# Division Troops Kill 239 Enemy

LZ HAWK HILL – Division soldiers recently combined with Vietnamese forces to seriously disrupt enemy plans for a winter offensive in eastern Quang Tin Province.

In a series of sharp encounters, the allies ground elements of the 31st NVA Regiment to shreds, killing 239 enemy in the span of 11 days.

"We received good intelligence and were able to both formulate an effective plan and get our forces into position," said Colonel James M. Lee (Wilmington, N.C.), commanding officer, 196th Infantry Brigade.

The allies initially deployed their units from north to south along the eastern sector of Quang Tin.

"We anticipated that the NVA would try to attack the populated areas around Thang Binh and Tam Ky," said CPT Robert Russell (Carson City, Nev.), assistant operations officer, 196th Inf. Bde. "The mission of our units was to block the enemy's attempts to enter these regions."

Alpha Troop, 1st Squadron, 1st Cavalry, made the first contact in open country five miles west of Tam Ky.

The allies hit back hard, and after several hours, the enemy withdrew, leaving 45 dead.

Alpha's M551 Sheridan Assault Vehicles, in their first real test, had played a large part in the troop's success.

"That 152mm gun really hurt them," said Sgt James M. Mullins (Danville, Va.), track commander.

The next contact came a day later, 13 miles northwest of Tam Ky. Seven tracks from F Troop, 17th Cav., were moving in a column, accompanied by a platoon from D Company, 3d Battalion, 21st Infantry.

The 196th Bde. soldiers spotted movement in a woodline, and the infantry dismounted to check things out.

"Just as we started to search the area," said SSG Tony Alfieri (Jamaica, N.Y.) Co. D, 3d Bn., 21st Inf., "They cut loose with automatic weapons and rocket propelled grenades."

The tracks lined up and assaulted the woodline, raking the enemy with canister rounds and machinegun fire.

The infantry followed, rooting out isolated pockets of resistance. After moving 200 meters the Americans returned to search the area.

"I didn't realize how many we had killed till we started to look around," said SSG Eugene Hodge (Locust Grove, Va.), machinegunner of the command track.

The Americans found 39 NVA bodies as well as 16 AK-47 rifles, four rocket propelled grenades, a 60mm mortar and over 70 Chinese Communist (Chicom) grenades.

In the same general area, Co. A, 3d Bn., 21st Inf., killed 12 NVA in isolated skirmishes throughout the afternoon. The next day Alpha spotted a large enemy force moving into a woodline. Artillery accounted for 15 more dead.

The next operation came several days later. A task force under the operational control of the 196th Bde. moved through "Pineapple Forest," six miles west of Tam Ky.

The task force consisted of Alpha and Bravo Troops, 1st Sqdn., 1st Cav., accompanied by one platoon each from D Co., 1st Bn., 46th Inf. and B Co., 2d Bn., 1st Inf., accounted for 15 enemy dead in two days of fighting.

However, the biggest fight came after the operation was supposed to be over.

The task force had taken its last objective and was on the way back to Tam Ky, when it ran into an estimated NVA battalion.

The tracks and infantry pulled on line and assaulted the rice paddy to their front. They overran the enemy positions, then went into a laager as night fell.

The next day a search of the area revealed 52 NVA dead, but even this count was conservative.

Further south, the 5th Regiment, 2d ARVN Division, continued to be active. The ARVN soldiers killed 61 NVA in nine days of fighting.

There were several reasons for the allies' success but, "Most important," said COL Lee, "was the splendid performance of the American and Vietnamese soldier once the fighting began." (196th IO)


SOUTHERN CROSS
AMERICAL DIVISION

Vol. 3 No. 8 CHU LAI, VIETNAM February 27, 1970

HIGH ABOVE QUANG TIN province, the head of a helicopter pilot is outlined against cloud banks as he keeps another gunship in sight. Both aircraft are participating in a recent combat assault mission south of Tam Ky.
(U.S. Army Photo)

# Flare Uncovers Sappers

FSB DEBBIE – As SP4 Richard Weeder (Lindsay, Neb.) of the 11th Infantry Brigade sat patiently as his guard post he decided that it was about time to fire a hand flare.

He reached over to the ammo can, pulled out a parachute flare, and ejected the instant light into the sky.

This single incident thwarted a sapper attack on an AMERICAL Division position and resulted in the deaths of nine NVA soldiers.

The lone flare alerted Company D, 4th Battalion, 21st Infantry and a platoon of Popular Force (PF) soldiers who jointly provide security for a village three miles south of Duc Pho.

PFC Lawrence Rooks (New Orleans), had his first taste of combat by the light of Weeder's flare. "I heard the flare go up," said Rooks, "and as the light illuminated the entire area, I saw three figures standing only a few meters away, looking directly into my face."

Rooks then warned the other men to get into their fighting positions. They did, and immediately opened up, dropping all three enemy before they had a chance to advance.

Several sappers around the perimeter, realizing that they had been prematurely discovered, began flinging satchel charges at the position, but they exploded harmlessly short of the target.

SP4 Al Peterson (Fort Dodge, Iowa), speaking of M-60 machinegunner PFC Turner (Fulton, Ky.), said, "He jumped up to the gun and sprayed the entire area to our front from a corner bunker. He put out a base of fire.

Several NVA attempted to penetrate the other side of the perimeter, which was secured by the Vietnamese PFs.

The PFs repulsed the attack, killing three NVA, one of whom was believed to be an NVA officer.

During the two-hour attack there were no American casualties. Air support was unnecessary, but gunships were on stand-by, and the company's forward observer had his artillery plotted around the perimeter.

# US, ARVN Team Stop Enemy Force

FSB BRONCO – The 4th Battalion of the 4th ARVN Regiment and the 174th Aviation Company are teaming up as an unbeatable combination.

In their most recent operation they combined to kill 34th NVA and VC, detained seven VC, captured 60 Chicom grenades and five AK-47's. The joint operation also denied the enemy two tons of rice and one ton each of wheat and corn.

Based on intelligence and visual sightings of NVA moving along trails, the 4th Bn. was airlifted into an area 10 miles south of Quang Ngai City by the 174th Avn. Co.

CPT John Gibbons (Sayville, N.J.) led a flight of 10 'Dolphin" utility ships into five separate landing zones and then divided the flight into sections of two ships to insert the 4th ARVN Recon Co.

One section of aircraft, carrying a squad of ARVN, came under intense automatic weapons fire. Both craft took hits but were able to land

Though wounded in one arm and one leg, he continued to put accurate suppressive fire on the enemy, firing his M-60 with his left hand. He refused evacuation until his gunship was relieved by another "Shark".

The Command and Control Aircraft, piloted by MAJ Virgil Blevins (Beeville, Tex.) and CPT Riddle made six emergency Medevacs for the ARVN's and by close coordination was able to commit reaction forces quickly.

As the squad of ARVN assaulted the unknown force, the lift ship put down suppressive fire and called for gunship support.

The Air Mission commander, CPT Stephen S. Riddle (Ashville, N.C.) immediately called for three lift ships to make an insertion of reinforcements. With this quick reaction the ARVN were able to rout an NVA—VC platoon, killing 18 enemy.

Two "Shark" gunship teams covered the assault. Led by CW2 Wayne D. Clark

# PilotsReceive DFC

CHU LAI – Two Division pilots of "Blue Ghost," F Troop, 8th Cav., 123d Aviation Bn. received the Distinguished Flying Cross during ceremonies held in the Blue Ghost briefing room recently.

LTC John F. Brosnan, 123d Aviation Bn. commander, presented the medals to CPT David W. Owen (Birmingham, Mich.) and CPT Robert D. Wiggins (Pensacola, Fla.) for heroism during the same action on Jan. 6, 1970.

Flying a Cobra, CPT Wiggins, aircraft commander, and CPT Owen, gunner, spotted a trench line manned by an estimated 100 NVA.

Disregarding the low ceiling and poor visibility, they immediately attacked with rockets and 40mm fire.

No sooner had they begun their attack when they started receiving heavy 51 and 30 caliber fire.

The aircraft took six hits, one hitting the transmission

# EM Promotion System Undergoes New Change

Recently announced revisions of the standardized promotion scoring system for grades E-5 through E-7 have assigned new point values and relative weights to factors of promotion consideration.

The new system assigns increased point values to civil and military education completed, and the board members' evaluation of the recommended individual now carries more weight in the scoring.

The total point value for the commander's evaluation has been cut, but the commanding officer's recommendation is still mandantory for consideration for promotion.

The new scoring system went into effect February 1, and will apply to all personnel not promoted immediately before that date.

Persons carried on recommended lists before that date will have their scores re-computed according to the new point system. No person may lose recommended status due to the change.

Any person who feels that he could attain a higher score than was administratively recomputed from his old score may request a formal reevaluation. One-time boards will be convened locally to handle such requests.

Changes in the promotion scoring forms were made primarily as a result of recommendations collected in a recent survey of major Army commands.

The changes are a phase in a program begun by the Department of the Army in 1968 to have Army-wide standards and procedures for enlisted promotions.

Maximum weight for civilian education has been increased 25 points to a total of 100. Credit is given for education up through the 12th grade, for college or university hours, and for business or trade school study above the 12th grade level, both prior to coming into the service and during after-duty hours.

Basic education requirements will be waived only in the case of individuals who are serving in a hostile fire area.

Maximum weight for military education has been increased by 25 points to a total of 125. The new procedures also allow more credit for both correspondence courses and performance of several duties.

# Veterans Hospital Benefits Increase

The Veterans Administration recently announced a $4 per day increase in the maximum rate paid to states for veterans receiving care in hospital facilities which meet VA requirements.

Signed into law by President Nixon this year, the change increases the per diem rate for each veteran to $7.50, replacing the old ceiling rate of $3.50.

The new rate will apply to about 2,000 veterans living in 35 state homes. Per diem rates for other patient services, such as nursing home care and care at the patient's place of residence remain unchanged.

Another feature of the law is that it provides for federal assistance in the remodeling or modification of existing hospital or nursing home facilities in state institutions providing care and treatment for veterans.

The aid to any state may not, however, exceed 50 per cent of the cost of each project, nor may it be more than 20 per cent of the total federal appropriation Congress fixes for the fiscal year.

# Awards & Decorations

### SILVER STAR MEDAL

SSG John T. Borrelli III, 196th Bde; 1LT James G. Decker, 196th Bde; CPT Michael A. Moore, 11th Bde; SP4 Richard Senske, 196th Bde; CPT Larry Stanford, 196th Bde.

### SOLDIER'S MEDAL

PFC Russell A. Carnahan, 82nd Arty; MAJ Richard N. Smith, 196th Bde.

### BRONZE STAR MEDAL WITH "V" DEVICE

SP5 James D Bray (1st OLC), 82nd Arty; PFC Henry Bush, 11th Bde; PFC Michael T. Derevjanik, 196th Bde; CPT John DeThorne, 198th Bde; PFC Richard D Duval, 196th Bde; PFC Carl G. Fisher Jr, 11th Bde; PFC Roy A. Frink, 11th Bde; SP4 Felix S. Garcia, 82nd Arty; SGT Roger J. Grazioplene (1st OLC), 196th Bde; SP4 Jimmy W. Hisaw (1st OLC), 196th Bde; PFC Raymond L. Hobbs, 11th Bde; 1LT William R. Johnston (1st OLC), 198th Bde; PFC John M. Lacey, 198th Bde; SGT James Lynch, 82nd Arty; 1LT George J. Marcinko, 82nd Arty; 1LT Albert S. McEldowney, 11th Bde; SSG Joseph A. Michaud Jr, 198th Bde; PFC Wesley Morris, 11th Bde; CPT Robert L. Phillips (1st OLC), 196th Bde; SGT Charles A. Rishel (1st OLC), 196th Bde; SP4 Brian J. Robinson, 196th Bde; CPT John E. Routon, 11th Bde; CPT Roger D. Sherrard, 196th Bde; PFC Benjamin F. Tiller, 11th Bde; SGT Henry M. Vance (1st OLC), 196th Bde; SP4 Thomas A. Zilafro, 196th Bde.

### ARMY COMMENDATION MEDAL WITH "V" DEVICE

SP4 Billy J. Blankenship, 196th Bde; SP4 Wayne G. Cassiday, 196th Bde; PFC Thomas S. DeSena, 196th Bde; PFC Charles Harper, 196th Bde; SP4 Norbert J. Krejci, 11th Bde; CPL Christopher T. Martin, 196th Bde; PFC Ronald L. Miller, 196th Bde; SP4 Peter R. Moore (1st OLC), 196th Bde; SP4 Peter M. Morford, 198th Bde; PFC Stevie D. Russell, 196th Bde; SSG Mark S. Sheets, 196th Bde; PFC Oscar R. Truitt, 196th Bde; SSG Gene G. Wells, 196th Bde; PFC Allen P. Wilson, 196th Bde.

# Beware of Stray Animals

The next time you see a cute little puppy, be careful. He may have the most deadly disease known to man - rabies.

Rabies, often called hydrophobia, is a disease of mammals which attacks the nervous system.

It is very common in Vietnam and in the animals we like to keep as pets - dogs, cats, monkeys, and also many other species of domestic and wild animals.

An animal can spread the disease by biting, scratching, or even licking the skin, and he may show no symptons of the disease until several days later.

There are two types of rabies, "mad" and dumb rabies. With mad rabies an animal becomes fierce, biting and scratching anyone who comes close.

With the dumb form of rabies however, the animal is very affectionate and will try to lick you hands.

Both types inevitably lead to death in an animal or human by paralyzing the muscles which control breathing.

The only treatment for rabies is immediate vaccination, because once symptoms appear it is too late.

The rules for prevention are:

1. Only one pet per company sized unit and all pets must be vaccinated for rabies. Dogs and cats are the only authorized pets.

2. Report all bites, no matter how small, to the doctor.

# Proud Men Serving Our Action Army

SFC Raymond A. Boyles
16th Combat Avn Bn
Career Counselor

By MSG H.A. Bonesio

Thirty-two of the 38 reelistees in the Americal Division during a one-week period were First Term soldiers.

Most of the new careerists chose guaranteed assignments or CONUS choice of station options.

Division Troops was represented by SP5 David Thole, 1-1st Cav. Support Command had SFC Wallace Anderson and PFC Charles Williams, 23rd Admin. Co.

Division Artillery retains MSG Ray Pauley, HHB, SSG Larry Scott, A Btry., 3-16th Arty.; SP4 Billy Hartsfield, B Btry., 1-14th Arty.; SP4 Perez Gonzales, G Btry., 55th Arty.

The 16th Combat Aviation Group keeps PFC Roy Withers, HHC, SFC Jesse Wallis, HHC, 14th Cbt. Avn. Bn.; SGT Leroy Gist, B Co., 123rd Avn. Bn.; SP5 Joseph Anderson, 335th Trans. Co.

The 11th Infantry Brigade reenlistees were SP4 Robert Williams, HHC; from 3-1st Inf., PFC Hardy Rose, A Co., PFC Milton Avery, E Co.; from 4-21st Inf., SGT Ronnie Sanders, D Co.

The 196th Infantry Brigade re-upped PFC Galen Fish, F Trp., 17th Cav.; from 2-1st Inf., SP4 Robert Rendon, PFC Larry Westphal, PFC Jerry Shields, SGT Thomas Long, SFC Doterto Aguigui, all from A Co.; SP5 Francisco Rosas-Ramos, HHC, SP4 Ronald Gibson and SP4 William Moon, E Co., 4-31st Inf., from 1-46th Inf., PFC Charlie Strong, A Co., SGT Elmer Perry, B Co., PFC Richard Knoble and PVT Ernest Johnson, D Co.

The 198th Infantry Brigade was represented by 1SG Jess Boyd, HHC, 1-6th Inf., from the same battalion, SP4 Carroll Johnson, A Co., PFC David Wallace, C Co., SGT William Schroeder, E Co.; from 1-52nd Inf., SGT John Lucas, HHC, SP4 Franklin Creswell, SSG Joseph Michaud, PFC Daniel Copeland, PFC Ronnie Chaffin, E Co.

# VA News In Review

EDITOR'S NOTE: Veterans and their families are asking thousands of questions concerning the benefits their Government provides for them through the Veterans Administration. Below are some representative queries. Additional information may be obtained at any VA office.

Q–I have heard many times that certain VA hospitals are "teaching hospitals." Just what does this mean?

A–Many VA hospitals are affiliated with university medical schools. In this arrangement, VA hospitals are used to train residents pursuing a course in medicine. In fact, the VA trains more than 11 per cent of all medical residents.

Q–I have a loan on my GI insurance policy. For the past few years I have been paying the interest as it became due. I would now like to pay on the principal, but how do I proceed?

A–Send with your check the stub attached to the receipt for your interest payment. If you do not have the stub, enclose a note requesting that the payment be applied to your loan.

"War is an ugly thing, but not the ugliest of things; the decayed and degraded state of moral and patriotic feeling which thinks that nothing is worth war is much worse. A man who has nothing for which he is willing to fight; nothing he cares about more than his own personal safety; is a miserable creature who has no chance of being free, unless made and kept so by the exertions of better men than himself."

John Stuart Mill

SOUTHERN CROSS
AMERICAL DIVISION

THE SOUTHERN CROSS is an authorized periodic publication of the Americal Division Information Office for division units in the Republic of Vietnam. Opinions expressed are not necessarily those of the Department of the Army. Contributions are encouraged and may be sent to the Information Office, Americal Division, APO 96374, Tel: Chu Lai 2414. The editors reserve the right to edit all contributions.

Major General Lloyd B. Ramey . . . . . Commanding General
Major John T. Paull . . . . . Information Officer
Captain Kim Johnson . . . . . Officer-in-Charge
Specialist Four William J. Hayes . . . . . Editor
Specialist Four Dan Swezey . . . . . Assistant Editor

# Tet Party Given For Viet Orphans

By SP4 Dan Swezey

Colorful balloons, new toys, singing and games brightened the Tet holiday season for 63 children of the Binh Son orphanage.

The party for the Vietnamese orphans was sponsored by the Division's 635th Military Intelligence (MI) Co.

The orphanage, established in 1965 at Binh Son 12 miles north of Quang Ngai, is the home of 70 children whose ages range from three to 16 years.

The orphanage provides kindergarten, primary and secondary education for the 70 orphans and 20 other children from the surrounding area who come to the orphanage each day for school.

According to Sister Giselle, manager and principal founder of the orphanage, the institution depends almost entirely upon the support and donations of Catholic and Protestant missionary organizations, the Ministry of Social Welfare (GVN) and American military units. Sister Giselle said that the 5-46th Inf., 198th Inf. Bde. which "adopted" the orphanage last year has been especially helpful.

According to MAJ Roger E. Powell, MI company commander, XO, CPT Laweance D. Willmann and 1LT's Kevin F. Manson and Larry F. Martin were primarily responsible for the organization of the party which was held at the "Midlands Inn" (a club for MI personnel).

After the children were brought to the MI Co. area by an MP escorted truck convoy the party began with the singing of traditional Tet songs by the children.

The youngsters' garb ranged from traditional Vietnamese dresses on some of the girls to a "Superman" and a "Batman" sweatshirt on two of the boys.

The singing was followed by an American meal of hamburger paddies, potato salad, fruit cocktail and milk. The MI Co., having no mess facilities of its own, had procured the food for the children from other mess halls.

After "chow" the children played such games as hitting balloons with darts and throwing a ball through a hole cut in a plywood board.

While the youngsters were playing, a movie projector was set up. Blankets were hung from the open doors to darken the inside of the club.

When the "theater" was ready the children were brought in to watch two Vietnamese movies one of which involved puppets who exhorted the children to study hard in school.

The movies were followed by a cake and ice cream treat. Surprisingly, only a few of the smaller tots managed to spread the ice cream beyond the perimeter formed by the corners of the mouth and the tips of the nose and chin.

After the children finished their cake and ice cream there was a drawing in which toys were given to the children with the lucky numbers.

Before the children were loaded on trucks to be sent back to Binh Son, each child was given the traditional Tet money gift in a red envelope. Each envelope contained 120 piasters and was inscribed in Vietnamese with the words, "Best wishes for the new year."

In addition, each child was given a bag of candy and apples.

The MI Co. also made a donation of clothing to the orphanage.

For the members of MI Co. helping the children of Binh Son Orphanage was a rewarding experience. For the children it was a happier Tet. (AMERICAL IO)

CHILDREN OF BINH SON orphanage, seated along a table in the military intelligence club are watched over by one of the teachers from the institution. (U.S. Army Photo)

# Tet Party for Soldiers

LZ BAYONET--In commemoration of Tet, the Vietnamese New Year, division officers and enlisted men of Headquarters Battery, 1st Battalion, 14th Artillery were invited to party here by native civilians who work at LZ. Bayonet.

The officers present at the celebration included LTC Boris Pogoloff, battalion commander (Manville, N.J.), MAJ Charles R. Sanders, XO (Tallahassee, Fla.), and MAJ John R. Sims.

The meal, prepared by the Vietnamese, consisted of traditional Tet delicacies and was served according to age old customs.

A Buddist Priest blessed the meal before it was served and the eldest Vietnamese male sat at the table with the officers and enlisted men.

In accordance with custom, the Vietnamese being the hosts, did not begin to eat until the American guests had completely finished their meal.

# Army Nurses Study Combat

CHU LAI--"By attending the same course as the men, we get a better understanding of what they are up against," was the comment of two Army nurses as they attended the AMERICAL Combat Center's in-country orientation course.

CPT Sandra Genthner (Washington D.C.) and 1LT Elaine Lankheet (Hamilton, Mich.) of the 91st Evacuation Hospital attended three days of intensive training.

Army nurses from both the 91st Evacuation and 27th Surgical Hospitals in Chu Lai attend either a one or three day course in order to familiarize themselves with the latest enemy tactics. The two nurses attended classes with 60 newly assigned AMERICAL soldiers.

CPT Genthner, who has been assigned duties as head nurse on Ward four, is on her second tour. She was assigned to the 93rd Evacuation Hospital in 1968. Both nurses wolunteered for duty in Vietnam.

## Soldiers Help Viet Woman Through generous gift

LZ BAYONET--Division artillerymen at Headquarters Battery, 1st Battalion, 14th Artillery learned that one way to show affection without being able to say it is through the spirit of giving.

Le Van Thi, Called "Mai" is a young woman who worked daily at the enlisted men's club. Although she was pregnant she continued at her job trying to earn more money for her "new arrival". Late in her pregnancy she was forced to quit for health reasons.

The men who use the club wanted to help their Vietnamese friend and show their appreciation to her.

SP6 James L. Peters (Bridgeton, Mo.) the club manager, decided to request contributions. Daily results were posted so that all could see how the fund was progressing.

The generosity was overwhelming. The final tabulation showed that almost a months salary had been given.

The money was taken to Mai to help defray costs of a doctor and medical treatment after the baby's birth.

It was announced and received with exhiliration at the club recently that both mother and six-pound, four-one baby boy are doing fine. (Div Arty IO)

## ARVNs Finish Medical Course

CHU LAI – Five ARVN enlisted medical technicians, after having recently completed a ten-week course at the 23rd Medical Battalion, represent the most recent ARVN achievement in attempts to improve medical service for the ARVN combat soldier.

The program was geared to train ARVN enlisted medical personnel with the most modern equipment, enabling them to acquire recently developed techniques.

Each graduate was presented a certificate of completion by the Division surgeon, LTC William B. Wilson, Jr. (DISCOM IO)

1LT CLARENCE W. HUNSACKER, executive officer of C Battery, 3-16th Arty, looks over his recent purchases. Vietnamese chidren led his unit to 12 60mm mortar rounds and were paid under the voluntary information program. (U.S. Army Photo by SP5 A.C. Barnett)

## 16th Av. Gp. Has Tet Meal

CHU LAI–Exchanging gifts is an important part of celebrating any holiday season, whether it be Christmas or TET.

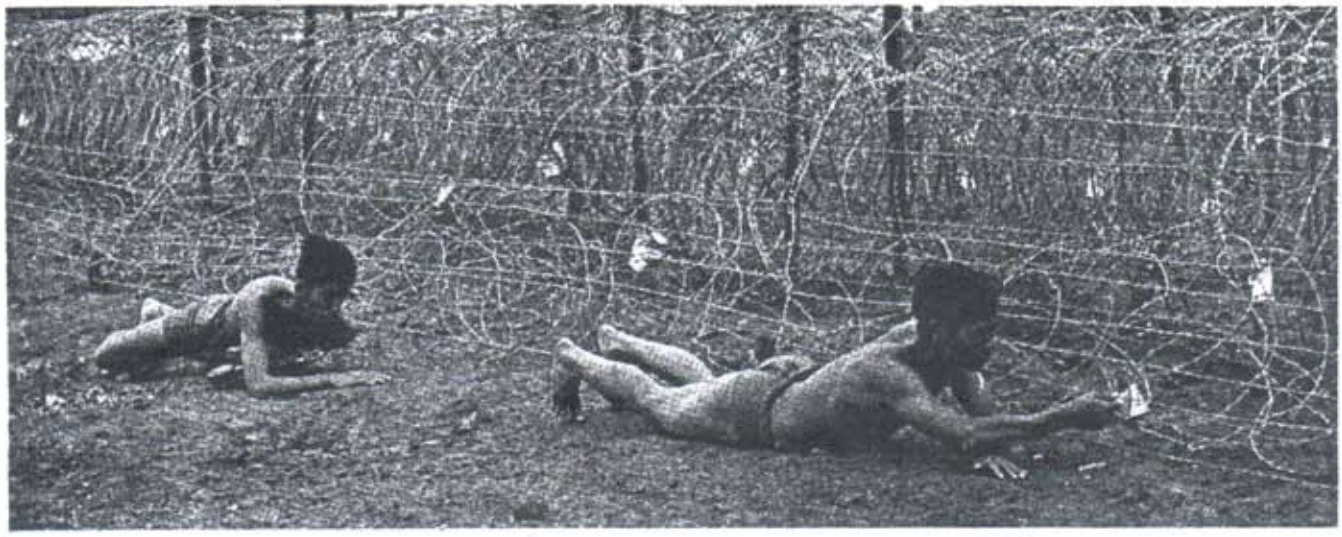
The gifts may be different, but the value placed on the giving is always important.

It was with such a spirit of giving that the Vietnamese kitchen-helpers of the mess hall at Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 16th Aviation Group (Combat), prepared a meal for the group commander and other officers and men of the unit.

Before sitting down to his meal of duck, rice bread and rice soup, Colonel D. Townsend thanked the Vietnamese for their conscientious work and wished them the best for the new year with gifts from the company.

Everyone enjoyed the meal, despite rumors that two ducks and a chicken were seen running through the mess hall earlier that morning.

The proof was arranged neatly on the tables waiting to be dipped in a special sauce and served with assorted oriental delicacies. (16 CAG IO)



# The Sapper-Su

One of the ways the enemy can attempt to inflict damage and casualties on U.S. units and their bases is to use "sapper" elements to infiltrate defensive perimeters.

One good way to cut down the sappers' effectiveness is to improve the design of perimeter defenses. But how do you know if a new design is better than the old one? One answer is to watch a sapper as he tries to penetrate the new defense.

Samples of various kinds of defensive barriers were recently constructed on LZ Fat City by men of Echo Company, 26th Engineer Battalion. Two Kit Carson scouts, former enemy sappers, then attempted to penetrate the barriers.

Once these two sappers have stealthily approached the outer edge of a defensive perimeter, they crawl along the edge of the wire, looking for a point that lends itself to penetration.

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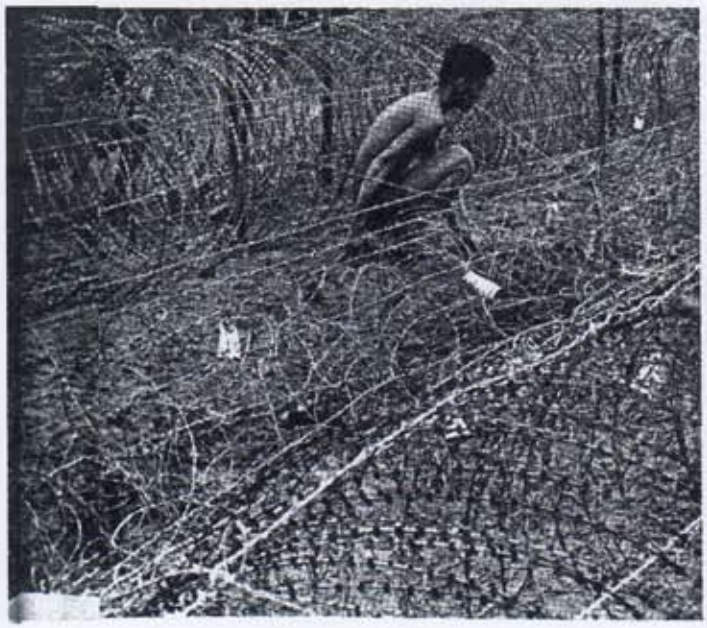
As he encounters each new obstacle, he gingerly opens an aperture large enough for him to ease through, careful to make no noise or show himself by rapid movement. Each new barrier means that he must check it for trip flares and other devices. If he misses even one, it could betray him

In addition to his own skills, the sapper must rely on a few other factors. Most of his work is during the hours of darkness, and a moonless night increases his chance of success. Whenever visibility is not as good as usual, the sapper has an advantage.

On a windy night, any small noise he might make may be drowned out by the wind, giving him a second chance to continue his mission.

Men who became suspicious of sounds coming from their front and who report them to their supervisors may make the infiltrator's smallest mistake his last.

**Photos By**
**SP4 J.B. Majerus**
**Americal IO**



# Combat In Review

MEN OF THE 133rd Ordinance Detatchment (EOD) take stock of the assortment of Chicom grenades, bangalore torpedoes and RPG rounds they collected along the perimeter at LZ Gator after a recent sapper attack. (U.S. Army Photo)

# VC Force Stopped In Joint Operation

FSB BRONCO--Intelligence reports indicated a VC main force was concentrated near Dam Lam Binh Lake, one mile southeast of the Americal's 11th Bde. firebase at Duc Pho.

The plan of action was quickly devised. The call went out to E Trp., 1st Cav. and the 4th Bn., 21st Inf. Also joining the operation were the Vietnamese Popular Forces and National Police from the nearby village of Pho Hiep.

While the 4-21st Inf. formed on line, E Trp. moved in with three sheridan Combat Assault Vehicles and four APCs to form a blocking force to the east.

The infantry soldiers swept through swamps, sand dunes, canals, rice paddies and over and around hedgerows in their attempt to find the elusive enemy.

The sweep was not in vain. CPT John W. Yarborough (Hampton, Va.), commanding officer of A Co. said, "Searching the canals we found four tunnels with entrances both above and below water."

"The first tunnel was empty. In the second," continued CPT Yarborough, "we found occupants. We tried to talk the VC out, no results, so we threw a hand grenade."

Finally, two dirty, scared VC emerged from their muddy hiding place.

One of the VC was wounded and was evacuated. The other VC was cleaned up. "After he got over his initial fear of us and we gave him cigarettes, he told us of another tunnel with three armed VC inside," related CPT Yarborough.

The infantrymen tried coaxing the three out but once again had to resort to hand grenades. The VC trio emerged shaken from the concussion but otherwise unhurt.

To the east, the armored cavalrymen began moving in and found numerous spider holes and tunnels.

SP4 David M. Doxtad (West Chester, Pa.) a gunner on an APC said, "We had just pulled a vehicle from the mud when a buddy tapped me on the shoulder and said he had spotted movement in a hedgerow. We didn't think they were armed so we hollered for them to halt, but they disappeared."

A group of cavalrymen dismounted and searched the area. Two VC climbed out of a spider hole and gave up. Another had jumped into a pond, but after a concussion grenade was thrown into the water he came out and surrendered.

"They were scared at first, but later became cooperative. I pointed to my M-16 and said 'you got same-same?' The VC replied, 'Got same-same, numba one," continued Dextad. "We covered them as one of the VC soldiers went back into the tunnel and handed back out one AK-47 and an automatic rifle."

By days end the 11th Bde. soldiers had killed one and detained nine VC.

# RTO Becomes Instant FO

LZ CENTER--When his unit accidentally stopped to rest in an NVA base camp, a 19 year-old Division soldier found himself busy as both Radio Telephone Operator (RTO) and Forward Observer (FO) in a battle that lasted eight hours and cost the enemy 40 killed.

SP4 Richard Fosler (Hamlet, Ind.) a member of C Battery, 3d Battalion, 82d Artillery was acting as both FO and RTO with F Troop, 17th Cavalry on their recent operation west of LZ Hawk Hill.

The two platoons of F Troop had been joined by a part of D Company, 3d Battalion, 21st Infantry, 196th Infantry Brigade on their operation to flush out the enemy in the area.

They had met little resistance during the early morning hours, but when they decided to take a break under some trees they triggered a firefight that would mean the success or failure of their mission.

An NVA soldier was spotted sneaking from behind a tree only 30 meters from the resting Americans. The NVA ran into a hooch neatly concealed by thick underbrush.

Within seconds the Troop was warned. Backed by four Sheridan tanks, they opened up with .50 caliber and M60 machineguns.

Receiving directions from the commander of F Troop, CPT Klein Harris (North Little Rock, Ark.), the platoon immediately reversed its attack and retaliated with small arms and hand grenades while moving behind trees and high grass for cover.

SP4 Fosler grabbed his radio and began calling to B Battery, 3d Bn. 82d Arty.

The big gun firepower was used to protect the rear of the American forces and also to cut off any means of escape for the now pinned down enemy.

The enemy had been caught completely off guard and had not had time to use their mortar tubes. With the artillery support their fortified bunkers could not protect them.

When the battle was over the Americans found 15 AK-47s, four RPG launchers and countless Chicom grenades.

The net result of the battle was one NVA base camp destroyed and one RTO/FO very aware of what an officer goes through as a regular FO. (Div Arty IO)

# NVA Mail Bagged

LZ HAWK HILL--Some NVA soldiers expecting Tet mail may have been disappointed this year.

Shortly before Tet an AMERICAL Division Long Range Reconnaissance Patrol (LRRP) detained an NVA mail courier.

LRRP teams Arkansas and Georgia, Company G, 75th Ranger Battalion, 196th Brigade were moving along a wide trail southwest of Tam Ky.

Suddenly Arkansas' point man, SP4 Pedro Martinez (Ponce, Puerto Rico), heard movement.

"There were three NVA to our front," said SP4 Julian Serna (Fresno, Calif.). "They started to run and we opened up."

SP4 Martinez aimed carefully and fired. One NVA fell behind a rock. Moving up cautiously they found the wounded NVA lying face down.

Beside the enemy was a large, brown sack, but the LRRP's did not have time to search it.

The brown sack was also taken in for examination. It contained 80 letters. (196th IO)

# Boxcars Undaunted Resupply Complete

CHU LAI--Two CH-47 Chinooks from the Division's 178th Assault Helicopter Company recently made a daring resupply mission to LZ Professional despite adverse weather conditions and reports of heavy enemy activity.

The weather had been bad for two weeks. Low clouds, scattered squalls and poor visibility made flying difficult.

Almost all aircraft were grounded and resupply of remote LZ's and FSB's had been sporadic.

Most LZ's, however, have enough supplies in store to keep them functioning at a normal level for a number of days.

On this particular day, LZ Professional had met with an unusual amount of enemy harassment

The "hooks" met with two Huey Cobras from F Troop, 8th Cav. which 1LT Robert Lockwood (Cockeysville, Md.) piloted one bird, WO1 Philip Washington (Claremont, Calif.) and CW2 Richard Dominy (Seattle) the other.

Fifteen minutes after notification the ships were on their way to the LZ loaded with ammunition.

The "hooks" rendezvoused with two Huey Cobras from F Troop, 8th Cav. which flew as armed guards.

An H-model Huey, also from F-8th Cav., accompanied the mission as a recovery vehicle in case a ship got shot down.

No ships received any hits and LZ Professional received its ammunition, weather and all. (16th CAG, IO)

ON A RECENT OPERATION north of Chu Lai, this Sheridan Assault Vehicle of 1st Squadron, 1st Cavalry fires on the enemy with its .50 caliber machine gun. (U.S. Army Photo)

ENJOYING THE SHADE in a small park near Saigon's municipal zoo is pretty Barbara Tudesco, a member of Johnny Grant's most recent Vietnam USO tour. It is a well known fact that Mr. Grant's "eye" for the aesthetic is well beyond amatuerish, and our comely Miss Tudesco does nothing but reinforce that suspicion. Miss Tudesco wishes to remind all Americal troopers that spending MPC on the economy can eventually buy weapons for the enemy. Buy in government operated exchanges.

(Photo By SSG Mike Arnold, USMC)

A "DOLPHIN" UTILITY SHIP of the 174th Aviation Company doesn't give premium stamps along with its goods, it just delivers. This ship is bringing in a load of still-frozen ice cream to 11th Brigade soldiers on FSB Bronco. (U.S. Army Photo)

# Trackers Uncover Big Enemy Cache

CHU LAI – Combat tracker dogs of the Division's 63rd Infantry Platoon (Combat Trackers) "sniffed out" enemy positions in two recent search operations.

In an area three miles west of Duc Pho, fresh tracks were found in the monsoon mud indicating recent enemy troop movement.

After a fruitless search, the soldiers of the 1st Battalion, 20th Infantry decided to enlist the aid of the 63rd Inf. Plt. SGT William Shaefer (Milwaukee, Wis.) and his team were inserted.

The track led across a murky rice paddy and came to a halt with the discovery of two 250-pound bombs.

The trail then proceeded to the base of a mountain. Shaefer remarked, "The strength of the tracks indicated that we were on the trail of more than just a few enemy. It was decided that the mountain side by swept by a larger element."

The rest of the company fanned out in a search of the area. The sweep uncovered an enemy basecamp containing a hand grenade factory. Clothing hanging on a line to dry suggested the enemy had been there recently, but had fled.

Before destroying the bunkers, the soldiers confiscated 23 new Chicom grenades, a number of partially completed grenades and all the tools.

In another action elements of the 63rd Inf. Plt. were called upon to help A Company, 1st Bn., 20th Inf. in a search for enemy soldiers.

Upon arriving at the scene, the trackers learned that the 11th Brigade unit's night defensive position had been probed by approximately 13 NVA. The enemy had been turned back with small arms fire.

Sweeping the area at daybreak, the infantrymen found one dead NVA soldier. The dog team was asked to track remaining members of the enemy force.

Tracks were found 75 meters from the night position and the trail was followed by the team's dog until it led into heavy vegetation. The visual tracker then took the job of trailing the enemy.

He led the infantrymen 600 meters to a haystack from which the troops began receiving sniper fire. The enemy position was engaged by small arms, artillery, and helicopter gunships.

A bunker was discovered under the haystack with one dead soldier in it. A cache containing 800 pounds of rice, cloth and medical supplies was also uncovered. (DISCOM 10)

# Pathfinders — They Chop LZs For The Choppers

CHU LAI – The assault group was assembled for an early morning pickup at a small LZ south of Chu Lai's southern perimeter.

The troops had amassed in a large group anxiously awaiting the choppers that would airlift them to the area of operation. Valuable time would be consumed if the men were not dispersed in the grouping required for each ship.

Since March of last year, problems such as these have dissipated appreciably. At that time, a specially trained 17-man team, aptly named Pathfinders, was assigned to the Americal Division's 14th Combat Aviation Battalion to work as guides and traffic controllers for the many ground units in the Americal area of operation.

Working in groups of two or more men, depending on the size of an operation, they are airlifted into the pickup zone (PZ) to coordinate the troop movement with the aviation company assigned to the combat assault.

Once on the PZ they immediately begin operations; directing the personnel into groups of proper size for air safety, relocating each group for quickest extraction, and setting up communications with the choppers.

Once the commo is in operation the Pathfinders inform the pilots as to what landing formation is needed for easiest pickup.

When the choppers come in, two Pathfinders board the first ship and fly ahead to prepare the landing zone for the combat assault.

If they are lucky the LZ will be free of enemy activity and their job is to simply set up a control center, drop smoke for identification and wind direction, and guide the incoming choppers for landing. If they come under enemy fire when they hit the ground they must perform the same duties they would in an enemy free area; set up commo, make a report on enemy activity, drop smoke, establish assembly areas and guide in the choppers.

Originally trained to work with U.S. troop operations, the Pathfinders have concentrated on assisting Vietnamese units in recent months, as the ARVN's assume more of the combat responsibility.

# VC Rice Captured

LZ CENTER -- Infantry-armor teams have proved a difficult combination for the enemy to handle, and a recent 196th Brigade operation was no exception.

Bravo Company, 3rd Battalion, 21st Infantry, and F Troop, 17th Cavalry, recently killed seven VC, siezed almost three tons of rice and captured several enemy documents, all in a single day.

Early in the morning, the soldiers found 500 pounds of unpolished rice near a built-up area. The men went on to search the structures and found several enemy documents inside a false wall.

In the early afternoon they found 5,000 more pounds of rice in a village. The rice was sent to Nui Loc Son refugee settlement.

Two hours later one of the men spotted seven VC scurrying into a tunnel. The Americans covered the entrance.

"Our Kit Carson scout went up and tried to get them to surrender," said PFC Clark Taylor (Leesburg, Fla.).

The VC refused to surrender. The Americans hurled grenades at the enemy.

# All Not Fair In Love Spurned VC Rallies

LZ PROFESSIONAL – A VC whose fiancee had jilted him for an NVA, recently rallied to the Government of Vietnam and led 196th Brigade soldiers to a cache of weapons and ammunition 18 miles southeast of Tam Ky.

The young Vietnamese had not become a member of the Viet Cong voluntarily. The NVA had recruited him by force and taken him to a strange area for training.

This was hard enough to swallow, but the worst was yet to come.

Upon returning home, the newly "recruited" VC found that his fiancee had left him for the very same NVA that had impressed him into the Communist ranks.

So, on a rainy evening, the VC crept away and rallied to the Government of Vietnam. He then volunteered to lead the allies to an enemy cache.

The next morning Echo Recon, 1st Battalion, 46th Infantry, set out with the rallier. They found the cache in the afternoon.

Included in the enemy arsenal were eight B40 rockets, two rifles, 300 rounds of small arm ammunition and eight gas masks.

## ARVNs Learn Electric Repair

CHU LAI – Five ARVN soldiers of the 2nd Logistic Battalion, 2nd ARVN Division recently completed two weeks of on-the-job training, learning through the facilities and personnel of the Division's 723rd Maintenance Battalion.

Accompanied by their interpreter, ARVN SSG Lau Lien, the enlisted men learned generator maintenance and repair.

DURING A LULL in recent action near Duc Pho, this 11th Brigade infantryman shaves while in a day laager with his unit. (U.S. Army Photo)