

HISTORY



THE AMMO DUMP IN DANANG EXPLODES IN 1969

(Photo courtesy of S/A Lance Arnold)

A LOOK BACK AT NISO VIETNAM

For most members of the Naval Investigative Service who served in Vietnam, the beginning of one of the most memorable and sometimes frightening experiences of their lives began just outside Sacramento, California, at Travis Air Force Base.

Two who made that trip were Mr. Steve Argubright, a retired Navy commander who now works in the NIS Counterintelligence Directorate, and NIS Special Agent Charles A. "Chuck" Palmer, who is now a supervisor in the NIS telecommunications division.

From June 1970 to June 1971, Mr.

Argubright served as the executive officer of what was then known as the U.S. Naval Investigative Service Office Vietnam. During the same period, S/A Palmer was a lieutenant junior grade who served first as the administrative officer and then as an officer-agent.

"Chuck and I flew over together on a MAC flight out of Travis, to Hawaii, then to Clark Airfield in the Philippines, and then on to Tan Son Nhut," Mr. Argubright recalled. "It took about 16 hours and was a very

(Continued)

Spartan flight. No frills. It was very tiring, plus there was the anticipation of going to Vietnam and the unknown. It was an emotionally draining experience.

SAIGON

"When we arrived we were met by (Cmdr.) Donn Burroughs, who was the commanding officer of the NISO, and (Lt.) Stan Zapatka, and some other people. They took us into Saigon, where we dumped our stuff. We were like zombies because we had been traveling so long. We stayed in the Five Oceans BOQ in Cholon, the Chinese district of Saigon, about a block and a half from the office.

"I was so tired, so whipped, that I just crashed. The next morning someone said there had been a rocket attack during the night and asked me if I had heard them. I said 'No, what rockets?' "

At that time, the Saigon office consisted of three officers, six Navy enlisted personnel and approximately 10 NIS Special Agents, according to Mr. Argubright.



TU DO STREET AND THE
CARAVELLE HOTEL

"Normally when guys came into Vietnam they came to Saigon first to get acclimated to the climate," Mr. Argubright said. "Then went out to the various regions where they were assigned, Danang, Binh Thuy, Nah Bay, or wherever."

Some of the memorable landmarks in Saigon included the Continental Palace and the Caravelle Hotel, which were holdovers from the old French colonial days and, of course, the infamous Tu Do Street.



THE CONTINENTAL PALACE

"The Continental Palace and the Caravelle were right across the street from each other," Mr. Argubright said. "They were some of the older, more established hotels that had been there for a long time and were located fairly close to the National Assembly building. They were gathering spots and watering holes for a lot of correspondents and war reporters who came into Saigon to file their stories. A number of news bureaus had offices set up in the area. It was a well known spot to meet people.

"Tu Do street was a combination of many things. It had many vendors and peddlers, lots of colorful wares, a lot of night clubs and restaurants. Of course there were other people who had other things they were peddling and you could get anything on Tu Do street you wanted ...for a price."

Although Mr. Argubright spent most of his time at the office in Saigon, he did some traveling in the field.

"I went to Nah Bay, Cam Ranh Bay and Danang. (NIS Special Agent) Andy Lambert was in Cam Ranh Bay, and (NIS

(Continued)

SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENT

USNAVINSERVO VIETNAM

SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENT

THE FIRST ANNUAL NISOV CHIEU HOI INVITATIONAL GOLF TOURNAMENT WILL BE HELD ON 15 OCTOBER 1970 AT THE SAIGON GOLF AND COUNTRY CLUB (NEAR COMUSMACV COMPOUND), REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM. ALL NIS PERSONNEL WITH A REAL SPIRIT OF COMPETITION ARE CORDIALLY INVITED. STARTING TIMES WILL BE AVAILABLE AT SUNRISE, OR AS THE OPERATIONAL SITUATION PERMITS, AND SUBSEQUENT STARTING TIMES WILL BE SIX MINUTES APART, OR AS INCOMING MORTAR/ROCKET ROUNDS ALLOW.

IN ORDER THAT TEE, FAIRWAY, GREEN, AND 19TH HOLE ARGUMENTS ARE AVOIDED, THE FOLLOWING "RULES OF ENGAGEMENT" HAVE BEEN ESTABLISHED, AND ARE IRREFUTABLE:

1. THE WEARING OF SIDEARMS IS PERMISSABLE; EACH GOLFER DESIRING TO DO SO, HOWEVER, MUST PROCEED TO A PRE-DESIGNATED "SAFE AREA" BEFORE TEEING OFF TO DEMONSTRATE THAT HIS BACKSWING IS OF SUFFICIENT GRACE TO PRECLUDE INADVERTENT HARM TO HIMSELF OR OTHERS.

2. THE CARRYING OF AN M-16 IN THE GOLF BAG IS OPTIONAL. SHOULD THIS BE DONE, HOWEVER, A MAXIMUM OF 13 CLUBS WILL BE ALLOWED AND THE M-16 SHALL NOT BE USED AS A SUBSTITUTE WOOD, LONG IRON, SHORT IRON, SAND WEDGE, OR PUTTER.

3. OUT-OF-COUNTRY PARTICIPANTS WILL BE GIVEN TOP PRIORITY IN THE SPACE-AVAILABLE BUNKERS THAT ARE STRATEGICALLY SITUATED THROUGHOUT THE COURSE. FLAK JACKETS ARE AVAILABLE ON A FIRST-COME-FIRST-SERVE BASIS.

4. ALL GOLFERS WILL BE REQUIRED TO HAVE A CADDY. THE CADDIES ARE CLASSIFIED AS FOLLOWS:

CLASS A: HAS HAD EXTENSIVE CADDY EXPERIENCE UNDER COMBAT CONDITIONS, SPEAKS ENGLISH, IS THOROUGHLY FAMILIAR WITH ALL SAFE AREAS, BUNKERS, AND SHORT CUTS ON THE COURSE, HAS MET QUARTERLY M-16 REQUIREMENTS ON THE FIRING RANGE, AND HAS SUCCESSFULLY COMPLETED AN EXPLOSIVE ORDNANCE DISPOSAL COURSE (EOD).
FEE: 350 PIASTERS (\$2.96)

CLASS B: HAS HAD LIMITED CADDY EXPERIENCE UNDER COMBAT CONDITIONS, SPEAKS VERY LITTLE ENGLISH BUT UNDERSTANDS SIGN LANGUAGE, IS NOT YET FAMILIAR WITH ENTIRE GOLF COURSE, SKIPPED M-16 PRACTICE THE LAST QUARTER, AND HAS ONLY OBSERVED EOD TRAINING CLASSES.
FEE: 250 PIASTERS (\$2.11)

CLASS C: HAS NO CADDY EXPERIENCE UNDER COMBAT CONDITIONS, SPEAKS NO ENGLISH AND IS OFFENDED BY SIGN LANGUAGE, HAS NEVER SEEN THE GOLF COURSE BEFORE, HAS NEVER FIRED A WEAPON OF ANY KIND, DOES NOT KNOW WHAT "EOD" MEANS, BUT HAS A GREAT DEAL OF INSTINCTUAL FORTITUDE.
FEE: 150 PIASTERS (\$1.27) PLUS A 50 PIASTER TIP IF CADDY AND PLAYER SURVIVE THE 18 HOLES.

"RULES OF ENGAGEMENT" FOR GOLF?

After receiving an invitation to the NIS Headquarters golf tournament, the Special Agents and staff of NISO Vietnam decided to come up with a comic version of their own.

5. SEARCHING FOR LOST BALLS IN THE ROUGH IS STRICTLY PROHIBITED. ONLY CLASS A CADDIES WILL BE ALLOWED TO DO SO, AND THERE WILL BE AT LEAST ONE WITH EACH FOURSOME.

6. INDIVIDUAL MINE-DETECTION DEVICES ARE PROHIBITED, AND DEEP DIVOTS WILL BE TAKEN AT THE GOLFER'S OWN RISK. PLAYERS WILL NOT WALK ONTO A GREEN UNTIL THE ALL CLEAR SIGNAL IS GIVEN BY THE SENIOR RESIDENT CLASS A CADDY, SUCH A SIGNAL BEING A LOUD AND CLEAR "OH HH KAY."

7. GOLFERS WILL NOT RETRIEVE THEIR OWN BALL FROM THE CUP; AN EOD TRAINED CADDY WILL DO SO. CUPS HAVE BEEN KNOWN TO CONTAIN AN ADDED LINING OF C-4, AND AN OVEREXUBERANT GOLFER COULD DISRUPT EVERYONE'S GAME. IN ADDITION, IT IS HIGHLY RECOMMENDED THAT PUTTS NOT BE "RAMMED HOME." SHOULD THIS BE NECESSARY, A LOUD, ONE-WORD WARNING SUCH AS "SCATTER" SHOULD BE GIVEN.

8. THERE WILL BE NO STROKE HANDICAP AWARDED FOR SCORING COMPUTATION. ALL LOUSY GOLFERS WILL BE ASSIGNED CLASS A CADDIES, WHILE ALL GOOD GOLFERS WILL BE ASSIGNED CLASS C CADDIES (THAT IS HANDICAP ENOUGH). GOLFERS WILL BE PLACED IN "GOOD" OR "LOUSY" CATEGORIES AS DETERMINED BY SELF-ADMISSIONS, HEARSAY EVIDENCE, AND INFORMATION PROVIDED BY INFORMANTS. SHOULD THIS PROVE INADEQUATE, ARRANGEMENTS WILL BE MADE FOR TOM BRANNON TO BE PRESENT.

9. TRANSPORTATION TO AND FROM THE REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM WILL HAVE TO BE ARRANGED AND PAID FOR BY EACH PARTICIPANT, OR AS "BOONDOGGING" WILL PERMIT. IN-COUNTRY TRANSPORTATION WILL BE MADE AVAILABLE BY NISOV THROUGH LIAISON WITH THE KEROSENE-CYCLO-BURNERS UNION. A SMALL CHARGE, DEPENDING ON THE TRAVEL DISTANCE INVOLVED AND THE INDIVIDUAL "HAGGLING" ABILITY OF THE PASSENGER, WILL BE REQUIRED.

10. BILLETING WILL BE RESERVED IN ADVANCE AT ONE OF THE MANY SUPERB HOTELS ON THE "STREET OF FLOWERS" IN DOWNTOWN SAIGON.

11. DUE TO THE AVAILABILITY OF ONLY FIVE CLASS A CADDIES, ONLY THE FIRST 20 GOLFERS TO APPLY WILL BE REGISTERED. APPLICATIONS MUST BE RECEIVED BY 10 OCTOBER, AND SHOULD INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION: NAME, ADDRESS, TELEPHONE, ETA, NEXT OF KIN.

PRIZES

FIRST PRIZE: FREE HELICOPTER RIDE ~~OVER~~ THE BEAUTIFUL ASHAU VALLEY.

ALL OTHER SURVIVORS: LIFE, LIBERTY, AND THE PURSUIT OF HAPPINESS.

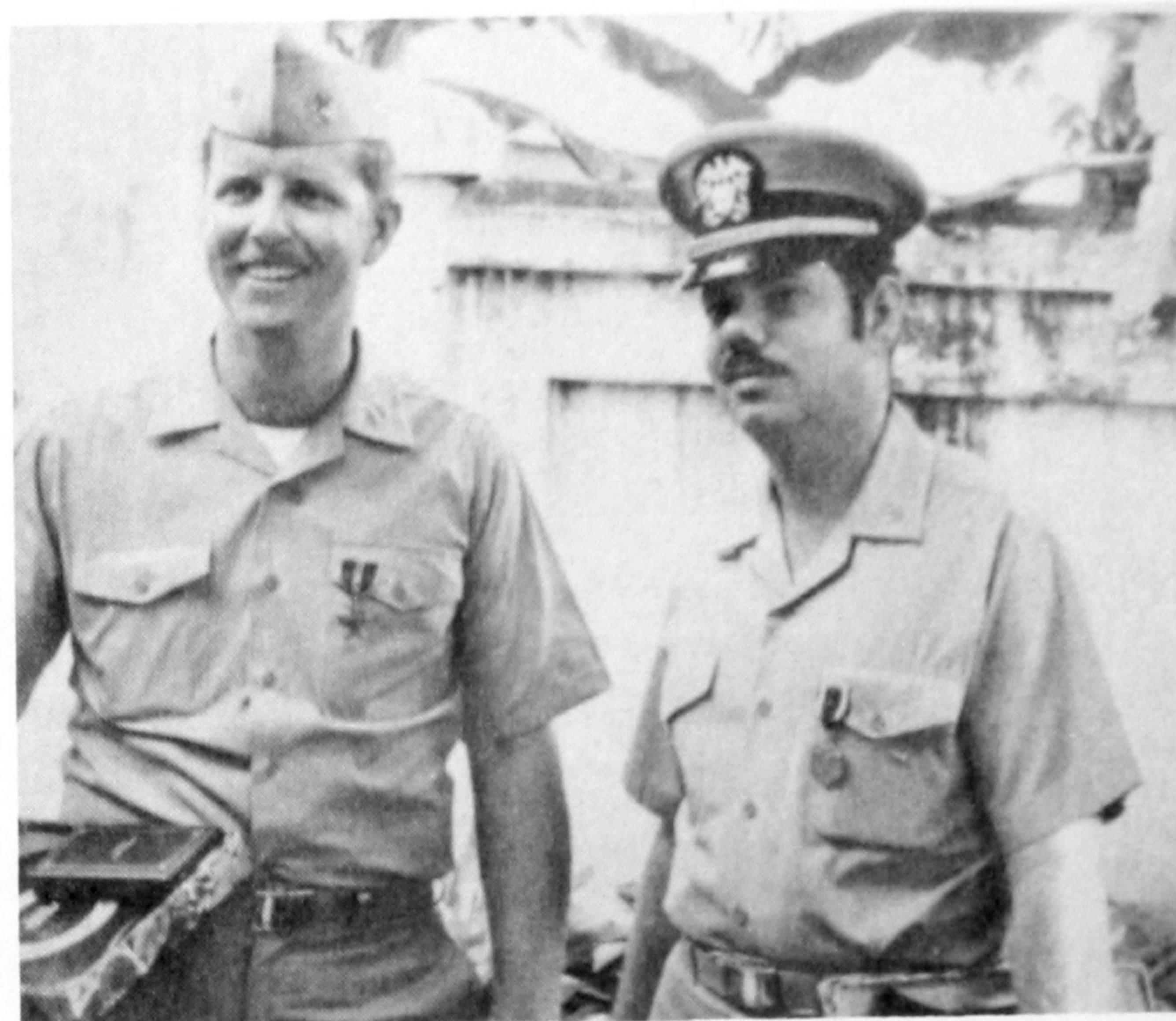
Special Agent) Ed Fitzpatrick was the SAC (then known as the senior resident agent) in Danang at the time."

Although it was relatively safe in Saigon, life in the field was a different matter.

"Andy Lambert was in the officer's club in Cam Rahn Bay one night and decided he'd go back to his office to work," Mr. Argubright said. "Right after he left, a VC 120mm howitzer round hit the club and killed practically everybody in it and destroyed the building."

Sometimes even the most innocent assignments could cause problems. Then-Lt.(j.g.) Palmer, for instance, had majored in Police Science at New Mexico State, and was pressed into service as an officer-agent at NISRA Saigon, utilized as an agent in the field. It was in Vietnam that he learned an important lesson.

"The SAC, Fred Givens, had a lead from Rota Spain," Special Agent Palmer said. "I've never forgiven Rota for this. I had to go out and interview a guy about a pallet of bedsheets that



Lt. Steve Argubright, at left, after receiving the Bronze Star Medal, and Lt. (j.g.) Chuck Palmer after receiving the Navy Commendation Medal in Vietnam.

supposedly disappeared while he was a master-at-arms in Rota.

"The guy was assigned to a little forward boat base, up in the Parrot's Beak area, right near Cambodia. It was about 60 or 70 miles away, but it took about three hours to get there.

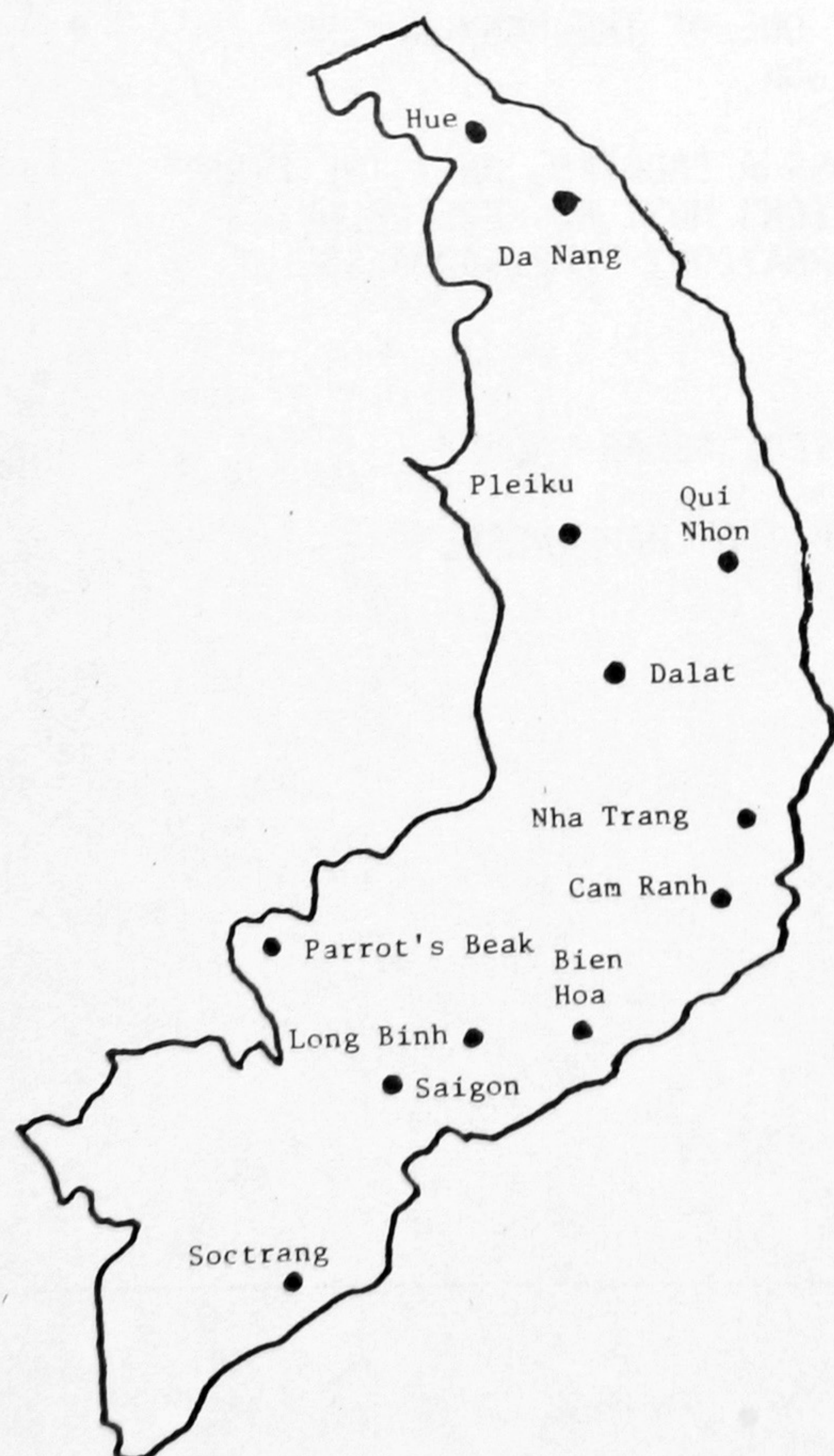
"I drove out there with a second class petty officer riding shotgun. I finally found the former master-at-arms and interviewed. All he said was he didn't remember much about a pallet of sheets. I took a brief statement, and when I say brief, I mean just a couple of paragraphs."

When he returned to the office, Special Agent Givens took one look at the scanty statement and ordered the aspiring young agent back out into the field to take a "proper" statement. This time, however, the trip to Parrot's Beak wasn't as easy.

"There was gunfire all over the place," Special Agent Palmer recalled. "We went through rubber plantations and on either side there were rows and rows of rubber trees. At an oblique angle you couldn't see because they were so dense. Then we came to a point where there had just been a firefight. Along the side of the road were some dead VC (Viet Cong) and some RVN (Republic of Vietnam) soldiers grinning over their victory.

"There was a lot of firing on either side of the road and every time we

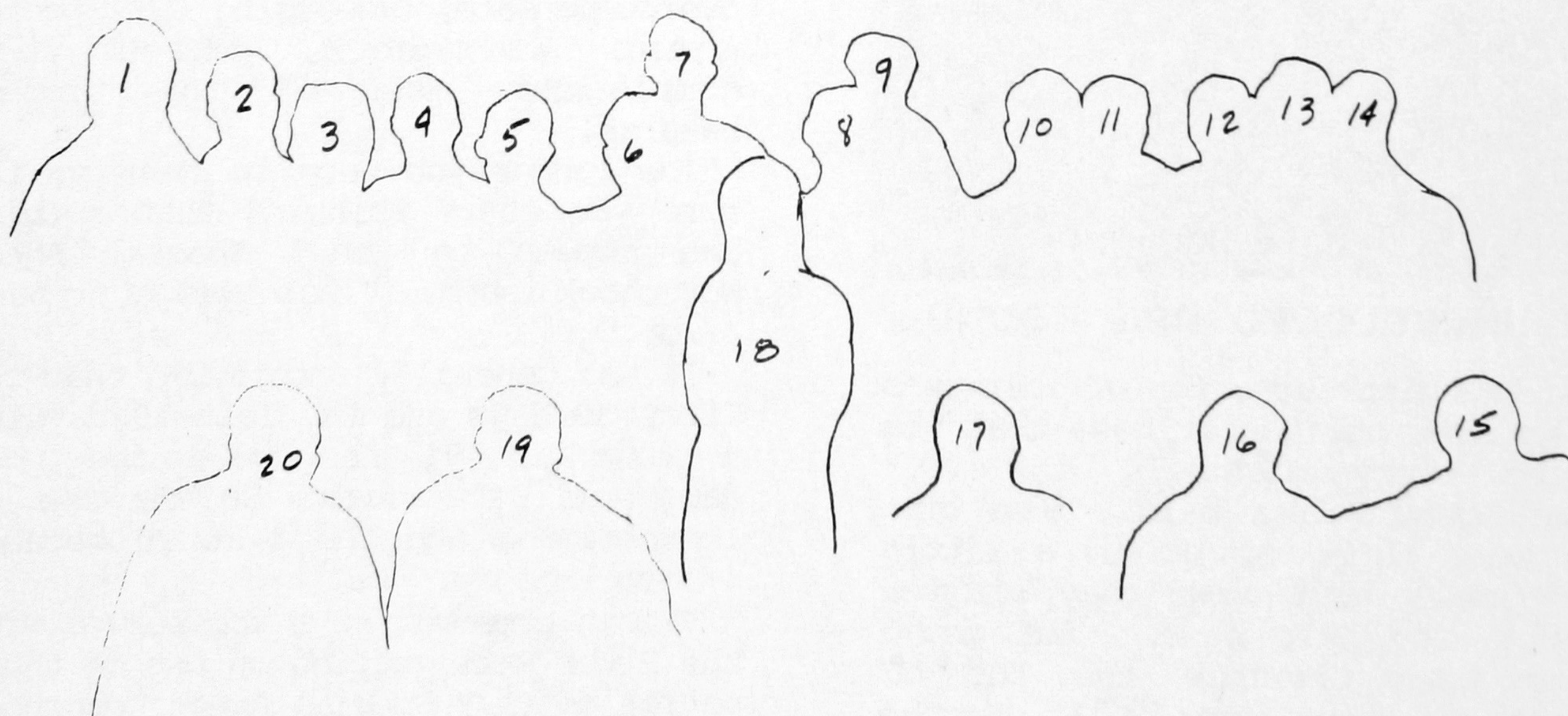
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Vietnam

USNAVINSERVO VIETNAM

NOVEMBER 1970



1. Steve Argubright
2. J.D. Whitmire
3. YNC Wm. Ludohack
4. Clay Spradley
5. YN2 Mike Johnson

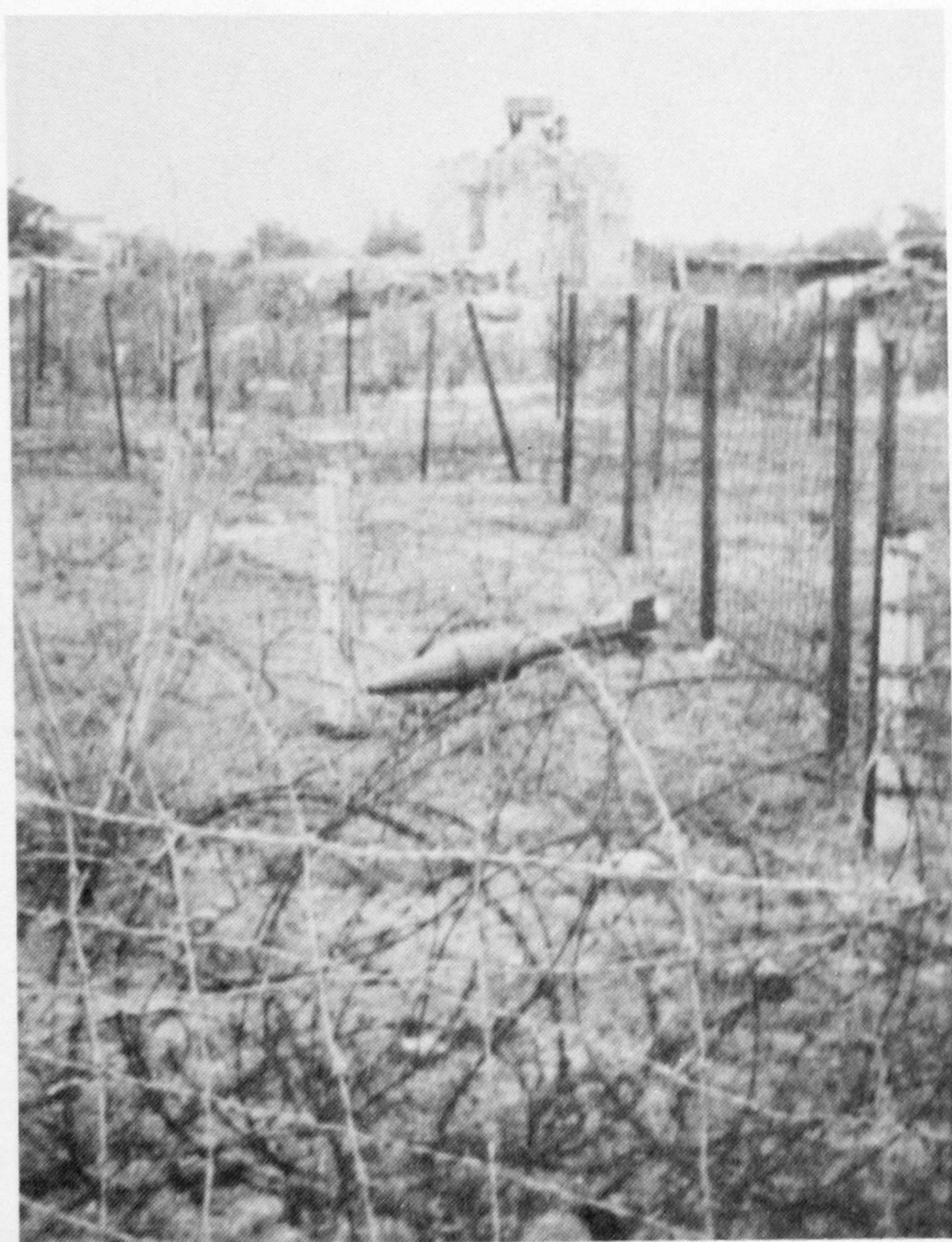
6. YN2 Bruce Robinson
7. Doug Hubbard
8. YNSN Dale Sedivy
9. Pete Hopkinson
10. CDR. Donn Burrows

11. Allan Kersenbrock
12. Andy Lambert
13. Bob Westberry
14. Rudy Dees
15. YN1 Wm. Schenker

16. Chuck Palmer
17. Fred Givens
18. Miss Hoang Thi Thu
19. Stan Zapatka
20. YN2 Jim Thomas

heard more firing, we'd just stomp on the accelerator a little more. Finally, we got to the base and I took a more detailed statement. I guess I put everything I could in there, even stuff about his grandmother. Then we got the hell out of there. When we got back I showed Fred the statement. He was satisfied and I haven't written a one-page statement since."

Despite the hazards there were lighter moments and for Special Agent Palmer, one of those moments came at the Navy base in Dong Tam.



AN UNEXPLODED RPG ROUND

"The transient area for officers was near an Army helicopter base that was rocketed every night by the VC," Special Agent Palmer said. "One time there were three of us in a little hooch (small hut) when they started rocketing the helo base. But those rockets were terrible and the VC couldn't aim them very well, so the three of us in the hooch went running for the sandbag bunker which was right outside.

"I guess I was the slowest because I was the last one out of the hooch. Just as I hit the door of the bunker, a rocket went off. It was probably

about 150 meters away, but it seemed like it was closer. I dove into the bunker and came down on the other two guys.

"Then everything was quiet...deathly quiet. Suddenly I heard this muffled noise. It was the guy on the bottom. He was face down in the mud with the second guy on top of him and he was about to suffocate. We started unpiling and as the tension eased we started laughing. We were really scared and then all of a sudden this happened and we just laughed."

Being scared was not uncommon, but most people tried to hide it and NIS Special Agents were no different.

"People were probably more scared when they were alone," NIS Special Agent Bill Worochock said. "But when they were among themselves there was a tendency to be macho or to show off their bravado. I made a strong effort not to be alone."

Special Agent Worochock is now the Director of the NIS Counterintelligence Directorate. From July 1971 until July 1972 he served as an agent in Vietnam, primarily stationed at the NIS Resident Unit at Binh Thuy (Bin Two-EE) located in the Mekong Delta.

In an attempt to deal with fear, there was a tendency to overcompensate, according to Special Agent Worochock, which made complacency one of the biggest hazards.

"The longer you were in country, the more you start thinking that nothing can happen to you," Special Agent Worochock said. "That was a common error."

It was generally considered that the first 30 days and the last 30 days of a tour in Vietnam were the most dangerous; the first 30 because of inexperience and the last 30 because of complacency.

"I can remember guys who served with the River Rats getting on top of their patrol boats," Special Agent Worochock said, referring to Navy personnel who served on river gunboats. "They thought they were immune. They'd be sitting up there in a deck chair, a shell would hit and the next thing you know there was nothing left."

There were many dangers and
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drawbacks, but there were some positive points, too.

"There was an esprit de corps and camaraderie, not only among the NIS agents, but among the Navy personnel we came in contact with, because we had to rely so much on each other," Special Agent Worochock said. "We lived with these folks 24 hours a day so we got to know them pretty well."

The type of cases NIS Special Agents worked in Vietnam included fraggings, sabotage, some narcotics, some black marketing, some misappropriation, homicides, and a limited amount of collection, according to Special Agent Worochock.



S/A BILL WOROCHOCK AND S/A TED CAUBLE LEAVING ON THE "VUNG TAU EXPRESS"

"It was basically a criminal-type of operation," Special Agent Worochock said. "For instance, we had an operation involving an RVN captain who was bribing personnel to misappropriate construction equipment from a facility known as Newport, just outside of Saigon. In turn, he was using it to build residences for personal use by Vietnamese.

"We had a chief petty officer who was our source. That particular bust involved the RVN captain moving truckloads of military construction equipment with the chief acting as the escort to get him through the gate. As they came through the gate they were stopped and apprehended. We arrested both the RVN Captain and the chief to protect the chief's identity. There were probably 20 duce-and-a-half (2 1/2 ton) truckloads.

That particular investigation was controlled by Marshal Whidden, who is now the SAC in London."

Another case Special Agent Worochock remembered involved sabotage.

"Two helicopters were flying in formation out of a unit in the Parrots Beak called Ben Luc," he said. "They were flying about 600 feet, clear weather and no VC in the area. The lead pilot radioed 'I'm taking one-to-one vibration, which means for every turn of the rotor blades you get a hop, which isn't unusual in turbulence, but which is very unusual in clear weather. As soon as he radioed that, the second pilot later recalled seeing an explosion, a fireball and the rotorhead falling off and what he thought was one of the rotor blades falling off almost simultaneously with the explosion.'"

The lead helicopter crashed and all the crew was lost. As a result, all Navy helicopters in IV Corps were grounded except one.

"Based on the circumstances I was asked to go out and do a crime scene investigation," Special Agent Worochock said. "About halfway to the crime scene we started taking one-to-one vibrations, so we sat down in a rice paddy and walked to Ben Luc. When we got to Ben Luc, we recovered the rotor head.

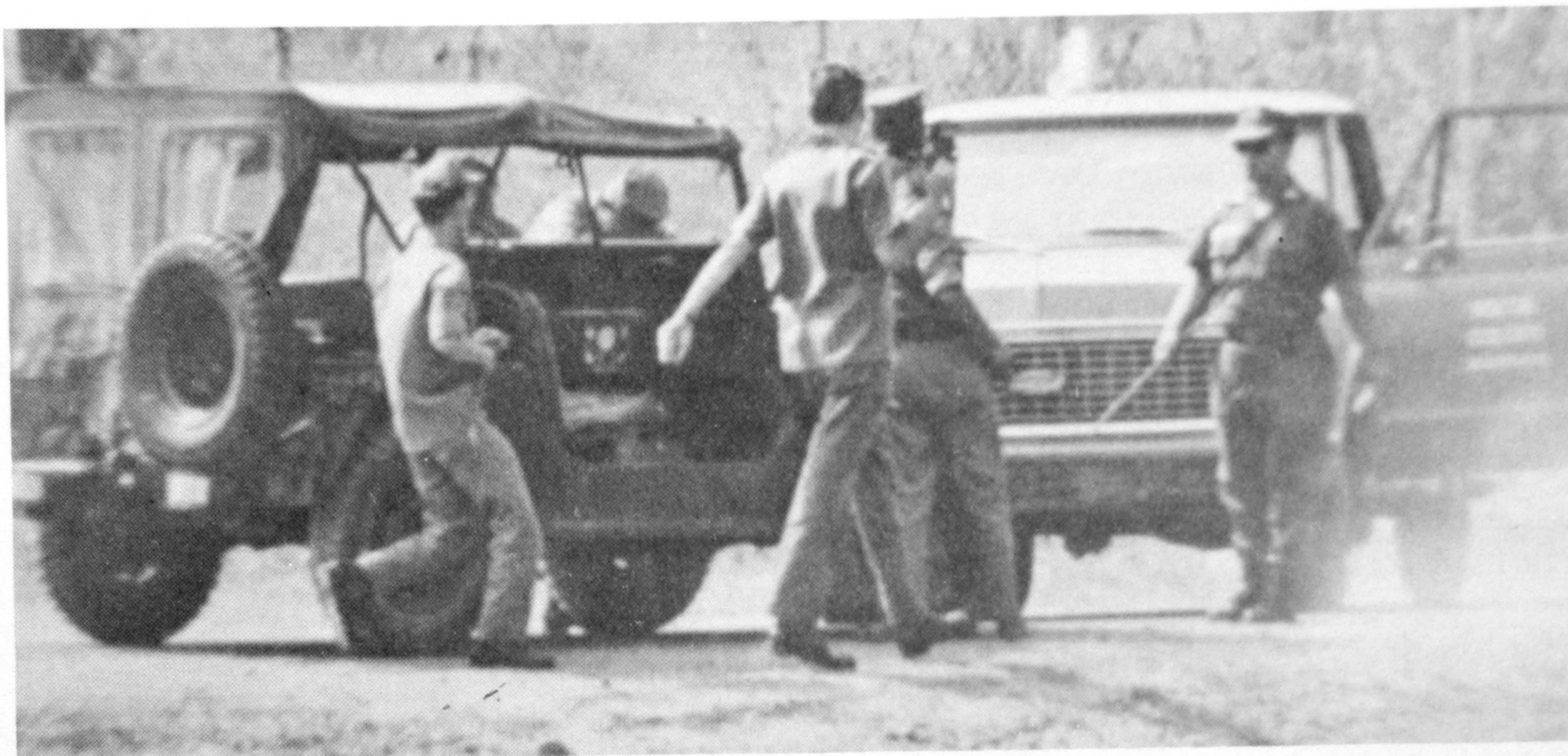
"The investigation later revealed that an individual had taken a hack saw and had run it across the leading edge of one of the blades. Then it became a question of stress. And the stress on that brass resulted in that blade suffering a catastrophic failure. And that was the reason for the explosion.

"It was done at the manufacturer, by anti-war people on the line. Every blade coming out of the manufacturer was X-rayed and the guy on the assembly line was in cahoots with the guy in quality control. They had done this on a number of blades. We sent leads back and examined the X-rays and were able to pinpoint at least one other crash that would have resulted from the same type of activity. That was referred back to the states."

For Special Agent Worochock, the experience in Vietnam was a valuable one.

"I would say the most important thing to come out of Vietnam was reliance on each other," Special Agent

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NIS BUSTS RVN CAPTAIN

In the top picture, NIS Special Agent Bill Worochock (center, with left arm swinging back) moves in with other NIS Special Agents and Vietnamese authorities to apprehend an RVN captain who was attempting to misappropriate 20 truckloads of construction equipment. Below, Vietnamese officials count bribe money seized in the operation.

Worochock said. "I think we all brought something different to the job based on background and expertise. But invariably you found out that you had a shortcoming somewhere. And the reliance factor came from saying "What do I do best and what do you do best, and can we make up for the shortfalls in each of us so we put together a pretty good team. It carried forward,

I think, throughout the majority of my career, especially when I was working up through the street. You can do so much better together."

DANANG

Special Agent Peter Reilly is now the NIS Inspector General. But from March 1968 until March 1969 he was the
(Continued)

Senior Resident Agent (Special Agent-in-Charge) at NISRA Danang.

NISRA Danang was responsible for all of I Corps, which included the northern most provinces of south Vietnam. The Marine Corps comprised the majority of U.S. forces in I Corps; however, Navy, Army (Air Cav) and ROK (Republic of Korea) forces were also present in I Corps.

Unlike most personnel who traveled from CONUS to Vietnam on MAC contract flights, Special Agent Reilly arrived on Marine C-130 direct from of his previous duty station in Taipei, in the Republic of China. This departure from the norm ultimately caused him some problems.

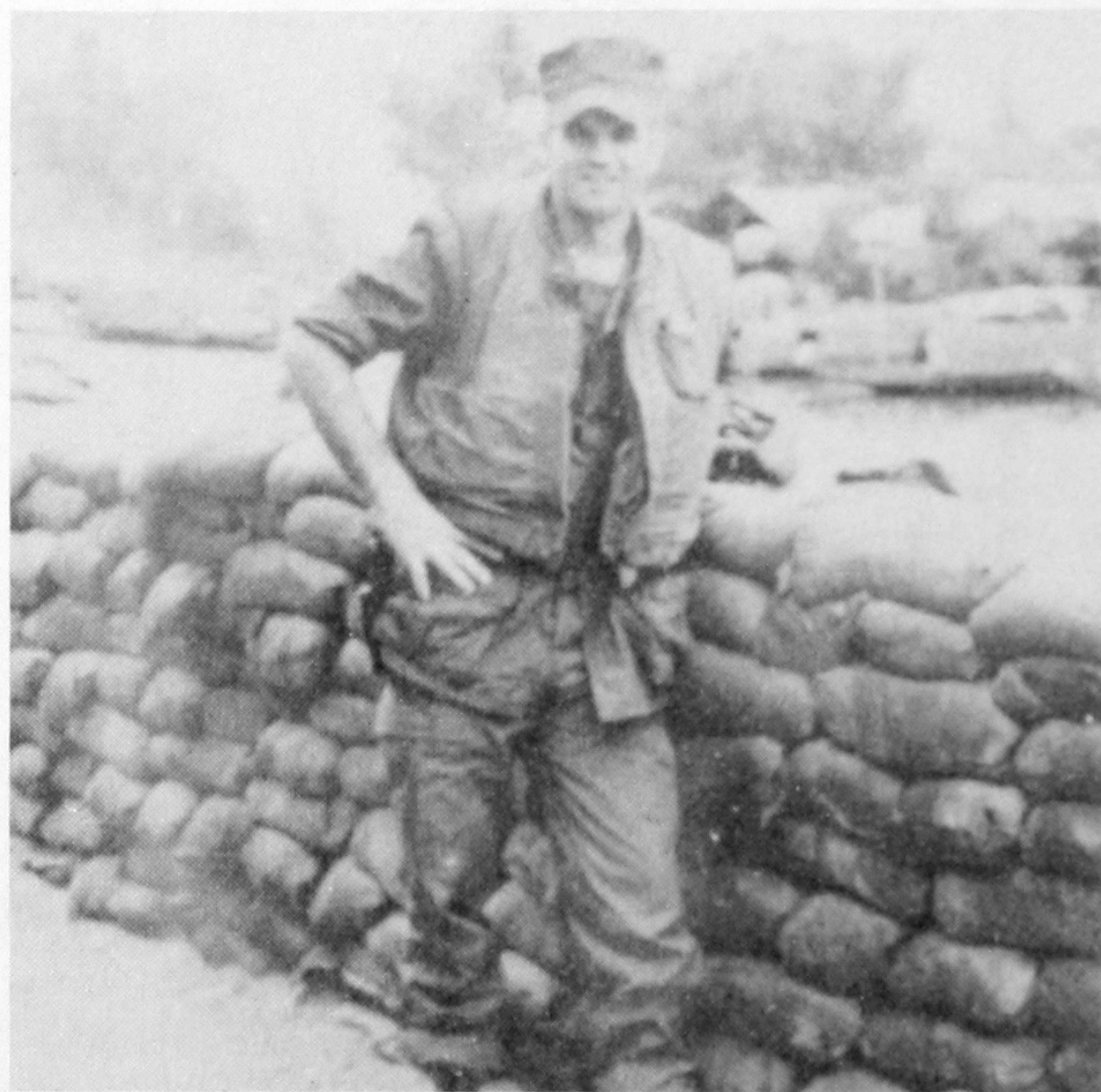
"Since I arrived in-country on an operational aircraft, I did not consider the requirement to obtain an entry stamp in my passport," Special Agent Reilly said, recalling what he now looks back on as a humorous incident. "A year later when my tour ended and I was scheduled to rotate, I could not depart because as far as the Vietnamese were concerned, I never arrived.

"I did some scrambling around and with the assistance of some 'contacts', I was able to obtain a retroactive entry stamp so I could ride the 'Big Bird' on that 366th day."



S/A REILLY IN QUANG TRI IN 1968

For the most part, however, it was a time when there was little to laugh about. Special Agent Reilly arrived just after the famous Tet offensive of 1968 and the costly battle for control of the former imperial city of Hue (pronounced WAY) had ended. Mortar and rocket attacks, and infiltrations of Danang by Viet Cong sappers were a constant source of concern.



S/A LANCE ARNOLD IN HUE IN 1969

During his tour, Special Agent Reilly observed first-hand what combat does to people.

"There is absolutely no question that the environment affected individual behavior," Special Agent Reilly said. "I witnessed an incident where a staff sergeant was denied a pass to go to one of the in-country recreation areas, and just put an M-16 on full auto and quite calmly stitched his OIC (officer in charge), a Marine captain. He emptied the whole clip on him."

Another incident Special Agent Reilly investigated involved a Marine Corps sergeant who was assigned to support a 155 howitzer unit, part of the perimeter defense of Danang. due to the sensitive nature of his duties, he was prohibited from leaving the hill (Hill 55), where his unit was situated. However, on the night in question, without authorization, he joined a patrol that left the hill at dusk to set a night ambush. Around

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OPIUM LABELS

The opium labels shown above came from packages seized by NIS Special Agents in July 1970 during a narcotics investigation in South Vietnam.

midnight, while set in a Vietnamese cemetery, the patrol leader was startled by the sound of a rifle shot nearby. When they went to find out what happened, they found the Marine sergeant dead of what was later determined to be a self-inflicted gunshot wound to the head.

"He had become involved with a group in the United States that believed in reincarnation," Special Agent Reilly said. "After he came to Vietnam, he became enamored with a Vietnamese peasant girl who was permitted to sell trinkets to Marines during daylight hours. He had obviously convinced himself that the only way he could be happy with her was to be reincarnated as a Vietnamese farmer. Prior to leaving on the ambush, he relinquished all of his personal possessions to her and assured her that he would return as a farmer."

"I do not regard these incidents as a reflection of our military," Special

Agent Reilly said. "I believe that existing in a combat environment for any length of times alters the traditional values, particularly the regard for human life. When you witness seemingly innocent actions by individuals not identified as combatants, which result in death and destruction, the 'animal instinct' comes into play.

"For example, we had a refuse dump on the perimeter of Danang which was manned during the day by security forces, primarily to control the activities of indigenous citizenry who combed the dump for anything of value. Most of these individuals were women and children who would normally be regarded as non-threatening. We experienced a number of incidents at the dump where members of the security force were killed or wounded as a result of booby traps placed in vehicles, on benches or elsewhere by

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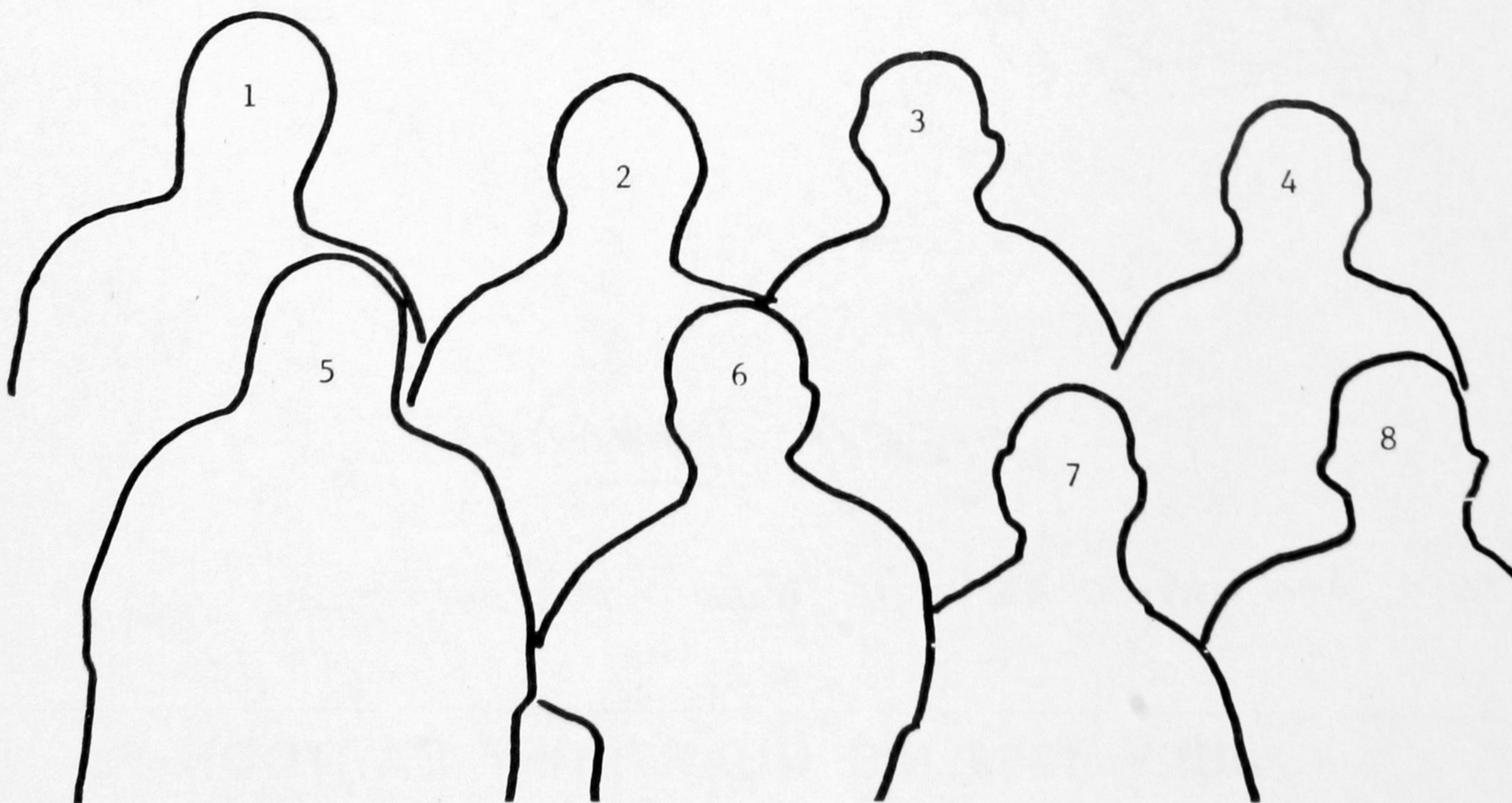
'innocents'. Consequently, people were unable or unwilling to differentiate between situations that were life-threatening and those that were not. Invariably, there were incidents that constituted a criminal

act. This presented both the investigator and the prosecutor with the greatest dilemma."

"I suspect that this is a fact of life in war and it was probably no

(Continued)

NISRA DANANG 1967



1. Pete Segersten
2. Bob Powers
3. Bob Hall

4. Bruce Middleton
5. Jack Meyer
6. George Meglemery

7. Carl Merritt
8. Howard Dilks



Loose

NISRA DANANG

TELL DON, HELL NO WE DIDN'T FINISH THAT 1(A)!

35

JULY 1969 NIS QUARTERLY CARTOON

During Vietnam, NIS Special Agents were still responsible for conducting background investigations, which were classified as 1(A). There were times when NIS Special Agents conducting 1(A) investigations found themselves in positions like the two in the cartoon above. The "Don" they are referring to is Don McCoy, who was the Senior Resident Agent in Danang.



"NISRU KHE SANH"

In the picture at left, Special Agent Carl Merritt (on the right) is shown with a Marine RECON officer in 1966. His office and quarters are shown at right.

different than it was in previous wars, although the advent of daily video coverage certainly conveyed a different impression to the American public."

Special Agent Reilly is convinced that the Marine Corps succeeded in Vietnam, pointing out that by 1969 the Viet Cong infrastructure had been effectively decimated. More and more it was found that cadre, infiltrated from North Vietnam, were sustaining the anti-government political/insurgent efforts.

Despite the hardships, Special Agent Reilly said his tour in Vietnam did have its rewards.

"One of the most rewarding aspects of the experience," according to Special Agent Reilly, "were the friendships resulting from living, working and surviving with a group of individuals who were the best of the best. I include in this group the many fine Marines, particularly those in the CI (Counterintelligence) community, who were such an important part of the NIS experience in Vietnam."

THE EARLY DAYS

Special Agent Bruce Middleton served in Vietnam from January 1967 to February 1968. He spent his first six months working out of Danang, and then opened the NIS office at Cam Ranh Bay.

Like many NIS Special Agents who served in Vietnam, Special Agent Middleton had his share of close calls.

"I had gone to Pham Thiet, about 40 miles south of Cam Ranh Bay," Special Agent Middleton said, recalling one incident. "We were inserted on the beach by swift boat."

"I met with the NILO (Naval Intelligence Liaison Officer) and asked him what the IIRs (intelligence information reports) had to say about the probability of enemy action in the area, since it was just after the Tet offensive of 1968. He said there was nothing to worry about."

Special Agent Middleton stayed in Pham Thiet that night and planned to return to Cam Ranh Bay with the NILO, for what he expected would be a relatively safe trip.

"The next morning he shows up in a jeep and there's a box of M-79 grenades in the front," Special Agent Middleton said. "He and the driver are armed to the teeth and he throws me an M-16."

"I said 'I thought you said the IIRs said there was nothing to worry about.' Then he told me he had read the wrong ones and as soon as I got into the jeep, he drove off like a madman."

About halfway to Cam Ranh they stopped at a special forces camp.

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Just before they pulled into the camp, they noticed a black Citroen following them about a quarter of a mile back. When they pulled into the camp, it passed by.

"We spent about 20 minutes in the camp looking at intelligence reports, then we left and continued on our way," he said. "About 20 minutes after we left camp, we came upon the old Citroen. It was in a ditch, burning and with no signs of life. I wanted to stop to see if there was anything we could do, but the NILO just kept going as fast as he could. He was right. He had to get us out of the kill zone in case there was another ambush."



QUARTERS IN DANANG

It was November 1967. Special Agent Pete Segersten remembered the date because it was just a few days after the Marine Corps Birthday and he been visiting some of the remote Marine outposts near the demilitarized zone (DMZ).

He was returning to Danang with a small group when they spotted something that didn't look right.

"We saw a wood cutter standing by the road, just looking at us," Special Agent Segersten recalled. "He was just staring at us, like something was up. So we backtracked and took another route."

Special Agent Segersten and the others later learned that some Marines were ambushed in the same area just a few hours after they left.

Another time, a group Special Agent Segersten was traveling with wasn't so lucky.

"I was in a convoy that got ambushed," Special Agent Segersten said. "Four trucks got hit."

That was the way it was in Vietnam.

"We never had one place we lived in," Special Agent Segersten said. "Carl (Special Agent Merritt) and I were assigned to cover the Third Marine Division, which covered the DMZ down to north of Danang."

"Normally we worked out of the post office, because they knew where all the units were. We used to bum rides on convoys, helicopters, jeeps and mail trucks. At times we even rode back with the body bags to Danang."

When they left Danang they went to places with names that are now part of military history.

"There were a string of artillery posts along the DMZ where we would go to work cases," Special Agent Segersten said. "Khe Sahn, Camp Carroll, Gia Linh, Con Thien..."

At times, Special Agents Segersten and Merritt would have to wait as many as five days before they could depart, because of hostile action. Even under those conditions, NIS Special Agents were expected to support their investigations with paperwork.

"We used to carry two bags with us," Special Agent Segersten said. "In one bag you would carry your clothes and shaving equipment. In the other you would carry the old ditto mat paper (a wax-coated paper used to print duplicates). We didn't have Xerox machines in those days. We'd write statements on ditto mat paper and then go back to Danang and put them on the machine that would print copies."

EPILOGUE

The Naval Investigative Service went into Vietnam in 1966 and stayed there until the waning days of the war. For its accomplishments Naval Investigative Service Office in Vietnam later received the Navy Meritorious Unit Commendation. In addition, those who served in Vietnam have the satisfaction of knowing they helped write another chapter in the history of an organization with a

(Continued)

proud tradition of service that dates back to World War I.

Today's NIS Special Agents are successors of the agents and operatives who served as part of the Office of Naval Intelligence (ONI) during World Wars I and II, and during the Korean Conflict. Some agents are still onboard today who joined the organization when it was known as ONI. The name was changed on February 4, 1966, when the Naval Investigative Service (NIS) was established and use of the acronym ONI to identify the Navy's investigative service was officially discontinued.

Although much has changed since the early days of ONI, the mission of NIS remains the same; to provide criminal investigative and counterintelligence support to Department of the Navy assets worldwide. NIS Special Agents are currently stationed at more than 170 locations throughout the world, including the Persian Gulf and other parts of the Middle East.

And what about the possibility that NIS Special Agents may find themselves in a combat zone again?

"It could happen very easily...very easily," Special Agent Worochock said. "I should point out that we had no difficulty in getting agents to go to Vietnam. They were all volunteers. We never ordered anyone in there.

"I expect that same thing would hold true in the future. If there was a crisis situation, whether it be in the Persian Gulf or Southeast Asia even, I think you would see the same response today that you saw in the late 1960s and early 1970s."

If another war occurs, NIS Special Agents will go where they have to in order to fulfill their mission of providing criminal investigative and counterintelligence support to the Department of the Navy. NIS Special Agents operated in Lebanon, and there are currently NIS Special Agents in the Persian Gulf.

Unfortunately, the words of one of the ancient Greek philosophers are as true today as they were when he said them more than 2,000 years ago.

*"Only the dead will know
the end of war."*

Vietnam Duty Roster

Below are listed the names of NIS Special Agents still on active status who served in Vietnam. Although a thorough search was made of the records in the Career Services Department, there may be some names which have been omitted due to lost or incomplete records.

NAME	DUSTA		
ARNOLD, Lance Morgan	0022	MCBRIDE, Daniel Alexander	83HQ
BAKER, James Jeffrey	03PP	MERRITT, Carl James	0026
BISCOMB, William Milford	0000	MIDDLETON, Bruce Mitchell	0026
BOURKE, Michael George	11HQ	PAGE, Charles Vanburen	0021
BRANNON, Thomas E.	60HQ	PALMER, Charles Arthur	0027
CAUBLE, Charles Theodore	03LV	PENDER, James P.	11HQ
DEES, Rudolph David	11NI	POWERS, Robert Joseph	0023
DILL, John	12SE	REILLY, Peter	0000
FERGUSON, Thomas Edward	08SL	SEEHORN, Frederick Reed	0024
FERRELL, Lawrence Earl	0025	SEGERSTEN, Peter Gaughen	0022
FOCHT, Walter Stanfill	11MM	SIPE, Allan Keith	11ND
HEMPHILL, Eddie Wilson	00TF	TRIPPLETT, John Wissler	0026
HICKS, Theodore John	11PL	TUGWELL, Robert Joseph	05NF
JOHNSON, George Ben	0026	WEBB, Donald Lee	06HQ
JONES, Michael Bishop	06LE	WHIDDEN, Marshal Tilden	60LN
		WOROCHOCK, William Anthony	0022



THE SECRETARY OF THE NAVY
WASHINGTON

The Secretary of the Navy takes pleasure in presenting the
MERITORIOUS UNIT COMMENDATION to the

U. S. NAVAL INVESTIGATIVE SERVICE OFFICE, VIETNAM

for service as set forth in the following

CITATION:

For meritorious service in providing investigative and counterintelligence support to Naval commands serving with elements of Free World Military Assistance Forces in the Republic of Vietnam from 1 November 1966 to 29 February 1972. In the face of extremely difficult and hazardous conditions, including attacks on office compounds by enemy forces, the personnel attached to the U. S. Naval Investigative Service Office, Vietnam worked long and arduously in performing duties that contributed significantly to the successful accomplishment of the mission of the Naval Investigative Service. This effort was not restricted to conducting security and criminal investigations and collecting and reporting counterintelligence information, but also included preparation of special estimates, issuance of warnings of enemy operations, and production of other timely intelligence. The skill, dedication, perseverance and teamwork of the officers and men of the U. S. Naval Investigative Service Office, Vietnam, were outstanding, and their unfailing devotion to duty and sense of responsibility were in keeping with the highest traditions of the United States Naval Service.

Secretary of the Navy

