

# Jumbo Project Runs Out of Gas

SAIGON (UPI)—All for the want of a three-ton elephant or two, U.S. and Vietnamese government forces stand to lose a little Vietnamese village they have long labored to keep out of the grip of the Viet Cong.

Tra Bong desperately needs two elephants to haul timber over the rough terrain around the

sleepy valley hamlet. Machines have been tested and failed. The villagers believe only elephants can do the job.

Without the beasts, Tra Bong will surely lose its one and only industry, a sawmill put into operation last year with the aid of the U.S. Army Special Forces, according to Green Beret Capt. Scott

Gantt, 29, of Cross City, Fla.

Gantt told UPI the loss of the sawmill industry would force some 400 families of Tra Bong to pull out, leaving the little valley in the hands of the Communists.

Gantt, with the help of the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), has purchased two elephants for Tra

Bong at a cost of 70,000 piasters (about \$590) each.

There was one hitch, however. The elephants were purchased at Ban Don, about 170 miles southwest of Tra Bong, located in an isolated valley surrounded by Viet Cong in South Vietnam's central coastal plains.

(Continued on Back Page, Col. 1)

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## Returns to Saigon

# Abrams Briefs LBJ, Advisers

WASHINGTON (UPI)—Gen. Creighton W. Abrams briefed President Johnson and his ranking military, diplomatic and intelligence advisers Wednesday on the outlook in Vietnam before flying back to Saigon,

still the top contender to succeed Gen. William C. Westmoreland.

Secrecy surrounded Abrams' unannounced two-day visit to Washington that included no less than three meetings with the President, who is reviewing the entire U.S. war effort.

Johnson characteristically maintained the suspense surrounding his choice of a new U.S. commander in Vietnam by withholding any comment on the matter. Westmoreland will become Army chief of staff on July 2.

Abrams, who conferred with the President at lunch Tuesday and again that evening at the White House, joined a meeting (Continued on Back Page, Col. 4)



President Johnson and Gen. Creighton W. Abrams listen at a White House meeting of the National Security Council. Abrams is Gen. William C. Westmoreland's top deputy. Behind the President is Undersecretary of State Nicholas Katzenbach. (AP Radiophoto)

## U.S. Military Spends Less

WASHINGTON (AP) — Military spending dropped in February by 10.6 per cent to just under \$6.2 billion, the Treasury reported Wednesday.

At the same time, the department's monthly statement of income and outgo showed that military spending for the first eight months of the fiscal year totalled \$50.28 billion.

If this pace is continued over the next four months, military spending for the fiscal year would exceed the \$73.69 billion projected by President Johnson in his budget message to Congress in January.

# Guards Use Tear Gas Again In 2-President Panama Crisis

PANAMA CITY (UPI)—Political passions boiled over again in Panama Wednesday, with national guardsmen using tear gas for the second straight day to suppress street disorders.

The demonstrators were protesting the continuance in office of impeached President Marco A. Robles, whom the opposition-dominated National Assembly ousted Sunday, but who refused to obey.

The national guard, the country's only armed force, backed

Robles and Guard Chief Brig. Gen. Bolivar Vallarino reiterated the support Wednesday pending a ruling by the supreme court, due to convene April 1, on who is legal president.

The assembly's appointee as president, Max Delvalle, in a television broadcast bitterly charged the guard with "open rebellion" in forcibly preventing the assembly from meeting Tuesday. The incident triggered wide disorders, after which more than 100 persons were

treated for tear gas inhalation. Delvalle said he would try to convince the assembly again but did not say when.

Robles was at his guard-protected offices in the presidential palace Wednesday while Delvalle convened his cabinet at his residence.

The city was generally calm and most businesses were open. Guardsmen showed they meant to keep the capital orderly by using tear gas to break up a (Continued on Back Page, Col. 3)

## Threatened Firemen Finally Act

HIGH RIDGE, Mo. (AP) — The volunteer High Ridge fire department was forced by an angry crowd armed with guns and clubs to put out a fire Tuesday night, an assistant fire chief said.

Robert Ellison, assistant chief, said his men had no chance to determine whether the house exhibited the required \$7 fire protection tag. He estimated 75 persons in the crowd. "We'll throw you right into the flames if you don't put it out," Ellison said he was told. "They even grabbed me and grabbed the hose out of my hands," he said.

The burning home was five (Continued on Back Page, Col. 4)

## No More Boob Tubes

INDIANAPOLIS, Ind. (AP)—Sheriff Lee Eads of Indianapolis has ordered deputies to get rid of their television sets. Eight prisoners have escaped from the county jail recently—apparently while the deputies were watching television.

# Jets Bomb 3 N. Viet Airfields

S&S Vietnam Bureau

SAIGON—Three North Vietnamese airfields were hit by U.S. jets in radar-bombing raids Tuesday.

Air Force F4 Phantoms blasted the MIG-capable Yen Bai base 78 miles northwest of Hanoi and the airfield outside Dong Hoi. Damage assessment was impossible because of overcast.

Navy pilots bombed Cat Bi airfield four miles south of Haiphong, fired the Hai Duong chemical plant halfway between Haiphong and Hanoi, and reported direct hits on the Yen Vien railroad yard six miles northwest of Hanoi.

Carrier-based A6 Intruders started explosions at the Nam Dinh thermal power plant 45 miles southwest of Hanoi and pounded railway sidings and facilities southwest of Thanh Hoa.

Skyhawks from the carrier Ticonderoga struck an enemy artillery site nine miles northwest of Gio Linh.

Air Force F105 Thunderchiefs destroyed a radar site 80 miles northwest of Hanoi, while communication lines and storage areas in the Panhandle were hit by F111 fighter-bombers for the second day.

Marine A6s touched off explosions at a ferry 17 miles north of Dong Hoi as other Intruders worked over truck and river traffic between Dong Hoi and the DMZ.

Air Force B52s flew eight missions in South Vietnam Tuesday night and early Wednesday. Seven were in support of the Khe Sanh combat base.

## 9 Suspects Caught in Aussie Net

SAIGON (AP) — Australian Army spokesmen reported Wednesday that troops from the Australian task force have completed a 24-hour cordon and search of a coastal area 50 miles southeast of Saigon, screening more than 2,000 persons and detaining nine as Viet Cong suspects.

The operation at Long Hai village, on the coast of the South China Sea, was code-named Ashgrove Tram and was part of Operation Pinnaroo, a sweep of the hill country east of Long Hai. In addition to the nine suspects detained, eight persons without proper identification were apprehended, the spokesmen said.

U.S. Navy boats patrolled the coast while Australian troops were moved by vehicle and helicopters into positions surrounding the village. They swept into Long Hai early Tuesday and quickly screened the inhabitants, the spokesmen said.

Other Australian troops meanwhile continued to search out cave complexes and enemy camp areas as part of continuing Operation Pinnaroo.

Three Viet Cong were killed during sporadic contact Tuesday, the spokesmen said. During the past 18 hours, they added, large quantities of rice, ammunition and weapons have been found by the Pinnaroo troops. Viet Cong losses for the operation were put at 58 killed.



## Postmarked: Khe Sanh

A Marine officer lies on top of his well-fortified bunker at Khe Sanh and dictates a letter to his wife over a tape recorder.

Although the top of the bunker is not the safest place, there is more privacy and sound effects are better. (AP Radiophoto)

## Blinded on Rescue Mission

# Marine Colonel Retires in Darkness

DA NANG, Vietnam (UPI)—The Marines retired Lt. Col. Daniel M. Wilson as commander of the 301st Helicopter Sq. in a change of command ceremony which he never saw.

Wilson was permanently blinded in action Sunday.

The ceremony took place at the Naval Support Activity Hospital Tuesday. Wilson, 38, of Jacksonville, N.C., was relieved by his executive officer, Maj. Forest W. Crone of Pensacola, Fla.

Sq. 361 received an emergency call Sunday night to evacuate wounded from the "Happy Valley" area 12 miles southwest of Da Nang. Because it was a hazardous night mission, Wilson assigned it to himself.

The helicopter was approaching the landing zone and began taking intense ground fire from dug-in North Vietnamese troops surrounding it. Several shots struck the cockpit and bounced off the armor protecting the pilot.

Wilson had just turned his head to see where the fire was coming from when a bullet pierced the base of his skull, severing the optic nerve and blinding him forever.

Wilson attended the change of command ceremony dressed in his Marine utilities and seated in a wheelchair. Immediately following the ceremony, Maj. Gen. Norman J. Anderson, commander of the 1st Marine Air Wing, awarded him the Purple Heart.

He was flown home Wednesday afternoon.

## Plague Cases Decreasing

SAIGON (AP) — U.S. officials said Wednesday that 708 suspected cases of bubonic plague were reported throughout South Vietnam in the first 11 weeks of this year, less than half the number reported during the same period last year.

Up to March 16, the officials said, 98 of the cases had been confirmed and 56 deaths had resulted.

This compares to 1,688 suspected cases, 186 confirmed and 74 deaths in the first 11 weeks of 1967.

The officials said plague vaccine was adequate, and a nationwide inoculation program was under way. Rat-infested areas were being dusted with DDT to cut down the number of fleas, which transmit the disease from rats to humans.

# Thieu Predicts Last-Gasp Push By Reds Before U.S. Election

SAIGON (UPI) — President Nguyen Van Thieu Wednesday predicted a last-gasp Communist offensive within "two or three months" designed to strengthen their positions before the fall election in the U.S.

He said 1968 was the make-or-break year for the Viet Cong and Hanoi and their aim is to have sufficient success by the November election to be able to enter negotiations from a position of strength.

Failing that, he said, the Reds might "fade away" gradually, still a threat but no longer a major military force.

But some sort of allied peace-keeping guarantee would be needed for three or four more years, he said.

In an interview, the 44-year-old President coupled predictions of a new offensive with

criticism of U.S. Senators who oppose the Vietnam policy of the Johnson Administration.

He cited by name Sens. Robert Kennedy, D-N.Y., Edward Kennedy, D-Mass., and William Fulbright, D-Ark.

They "make the war effort more difficult for us," he said.

"Sometimes I can tell you that statements of some of the senators are difficult for us."

In his brown seersucker suit, striped brown tie and white shirt, Thieu appeared in his Presidential Palace Office relaxed and obviously eager to get home his points to the people of the United States.

He reminded that he has dismissed 69 provincial chiefs and district chiefs in his anticorruption drive. More will be dismissed, he said.

He said he has closed the

bars and nightclubs of Saigon as part of his campaign against black marketeering. The Americans must help by limiting the import of PX luxury goods which GI's can move into the black market or which can be stolen.

His campaign to expand the Vietnamese Army is progressing, he said.

## Shrapnel Hits Photographer

SAIGON (AP) — Associated Press photographer Al Chang, 43, was slightly wounded Wednesday while covering U.S. 25th Inf. Div. troops attacking a Viet Cong hamlet 28 miles northwest of Saigon.

A piece of shrapnel hit Chang in the chest when the Viet Cong

Photo on Page 12

opened fire on an Armored Personnel Carrier he was riding. He was walking later and not believed seriously injured.

It was the second time Chang has been wounded while covering the Vietnam war since 1962. In December, 1965, he was wounded in the head.

The Hawaiian-born Chang had spent 21 years in the Army taking combat photographs without getting a scratch.

# Kin Bury Gentle Hero of Khe Sanh

MIAMI, Fla. (AP) — Marine Pvt. Jonathan Nathaniel Spicer, the gentle GI who went to Vietnam a conscientious objector and died a hero, was buried Tuesday amid a volley of rifle shots and the sounding of Taps. Spicer, 19, was hit by shellfire in February during fighting

around Khe Sanh.

The nonsmoking, nondrinking son of a former Methodist minister, Spicer started his tour of duty as the butt of jokes. But as a stretcher bearer who shielded their torn bodies with his own, he won the respect of fellow Marines.

"Like our Lord, he was conscientiously opposed to killing people," Episcopal Vicar Calvin

O. Schofield Jr. said at the funeral. "It is difficult in this age to know how to abide by the rules, to carry on when one's principles rebel ... in the final analysis, have we lived as well as this man did?"

Spicer's brother Tim, 17, wore the uniform of a Marine as he stood with his parents and the other Spicer children, Bill, 21, Rocky, 9, and Donna, 15.

# Pilots Make Happy Landings in Tree, Paddy

SAIGON (UPI)—One parachute failed to open and another opened with only one second before landing, but two Air Force pilots lived to tell their harrowing story.

The two pilots were Lt. Col. Burton M. Field, 38, of St. Petersburg, Fla., and Capt. William D. Canup, 26, of Indianapolis, Ind., who ejected from their doomed F100 Supersabre at an unorthodox 500 feet.

The prescribed minimum ejection altitude for an F100 is 2,000 feet, according to an Air Force spokesman.

Field was saved by a tree. His un-

opened chute snagged on a 30-foot mango. He found himself dangling from his harness in an eight-foot ditch, his ankles resting in mud and water up to his knees.

Canup, whose parachute opened only one second before he hit the ground, landed in a rice paddy under about 15 inches of water. He sank into the mud bottom, which eased his landing. The chute was not open long enough to establish a normal rate of descent.

The two pilots, assigned to the 615th Tactical Fighter Sq. at Phan Rang Air

Base, had been on a strike in the Mekong Delta when their two-seat aircraft was shot down.

Both men were rescued within 15 minutes after hitting the ground. Their injuries were described as minor.

Field, a veteran of 126 combat missions, suffered minor cuts, bruises and burns. He later recalled the agonizing seconds after ejection and said he was not really worried until he saw the branches of a tree go by.

"There were branches between me and the streaming chute," he said. "I

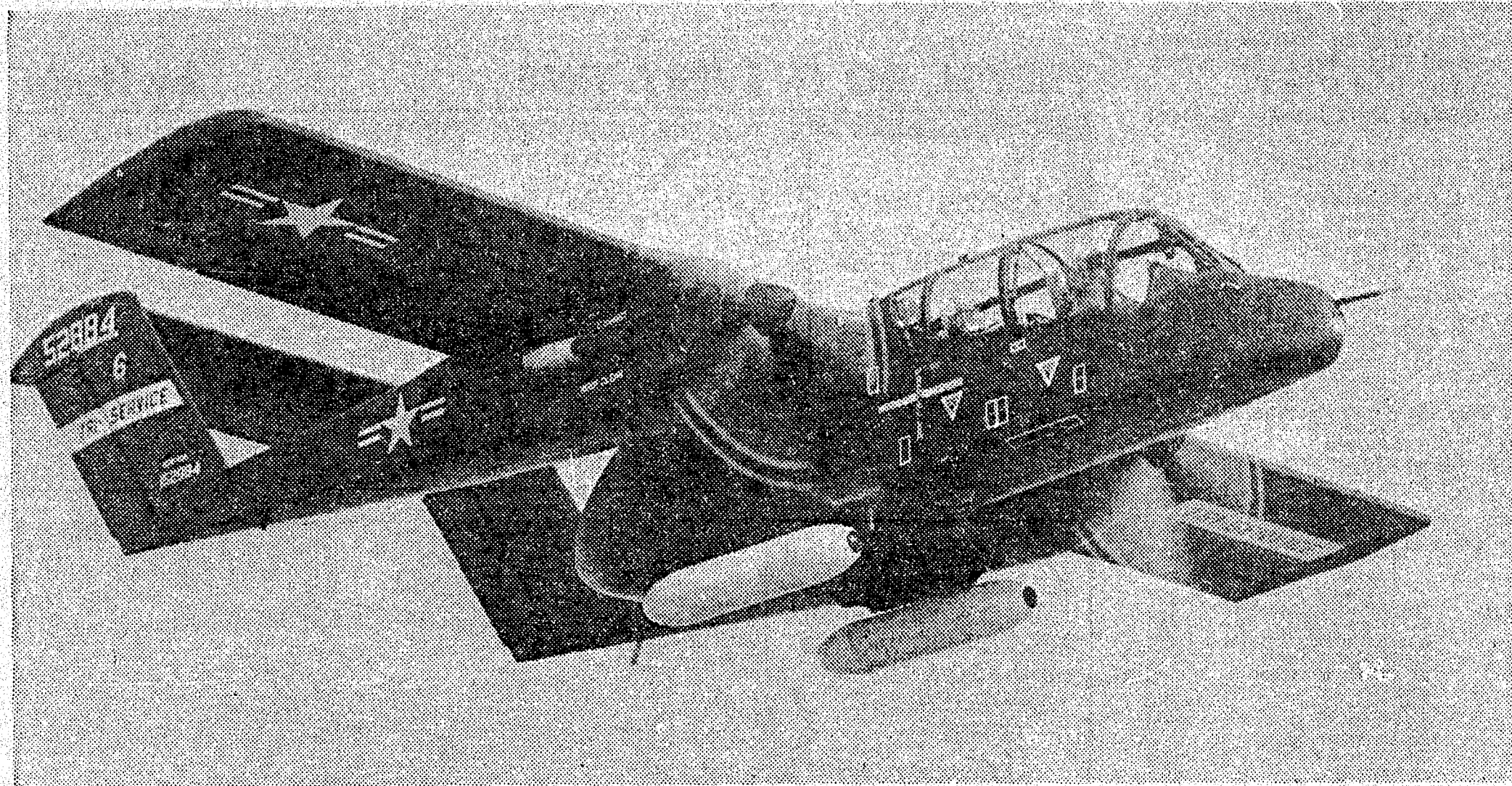
figured that's the end and wondered how long it was going to hurt."

Canup was more confident. Although the ejection occurred on his second command and the streaming chute," he said. "I supposed it wasn't my turn to go."

It was the second time Field has been forced to bail out from an F100. This time he telephoned his wife from Vietnam.

"Well, I did it again," he told her.

"She took it a lot better than last time," he said.



THE OV10A BRONCO IS BEING TESTED BEFORE GOING INTO COMBAT THIS YEAR.

## Counterinsurgency Plane Due in Vietnam This Year

S&S Washington Bureau

WASHINGTON — The first American airplane specifically designed for the Vietnam war and counterinsurgency operations is now being checked out by Air Force and Marine Corps pilots before going into combat some time this year.

It is called the OV10A or Bronco, and, according to the men who have built and flown the first models, it is supposed to be one of the most versatile to fight with ground troops.

Typical missions will include battlefield surveillance, helicopter escort, close air support against light enemy opposition, gunfire spotting, medical evacuation and even the transport of five paratroopers, six regular infantrymen or 3,200 pounds of cargo in the battle zone.

The first of 271 ordered by the Defense Department are being flown by Marines at Camp Pendleton, Calif., and at the Air Force's Special Air Warfare Center, Hurlburt Field, Fla.

The twin-engine turboprop Bronco is designed to fill the performance gap between jets which are too fast for most of the needs of guerrilla warfare and helicopters which are too slow or vulnerable for many missions.

According to the Air Force and Marine Corps, the Bronco will be capable of operating from rough clearings, primitive roads and waterways in addition to prepared airfields and even aircraft carriers. Its short take-off and landing capability—it can clear a 50-foot obstacle in less than 600 feet with a

1,200-pound load of ordnance and three hours of fuel—is vital to battle zone operations.

On an armed reconnaissance or close support mission the OV10A can fly 50 nautical miles to the target area, loiter for about two hours and then return to base.

The new plane has a top speed of 244 knots at sea level

and an approach speed of only 75 knots which is handy for many purposes such as jungle search and helicopter escort.

With auxiliary fuel tanks the Bronco can be flown anywhere in the world and that's just what the Air Force and the Marine Corps will do with their new jungle fighters in the near future.

## Soldiers Join Orphans In Vietnamese Games

SAIGON (IO) — Sometimes it is hard to understand what makes soldiers and children hit it off so well. But recently 70 soldiers from the 64th Quartermaster Bn. and several children from the Buddhist Orphanage Center in Saigon did just that.

The visit came after the 64th, commanded by Lt. Col. John A. Wilkinson of Fairfax, Va., donated construction material to the orphanage for a civic action project. The material was used to build a storage room, a shower and two restrooms.

The orphanage center director, Thich Nhat Thien, invited members of the 64th to Saigon to see how they used the material. The soldiers joined the children in Vietnamese games. They spent the rest of the afternoon teaching the orphans games the soldiers remembered when they were children.

According to Capt. Mitchell E. Chinn of Colonial Heights, Va., civic action project officer for the 64th, "The soldiers had

as much fun as the children that afternoon, maybe even more."

The orphanage director expressed his gratitude by saying, "We sincerely thank you for having joined in our effort to bind up the wounds of a nation that has been and still is suffering from a war that for over 20 years has brought much destruction to its homeland."

SAIGON (UPI) — Monsieur Daniel, Lynda Bird Johnson Robb's New York hairdresser, has ended a week's tour of snipping and coiffing in Vietnam. He won the hearts of 350 nurses, Wacs and Waves.

Daniel, 26, whose full name is Daniel Wadiaeff, wore jungle fatigues instead of his usual formal suit and carried a .45 caliber pistol among his brushes and combs.

He crammed six major

## Grenade—At His Nose

SAIGON (IO)—The "monotony" of searching out and destroying enemy tunnels and bunkers ended suddenly for Sgt. Jim R. Spitze when he looked up and saw a grenade—pin pulled— inches from his nose.

"We were following an enemy trench line," Spitze said, "blowing bunkers as we went along." Spitze is a squad leader on the 919th Eng. Co. (Armored), 11th Armored Cav. Regt.

The unit had come across a sizable Communist bunker west of Saigon. Spitze inched through the narrow entrance with explosives to destroy it.

"Just as I crossed the doorway," he said, "I noticed a wire stretched across the entrance. I looked up just in time to see the booby trap, a grenade, in the ceiling inches from my nose."

As Spitze backed away, the explosive charge he was carrying tripped the wire and pulled the pin from the grenade. The sergeant grins when he tells what happened next:

"It was a dud . . ."

## Bridge Repaired, Despite VC

DA NANG, Vietnam (PAO)—Behind protective covering of 1st Marine Div. heavy tanks, civilian workers labor under battle conditions to repair the Cau Do bridge, heavily damaged by the Viet Cong five miles south of here.

A Communist mortar attack last fall dropped the two center sections of the four-section, 300-foot structure, slicing the main supply artery linking Chu Lai and Da Nang.

Vietnamese RMK-BRJ labor crews began repair work almost immediately. Salvage crews lifted the fallen sections from the river and barged them to a secure area for repair.

The sections were then floated back to the bridge site. One is already in place and the second is being readied for reinstallation. When completed, the bridge will have five sections instead of the original four.

Since the bridge site lies directly between important U.S. military installations and a favorite Viet Cong mortar and rocket firing point, work often goes on with artillery whistling overhead. Sniper fire sometimes ricochets from bridge metal.

## These Viet Cong Were Hayseeds

CHU LAI, Vietnam (IO) — When is a Viet Cong not a Viet Cong?

This question confronted 2nd Lt. Christopher Lane, of Olympia, Wash. Lane is a track commander from E Troop, 1st Armored Cav., of the Americal Div.'s 11th Inf. Brigade.

Personnel carriers attached to the brigade's 3rd Bn., 1st Inf., observed what they thought were 10 enemy soldiers crouching in a field and carrying weapons.

When the tracks moved in to challenge, three men made off. The remaining "soldiers" turned out to be mannequin dummies made from straw. They were destroyed.

## Coiffeur 'Quick-Clips' Vietnam

SAIGON (UPI) — Monsieur Daniel, Lynda Bird Johnson Robb's New York hairdresser, has ended a week's tour of snipping and coiffing in Vietnam. He won the hearts of 350 nurses, Wacs and Waves.

Escorting him on the tour was John Miller, of Bonita, Calif., a Korea and Vietnam combat veteran and ex-Special Forces major.

"Wherever we went," Miller said, "there the girls would be... in huts, under parachute awnings, trailers or service clubs. Thirty or 40 of them at a

time all ready and waiting with towels around their heads."

Daniel, who paid his own way, said everyone in New York thought he was "nuts" to undertake his quick-clip project in Vietnam.

"But it's been well worth it," he said. "I've never had such a reception. No one's come out exclusively for the women before."

# GIs Dodge Own Shells to Hit VC Village

SAIGON (AP) — Calling in artillery strikes less than 50 yards from their own lines, American infantrymen and tanks fought their way into a Viet Cong hamlet 28 miles northwest of Saigon through heavy enemy fire Wednesday.

They seized one-fourth of the hamlet, laced with Viet Cong spider holes and trench lines.

With U.S. artillery thundering within 50 to 75 yards of the American troops, Lt. Col. John H. Tipton, 38, asked his artillery liaison officer: "Can we put more artillery in closer?"

"Yes, we can, but there's a good chance of hitting our own people," replied the artillery officer, 1st Lt. John J. Mennig.

More artillery rounds came pouring in on the dug-in Viet Cong, this time less than 50 yards from the U.S. troops. Fighter-bombers also hit the enemy positions, 50 to 75 yards from the American line.

The fighting was still continuing late Wednesday afternoon.

Initial reports said eight Viet Cong were killed, but the num-

ber of enemy casualties is likely to climb.

The hamlet, Ap Long Muc, is about 800 yards long and 400 yards wide, shaped like a kidney. It is about 15 miles northeast of the district town of Trang Bang, which the Viet Cong tried to seize in all-day fighting Monday. That attempt was foiled by other American infantrymen and armored units from the 25th Div.

Heavy fighting has raged since Sunday around the Trang Bang sector and U.S. and South Vietnamese troops have claimed 395 enemy killed in three days while suffering only light casualties.

The battle for Ap Long Muc began Tuesday afternoon when the infantrymen came under heavy machine gun and grenade fire. An armored column of tanks and personnel carriers moving to reinforce the infantrymen also came under heavy fire.

Through the night, artillery and jets hammered the Viet Cong positions, trying to soften them up for the assault Wednesday morning by tanks and ground troops.

At dawn, the armored column began moving slowly through the hamlet. From the left flank, the Viet Cong threw a heavy stream of fire. Armored personnel carriers and infantrymen pulled back about 50 yards and called in the artillery strikes.

Meanwhile, U.S. headquarters in Saigon disclosed another fight in the Trang Bang sector. Headquarters said other 25th Div. units killed 17 enemy after a helicopter assault into a hot landing zone Tuesday four miles northeast of Trang Bang.

The thrust around Trang Bang is part of Operation Quyet Thang, the biggest Allied offensive of the war with more than 50 American and South Vietnamese battalions totaling 50,000 men sweeping through five provinces around Saigon. Their aim is to regain the offensive from the Viet Cong and to destroy troops within striking distance of the capital.

The U.S. Command said Allied troops have killed 1,842 enemy and captured 233 prisoners and suspects since Quyet Thang began March 11. U.S. losses were listed as 80 killed and 604 wounded. South Vietnamese casualties were reported as 92 killed and 232 wounded.

Only scattered light action was reported elsewhere across the country Wednesday.



A rock flies at him as a Panamanian national crowd of anti-Robles demonstrators in Panama guardsman starts to hurl a tear gas grenade at a City. (AP Radiophoto)

## Air Crash Mystery Deepens

ROSSLARE HARBOR, Ireland (UPI) — The mystery of what caused an Irish airliner to plunge into the Irish Sea Sunday mounted Wednesday with the disclosure that none of the victims recovered so far died from drowning.

Aviation experts have been baffled by the crash of the four-engine Aer Lingus Viscount into the sea off Wales with 81 persons aboard.

Group Capt. J. K. Mason, a Royal Air Force pathologist, said postmortems on the 11 bodies recovered from the sea revealed that none died from drowning.

Mason declined to give his opinion as to the cause of death. He said a full report is being submitted to the Irish Department of Transport and Power.

An Aer Lingus spokesman said shortly after the crash that sabotage could not be ruled out.

Strong winds and heavy seas forced vessels to discontinue the search Wednesday for bodies and more wreckage.

## Project Runs Out of Gas

(Continued From Page 1)

The problem: How to transport two elephants to Tra Bong — not only over hostile Communist territory but through miles of military red tape.

The trip by land would be too long and too insecure because the Viet Cong firmly control the road leading into Tra Bong. The trip by boat, if the pachyderms could be moved to the coast, would likewise be too long. And the elephants might get seasick.

That leaves air travel. Here, Gantt thought he had the problem licked.

The U.S. Marines agreed to haul the elephants the 20 miles from Chu Lai to Tra Bong by Sky Crane helicopters, the aircraft normally used for such heavy-duty jobs as lifting disabled helicopters to repair centers.

The problem then narrowed down to getting the two animals from Ban Don to Chu Lai, a trip of about 185 miles. No small chore.

It had to be done by airplane, thought Gantt, who contacted the 7th Air Force. They agreed, if the elephants could be properly secured inside a giant C-130 transport.

The Green Beret captain spent hours on a transatlantic telephone, calling zoos in the Bronx, N.Y.; Cleveland and London in search of a tranquilizer that could put the animals to sleep for the trip without harming them.

Gantt learned that the drug he needed was M-99, manufactured by Rickitts and Sons of Hull, England. He arranged for the shipment of the tranquilizer to Vietnam and almost immediately ran into yet another snag.

The U.S. Bureau of Narcotics held up shipment until a "required form" was sent spelling

out how the drug was to be used.

Having hurdled this roadblock, with M-99 in hand, the Green Berets tested the drug on an elephant. It passed all the tests and satisfied everyone, including the U.S. Air Force, that the elephants would remain docile for the plane ride.

As a sidelight, it was noted that M-99 tended to produce a harmless intestinal gas. After that, the operation was dubbed "Bah-room."

Operation "Bah-room" was scheduled to blast off this week.

Then it happened. The plane ride was cancelled.

U.S. Army Brig. Gen. H.A. Rasmussen, assistant chief of staff for logistics, Military Assistance Command Vietnam, blocked the plans.

Tra Bong still needs its elephants.

"If they don't come, we've lost 400 families," said Gantt. "Unless we get those elephants up there, they're quitting."

## Panama—

(Continued From Page 1) small group of protesters in a downtown street.

However, whiffs of tear gas still hung in the air in the Maranon sector and around the Legislative Palace, where most of Tuesday's disorders took place.

The political opposition reported 62 new arrests by the guard Tuesday after 181 oppositionists had been rounded up the night before in a guard raid on opposition political headquarters. Most were being held on a charge of harboring arms, for which there is no bail.

Those arrested included several oppositionist journalists and photographers and the publishers of two newspapers, George Westerman of the Panama Tribune and Gilberto Arias of El Panama America, protested their arrest to the Inter-American Press Association.

## Abrams Briefs LBJ

(Continued From Page 1)

of the National Security Council Wednesday for what the White House said was a report on the South Vietnamese army.

Modernization and expansion of the Saigon regime's armed forces is one of Abrams' major duties as deputy commander under Westmoreland and is a priority goal of the Administration, which wants South Vietnam to assume a more aggressive share of the fighting.

The results of Abrams' task could determine future U. S. troop needs and the size of a supplemental defense appropriations request which the President has indicated he will have to send to Congress. He already

has requested more than \$26 billion in the next fiscal year, starting July 1, to fight the war.

Others at the National Security Council meeting included Undersecretary of State Nicholas deB. Katzenbach, Vice President Hubert H. Humphrey, Defense Secretary Clark Clifford, Director Richard Helms of the Central Intelligence Agency; Walt W. Rostow, who is the President's chief foreign affairs adviser; Gen. Earle G. Wheeler, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff; William C. Foster, director of the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency, and Foster's deputy, Adrian S. Fisher.

The Defense Department said Abrams arrived at the Pentagon at 8 a. m., read overnight cables from Saigon, and joined Wheeler at regular operations and intelligence briefings given by the Joint Chiefs of staff.

## Firemen—

(Continued From Page 1)

houses away from a residence the firemen allowed to burn March 18 because it was untagged. They are not permitted to fight a fire at a home without a tag, unless human life is at stake, Ellison explained.

He said the state highway patrol and Jefferson County sheriff's officers were called when the mob gathered. High Ridge is a community of about 260 persons 35 miles southwest of St. Louis. The police stood by while the firemen fought the fire. There was no violence.

Earlier Tuesday, firemen put out a blaze in an unprotected home because a woman and child were in danger. The child was overcome by smoke, and the mother suffered cuts.

"What surprises me is that all 28 guys in the department haven't turned in their badges, because not one single dime is made by any of these guys," Ellison said.

Damage to the home in the Tuesday night fire was extensive, he said. There were no injuries.

## Weather

Asian Weather Central

### TOKYO AREA

Thursday Night: Mostly Cloudy; Low: 44

Friday: Partly Cloudy; High: 56

### TEMPERATURES

March 27

	M	L	M	L	
Bangkok	87	79	Naha	66	55
Chitose	46	23	Saitama	91	77
Gum	83	77	Srael	50	25
Hakuba	57	36	Taipei	65	63
Manila	91	77	Tokyo	48	45
	M	L		M	L
Albany	54	24	Louisville	70	35
Albuquerque	72	37	Melbourne	78	59
Amarillo	—	44	Memphis	71	47
Atlanta	72	39	Miami	77	66
Birmingham	76	33	Milwaukee	77	46
Bismarck	62	28	Moscow	48	34
Boise	51	36	N. Orleans	67	33
Boston	51	31	NYC	53	36
Chicago	73	49	N. Platte	74	32
Cincinnati	49	40	Omaha	77	40
Cleveland	61	40	Omaha	79	43
Denver	66	37	Paris	63	41
Des Moines	77	35	Phila.	59	33
Detroit	62	36	Phoenix	82	43
Duluth	64	54	Pittsburgh	64	38
Fairbanks	37	06	Portland, O.	51	33
Fargo	65	28	Reno	57	15
Fort Worth	72	54	Singapore	88	73
Hong Kong	59	53	St. Louis	80	52
Honolulu	85	71	St. Paul	68	53
Houston	70	57	San Francisco	68	54
Indianapolis	72	43	S. Antonio	76	45
Jackville	75	44	San Diego	68	55
Jakarta	89	75	San Fran.	63	52
Kansas City	73	50	Seattle	55	43
K. Lumpur	93	71	Shreveport	74	48
Las Vegas	74	50	Sydney	80	70
London	61	43	Tucson	80	47
L.A.	78	51	Wash.	68	39