



As seen on the phosphorescent screen Army Specialist Reed Black of Kansas City, Mo. gives the latest reports on the President's wage price freeze. Reed is a Journalism graduate of the University of Missouri and has been assigned to AFVN News for six months.

Journalist second class Mick Smith of Charlevoix, Michigan, chairs the Sunrise morning show on FM radio. Additionally, the former WJML Detroit disc-jockey can be heard discussing various aspects of Vietnamese culture with Miss Mai on Saturday mornings at 9:05 over the AM band. Prior to his Vietnam assignment Mick was an announcer at AFCN in the Caribbean network while stationed at San Juan, P.R.



Maintenance of equipment is a continuing problem at AFVN considering the weather conditions in Vietnam. Air Force Tech Sergeant Don Armstrong checks out the signal on an Ampex 1100 Video Tape Recorder in the VTR room. The VTR on the extreme left is running the Neil Diamond "Interlude" while the film chain projector just past Armstrong's elbow is cued up for the first film program of the afternoon. Although the station is completely air conditioned, heat and humidity pose constant threats to the sophisticated electronic gear used to provide the viewer and listener the finest in programming.

AF

From humble beginnings in 1962 the American Forces Network in Vietnam has grown to be the largest in size and most powerful in output within the American Forces Radio and Television Service.

Broadcasting from a small room in the Rex Hotel with a total complement of six people, AFRS brought news and music to about 80 per cent of the American forces in Vietnam in 1962. By 1969, at the peak of U.S. involvement, the network had expanded to full radio and television capability with seven detachments and over 200 people. Radio and television were being heard and seen by over 95 per cent of the American Forces personnel in country as well as most of the ships operating in the Gulf of Tonkin.

The Vietnam network is the only one in the AFRTS that broadcasts news on the hour 24 hours a day. The key station in Saigon has teletype with direct lines to the Associated Press, United Press International, and the AFRTS center in Washington, D.C. The Washington office gathers news from the commercial networks and sends it out by cable direct to Saigon where it is prepared for local broadcast by the station news staff.

The 1971 World Series games were broadcast in Saigon the same day they were played through the Philippines. AFPN made video tapes of the games as they were played and airlifted the tapes to Saigon where kinescopes (16mm motion picture films) were made and airlifted to the detachments up-country. Presidential addresses and other major news items are given the same treatment.

Television first came to Vietnam when the Blue Eagles (C-121 Super Constellations) began flying over the country in February 1966. These aircraft were outfitted as complete radio and television transmitting stations and broadcast American programs on channel 11 and Vietnamese programs on channel 9. Strong emphasis had been placed on bringing television to the most remote villager as a decisive factor in nation-building and establishing national unity in the Republic of Vietnam. As a result, AFVN was tasked with providing engineering assistance to the Joint U.S. Public Affairs Office for the purpose of building and placing in operation independent television stations for the Vietnamese government.

The Blue Eagles were nearly destroyed in April 1966 when the VC made two direct mortar hits on one aircraft and severely damaged a second. The third aircraft received minor damage and was able to continue broadcast operations over Vietnam on a limited schedule five days a week. The other two aircraft were repaired and back in the air in just 28 days, five weeks ahead of damage inspectors' estimates.

With the installation of seven van-type television broadcast facilities at widely separated locations to provide maximum coverage throughout the Republic completed in 1966, the Blue Eagles began serving the heavily populated delta region with Vietnamese programs. They were ultimately retired from service in 1970 and,

