

The following concerning the Seventh Fleet Destroyer USS Blue, has been authorized for release to news and press media. Alan Cherrick, SN, SUNR, son of Mr. and Mrs. Walter H. Cherrick, Anna, is currently serving on board the Blue.

The Seventh Fleet Destroyer USS Blue (DD-744) departed the Gulf of Tonkin today, June 29, 1968, leaving in her wake, heavy and devastating enemy losses. During the past two weeks on naval gunfire support, Blue many times over a veteran Sea Dragon and gunship, relentlessly poured enemy positions from Danang north along the coast of Cua Viet. With over 5000 five inch projectiles, Blue's air spotters have credited her with accurate destructive fire which includes: destroying 249 Viet Cong structures, 55 rice caches and 40 meters of tunnel, damaging 150 structures, two bridges, ten bunkers.

Blue started 38 secondary fires and caused eight secondary explosions. On three occasions, Blue provided area preparation fire for the Army's First Air Cavalry verti-

cal envelopment assaults near the scene of Dr. Bernard Paul's historical novel "The Street Without Joy".

Exact timing was required to insure thorough area preparation without endangering friendly troops and helicopters. Blue's preparative fire that suppressed enemy ground fire throughout these assault landings was so thorough that not a single U. S. casualty was sustained in the assaults.

To insure accurate and timely support of our troops ashore, Blue's gun control personnel are divided in two sections firing alternately around the clock. The teams, headed by Lt. Philip King, Gladewater, Tex., and Lt. Richard P. Genet, Barrington, include the following key personnel: GMCS Lewis G. Hill of Bishop, Va., GMCS Wayne L. New, Galveston, Ind., PTC Lon H. Smith, Jr., Grants Pass, Ore., STC Keith A. Olkonen of Wallace, Idaho. The precise navigation for gunfire support is done by RDL Malvin F. McBride of Shreveport, La. and RD 2 Perry W. Kaulles, Chicago.

Blue, a member of the famous "En Garde" destroyer squadron nine, is commanded by Commander H. W. Bademan of Sioux Falls, S. D.