

# THE JAGGED SWORD

The Magazine of the 1st Signal Brigade,  
Fall 1970





# SEAPC

The Eyes  
of the  
1st Signal  
Brigade

By SP4 Dan Cotter



*This page shows the many facets of SEAPC. Upper left, the photo work desk where orders are received. Upper right, one of 6,000 training films in the SEAPC library. The field work, center, is printed in modern darkrooms. Above, the unit's graphics shop.*

The visual explosion has reached Southeast Asia. Throughout the United States and most of the world reliable and near-instantaneous visual coverage of events has become commonplace. But only within the last year has the full scope of visual communication come to the many phases of the Vietnam war.

The main force behind the growing use of eye-directed media is the visual branch of the 1st Signal Brigade, the Southeast Asia Pictorial Center. During the last year SEAPC under the direction of MAJ John A. Goetz, LTC Warren R. Colville and now MAJ William B. Valen has realized its proposed goal of providing the pictorial support necessary for complete analysis and historical documentation of the effort of the Free World Forces in Southeast Asia. With headquarters in Long Binh and detachments in Da Nang, Pleiku, Qui Nhon, Cam Ranh Bay, Can Tho and Saigon SEAPC has exercised competent operational control of all Army Signal Corps photographic and audio-visual support units in RVN outside field forces and divisions.

SEAPC was activated in late 1966 for a unique mission—to direct, supervise and coordinate the performance of photographic and audio-visual functions in support of United States Army elements and other governmental activities in Southeast Asia. SEAPC distributes its support activities into several phases: still and motion picture photography; color and black and white film, transparency and print processing; audio-visual equipment and training film operations; graphic arts support for Assistant Chief of Staff, Communications-Electronics, USARV, and CG, 1st Signal Brigade. The unit also collects, processes and submits historical record material to Department of the Army.

The heartbeat lies in its Photo-

graphic Section. Headed by SSG William Bryant, a seasoned Army photographer, the SEAPC photomen focus their attention on the activities of the United States and Free World Forces throughout the Republic of Vietnam. The substance of SEAPC's work is centered in combat action and operational record photography—the ultimate goal being comprehensive documentation of the war effort in RVN for Department of the Army. Full visual coverage is provided by three-man teams, composed of two motion picture photographers and one still photographer, who are dispatched throughout Vietnam in maintaining responsive pictorial support at all Military Regions.

The SEAPC photographers, all members of the 221st Signal Company (Pictorial), make a practice of being "on-the-spot." Their expansive coverage of the Allied operations in Cambodia during May and June of this year displayed both the flexibility and reliability of the photomen. The in-country training which the photographers receive from the 199th Light Infantry Brigade or the 101st Airborne Division proved valuable

as the men of SEAPC showed their ability to operate effectively under any combat situation.

The pictorial support provided by SEAPC begins to take form in the central laboratory facility housed in semi-mobile vans. The laboratory processing equipment arrived in Vietnam in late 1967. The operations of the lab have come a long way from its first days of location and relocation, generator power-failures and immense backlogs. Now permanently situated, the photo vans have aptly utilized commercial power with the result of steady improvement in production quality, maintenance and training of personnel. The lab, divided for the sake of organization and control into a wet lab section, color section and a roll print section, revolves around a semi-automated operation which has drastically reduced film processing and printing time. But 1LT Bernard Buck, formerly OIC of the lab, is quick to find the source of the efficient service. "It's the men of this lab like SFC George Yates, SSG John Willits and SP5 Sankey Fields—the quality of their work and their willingness to go out of the way to get the job done is more than anyone

*Detachment B of the 221st Signal Company (Pictorial), Cam Ranh Bay, is one of SEAPC's six detachments located in the Republic of Vietnam.*



*SP5 Sankey Fields, right, works with SEAPC's semi-automated processing equipment. SEAPC has installed modern equipment to insure high quality and speed. Below, a photo/combat art team records a civic action program in the Central Highlands. SP5 Ken Grissom, left, SP5 Mike Kielty and 1LT Eric Wiegand record the scene on film and paper.*



could ask for."

The main task of audio-visual training falls to SEAPC's Central Audio-Visual Support Center. The A-V Center furnishes equipment and training aids which include over 6,000 films, transparencies, film strips, records, and tapes in support of the command wide training program. In addition, motion picture projector and equipment service is provided in conjunction with a weekly class in projector operation.

The other shaping agent of SEAPC's visual activities is the Graphics Support Section. The men who wield the charcoal and pencil supply Headquarters, 1st Signal Brigade, and Headquarters USARV, with charts and graphs for command briefings and conferences.

Further equipment service is supplied by SEAPC's Photo Maintenance Section which performs general support maintenance and repair on all of the brigade's TO&E photographic

and audio-visual equipment. Little notice or praise is given to the repairmen like SP5 Bryan Jones who keep the photographic machinery of the 1st Signal Brigade running smoothly. Although their role is a mundane one, lacking much of the luster of the other departments of SEAPC, the maintenance personnel headed by SP5 Ronald Burton do an outstanding job keeping the deadlined equipment at a minimum.

The final output of SEAPC's activities is compiled in the funneling operation of the Project Control Section which maintains files of all photographic material forwarded to Department of the Army. Project Control has the responsibility for receiving, processing and forwarding the material to the Army Pictorial Agency. Through an intensive pursuit of high quality in negatives, photographs, and photographic captions, Project Control adds the final polish to SEAPC's documentation of the war effort through still and mo-

tion picture photography. After the Central Lab Facility has processed the film turned in by the individual photographic teams, Project Control assembles the prints and negatives with their identifying captions. The men of Project Control realize the importance of their job and are proud of the accuracy which the section maintains. "I can't get bored," says SP5 Mark Erickson, "even though I look at thousands of negatives per week. My job determines the final output of SEAPC, so it's important that I do the best I can." As a final check the material chosen to be sent to the Army Photographic Agency is once again screened by the Operations Officer for quality, repetition and organization of the shipment. By means of the careful selection process and, more important, the keen interest of the men, SEAPC has accrued an unparalleled submission and acceptance rate for historical record negatives.

The acceptance rate of SEAPC's material by the Department of the Army has far surpassed the normal average Army acceptance rate of 15 to 17% of submitted material. SEAPC has an acceptance rate of 55 to 60%. In addition the volume of submitted material has also risen phenomenally. In fiscal year 1969, SEAPC submitted some 2,000 negatives and 190,000 feet of motion picture film. In fiscal year 1970, SEAPC submitted over 20,000 still negatives and some 383,000 feet of motion picture film to the Department of the Army.

Through the Southeast Asia Pictorial Center the 1st Signal Brigade is able to bring reports of the war to both the eyes and the ears of the Army.

The men of the Pictorial Center provide the military here and in the United States with a reliable and up-to-date visual account of the myriad of events which characterize the Vietnam conflict.

**“a  
bit  
above  
the rest”**



SP4 Alan Rockoff is on his second tour in Vietnam. During his first year Rockoff served with the 1st Air Cav., the 9th Infantry Division, the 11th Armored Cav., the 25th Infantry Division. . . The list of units and operations with which Rockoff has been associated goes on and on. The reason Alan Rockoff has spread himself across Indochina is simple—he is an expert in combat photography and he goes where the action is.

Specialist Rockoff is a member of the 221st Signal Company (Pictorial), and a key part of the photographic operation which has made SEAPC an integral part of the allied effort in Southeast Asia. There are many outstanding photographers among the men of SEAPC and the 221st. But, as 1LT Peter Reid, formerly a SEAPC Operational Liaison Officer, said, “There are a few photographers whose work is of such excellent quality that they are a bit above the rest—and Rockoff is one of these few.”

The force that produces the excellence in Rockoff's photography is his personal pride in his work. Photography is his profession in civilian life as well as in the military. On each assignment Rockoff is conscious of what his camera is capable of recording and of what he must do with that camera to accomplish his mission and to satisfy his own creativity. Of course, many times his personal satisfaction is pre-empted by the military objective or the dangerous situations which Rockoff as a combat photographer must face.

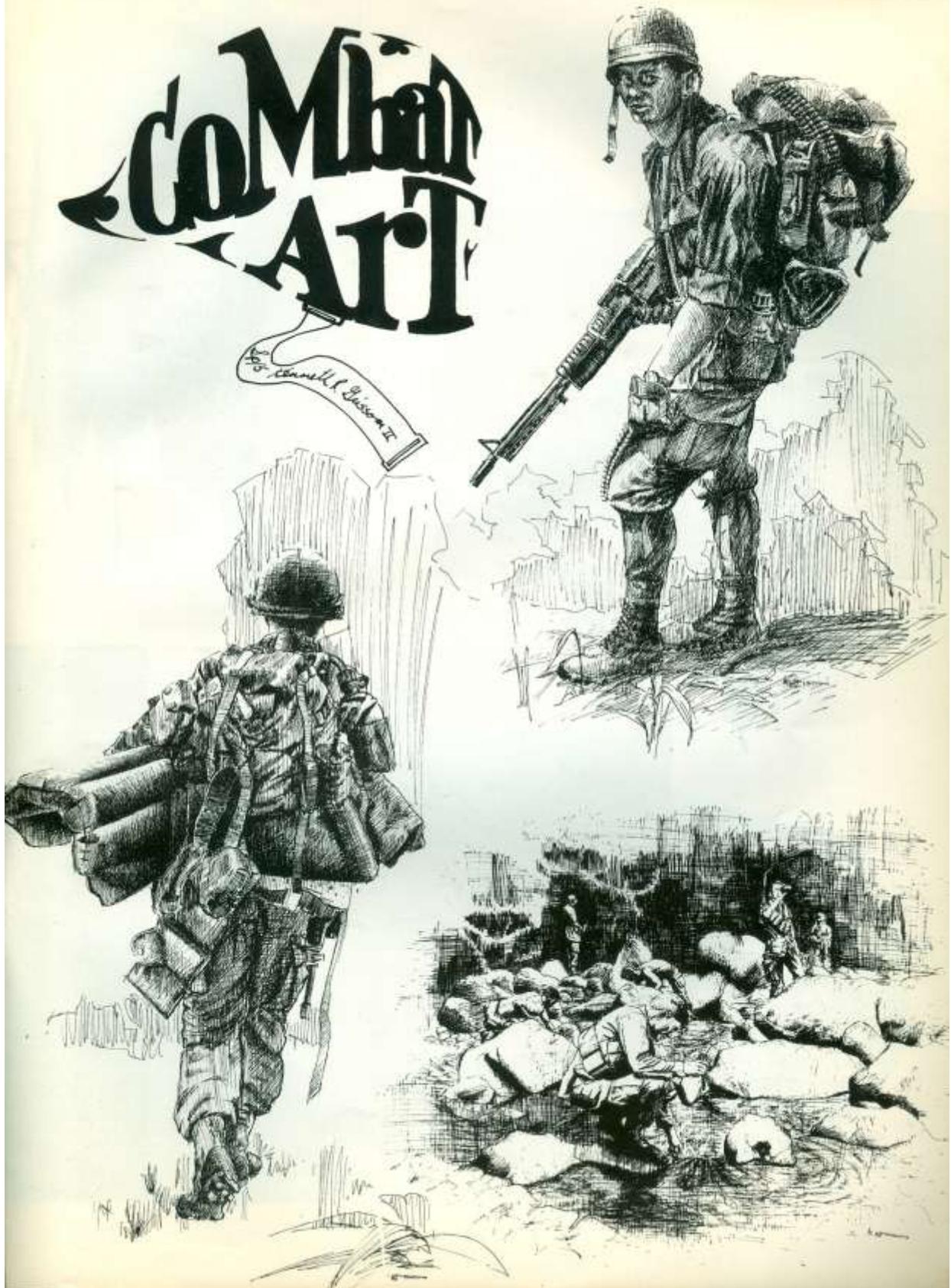
“I'll never forget lying in that water-filled ditch,” says Rockoff, “with enemy voices only a few yards away in the dark night. I sincerely questioned my sanity in being there with only a camera in my hand.”

But Rockoff would not trade jobs with anybody in Vietnam. “My camera coverage of different operations is the most interesting and fulfilling MOS I could ask for. Sure, there are hassles in catching choppers to get where we are going. And sometimes we might spend three days trying to get back, but the experience and the chance to see what's really going on throughout the country is well worth the trouble.”

Rockoff finds that the reaction of the combat units to the presence of a photographer varies. “Some units consider the ‘lens’ an intrusion,” explains the Florida native, “but most of the individual soldiers welcome the chance to publicize their situation and even go to great lengths to ham it up.” Rockoff feels that such a response is great. “Many times the photographic mission is set up to emphasize civil affairs or, as in the recent operations in Cambodia, the pictures of the arms caches were needed to show the results of the move. But I would rather show the individual soldier at his job. For me that's the most critical element of our presence here.” ↓

# COMBAT ART

By Cornell Lisman





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## Brigade Welcomes New Commanding General



MG Hugh F. Foster Jr. assumed command of the 1st Signal Brigade June 19 and immediately set out to see as much of his new command as possible.

Within the first few weeks, he visited each group and hundreds of signalmen throughout Vietnam and Thailand. There was no area of the brigade he did not cover in his familiarization visits.

Before coming to the First Signal Team, MG Foster was closely associated with the brigade for nearly a year as commanding general of U.S. Army Strategic Communications Command-Pacific, the brigade's parent organization. MG Foster brings 29 years of military experience to his new post. He is a 1941 graduate of the U.S. Military Academy and has a Master of Science degree in Engineering from Purdue University. He has also attended the Army War College and other military schools and has held signal assignments all over the world.

MG Foster's personality is perhaps best expressed by his own words. When he assumed command of the brigade, MG Foster outlined his personal philosophy as "He who cannot lead and will not follow should get out of the way."

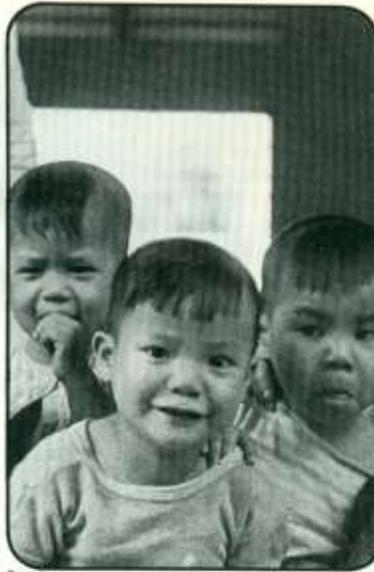
# THE JAGGED SWORD

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