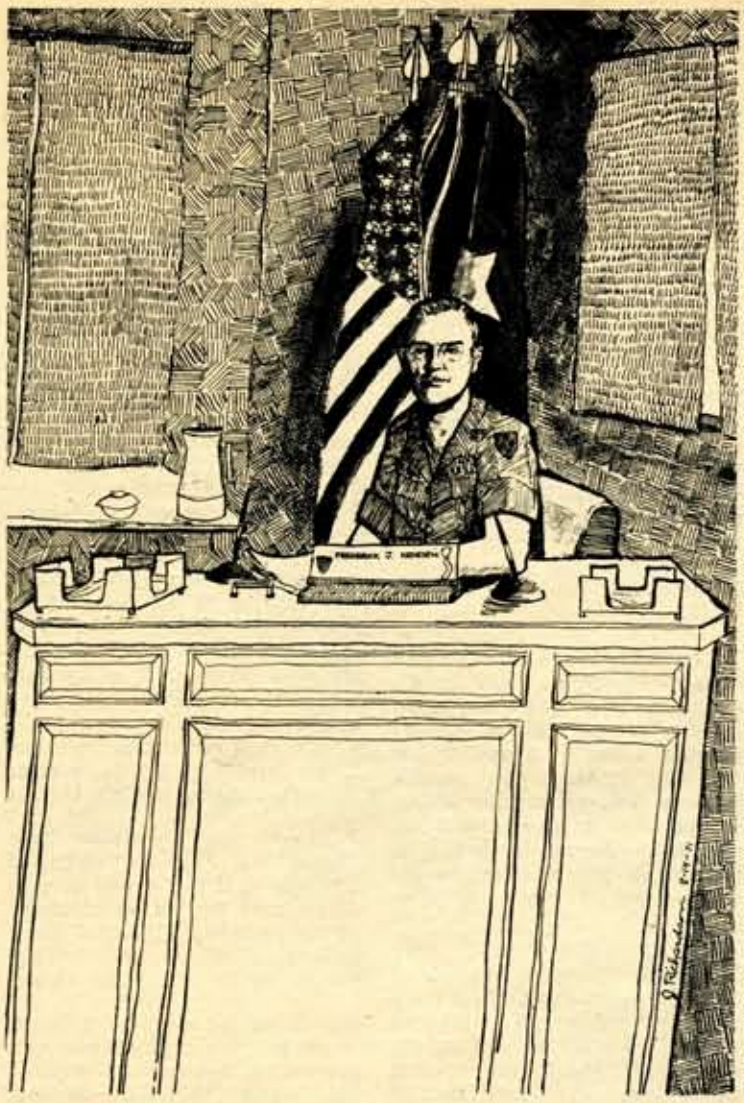

The General Answers You

EDITORS NOTE: Our Southern Cross reporter recently interviewed Major General Frederick J. Kroesen and asked him some questions the average soldier is concerned about. The following are the question and responses from the general. More questions and answers will be continued next week.

By SP4 William Hutchison

REPORTER: Rumors are circulating regarding the Americal Division standing down in the near future. Has the division been given any time-frame for standdown?

GENERAL: As of this date, I hasten to say this is the 14th Day of August, there has been no public announcement of any standdown scheduled for the division or any element of it. It would be naive to think that, with a continuing reduction required in the U.S. Army forces here in Vietnam, that the Americal Division would not be affected in some way by the required reduction to meet the president's goal of 100,000 by the first of December. However, there is no way for me to determine or indicate which of the major units that are still in Vietnam would be affected by this requirement for continuing reduction.

REPORTER: How long will it take to complete the inactivation of the division, once we are given word?

GENERAL: Any speculation to the time required for inactivating the division must consider a number of factors, such as the ability of the depots to accept equipment for turn-in, the availability of aircraft or ships for personnel movement and the ability of the government of Vietnam to take over control of the installations that we now have. All these things can be done over a period of time or be done in an expedited fashion. All of them have a normal processing time which I think will allow for an orderly, well coordinated turn-in and turn-over of the division's assets. Perhaps the most important factor will be the security of the division and its remaining personnel as the phase-down occurs. This of course, is affected by the capability of the enemy, the ARVN and other friendly forces in the area, so I would have to estimate that a period of 90 to 120 days would be adequate to accomplish the inactivation of the division, given the enemy situation we have in the area now, given the normal processing time we would like to have to turn in the equipment and ship out personnel.

REPORTER: What effect will the division's going home have on the personnel presently assigned?

GENERAL: I would presume that any change in the Division's status is going to have very little affect on personnel who are now assigned. Except for those people whose DEROS is almost upon them, I think the rest of us will be transferred to other units or other assignments and we will still complete our year in Vietnam. We have a number of veterans of other units who we're transferred into the division, from the 1st Brigade, 5th Mech., and the 173d Airborne Brigade, when their units went home, and I think all of us in the division can look forward to the same kind of thing. When we inactivated or reduced to zero strenth in the 4/21st and 5/46th Inf. those personnel were merely reassigned to other units.

I would anticipate that is what is going to happen to those of us in the division if we are to be inactivated.

REPORTER: A medic assigned to the 1/52nd Inf. asked a question concerning individual standdown of the units within the division. He wanted to know why the division makes no definite statement on a unit's standdown until the last possible moment, therefore allowing rumors to circulate.

GENERAL: Withholding announcement about standdown dates is almost entirely a matter of security. That is, it is concerned with the safety of the troops involved. Any units is more vulnerable to enemy action when it is moving and when movement is coupled with the turn-in of weapons and equipment, vulnerablility manyfold. If we inform everybody ahead of time, we also inform the enemy, and we are going to invite his attack when we are at our weakest moment. Now, in addition to the security problem, there is also the psychological letdown that we have to guard against when we make an announcement. If, for example, we say that the 1/52nd Inf. is going home next week and leave LZ Stinson, it is rather doubtful that people would be concerned about the bunkers that need to be maintained and upgraded. Most of us would be more apt to take a chance on the old sandbags for another week, and that is a chance that might cost somebody his life. Furthermore, any decrease in our operations which interdict enemy infiltration routes would allow him to concentrate his forces or

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SOUTHERN CROSS
AMERICAL DIVISION

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OPMS changes tentative

Army News Feature

WASHINGTON -- The Department of the Army is considering several changes in the officer personnel management system.

Termed the Officer Personnel Management System, (OPMS), the concept has been released to the Army General Staff and major commands for review.

The objectives of the proposed concept are to:

1. improve the professional and personal standards and goals of the officer corps;

2. develop an officer career mangement system that meets present and future Army requirements;

3. provide for the professional development of each officer in an atmosphere of constructive competitive advancement;

4. create confidence in the career management system by allowing each officer more control over his own career;

The ideas proposed are the result of a study begun in fiscal year 1970 and are aimed at improving professionalism and job satisfaction within the Army, by allowing each officer more control over his career, by allowing more specialization to meet the needs of the Army, by providing increased utilization of individual skills, aptitudes and interests, and by maintaining equitable promotion opportunities.

If the proposals are accepted, the present system of designating some military occupational specialties (MOSs) as "branch immaterial" would be abolished. Responsibility for individual MOSs would be assigned to individual career branches or branch groupings and related MOSs would be grouped to establish career fields.

Upon promotion to major, officers would be tentatively identified for further development as commanders or staff officers. Formal command or staff identification would be accomplished in conjunction with selection for promotion to lieutenant colonel and colonel.

A new "specialist" career branch would be established to manage officers pursuing careers in the areas of computer science, information, comptroller, research and development and operations research and systems analysis.

The Army promotion list will be divided into competitive groupings of related branches and equitable promotion would be afforded to each group.

On-going efforts to improve the officer evaluation system are being incorporated into OPMS. A new officer's performance report is scheduled for field testing in August and September.

The OPMS concept now being circulated envisons longrange, gradual implementation to insure a smooth transition from the present to the proposed concept. Additionally, since the concept is now in the initial staffing and since many of the proposed changes are highly controversial, substantial changes may be made before a final concept is submitted for an approval.

TAN SON NHUT, (USARV) – Beginning August 15, the Army urinalysis and drug treatment program was expanded to include all military personnel departing Vietnam on 14 day leaves.

Headquarters, USARV, announced that all military personnel scheduled to depart August 16 or later will report to the Leave Control Center, Camp Alpha (178th Replacement Company), Tan Son Nhut Air Base.

Reporting time is no sooner than 24 hours prior to departure but no later than noon of the day prior to scheduled departure.

The urine sample taken at Camp Alpha will be used to identify all heroin, amphetamine and barbituate users. Confirmed heroin users will not go on leave, but will be referred to drug treatment centers.

Due to longer testing procedures for Amphetamines and barbituates, some users will not be detected prior to their departure on leave. Those who are detected will be detoxified: the remainder will be detoxified upon return to Vietnam after leave.

Gun 1, Battery C, 6th Battalion, 11th Artillery, fires support from Fire Support Base Charlie 2. (U.S. ARMY PHOTO BY 1LT WARREN C. MABIE)

General Answers . . .

continued from page 1

build up his supplies, increasing his capabilities to launch attacks against our units and installations. So I hope that every man in the division will realize that if I do not announce a standdown schedule, it is only because the safety and the security of the division is my first responsibility. This is not only my responsibility, but it is General Abrams', General McCaffrey's, and General Dolvin's responsibility as well–to insure that the security of the forces are the paramount consideration.

REPORTER: Much has been said about the Americal Division in the press--most of it not so good. How would you evaluate the job which we have done here in Vietnam?

GENERAL: I have said many times since coming here, and I honestly believe, that the Americal Division can be measured against any other division that has ever been in Vietnam. Use any measurement criteria that you desire, use any statistics, use any standards and you will find that this division will never suffer by comparison. The division knows how to do everything it is called upon to do and it does it well. It does it professionally and it does it thoroughly. Unfortunately, when we make mistakes we are very spectacular about them. The reputation of the whole division has suffered because of the actions of a very few. We cannot escape a collective responsibility for those mistakes, but we all can take a justifiable pride in what the division has done here. The Americal Division was born in a very difficult time in 1967 when the U.S. Marines needed help; when Quang Tin and Quang Ngai Provinces were almost lost. The second and third NVA Divisions and local VC controlled almost the whole area. There is no more difficult task than organizing a division in combat--developing the procedures, techniques, and teamwork and fighting the enemy at the same time; but this was done and it was done well. If you don't believe it, ask the NCOs and officers who are here on their second and maybe third tours, and you will find that although they have a tremendous loyalty for the units they fought with first, they will also admit to a great respect for the Americal Division and the way we do things. I think this division has every right to be completely proud of the record it had established here, and I will stack the division up against any in the United States Army today.

REPORTER: How effective are the troops who are presently serving under the "Southern Cross"?

GENERAL: I think our troops are as effective as any I have served with before and any that would hope to serve with in the future. I think our troops come into this war better trained than any it has been my experience to serve with in previous wars. I have always admired the American infantryman, but I think I admire the American infantryman in this war more than I did in previous wars. Because he had come to us better trained and for some reason, regardless of the feelings that we seem to have in the United States against this war, we still seem to have a well-motivated soldier who comes over here to do the job his country sent him to do; and I have great faith in the way they are doing it and the way I believe they will continue to do it.

REPORTER: We all recognize that the division is plagued by several problems, one of them is drugs. How serious a problem do drugs present?

GENERAL: I think drugs are an extremely serious problem. They are the most serious problem in the world for those who are addicted to drugs, addicted to heroin in particular. They seem to remain unaware or uncaring and refuse to believe that they are destroying themselves. Drugs are almost as serious for the habitual users who refuse to believe that they will become addicted. I have a great deal of compassion and sympathy for those people but I continue to hold each of them individually responsible for the condition in which he finds himself. My primary concern as the commander of the division, is the mans ability or inability to perform his mission, to accept a responsibility for his duty, and failure to do this, thereby places another man's life in danger. For this there can be no excuse and no forgiveness for the drug user.

REPORTER: Do you see any differences between the use of marijuana and heroin as far as their legality is concerned?

GENERAL: I consider the use of marijuana and the use of alcohol in the same vein. When they incapactiate a man or make him unable to perform his mission, they are no different than heroin, and if they endanger other peoples' lives because they incapacitate an individual, I feel that individual should be dealt with very harshly.

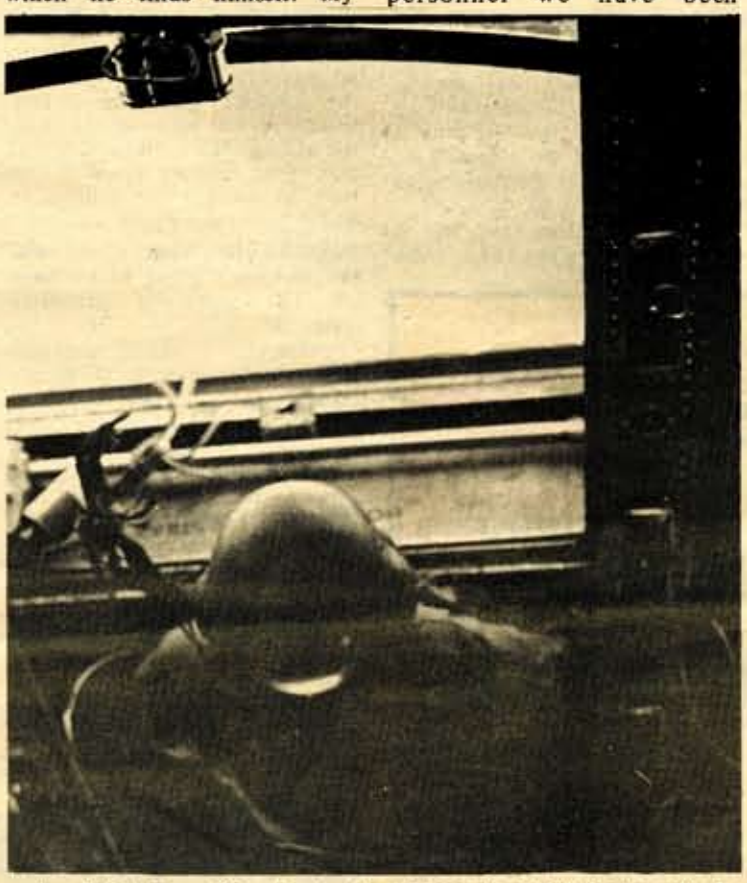
REPORTER: Another problem is the lack of personnel, especially in the line units. What is being done to bring the Division back up to strength?

GENERAL: The shortage of personnel we have been experiencing for the last couple of months was caused by some major personnel management mistakes that had been, by a heavy normal DEROS of personnel during the summer months, and then by some personnel policies which were adopted when the division was overstrength and we transferred individuals from their combat assignment into non-combat rear area assignments. I believe that in the past month, we have corrected some of these mistakes, we've changed some of the policies and we hope to overcome this shortage. I expect now that the problem is known we will be receiving additional personnel replacements through the USARV replacement channels and that our personnel strength will improve markedly by the end of August.

REPORTER: Secretary of Defense Melvin R. Laird made a statement to the press on August 4, in which he said the Army's combat role in Vietnam was virtually ended. In coming soldiers holding combat MOSs would like to know what his statement means in terms of what they will be doing in the field?

GENERAL: This is a very important question because I feel that is is essential that every soldier in this division understand what his role and his mission is during the coming months. Mr. Laird's statement is a true reflection of the fact that the mission of driving the NVA forces out of Vietnam has been taken over by the ARVNS. U.S. forces are no longer engaging in the large scale nick-named operations which were once targeted against the enemy and which required long periods of combat against the enemy's main forces. Unfortunately, this change does not mean that U.S. soldiers no longer have to fight. We must continue to protect ourselves and we still have the mission of assisting to protect and provide security to the Vietnamese population, in our area of operation. We just cannot do this by sitting in a defensive position on a firebase and hoping the enemy will not attack. Six years of experience in Vietnam has taught us that we must stay on patrol to keep the enemy from concentrating his forces, building up his supplies and preparing detailed plans for attacking our positions. If we do not prevent these things, it is almost certainty these attacks will take place, and they will be very costly to us. So, for the combat forces of the division, the future is one of patroling the mountain area looking for caches, working with the RF and PF to provide them with the best training we can give them, and staying alert for the enemy who is still out there and still has the mission of our destruction. Many people choose to interpret this as offensive operations and they are determined to say that we are conducting offensive operations when secretary Laird said we will not. I maintain that if the policeman on the beat in the small town in the United States or the policeman in a patrol car is on offensive operations, then I would have to admit that we are on offensive operations. But in fact I don't believe that. I believe the policeman on the beat, rather than being out seeking a criminal to destroy, is out on his beat as a preventive measure, attempting to insure that a criminal entering his beat does not have an opportunity to commit a crime. I liken our current operations and missions to the operations of the police force in your home town.

Next week more questions will be answered by Major General Kroesen. If you feel you have a pertinent question to be answered call the Division Information Office at 3212 or 2414 or write: Information Office, 23d Inf. Div. APO SF 96374. All questions will be considered.



Specialist Four Kim Spahn (Poughkeepsie, N.Y.) looks out the door of his CH-47 (Chinook). He is crew chief on the helicopter. (U.S. ARMY PHOTO BY SP4 RANDY BOMBARD)

Crew Chief has chore caring for CH-47, passengers, flights

By SP4 Randy Bombard

CHU LAI (23d Inf. Div. IO) – The day begins early for Specialist Four Kim Spahn (Poughkeepsie, N.Y.). It's up at 5:30 a.m. and down to the chopper pad by 6:15 to begin preparing for the new day's mission.

The first item on the agenda is the pre-flight check given all systems on the aircraft. This includes checking oil and hydraulic fluid levels along with a visual inspection of the interior and exterior surfaces of the aircraft. The crew chief looks for any hair line cracks in any control surfaces or around stress points, as well as frayed or chafed points on wiring or tubing.

When an item is found that requires attention, it is written up in the log book and when maintenance has been performed, it is then signed off by the person performing the maintenance operation.

Many hours a day are required to keep all the equipment and various systems on board in top operating condition.

The remainder of the day Spahn is busy supervising the loading and unloading of freight or passenger loads that are carried by their CH-47 (Chinook).

Originally assigned to an infantry company, Spahn decided he would like to fly, so he put in a request to transfer to an aviation company as a door gunner. His request was granted and he has since worked his way from door gunner to crew chief, a position that carries much responsibility.

Spahn definitely enjoys flying. He said, "The Chinook is really a great aircraft to fly on. I'm really glad I was able to make the transfer from the infantry to flying. I definitely enjoy it."

Marines pass on bird

By SP4 Larry Rich

CAMP REASONER (196th Inf. Bde. IO) – The Army wanted to give the Marine Corps the bird. No, they did not have a surplus of colonels in the 196th Infantry Brigade. They had some unused Marine Corps emblems.

When the Marines went back to the United States, they left the Da Nang area in the hands of the Army. They also left several visual reminders of their stay in the Republic of Vietnam.

The mess hall for the 196th Inf. Bde. Headquarters Company came complete with the famous "eagle, globe and anchor" of the Marine Corps. A large plaster of paris eagle "viewed" the eating area from its "perch" on one side of the room.

"It wouldn't have been right to tear it down," Sergeant Dale Sullivan (Niles, Ohio), a cook with the 196th Inf. Bde. said. "The Marines did a fine job, but the Army's done a good job too."

With no Marines left in the Republic of Vietnam, there was no one to give it to. There was nothing to do but adopt it.

A coat of paint helped the statue blend into its new military surroundings. Now the golden, bald-headed eagle sits on a red and blue world and watches the Army cooks.

The 196th mess did not lose a Marine Corps. They picked up a mascot.

SOUTHERN CROSS
AMERICAL DIVISION

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If it needs cold storage, Class 1 handles it

By SP4 William Hutchison

CHU LAI (23d Inf. Div. IO) -- From Gerber baby food to fresh fruit, to batteries in cold storage, they have them all.

For the men of the 23d Infantry Division (Americal), the 226th Supply and Service Company's Class 1 Rations is their Vietnam style A&P.

In support of 43 divisional and non-divisional units, Class 1 handles all subsistance items--perishable and nonperishable, such as meats, fruits, and starches--all together over 250 different line items.

For the man in the field, Class 1 handles C rations and LRPs (freeze dried food). All the streaks, cheeseburgers and rolls you buy at the EM, NCO or Officers' clubs all come from the reefer bank's cold storage. Food for unit fund parties are purchased from the stocks down at Rosemary's Point.

In one day alone, the reefer point, where all perishable food is stored in chillers or freezers, moved 23,000 pounds of food. The reefer bank has 69,000 cubic feet of cold storage space.

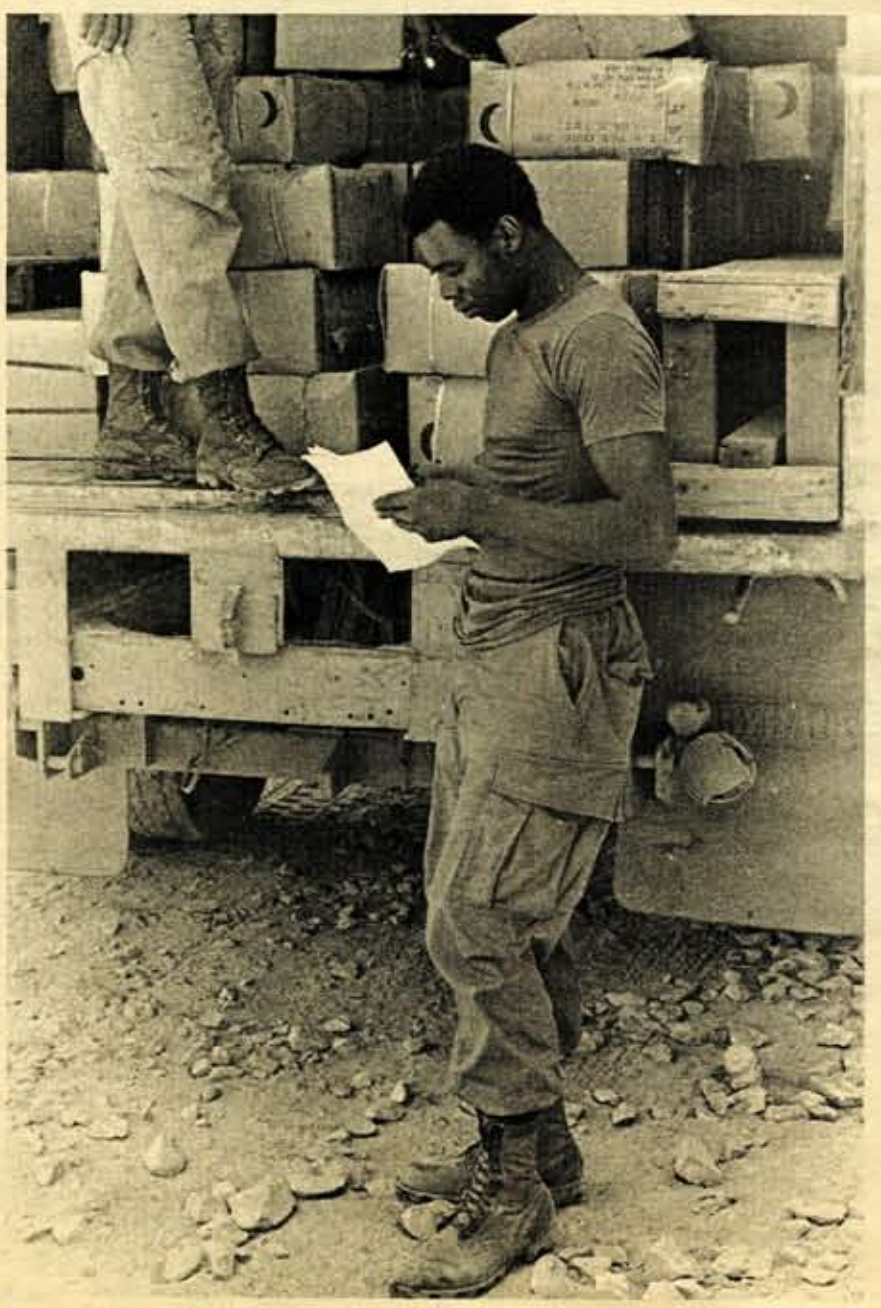
"Our boxes are some of the best in Vietnam," stated Staff Sergeant Clay Kelley, (Orlando, Fla.), who runs the reefer bank distribution. "When we were without power recently for several hours, we didn't have any spoilage or have to dispose of any food."

All the rations come to Chu Lai from the states via Da Nang and Sea-Land transports. A few items, like apples, are flown in to insure their freshness. There are also some regional foods, such as cucumbers, obtainable at Class 1.

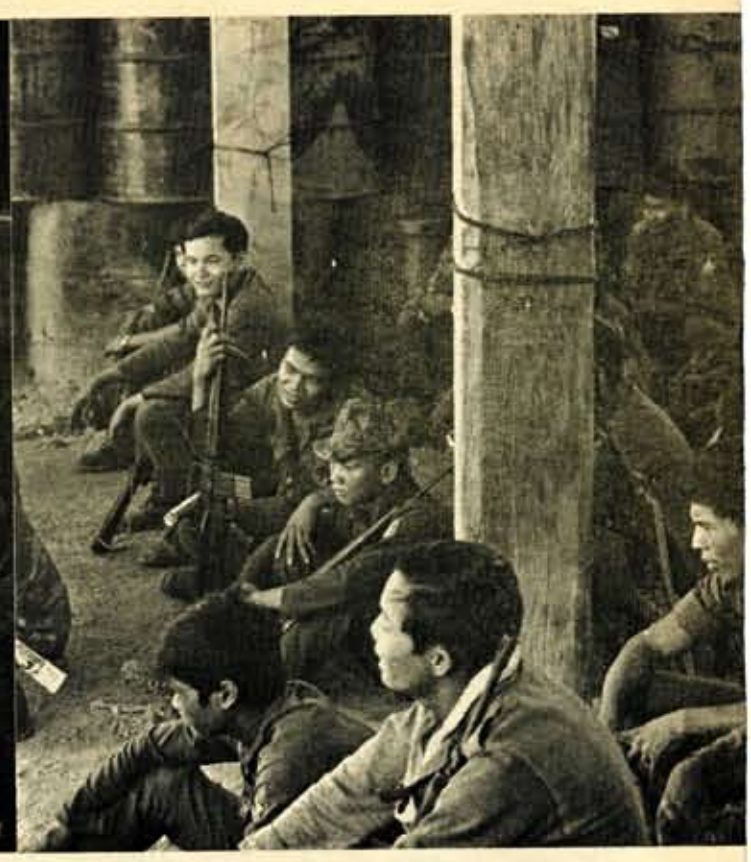
Class 1 also handles the ice you use to cool your beer or drop in that glass of Kool-Aid (it's their Kool-Aid too). They have their own ice plant which makes 24,000 pounds per day. With the supplementation of ice from Quang Ngai, the ice is distributed to individual units according to the headcount-each man getting three pounds, if it is available.

Captain Michael J. Amidei (Memphis), commanding officer of the 226th S&S Company stated, "My men do a damn good job down here, as good as anywhere in Vietnam, in fact all things, considered, probably a better one."

They never did say who the baby food was for.



TOP: Specialist Four Nicholas Povrzenich (Mosessen, Pa.) unloads ice into one of the 226th Supply and Storage Company's numerous chill boxes which are used to store perishable Class 1 rations.
BOTTOM LEFT: Private First Class Robert Myers (Chathau, Va.) checks boxes of meats as they are loaded from the freezers at the reefer bank. The frozen meats are bound for one of the many mess halls in the Chu Lai area.
BOTTOM RIGHT: Private First Class Gregory Kelley (Brooklyn) beats the heat by working inside a refrigerated truck loaded with ice. The blocks of ice are placed on rollers and pushed into reefer boxes, where they are used to chill perishable Class 1 rations. (U.S. ARMY PHOTOS BY SP4 WILLIAM HUTCHISON)



TOP: Specialist Five Carlos Solis, 68th Medical Detachment, 14th Aviation Battalion, demonstrates the use of a jungle penetrator. Men of the 4th Reconnaissance Company, 4th ARVN Regiment watch the demonstration.

BOTTOM LEFT: First Lieutenant Eric Herold, commanding officer of the Pathfinder Detachment, watches as a soldier from the 4th Recon Co. applies the hand signals taught in class.

BOTTOM CENTER: GANG WAY. Men of the 4th Recon Co. hustle aboard a UH-1 (Huey) practicing a combat assualt.

BOTTOM RIGHT: UP, UP, and AWAY. A soldier from the 4th Recon Co. is hoisted aboard a Medivac helicopter on a jungle penetrator. The crew man standing on the skid is balancing the craft with his weight.

Story and Photos by SP4 Mike Cassidy

14th Aviation Bn. gives ARVNs basic helicopter utilization course

CHU LAI, (23rd Inf. Div. IO) – Men of the 14th Aviation Battalion (Combat), 23rd Infantry Division (Americal), are giving a detailed course on helicopter utilization to Army of the Republic of Vietnam infantry and artillery units in Duc Pho.

The program provides instruction and practical experience on basic and advanced levels for both officers and enlisted men.

Thus far the program has given instruction to the 2nd, 3rd and 4th ARVN Regiments. Plans are underway to give the instruction to the remainder of the 2nd Infantry Division and to Regional and Popular Forces in the area.

The 4th Reconnaissance Company of the 4th ARVN Regiment recently went through the basic course. The day started with instruction on the proper way to board various types of helicopters in different terrain situations. The instructor was First Lieutenant Eric G. Herold (Seattle), commanding officer of the Pathfinder Detachment of 14th Aviation.

The instruction was supplemented by a practical exercise, the proper method of getting on and off a UH-1 (Huey) for a combat assault with eight men in combat gear. Though the first run was a little rough the later groups avoided their predecessors' mistakes by paying close attention while waiting their turn.

Later in a variation of the exercise, eight men were to enter the Huey from one side. This would be necessary if the helicopter had landed on a slope. The first attempt at this drill was perfect.

"These soldiers are very receptive and motivated. They even enjoy the instruction. They seem to be the most receptive group I've seen here," said Captain Edwin M. Frazier, S-3, 14th Aviation.

At the request of the S-3 of the 4th ARVN Regiment, this program was initiated to help the training needs of the troops. Frazier (DeRidder, La.), who has worked with ARVN soldiers as a pilot, was chosen to design the program.

The second hour of instruction, given by Sergeant Jose R. Adame (Pharr, Tex.) of the Pathfinder Detachment, concerned the preparation of landing zones and techniques used to bring in a helicopter. The practical exercise was to land the real thing using hand signals. Everyone had a turn, including the company commander, First Lieutenant Le Quang.

The Pathfinder Detachment has been a main source of instructors for this program, since their job is the use of air support in a tactical situation. In the past they have worked closely with Vietnamese units in the control of their combat assaults and other airmobile operations.

The job of instructor is rotated through the detachment, because all of the men are expert in this area. Pathfinder Platoon Sergeant Simon Quinterous (Temple, Tex.) has been cited on a number of occasions for his success in teaching through an interpreter.

Specialist Five Carlos Solis (Tampa, Fla.), 68th Medical Detachment, in the third hour stressed the use of field expedients for medical evacuations. The emphasis throughout all the classes was on the equipment that the ARVN's have on hand and not what would be ideal in a particular situation.

The day's training was concluded with instruction on the utilization of gunships and demonstration of their fire power. The troops are usually asked if they would like to be under that type of assault. The answer always comes back an emphatic "No".

This class, which started July 16, has become a success. A province chief has even requested that this instruction be given to his Regional and Popular Forces.

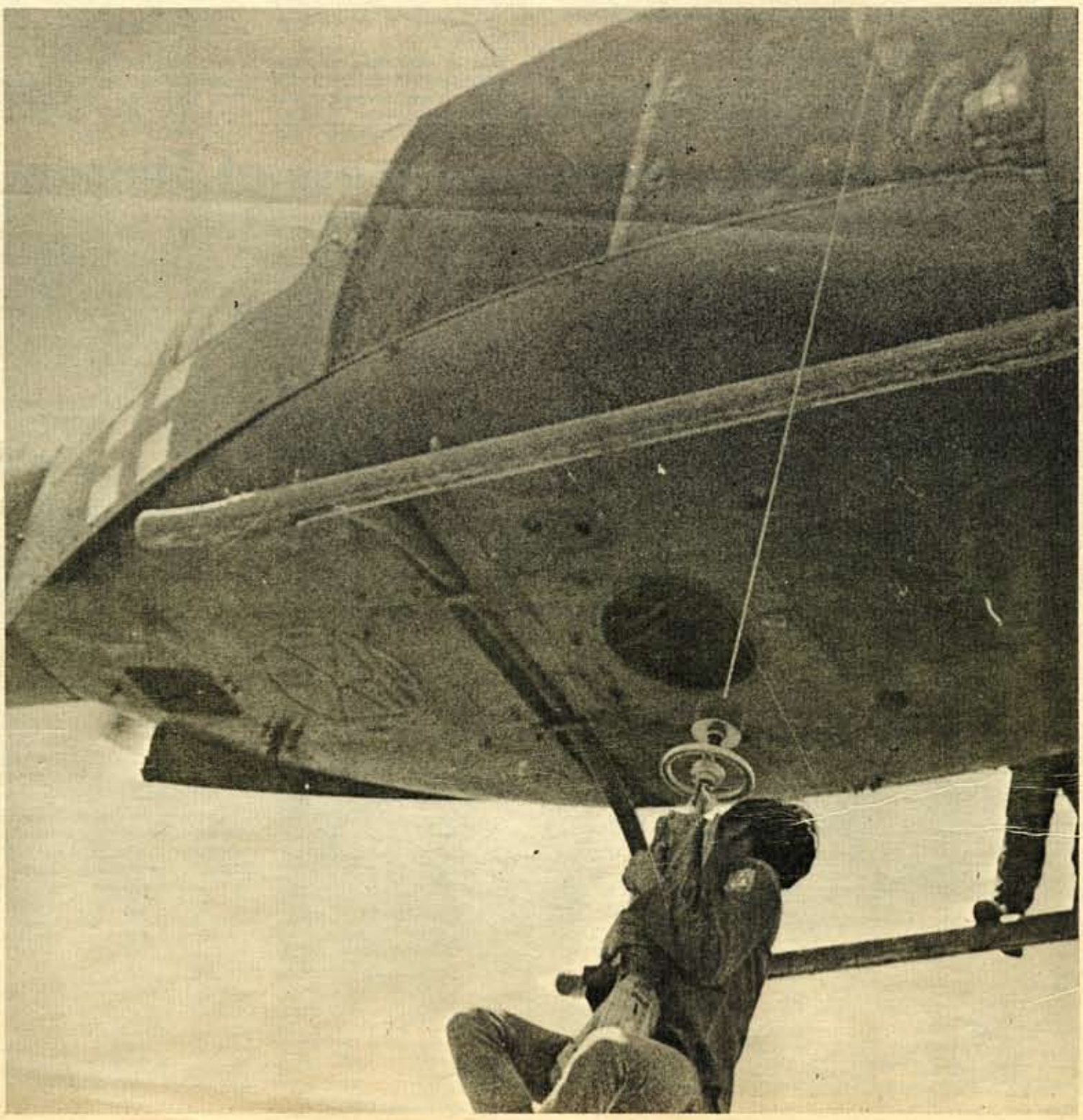
Along with this basic course, there is a 24-hour block of advanced instruction given by the 14th Aviation. "Advanced Techniques in the Employment of Helicopters–Medium and Utility" is given to ARVN officers and senior non-commissioned officers.

This course explains the uses of the Huey and CH-47 (Chinook) helicopters in combat and combat support roles.

Also, there is a program to instruct cadre from the 2nd ARVN Division in the employment of the Chinook. The cadre will in turn give the course to local RF and PF units.

Captain Edward R. Clark, MACV advisor to the 4th ARVN Regiment, commented that this was a very important form of training, since it gives instruction to the people who will be using it–the individual soldier.

Lieutenant Colonel Joseph F. Rutkowski (Dalevale, Ala.), commanding officer of the 14th Aviation, is very proud of the success of the program. He credits the success to the teamwork of his battalion's personnel, who scheduled time for instruction with their usual duties.



Da Nang USO is Korean smile

By SGT Tom Mano

DA NANG, (196th Inf. Bde. I0) – Two "soul brothers" engage in what seems like mortal combat with a small white ball; one smacks the ball in the hootch maid's mopwater and the other quips, "You'll never get to Peking that way." Both laugh.

Janis Joplain blares a song in the background while men in another part of the room bang on a table hockey board simultaneously juggling pizza toward their mouths.

This is the scene in the newly opened 196th Infantry Brigade USO. For "Chargers" it could be a step towards relaxation through recreation.

Many think the key to preventing men from turning to "smack" and other dangerous drugs is to keep their minds and bodies active. From 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. every day, this is what the amusement center tires to do.

The choice of food isn't comparable to a restaurant in the "World" but the service would rival most. With each taco, pizza or plate of fried rice, the customer receives a big Korean smile.

One GI ordered two tacos and sat down to write a letter home. When his order wasn't completed 15 minutes later, he returned to the counter and inquired about his Mexican delight.

"I'm sorry, I thought you just wanted a coke," apologized the Korean. "We'll get right on it."

The GI smiled and thanked him. Another bit of Oriental inefficiency he thought. Ten minutes later the same Korean came to his table with not two but three tacos.

Damn, thought the soldier, the guy can't even get the order right when he does finish it. I should've known this would happen.

"We'll give you three for the price of two, because you had to wait," beamed the Korean. Both smile. Say, this dude isn't such a had guy after all.

Two chopper pilots and their door-gunners sit comfortably eating pizza near the bumper-pool table. Considering it's early in the morning, one would assume these flyers are in for beaucoup nightmares.

"Like drinking before noon, I never thought I'd eat pizza for breakfast," mused a warrant officer, "but it doesn't taste half bad. I might even recommend it to my wife."

"Yah, she'd love that," laughed a door-gunner. "My wife would probably throw me out of the house."

Perhaps the new USO isn't the final answer to curbing feelings of apathy in the 196th Inf. Bde, but it is a step towards a better piece of pizza and more peace of mind.

Specialist Four Robert Kelly (left) and Specialist Four Larry Arbuckle (right) test firer a .50 caliber machine gun used for perimeter security at LZ Vandergrift.
(U.S. ARMY PHOTO BY SP4 WENDELL P. HAUTANIGNI)

Soldiers learn by teaching

By SGT Tom Mano

DA NANG, (196th Inf. Bde. I0) – "We don't have to carry a whip and a pistol, and there isn't as much jabber or spinoff from these children."

This is how one of four English teachers in the 196th Infantry Brigade described the difference between teaching English to Americans and imparting the knowledge to Vietnamese.

Four days a week the four "Chargers" sacrifice their evenings and make the trek into Da Nang to further communication between the Americans and the Vietnamese. Their classes last one-and-a-half hours and have an average enrollment of 30 pupils.

"There's been a sharp increase in class size," commented First Lieutenant George N. Monsson (Laramie, Wyo.). "Last semester I only had five students."

Age is not a discriminatory factor in those classes. It is not unusual to have 8-year-olds sitting by men who could be their fathers.

"It would be rediculous to have the classes by age," mused Monsson. "We divide the people by levels, one to 15, according their proficiency.

Though the classroom is in the Da Nang Girl's High School, the classes are thoroughtly integrated.

"The girls are shyer and more soft-spoken," said Monsson. "I think it's due to the hard-handedness they get from their professors (teachers)."

"They're surprised we're not strict disciplinarians," continued the lieutenant. "When they first came in, they expect us to rule with an iron hand."

"Okay, sometimes there is a bit too much fooling around, added Monsson. "Then, I read the riot act and say if they're not here to learn, then leave. So far, only one guy has left and he never returned."

A problem that the teachers share with many instructors in America is the penmanship. Now and then they return from their classes with eyes like road maps.

"Sometimes it's really a challenge to figure out what they're writing," commented Nonsson. Occasionally, it gets to the point of intranslateability, if there is such a word."

The four soldiers receive token payment from the Vietnamese American Association each month. The reward fo self-satisfaction far outweighs this trivial amount.

"You get to meet the Vietnamese people on a different basis other than as hootch maids or bar girls," concluded Monsson. "When you leave, you know you've accomplished something tangible in Vietnam."

Mishap forces emergency mess at Stinson

By SP5 Gregory Wright

FSBSTINGSON, (11th Brigade I0) – An explosion recently ripped through an Ammo Supply Point (ASP) at fire Support Base Stinson. Troops were dismayed to see that the blast had destroyed not only the ASP but a large portion of the nearby mess hall.

The building, approximately 70 feet in length before the mishap, had been reduced to about 24 feet of the original kitchen, the storeroom and washroom completely destroyed.

Steps had to be taken immediately to provide a mess area for the men on Stinson. C-rations which had survived the blast provided part of the answer. Later, as supplies could be brought in, the C-rations were supplemented with coffee and fresh fruit.

Make-shift stoves were fashioned from 55 gallon drums so meat could be grilled outside, lending a cook-out atmosphere to the mess-hall disaster.

In the meantime, plans were being made for a new structure. Engineers on Stinson were informed of what had occurred and equipment was gathered in preparation for construction.

Staff Sergeant William Puckett (Winchester, Kan.) was in charge of the construction of the new mess hall and explained some of the problems encountered.

"I suppose our biggest hangup was the shortage of materials," recalled Puckett. "Most of the plywood in the old building had been shattered and couldn't be used again."

Sergeant First Class Charles Moore, mess sergeant (Laughton, Okla.) admitted that continuous smooth operation of the mess faility was difficult, but was impressed with the efforts of both cooks and KP's. He also praised Major Charles D. Getz, battalion commander at that time.

"Major Getz insisted that the main dining room for the troops be completed first, and continued to eat his meals on a bare platform, exposed to the sun, until this was accomplished," said Moore.

Although the two small dining rooms have been completed, work has not been stopped at Stinson. There are plans for an improved structure resembling the original, with the present main dining room converted to use by senior NCOs and officers.

Traditionally, Army chow has been the subject of many gripes, with the complaints coming the thickest when it isn't there at all. Not even the destruction of a mess hall, however. can prevent the men on FSB Stinson from getting their meals on time.

For incoming soldiers, the 23d Infantry Division's (Americal) Combat Center processing means time to catch up on a little reading. The Combat Center has recently been swamped with fresh arrivals. (U.S. ARMY PHOTO)

Susanne Benton suggests that she would like to play in the straw. Any takers? She recently starred in "Cover Me Baby" a 20th Century-Fox Production.

Sergeants Major meet, discuss units' problems

By Sp4 Mike Cassidy

CHU LAI, (23d Inf. Div. IO) – 23d Infantry Division (Americal) Command Sergeant Major Morrill A. Barron told the Command Sergeants Major Conference that in order to "take care of the troops" there must be direct communication with them and an end to the "rear area syndrome."

This second Command Sergeants Major Conference, attended by the top non-commissioned officer (NCO) from each unit in the division, was held here recently.

Barron pointed out that the troops do not "want to talk with someone sitting in the rear," adding that first sergeants and sergeants major are not just administrators.

The purpose of the conference was to work on the problems faced by the units in general, by drawing on their collective experience and that of the division's administrative sections.

The meeting began with an address by Major General Frederick J. Kroesen, commanding general of the Americal Division.

In his address the general compared the division to a machine with 22,000 moving parts which must have good leadership to function. The general expects that these leaders will take the actions indicated by their best judgment and be ready to stand up for their decisions.

The general told the senior NCO's to demand soldierly conduct and qualities from the enlisted men in their charge, to look after their well-being and welfare, and to be aware of outside changes that are affecting the Army.

Emphasizing his last point, Kroesen said, "...if you can't cope with the youth of today–a change which has been levied against both you and me...the Army as a tool of national power and national significance will be lost."

Reiterating a point that he has made on several other occasions, the general said, "We have no indication of a withdrawal (of the division)."

Next, Colonel William R. Richardson, chief of staff of the Americal Division, explained the necessity of the senior NCO "getting out where the going gets rough" to set the example and provide supervision in the field.

A briefing from the administrative sections of the division followed the opening speeches. Among other topics, the sergeants major heard about the necessity of rabies innoculations for unit pets and the status of the division's drug program.

The division adjutant general, Lieutenant Colonel D. J. Delandro, explained that people who are constantly defered from performing their MOS, refered to as "hip pocket profiles," will be denied promotions.

In the last presentation of the meeting, Barron declared that the first job of the NCO was to take care of his men and give them good leadership. In order to fulfill that mission, he demanded that the NCO's be with their men where they work.

In another area, he requested that those present devise a plan that would make the troops keep up their own appearance. He did not feel that the proper results would be obtained by picking out individuals for violations of the uniform code.

Specialist Four William Jarboe (Louisville), a patient at the 91st Evacuation Hospital receives a plaque and handshake from Lieutenant Colonel John C. Shannon, commanding officer of the 4th Bn., 3rd Inf. Colonel Leon M. Herbertson, commanding officer of the 91st Evac. (far left) and Brigadier General Joseph C. McDonough, assistant Commander of the Americal, look on.
(U.S. ARMY PHOTO BY SP4 WILLIAM HUTCHISON)

Grunts give hospital TVs

By Sp4 William Hutchison

CHU LAI (23d Inf. Div. IO) – The 91st Evacuation Hospital now has six new televisions for its casualty wards, thanks to the thoughtfulness and generosity of the men of the 4th Battalion, 3d Infantry.

A group of grunts contributed enough money so their wounded comrades may enjoy a bit of the world while they recuperate in the hospital.

The TV's were the brainchild of Captain Henry F. Maze (Carbon-dale, Ill.) the 4th Bn., 3d Inf.'s acting executive officer. He had been seeing wounded members of the "Old Guard", bringing them cigarettes, and he would ask them if they needed anything. Several asked if there was any way to get a television to liven up the long hours in bed.

Maze returned to the battalion area and presented the problem to the first sergeant. They decided the only way to get the TV's quickly was to take up a collection on payday. Each company that contributed enough for one set would get their name on the plaque. The pay officers were briefed and the "ball was rolling".

"In less than two weeks, the battalion had purchased six televisions and six plaques. Our carpenters built stands to hold the sets and the communications people installed the sets and the antennas. All the work was done at night on a volunteer basis," explained Maze.

Headquarters and Headquarters Company bought two sets; Bravo, Delta, and Echo each put in for one; and Alpha and Charlie bought one. The plaques were inscribed with the name of each company. The largest contribution came from Staff Sergeant Thomas J. Bennett (Fayetteville, N.C.) whose $60.00 made it possible to buy the sixth TV, which was donated in the memory of Lieutenant Colonel Albert J. Coast, former battalion commander, who was killed in May.

At ceremonies in Ward 2A of the 91st Evac, Lieutenant Colonel John C. Shannon presented the sets on behalf of the "Old Guard" to Specialist Four William Jarboe (Louisville), a member of Company E and a patient of the hospital.

Colonel Leon M. Herbertson, commanding of the 91st Hospital was there to receive the televisions for the hospital.

In thanking the "Old Guard" for their generosity, Herbertson summed up the sentiment of all when he stated, "We here at the hospital, especially the patients, will enjoy there televisions but, more importantly, we enjoy the sentiment of trying to make a man's stay here more pleasant."

3/82nd Arty devises plan to aid drug amnesty cases

By SGT Carl G. Prost

CHU LAI, (23d Inf. Div. Arty. IO) – Every unit has an amnesty program and attempts to help the soldier who wants to break his drug habit. The Drug Rehabilitation Program of the 3rd Battalion, 82nd Artillery, however, represences a special approach to the problem.

Through the efforts of Battalion Commander, Lieutenant Colonel Richard C. Martin, and members of the Battalion Aid Station, a storage hooch which once housed medical supplies has been transformed into a well-equipped rehabilitation ward.

A man entering the battalion's program can expect to remain in the ward for three to five days and, although, he is confined to special quarters for a period of time, everything possible is done to make him comfortable. Each man is afforded books, a radio, a fan, and a comfortable sleeping area. Plastic models of airplanes, helicopters, and a tank are available, as well as writing material.

During the difficult hours of withdrawal from an addictive drug, the patient is under close supervision of the battalion surgeon, Captain Douglas Allderice, and the battalion medics. Counseling for personal problems is available at any time.

The new rehabilitation facility at 3rd Bn., 82nd Arty. has one successful withdrawal to its credit, with two other individuals presently under care to free themselves of drug abuse.

The Camp Redhorse Compound has set an example for all to follow and, hopefully, other battalion aid stations will look for ways to improve their own rehabilitation programs.

Rabbi feels 'committed' to soldiers

By SP4 Sam Rousso

CHU LAI, (23d Inf. Div. IO) – "Committed." You hear the term a lot these days. Sometimes it loses its meaning, or relevance.

If a phrase or a single word could be used to describe Chaplain (Captain) Harold Axlerod (Brooklyn), it would be "committed." It took him 17 years of study to become ordained as an Orthodox Jewish Rabbi.

Why such dedication–such a committment? "There is a real need," he says. "The shortage of rabbis is acute...I feel a sense of accomplishment, of gratification."

After he was ordained, he ministered to a congregation in Greenwood, Miss., for two years before moving to New Orleans, where he entered Loyola University of the South, obtaining a Masters Degree in Education. He stayed at Loyola, becoming a faculty member, teaching the History of Education, a required for the Louisiana teachers.

During the stay in New Orleans, he was the New Orleans Area Chairman for the United Fund. He entered the Army on July 26, 1970. Considering the anti-military tenor of current attitudes, why did he take this step? "For the same reason I became a rabbi–the great need of the troops could not be denied."

After serving 11 months at Ft. Sill, Okla. – including a nine-week stay at Ft. Hamilton, N. Y., where he took a sort of Chaplains Basic Training–Axlerod arrived in the Republic of Vietnam.

Assigned to XXIV Corps, the administrative unit for the United States Army Units–the 23d Infantry Division (Americal) 101st Airborne Division (Airmobile) and Da Nang Support Command--he is responsible, as he states, for the "WELFARE' religious caverage and morale of the approximately 150 Jews in Military Region 1."

He describes his work this way: "I'm on the road three of four days a week, traveling 'pit to pit'...the transportation support I get is fantastic...It is quite interesting--I'm able to see the problems and needs of the people..."

Just as John Donne believed that "No man is an island, entire of itself," Axlerod believes that his job couldn't get done without some help. "My supervisor, Chaplain (Col.) Robert Plocki, is extremely understanding and a great help in assisting me to fulfill my mission."

Yes, Chaplain Harold Axlerod is "committed." Not only is he committed to his religion and his mission, he is committed to his country. "The needs of the troops deserve to be met. I felt that it was my duty to answer the call–after all, we're all part of the greatest country on earth."

23d Infantry Division (Americal) PROJECT HELP, Question of the Week.

Question: I have a relative who is in Vietnam. How can I find out where he is?
Answer: You can write the in-country postal locator at the 56th Army Postal Unit, APO 96491 or call them at Tel: 926-5492.

If you have a question, call H-E-L-P for answers to all questions, except those relating to drugs. Dial D-R-U-G for drug related questions.