

to do your job and count on the other man to do his. Your life depends on it. So you get tight with the guys in your outfit and you take pride in what you do. A man can't feel much pride when he's back at an R & R beach tending bar or lifeguarding.

Well, I put a stop to a lot of that, and when my troops out in the field saw the guys who had been living it up back at base out there with them, that ended some of the resentment they'd felt before I took over the battalion. They also saw *me* out there, so they knew they weren't being run by remote control, being told to take risks their commander wasn't willing to take. They were also getting what was due them. Every man in the field, for example, was supposed to get a free beer a day. It was supplied and the men were supposed to get it. Previously, some swore to the I. G. office they had been charged a buck a can for beer that had been given to us free to give to them. And it was warm beer when they got it. So I took the beer to them every night myself; had a man put it in big rubber body bags. The ice melted overnight in the heat, of course, but the beer stayed cold. Anything that came in for the troops, my staff and I made sure they received it.

They were also supposed to have survival knives, a big hunting knife made for helicopter pilots in Vietnam. Everybody in Saigon was carrying one of the damned things on his belt, but the troops that needed them in the jungle didn't have them. The high ranks peeled them off and sold them on the black market or kept them. So you'd see all these Saigon commandos with this big damned survival knife, and the guy in the jungle running around with a penknife. Well, a friend got me a set of these knives and I made a rule: Every private in the battalion was to have one of those knives. I said I'd better not find a single man above private wearing a knife as long as there was still one private without one; I'd better not find one corporal wearing one and some Pfc. without one. So instead of giving it from the top down, I gave it from the bottom up, as it's meant to be. And the troops realized right away what was going on. You can't bullshit them, and when you don't try to, they appreciate it. **PLAYBOY:** Considering the unpopularity of the war, weren't there any men under your command—despite your honesty and evenhandedness—who simply didn't want to fight?

HERBERT: Some of the men balked at going into the field, but I really didn't have much of a problem with that. Some of them didn't want to be involved in this type of war, or they said they didn't believe in killing. I told them they didn't have to kill—just go out and do another job. There are a lot of other jobs in war besides killing. I let them



Loyalist of the month:

At a party, Leon Laufer refused to drink the host's scotch because it wasn't Ballantine's. The host, offended, punched Leon Laufer in the nose. Leon Laufer sued and collected \$346,159.

Moral: It pays to be loyal.

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