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A letter from the PUBLISHER

James R. Shepley

"I AM not a stranger to fear, but
I have never endured fear as
intense or as protracted as I experi-
enced that night. I was so frightened
I could hear myself sweat."

This is how our Saigon bureau's
Robin Mannock summed up his feel-
ings after the event. Reporting for
this week's cover story on the Ne-
gro in Viet Nam, British-born Corre-
spondent Mannock, 36, had gone out
on a long-range patrol with Sergeant
Clide Brown and, as described in the
opening passages of our story, had
landed in the midst of the Viet Cong.
Brown and his men were so close to
the enemy that one member of the
patrol who was trying to snatch
some sleep had to be awakened lest
his soft snoring give them away. "As
I hid in the grass, two Shakespeare
quotations buzzed through my head,"
recalled Mannock, faithful to his
Oxford education. "The first was
'Cowards die many times before their
deaths.' The other, as the night
dragged interminably, was the Dau-
phin sighing, 'Will it never be day?'"

Mannock has flown more than a
hundred helicopter missions in Viet
Nam, was inside Plei Me when it was
attacked by the North Vietnamese,
and had several close scrapes 2½

HAROLD ELLITHORPE—EMPIRE



TERRY & HELICOPTER GUNNER

ROBERT J. ELLISON—EMPIRE



STAFF SERGEANT BROWN & MANNOCK

years ago during the Congo fighting.
But this, he concluded, topped all
his previous experiences: "Sergeant
Brown's courage and professional
skill kept us alive and me sane that
night. After the rescue helicopter
had finally lifted us to safety next
morning, I found myself singing
above the engine's roar like one of
the Animals, 'We gotta get out of
this place.'"

The entire Saigon staff worked on
the cover story, which was written in
New York by Robert Jones and edit-
ed by Michael Demarest. From our
Washington bureau, Harlem-born
Wallace Terry, 29, arrived on the
scene to help round out the cover-
age. "This was my first experience
reporting a war," recalls Terry, "but
not my first experience reporting
violence. For nearly seven years I
have followed the development of
the Negro revolution in all corners
of America. Now a Negro airborne
sergeant kidded me about being safer
in Viet Nam than I was during the
Harlem riots (when I was knocked
out by a rioter's brick), the Birming-
ham and Jackson demonstrations,
and in Watts.

"In the course of my interviews I
came across a Negro Navy radio
man who was in grade school with
me in Indianapolis, a helicopter pilot
who belonged to my college frater-
nity at Brown, and an infantry of-
ficer who lived in my old Harlem
neighborhood." Correspondent Ter-
ry was heartened by what he saw
and heard in Viet Nam. "The tank
I rode on had a Negro commander
and an all-white crew. I have ob-
served here the most successfully in-
tegrated institution in America."

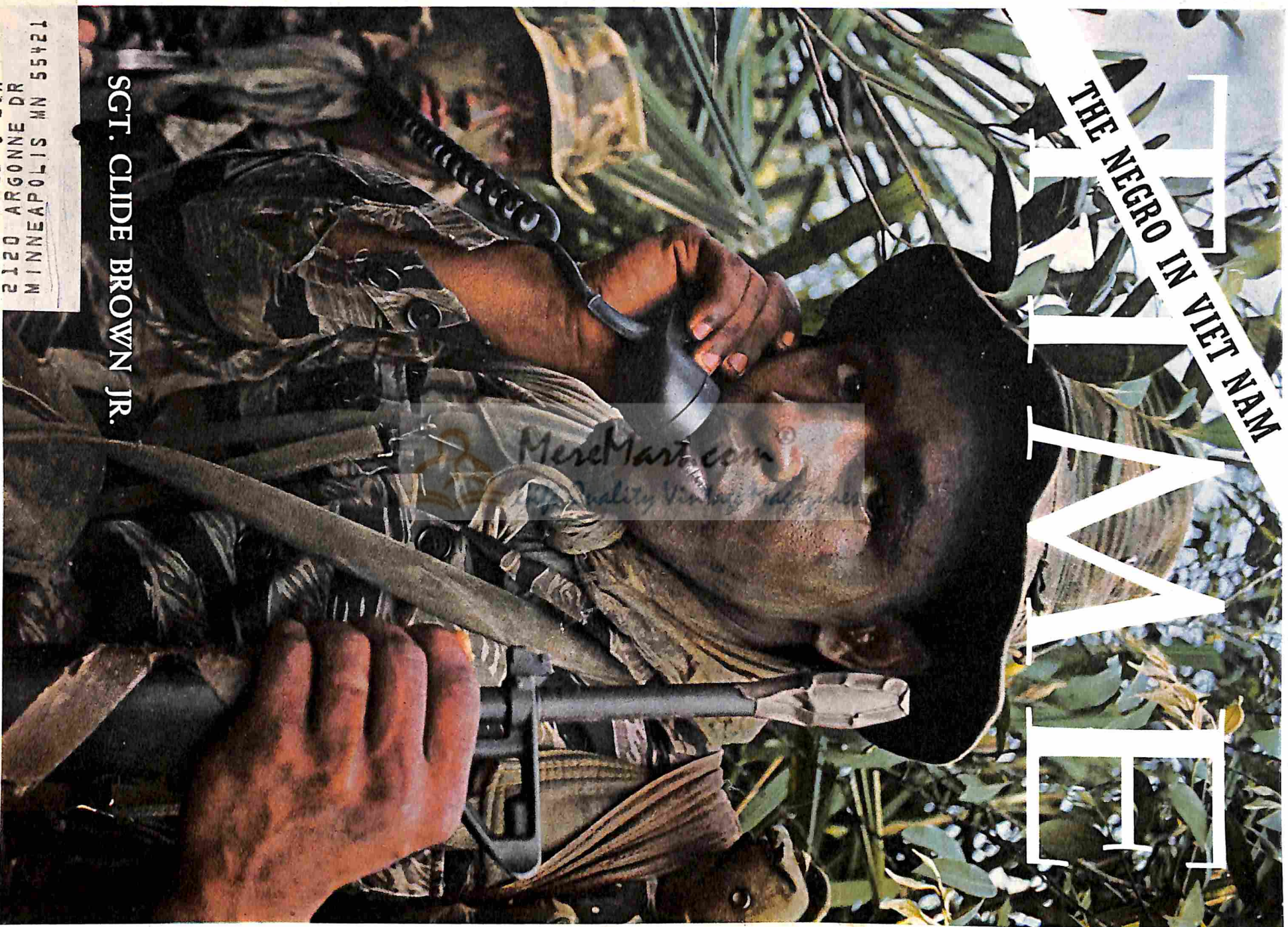
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THE NEGRO IN VIET NAM

THE



SGT. CLIDE BROWN JR.

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