

Glossary for “The ASA Trilogy”
Involuntary Tour
Dragon Bait
Falloff

These are terms that existed at the time of the novels’ settings, in the 1950s and 1960s. Many of these terms are not extant; some have modified meanings in the “modern” Army; but a quantifiable number remain in effect much as they were earlier.

Please feel free to point out to this author any inaccuracies you perceive in this aid; some may be a matter of personal experience, or may reflect usage in different timeframes, but I would like to be informed of perceived differences. If warranted, I will make changes to this Glossary. You may contact me with such notices at connemara2@comcast.net and in the Subject line, please notate “Glossary.” [This update effective 30 September 2020.]

Acronyms, Abbreviations, Slang, Jargon and other civilian inexplicables

051 — the military occupational specialty (MOS) for the warrant officer that is related to the MOS 058 for enlisted personnel: manual Morse intercept operator, or in the warrant's case, MMI technician.

058 — oh five eight; zero five eight; (later 05H); military occupational specialty (MOS) code for manual Morse intercept operator; Ditty Catcher; Ditty Snatcher, Ditty Bop, Ditty Bopper

3.2 -- 3.2% beer; refers to alcohol content; 3.2 is a weak beer; average American beer is about 5.6%. 3.2 is usually offered in military clubs and facilities to keep down alcoholism. (It doesn't work.)

.38; Thirty-eight — a .38 caliber revolver in a police or combat configuration, often used as a sidearm and emergency defense weapon for pilots, aircrew, couriers, and others who avoid the weight and bulk of larger weapons; this weapon not considered combat effective.

.45; Forty-five — 1911A1 .45 caliber semi-automatic pistol; standard U.S. military sidearm

100 miles an hour Army green tape — similar to duct tape but green and meaner; said to sustain adhesion in 100-mph winds

201 or 201 file: two oh one file — the military personnel information file which lies behind each soldier's service; the "book" on an individual.

292 van — a transportable hut-like operations facility; truck-mounted in the bed of a standard ‘six-by’ two-and-a-half-ton truck. Driven to an operational location, the truck was parked, stabilized, and the sides of the van, like a Shasta fifth-wheeler, were then cranked outward to expand the internal space. Used by ASA for mobile, temporary and/or tactical operations and served as space for intercept operations, analysis, maintenance, office space and storage. Does not encourage indoor troop formations.

390 [as given] wire benders — Military Occupational Specialty (MOS) generic code for a variety of electronics and communications maintenance personnel

982 — nine eight two; later (98C); military occupational specialty code for traffic analyst

1SG — First Sergeant; Top Sergeant; Top; First Shirt, Top Soldier; the senior non-commissioned officer at company level; often the “bad cop” in administrative hierarchies.

1st RRC — First Radio Research Company; usually expressed with an accompanying parenthetical entry, (Aviation) when spelled out, or 1st RRC (Avn.). Also mischievously referred to as ‘First Rah Rah,’ ‘First Rape & Ravage’ and other denigrating terms, affectionately labeled.

1st CTZ; 1st Corps Tactical Zone; 1st Corps; I Corps; Eye Corps — northernmost operational zone in South Viet Nam, bordering North Viet Nam

1st Log Command — 1st Logistical Command, a major support command in Viet Nam, located on the tip of the peninsula at Cam Ranh Bay. An enormous supply-handling facility and storage area to maneuver and control the billions of tons of supplies and equipment that flowed into Viet Nam.

2nd CTZ; 2nd Corps; Second Corps; Two Corps; II Corps — Central Highlands; just south of Eye Corps

3rd CTZ; Third Corps; Three Corps; III Corps — south of Two Corps; in the midlands of South Viet Nam

3rd RRU — 3rd Radio Research Unit; the Third; 3rd Rock and Roll; 3rd Rusty Rifles, and others; a cover, a euphemism for Army Security Agency operations within South Viet Nam at the time of “The ASA Trilogy”.

4th CTZ: Fourth Corps; Four Corps; IV Corps — the Delta, southernmost operational zone

5th CTZ: Capital Military District — special Sai Gon-Cho Lon-Gia Dinh operational zone

5th Marines — Fifth Marine Infantry Regiment, First Marine Division (1MarDiv)

11th Marines — Eleventh Marine Artillery Regiment, First MarDiv

400th SOD — an ASA-integral Special Forces “Special Operations Detachment.”

A1-E — A-1; A-One; (AD-5 and AD-6 in Marine/Navy designation); Spad (fond reference to an older WW-I aircraft); Sandy, from their radio call signs in SAR; a powerful single- reciprocating-engine aircraft originally designated a fighter, later an attack-fighter, later an attack bomber. Emerging in the late 1940s, built ultimately in many configurations, used extensively in Korea and again in Viet Nam; ground or carrier-launched; carried enormous ordnance stocks, including cannon, rockets, and bombs in various configurations. Particularly valuable in search and rescue and fire-suppression missions due to the extensive and variable ordnance and long-time-on-target capability. Extremely valuable in close air support; Marines and navy pilots are the best CAS pilots in the world, and used the A-1/AD-5/6 to good effect.

AAA — anti-aircraft artillery, ground-based (not missiles); Triple A; guns of .51 caliber, 20 mm, 37 mm, and larger.

AB-105 towers — a tinker-toy-like constructible metal tower which could be erected in remote and/or otherwise unserved areas where the need for high placement of antennas was not met by permanent antennas.

AC, AC number — aircraft number; the “user ID” or serial identifier of an aircraft; often referred to as “tail number” from its display on the vertical stabilizer.

AAFES; Army-Air Force Exchange System — a consolidated government element combining U.S. Army and U.S. Air Force Exchange operations: PX and BX facilities. (Navy and Marine Corps exchanges are separate.)

AEF — Allied Expeditionary Forces. The generic term for American (and British) military forces in World War I.

AFIS — Air Force Investigative Service; the military police investigative arm of the Air Force

AID — Agency for International Development; a civilian element of the U.S. government, which hands out money and advice to less fortunate peoples.

Air America — a CIA-owned and -operated air service which was active across Asia, performing all manner of clandestine logistical, administrative, surveillance, and combat roles.

Airdale — a slighting or derogatory reference/address to Air Force personnel.

AIS — Army Intelligence and Security; an administrative melding of ASA (see below) and Military Intelligence organizations; a short-lived definition which led again to separation of the two functions.

AK-47 — Avto Kalashnikov model 47; an automatic rifle, capable of single shot or automatic fire; a Soviet-produced military weapon which was utilized by all Soviet forces and their allies; fired a 7.62 mm round; very dependable and rugged in all conditions; thought by many, including some Americans, to be the best infantry weapon extant; still in use by Russian and their allied armed forces, many Middle Eastern armed forces, terrorists, and drive-by shooters of MS-13 and assorted bad guys.

AM — Air Medal; a medal awarded to U.S. military personnel, with an appended "V" device indicating a combat-related award for a specific act or sequence of duty; without the "V" awarded for 25 hours of combat assault duties in an aircraft, or 50 combat support duties in an aircraft. Personnel who flew often and flew long missions in combat often acquired a substantial number of Air Medals (at least one person in the 224th Aviation Battalion amassed more than 100 Air Medals).

Analyst; traffic analyst — a 982: unlike cryptanalysts who break and interpret codes, traffic analysts perform their magic on enemy communications by relating activities, identity, and location from external evidence, i.e., call signs, co-location with identified units, signal "fingerprinting" and other factors not requiring reading of the enemy's text.

Angel Flight — chartered civilian aircraft used to transport wounded/ill internationally

AO — Area of Operations; the proximate surround to the focus of operations, whether they be an infantry operation or an ASA region of interest. Used generally to mean "within my interest area."

APC — Armored personnel carrier; usually, in Viet Nam, referring to the American M-113 armored, tracked vehicle for transporting troops, casualties, and supplies; functions like a light-weight tank, but generally lacks the firepower in that it usually carried no more than a .50-caliber machine gun. Safe against light infantry weapons, but a death trap encountering mines or armor-piercing projectiles. Also, in earlier years (1950s and earlier), APC, in the GI's vernacular, stood for All-Purpose Capsule, an Aspirin Plus tablet, prescribed for every ailment, from VD to green stick fractures.

AR-15 — a variation of the .223 caliber M-16 standard infantry rifle in Viet Nam and elsewhere

AR 672-5-1 — Army Regulation six seventy-two dash five dash one. The Army reg specifying criteria for, and regulations governing recommendations, award, and wearing of medals, badges, insignia, ribbons, and other uniform accouterments of the U.S. Army.

ARAMCO — Arabian-American (Oil) Company; a joint operation for maximizing the production of oil found in the wastes of the Arabian peninsula. Most employees (Americans) lived in a compound of private quarters in Dhahran, on the Persian Gulf, Saudi Arabia.

ARDF — Airborne Radio Direction Finding: performing direction-finding against enemy radio transmitters from an airborne platform.

Arlington Hall — Headquarters of the U.S. Army Security Agency, located on a coveted patch of ground on Arlington Boulevard in Arlington, Virginia. This closed down in the 1980s and is now the home of State Department training facilities. During the period of the books, often referred to merely as "The Hall."

ARVN — Army of the Republic of (South) Viet Nam; as an acronym, pronounced “Ar-vin”; Vietnamese personnel disparagingly referred to as “Marvin, the Ar-vin”

ASA — Army Security Agency; USASA

ASAP — As soon as possible; pronounced “A-Sap.”

ASA Pac — Usually pronounced Asa-pack rather than A.S.A. pack; the headquarters in Hawaii of all ASA activities in the Pacific Ocean realm of commands, in the war and beyond.

ASR — Air Search & Rescue; an Air Force unit especially trained and equipped to search for and recover downed aircraft and crew.

A/TC — Assistant Trick Chief; commonly referred to and addressed as “A-slash.” (See TC, below)

A Team — Special Forces basic field unit, usually consisting of 12 men: one or two officers and the remainder NCOs (later, lower-ranking EM were utilized); this highly-trained team concentrated many military skills, cross-trained in weapons, medical, logistics, communications, Forward Observer skills, intelligence, and local language skills. Usually operated in remote areas without local main force direct support.

AWOL — Absent Without Leave; unauthorized absence from one’s place of duty. If continuing past a given limit, the individual can be charged with desertion, a much more serious offense, punishable in wartime by death, though seldom carried out. Pronounced “A- wahl.”

B-17 — a World War II-era heavy four-engine strategic bomber flown by the US Army Air Corps in all theaters, but is known primarily for its role as the workhorse of the 8th Air Force in Europe; the “Flying Fortress,” for its multitude of defensive guns.

B-52 — Stratofortress; BUF (see below); old but effective heavy-duty jet bomber built by Boeing; entered the Air Force inventory in 1955 and still capable of significant hurt on enemy targets; eventually produced in a wide range of models with increasingly lethal payloads and capabilities. During the Viet Nam War, no B-52s were based in-country; most flew long, round-robin missions from Guam or from Thailand, delivered their ordnance, often without ever seeing their target, indeed, even the ground (from 35,000 feet), and returned to base for all maintenance, upkeep, and personnel support.

B-57 — an old and limited-capability bomber, used only in the earliest days in Viet Nam

BA — Short hand for Bad Aibling, a small town in Bavaria, Germany; translates to "Mud baths."

Base (leg) — pilot jargon: this is one of the three basic directed and controlled movements within the discipline of landing an aircraft under normal conditions; a pilot enters the landing "pattern" in a downwind position (parallel and opposite to the direction of planned landing; downwind is usually "with the wind," whereas landing will occur against the wind for maximum lift of the aircraft); at the proper time/place, the pilot is directed or will himself initiate a turn of ninety degrees (usually left, but sometimes right, depending upon the configuration of landing patterns, airspace, ground obstacles, etc.). This "second leg" of the landing pattern is called base leg. When the pilot and his craft reach the proper position, he will make another ninety degree turn, in the same direction as before, and line up on "final leg" or "final" approach, the trajectory that (hopefully) takes him safely onto the runway.

BCC — British Crown Colony; Hong Kong

BEQ — Bachelor enlisted quarters; usually NCOs only.

Benjo ditch — an open sewer; derived from such existence in Japan, especially during Korean War

Big Red One — Fond reference to the U.S. Army First Infantry Division; the "Big Red One" derives from the prominent number "1" displayed on the uniform's shoulder patch, red on a field of green.

Blaupunkt — a quality radio built in West Germany, both for auto and home/recreational use

Blood chit — A cloth document whose message is written in 14 Asian languages/ dialects; carried by airmen and some other personnel extraordinarily exposed which promised the bearer/receiving party a substantial financial reward for aiding the return of the American serviceman bearing the chit (or return of the body on which a chit is found).

BOQ — Bachelor officer quarters

Brown scarf — In the Army's wearing of colored scarves in the story era to indicate various command/elements of Army service, i.e., light blue for infantry, red for artillery, yellow for cavalry, green for Military Police, and teal blue for ASA, warrant officers were relegated wear of a brown scarf, which usage was shared only with general officers.

BUF — Big Ugly Fucker; B-52 bomber. Some non-participants in later years added another "F" to the abbreviation, ostensibly to represent "Big Ugly Fat Fucker," but in fact, the B-52 is in no sense fat. It is one sleek, long-line deliverer of grief.

Butts — The opposite (receiving) end of a weapons firing range from the point of firing, i.e., the

‘down range’ end, the place where the targets for the range are located; butts are designed to protect personnel servicing those targets during firing exercises. Usually consist of a trench or dugout behind a berm of dirt upon which is mounted the target frames, stakes, and associated mechanisms.

BX — An Air Force term indicating Base Exchange; in the Army the relative term is PX, Post Exchange; both are supported and operated by AAFES.

C-4 — "plastic" explosive, waterproof, malleable, lightweight and powerful; used in munitions and as a moldable detonation compound; used by engineers and in booby traps.

C-21(B) — Military version of the Gates Learjet 35A, a 10-person fast airlift jet used by the U.S. Air Force, CIA, and other government agencies. Two pilots, up to eight passengers, 3,000 pounds of cargo, or aeromedical evacuation/transport.

C-54 — An old, four-reciprocating-engine transport aircraft; in service since the 1940s; will not quit flying.

C-123 — A two-reciprocating-engine cargo/transport aircraft widely used in Viet Nam.

C-130 — The Hercules or “Herc”; a four-turboprop-engine cargo/transport aircraft widely used in Viet Nam and still in use; carried a much larger payload than the C-123 and could sustain longer missions over greater distances.

C-135 — The militarized version of a Boeing 707, jet cargo/passenger plane, the most notable feature being the absence of windows. Harrowing flights if you are claustrophobic.

Cambodge — Cambodia; a “playful” reference to the country, but derives from an earlier form of the current title

The Canal — Guadalcanal, an island in the Pacific Solomon chain, which was the site of the first major American military response to the Japanese raid on Pearl Harbor in December 1941. The U.S. Marines made amphibious landings on the Canal in August 1942, and after eight-months of extremely ferocious fighting against Japanese Imperial troops, malaria, starvation, dengue fever, black water fever, captured the island and established airbase facilities to begin the long island-hopping campaign to take the war to Japan’s home islands.

Cans — slang term for earphone sets or headsets.

CAP — Combat Air Patrol; A formation of fighter aircraft in a defensive or offensive role at various altitudes and configurations to counter enemy threats.

Capital Military District — The administrative designation (5th CTZ) specifically encompassing the Sai Gon, Cho Lon, Gia Dinh urban areas.

CAP team – Civilian Action Platoon; A highly successful Marine combat program of the early Viet Nam War in which Marines interacted closely with local nationals, going often/regularly into villages and providing dental and medical care, security, and developing close relations with the villagers, encouraging them to provide information on local Viet Cong activity. As it was successful (but slow, requiring time to develop personal relationships), the Pentagon scrapped the program before it could bear fruit.

Casual status – A condition usually occurring at the start of a new military assignment when command has not fitted the individual into the program; a soldier in ‘casual status’ is usually pulling odd details for the Field First or First Sergeant, awaiting final formal assignment. This also occurs with personnel awaiting start of classes, awaiting courts-martial, awaiting discharge/transfer. A ‘holding’ condition.

CBU – Cluster Bomb Unit; A canister carried by a fighter or bomber aircraft that, when dropped, dispenses small bomblets over a wide area; used against columns or troops in the open, parked aircraft, or lightly armored vehicles. Amazingly effective.

CCF – Chinese Communist Forces

Centime – A French monetary denomination, equivalent to 1/100 of a franc. Not much money. Used in Viet Nam informally to indicate small change.

CG – Commanding General

CH-47 – The “Chinook” (or, less elegantly but fondly, “Shithook”); a large cargo workhorse helicopter with twin rotors and great “lift” power, used in a wide variety of roles in Viet Nam: hauling cargo, fuel, ammunition; transporting artillery pieces and even vehicles; hauling soldiers into combat; evacuating casualties out of combat. Built first in 1959 by Boeing Vertol and still in use in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Changjin Reservoir – The proper name for the Chosin Reservoir in North Korea; ref the Marines’ fighting retreat from near the Chinese border when Chi-Com troops entered the Korean War in massive contingents, late in 1950. Common reference to “Frozen Chosin.”

Charlie – from Viet Công or VC, in phonetic alphabet VICTOR CHARLIE; Mister Charles; term of reference for enemy troops in Viet Nam; technically, the Viet Cong were guerilla forces, but the term remained in use after the introduction of North Vietnamese regular army forces.

Chi-Com – Chinese Communist

Chief – form of address and reference to Chief Warrant Officer, CW2, CW3, and CW4. Sometimes, in direct conversation/address, even WO1s may be addressed as Chief. It is a measure of respect. (Rumor has it that the Navy also has a chief grade/rank, but nothing so elegant as this marvel.)

Chinook — (see CH-47, above)

Chuck — racially derogatory term used by blacks to denote whites; not as offensive as the “n” word, but sets a negative tone in conversation.

CI – Counter Intelligence; spy catchers.

CIA – Central Intelligence Agency; The Company

C.I.A.A.O. — An R & R hotel, leased and operated by the American government for the use of military personnel on the Red Sea coast in Massawa, Eritrea (Ethiopia); primarily used by personnel stationed at Asmara, 8,000 feet up a mountain some four hours driving time from Massawa; pronounced “chow.” Was also available for use by State Department personnel, AID personnel, and other government hangers-on. Provided cheap rooms, a dining facility with cheap meals, boats, fishing tackle and scuba diving equipment, as well as a pier from which to conduct these aquatic endeavors, and a garden (of sorts) in which to fall down when drunk. By implication, also sold beer.

Class VI or Class 6 — a US government facility which sells alcoholic beverages to military/government personnel; where a GI acquires bottles of alcoholic drinks and cases of beer, unlike the clubs which dispense only by the drink. Sort of a 7-11 for boozers.

Classification; Security Classifications — Despite a lot of nonsense written in spy novels and most often, ill-informed newspaper accounts, the classification of security, and military and politically-oriented, information is, at least on the surface, fairly simple. There are three categories of classification: CONFIDENTIAL, SECRET, and TOP SECRET, with CONFIDENTIAL the lowest category. These categories are generally applied to information/data by the creator of the written or entered original; sometimes a reviewing authority may implement, upgrade, or downgrade a level of classification. Within these three basic categories, other caveats can be applied based on specific content, source, means of collection, or relevance. Many of the code words used to denote these additional layers of security are themselves often classified, as in the given example of the BINGO pads (as used in this work, a euphemism for a differently named item).

CMH — Outmoded term of reference for the Medal of Honor (MOH); previously the Congressional Medal of Honor.

CO — Commanding Officer; generally used at company and battalion level, but can refer to the senior officer in any organization.

COMINT — COMmunications INTelligence; intelligence derived from the interception (collection), processing and analysis of various means of communications, especially radio in the terms of this work.

Comm Center — Communications Center: The central location in any military organization which handles incoming and outgoing communications/message traffic; a major element and function within ASA field units, field stations, and detachments.

CONUS — Continental United States

CQ — Charge of Quarters; usually a low-to-mid-level enlisted grade soldier who is temporarily (assigned from a rotating roster of duties) in charge of, and responsible for, a physical location, usually a barracks or logistics venue.

CS — A gas, combining the properties of tear gas and a vomiting agent, harnessed in canisters or grenades and used against enemy in closed areas, i.e., bunkers, tunnels, buildings, etc.; also used by harsh regimes to control crowds and disperse protesters.

CV-2 — the Caribou; cargo aircraft built by DeHavilland of Canada; moderate payload capability but highly valued for its short take-off and landing airstrip requirements. A Caribou on “full flare” into a short strip, to avoid time of exposure to enemy fire, appeared to float down, almost in helicopter mode. Lost to the Army 1 July 1967 by a politically-motivated Air Force takeover of Army multi-engine aircraft. Once relegated to the bureaucratically hide-bound control of the Air Force, the aircraft fell from grace and was improperly and/or inefficiently used thereafter.

CW — continuous wave; a technical term indicating an electronic signal of a steady "tone" or sound; interrupting this continuous wave with various-length breaks affords the dits and dahs that make up manual Morse code.

CW2, CW3, CW4 — Chief Warrant Officer, grades two, three, and four; commonly addressed as Chief, Sir, or Mister. Current Army extends this gift to CW5 grade.

CWO — Chief Warrant Officer (generic); Chief; may be either CW2, CW3, or CW4.

Cyclo — a three-wheeled vehicle built on a beefed up, special bicycle frame with a single bicycle wheel in the rear and the driver mounted above, and a two-wheeled front passenger seat in a sort of “cart before the horse” arrangement. Cheap transportation in Asia, but slow; the streets of Asian cities used to be filled with these adequate transport buggies.

DA — Department of the Army; the senior U.S. military service; this department commands all things Army.

Days; Day Trick — a period of roughly one-third of the 24-hour day, generally configured to the hours of approximately 7:30 or 8:00 A.M. to 4:00 or 4:30 P.M., depending upon local custom and needs. ASA duty is around the clock, and working “Days” indicates that one works an (almost) normal workday. Trick is the ASA nominative for “shift.” The other two tricks are Swings (4:00 or 4:30 P.M. to 12:00 midnight) and Mids (midnight to 7:30 or 8:00 A.M.).

Dayroom — a room, usually larger than a standard room, such as a game room within which a soldier may find distraction in a pool table, table tennis, ping pong, reading materials, stereo (later, television/radio); a recreation area for soldiers on a military facility.

Dengué – Usually expressed as Dengué fever, it is a disease borne by mosquitoes and providing symptoms quite like malaria, except that it is usually not deadly and is more easily treated with ordinary antibiotics. Symptoms include fever, indolence, sleepiness lasting for long hours, and rash. Debilitating; normally not fatal.

DEROS — Date (of) Estimated Return (from) OverSeas; the projected date for the end of an assigned overseas tour, based upon length of standard tours plus any special conditions. It is the date to which personnel "counted down" for their departure from the overseas site.

Det J — A sub-element of the 3rd RRU, Det J was located near the northern border of South Viet Nam at Phu Bai, near the ancient capital of Hue. The 3rd RRU was headquartered at Tan Son Nhut Airbase near Sai Gon in Viet Nam. With the expansion of the Viet Nam War in the mid-1960s, was elevated and staffed to the level of a field station, full operational site: 8th USASA Field Station.

DF; to DF; DF-ing, DF shot — direction finding, a verb and a noun; to define, from a relative ground position, the line of bearing (direction) to a transmitting radio signal. A single “shot” tells the analyst the target entity is somewhere along that line of bearing. By working around a target and taking numerous “shots,” the actual location hopefully can be determined by triangulation at the intersection of multiple bearings.

DIA — Defense Intelligence Agency; another of the “alphabet organizations” staffed by personnel of all military services.

Dinks — disparaging reference to Vietnamese, most often in association with the enemy, as in “Dinks in the wire,” e.g., the enemy is very close to breaching our defenses.

DMZ – Demilitarized Zone, an area between two opposing combatants in which no military action is to take place; a mythical demarcation in many wars, Viet Nam included, which was largely ignored. Hostile actions commonly focused on the DMZ

DO — Duty Officer (see SDO, OD)

DoD — Department of Defense

Donut Dollies – Affectionate reference to female workers of the US Red Cross who provided snacks, drinks, reading/writing materials, and other ‘comforts,’ as could be managed in individual relationships.

Down-wind (leg) — the initial of three “legs” of an aircraft landing pattern (see base leg, above)

D-ring — the large, accessible D-shaped metal handle which is fixed to the front of, and deploys, an emergency parachute; pulling this ring releases a “pilot” chute, which then, under air pressure of falling through space, pulls forth the main chute. Paratroopers normally make their jumps using “static lines” which perform the pulling-forth action by attachment to the interior of the aircraft platform to avoid oversights that might plunge one to oblivion. [Note: there is a D Ring five-sided corridor in the Pentagon also, but does not perform so necessary a function as this one.]

DRV — Democratic Republic of (North) Vietnam. Whenever a political entity such as this proclaims itself “Democratic,” you may be assured it is anything but.

DSC — Distinguished Service Cross; the second ranked military award for valor in the U.S. Army. Ranks behind the Medal of Honor; awarded for conspicuously gallant action in combat situation. Many eventual winners of the MOH are initially awarded the DSC (or the comparable Navy/Marine award, The Navy Cross, or the Air Force’s comparable Air Force Cross) while recommendation and vetting in the MOH process grinds its way through channels. A mark of a significantly valorous act or series of acts.

Dust-Off — a (commonly emergency) medical evacuation action; used also to mean the vehicle, a helicopter employed in the evacuation. The term derives from a radio call sign used in Viet Nam by helicopters specifically assigned this duty. Dust-Offs were responsible for the quantum leap in battle casualty survivals between Viet Nam and earlier conflicts.

Duty NCO — a non-commissioned officer, usually E5 sergeant or specialist, or E6 staff sergeant or specialist of that grade, who serves as a responsible “contact point” and decision maker in an organization outside normal duty hours. Assigned the duty, usually for a 24-hour period, from a rotating roster of personnel of those grades, the Duty NCO is an assistant to the Duty Officer. Together, they represent the commanding officer/ command and implement command or unit policy during the CO’s off-duty hours or in his absence from the command.

Duty Officer — generally a warrant officer, or commissioned officer below-field grade (i.e., 1st or 2nd lieutenant or captain) who pulls a 24-hour duty shift, also from a roster of such officers. (see Duty NCO, above)

EAGLE FLIGHT — a helicopter airlift, usually of major size, to insert combat troops into a region or pre-determined position.

The Elephant Kingdom — Cambodia; this genteel appellation was later supplanted by “The Killing Fields.”

Eleventh Marines — (see 11th Marines, above)

ELINT — Electronics Intelligence; intelligence derived from collection, processing and analysis of radar and various guidance control systems.

EM — enlisted man; enlisted men; generic term for non-officer personnel, and may include all levels of non-officer, including non-commissioned officers (e.g., Corporal through Sergeant Major), though advisable behavior in the military will avoid such “downgrading.” Incorporates enlisted women.

Empty quarter — The "Empty Quarter," *Rub' al Khali* in Arabic, is one of the largest and most imposing deserts in the world, encompassing some 650,000 square kilometers (250K sq. miles). It occupies the southern third of the Arabian Peninsula, including southern Saudi Arabia and parts of Oman, the United Arab Emirates, and Yemen. The desert is completely uninhabited, nor is it even traversed by the Bedouin, who fear few things.

Enfield — a .303-caliber infantry rifle issued to British and Commonwealth troops in World War II and Korea; many found their eventual way into the arms rooms of dissident and/or new world government military units. A bolt-action, therefore slow fire, rifle of better than fair overall quality.

Eritrea (Ethiopia) — Eritrea is a small country north of Ethiopia along the Red Sea coast in East Africa. This two-name, parenthetical convention is employed herein because of the confusing relationship between the two. To wit, briefly: In 1952, the U.N. ceded the country of Eritrea to the protective (and exploitative) control of Ethiopia for economic reasons. This “trial” condition was to exist for ten years, after which time the free peoples of Eritrea would vote whether to continue the relationship or not. As the relationship gave King Haile Selassie of Ethiopia the status of Emperor, and provided financial benefits to Ethiopia of having their first deep water seaport at Massawa in Eritrea, the plebiscite was doomed to political chaos from the git-go. This ultimately led to a 30-years war between the two countries, coups, counter-coups, Marxism, communism and other social experiments, but led eventually to Eritrea’s re-emergence as a free, independent country. No prediction as to next week. American servicemen serving in Eritrea in that period commonly considered they were performing duty in Ethiopia: Haile told them so.

Eye-tie — A slang reference to an Italian, any age, any gender; not necessarily disparaging.

FAC— Forward Air Controller; usually an Air Force pilot, flying “low and slow” aircraft to observe battlefield conditions and to spot targets and pinpoint ordnance delivery for both aircraft and artillery. FACs were targets for every little commissar in SE Asia, for it was recognized how critical were their services to the ground troops needing close air support or artillery/mortar support.

Fam-fire — familiarization firing of a weapon, usually the weapon assigned to each individual, in which he can at least get familiar with the feel of his weapon when fired. Not sniping by any means. As depicted, usually a waste of time, ammo, and facilities.

Fasching — a carnival with religious associations, a la *Carnivale* or *Mardis Gras*; a German festival celebrated in almost all regions of the state, especially vibrant in the Rhine Valley, specifically in Cologne’s *Karneval am Rhein* marking the last three days of the carnival;

beginning the Thursday before Ash Wednesday with a women’s parade known as *Weiberfastnacht*. On the Monday, a superb costume parade is held called *Rosenmontagsumzug*. Like *Mardis Gras*, *Fasching* produces wild and bizarre behavior and a modicum of overindulgence, with predictable hangovers, pregnancies, and arrests.

FDC — Fire Direction Center; the site, close to but usually “behind the lines” of combat engagement, which coordinates requests for, and accomplishment of, artillery supporting fire. In Viet Nam, there were no “lines,” effectively, but the FDC was usually co-located with the firing guns, distant from, and worked by radio or telephone with, the FO.

Field First — not an official title or rank; usually a temporarily appointed non-commissioned officer who carries out specific functions for the First Sergeant, directing efforts of lower-grade enlisted men.

Final (leg) — the third of the three legs of an aircraft (normal) landing pattern; generally referred to as “final.” “I’m on final” or “turning final” often heard in communications with pilots.

First Mar-Div — First Marine Division; also expressed 1MarDiv or 1st MarDiv.

First Shirt — familiar term for First Sergeant; not derogatory.

Flare— a pyrotechnic magnesium phosphorous device deployed by firing, high angle, from a mortar (usually 61 mm). When the mortar round detonates in the air, it releases the flare to float back to earth suspended beneath a small parachute. This provides brilliant, cold light over an area to deny the enemy the comfort of darkness; especially useful when under night attack. Aircraft deploy similar flares, which produce a high level of heat along with the light, and are released in aerial combat to decoy heat-seeking missiles. Flare is also a term used to describe a change in the flight path or dynamics of a landing aircraft so as to reduce the rate of descent for touchdown: to flare; flare out.

FLASH - The (normally) highest precedent given to communications traffic, indicating the fastest possible means of transmission and delivery of the message contents to its addressee. White House or congressional authorities may have other, higher precedents, but in the military world, FLASH was it.

FNG — Fucking New Guy; dismissive title for/reference to a new man in a unit; more charitably, a “newk” or “newbie”

FO — Forward Observer; the individual, usually far “in front” of the guns, who calls in artillery fire in support of military associates. This “calling” can be accomplished over radio or through landline telephone or quickly laid field telephone wires. The FO coordinates his task with the FDC, who takes his direction and requests, computes the numbers, and works to put the ordnance where desired.

Fragging — a formalized upgrade in Viet Nam of an age-old practice; that of killing or injuring one’s own friendly personnel, usually a senior non-commissioned officer or an officer. The term comes from the most common weapon employed for this injudicious criticism: flipping or rolling a fragmentation grenade into the hooch or bunker or toilet stall of the victim. Became a significant and frightening problem in Viet Nam when morale began its precipitous fall.

Frag grenade — the M-26 fragmentation grenade; a hand-thrown grenade which was activated by pulling a ring, releasing a “spoon” or handle to rotate over the top of the device, igniting a fuse which burned (one hoped) for 3.5 to 5 seconds, the time usually spent in flight after being thrown by an irate infantryman at the enemy. The small bomb weighed roughly a pound, and its surface was serrated cast iron, which, upon explosion of the internal charge, fractured into many deadly fragments, effective out to about 40 yards. The texture of a frag grenade closely resembles a block of X-Lax (thus its nominative, the steel X-Lax) or a particularly dirty waffle. Using earlier weapons (the M-1 Garand and M-14 rifles), the M-26 could be fired over a long distance with use of an attachment on the rifle; these were then called “rifle grenades.” Hand launch distance was limited by how far one could throw a one- pound object, though well designed and comfortable in an ovoid spherical configuration, and how exposed the thrower might feel comfortable with, considering enemy opposition fire.

Freedom bird — a (usually) government-chartered, commercial airliner which transported troops from the combat zone (the entire country) back to the US, for discharge and resumption of civilian life for non-career personnel. An often nostalgic icon for men in combat, the freedom bird became an object of veneration, more so as an individual drew near his departure date. (The irony of “freedom birds,” though, was that these were the same aircraft, on their in-bound flights, that brought troops to Viet Nam.)

Free fire zone — FFZ or FOXTROT FOXTROT ZULU, a free fire zone is an area within the area of operations in which the normal terms of engagement are suspended. There is no need to quantify/qualify a target in an FFZ, no need to request permission to open fire or bring down aerial bombardment. Anything moving in an FFZ is fair game, tough luck to the uninitiated.

French Indo-China — an outdated colonialist reference to France’s colonial entities, collectively, of South Viet Nam, North Viet Nam, Cambodia and Laos. After 1954, this term was technically non-extant, though still used colloquially.

FTA — Fuck the Army! Just that; a subtle approbation directed into the void, expressing one’s ineffable joy at continued military servitude.

Garand M-1 — a .30 caliber, gas-operated, clip-fed (8 rounds), semi-automatic military rifle which came into service in the U.S. armed forces in the early 1940s, and was the standard infantry weapon throughout World War II and Korea; the rifle, thought by many “grunts” to be the all-time best, most accurate, most dependable infantry arm of all time. It was used widely in Viet Nam by ARVN forces, Korean forces, and assorted miscreants. Still in use in many slow countries. The M-1 was the last of the weapons utilized by infantry personnel who were expected to be marksmen, not just sprayers of lethality. The M-1 was replaced in U.S. service by the M-14, an upgraded M-1 with automatic cycle selection, utilizing a larger magazine, but

because of the auto feature, used the ammo up faster and usually less effectively. The M-14 was replaced by the M-16, a .223 cal. popgun still in use in many venues.

GC — ground control, in pilot speak; the directing agency operating in the control tower or on a radar scope, directing the disposition of aircraft while on the ground.

GCA — Ground Controlled Approach; a method for bringing aircraft in to land safely when visual conditions are disruptive (bad), by the use of radars to control line of approach, glide slope of approach, and with ground-to-pilot communications, directing/correcting pilot's efforts.

GCI — Ground Controlled Intercept; ground-based operators using radars and radio communications to direct integral or friendly fighter aircraft in the intercept of enemy aircraft.

GCT — the main, comprehensive test within a battery of tests given to new military recruits; determines assignment to schools and special assignments, based on standings/results. Analogous to a military IQ. Reputed to be abbreviation for "General competency test,"

Gerry Owen — Term/title appears in several forms: Gary Owen, Garryowen, Garry Owen, or Garry Owens. Derives from an Irish drinking song and brought to the American cavalry during the period of the Civil War (1861-1865) At the time of this book's action, it was the regimental song of the 7th Cavalry Regiment (Custer's old/final command) and the nickname of that regiment's troopers. In 1981, Garryowen became the official song of the entire 1st Cavalry Division (Airmobile), of which the 7th is one regiment. Pronounced here, in text, as Gerry (Jerry) Owen in a playful reference.

GI — government issue; a term, since World War II, referring to the soldier, sailor, airman, or Marine; generic for military personnel; also indicates a state of government/military subservience or relationship, i.e., "He's so GI." Also, to GI is to clean thoroughly; a GI party, i.e., complete washdown/cleanup/wipedown, sweep, mop, and scrub.

Gook — term of disparagement defining Asian peoples; the term found its Genesis during the Korean War, but became a generic term of racism/cultural ostracism in any other country where Asians were the "local nationals." A Gook might refer to a six-foot tall, sword-bearing Samurai warrior, an out-of-favor bargirl, or a three-day-old Filipino baby girl. Term still extant in Viet Nam at the time herein.

Gravel bombs — More properly, gravel mines; small anti-personnel mines dropped on enemy territory, trails, and suspected gathering places, from aircraft (thus bombs), and designed to detonate upon being stepped on or run over by vehicles; mostly seen as a slight inconvenience to the VC and North Vietnamese forces. Handling conditions by US personnel was difficult. Still, some 37 million were produced in 1967/68.

Green Berets, Green Beanies, Beanies, Snake-eaters — Special Forces troops. Highly trained, special-purpose personnel, all cross-trained in multiple skills (weapons, communications, intelligence, medical support), all parachute qualified, some SCUBA qualified, Ranger trained,

and other special skills; language trained for duty in foreign environments; initially designed to be inserted into countries/regions which are unstable, but of interest to American foreign policy, and the Green Berets act as trainers in military skills.

The Green Machine — semi disparaging reference to The Army

GSFG — Group Soviet Forces, Germany; Soviet troops stationed in East Germany; these were not guest troops, but effectively occupation forces in Germany following partition after World War II. The four initials, as a block, as G-SFG, in GI speak are pronounced “Gee Soff.”

Grunt — an infantryman; a soldier or Marine whose military occupational specialty (job/function) is to carry a rifle and perform his duties in all environments; a term of affection, especially self-affection among grunts; what used to be called a “dog-faced soldier” and other less complimentary terms; a mud-slogger. The military individual usually on the point of a ground combat spearhead.

Guard Channel — internationally established and recognized emergency radio frequencies, or channel: in VHF (very high frequency) Guard is 121.5 kHz; in UHF (ultra-high frequency) Guard is 243 kHz. (By chart break-out, below, this reputed UHF is technically in VHF, but then, the chart is often wrong.)

Gyrene — Slang reference to a Marine; not discriminatory. Origin unknown.

Hall, The — (see Arlington Hall, above)

HAM — Properly known as an amateur radio operator, a mode of organized communications almost 100 years old. Not always capitalized; appears as Ham or ham. Ham operators talk with one another on scheduled arrangements, or not, around the world. Early Ham comms was mostly HF manual Morse code; later using voice. (Oddly, with the explosion of other, faster digital communications in the past few years, there is a reawakening of interest in Ham radio, with some 700,000 licenses issued in 2010.)

Hashmarks — Angled stripes (gold in color) worn on the left sleeve of Army dress uniforms; each stripe indicates three years’ service in the military. Marine and Navy hashmarks indicate four years’ service; the Air Force does not employ this accouterment.

Helmet liner — A device, shaped exactly to the form of a helmet (“steel pot”), which allows the wearer to fit the helmet to his head and keep it on ... sometimes. Made of a composite material, it is light and contains a webbing of straps and adjustable buckles so that each soldier, pressing the liner into the metal helmet, can “fit” a helmet to his head. Helmets are all one size, and the liners are one size externally, but allow interior adjustment. This device is often seen as the headgear in military parades and formations rather than the real steel device which is much heavier. The helmet liner provides practically no protection, except perhaps from rain and bird droppings. [Not relevant in the era of new military’s “coal scuttle” helmets.]

Herzo, Herzo Base — Slang reference to the ASA site at Herzo-Genaurach, Germany; pronounced "hertz-oh."

HF — High frequency; in radio; used for extreme long-distance communications; later replaced by SATCOM. A measure within the electromagnetic spectrum ranging from 3-30 MHz (megahertz, i.e., millions of cycles per second); other useful frequencies (freqs) in terms of the book's references, are VLF, very low freq, 3 kHz-30 kHz (kilohertz, thousands of cycles per second); LF, low freq, 30-300 kHz; MF, medium freq, 300 kHz-3 MHz (300 kilohertz to 3 megahertz); megaHertz, millions of cycles per second; HF; VHF, 30 MHz-300 MHz; UHF, ultra high freq, 300 MHz-3 GHz (300 megahertz-3 gigahertz), gigaHertz, thousands of millions, ad nauseum; SHF, 3 GHz-30 GHz, etc.

HH-3 — a modified Sikorsky CH-3 Sea King helicopter used for deep-penetration rescue missions into heavily defended areas; popularly known as the Jolly Green Giants. General use of “Jolly Green Giant” or “Jolly Greens” was a fond reference to the men & machine service to recover downed airmen or extract Long Range Recon patrols.

Hickam — truncated reference to Hickam Field, or later Hickam Air Force Base, on the island of Oahu, Hawaii

Ho Chi Minh sandals — a sort of sandal or “shower shoe” worn by peasants and poor people in Southeast Asia; those worn by the Viet Cong and later, North Vietnamese forces, were made by cutting soles from worn and discarded truck and auto tires. Attributed to Ho Chi Minh as his forces were all supplied with this very functional and inexpensive footwear.

Honcho — a term deriving from the Korean War era and service; purported to be of Japanese origin; generic meaning is “a person in charge.” The boss. Or, as a verb, to honcho means to take charge and direct an activity, e.g., “Go honcho that detail for me.”

Hooch — sometimes spelled hootch; a reference to an abode of unprepossessing characteristics; a hut or small place of occupancy, usually indicating a structure of some kind and not merely a hole in the ground, as in bunker or foxhole. A hooch, in the invidious climate of Viet Nam, could be quite practical and acceptable, built to keep out rain, some vermin, but allow the maximum of open air ventilation. Many hooches in Viet Nam were as described for those at Tan Son Nhut's Davis Station: house-like structures with louvered board siding over screened “walls,” and roof overhang to keep out monsoon blowing rain.

Horn (of Africa) — The geographical feature of northeastern Africa which, with Somaliland, Djibouti, and Ethiopia, south of Eritrea, Sudan, and Egypt, protrudes like a horn, into the Red Sea.

"Host ship which his loose lips had sunk" — [As given ...] This subtle criticism derives from a very famous wartime poster of World War II, which showed a tanker ship sinking, following an enemy torpedo and a guilty sailor (if I remember correctly), with the admonition not to discuss classified information to un-qualified personnel because it can lead to disaster, as in casually mentioning a departure time/route/cargo of a ship. The poster bore the warning words: "Loose lips sink ships."

Huey — UH-1 helicopter (Utility Helicopter-model 1, the “UH-1” looking like and pronounced as “you-i” segued into “Huey”); generically, a series of helicopters built by Bell Textron used for everything; the original UH-1 Iroquois devolved into a full menu of many models of this ubiquitous aircraft, with finer and finer definitions and designs to meet specific needs over the years. In later years in Viet Nam, this same helicopter was upgraded/redesigned as the AH-1 (attack helicopter), a fierce gunship model for extended combat use. Used for troop hauling, medical evacuation, supply hauling, and various administrative duties, the Huey provided the overriding aural association of that war in its particularly evocative “choppy” blade sound, identifiable yet, some 40 years later, amongst a covey of assorted helicopters.

HUMINT — Human Intelligence; intelligence derived from human sources, i.e., spies (either covert or, as in the case of military attaches assigned to foreign country embassies, overt), or more benign forms of information gathering from human sources; can be stretched to include “Tech-Int,” data and information derived from newspapers, magazines, technical journals, etc.

Indian country – Enemy territory or uncontrolled territory in a combat zone; where the bad guys live. Beyond the Pale.”

I.T.T.A. — International Telephone & Telegraph Association

J-1 — At higher levels of command involving more than a single prime organization, the administrative division; analogous to S-1 in lower levels.

J-2 — At higher levels of command involving more than a single prime organization, the intelligence division; analogous to S-2 in lower levels.

J-3 — At higher levels of command involving more than a single prime organization, the plans and operations division; analogous to S-3 at lower levels.

J-4 — At higher levels of command involving more than a single prime organization, the logistics division; analogous to S-4 at lower levels.

JGS — (Vietnamese military) Joint General Staff; in Viet Nam, the JGS compound was a military facility hosting both the ARVN/VNAF command structure and some Allied units, i.e., the ASA (Radio Research) intelligence collection site adjacent to Tan Son Nhut airbase, northwest of Sai Gon.

Jolly Green Giant — (see HH-3 above); Jolly Greens

JP-4 — standard U.S. military jet aircraft fuel

KGB — *Komitet Gosudarstvennoy Bezopasnosti* (Committee for Internal Security). From the Russian, the “heavies” of the Soviet state before the collapse of communism. They haven’t disappeared, but simply changed their name in the new Russian hierarchy.

KIA — The most dreaded response to the request for information about an individual: "Killed in action."

KP — Kitchen Police; a slightly grand title for what is usually a duty assigned lower ranking enlisted personnel to perform lesser duties in the preparing, serving, and cleaning-up-after of institutional meals in dining halls or, as fondly known, “mess halls”; a holdover from World War II or earlier. Some good things the military just cannot turn loose.

Krugerrand — A gold coin; a stable currency in South Africa, not only based on the gold standard but consisting of 1 ounce of South African minted gold. Recognized in international markets as an utterly reliable investment.

Land of (the) Morning Calm — a name given an ancient Asian country by Pollyanna, who could not abide the debilitating image generated by a reference to the country, Korea.

Left eight zero, add six hundred [Example used] — “Move 8 mils left (as shown in binoculars), add 600 yards to the range...” from a registration (pre-determined) point.

Light Colonel — lieutenant colonel; a relative term, used only with colonel; one rank below Colonel or “full bird colonel” or “chicken colonel.” In Army argot of the times, LTC; earlier Lt Col or Lt. Col.

LOM — Legion of Merit; a high level award in the military which can be, with an appended “V” for valor, awarded for combat efforts, though usually associated with something other than direct combat, such as accomplishing a difficult logistics task during combat, i.e., bridging a river in a hostile environment, etc.; is usually awarded, without the “V,” for elevated levels of job performance and accomplishment of difficult goals in non-combat theaters.

LRRP — Long Range Reconnaissance Patrol, usually pronounced ‘Lurp.’ Teams of five-to-eight men skilled in bush/jungle combat who would be inserted surreptitiously into the enemy’s area of operations and through subversive movements and concealment for long periods (2-7 days), gathered intelligence and performed other ‘sneaky pete’ actions. These patrols were often discovered by the enemy, leading to many of the small-unit actions of the war and to many of the casualties. ‘Mascara’ was the skeptical term of endearment for the camouflage grease paint with which Lurps disguised their faces and exposed skin to enhance their invisibility.

LT — lieutenant; “El Tee,” phonetic address and reference to a lieutenant, first (1LT) or second (2LT).

LTC — abbreviation for lieutenant colonel, used in the Army only during the books' period, according to the three-letter/number profile for all ranks; Marines and Air Force use the designator, LtCol or Lt.Col.

LZ — landing zone; LIMA ZULU in phonetic alphabet; a site, peremptorily prepared in an inhospitable landscape (enemy/neutral/Indian Country) to allow the heliborne landing of troops, equipment and supplies. Often, in jungle especially, or in plantation growth, obstacles such as trees, poles, towers, etc., had to be removed so as not to hazard helicopters in landing. Sometimes “blown” clear by the dropping of a bomb, others were cleared by personnel with chain saws, axes, and blasting devices. Generically, a cleared space with no obstructions to helicopters.

M-1 — (see Garand, M-1 above)

M-1 carbine — a light-weight .30 caliber rifle, hand weapon with diminished firepower, accuracy, and range; like the M-1 rifle, it was an air-cooled, gas-operated, semi-automatic but magazine-fed weapon usually issued to personnel with primary duties other than sustained combat infantry tactics, i.e., squad leaders, platoon and company leaders, tankers, radio operators, medics, and others who needed not to be hampered by a heavy weapon but could not be without a weapon. Usually operated and sustained by a 15-round straight magazine; could also use a 30-round, curved magazine called a “banana clip.”

M-2 carbine — essentially the same weapon as the M-1 carbine (above), but fitted with a selector switch to allow fully automatic operation. In full auto, the banana clip was favored; else, the user found himself devoid of ammo in a short time. And even so ...

M-14 — (see Garand M-1, above which the M-14 replaced); the M-14 was used in the early days of our Viet Nam War, but was clumsy and heavy in the heat-wasted, humidity-saturated environment of the country; the M-14 was replaced by the M-16 in the mid-1960s.

M-16 — standard U.S. military rifle, entering the inventory about 1964-65; .223 caliber. Early-on, this weapon demonstrated many unfortunate features: it could not tolerate mud, sand, moisture, colonies of mites and spiders, or if the rifleman cursed it or looked askance at it, it would jam; responsible for many combat deaths of friendly forces due to failure, until the weapon was re-tooled, upgraded, and “beefed up.” Though firing a light-weight round, the rate of fire was such, and the projectile (which tumbled) impact was such, that the weapon reached the level of popular acclaim. The light-weight ammunition also allowed a rifleman to carry many more rounds of ammunition for the same degree of pain.

MAC — Military Airlift Command; U.S. Air Force major command, 1966-1992, which provided aircraft for movement of men and material about the globe. Later re-named to something else.

MACV; MAC-V; (pronounced “Mac-Vee”) — Military Assistance Command, Vietnam; American military headquarters of the senior general staff in Viet Nam, located at Tan Son Nhut airbase near Sai Gon; established in 1962; closed in 1973 with American troop drawdown. Nicknamed “Pentagon East” and referred to by troops as the Puzzle Palace (a misnomer: the real Puzzle Palace was always NSA’s facility at Fort Meade, Md.), the Madhouse or Oz.

Mad minute — a phenomenon particular to the Viet Nam War in which, for a period of some 60 seconds, a unit would employ total weapons expenditure of ordnance, used to test fire weapons, but mostly to saturate an area surrounding friendly locations to discourage enemy infiltration, especially those unobserved. Called “MIKE MIKE” or a MIKE moment, or Mad MIKE. A “free fire” minute, but hell on the supply system. Also fondly referred to as “recon by fire,” i.e., reconnaissance by weapons fire.

Manual Morse — a method of communications utilizing (primarily) a solid-tone signal (CW) predominantly in the HF frequency spectrum, interrupted by manual manipulation with a “key,” i.e., telegraph key, in order to produce short or long signal tones interspersed with signal-free “dead time,” producing the “dot-dash” phenomenon of Morse code, so named for Samuel Morse, the inventor in the 19th century. Manual Morse was an especially useful means of communications over great distances at relatively low cost and simple operator requirements. Letters, numbers, and special characters are composed of diverse combinations of short (dots) and long (dashes) bursts of aural signal, e.g., the letter “A” is conveyed by one dot, one dash (. –); the letter “B” by one dash, three dots (– ...), the number “two” by two dots, three dashes (.. – – –), etc. The last Morse code common-user systems disappeared from the world’s inventory in the very early 21st century, but had been in decline in use by modern communications technologists for some years.

MATCU-64 — Marine Air Traffic Control Unit-64; a specific Marine ground aviation unit comprising GCA (ground control approach) radars and controllers for landing aircraft, a tower unit (control tower operational unit which, by personnel communications interface, directs aircraft landing operations), and longer-range radars and operators to bring aircraft within the control arena of the GCA.

MAYDAY — international distress call, broadcast by voice (could be by manual Morse, printer, or other forms of communication); commonly used to describe any condition of threat but especially the eminence of an aircraft crash.

MESA — Middle East Signal Agency; a subelement of the U.S. Army's Signal Corps branch; the MESA site in Asmara was particularly useful for relaying signals from the U.S. to the middle- and far-east; came into being during the Korean War when communications across the Pacific were “iffy.”

MI — Military Intelligence (No, this is not an oxymoron!)

Mickey Mouse boots — an interim design for cold weather foot gear in the Korean War, not particularly effective; many Mickey Mouse wearers, to this day, walk on crutches or in wheelchairs for the loss of toes, feet, legs after enjoying the winter sports in Korea.

Mids — Mids trick (see Days trick, above)

MilPerCen — Military Personnel Center; another “puzzle palace”; the source of Army affairs confusion; a function of the Army, located in the Hoffman Building in Alexandria, Va. MilPerCen was (is?) responsible for (most) Army assignments and all aspects of personnel activities.

mil scale — a scale wherein the circle of 360-degrees is more critically divided into 6,400 “mils” to provide for precision, especially in calling fire for artillery. Mil scales were inscribed on the lenses of Forward Observers powerful binoculars, providing them a built-in reference for moving the point of their objectives horizontally across a landscape.

MLR — Main Line of Resistance; the “line” of earlier wars, especially Korean War, or “front lines”; in Viet Nam, as there were no “lines,” this term had no meaning and was not used.

MOH — the Medal of Honor, The Medal; America’s premier military decoration for valor and risk of life above and beyond the call of duty; all other awards pale by comparison. Since its inception during the Civil War, there have only been some 3,468 MOHs awarded out of the many millions of persons who have served in combat. In the Viet Nam War, 240 Medals of Honor were awarded. The majority of MOHs are awarded posthumously. (previously: the Congressional Medal of Honor, CMH, non extant)

Mohawk — The OV-1B twin-turboprop aircraft used by the Army in Viet Nam to carry a wide variety of payloads, including supplies, troops, med-evacs, as well as electronic sensors of various application. This aircraft was little used by ASA, the exception being an OV-1C model in a close-hold, presumably compartmented operation in the 1968-69 timeframe in the Laos AO under the cover HOMING PIGEON. Product, combined with 1RRC product, was processed at 8RRFS, Phu Bai. Mission ops were members of the 1st Radio Research Company (Aviation). [Thanks, Paul Struxness, mission op on the Mohawk, for this update.] Other potential ASA use of the Mohawk as platform was made moot by the Air Force’s total acquisition of the aircraft in 1967, following a sleight-of-hand surge of politicking in the Pentagon the previous year.

Monterey Mary — a semi-disparaging moniker defining linguists, i.e., operator personnel whose function it is to read, listen to, translate, and sometimes emulate a foreign language communique. Though appending the inference of “less than manly” attributes with its implied homosexual tinge, this term was often applied to themselves by linguists, particularly those who had done their language studies at the Presidio of Monterey Army Post, Monterey, California. Pride of completing one of the saturation language training courses made Monterey Marys a bit cheeky. Often the least military of all operational personnel, these special operators were also, in general, usually the best educated, many of the enlisted grade personnel possessing college degrees or some level of college.

More ricky tick — quickly; right now; another ubiquitous phrase, deriving from service in Japan and/or Korea in the early '50s, ostensibly from the sound of the (unidentified) original foreign language phrase.

Morning report — an official document prepared by a clerk for the First Sergeant and Commander of a company-level unit which religiously reports the absolute status of that unit for that one day: numbers of personnel assigned, numbers on leave, numbers on sick call, numbers killed/wounded/missing action . . . the absolute in accountability. More people have gone to Leavenworth for fudging MR figures than any other failing.

MOS — Military Occupational Specialty; a system of coded numbers/letters to indicate the specific job and grade level of one's military function; e.g., 058; manual Morse intercept operator. [Later changed to two numbers and one letter, as 05H.]

Morse op — Morse operator, manual Morse op, ditty-bopper, dit-catcher; all terms for manual Morse intercept operator

MP — Military Police, or Military Policeman; Army cop

NAAS — Navy Auxiliary Air Station; e.g., the Marine's NAAS Edenton, N.C.

'Nam; The 'Nam — Viet Nam, usually referring to South Viet Nam; might refer to what is entire (now extant) country.

Navy Cross — the second-ranked award for valor in the US naval service (Marines and Navy). Equivalent to the Distinguished Service Cross in the Army.

NCO — Non-commissioned Officer; a rank, usually associated with sergeants in the Army, but could include Corporal, Sergeant, Staff Sergeant, Sergeant First Class, Master Sergeant, First Sergeant (not a grade/rank but a position), Sergeant Major, Command Sergeant Major (another position), and Sergeant Major of the Army (the ultimate Army NCO). Career NCOs are known as the "backbone" of the Army.

NCOIC — Non-commissioned Officer-in-Charge; the senior NCO within a specific area of operations or performance.

Nettuno landing — the proper reference for what is generally referred to as the "Anzio landing," a combat sea-borne assault landing (amphibious operation) on the south coast of Italy in World War II. Anzio is the small town next door to the small town of Nettuno. Both were devastated in the assault.

Niner — the pronunciation of the number nine (9), used especially in telephone/radio communications when it is important to guarantee exact understanding of a message containing numbers and other tricky phonetics.

(NMI) — an abbreviation for the phrase “no middle initial”; usually encountered in official records of personnel who could not afford the luxury of the intervening nominative: Doe, John (NMI).

Nomex (flight suit) — a fire resistant/retardant item of clothing (coveralls) now worn by all flight crews, but which, in the 1960s, was just being introduced, replacing an older coverall garment without any protective values. [This is probably more than you ever wanted to know, but ... the garment is made of 92% Meta Aramid, 5 % Para Aramid, and 3% conductive fibers, making it fire resistant/retardant. It is sewn to Mil-Spec (military specifications: rigidly controlled). The "suit" has a two-way zipper with pull, six primary pockets with ample carrying capacity, adjustable waist belt with Velcro, a knife pocket, a pen pocket on the left sleeve, and a gusseted back.] Characters in the ASA trilogy (and, in fact, in the 224th Aviation Battalion), were not given opportunity to use these suits until sometime between March 1965 and August 1968, though the Air Force had been wearing them for some time.

NSA — National Security Agency; the true Puzzle Palace.

Numbah ten thou’ — [as given] an expression, ostensibly derived from the Vietnamese cultural notion (in translation) that the value of “things”, i.e., items, situations, prospects, etc., are rated from one upward in negative quality. Thus one is the best; ‘numbah ten’ is bad; numbah ten thou’ (thousand) is really bad.

Nungs — Stone Age recidivists, tribes of ancient cultures and language who occupy the highlands in Southeast Asia. Traditional enemies of the ‘occupying’ Vietnamese of their tribal lands, the Nungs often were useful US allies and were good soldiers, when trained and armed. Despite the popular myth, however, not all Nungs fought on the US side; the VC and NVA fielded Nung-populated units.

O-Club — Officers Club

OD — Officer of the Day (see DO, Duty Officer, SDO, Staff Duty Officer, above and below)

OER — Officer Efficiency Report; the military officer’s annual, or upon transfer, “report card,” upon which depends promotions, assignments, retention; where the rubber meets the road in performance.

OIC — Officer-in-Charge; (see NCOIC, above); the officer who is in charge of, and responsible for, a section, a group, a function, etc. Generally not applied to positions of actual command, which bear additional responsibilities.

OJT — on-the-job training; situation in which an individual (any grade) is given instructions on his responsibilities and tasks while in the act of performing such; not school trained.

ONI — Office of Naval Intelligence; no comment; this may be an oxymoron.

The Old Man — a casual, but not discriminatory or derogatory reference to the commanding officer; the person so designated need not be old, but title goes to the position.

Ops — Operations; in ASA parlance this is the main function of the entire command: to collect, process, analyze, and distribute results from all those actions to the subscribers/users of such intelligence. Ops requires a vast number and range of players to integrate all these functions.

ops — (my treatment) In the lower case printed use, "ops" refers to operators, i.e., the personnel who perform operations duties. Both this lower case and the previous capitalized abbreviation are pronounced the same; the difference derives from context.

Ops Officer — an Operations Officer in any organization is just that: responsible for operational activities. In ASA context, an Operations Officer is specifically a senior member of the command team, directly responsible for all aspects of the collection, processing, analysis, and support of the intelligence mission. Big Dog, on or off the porch.

Orderly Room — a place (not a condition) of central importance in a unit, especially company-level and unit-level organizations. It is the office abode of the Commanding Officer, Executive Officer, First Sergeant, and one or more clerks to handle administrative and support functions.

Overseas bars — small, straight gold bars worn in a ladder display on the right sleeve of Army dress uniforms; smaller than the left sleeve hashmarks, each overseas bar represents six months in a combat zone, not in contiguous areas.. When created in World War II, they were called ‘overseas bars’ because almost all duty outside the continental US was in a war zone.

p — piaster; the local denomination of monetary exchange in Viet Nam; derived from the French monetary system. Commonly expressed, vocally and written, as “p”; at the time of the trilogy, 100p equals about \$0.90, legal exchange. In 1970, the Vietnamese monetary unit was changed to the *dong*.

P2 — P2V; RP2V; the Neptune; a single mid-wing beam aircraft built by Lockheed, first in 1944, and later appearing in numerous upgrades/configurations to fit specific needs. This was essentially a US Navy aircraft, but also found a home with many foreign allies’ armed forces. Powered by two Wright R-3350 reciprocating engines, driving huge four-bladed props, later models were also equipped with two externally mounted jet engines for power assist in take-offs and landings. Most often used for observation for various purposes; due to its solid stability, operated as “Hurricane Hunters” for years, aircraft, which flew into the eye of hurricanes to assess conditions. Operated in Viet Nam primarily with Navy crews, which rotated in three- or six-month cycles from bases in the Philippines, Okinawa, and Japan. Aircraft interest here is in Books II and III for its use by ASA as a platform for an intelligence program in Viet Nam from 1967-1972; program called CRAZY CAT, later became CEFLIEN LION (pronounced “see flyin’ lion” or Sea Flying Lion). CRAZY CAT operated mainly out of Cam Ranh Bay on the central South Viet Nam coast, and flew 13-hour missions with 12-13 man crews as far north as the DMZ and along the Ashau Valley, over Khe Sanh, occasionally

deployed to other in-country target areas. Though an asset of the 1st Radio Research Company (Aviation), one of five aviation companies in the 224th Aviation Battalion (Radio Research), 509th Radio Research Group, this unit and aircraft were uniquely not associated with ARDF, but constituted a flying intercept collection platform. The story of how the Neptune became the bird of choice for the Army in 1966, and how it served its function in Viet Nam, is a fascinating one of politics, service rivalry, hubris, and angst. The aircraft were old when the Army obtained six of them from the “boneyard” in Arizona where old planes go to die, and their cast-off condition contributed to a constant state of concern and failure, both before and during flight in its five years in Nam.

Paris Match — a major French newspaper, not necessarily an organ of integrity and enlightenmen

Paris of the Orient — euphemism for 1960s Sai Gon (Saigon); so named for its glitter and sinful ways.

PCS — Permanent change of station. A move in the military; not a “trip” or temporary displacement.

Perspex — brand name of a highly tensile and shatter-resistant material used in making aircraft cockpit windshields/windows.

PFC — Private First Class; in World War II and Korea slang, “poor fucking civilian” to heighten the disparity between what they were and what they had been. Near the bottom of the rank/grade structure in enlisted personnel.

Phantom; F-4 — The MacDonald-Douglas model F-4 fighter-bomber aircraft, a workhorse in Viet Nam, and a deity prayed to when one felt the need for ultra protection, i.e., air support. The Phantom carried a startling array of ordnance, including cannon for strafing, rockets, air-to-ground and air-to-air missiles and air-to-surface for anti-ship operations, and a variety of bombs, including CBU's; napalm canisters; and could even be specially configured to carry nuclear payloads; up to 16,000 lbs of live ordnance. Whatever the particular mission or need at any moment, likely some orbiting F-4 had the proper mix of ordnance to do your job and keep you on the roster of active military personnel.

P.I. — Phillipine Islands

POL — A category of materials: Petroleum, oil and lubricants. POL collectively is of vital importance to the mobility of any command.

Poncho — a relatively effective rain garment, like a loose topcoat, except that it had no buttons or fastening devices, was of a single-piece construction, and was slipped on and off over the head; made large enough to fit over an individual and his personal equipment, i.e., pack, weapon, accouterments; shed rain, snow, cold.

Poncho liner — a light weight, soft, quilted liner to be employed, with or without, the poncho for warmth and camouflage. Poncho liners came in two designs: Army green and jungle camouflage. These items were highly prized and jealously guarded. They were unit-issue items, scheduled for turn-in upon leaving the theater. When attempting to keep and ship a liner home, personnel found it easier to get an AK-47 past the supply and transportation system NCOs than a poncho liner.

Port — The original nautical term for the left side of a ship as one looks or progressed toward its bow. (Another, less-used term for the left was ‘larboard.’) The complementary right side is ‘starboard.’ Airplane drivers/aircrews generally apply this nautical device.

Port Call — A formal notification of movement orders, coupled with information regarding method of travel, report date, time, authorized accompanying persons, and other information necessary to move G.I. Joe from point A to point B. After (often) weeks, even months of rumored shipment information, getting a port call meant you knew, for real, when you were to board a plane/ship/bus for transfer, usually involving inter-continental movement.

Pos — position; a truncated reference to (primarily) a manual Morse intercept collection position, a work venue comprising two HF radio receivers (R-390) in a mainframe; a metal work table with a “mill”—a rugged communications typewriter with all capital letters (no lower case), generally an Underwood—and an ashtray (the most important feature); headphones and connecting cable; and presumed to contain an operator. “Pos” could be used also to describe a printer position, an ELINT position, or specific configurations for other than Morse capabilities. A Morse position might also contain other radio receivers, i.e., the VHF R-220, or other special purpose devices. [A pos in ARDF or collection aircraft configurations were configured somewhat different.]

Primaquine — one of two malaria-prevention medications administered by edict on a regular basis. Usually in the mess hall line on a specific day of the week (when, by command collusion, they served the most attractive meal); enforced, verifiable ingestion. Dreaded for the resultant diarrhea it provoked

PSP — Perforated steel plating; metal “planks” with holes drilled in the flat plank (to reduce weight) which are used by aviation units to lay down runways and aircraft work areas on unstable terrain, i.e., on sand, mud, volcanic ash, etc. Also known by several other references, but I always knew PSP. Also, PSP is not exclusively the property of aviation units, but often used by transportation units, supply, and wherever an unstable ground surface needs temporary stability.

P-trails — reference to the attractive white smoke trails produced in a “flower” configuration by the explosion of phosphorous-containing ordnance.

“Pulled some Gs” — slang for being subjected to an inordinate level of stress through gravity compression, occasioned by increased gravitational pull, i.e., when aircraft make violent maneuvers, especially pulling out of dives.

Purple Heart — A U.S. military decoration awarded in the name of the President of the United States to those wounded or killed in action against an enemy of the U.S., or as a result of an act of any such enemy or opposing force, on or since April 5, 1917. Originally introduced by George Washington in 1782 as the Badge of Military Merit, it was a heart-shaped badge cut from purple cloth and permanently attached to a uniform, and thought to be the U.S. military's first decoration. Though technically ranking lower than any other decoration for valor and/or meritorious service, it is more highly prized by many soldiers who have earned a "heart," a familiar term of approbation.

PX — Post Exchange; an Army and Marine reference to the commercial-like business on a military base where personal items can be purchased by military personnel, including civilian clothing, toilet articles, books and magazines, newspapers, snacks, cameras, records (no CDs or DVDs in the '60s), etc. (see BX above) Oddly, both soldiers and Marines refer to their exchanges as PXs, and the Air Force calls their similar facility a BX for Base Exchange; odd, because both Marine and Air Force military installations are generally called “bases,” where Army facilities are called “posts.”

QC — Quân Công; Quan Cong, in American write; Vietnamese military police

R-390, R-390A — A high-frequency radio receiver originally built by Collins. This popular set replaced the old Super Pro and Hallicrafter R-274 receivers. Used by practically all ASA HF operations, ground-based and air, usually in a dual configuration on one “pos” with accompanying table/mill/ashtray furniture. Highly accurate, easily maintained, and impervious to operator abuse and environmental damage. A rare exemplary tool which served for many years.

Radio Research — a euphemism for ASA personnel/units in Southeast Asia, as in 3rd Radio Research Unit (3RRU). The only individuals fooled or confused by this subterfuge was, perhaps, friends and relatives “back home” who, when they wrote, wondered why Johnny was no longer in ASA. Johnny was... but, according to a famous recruiting lie of the period, “There is no A.S.A. in Viet Nam!” See Johnny run. See the recruiter’s nose grow.

Railroad tracks — slang reference to Army captain’s bars (2); derived from the appearance of two rails overlaid on two crossties.

R-and-R; R&R — Rest and Recovery, Rest and Relaxation, Rest and Rehabilitation: period in which an individual is removed from the threat of combat in order to recoup human feelings, get distracted (drunk, laid, or whatever) without the immediate threat of enemy hostilities. Waggishly represented as Rampage and Rape, Rape & Relax, Remove and Replace (one’s body), etc. In Viet Nam, an R&R program was initiated in January 1965, offering six days in Hong Kong or Bangkok, Thailand; choices were later extended to include Australia, Kuala

Lumpur, Singapore, and popular with married personnel, Honolulu where they could meet their spouses.

R.D.F. — [as given in dialogue] Radio Direction Finding

REMF; Rear echelon mother fucker — a derisive term applied to any/all headquarters, support and other rear-echelon personnel who were not commonly exposed to direct enemy fire.

Repo-depot — a signally indefinable term, meaning (having) vaguely to do with replacement depot; but the term, as spoken, could indicate a vehicle (used to transport replacements within or to and from a depot environment), a person (someone assigned duty in that arena), or a unit/command (the replacement of personnel function lying within); sometimes pronounced “repple-depple” and other equally meaningless phrases. Thought to have been derived from Reporting Depot.

Round — term for individual bullets or shells, i.e., pistol, rifle, machine gun ammunition, mortar and artillery shells; e.g., “I fired 20 rounds ...” means “I expended 20 individual shots ...” or “I fired 20 mortar shells,” etc.; numbers of bombs, rockets, missiles, containers of napalm and other expendable ordnance are not expressed as “rounds.

RPG — Rocket Propelled Grenade; a highly effective Soviet-built, shoulder-fired rocket which was used against personnel, vehicles, and fixed positions.

RRC — Radio Research Company; euphemistic cover for ASA companies in Viet Nam. There was no ASA in Viet Nam. Ri-i-i-ght

RU-1 — U-1; the “Otter,” a DeHavilland of Canada single-engine, high overhead wing, bush plane with rugged construction and reliable tendencies. ASA had a couple of aviation intelligence collection programs utilizing the Otter platform.

RU-6 — U-6; Army designation (old) L-20; the “Beaver,” (see above), the mother of all DeHavilland bush planes; ultra reliable, though with only a single engine; “slow and laid back” was the manner of performance. First produced in 1947, at last report there were still a lot of Beavers in the backwoods of the world. A mainstay for ASA Air.

RU-8 — U-8; Army utility aircraft; twin engine, low-wing, tricycle landing gear; the later mainstay aircraft for ASA Air in Viet Nam, until the introduction of the U-21

(RU-21) LAFFING EAGLE project — A new airborne collection platform/program introduced in Viet Nam in 1968-69.

Ruff-Puffs; RPFs — Vietnamese Regional Popular Forces, roughly akin to a militia; not exemplary troops.

Rusky; Russkies — slang for Russian; Russians

S-1 — At battalion or regimental level, the section responsible for administrative functions; at division or higher upper echelons, this function falls to G-1; for Joint operations, i.e., Army and Navy elements under a unified command, this function segues into J-1. S-2 through S-4 sustain comparable G and J elements. Other special needs are met by additional nominators, e.g., G-5 for Civil Action, etc.

S-2 — the section responsible for security matters in battalion/regiment; G-2/J-2 above.

S-3 — the section responsible for training and operations in battalion/regiment; G-3/J-3 above.

S-4 — the section responsible for supply and logistics in battalion/regiment; G-4/J-4 above.

SABERTOOTH — The Vietnamese military (ARVN) manual Morse intercept operations site adjacent to, and peripherally integrated with, the US's WHITE BIRCH operations.

Saigon Dailey News — an English-language daily newspaper published in Sai Gon, read religiously by GIs for “inside” or reliable information on local and national events; the News often stepped on the toes of American and Vietnamese command prerogatives, and was thus a thorn in the side of MACV. Employed mostly American journalists.

Sai Gon — Saigon, in western speak; [Note: All Vietnamese village, town, city, district, etc., names are separated into syllables consistent with spelling in the Vietnamese language]

Sai Gon tea — a tongue-in-cheek euphemism for the apocryphal whiskey which a bargirl ordered (at the requirement of the house establishment); GIs, in order to talk to, sit with, play with, or plan more intimate unions with the bargirls, must buy her “whiskey” or “champagne,” drinks which were only various strength and colors of tea. An open scam; since all further negotiations with the bargirls was dependent upon her satisfying her boss in the bar — usually a “mamasan” or “Dragon Lady” — it was an accepted practice, though soundly denounced as usury.

Sampan — a small, often hand-crafted boat for use in canals, streams, and rivers; used in Viet Nam for surreptitious movement of enemy who wanted to move unobserved, and for the limited smuggling of arms and ammo, supplies, and personnel.

Sapper — a Viet Cong or North Vietnamese commando, specially trained in the use of explosives, whose duty it was to infiltrate Allied positions, “getting through the wire,” and destroy facilities, equipment, and lives. This responsible function (in the prosecuting of the war on behalf of communist forces) demanded extreme dedication and bravery. “Dinks in the wire!” or “Sappers in the wire!” were alerts to extreme and imminent threats. Many of these sturdy troops performed suicide missions, and were content to do so. (Sound familiar?)

SDO — Staff Duty Officer; Duty Officer, DO; Officer of the Day, OD.

Sea King – SH-3A variant of twin-rotor/engine heavy support helicopter designed for use in Anti-Submarine Warfare, but also used in Viet Nam in many configurations and assignments, including Search and Rescue.

SFC — Sergeant First Class; an upper-mid-grade enlisted rank; grade of E-7

S.G.L.I. — Standard Government Life Insurance; life insurance on the life of military personnel, at the time of this story provided free of charge by the government where loss of life resulted in a payment by the government of \$50,000 to the legal beneficiaries.

SGM — Sergeant Major; in grade level, enlisted E-9, the senior level of enlisted grades; there are other Sergeants Major grades, all E-9: Command Sergeant Major, abbreviated as CSM, and Sergeant Major of the Army, SMA, the latter the single, highest-rated enlisted person in the Army.

SIGINT — Signals Intelligence; intelligence derived from the collection, processing and analysis of either of, or a combination of, COMINT and ELINT.

SITREP — situation report; just what it says.

Six-by — a military 2-1/2-ton truck; “six-by” for measurement (origin lost in time) of six feet x six feet; 6 x 6.

Skivvies; skivvie shorts — underwear, specifically G.I. underwear, and more specifically the shorts; generic (skivvies) could include T-shirts or undershirts (skivvie shirts).

Skyraider — (see AE-1)

Slick — generally a reference to a helicopter, especially UH-1s, without integral, or built-in, weapons systems; a slick will not necessarily be unarmed, but usually mounts one or two M-60 machine guns, suspended on bungee cord-like flexible mounts, or a similar arrangement, and manned by a gunner. Slicks are not “gun ships,” per se, but used for cargo hauling, med-evac, administrative use.

Slickie Boy — con artists; street gang members, thugs; usually young; specialized in stealing watches, wallets, cameras, and other valuables; could be dangerous when confronted as they were subject to harsh official punishments when apprehended.

Slope — derogatory reference to Asian peoples (generic); specific to Vietnamese

The Slot — common reference to the extremely hazardous body of water off the coast of Guadalcanal in the Solomon Islands in World War II. The Slot was situated between the coast of “the Canal” proper and a series of small islands off the coast, and was the site of heavy combat between ships of the Japanese Navy and shore batteries on the Canal.

Sole surviving son — reference to a policy in the Army in which a male individual, if he is the single remaining male within a family name (thus the only possibility for sustaining that name's lineage), he may be excused from hazardous duty (combat) wherein death could lead to extinction of the name

Sou — a slang reference to a very small increment coin of Vietnamese exchange; derived from such a category of French currency/coinage.

SP4, SP5, SP6, SP7 — U.S. Army enlisted ranks that bore corresponding enlisted grades, i.e., E-4, E-5, E-6, and E-7. Expressed as “SP four, SP five, etc.,” or “Spec four, spec five, etc.”

Squids — Indelicate reference to naval personnel, its portent depending upon the then standing inter-service rivalries.

Stars and Stripes — An independent news source operating from within the U.S. Department of Defense, but editorially separate from it. Reports on military matters of interest as well as other news items, advertising, comics, and lifestyle columns to provide military personnel, especially those serving in foreign lands or at sea, a means to “keep up” with matters at home, as well as their daily interests. Often the only news a soldier gets. Usually highly regarded by GIs unless they perceive the paper to be too closely parroting headquarters or political leadership’s party line. Bill Mauldin and Ernie Pyle helped make this organ a viable source of information for GIs.

State — U.S. Department of State

Steel Ex-Lax — the configuration of the outer cover of a fragmentation grenade (specifically the American-made M-26); so called for the appearance of segmented squares of iron/steel which, upon explosion, fracture along segment lines, thus spraying small shards of steel outward in all directions. Steel Ex-Lax, as with its namesake, can lead to evacuation activities.

STRAC — Ostensibly derived from Strategic Army Corps, a command of the U.S. Army in the 1960s, but later inactivated. Emphasis on military bearing and dress and comportment lead to the term, STRAC, as one who is “shaped up,” very military in appearance and thinking, neat; more prosaically, “... has got his shit together.”

Straphanger — one who has no useful function, serves no useful need, as in passengers on a subway hanging sheep-like from straps; a term of disregard for non-essential bystanders.
Swave and de-boner — a playful depiction of one who may or may not be suave and debonair.

Swedish-K — the Carl Gustav M/45; also the Kulsprutepistol m/45; a submachine gun of Swedish manufacture, firing a 9 mm parabellum cartridge; originally designed in 1944-45 (thus the 45 designator), this was the standard sub-machines gun of the Swedish Army. Used in Viet Nam by Special Forces and “spook” units. Weighed 7.3 pounds, fired 600 rounds per minute, with an effective range of 200 meters, it was fed by a 36- or 50-round magazine. Sold by Swedish arms dealers worldwide; very popular as a personal weapon at the time of the Viet

Nam War. Knock-off copies are still popular in un- and under- developed countries’ military factions.

Swinging Richard — a cleaned up form of “every swinging dick,” that is, all (male) personnel.

T-28 — a single-engine, propeller-driven airplane, designed and used as a trainer; outfitted with ordnance racks and guns, it was used by the Vietnamese Air Force in Viet Nam as a combat aircraft.

TA — traffic analyst (see Analyst above)

Taps — the military bugle call which is heard at funerals, memorial services, and also at the end of the military work day; the music has a storied history, but is noted for its beautiful, though mournful, dirge-like tones and quality.

TC — Trick Chief; the senior soldier, within a specific operations section on a trick, or shift, during the work day.

TDY — temporary duty, usually (or often) in distant locations from one’s “permanent” assignment.

Tiger-stripe fatigues — fatigue uniforms with a camouflage pattern resembling the stripes on a tiger; these might be in shades of green (most common in Viet Nam); might also appear in shades of brown/tan and gray/black in later engagements.

TOC: Tactical Operations Center – the operations and command/control center of a fielded unit; in Viet Nam, often a bunker or a buried CONEX

Tommy — Slang term for a Thomson's gazelle, a sleek and beautifully elegant, relatively small deer-like hooved animal of the African veldt and mostly open country; highly prized for eating, usually very tender with a pleasing flavor, and like Eastern Whitetails, a Tommy with a few years on him might sport a decent rack of displayable horns. Sometimes spelled "Tommie" or "tommy" or "tommie."

Top — First Sergeant; Top Sergeant; Top Soldier; common, casual reference or address, not derogative.

TO&E — Table of Organization and Equipment; the Army’s official, structured blueprint for each type of different unit, i.e., infantry, armor, artillery, etc.; the TO&E specifies exactly how many soldiers of various MOS and grade are authorized to a unit, and how much of what kind of equipment, i.e., tanks, radios, guns, portable latrines, that unit is authorized (required) to have in its inventory. US military units too often operate outside (generally below) the defined requirements, regarding numbers and capabilities.

Traffic Analyst — (see Analyst above)

Travis — A truncated reference to Travis Air Force Base, north of San Francisco, California, the main departure and arrival point for personnel of all services deploying to or from Viet Nam (as well as other Asian assignments).

Trick Chief — (see TC above)

Tropic Lightning — the nickname for the US Army's 25th Infantry Division; the name derives from the flash of gold lightning on a primarily red shield-shaped background of the division's shoulder patch.

TSN — Tan Son Nhut; a Vietnamese airbase (also hosting army personnel) serving also as a base for American and Australian troops, units, and assets; located some 6-7 miles northwest of the city of Sai Gon, Viet Nam. In the “early years” of the war, this was the site/home of a large percentage of American assets in Viet Nam.

Two Rock Ranch — an ASA operations site in California, near Petaluma; personnel stationed there were usually content in the assignment, and many established permanent ties to the nearby communities and the base itself, managing to have themselves assigned there time and again, alternating with various overseas assignments. The east coast equivalent was Vint Hill Farms Station in Virginia, near Warrenton, Fauquier County.

U-6 — RU-6, L-20, “Beaver” (see RU-6, above)

UCMJ — The Uniform Code of Military Justice; the book of law common to all the U.S. military services; the “book.”

Un-swave — or “not swave”; not even suave; a person was so denigrated for exhibiting gross behavior or indelicate manners and behavior; not suave; klutzy or acrimonious; an individual, under the stress and panic of combat, might be un-swave.

U.P. — the Upper Peninsula of Michigan, a fabled outdoors sports semi-wilderness area in the far north. (Read Hemingway on this subject.)

USAEUR — United States Army, Europe; headquarters was in Heidelberg; the supreme command in charge of all European operations; sometimes its influence was extended into the surrounding Mediterranean littoral, Middle East.

USARV — United States Army, Republic of Vietnam; the major command for all operations units in Viet Nam, located at Long Binh, some 13 miles from Sai Gon. Later in the war, the Long Binh facility became the largest “base” in the free world. Another bureaucratic stumbling block.

USASAEUR — United States Army Security Agency in Europe; headquarters for "ASA Europe" was in the I.G. Farben Building in Frankfurt, Germany. All ASA units in Europe, the Mediterranean, and peripheral locations, often including the Middle East, were subordinated to this "head shed."

UWM — University of Wisconsin, Milwaukee campus; located near the lakeshore in Milwaukee

Uzi— a simple, economical submachine gun, made in Israel, and available worldwide. Very short range but serviceable in extreme conditions; lightweight.

Valley Forge — In Book II, *Dragon Bait*, the term refers to the US Army's hospital at Valley Forge, Pennsylvania. If the term is "*the* Valley Forge," it refers to the US Navy aircraft carrier, CV-45, built on a World War II design but never saw service in that war; was deeply involved in Korea and Viet Nam, in its numerous iterations.

Varicam — An unusual, if not unique, feature of the P2-V Neptune aircraft. From development models which demonstrated great difficulty in turning the rudder, enhancements added a 'varicam,' a device to aid modification, in flight, of the cross-sectional curvature of the aircraft to maintain trim as fuel was consumed. This was an 'automatic' feature and occurred as fuel weights varied with consumption. When the varicam went into adjustment mode, it made a loud, slamming noise heard and felt throughout the plane.

VC — Viet Cong; VICTOR CHARLIE (from the phonetic alphabet), Charlie; Victor Charles, Charles; Vietnamese guerrillas; the enemy before the major introduction of North Vietnamese troops into the conflict. The term Viet Cong derives from the parent Vietnamese term, Viet Cong San, signifying Vietnamese communists. Destroyed as an effective battlefield force during the 1968 Tet uprising, generically the enemy in Viet Nam (guerrilla or main force) would always be "Charlie," the VC. (NOTE: Within MS Word, there is no adequate way to present the full subtleties of the Vietnamese printed language; many diacritical marks are missing from this shoddy program.)

VCD — [as given] *Vam Co Dong*, as in *Song Vam Co Dong*.

VHFS — Vint Hill Farms Station, Va., the American east coast complement to the west coast Two Rock Ranch (see, above); located in Fauquier County, near Warrenton, Va., some 50 miles west of Washington, DC. Operational ASA site; home of ASA logistical support for worldwide sites.

Viet Nam — name of the country is utilized in the westernized form of *Vietnam* but as noted above, this does not represent the actual depiction of the name in the Vietnamese language of two syllables.

VNAF — (South) Vietnamese Air Force; pronounced Vee-Naf.

Warp zone — a wry allusion to the 'war zone' exhibiting attitude.

Watch NCO — the senior noncommissioned officer on an Operations trick, or shift; holds operational and administrative control over all sections and across lines of responsibility; effectively, an on-site hit man for the Operations Officer, who is often not present in the Operations site.

Watch Office — a specific location within an operations complex where the Watch NCO, and often a clerk, concentrated their duties, i.e., oversight of the entire operational cucamonga. A hangout for NCOs who do not keep themselves rigidly among the personnel and equipments assigned to their tuteledge/supervision.

WHITE BIRCH — In the "early years" of the Viet Nam war, this was the ASA manual Morse signals collection site at JGS (ARVN Joint General Staff) compound (1963-65). Later, WHITE BIRCH would be subsumed into, and the building become a part of, the 509th Radio Research Group's headquarters.

White Mice — a derogatory/slang term for Vietnamese civilian (militarized) police; name derives from heavy employment of the color white in their uniforms, including white barracks hats, white "Sam Brown" belts, holster, and gloves; worn with khaki uniforms. The disparaging joke was that they wore white so as not to have to carry a separate surrender flag with them on duty. Not terribly reliable when their services were needed. Often run by or riddled with corrupt officers with ties to criminal organizations, and even the Viet Cong.

White sidewall — slang term for a "high and tight" or extremely close-trimmed, military, crewcut-style haircut; generally the province of STRAC personnel, "lifers" and individuals appearing before promotion boards. In reality, especially in Viet Nam, a very practical response to the discomfort of high humidity, heat, and a gazillion forms of infestation.

WIA — Wounded in action; a conditon to be avoided, but far superior to KIA.

WO1 — Warrant Officer grade 1; the lowest grade of warrant officer; traditionally, not addressed or referred to as "Chief," the case with CW2 and above (i.e., chief warrant officer, grade 2 and above).

WOPA — Warrant Officers Protective Association; an apocryphally vigilant group who ostensibly protects the rights and privileges of warrant officers, called into play when warrants are given grief by superior officers and civilian military employees. This specious organization could, merely by mention, effect special consideration, even (grudging) admiration.

WTF-O? — What the fuck? Over. Often expressed in situations of chagrin and pique, when the speaker doesn't understand something. A caustic play on radio communications protocol, wherein one end of the conversation asks a question, and to indicate to a switching operator (in older systems) or just to the person to whom he speaks that it is now their turn to speak, uses the term "Over," indicating, "the transmission capability is turned over now to you." (Note: in almost every war movie ever made, someone on the radio uses the expression, "Over and

out." They were all wrong; no trained communicator would make such a blunder. The indicator was either "Over," indicating the respondent was to speak, or "Out," indicating the speaker had nothing further to say and was closing communications.

XO — Executive Officer, at any command level; the number two in the pecking order; the immediate subordinate of a commanding officer; functions as the CO in that leader's absence.

Zil — A heavy-duty Russian-made truck: term is short (abbreviation) for "Zavod Imeni Likhachova," translated to mean "the factory of Likhachova," a proper last name. Zil, the company, has for many years been a major manufacturer of trucks, heavy equipment, and other products purchased largely by the government.

Zip, Zips — derogatory address and reference to Vietnamese persons (military or civilian), ostensibly derived from "Zipper head," a broader, more derogatory term applied to a broader spectrum of Asian peoples.

Zoomie — a slighting reference to any US Air Force personnel; only serious to the degree of existing inter-service rivalry.

ZSU-23 — a highly mobile Soviet anti-aircraft artillery weapon system mounted on a fast-tracked vehicle, comprising four radar-controlled 23 mm cannons. The weapon had a range of one mile, capable of firing 800 total rounds per minute (with all four guns firing) against all kind of low-flying aircraft. This weapon did not make its appearance in South Viet Nam until late in the war, where it usually could be found along the Ho Chi Minh Trail to protect the movement of men and supplies. Agonizingly effective as a deterrent to low-level flight by Americans.

Foreign language phrases

Inclusion of foreign language words and phrases in this Glossary serve as a quasi-Rosetta Stone to enable those readers who do not share a military experience to gain some insight into the language and actions of those who have had that Spartan life. Most translations of foreign words and terms, phrases, expressions ... are *veritax approximatas* (as is this phrase), my own term to convey the relative usefulness of the meanings/translations provided without absolute language accuracy. Not precisely formal translations, but the rough meaning intended by the GIs who spoke thus, off-handedly butchering not only the foreign languages but often English as well. These ‘GI-speak’ translations will get you close in meaning.

Parenthetical codes: (Arab) – Arabic; (Erit) – Eritrean; (Ethi) – Ethiopian; (Fr) – French; (Ger) – German; (Haw) – Hawaiian/Polynesian origins; (Irish) – Old Irish, Gaelic Irish; (Ital) – Italian; (Lat) – Latin; (Span) – Spanish; (Viet) – Vietnamese; (Russ) – Russian; (Yid) – Yiddish

(Ger) *Ach. Ja, gut. Danke Schön. ‘wieder hören.* [As given ...] – ”OK. Yes, good. Thank you. Until we speak again.”

(Lat) *Age quod agis* – “Do as you do!” (Span) *Ayee, Dios!* – (loosely) “Oh my God!”

(Ital) *Alto!* – "Halt!" A command; used on stop signs in traffic, as well as a verbal command. Stronger in inference than "Stop!"

(Ger) *Amerikanischers* – Americans (collective); as an adjective, American, *Amerikanisch.*

(Ethi) *Amharic* – the major language spoken in Ethiopia proper; that is, not in Eritrea, despite its colonial state at the time of these writings.

(Fr) *Arrondissement* – literally, "a rounding off" or approximation; used in the sense of defining "districts" or "precincts" within towns and cities in France and French colonial possessions.

(Span) *Ayee, Dios!* – (loosely) “Oh my God!”

(Viet) *Áo Dái* – a form of dress for Vietnamese females; graceful, practical long upper garment like a long-sleeved dress, but split at the waist to hang loosely over pants (trousers); especially worn by young maidens. Pronounced “ow dye.”

(Ger) *Autobahn* – the high-speed, national highways of Germany, analogous to our Interstate system; originally built by Hitler to facilitate the rapid movement of armor and troops from one area to another within the Third Reich. For many years, this road system did not impose speed limits; this has changed to a minor degree. You may still be motoring down the “bahn” at 90 mph or so, hear a whine, and be passed by a VW bug.

(Fr) *Autoroute* – the French equivalent of our Interstate system.

(Ital) *Autostrada* — the Italian equivalent of our Interstate system; for most of its existence, this highway system did not impose nor recognize speed limits, a lax oversight now amended in areas of build-up, road repairs, sites of accidents, etc.

(Fr) *Avion* — slang reference to a popular loaf of French bread (pain), perhaps 12-15 inches in length, wider in the middle, tapered at the ends; derives from the same word meaning an airplane propeller, which the loaf is said to resemble.

(Ital) *Avvocati della cause perse!* — "Champion of lost causes."

(Ger) *Bad Aibling Kaserne* — Bad Aibling military base

(Irish/mixed) *Bad cess rising* — From the Irish who use *Bad cess* as in English we say 'bad luck' or 'bad circumstances.

(Fr) *Baguette* — a popular elongated loaf of French bread (pain), served in a wide variety of uses.

(Arab) *Baksheesh* — for free; often something given in commercial exchanges as a minor bribe or more charitably, an inducement to sales/trade.

(Viet) *Ba mui ba* — the number "33"; most common regarding the Vietnamese beer of that name

(Viet) *Ba mui lam* — crazy

(Irish) *Banh sidghes* — "banshee"

(Erit) *Basgh* — proper name for the large, slum-like quarter in Asmara, Eritrea (Ethiopia), where there lived most of the poorer class as well as criminals/social outcasts; pronounced "Bosch."

(Ger) *Bauern Frühstück* — Farmer's breakfast; a monumental breaking of the fast; implication is that the farmer works harder than others, thus must have a larger, longer-lasting breakfast.

(Ger) *Bayerischer Deutsche* — Bavarian German (literal); first use is in reference to the dialect of German spoken in the south, in Bavaria; colloquial meaning of Bayerischer (Bavarian) is a "countrified person," a farmer, a hick.

(Jap) *Benjo* — inexact transliteration of a Japanese word representing "toilet" or "sewer"; often expressed redundantly as a *benjo* ditch.

(Ger) *Bock* — literally, a buck (animal); the term applied to a dark and heavy member of the beer family, though some make the distinction that "there is beer, and there is bock." Drunk

and enjoyed like beer, it is often the tailings of a brewmaster's brewing-to-bottling process. Can be high in alcohol.

(Ger) *Brathendel* — a chain fast-food stand located in shopping centers, vacation spots, and downtown business areas across all areas of Germany; their specialty (almost all they sold) was spit-roasted chicken and *pomme frites*.

(Ital) *Capish?* — An unsupportable but popular expression meaning ‘Do you understand?’ Skewed expression, from *Capire*: to understand.

(Ital) *Carabiniere commandante* — The chief of the national police in a particular district.

(Ital) *Che cosa?*— [As given ...] "What's the matter?") Used casually in the sense of "What's up?"

(Viet) *Choi oi!* — Exclamation: surprise, wonder, disgust; the expression can take many meanings depending upon accent and tonal quality. A reasonable approximation is the English “Wow!”

(Yid) *Chutzpah* — Over-weening confidence; "nerve" or hubris.

(Span) *Cojones* — Testicles; "balls." Used in the same sense that "having balls" is used in English to mean that one has sufficient intestinal fortitude or guts to be counted a real man's man; even now appearing in reference to gutsy women.

(Ital) *Come? Americano? É solo?* [As given ...] "What? You're American? Are you alone?"

(Span) *Cornada* — literally "goring" or the "thrusting of the horn," the term commonly refers to the wound that kills Spanish bullfighters. It is occasioned by the severing of the femoral artery in the inside thigh, a zone most accessible to the low sweeping thrust of a fighting bull's horns; the bullfighter dies from loss of blood and/or sometimes sepsis, which sets in later.

(Span.) *Corrida* — the full panoply of a bullfight, including all choreographed movements and prescribed actions.

(Viet) *Con biêt?* — “Do you understand?”

(Fr) *Croix de guerre* — Cross of War, a major military decoration/award in France’s military often awarded to military members of France’s colonial states.

(Viet) *Dai úy* — Vietnamese Army or Air Force captain; pronounced “dye-we”

(Ger) *Darfe sprechen, bitte, mit Frau West?* — “May I please speak with Mrs. West?”

(Ger) *Deckel* — literally, a lid or a cap; it is the term used for the small cardboard mat which is placed beneath a served drink, including beers. The waiter/waitress makes a mark on the deckel to indicate how many beers one has consumed, thus it falls into the accounting category.

(Fr) *De jure* — literally, “of the day,” e.g., menu de jure.

(Ger) *Der Fliegende Holländer* – The Flying Dutchman.

(Ger) *Deutsche* — German; can refer to a person or to the generic language.

(Ger) *Deutsche Mark* — The German currency, before the EU; at the time of these stories, the rate was almost exactly 4 *Deutsche mark*(s) to \$1.00 American.

(Arab) *Dhow* — a small boat, propelled either by oar or paddle power, or with a triangular, sloping "lateen" sail. Common along the rivers, lakes, and coasts of African and middle eastern countries. Used for fishing and for small-time transportation.

(Viet) *Di di maow!* — “Go!” “Go fast.” “Go faster; get a move on.” Pronounced “dee-dee maoww”; often just expressed “Di di!”

(Viet) *Dinky Dau* — Crazy; wacko, in a demeaning sense (pronounced just as it looks)

(Ger) *Dreck* — dirt, mud, excrement (slightly more toney than *Scheissen!*; trash.

(Viet) *Dung lai!* — “Stop!” (pronounced “Dung lye”)

(Viet) *Dung thang!* — Stand up! (a command)

(Ital) *Duomo* — cathedral

(Arab) *Djellabah* — the outer, covering garment for men in many Arabic cultures; a robe of sorts, usually made of wool though they are worn in very hot climates. Go figure! And though they may be found in a variety of colors, like Henry Ford's Model T, mostly they come in many colors — all of them black.

(Viet) *Dzong* cart — a common form of cheap transportation in Viet Nam; a three-wheeled motorized cart with a single front wheel, steered by handlebars, while passengers sit in a wire screen enclosed “cage” above the two rear wheels. Some carts had no screening, but slats or bars to protect riders. Pronounced “dong” cart.

(Fr) *Éclair* — a French pastry of classic existence

(Span) *Es muy stupido!* — “That’s extremely stupid!”

(Ger) *Est* — east

(Ital) *E troppo presto per contar vittoria.* — “It’s too soon to celebrate.”

(Ital) *E tutto?* — [As given ...] "Is that all?"

(Fr) *Excusé moi, Messieurs!* — “Excuse me, gentlemen!”

(Ital) *Ey-Attenzione! Buona fortuna and Ciao!* — “Hey, pay attention. Good luck to you, and so long.”

(Ger) *Federdecker* — A bed comforter, filled with feathers; often heavy, it could be intimidating, but luxuriously warm and comforting in cold, northern climes.

(Erit) *Ferengi* — Foreigner

(Ital) *Ferma qui!* — [As given ...] "Stop here!"

(Ital) *Ferragusto* — An Italian holiday; especially enacted in major cities when the summer weather reaches its most oppressive and the town/city shuts down so that everyone can flee to the mountains or the seaside; encompasses, usually, the entire month of August. No business of significance occurs during Ferragusto.

(Ger) *Festhalle* — A place where parties/dances, etc., are held. Can be regularly a barn, a store, a gymnasium, or any other place which can accommodate party-goers in a festive mood.

(Fr) *Filles de joie* — [As given ...] Literally, women of joy; colloquially, whores, prostitutes, bar girls

(Ger) *Flughafen* — an airport or air base; literally, a place of flying

(Ger) *Fraulein* — Miss; young, unmarried woman; girl.

(Ger) *Gasthaus* — literally, a guest house; often much like a Bed & Breakfast. An inn. Not all *gasthaus*-es offered rooms, but most did. Breakfast (the real Continental breakfast) offered as part of the charge for lodging. GIs traveling on TDY often used a *gasthaus* for good food and adequate lodging along with the comraderie of the inevitable bar.

(Ger) *Gasthof* — Synonymous with *gasthaus*; sometimes a bit more elegant than plebian.

(Ger) *Gemutlichkeit* — Easy-going life; coziness; implicit, “the good life”

(Erit) *Gharry* — a small cart with two large wheels, usually pulled by a small horse or donkey, though they have been known to facilitate power from an oxen or a camel. Single bench seat; seats the driver and as many drunks as one can pack in. Used in Eritrea as a taxi.

(Ital) *Grand Raccordo Anulare* — the multi-lane highway which encircles Rome like Washington, DC’s beltway; off the “Anulare” extend all the roads that lead into, or away from, Rome to the rest of the world, Rome’s former and still-perceived-to-be provinces.

(Span) *Guardia* — From *Guardia Civil*, the Spanish national/state police. General term for any kind of police.

(Haw) *Haole* — a non-native Hawaiian of non-Polynesian descent; a white person usually; pronounced "how-lee."

(Ger) *Hauptpolizei* — Chief of Police

(Ger) *Herr Leutnant* — “Mister Lieutenant”; slightly farcical address, perhaps to an officer who is too full of himself.

(Ital) *Ho fretta. Non mi secchi, per favore.* — [As given ...] "I'm in a hurry. Please don't delay me."

(Ger) *Hunde, Hunden* — dog, dogs

(Fr) *Joie de vivre* — the joy of life; unbridled pleasure in existence

(Ger) *Kaserne* — a military base/facility; a post; a fortified place of military residence.

(Ger) *Kinder* — child or children; the source of the term "kindergarten"

(Ger) *Kuchen* — German pastries, baked goods.

(Ger) *Lebensmittel* — a small store, like a five-and-dime; akin to a 7-11 in some respects

(Ger) *Luftwaffe* — the German Air Force

(Ger) *Macht schnell!* — “Make it fast!” (literal); “Hurry up!” “Get a move on.”

(Ger) *Mädchen* — a girl; a maid (draw your own conclusions; too often, wishful thinking)

(Ger) *Maxlrain* — A German proper last name; [As given ...] Count Maxlrain owned the land on which was sited Bad Aibling base; he also owned a brewery, and the clubs on Bad Aibling were obliged to offer/sell his beer (though it was despicable); the beer was referred to as "Maxlrainer".

(Lat) *Mea culpa!* — Anglicized spelling of term meaning “I am culpable” (literal); “I am responsible”; “It (the act or omission) is my fault”; a common phrase in Catholic religious responses within church liturgy, prayers and confessions. An act of acknowledging responsibility.

(Lat) *Mea maxima culpa!* — (see above) This is the acknowledgment of guilt/responsibility taken to the highest level, i.e., “I am most guilty/responsible” (and implied, contrite).

(Ger) *meine kleine heimatlos Freund* — my little homeless friend; a slighting, playful reference to the homelessness of professional soldiers.

(Fr) *Mistral* — a warm wind “from the south,” usually in Europe considered to emanate from Africa. The same phenomenon has many names: the *phoen* (pronounced “fern”) in German; in Arabic, the *Scirocco*, etc.

(Arab) *Muzzeim* — a quasi-religious figure in Muslim societies who makes the public calls to prayer.

(Mixed) *Nevva hachi, G.I.* — Bastardization of a Japanese phrase meant to suggest “never happen, G.I.” Derives from Korean War mis-usage.

(Fr) *Nom de guerre* — war name; a euphemistic use of a title rather than one’s given name, i.e., Ratty Mac for Algernon McGantry, Spanish Jack for John Spain.

(Fr) *Nom de militaire* — same as *nom de guerre*, except that it occurs more broadly, beyond combat

(Ital) *Non te la prendere! Sai bene che le dichiarazioni di television vonno sempre prese con beneficio d’inventaria.* — Don’t get worked up. You know how you have to take any television announcements with a grain of salt.

(Viet) *Nuoc mam* — a vastly popular condiment throughout Viet Nam, but also other Asian constituencies; this “fish sauce” is created by taking fresh, otherwise unprepared fish, layering them with salt in a porous container or holding bin in the open air, and allowing the concoction to ferment, or more properly, “rot,” capturing the runoff of liquid which the putrefaction process produces. In a reverse of the Vietnamese cultural gauge, the first capture and bottling of runoff produces “Nr. Ten” sauce, a cheap and unsatisfactory product reserved for the poor; the numbers go down as the pungency increases with later run-off, the object being to reach the product of “Nr. One Nuoc Mam” (pronounced nook-mom); which is used on practically every dish served in Viet Nam. It does add intriguing flavor to sometimes especially bland foods consisting of vegetables and rice if one can get past the smell. This is the origin of the impression, when you enter a Vietnamese restaurant, that you have walked into an outhouse.

(Ital) *Omerta* — the practice, ostensibly originating within Mafia families, of absolute silence about internal activities, characters, events, etc. Violation of *omerta* ("ratting out someone") was a death sentence.

(Fr) *Pain* — generic for bread

(Viet) *Phô* — soup; a Vietnamese culinary specialty and comes in hundreds of varieties

(Fr) *Pas de deux* — a dance for two; colloquially, anything necessarily involving two persons.

(Fr) *Piede à terre* — a temporary or second lodging

(Span) *Pistolero* — a gunsel, a hired gun; a gunfighter; one who hires out, in any endeavor, without moral commitments.

(Ger) *Platz* — plaza or square

(Ger) *Polizei* — police (collective)

(Fr) *Pomme frites* — lit. "fried potatoes" but in the form of "french fries," the term is common throughout Europe.

(Ger) *Prosit neue jahr!* — [As given ...] Happy New Year! (pronounced "Prost noi yahr!")

(Viet) *Quân công* — Vietnamese military police/policeman; QC.

(Viet) *Quân nhán* — Vietnamese military (generic); soldier

(Ger) *Raust, mein Herr!* — [As given ...] Basically, "Get up, you bum!" The unfamiliar Deutschism, "*raust*," can likely be attributed to its crossover from English of "roust."

(Viet) *Sau* — expression of negative impact; disgust or bad; often drawn out to indicate an elevated level of bad, e.g. "*Sau-u-u-u*."

(Irish) *Shanachie* — an Irish story teller

(Ger) *Schatzie* — a diminutive form of Schatz: sweetheart; girlfriend.

(Ger) *Scheissen* — shit (also, less common, Dreck; used in a dismissive sense, i.e., "That's just so much shit.")

(Ger) *Schloss* [as given] Maxlrain — country estate house (of the Maxlrain family).

(Ger) *Schnaps* — hard liquor; distilled liquor, often with fruity overtones, but high in alcoholic content.

(Ger) *Schutzman* — policeman; pl. *Schutzmanen*.

(Erit) *Shifta* — a term used in Eritrea and Ethiopia denoting a person of low birth (usually), one who acts as a bandit or thief. Often mispronounced by GIs as "Shiftee."

(Viet) *Sinh loi!* — "I am sorry (about that, about/for some event or thing.); colloquial and ubiquitous in Viet Nam: "Sorry 'bout that!" Usually insincere expression of compassion.

(Irish) *Slánte* or *Sláinte* — An Irish drinking toast: 'Your health!

(Viet) *Song* — river; [as given] Song Vam Co Dong

(Ital) *Sono Americano* — [As given ...] "I'm American" Colloquially, "I'm only an American," implying "You have nothing to fear from me as an enemy."

(Arab) *Souk* — an open-air market; often part of the name of towns, villages, and communities, coupled with the name of the day of the week on which the market occurs (is open and attended), e.g., Souk el Arba, a village on the coast of Morocco, named for its market held on Thursday.

(Ger) *Standartenfuhrer* — essentially the SS; bully boys of the Third Reich.

Ger) *Strasse* — street

(Ger) *Strassenuntereingang* — an underground passage, running beneath heavily traveled streets and roadways where stoplights would impede traffic flow too much; essentially a (usually) dank, dark and intimidating tunnel from one side of a road to the other. These were often, in larger cities and tourist meccas, the location of small specialty shops, eateries, and migrant vendors. Also, *Strassenunterführung*.

(Ital) *Stupido come l'aqua calda!* — dumb as dish water

(Erit) *Tigré* — A province in Eritrea.

(Erit) *Tigrinya* — The language predominantly spoken in Tigré; the main language of Eritrea.

(Ital) *Trattoria* — basically a small service facility, serving quick snacks, small sandwiches and desserts, drinks; and in some areas of Italy, can be extended to encompass more elegant dining facilities. The trattoria (pronounced trot-o-ree-ah) is commonly found located at the site of tourist facilities and at highway roadside stops, i.e., fuel stations.

(Fr) *Tresième Administratif* — [As given ...] "The thirteenth administration," or Office Nr. 13.

(Viet) *Trung úy* — Vietnamese Army or Air Force lieutenant.

(Irish) *Uisce beatha* — "water of life"; a lyrical expression, deriving from an ancient Irish term for Irish whiskey.

(Viet) *Viec hoi lo* — A culture of influence or protection, commonly accepted even in polite Vietnamese society. Similar to "being connected," or the Godfather premise of oversight with repayable obligations.

(Arab) *Wadi* — a large ditch or the bed of a stream in parts of Asia and in North Africa, which is usually dry except in rainy season.

(Ger) *Was machts du?* — "What are you doing?" "What's up with you?"

(Ger) *Wehrmacht* — the German army.

(Ger) *Wehrstanden?* — “Do you understand?”

(Russ) *Zheet boodyesh, no yet nye zakochyesh.* — [transliteration from the Russian: “You’ll live [through it], but you won’t feel much like fucking.” Phrase used to describe labor camp conditions to incoming prisoners in the Gulag.

A “New” Phonetic Alphabet

(in effect at the time of the
Viet Nam War)

Alpha
Bravo
Charlie
Delta
Echo
Foxtrot
Golf
Hotel
India
Juliet
Kilo
Lima
Mike
November
Oscar
Papa
Quebec
Romeo
Sierra
Tango
Uniform
Victor
Whiskey
X-ray
Yankee
Zulu

“Old” Phonetic Alphabet

(in effect at the time of the Korean War
and World War II)

Able
Baker
Charlie
Dog
Easy
Fox
George
How
Item
Jig
King
Love
Mike
Nan
Oboe
Peter
Queen
Roger
Sugar
Tare
Uncle
Victor
William
X-ray
Yoke
Zebra