



SAIGON (A)

A SHORT GUIDE TO NEWS COVERAGE IN VIET NAM

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AF SHORT GUIDE TO VN (Mar 1963)

INTRODUCTION

This is intended as a general briefing on news coverage of South Viet Nam for Associated Press staff correspondents new to the area, for AP stringers, and for friends of the AP who come into the country from time to time.

The contents should be regarded as confidential, and it is requested that you do not pass on this booklet to another person.

Because a major part of news coverage here has to do with the guerrilla war and the special problems the war has created, a large part of the booklet consists of basic military reference material.

We also include some tips on getting around the city and country, and on things to look for in covering the country. Obviously, most of the background you will need to operate effectively must come in briefings from officials and from going out to look for yourself.

Coverage in Viet Nam requires aggressiveness, resourcefulness and, at times, methods uncomfortably close to those used by professional intelligence units. You can expect very little help from most official sources, and news comes the hard way. Correspondents in Viet Nam are regarded by the Saigon government as "scabby sheep," and treated accordingly. At the same time, the Vietnamese people are friendly and agreeable, and private sources can be cultivated.

Because of the political climate, it is vitally important to protect sources -- particularly those of Vietnamese nationality. Disclosure of sources by several indiscrete newsmen in Viet Nam has wrecked careers, or worse. American military sources must be similarly protected.

Good luck. You'll need it.

Malcolm W. Browne
Saigon, Jan. 25, 1963

I. STRINGER PAYMENTS

The AP Saigon bureau does not have any stringers on regular retainer. The bulk of coverage is handled by staff members, and all copy must be edited or rewritten by the desk to meet AP requirements. Don't be offended at rewrite jobs on your copy, it's all part of the game. The AP rewrites even its Pulitzer Prize winners.

For photos, the bureau pays \$5 U.S. or its equivalent in Vietnamese piastres per picture, on acceptance. Normally, the negative becomes the property of the AP and goes to Tokyo. Acceptance of photos is up to the Tokyo photo desk. In rare instances, higher rates can be paid for pictures of exceptional interest.

If the bureau assigns either a photo or news stringer on a day-assignment basis, the stringer receives a flat \$10 U.S. (or its piastre equivalent) for whatever he produces for the day. He is also entitled to normal expense payment (to include film, transportation and certain other items). Vouchers or receipts

must be submitted to the bureau for each expense claimed.

For news stringers, rates of payment are scaled according to relative value (of which speed is a factor) of the material.

An accurate tip on a breaking story is worth \$5 U.S., as a rule. If it's a tip on something of particular importance, it may be worth somewhat more. First tips on major battles or multiple-American-casualty crashes might be worth up to \$10. It would take something like the assassination of the president to bring the ante much above that.

A tip is just what the word implies -- the first fragmentary bit of information that something important has happened. Even if most of the details are lacking, the tip may be valuable to us. We can usually fill in the details ourselves, once we know something has happened.

A stringer who happens to be at an isolated town or outpost when a story breaks often can get to a U.S. military telephone (see section IX); from which he can call Saigon -- and the AP. When this happens, the stringer usually is in a position to send a stream of fast, accurate information -- in short, the whole story -- to Saigon. This is the best way to make money as an AP stringer.

Under such circumstances, the stringer can be paid either on a day-assignment basis for the story he has given us, or we can pay for the story on the basis of its relative value. For a major military engagement, payment might be about \$30.

Features are a tricky business. We take stringer features from time to time, but always check with the bureau before heading out on one. Your idea may be something we've done already. Or we may have another feature idea that needs handling. Sometimes a well planned feature is just not suitable for the AP wire, good though it looked. Features, like photos, we buy on acceptance. Don't worry about our pirating the material you struggled so hard to get. If we want it, we'll pay you for it.

Speed is vital on all tips and news stories. The development that was news today may be worthless tomorrow. News gathering is a hotly competitive business, in which speed is worth money.

If you can't get to a U.S. military telephone with your tip or story, you may be in or near a town where you can find a Vietnamese Post Telephone & Telegraph office. If so, send us a cable addressed ASSOCIATED PRESS SAIGON. If it's a hot story, mark it URGENT. You'll have to pre-pay the cable charge, but this is a reimbursable expense. In rare instances, you might be able to telephone us with the government system.

Obviously, you can't expect to make a living solely from your income as an AP stringer. But if you're working on magazine articles or stringing for other outfits, the AP income can at least keep you in cigarettes and booze for just a little extra effort.

You may string for us and anyone else you like, EXCEPT our competitors. Our competitors are UPI, Reuters and Agence France Presse, in that order.

II. SOME TIPS TO STRINGERS

As an AP stringer, you get some fringe benefits. One is the matter of accreditation.

To deal with the U.S. military here, you must be accredited to them through some recognized news organization. Once you become an AP stringer, we can arrange for your immediate accreditation to the U.S. Military Assistance Command Vietnam (MACV).

This means you will be eligible to go out on operations with American troops, and are eligible to receive the same information and briefings from U.S. officers that AP staffers get.

You also will be eligible to fly free within Viet Nam on the MACV "mule train" transport system.

If you are an American citizen, you probably will be eligible for PX and Commissary privileges, although conditions are subject to change.

You are entitled to read the AP Saigon bureau file, as an AP stringer. This will be especially useful to you in keeping abreast of the Viet Nam situation as a whole, and in planning non-AP projects on which you are working (books, magazine articles, poetry or whatever). The AP bureau is the largest news organization in Viet Nam, and is on top of the story at all times.

Some elementary points on handling news:

Accuracy is vital. If you don't know how many troops participated in an operation you covered, don't guess or make it up. Tell us only what you KNOW. If you are estimating something, label it as an estimate, and tell us how you arrived at your estimate. Second Battles of the Marne are fine if they really happened, but the truth is the important thing.

Avoid the crowd. Newsmen and newswomen come to Viet Nam by the hundreds, and there is a tendency to gather in bunches -- in bars, in offices, on operations, and so forth. Obviously, some of this is essential in the routine of daily life. But one of the best stringers we ever had (he now works for the Wall Street Journal) never went near the Caravelle bar, never went out on any story with another person. Blaze new trails, and do it alone. The fresh story, the new angle, the hitherto unreported -- these are the things we want.

Sometimes, hanging around military installations (but not long enough to wear out your welcome) and making friends can pay off. An important operation may come up or some other important story may develop. This kind of thing is something regular staffers rarely have time for, and is a good field of work for stringers.

Don't trust information you get from anyone without checking it the best you can (including the information in this booklet). This goes not only for Vietnamese and American officers, but from any source, and for that matter, even your colleagues. You will find quickly that most "facts" in Viet Nam are based at least in part on misinformation or misunderstandings.

A final note:

The AP Saigon office is a small, crowded and overworked place. You're always welcome if you want to talk about a story, but if you just want to shoot the breeze, you come at your peril.

• PLEASE DO NOT TALK TO OUR HIRED HELP WHEN THEY ARE GRINDING OUT COPY OR OTHERWISE GAINFULLY EMPLOYED.

The bureau currently is headed by an ogre named Browne who has been known to throw out whole squads at a time of the cracker-barrel set.

Particularly bad times to come are any time before 9 a.m., between 1:30 and 4 p.m., and between 6 and 6:30 p.m. These are times when deadlines are coming up or radio monitoring is in progress.

However, you are welcome to telephone at any time of day or night any day of the week, avoiding only the period 6 to 6:30 p.m.

III. LANGUAGE

English has become vital to coverage of news in Viet Nam -- even for reporters of the local press.

But French is also a must when dealing with most members of the government, many embassies and many Vietnamese military officers. French is still the nation's second language, despite the gains made by English.

Vietnamese is a very difficult language for Westerners, related fairly closely to Chinese (although it is written in Roman letters using special accent marks to indicate the tones.) Don't expect to learn the language unless you're prepared to spend several years at it. But learning a few Vietnamese words and phrases is useful -- particularly those needed in directing taxis.

Many Vietnamese speak Cantonese.

IV. MONEY

The monetary unit is the piastre (or dong) pegged at 73 to the U.S. dollar. Further information at the bureau. The PX and U.S. field messes insist on dollar payments, although the PX accepts personal dollar checks.

V. VISAS

Vietnamese visas involve a gigantic amount of red tape, only small portions of which can be cut through private channels.

If you are coming to Viet Nam, try to get a 30-day visa in advance. If you are in a great rush and you hold an American passport (or a passport of any of the anti-communist nations) you can come without a visa for up to 48 hours. This normally can be extended once you get here.

Short-term visas are extended only by application as far in advance as possible. Long-term or resident visas require

application at least 30 days in advance of expiration for renewals.

If you have ever been thrown out of Viet Nam you probably cannot get back in. If you have visited North Viet Nam since 1954, you probably won't get a visa for South Viet Nam (unless you are an official of the International Control Commission.)

To leave Viet Nam you must have an exit visa, wherever you are going. If you are going to one of the former Indochina states (Cambodia or Laos) and plan to return here, apply for a re-entry visa along with your exit visa. If you're going to any other country, you'll have to start from scratch returning here. If you hold a Vietnamese resident visa, you automatically lose it.

You can and must normally get a resident visa after you've been in the country three months. Once you hold a resident visa you must start paying income taxes to Viet Nam.

Taxes for a bachelor amount to about 10% of his declared salary, taxes for family men are slightly less. Taxes on income, cars, property and a half-acre or more items must be paid up and certified before you will be issued an exit visa. All this gets extremely involved and time-consuming, but there's no way around it, and you should be psychologically prepared before deciding to leave the country (unless you are expelled, in which case taxes generally are waived.)

Assistance on visa matters is available from the government Press Liaison Office on Blvd. Le Loi near the Caravelle Hotel.

VI. HEALTH

Viet Nam has plague, malaria, tuberculosis, typhoid, dysentery, all kinds of parasites, and various other goodies. Leprosy runs as high as 5% of the population in some areas.

Water (including tap water in hotels) should be considered unsafe to drink unless it has been sterilized. In the field, use halozone purification tablets, as directed, in canteens. For malaria, one tablet a week is recommended of Chloroquin. These tablets are available at the American Dispensary, Saigon, and from military authorities.

For dysentery, a variety of French remedies is available on the local market, some of which work. "Liquid cork" can be obtained from the American Dispensary. Viotorm, if not used too frequently, is effective.

One of the doctors at the American Dispensary, Bill Shadel, knows a lot about tropical medicine, and is especially friendly with correspondents (partly because his old man is an APO commentator). He'll treat anything, and is known as a specialist for ailments that result from too much night life.

Salads and fruit in Viet Nam are delicious. In restaurants they generally have been rinsed in pesticides, and are reasonably safe to eat.

If you should get sick or otherwise worried, you will get the same benefits if held after evacuation as the troops. Treatment and even a vasectomy are available at the military

field hospitals. If you are American and your wound is serious, you may be evacuated to Clark Air Force Base in the Philippines. The civilian Adventist Hospital in Saigon is fairly good and run by Americans. L'Hopital Grall is the main French hospital, and is highly regarded.

In the field, it is advisable to take a GI aid pack (pressure dressing); some aspirin tablets; some dysentery tablets; mosquito repellent; if possible, a mosquito net; a jack knife and sun glasses. The sun gets hot, and hats and salt tablets are a good idea.

Halizone water purification tablets, powdered and mixed with a little water, have worked well for this writer as emergency disinfectants, and can be used for small wounds. If wounded either on a steel or bamboo foot spike tray, get a tetanus booster shot as soon as possible. The Viet Cong often soaks these spikes in buffalo urine to make them tetanus transmitters.

Battle casualties often die from loss of blood. Belts, ropes and field straps make good tourniquets, and the experts recommend thinking of tourniquets first if you are bleeding heavily.

Whenever flying in a helicopter, try to borrow a flak jacket from the crew -- two, if possible. The second one is to sit on. You won't be considered a chicken. All crew members must wear them.

On operations, sometimes the most palatable fluid available is coconut milk. This can cause diarrhea in some persons, but it's worth the risk if you're thirsty enough. Soldiers usually carry the machetes needed to knock the tops off coconuts to get the milk out.

The cold rice, broiled pork, fermented fish sauce, duck eggs and other foods Vietnamese troops eat in the field may not appeal to the average Westerner, but they are nutritious and reasonably safe. If you're hungry and have the chance to eat (especially if your unit is stuck somewhere) it's better to eat all you can get down.

Watch out for squirrels and rats in Viet Nam. Many of them carry rabies and will attack. If you are bitten by one, start getting the treatment immediately. The shots are painful (direct injection into the stomach) but worth it.

VII. TRANSPORTATION

A. Saigon and vicinity

There are four ways: Hired cars, taxis, cyclos (scoop-shaped three-wheeled or bicycle cabs) and mopeds (the same as cyclos but with motors instead of pedal power).

Taxis are recommended. The minimum ride costs six piastres. All cabs have meters, but be sure the driver has turned yours on when you start, otherwise you may have an argument when you arrive. If the argument gets too bad, call a cop (who may speak French, occasionally a little English).

After 10 p.m., pay 50% more than the amount shown on the meter. After midnight, pay double what's on the meter. Tips should not exceed one or two piastres.

Cycles and mopeds cost about half the fare for taxis. Settle the price with the driver in advance. They are slow and not recommended except for fun once in a while.

Hired cabs are not recommended for Saigon and vicinity. They are too expensive.

Transportation to the Saigon airport (Tan Son Nhut) is difficult. The VIP lounge (where most airport press conferences are held) is on the civilian side of the airport next to the passenger terminal.

As you approach the airport, the road (Ngô Dinh Khai) forks. Straight ahead leads to the civilian side. Bearing to the left leads to the military side. Be sure to specify to the taxi driver which way. (If you have a big nose, he will normally assume you want to go to the military side.)

Your taxi must stop at a check point entering the civilian side, and the vehicle will be searched by police for grenades. Without a special, difficult-to-get, one-time pass, you cannot get past this check point earlier than 6 a.m. or later than 9 p.m.

At the military side, there is a Military Police gate post. The cab can go no farther than this point and ordinarily, you also will have to stop here. Make arrangements in advance with whatever officer you want to see to meet you at the gate at a certain time and escort you in. Inside the military side, if you get stuck, there are blue cabs and scooter cabs (pay the driver two piastres) but don't try them until you know what you're doing and are thoroughly familiar with the layout of the military side.

BEFORE GOING ANYWHERE IN SAIGON, know how to get there before you step into a cab. Just showing the driver an address is rarely enough to get you there. Check the map in the AF office, find the street you want AND THE APPROXIMATE HOUSE NUMBER. Street numbers work with odd numbers on one side and even on the other, but the odd and even sequences rarely match up. "137" may be miles from "130." After you've dored out the scheme and taken into account one-way streets, direct the driver with exact commands: "See Tong" (straight ahead), "Kwa tie mot" (to the right), and "Kwa tie try" (turn left). Spellings are phonetic.

Saigon actually is two contiguous cities. Saigon, in the east, is predominantly Vietnamese. Cholon, in the west, is predominantly Chinese.

Certain streets in downtown Saigon near the palace (including Rue Pasteur in front of the AF office) are closed at night, but pedestrians normally can use most of them.

Taxi drivers at night normally offer to take male passengers to female company men. For a wide variety of reasons, it is dangerous to take them up on their offers.

B. Outside Saigon

If you go with a military operation, your transportation normally gets you to the call back, sorghum or other (this way

mean marching for miles over rice fields). If you get stuck at some provincial capital, you may have to get back to Saigon on your own (most often, by hired car).

To most of the key towns in Viet Nam you can get transportation on the MACV "mile train" -- mostly C47s and C123s. These flights must be arranged in advance with the MACV information office, which will cut travel orders for you.

The flights are free but slow and undependable. It is often quicker and easier to fly commercially.

There is one railroad line in South Viet Nam, with several small spurs. The line leads east from Saigon to the South China Sea, and then all the way up the coast to the Ben Hai River (the demarcation line between North and South Viet Nam). Note: You need special Vietnamese government clearance in advance to proceed north of Quang Tri to the border.

Rail travel is considered extremely dangerous, uncertain and slow. It is most safe (but not very safe) between Saigon and Dalat and between Saigon and Nha Trang. But trains draw sniper fire or are ambushed or derailed nearly every day, and bridges are blown up regularly.

Apart from that, there are three classes on through passenger trains, and first class is cheap and comfortable. Pullman-type births are available, and trains have dining cars with good food.

Rail travel is not recommended except in cases where the trip itself is the story.

Buses travel throughout South Viet Nam. They are regularly stopped by the Viet Cong, and the credentials of passengers are checked. Americans and most other foreign nationals are likely to be kidnaped.

Travel by road in private or rented cars is risky but not impossible. Be sure the car is in good working order and that the tires are in good shape before starting out. Pick as inconspicuous a car as possible (the Little French Citroen "Deux Chevaux" is best; it is a sturdy little car normally driven only by Vietnamese or French.)

The highway to Bien Hoa about 15 miles north of Saigon is well paved, has three or four lanes, and is always safe to use during daylight hours. The road to My Tho about 45 miles south of Saigon is the key highway to the south, and also is fairly safe during the day. On all other roads you travel at your peril, day or night.

A Saigon taxi can be rented for either Bien Hoa or My Tho. A price should be fixed in advance. Rented cars are sometimes preferable for this.

Avoid the use of jeeps if they are traveling without escort, or civilian cars with green and white (military) registration plates.

If you must drive in extremely dangerous areas, provincial officials will sometimes loan you a platoon or two of troops as escort for part of the way.

The worst areas for driving are: Due north from Saigon through the plantation country toward Loc Ninh (Route 13),

anywhere south or west of My Tho (including the delta and southern provinces, although the main road to Can Tho is somewhat safer), all the roads in or near D Zone (north and northeast of Saigon), most of Route 14 northwest of Saigon, most of coastal Route 1 (particularly between Bien Hoa and Phan Rang, and from Tuy Hoa to Qui Nhon and from Quang Ngai north).

Air travel is by Air Vietnam, which has a good safety record and operates many flights to most parts of the country. Some of these are on single-engine Cessnas, which can land on short strips.

Fares are cheap, planes keep to schedules (except at times of national crisis). Cessnas can be chartered at the rate of about 3,000 piastres an hour.

Recently, the U.S. Air Force has shown cooperation in letting correspondents use its L28 (single-engine reconnaissance) planes for coverage of some operations.

The guiding principal in travel in Viet Nam is to remember that the entire country is a war zone. If you want to get close to the war, stay on the ground. If you just want to get quickly from one point to another, go by air.

VIII. VIET CONG ATTITUDES TOWARD FOREIGN CORRESPONDENTS

(JAN 1963)
At this writing, no correspondent has fallen into Viet Cong hands or been killed by them, although many newsmen have drawn fire.

An Israeli free-lance writer traveling by bus along Route 1 last summer was taken off the bus by the Viet Cong and held captive several days. He managed to escape and find his way out of the jungle by some derring-do.

There are indications the Viet Cong would like to influence correspondents with propaganda, but few direct approaches have been made.

If captured by the Viet Cong from a private car, bus or train, an American (or other Western-bloc correspondent) probably would be treated the same as an American soldier. This normally means six months or more of captivity under very difficult circumstances in the jungle, and eventual release. A captive normally is required to sign propaganda statements or make verbal statements into a tape recorder. Physical torture is unlikely, but daily brain-washing sessions are part of the routine.

Grant Wolfkill, NBC correspondent who was held by the Pathet Lao in Laos received very bad treatment, but the Viet Cong is considered a little less rough in its treatment of prisoners.

If you are with a government operation, you will be a target of enemy fire, exactly as if you were a combattant. If you are wounded in a convoy or position that is overrun, you probably will be shot to death. The Viet Cong generally does not take wounded prisoners (because of the difficulty of keeping them alive in the jungle) but shoots them on the spot.

Most war correspondents in Viet Nam carry pistols on operations to have some chance of shooting themselves out of this kind of situation if wounded. Personal arms also may be useful if with

a small unit under heavy attack, in cases where every effective fighter is needed to avoid being swamped.

Carrying pistols is not condoned officially either by Vietnamese or American authorities, but American officers privately approve of the practice.

Under no circumstances try to shoot it out with the Viet Cong if you are alone. They always outnumber you, and generally pack Tommy guns.

There are some highway bandits of a non-political or quasi-political character in Viet Nam. They will hold you up, rob you blind, beat you up and possibly kill you. It is recommended that when you travel you leave valuables in Saigon EXCEPT for identification papers and about 5,000 piastres. Any money you have will be taken, but 5,000 piastres is regarded (by the most experienced French travelers) as about the minimum with which you can buy freedom or your life from bandits. A few U.S. dollars also are handy for use at MAAG detachments.

If stopped by the Viet Cong, tell them truthfully who you are and what you are doing. Don't try to throw away your identification papers if you are stopped by guerrillas. Identity-less captives are regarded as extremely suspect by the Viet Cong and are subject to very bad treatment. If you are American and happen to speak fluent, accentless French, you might get off with just a brief lecture. But don't try too hard to deceive anyone. This can make matters a lot worse if you are found out. Do not carry arms if traveling alone.

IX. COMMUNICATIONS

The AP Saigon bureau sends most of its stories either by press cable to Tokyo or by its daily radioteletype cast to Tokyo. We have a half-hour cast (good for up to about 1,800 words) every day but Sunday. The cast must be filed by about 4 p.m. to give the censors time to read it over. It starts moving at 5:15 p.m.

The Saigon cable office (PTT) is open 24 hours a day every day.

The AP has a cable account, and AP STAFFERS can be issued filing cards by the PTT so they may sign and file their own cables without pre-payment. Cables should be sent only on the forms provided in the AP office. No credit cards from commercial communications firms (RCA, Cable & Wireless Ltd., etc.) are honored in Viet Nam.

All communications in Viet Nam are controlled and operated by the government. All cables (including service cables) and casts are monitored by several censorship units. While casts and cables have been allowed to pass without delay in recent months, the practice of delaying or blocking controversial stories might be resumed at any time.

Urgent-rate cables take one to three hours reaching Tokyo. Normal press-rate cables take up to five hours.

Incoming cables are delivered to the AP office (or Brown's apartment upstairs) at all hours, but delays late at night are

frequent. Someone must always be on hand to sign for a cable or it will not be delivered.

There are three basic telephone systems in Viet Nam, all of which can be used from the telephone in the AF office.

The first is the government-operated civilian system. All private and commercial numbers are on it (but because of very high telephone rates, relatively few Saigon residents have phones).

As yet, there are no telephone booths or public telephones in Saigon.

Most Saigon telephone numbers have five digits and can be dialed directly. The PTT phone book (in Vietnamese only) cross lists all numbers by numerical order, by the name of subscriber, alphabetically, and by the address of the subscriber.

Some numbers have only four digits (the first of which is "4".) To get them, dial "4," then tell the operator (in Vietnamese or French) the remaining three digits of the number.

It is theoretically possible to make radiotelephone calls using the PTT system to about ten cities in South Viet Nam. In practice, these circuits are usually very bad.

The Vietnamese military establishment operates a switchboard of its own, which includes many American military phone numbers, numbers for officials of the International Control Commission, and some others.

To get the Vietnamese military switchboard operator, dial 20911, 24675 or 20731. When the operator answers (in Vietnamese) tell him the number you want (in English, Vietnamese or French). After a pause, he will ask you (in very poor English) the number of your telephone. Tell him. If you are calling from the AF, it is 25536. Be patient and try to keep your temper.

The MACV (U.S. Military Assistance Command) information office has a PTT number of its own, which can be dialed directly. It is 25565. During off hours, you must reach the officers who work their at their billets, and this has to be done through the Vietnamese military switchboard.

The third major communications channel is a system of single-sideband radiotelephone connections between U.S. installations in most of the important capitals of South Viet Nam's provinces, and one in Thailand (Ubon).

To use this system, dial 21273 or 21266 to get "Tiger" (who is a U.S. military operator). Tell him the code name of whatever town you want to call (complete list of code names at the AF office) such as "Bluebird" for My Tho, "Llama" for Pleiku, and so on. Some code names can be reached only by routing through others, but the diagram for this is in the office.

Connections through this network are extremely clear, except at certain hours to some points in the delta. The best time to call My Tho ("Bluebird") or Soc Trang ("Lady") is after dark.

Try to give the operator at the other end the exact number of the phone you're trying to reach (intelligence sections of many U.S. detachments have the phone number "212," for example).

If you're trying to get military information, try to get the duty officer, or the G-2 (intelligence) or the G-3 (operations).

Domestic cables are slow, but sometimes the only way to get information out of remote towns. Always pre-pay domestic cables

(few rural PTT offices have ever heard of filing cards), and, like international cables, address them to ASSOCIATED SAIGON.

The government radio station (formerly the French-owned company Televietnam) handles all overseas telephone calls, voice casts, PTT casts and radiophoto casts. It is not open at night, on weekends or holidays, unless special arrangements are made in advance. Voice or radiophoto circuits to Tokyo are clear only in the mid-morning; to Paris, only in late afternoon.

In the past, emergency copy has been telephoned or sent by voice cast from the radio station (for example, when the Saigon PTT was under siege by rebel paratroops on Nov. 11, 1961). But since the radio station now is entirely government controlled and owned, this practice may be impossible now.

The AP has no radio equipment of its own in Saigon.

The U.S. Information Service and certain MACV installations have their own radioteletype equipment. Under a private subscriber agreement, USIS currently monitors the incoming AP report, and we receive a copy from USIS several times a day.

It might prove possible in an emergency to file news outward on the U.S. government circuits, although possibly only on a pool basis. U.S. officials never have firmly committed themselves on the point.

Certain other foreign embassies (notably the Korean) maintain their own radio channels, which might conceivably be used in emergencies.

X. CLOTHING

South Viet Nam has three seasons: The hot season, the monsoon season and the dry season. These seasons are not uniform in all parts of the country.

In Saigon, dinner clothes are sometimes useful for resident correspondents at diplomatic functions. Dinner jackets (white) and trousers can be made up in the city for about 3,000 piastres.

Dark suits and ties are standard for all receptions, cocktail parties, dinners, and most government press conferences. Suits and ties must be worn when the presidential family is involved in any function.

Sports shirts and slacks (but not shorts) are appropriate for everything else in Saigon.

For the field, a light sweater and pancho or plastic raincoat are advisable in the highlands, especially in the dry and monsoon seasons. In some mountainous areas blankets are needed at night.

Cotton bush jackets and pants or ordinary army fatigues are best for the field. Bush jackets have pockets that hold more than fatigues. They can be made up at local stores.

Shoes or Vietnamese combat shoes are not recommended. The soles will not stop foot spikes. If a correspondent expects to be in Viet Nam for some time, he should buy a good pair of boots. They can be custom made for about 1,000 piastres. Some correspondents have had bootmakers install steel plates inside the soles,

for extra protection against spikes.

SPIKES ARE VERY DANGEROUS AND PAINFUL, ALL OF VIET NAM ABOUNDS WITH THEM, AND THEY SHOULD NOT BE UNDERESTIMATED.

Gear should also include a light, cheap hat and sun glasses. Locally made clothing is cheap.

XI. RECOMMENDED FIELD GEAR

For one-day operations, a pistol belt with attached canteen and case are the basics. A jack knife, film and some candy are useful. (Candy helps fill in the long hours between meals and pleases peasant children. Chocolate always melts, but sour balls are suitable.)

For longer operations, the following is recommended:

A GI field pack, or its equivalent.

A camouflaged mosquito net (not a white one).

Canteen with case, jack knife, C-Ration can opener.

Assorted canned or packaged food, especially canned meat, enough to last at least one day. C-Rations can be bought from MAAG units in the field sometimes. They cost \$12 a case, which is enough for about one week.

A rubber air mattress, if obtainable; otherwise, a ground cloth.

Several pairs of socks, some underwear, and a white shirt, if there's room. Province chiefs sometimes invite correspondents in the field to dinner.

Toilet items, including towel and soap.

An ample supply of toilet paper.

A small flashlight.

Mosquito repellent

A light blanket, if season and area indicate it.

An aid pack

A bottle of halizone water purification tablets.

Aspirin

Matches or lighter, if you smoke. Candy.

A suitable map.

Money and identification papers.

Optionally, a pocket pistol.

In crossing streams, canals and ditches, the correspondent often is neck deep in water and mud. Everything not specially protected will be soaked. Cameras should be held over the head or thrown to someone on the other side before crossing. Small pocket items, such as matches and identification papers and film can be kept dry with GI contraceptives. Items can be put in the rubbers, tying the necks closed.

All these items can be obtained in Saigon.

XII. PRIMARY OFFICIAL NEWS SOURCES

The U.S. Embassy (25251)
The U.S. Information Service (25258) John Mecklin; director;
Paul Phillips, press officer.
Vietnam Press (Issued twice daily in English and French)
U.S. Military Assistance Command (MACV) information office
(25565) 137 Rue Pasteur. Lt. Col. Jim Smith in charge.
U.S. Military Advisory Assistance Command (MAAG). Military
switchboard 6C213
Viet Nam Direction General of Information (21696) 79 Phan
Dinh Phung. Phan Van Tao, director; Dang Duc Khoi, deputy.

XIII. AP OFFICE ROUTINE

The office (158D/3 Rue Pasteur) opens daily except Sunday at 8:30 a.m. A messenger and one or more correspondents are on duty at that time. The office usually closes at 7 p.m., although someone is usually working in it until later.

A messenger or attendant is on duty every day during the day and Wednesday, Thursday, Friday and Saturday nights until 11 p.m. (Browne lives upstairs, has an extension of the office phone, and normally can take calls at all times the office itself is unstaffed.)

The incoming AP file is picked up several times a day, and should be read by the desk.

Vietnam Press bulletins come in at noon and about 6:30 p.m. The desk should read both editions.

Radio Phnom Penh (in English) must be monitored each day using the radio next to the desk (which has a special antenna rigged on the roof.) We monitor at 1:30 p.m. on 6090. (Exact frequency marked with a "P" on radio dial.)

Radio Hanoi (in English) is monitored at the office every day on 9840 at 6 p.m. Tokyo also monitors Hanoi, but this should be regarded only as a backstop. (Exact frequency marked on radio dial with an "H".)

For radio monitoring, it is useful to use a tape recorder for verbatim quotes and as a substitute for shorthand. There is a tape recorder next to the radio. Make sure you know how it operates before using it. It's expensive, it belongs to Browne, and if you break it, there'll be hell to pay.

"Bill" Ha Van Tran checks the local press in the evening for possible stories.

A messenger from the British Information Service brings a mimeographed excerpt of important stories in the local press about noon each day. The "Vietnamese External" and "Vietnamese Internal" sections should be read carefully by the desk.

Agence Khmere de Presse (AKP), Cambodia's official news agency bulletin, arrives in batches by mail from Phnom Penh once or twice a week. Despite its staleness, this should be read by the desk, especially with an eye for upcoming stories or events not mentioned on Radio Phnom Penh. It's in French.

our current stringer in Cambodia is a Cambodian businessman named Seng Meakly. His cable address is ASSOCIATED PHNOMPENH, and cables to him must be in French. He files from time to time, and sometimes his dispatches are important. Since they are in French, they come here. We must not only translate them but rewrite them as a rule, removing any tendency to provincialism and putting them in perspective. We then refile to Tokyo.

The AP has a mail box at MACV information office, in which news releases and mail from our military friends is left. This should be picked up daily.

The Vietnamese Direction General of Information holds daily what it calls a "military briefing," Monday through Saturday at 10 a.m. An official reads the daily military communique in Vietnamese and English. This is the same communique published later in the day by Vietnam Press, but we usually attend the "briefing" anyway to benefit from the several-hour lead it has on the published report. No questions are answered at the briefings. In general, events up to one week late are reported, and information frequently is inaccurate.

The bureau has some of the elements of a darkroom in its john, but still does part of its photo processing commercially.

At the press table in USIS, transcripts of foreign radio broadcasts (FBIS) -- which include SCME of Hanoi, Phnom Penh, Radio Pathet Lao and Liberation (Viet Cong) Radio are kept. They are always stale, but should be read from time to time.

XIV. SOME TIPS ON EMBASSY SOURCES

Embassy sources in general are very useful. They can be tapped in office interviews, at luncheon dates, or at cocktail parties.

A resident correspondent in Saigon is invited to three to five cocktail parties a week, sometimes more. Most begin at an inconvenient time (6:30 p.m.) but it is wise to attend as many as possible. The faces and subjects of conversation don't change much, but the most influential people in town go to them. People you can't get to interview any other way you often can nail down at receptions.

Here are some subjective judgments of the news value of various embassies in Saigon:

U.S.--Variable; the higher the official, the more vague he is likely to be. Some very good sources, however. British--Generally close-mouthed, but extremely well informed. Excellent sources. French--Except for the ambassador (who won't talk at all), rather poorly informed. Deeply suspicious of the press, particularly American correspondents. German--Very good company, excellent press dinners, good on cultural developments, but worthless for any other kind of news. Ambassador useful if German is kidnapped or killed, however. Japanese--Generally well informed and anxious to swap information with correspondents. Indonesian--Fairly well informed, extremely talkative, apt to be inaccurate. Korean--Friendly to press and well informed. Chinese--(nationalist) Well informed but difficult to tap

because of delicacy of its relations with Viet Nam. Philippines-- Poorly informed, mainly concerned with boosting relations with the Vietnamese government. Laotian--While Laotian relations with South Viet Nam technically are severed, the Laotian embassy is still operating in Saigon under a charge d'affaires. Friendly and cooperative with press, but not kept well informed by its own government. Cambodian--Cooperative, but not kept well informed by its own government. Indian--Generally well informed (especially on ICC matters), and since the Sino-Indian fight, increasingly cooperative with Western press. Good on news from Hanoi. Polish--Good parties, little information. Canadian--Well informed on Hanoi, occasionally talk to press.

XV. SOME TIPS ON OFFICIAL INFORMATION

No government is above distorting or concealing information to serve its own ends, and in Viet Nam the situation is particularly trying to newsmen.

Most official information, not only from the Saigon government and its agencies (which include the local newspapers, since they are under rigid control) but foreign sources must be mistrusted.

Figures on casualties and reports of military engagements are especially subject to distortion.

In covering a military engagement, make every effort to count the bodies yourself before accepting any tabulation of results. In any case, cross check Vietnamese and American tabulations of casualties -- there are often wide discrepancies. Besides official sources, check with officers who were there and whom you trust. And on top of all that take everything with a grain of salt. Always attribute casualty figures to whatever official source they came from. (For example: "The Saigon government claimed that, etc.")

American casualties now are generally reported accurately and fast by MACV information office.

Beware of claims of military victories. This is not the kind of war in which real victories turn up often, on either side. Saigon and Hanoi are equally extravagant in their claims.

Suspect any "victory" in which more than 15 enemy dead are claimed.

Suspect victories based on estimates of the effects of air strikes. Pilots' claims often are exaggerated and rarely can be confirmed.

Suspect claims of large seizures of enemy weapons. There have been cases in which stocks of weapons have been planted in hamlets, "seized" by ground forces, and then claimed as "enemy" booty, for propaganda purposes. This kind of thing is known technically as "black propaganda," and it flourishes in Viet Nam.

Suspect reports of weapons seized which purport to prove communist arms are being smuggled in from Laos and Cambodia. Most intelligent officials believe arms smuggling is not significant in Viet Nam. If captured Red Chinese weapons are displayed, it must be proved they were made later than 1954 to prove infiltration. Many Red Chinese weapons were supplied to the Viet Minh

during the Indochina War, and many of these weapons are still around.

Beware of claims that the Viet Cong was "crushed" in such and such a district, or that such and such a Viet Cong battalion or regiment "was rendered ineffective." Waiting a few days usually proves such claims false, when the Viet Cong comes back for another round.

Beware, similarly, of American official reports of such things. Americans occasionally have had to make their reports on nothing more than the Vietnamese claims, although this is being reduced as American field advisers have been reporting more effectively.

Remember, in general, that any information given out by the Saigon government has been well filtered by the propaganda apparatus, and would not be given out at all if it were not intended to have some propaganda effect. Rely basically on your own private sources.

The same, naturally, goes for anything coming out of Hanoi, Liberation Press Agency or Liberation Radio.

Even in the field, beware of impressions you get from things shown you by officials. If you ask to see a strategic hamlet and are taken to one by officials, they obviously will show you only the best they have to offer. You have no one but yourself to blame if it is not typical of strategic hamlets in general. Do things and talk to people on your own.

After cultivating instinctive suspicion of all official information, don't become so suspicious you automatically reject all statements and claims. Check each one. Sometimes the truth will pleasantly surprise you.

"Estimates" of enemy casualties sometimes are not mere lies; the Viet Cong DOES carry off its dead and wounded, whenever possible. Often, after a heavy engagement, a human brain will be found under a bush, or there is some other indication that enemy losses were carried off. But remember that if enemy casualties were carried off, the enemy is still pretty strong -- he can't be both wiped out and carry off his losses at the same time. It generally takes two healthy men to carry one dead or wounded one away from a battle. When this has happened, it means the enemy did not flee in a rout, but withdrew with discipline and good order. If he managed to take most of his weapons with him (which is often the case) it is additional indication that either the official "estimate" of enemy losses is wrong or that the enemy is still pretty strong.

Only heaps of bodies and captured weapons indicate solid success in this war. Count and check whenever you can.

Beware of claims from either side about Cambodian-Vietnamese border skirmishes. The skirmishes happen, but it is always difficult to name the guilty party. Neither Cambodia nor Viet Nam recognizes the other's maps. The border between them varies by a few kilometers, depending on which country's map you are looking at, and in most places, the border is physically unmarked. Cambodians and Vietnamese sometimes shoot at each other just for the hell of it. The feud goes back for centuries.

Beware in particular of any information at all you get from certain officials, who can be counted on to tell bald-faced, 180-degree whoppers nearly every time. A list of these officials and their relative credibility indices is available at the AF office. Unfortunately, some of them are in high positions.

XVI. SOME POINTERS ON GUERRILLA WARFARE

At times, you will find yourself in actual combat situations, and you should react to them like a soldier -- by doing everything you can to keep yourself alive and unwounded.

Try to keep in good physical condition so you can march or run for a reasonable distance. You might have to save your life doing this at some point. You should know how to swim. Canals and ditches often are above your head.

If you hear a shot and think it's not from your own side, don't get up and look around to see where it came from. The second shot might get you. Lie prone under fire, and move only on your belly. Look for cover and move toward it.

When moving with troops DO NOT stay close to the head of a column or the "point man" in a formation. Professional soldiers are paid to do this. DO NOT stand or march next to a radio man or an aid man. They are prime targets. Stick close to the commander, who is generally in the safest position available. You'll learn more from him than most of the others, anyway. The whole idea of covering an operation is to GET THE NEWS AND PICTURES BACK, not to play soldier yourself.

When moving through enemy territory (a good part of Viet Nam is enemy territory) watch your feet. Spikes, mines, concealed pits and booby traps are everywhere. When possible, step in exactly the same places as the soldier ahead of you. If he wasn't blown up, you probably won't be.

If you should get stuck under a mortar barrage or accidental air strike on your own side, the best place to be is under ground. Holes are better than nothing. Most Vietnamese huts have roots cellars inside them, which offer fairly good cover.

If you are traveling in an M113 or M114 armored amphibious personnel carrier, do not stick your head out of the hatch when the vehicle is under fire. The gunner has to, because it's his job. But five M113 gunners were killed in a recent clash in the delta.

If you know you're going to be traveling in an M113 or M114 during an operation, bring heavy cotton gloves. If you don't, your hands will be badly blistered, cut up and mashed, just from holding on.

Do not pick up Viet Cong flags or other souvenirs from hay stacks, tree branches or poles. They are often booby-trapped with grenades.

Never be the first to walk into a hut.

Beware of water buffalo. When they get excited they stampede, charge and kill. Vietnamese forces suffer a number of casualties from water buffalo. Don't be misled by seeing children playing on their backs; children and buffalo are friends.

XVII. ON COVERING OPERATIONS

There are two objectives in covering an operation -- getting the basic facts of what happened, and getting the color and little details that put flesh on the bones. It's not always possible to do both things simultaneously.

Sometimes the basic facts are the most important things to look for, and the color is merely routine -- color that's been described many times before.

Sometimes the color is more important, especially if the operation had no significant military result. Perhaps someone said something interesting. Perhaps some home-made Viet Cong ammunition of an interesting kind was captured. (In several instances, cartridges made out of old French coins have been found.) In short, the sidebars are sometimes more interesting than the story. Most often, a good balance of both color and facts is needed.

Operations these days may start with landing craft, trucks, armored amphibious personnel carriers, or even with a foot march. But most often the operation starts with helicopters, and sometimes with parachute drops.

Covering an operation that starts with helicopters requires a decision on the part of the correspondent early in the day -- whether to stay with the helicopters and at the command post, or whether to get out with the troops.

In terms of personal danger, it's six to one, half dozen or another. Helicopters take casualties, too.

To get close to the war, you must be with the troops, unless you are so unlucky as to get shot down. It is often best to be in the thick of the fighting to know what's going on, and it's essential if you want pictures.

On the other hand, tactical details of what is happening generally are more accessible at command posts. Maps are kept posted and casualties are reported as they develop. Lately, the Vietnamese government has made it very difficult to get near tactical maps, and has forbidden correspondents to talk to Vietnamese field officers unless they first go through mountains of red tape (aimed at filtering any direct quotations through the government propaganda agencies).

Despite this, a good deal of information is available from American sources around command posts, which generally are only a few kilometers from the objectives.

There is the added advantage that you can always get out with another helicopter wave if an interesting one develops later in the day.

The main disadvantage of being out with the troops is that you rarely can get information as to what's happening throughout the entire operating area. Usually, operations involve a number of landing points, sometimes miles apart. You may hit it lucky and land in an active sector. On the other hand, you may not hear a shot fired all day, and miss the whole thing. It's pot luck.

Wherever you are during an operation, you must expect to have to spend most the time in long, tiresome hours waiting for something

to happen. This is the most tiring and frustrating aspect of war coverage.

HOWEVER, operations most often run into any enemy resistance they will meet in the opening assault phase. If, as your helicopter touches down in front of a hamlet or tree line you start receiving enemy fire, you probably have hit an interesting sector. It is best to get out and follow the assault on in. But remember, once the helicopter touches the ground, you have only about six seconds to make your decision as to whether or not to get out. That's how long the troops (and you) have to leave the aircraft before it flies off.

Once you get out, your decision is irrevocable. You may not see another helicopter again all day, and chances are, you will have to march back to the assembly area. In fact, you may not be able to get back for several days. It is therefore wise to have field gear with you if you plan to get out.

If you are wounded or sick, you will be evacuated; otherwise, you must stay with the troops from that time on, as a rule.

Often, helicopters make their landings in a series of waves, especially if the operation is large. Three waves are common, and a reserve force at or near the CP may be committed later in the day. Reserve forces generally are sent in if active fire fights develop anywhere in the operating area, and sometimes are interesting units to be with.

If you are flying with the Utility Tactical Transport helicopter company (U.S. Army), you will not be with troops at all. These helicopters are escort craft armed with rockets and machineguns, and their only function so far is to guard the troop-carrying helicopters. They stay in the air when the troop-carriers land.

If you are on the ground when an artillery bombardment or air strike begins nearby, stay under cover and don't move until you're sure it's over.

Don't try covering an operation from a T28 or B26 fighter plane if you have the slightest tendency to air sickness. To a lesser extent, this applies to L28 and Mohawk reconnaissance planes. These flights are really rough, and pulling out of strafing runs puts a force of more than four "Gs" on you.

Commanders rarely tell you how many troops are on an operation, so you must estimate. Count the number of troop-carriers (H21s or HB4s). Each troop-carrier holds an average of 12 troops (one squad). By counting the helicopters and counting the number of waves, you can calculate fairly accurately the number of troops that went in by helicopter (there may be others who went in by road, on foot, or in river craft).

For example: 15 helicopters, three waves. $15 \times 3 \times 12$ equals 540 troops, or about one Vietnamese battalion.

You may not know the direction of the objective from the point at which you took off. Just check the direction of the sun, and remember the sun rises in the east and sets in the west. To gauge distance, remember that a helicopter flies at about 80 miles an hour on combat missions.

Remember that DIRECT QUOTES FROM OFFICERS AND SOLDIERS ARE

IMPORTANT TO GET, especially if they illustrate some important aspect of developments.

In identifying any American, it is important to get his age and home town, if possible.

XVIII. ORGANIZATION OF ARMED FORCES IN VIET NAM

The Saigon government's major armed forces include the regular army (ARVN), the air force (VNAF), the navy and the marine corps.

All military aircraft, including helicopters, are part of the air force.

Besides the major fighting arms, there are several paramilitary organizations. The two most important -- the Civil Guard (Bao An) and Self Defense Corps (Dan Ve) suffer the bulk of government casualties.

The Civil Guard originally was set up to give each of the 41 provinces in South Viet Nam its own semi-autonomous fighting force. The Self Defense Corps originally was in the jurisdiction of the districts or even villages, and grass-roots hamlet protection often is provided by the SIC.

Both organizations now are under the Defense Ministry command, however, which has made it possible for U.S. advisors to work with them.

Designations of Vietnamese units is usually given (for both government and Viet Cong forces) in conventional military terms, but strengths of designated units do not necessarily coincide with American designations.

Here, approximately, are the strengths of the different types of Vietnamese unit:

Squad--12 men; Platoon--25-30 men; Company--100-120 men; Battalion--400-500 men; Regiment--1,200-1,500 men; Division--4,500-5,000 men; Corps--About 25,000 men.

In the field, regular soldiers and Civil Guards are dressed about the same, both in American-style combat fatigues or khakis. Insignia of rank in all forces are stripes on the sleeves for enlisted men, metal devices worn in the center of the chest for officers.

Officers' insignia are: One gold circle with curving line across it--"Aspirant" (Officer Candidate); One gold leaf--2nd Lieutenant; Two gold leaves--1st Lieutenant; Three gold leaves--captain; one silver leaf--major; Two silver leaves--lieutenant colonel; Three silver leaves--colonel; Two silver stars (there are no single stars)--brigadier general; Three silver stars--major general; Four silver stars--general (there is only one man holding this rank. He is General Le Van Ty, aging commander of all the armed forces, who is in semi-retirement).

Other organizations that fight include the Republican Youth Corps (Thanh Nien Cong Hoa), made up mostly of civil servants up to the age of 35. It has more than one million members, some of whom, in rural communities, are called on to fight, especially during enemy attacks. They normally wear blue uniforms. (On Monday in Saigon, they are required to wear their uniforms to work, stand formation at 7:30 a.m. in front of their offices, and train.)

There is a paramilitary Women's Corps (organized by the First Lady, Madame Ngô Đình Nhu), whose members receive some combat training. They rarely actually fight, however. They also wear blue.

The National Gendarmerie serves mainly as a rural police force, but sometimes gets into fights with the Viet Cong. Gendarmes wear khakis with red visored caps.

The Civic Action Corps consists of cadres theoretically trained to fight, carry out propaganda missions, spy, help with rural administration, and otherwise operate as multi-threat anti-guerrillas. They wear blue.

Marines in the field wear characteristic green and black camouflaged nylon fatigues.

Rangers often wear the same fatigues, but marked with a black and yellow shoulder patch depicting a snarling tiger's head.

Some organizations wear berets of characteristic colors. Beret colors are:

Red--paratroopers; Green--marines; Brown--rangers; Black or green--army special forces; Black--palace guards; Tan--political officers, interrogators and translators. The presidential palace guard wears white uniforms similar to the metropolitan police.

South Viet Nam is divided into four corps areas; the northernmost is I Corps, the southernmost is IV Corps. These areas are marked on maps at the AF office. Each corps is commanded by a general, who is responsible to the Chief of Staff in Saigon. Each corps includes several divisions.

There are special commands for the Capital Region (Saigon and vicinity) and for D Zone (a major Viet Cong "liberated" area north and northeast of Saigon).

IV Corps currently is commanded by Brig. Gen. Huynh Van Cao, a champion press-hater from way back. Unfortunately, his corps includes the delta and everything else south of Saigon where most of the fighting is. A correspondent can expect no cooperation whatever from him, and it is best to stay out of his way.

The Viet Cong divides South Viet Nam into five "Zones" with several "Interzone" headquarters. Main Viet Cong strength is in the delta, in the southern tip (An Xuyen and neighboring provinces), and F Zone, with strong pockets all the way up the coast and in the inland mountains.

Viet Cong uniforms vary. Some are black (standard South Vietnamese peasant garb), some are khaki, some are Hanoi-green. Viet Cong troops often wear bush hats (white or olive-drab), but regulars generally wear the old Viet Minh wicker-and-plastic helmet, which looks like an inverted pie tin with deep sides. Their flag is red on top, blue on the bottom, with a yellow star in the center. Sometimes they carry the North Vietnamese flag, which is solid red with a yellow star in the center.

In general, the Viet Cong's three main forces (South Viet Nam Liberation National Front People's Self Defense Forces) are broken down the same as government land forces, that is, into regular (hard-core) guerrillas, territorial guerrillas (corresponding to the Civil Guard), and the Self Defense Corps.

The U.S. military establishment all comes under the heading U.S. Military Assistance Command Vietnam (MACV), currently commanded by Gen. Paul D. Harkins (four stars).

Sub-commands include the Military Assistance Advisory Command (MAAG) under which most advisors work, and the U.S. Army Support Group, which has to do with direct support (helicopters, for example).

The U.S. Army Special Forces have a role all their own. They work under the Combined Studies group, of which Col. Gilbert Layton is currently the commander. Their relations with the Central Intelligence Agency and other spook groups are close. They are most active in the highlands, where their primary mission is bringing the various tribal "montagnard" groups back into the fold.

U.S. Air Force activity is mostly under the 2nd Air Division. Its pilots fly many of the Vietnamese air force planes, including the T28s and B26s. (Vietnamese airforce insignia is exactly the same as U.S. Airforce insignia, except that the side panels are boxed in red with a red center stripe and yellow instead of white in the rest of the box. It's easy to confuse with American markings.)

There also are U.S. Airforce jet fighters stationed on and off at Saigon. These are F101s, F102s and occasionally others from the "century series." Most U.S. air activity is kept under secrecy wraps, but hard-driving reporting techniques can dig out information sometimes.

The U.S. Agency for International Development mission in Viet Nam (USAID) is also active in military matters, particularly its new Rural Affairs Section. The section currently is headed by Rufus Phillips, a former (?) CIA operative, who built a reputation for anti-guerrilla know-how in the Philippines.

XIX. ACCOMMODATIONS AND ENTERTAINMENT

Hotels in Saigon are comfortable and fairly expensive (about \$17 a day for a room at the Caravelle, the best hotel in town). Bookings should be made well in advance, especially during certain holiday seasons (including the Chinese new year).

Despite the official ban on dancing and almost everything else that involves fun, there is some night life in Saigon. There are many private parties. The two most popular nightclubs in Saigon are La Galerie (next to the Caravelle), which has an excellent floor show (mostly in French), and La Cigale (mostly for music). Catinat and other downtown streets are lined with gin mills where hostesses wearing chaste, white uniforms serve booze to the GIs and other patrons. Don't be too obvious trying to pick up a hostess. The police probably are sitting there too, and you may get her in trouble.

Cuisine in Saigon generally is excellent. The best French cooking is available (Paprika, Aterbea, L'amiral, Guillaume Tell), as well as Vietnamese, Chinese and Algerian.

There are no longer any sidewalk cafes in Saigon because of a resurgence of grenades (although some restaurants are at street level with grenade guards).

Don't try to buy anything or get much done between noon and 3 p.m. The whole country closes down for Siesta during those hours.

All bars and restaurants close at 2 a.m.

Private clubs in Saigon include Le Cercle Sportif (for swimming

and tennis), Le Cercle Hippique (for riding) and Le Club Nautique (for boating; but don't take boats too far up the river. Several members have been shot and killed by the Viet Cong doing this). There is also a "golf club."

There is a foreign correspondents' association in Saigon (headquarters currently at the AP office) but no press club. Transient correspondents often gather at Jerome's Bar on the 8th floor of the Caravelle.

You should assume in any bar or public place that your conversation is being overheard by an agent of some kind, most often a government agent (Bureau of Studies, Surete, etc.). Correspondents who have talked too candidly about their private views in such places have sometimes had cause to regret it. Exhaustively complete dossiers are kept by the government on every correspondent visiting the country.

Outside Saigon, it is generally simplest to arrange accommodations at a MAAG detachment, if there is one in the vicinity. You may have to pay (in dollars) for billeting, and you always pay for food and other things.

XX. SOME COMMON WEAPONS

Artillery--75-, 105- and 155-millimeter howitzers; 40-millimeter anti-aircraft guns; 60 and 81-millimeter and 4.2-inch mortars; 57-millimeter recoilless rifles (if Chinese, called "SKE".)

Machineguns--.50 and .30-caliber American machineguns (Browning) and French .30-calibers (MAT); on helicopters, M60 Nat. machineguns.

Rifles--M-1 garand (American); MAS36 (French); M14 (American); Indochina Rifle (French); Enfield (British); "Armalite" .223-caliber (American, ultra-lightweight).

Automatic rifles--BAR (American); MAT (French); M14 (American).

Carbines--M-1 and M-2 (American).

Sub machineguns--Thompson .45-caliber (American); .45-caliber "grease gun" (American); FN (Belgian); Swedish "K".

