SOUTHERN CROSS
AMERICAL DIVISION
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Ranger-Team Upsets Enemy

High above the jungle floor, a heavy ranger team rides in the helicopters headed for the western limits of Southern I Corps. As they near the place where the helicopters will insert them, the men of Company G (Ranger) 75th Infantry are quiet.

Some of them watch the ground below, but they are too high to make out any detail or signs of enemy movement. As the aircraft loses altitude, however, more of the team members start peering intently at the terrain below.

Each man of the heavy reconnaissance team knows that the insertion is a critical period of their operation. If enemy soldiers are nearby when the insertion is made, they may be able to engage the team before they can slip silently into the concealing vegetation. The rangers try to spend as little time as possible in the comparatively open landing zone.

Scramble For Cover

When the landing zone is reached and identified, the choppers plummet quickly into the clear area. The rangers hurl themselves from the aircraft and scramble for cover and concealment. After scant moments on the ground, the helicopters leap upward again. The team is inserted and ready to begin the mission.

Noiselessly, the team members file through the area, ever alert for signs or sounds of the enemy. Though many reconnaissance units avoid contact with the enemy and limit themselves to intelligence gathering, the heavy ranger teams are ready to engage an enemy element of comparable size.

In spite of the small number of men on a team, the group has high firepower capability with a variety of weapons. Each man carries more ammunition than most other soldiers are likely to carry and are able to achieve and maintain fire superiority over the enemy in most cases.

Unknown Size Enemy Force

During a recent mission southwest of LZ Siberia, the team was fired upon by an unknown size enemy force. The team returned a heavy volume of fire, and the enemy disengaged. Minutes later, the men to the front of the ranger team heard and saw enemy movement again.

Riflemen engaged a form darting through the undergrowth. A search of the area revealed a wounded enemy soldier. In hope of saving the enemy's life, the radio telephone operator placed a call for a helicopter to extract the wounded NVA troop and evacuate him to Chu Lai for medical treatment.

As soon as the team reached the wounded North Vietnamese, some of the Americans bandaged his wounds to stop the bleeding and protect the wound from further damage or infection.

An Extraction

Within minutes, the soldier was gently carried to the bank of a nearby river, the only place where a helicopter could get close enough to the ground for an extraction. Even there, the helicopter could not land on the ground due to thick vegetation. A team member ignited a smoke grenade to mark the pickup zone.

Keeping the wounded man out of the water as much as possible, members of the team waded into the river until they were chest deep in the stream.

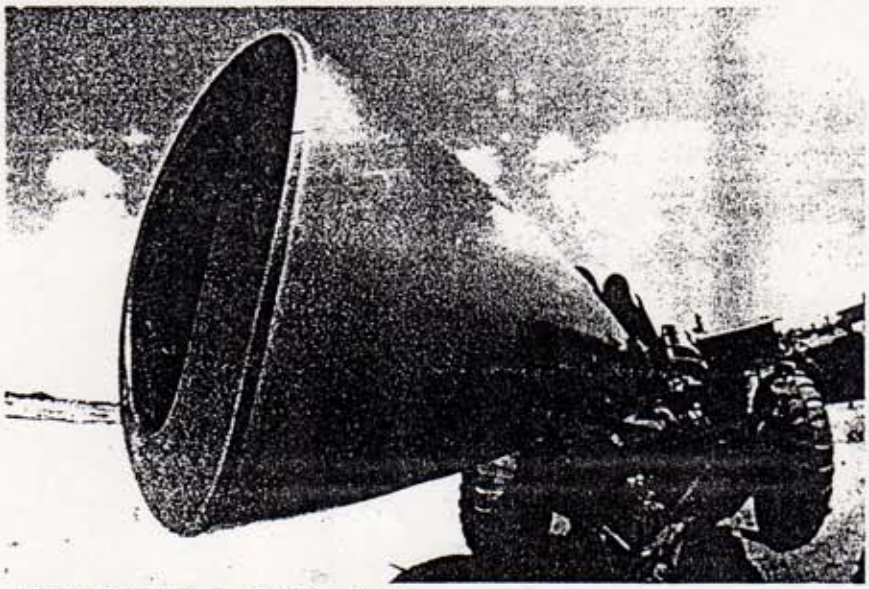
Other members of the team formed a perimeter on one bank of the stream to provide security for the extraction.

When the men in the stream were in position, a chopper swooped down and approached from downstream. Carefully, the pilot positioned the ship so the NVA could be placed aboard. One team member, using hand signals, guided the ship in from shore.

Men In Water

To get the helicopter door within reach of the men in the water, the pilot lowered his ship so far that the landing skids were partially submerged in the stream, causing the helicopter to be affected by the river current.

During these crucial moments a volley of small arms fire began crackling from a woodline across the river. In spite of the harassing enemy fire and the problems of the river current, the extraction was completed within seconds as the helicopter turned downstream to begin its dash for speed and altitude, the rangers who had been in the water scrambled to the bank and began donning their gear. As the ship cleared the trees, the rangers melted back into the forest. (Americal 10) See photos pages 4, 5.



THE HUGE TUBE of this 155mm howitzer as seen through the fisheye lens appears to be looking over the perimeter for the enemy. The howitzer, part of Charlie Battery, 3d Bn., 16th Arty., provides support for Division ground forces in the area.
(Photo By SP5 A.C. Barnett, Div. Arty IO)

Infantrymen Find Tam Ky Billeting

LZ HAWK HILL – Soldiers of the 196th Brigade recently uncovered a Viet Cong basecamp 12 miles northwest of Tam Ky. A patrol from A Co., 3rd Bn., 21st Inf. moved cautiously through the thick tangled undergrowth. Suddenly they spotted several structures.

The infantrymen moved in for closer inspection. There were six structures in all. Two were 10 x 5 meters, two were 10 x 10 meters and two were 10 x 20 meters in size.

One of the largest ones contained shackles," said SSG John Borrelli (Lawrence, Mass.), "There were enough to restrain nine persons."

Closer Inspections

Another of the structures appeared to be a mess hall. Three others were apparently used as sleeping quarters. The men of A Co. found loose ammunition, parts to a rocket propelled grenade and kitchen utensils scattered about the area. (196th Bde. IO)

Ambush, Patrol, And C/A

'Sykes Regs' Take NVA

By SP4 Toby Prodgers

FSB LIZ – In a recent three-day period, a division company deftly executed an ambush, a patrol, and a combat assault (CA) that resulted in four enemy killed, one VC detained, three rifles, and a number of rockets and grenades confiscated.

SGT Edward Gatton (Baltimore) of the 11th Infantry Brigade's 1st Battalion, 20th Infantry, led his squad to an ambush site at Van Truong village, four miles north of Duc Pho.

The Company B squad spotted and killed two NVA soldiers. The pair had been carrying two NVA B-40 rockets and a carbine which the squad confiscated.

The next morning, the 1st Platoon returned to the same area and spotted five VC miving through the rice paddies across the Tra Cau River. One squad crossed the river, made contact, and other elements of the 1st Platoon moved in to assist in the pursuit of the enemy.

Three men, SGT William Miles (Jeromesville, Ala.), SP4 Charles Thompson (Kimberely, W.Va.), and SGT James Shaner (Spenceville, Ohio) pursued and fired on the VC. The result was one enemy killed carrying a grenade and a bag of medical supplies. A search of the area revealed several tunnels and two "2mm NVA mortar rounds.

The next day, the 1st Bn., .0th Inf. Command and Control ship alerted B Co. to a group of enemy swimming west across the Tra Cau River. One squad of the 1st Platoon was CAed to the east bank and another squad to the west bank.

The efforts on the east bank failed to turn up any significant findings.

Westmoreland Speaks On Vietnamization

EDITOR'S NOTES: The following excerpts are from a speech delivered by GEN Westmoreland to the Lincoln Academy of Illinois upon receiving the Order of Lincoln medal.

Today our country is in a zone of ambiguity...between peace and war. In Europe and Korea the Army helps keep the peace, but is ready for war should any misread our determination to defend the frontiers of freedom. In Vietnam, the Army continues to fight a war about which there has been loud dissent but in which there is growing understanding and approval of our Vietnamization Program. At the same time, our country has not suffered a shortage of consumer goods nor has our standard of living declined. And paradoxically, for the most part those who have sacrificed the most...the soldiers on the battlefield and their loved ones at home...have not been the dissenters.

And yet the American people are experiencing frustration as we search to end the longest, most challenging war in our history. But nevertheless, America has prevented a small nation from being overrun by a communist invasion. Behind our protective shield, South Vietnam has strengthened its government, its economy, and its Armed Forces. Today, we are beginning to see the results of our efforts. Accordingly, Vietnamization continues to unfold. We are handing over the shield of security to the South Vietnamese as they increase their forces, improve their performance and receive the more modern material we are providing them.

Vietnamization is not an easy choice, but as our President has said, it is the right choice. The progress this strategy has enjoyed to date is a tribute to our commanders and men. They have undertaken the task of turning over the war to the Vietnamese with the same enthusiasm and professionalism that have characterized their gallant performance on the battlefield. But as we proceed with the methodical execution of a workable strategy for achieving national objectives in a war that has clearly not threatened our survival as a nation, the professional soldier must not – indeed cannot – forget that he is responsible for the security of our country...its very survival depends on his judgement – his professionalism – and his dedication.

Other divisive forces are also at work in our Nation...forces which either unintentionally or deliberately by their very quantity tend to diminish the faith of the American people in their Armed Forces...a faith which is an unfaltering trust giving the American fighting man his sense of belonging, of being needed, of being useful, of contributing to our society.

Our soldiers, sailors, marines, airmen and coastguardsmen have needs as do all human beings. And a necessary part of their identity pattern is the involvement in things greater than oneself. For the serviceman, this is dedicated service to the defense of one's country...a dedication that is found in few other places in our society. But if the soldier ever believes that his service is not appreciated by the citizenry he protects, then his morale is diminished, his effectiveness becomes desultory, and his dedication eroded.

Honest disagreement within a democratic society has always been a vital part of our political tradition. Your Armed Forces honor this tradition. They are dedicated to its survival...for this is the essence of our open society.

Yet those who have faced the dangers of the battlefield...and in some cases sacrificed their lives or suffered inhumane captivity...to preserve this precious heritage have been perplexed by those American citizens who give aid and comfort to the enemy...who chant in the streets, "Ho, Ho...Ho Chi Minh"...who wave the flags of an enemy that has killed over 40,000 Americans...and who have replaced the pictures of Washington, Jefferson, and Lincoln with pictures of Che, Mao, and Lenin. At times their actions become uncontrolled and violent...and this is intolerable in our society. In all objectivity, can these people be considered responsible? For as Lincoln said, "There is no grievance that is a fit object for redress by mob law."

Moreover, some within our society deliberately attempt to cause dissent witin the military establishment. These people prejudice the good order and discipline which are so necessary to a viable military force. An army without discipline is worse than no army at all and becomes

General Westmoreland

a menace to the society it is sworn to defend.

Others who are naive and uninformed attack the military for our national involvement in Vietnam. All too often political criticism of international affairs and commitments manifests itself as criticism of those who carry out policy. The Armed Forces of the United States do not make our national commitments, but instead, are one of several instruments of our national power. The heads of our Armed Services, however, do offer military advice to their civilian leaders. If our policymakers cannot turn to the military for military counsel, to whom do they turn?

Distortions surrounding our commitment in Vietnam abound. Because of instant communication, the actions of the Armed Services in Vietnam have become public property...and this is as it should be. The perspective of war portrayed to young people has been shown largely by films which sell...those in living color...those filled with action...violent action and sudden perplexing death. The picture of the American fighting as the hero of World War II has decomposed into the hired killer of Vietnam in the eyes of some whose emotions becloud good judgement. One young Sergeant in Vietnam recently addressed this subject more succinctly than I can. He said:

...We are sick of people regarding us as murderers. For those who have fought for it and died for it, freedom has a taste the protected will never know.

Public attitudes must be clarified, but only the American people can do that...To picture our Armed Forces as an institution ruthlessly disregarding life and property is a gross distortion of fact.

Never before in our history while fighting a war have we concentrated so intensely on controlling our fires to avoid civilian casualties and damage to civilian property and on helping the people of a foreign land. We have brought medical care to thousands who had never seen a doctor...we have built hundreds of schools, market places, and meeting houses...and your soldiers have devoted much of their own time and labor to assist the Vietnamese in their search for a better life. Unfortunately, these events are not news.

My concern is that indiscretions or the actions of a few are used to vilify our Army as an institution. We must remember that the Army is a mirror of the society it represents. Inevitably, the ills of society overlap into the military. But the improper conduct of these few should not soil the noble performance of over two million men who have served with distinction and devotion in Vietnam.

Our Army stationed here in the United States and around the world – an Army of nearly a million and one-half men and women – is your Army. Its only reason for being is to safeguard those values in our way of life that all of us so jealously cherish – to serve the national interest.

Today, our Army remains focused on General MacArthur's charge that "...the very obsession of public service must be duty, honor, country..."

For almost two centuries, the United States Army has served our Nation with unfaltering dedication.

Vietnam Style

SP5 James Brown

The religious observances of the Vietnamese family take place in the home, or in the family temple if there is one – both an ancestral altar and an altar dedicated to Buddha placed in a prominent place in the main room of the house. There may also exist smaller altars to lesser deities, such as the God of the Hearth.

Moreover, the ancestral altar is set with incense burners, candle–sticks, trays and bowl stands, together with the ancestral tablets, which in traditional households are of the past four generations. Those of the fifth generation have been buried. The households of Cao Dai, Hoa Hao and Catholic also maintain family altars honoring their own deities.

The chief of the extended family, or, in the immediate family, the head of the household, is responsible for assuring the ancestors are properly venerated. On feast-days and anniversary of the death of each ancestor the rites are performed; which consist of invoking the

spirit of the particular individual so honored and making sacrificial offerings of betel, wine and incense.

Besides the individual anniversaries, sacrifices are offered to all the ancestors in general on the days, Tet being the most important (the New Year Celebration). Also, whenever there is an occasion of family joy or sorrow–a wedding, an anniversary, success in examination, a promotion or a funeral–the ancestors are informed.

There are several occasions for family rituals other than in connection with the Cult of the Ancestors in traditional households. The family is always careful to make a offering to the God of the Hearth; prayers and sacrifices are also made to this same deity when misfortune falls upon the household.

The Kitchen God is another lesser daity, honored on the twenty-third day of the last lunar month, the day when, according to legend, he reports to heaven on the good and bad deeds of all mankind.

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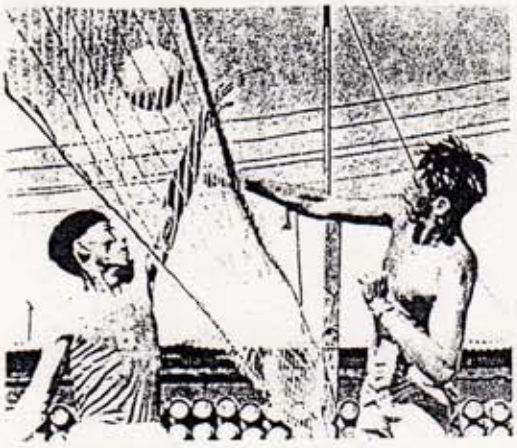


ARVNs Mix Work With Volleyball

LZ HURRICANE – Fire mission! The artillerymen worked as a team as they bent to their duties and literally leaped into the battle.

Shot out! The round arced skyward, only to be driven back at twice the speed.

Passing the problem around the members of the gun crew, the location and dispersion of the target was rapidly calculated and the round once more rammed home.

The cannoneers of the 30th Arty. Bn., 2nd ARVN Div. and their counterparts of the Amcal Div.'s 1st Bn., 82nd Arty., were bombarding each other in a friendly game of volleyball on the American battalion's home sand.

As the battle thickened, and the combatants moved into "danger close" proximity, spectators had to take cover from the flying sand. Using their entire sandbag of tricks both crews tested every tactic available.

Starting with zone sweeps to soften up the opposition, holding their own with defensive targets, showing off with air bursts on the net and scoring with Hotel Echo (high explosive) on the deck, each team had its ups and downs.

The exact scores have not yet been given political clearance but is can be revealed that each team had one win and one loss.

After the strenuous but very enjoyable afternoon the gun bunnies returned to their more routine duties on their fire base. (Photo By PFC Robert J. Smith)

Viet Employees Give Party

FSB BRONCO – "We should try to live according to Vietnamese customs as much as possible," said ISG Lewis G. Long (Glen Burnie, Md.), first sergeant of the division's Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 11th Infantry Brigade.

A recent party for the HHC employed Vietnamese civilian workers at the Enlisted Men's Club was the implementation of ISG Long's belief.

Commenting on the party, ISG Long said, "It is a Tet tradition that an employer pay one twelfth of his annual income to his workers. Since Headquarters Company employs from 150 to 200 Vietnamese a day as barbers, domestics, sandbaggers and sanitation men to name a few, it was obviously impossible to follow the tradition to the letter. So we planned one big party for the workers."

The party featured Vietnamese food exclusively and gifts of clothing and rice.

ISG Long added, "We served a traditional dish of meat and vegetables with Nuoc Mam sauce. HHC soldiers donated the money and to insure that we got the right ingredients I sent two of our girls who work in the EM Club, Vo Thi Mai and Nguyen Thi Phi Yen, to Duc Pho to buy the necessary food."

The gifts of clothing were provided by Chaplain (MAJ) Gordon B. Hanson (Fargo, N.D.) who received the packages from collections taken up in the United States.

One ton of unpolished rice was also distributed. 1LT Edward R. Giacci (New Haven, Conn.), assistant brigade S-5, reported, "The rice was part of an enemy food cache captured by Company B, 1st Battalion, 20th Infantry. Company B turned the rice into S-5 and we answered a request from ISG Long." Men of HHC distributed the rice.

CPT Robert J. Graham (Patchogue, N.Y.), commanding officer of HHC, commented, "The party was a good chance to let the Vietnamese know that we appreciate their work."

After receiving many "thank yous" and double handshakes, ISG Long concluded, "It was a rewarding experience for me and from the reaction of the people I think that they all had a good time." (11th Bde IO)

COL HUGH F. T. HOFFMAN Jr. (San Antonio, Tex.), commander of the division's 11th Inf. Bde., and Duc Pho District Chief, MAJ Buu-Tuong, review members of civilian defense groups at Le Van-Duyet High School, Duc Pho. The recent ceremonies were a demonstration of the people's gratitude to COL Hoffman and the men of his brigade and a display of their unity in resisting the Viet Cong. "Unite and Let Us Destroy the Viet Cong," reads the overhead banner. (Photo By PFC Peter R. Sorensen)

Cadre Cited Prize

FSB DEBBIE – Seventyseven-thousand piasters say that the Revolutionary Development (RD) Cadre Group 39 is the best in Vietnam.

The group, which operates in the division AO, was awarded that amount by the Government of Vietnam and named the "best RD cadre group in Vietnam" for their work in assisting and advising the people.

Under the leadership of Nguyen Thachv and Ho Ly the group recently evacuated 750 villagers with the aid of the 11th Inf. Bde. from the VC infested coastal area of Quy Tien and relocated them six miles south of Duc Pho.

The group remained with the villagers helping them to build homes and bunkers, dig wells and string barbed wire. They even supervised elections of hamlet chiefs and officials.

SFC Adrian Steward (Milton, Fla.) the MACV advisor explained, "They work very close with the Regional and Popular Forces, letting them pull security for the hamlet or village while they go in and work with the people.

KC-Scouts Prove Hard Fighters

LZ HAWK HILL – The slightly built figure moves gingerly down a tangled, overgrown path. He raises his hand and the American soldiers who follow stop abruptly.

They know that when Nguyen Minh Hoang senses danger, he is usually right.

The Vietnamese carefully parts a leafy bush, revealing a 105mm artillery round with a Chicom grenade detonator. The round is destroyed and the infantrymen move on.

Hoang was once an NVA sapper. Two years ago division soldiers found him in an abandoned mountain hideaway dying of malaria.

"He was too weak to move," said SGT Evert Graves (Redform, Va.). "His fellow sappers had taken his food and weapon and left him to die."

The former NVA is now a Kit Carson Scout for Charlie Company, 2nd Battalion, 1st Infantry, 196th Infantry Brigade. Because of scouts like Hoang, the Kit Carson program in the 196th Inf. Bde. is daily producing devidends.

The brigade's Kit Carson Scouts undergo a three week training period at division headquarters in Chu Lai. They are then sent back to work with one of the brigade's units in the area with which they are familiar.

The life of a Kit Carson is not an easy one. Because of their knowledge of the terrain they frequently walk point. Their diminutive size singles them out for enemy snipers. Yet they approach their tasks with determination.

"They want to prove themselves," says Mr. James Ketchum (Newport Beach, Calif.), 10th Military Intelligence Detachment, 196th Inf. Bde.

Mr. Kitchum, whose rank is classified, is a liaison worker with the Kit Carsons. He knows them to be a proud and skillful group of fighters. (196th Bde. IO)

Throng of 500 Spectators

Anniversary Celebration; Soldiers Decorated For Heroism

QUANG NGAI CITY – The brisk wind moved the sea of red and yellow Vietnamese flags to reveal an occasional red, white and blue banner in the throng of 500 spectators.

The rigid line of 95 American and ARVN soldiers had just been decorated for heroism by the assembled dignitaries in a colorful ceremony at Quang Ngai commemorating the 15th anniversary of the 2nd ARVN Division.

Sound of Drums And Horns

As the sound of drums, tubas, and clarinets echoed through the plaza, two young village girls placed floral wreaths at the foot of a stone memorial honoring those who have died defending Vietnam.

After the wreaths had been placed, BG Nguyen Van Toan, commanding general of the 2nd ARVN Division, spoke of the "environment of mirth and union" which pervaded the anniversary celebration.

"Mirth because this is a unique yearly occasion when all the units of the 2nd ARVN Division are together to celebrate the new year," said BG Toan. "Union, because this is the opportunity for sincere friendship between the Vietnamese and American troops."

BG Toan then announced that the unit had been selected to wear the Fourragere with the National Order Color because of its many combat and pacification successes. "The 2nd Infantry Division still sticks to its motto 'no vanity in victory, no discourage in defeat'," he concluded.

During the awards ceremony Vietnamese soldiers of the 4th, 5th and 6th Regiments and American soldiers of the 11th Infantry Brigade, Advisory Team 2, the 196th Infantry Brigade and the 1st Brigade, 82d Airborne Division received gallantry medals.

To the accompaniment of a constant drum-beat, school girls in white ao dais (the traditional Vietnamese dress) marched down the four ranks and placed bright orage, green and yellow victory garlands over the heads of the recipients.

Outstanding Viet Soldiers

LTG Herman Nickerson, III MAF commander and MG Ramsey then presented special citations and medals to four outstanding Vietnamese soldiers.

As the Vietnamese band again began to play, the dignitaries which also included LTG Hoang-Xuan Lam, commanding general of I Corps (11th IO)

A Dramatic Extraction In The

A smoke grenade billows as Rangers await helicopter.

Photos By
PFC Laszlo Kondor
Americal IO

The hovering aircraft eases closer...

...until one landing skid is in

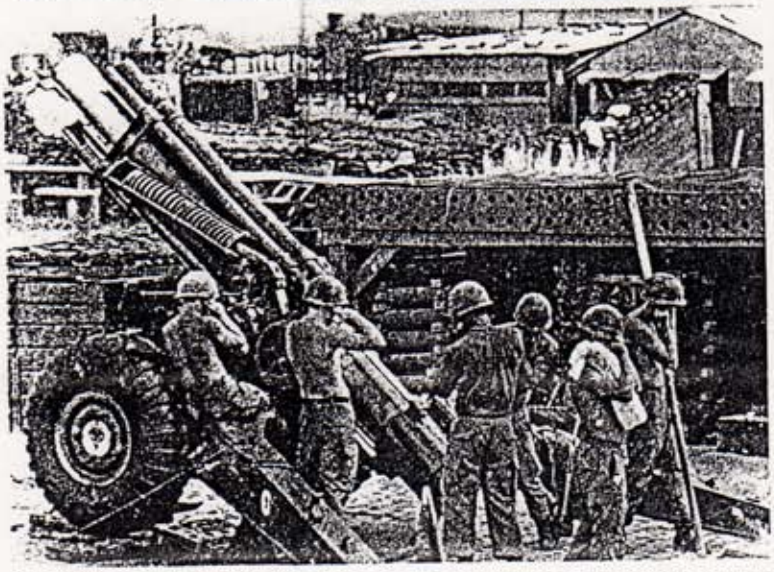
Face Of Strong Current, Enemy Fire

They dash to the water to meet the chopper

the water as the NVA is lifted

Despite enemy fire, the mission is completed.

Combat In Review



DANCING TO THE TUNE of the 155mm howitzer, the sand on the top of the ammo bunker leaps skyward from the concussion of the blast. The unit is part of the division's A Btry., 3d Bn., 16th Arty. seen here during a recent fire mission 25 miles north of Chu Lai. (Photo By SP4 Thomas A. Budarz)

Quick-Reaction Arty Scores On Targets

LZ BRONCO – Members of the Division's D Co., 4th Bn., 21st Inf., 11th Inf., Bde., load their gear and go on a sweep of an AO near the town of Duc Pho. Their mission is to find "Charlie" and destroy him.

The strongest firepower in the platoon is represented by 2LT Charles R. (Rusty) Dannison (South Haven, Mich.), who plots "delta tangoes" or defensive targets in preparation for the mission–2LT Dannison is a forward observer for A Btry., 6th Bn., 11th Arty.

"By plotting likely avenues of approach in advance, I can get fire in on the enemy in no time at all," said 2LT Dannison. "It is the first five minutes of contact with the enemy that artillery can really do a job. The fire breaks up 'Charlie's' plan of action, creates havoc among their forces and puts them on the defensive before they can launch any kind of attack."

The platoon pushed around the base of a hill and came to a valley with heavy brush. After a quick meeting of minds, 2LT Dannison decided to "prep" the valley with artillery fire before proceeding into it.

The temporary halt came around lunch time so everyone grabbed a can of C rations, took off their field gear and settled back for a quick bite to eat while "Arty" supplied the mid-day entertainment.

"Shot in zero five seconds," came the word over the radio from the Fire Direction Center. Wham! A "Whiskey papa" on target.

"Drop one hundred and put it on the deck," said 2LT Dennison. No sooner said than done. One "whiskey papa" on target.

"Great shot, now give me a platoon two by two with Hotel Echo," called back 2LT Dannison. The valley started shaking and the infantrymen started giving their applause.

Meal time over and the valley cleared, the platoon continued their sweep. 2LT Dannison now began the second part of the mission, to aid in the search. Checking "spider holes", blowing up caves and searching for "Charlie", that is part of being a forward observer.

2LT Dannison and his RTO get a little friendly hassling from the infantrymen but they are a solid component of an efficient team. Infantry with artillery at their side is a hard combination to beat! (Div. Arty. IO)

The Old WWII Tactic Will Still Bring Smoke

LZ CENTER – A division artilleryman used an old WWII tactic to spoil the plans of over 60 NVA soldiers during a recent operation near LZ Center.

Teamwork Provides Fire Power

The howitzers from two nearby fire bases teamed up to provide the firepower for the action that resulted in 15 confirmed kills.

2LT Robert D. Thomas (San Jose, Calif.) a forward observer for the 3d Bn., 82nd Arty. lives and works with the infantrymen of A Co., 3d Bn., 21st Inf., 196th Inf. Bde.

"Whe we first spotted the NVA we thought there were only a few of them, but soon we counted 12 groups of five NVA, all with packs and weapons," said 2LT Thomas.

Artillery Reacts

An important target but too distant and spread out to effectively engage with small arms, the artillery was called in to do the job.

Soon almost one square mile of jungle trembled under the intensive artillery barrage. The 155mm howitzers of A Battery, 3d Bn., 16th Arty. on Hawk Hill and the 105mm howitzers of B Battery, 3d Bn., 82nd Arty. on LZ Center were firing a special pattern called a "zone sweep."

An Old Tactic

The tactic, an old artillery trick, is to provide a target for all the available weapons. Each howitzer fires on its target and continues to place additional rounds all around that location.

With as many as 12 guns employed in this mission, each firing over 18 rounds, the entire area where the NVA were maneuvering came under intense fire at the same time.

"The aerial observer gave 'Arty' credit for 15 visible kills," said CPT Bernhard F. Wolpers (Montery, Calif.) commander of the infantry unit. "With that number of rounds and the number of NVA in that area, there must have been a lot of casualties that couldn't be confirmed.

Cav. Troops Take Enemy Food Supply

LZ HAWK HILL – Viet Cong working in the Tam Ky area may have to tighten their belts further in the coming weeks.

Four Tons of Rice

F Troop, 17th Cav., 196th Inf. Bde., working with Vietnamese Popular Forces, recently found four tons of enemy rice eight miles northwest of Tam Ky.

The division soldiers were sweeping an open field when they came upon the unpolished grain. It was strewn all about the area.

Empty Bags

"There were a lot of empty bags lying about," said SSG Robert Sabrie (Louisville). "Evidently Charlie had been bagging up the rice and had been scared away by the sound of the tracks."

Taking advantage of the enemy's helpfulness, the men of F Troop used the bags to pack the rice. They then turned the cache over to the Vietnamese allies for distribution. (196th Bde IO)

Info Leads To NVA Bunkers

By SP4 Jim Tannesen

LZ HAWK HILL – Reacting swiftly to reports of an enemy troop build-up, division soldiers of the 196th Inf. Bde. recently dislocated an NVA battalion and destroyed a vast bunker complex.

Rumors of large NVA concentrations had been filtering into the intelligence section of 2nd Bn., 1st Inf., 196th Inf. Bde. Investigation of these reports resulted in significant findings.

"There was a battalion-sized unit moving towards a staging area in 'Pinapple Forest' five miles west of Tam Ky," said CPT James Gardner (Wellsville, N.Y.), intelligence officer, 2nd Bn., 1st Inf. "It appeared that they were getting ready to attack Tam Ky itself."

A and C Co., 2nd Bn., 1st Inf., were airlifted in to meet this threat.

The quiet of Pineapple Forest was shattered by the deadening rear of helicopters as wave after wave drooped to the jungle floor. For the rest of the day the infantrymen pushed on through leafy vegetation toward their goal.

The next morning they came upon the enemy stronghold.

"We were sweeping towards a woodline," said PFC Earnst Harrison (Sylacauga, Ala.), "when we spotted a bunker to our front."

Rifle and machinegun fire spewed from the enemy emplacement. The Americans dove for cover, then opened up with M-16 rifles.

A lone soldier rushed the bunker from its blind side and tossed a hand grenade through the portal. Four NVA were killed, including two officers.

Another enemy opened fire from a spider hole. He too was brought down by grenades.

By this time the entire hillside had erupted with enemy fire. The Americans halted their advance and called for air and artillery support.

"The air strikes lasted all day," said SP4 James Steele (St. Louis). "The whole side of the hill was covered with smoke."

The next morning the Americans found no trace of the savage enemy resistance encountered the day before. The NVA had abandoned their fortifications during the night.

"They hadn't left anything," said SGT Charles Missar (Chicago). "I know we had a lot of kills, but they carried the bodies off."

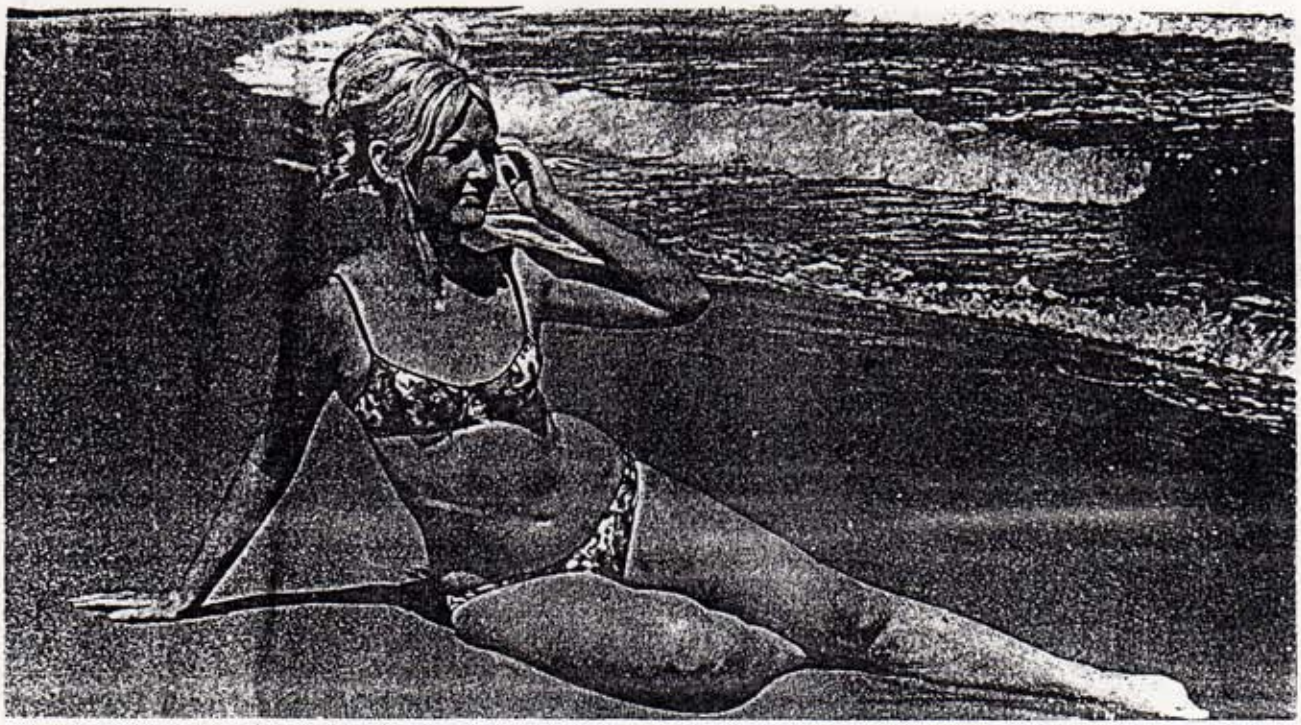
The NVA had abandoned a sprawling complex of structures and tunnels. The Americans destroyed 41 bunkers and 600 meters of interconnecting trenches.

"All the bunkers had overhead cover," said SGT Missar. "Some were reinforced with metal stakes and wooden beams."

Intelligence reports were a major factor in the success of 2nd Bn., 1st Inf.

"We got to them before they were prepared to attack," said CPT Gardner, "and were able to disrupt the entire battalion." (196th Bde. IO)

A NEW SHERIDAN Assault vehicle from the Americal Div.'s 1st Sqdn., 1st Cav. moves across a muddy rice paddy on an operation north of Duc Pho. (US Army Photo)



HOW WOULD YOU like to meet this pretty blonde? There are thousands of girls just like Karen on college campuses throughout the U.S. Your Veterans Administration reminds you that you are entitled to VA assistance as a full time or part time college student once you complete your military service.

(Photo by SP4 J. B. Majerus)

196th CO Expresses Opinions In Interview

EDITOR'S NOTE: COL James M. Lee, commander of the 196th Infantry Brigade, saw service during World War II, the Korean conflict, and a previous tour in Vietnam. During his earlier tour here, he served as a senior advisor for the Military Assistance Command, Vietnam.

His decorations include the Silver Star and the Legion of Merit with oak leaf cluster.

HAWK HILL – The biggest problem facing the commander of an infantry brigade in I Corps tactical zone is maintaining high mobility without suffering heavy losses through enemy booby traps and small engagements, a brigade commander said in a ecent interview.

"Without question, the biggest problem facing me is to continue to be mobile with my maneuver elements – the infantry companies, the cavalry troop and recon units – without experiencing what has been called the 'slow bleed'" said COL James M. Lee, commander of the 196th Inf. Bde.

"In order to attempt to organize VC sympathizers and take over the political infrastructure of an area, the enemy must try to keep allied forces in fixed positions so enemy elements can operate in remote areas without interference from allied forces," COL Lee said.

"He cannot do that as long as we are moving, seeking him out and destroying him," he said.

In an effort to prevent allied movements, the enemy tries to make movement so expensive in terms of casualties that allied forces will begin to operate from fixed positions, COL Lee said.

To cause the slow bleed of forces, the enemy sets booby traps to inflict casualties without suffering any snipes at friendly units from a distance to prevent massive engagement, and launches sapper attacks against night defensive positions in the field, COL Lee said.

Using the sapper tactic, the enemy commander sends a small number of his men against allied night laagers, where they attempt to infiltrate the perimeter and throw satchel charges into the foxholes.

"If the enemy has losses, they are small," COL Lee said.

As the enemy tries to make the price of mevement high, it is the job of the brigade commander to see that brigade elements continue to move, but with the smallest number of casualties possible, he said.

Comparing today's American soldier with those of the Korean conflict and WWII, COL Lee said that the modern soldier is more educated, more aware of events in the world around him and better able to reason for himself.

Though this situation creates larger demands on the leadership, the leadership itself has improved proportionately, he said.

"That tends to cancel itself out," COL Lee said.

He pointed out the differences in public sentiment during the three most recent large-scale conflicts involving American troops.

"What singles out the Vietnamese War from WWII and the Korean War is that our country was behind the fighting effort in those earlier two wars – though to a lesser degree in Korea," he said.

"This puts another leadership load on our officers and non-commissioned officers," he said, "and there is no co cancelling-out operation here."

It is challenging to a leader to constantly keep his men motivated, he said.

"He must give them a reason for risking their lives and for suffering the elements..our companies stay out sometimes 15 or 16 days before coming back to a relatively secure fire base," COL Lee said.

He described the infantry soldier as a man who can think for himself and who asks questions when he does not understand or wants more information.

"It is a constant leadership struggle to point him in the right direction. We've been successful at this and our soldiers today continue to stay with the job and do it well," he said.

Comparing so-called hard core regular VC units with NVA elements, COL Lee said that overlap of VC and NVA soldiers in each kind of unit makes analysis of the unit as a whole difficult.

"All of the so-called "main force VC" units are principally made up of NVA. The VC recruiting effort has been so unsuccessful that replacements for main force units have had to come from the ranks of the NVA," he said.

To illustrate the behavior of the individual enemy soldier, COL Lee cited the action in which the 196th Bde. engaged elements of the 31st NVA Regiment in early January.

He said the enemy's bravery, stubborness and ingenuity were impressive.

"He stayed in his bunker and fired at the oncoming tanks till the last. He's very brave and tough; we give him a lot of credit," he said.

COL Lee evaluated the local VC soldiers in relation to the regular VC and NVA units.

"There is no comparison between the regular units and the local VC," he said.

"As our soldiers have often said, when you run up against the local force VC, they may fire a round or two and then run. That isn't the case when you come up against the first line unit," COL Lee said.

COL Lee cited the performance of province forces and the 5th Regiment, 2nd ARVN Division in the area.

"The province forces are very good. They are led by a highly competnent sector commander," he said.

COL Lee described the sector commander as a good organizer.

"He has developed countless numbers of Popular Forces (PF) platoons, some of which are organized by former VC; he has also made the People's Self Defense Force (PSDF) work very well," COL Lee said.

"I believe that if the 196th were to pull out now, the 5th Rgt. would carry on and do a good job," COL Lee said.

"However, if the NVA decided to mass forces in this area, the 5th Rgt. would have to be reinforced from other parts of the country," he said.

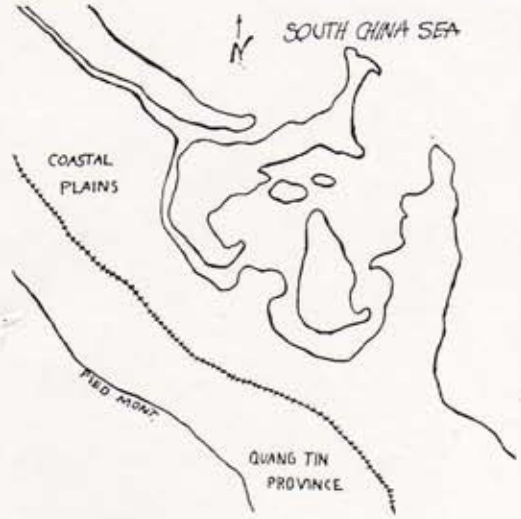
COL Lee said that he could not predict a takeover date.

"I would say that at this time there are too many imponderables -- enemy intentions, enemy capabilities, ability of the ARVNs to reinforce – to give a solid answer to the question. Suffice it to say that tremendous progress has been made," he said.

He said that the future goal of the pacification program is to make every citizen of Quang Tin Province secure from terrorism and from a major attack on his hamlet.

COL Lee evaluated the overall effectiveness of the pacification effort in the province.

"The province chief has achieved relative security for the major part of the population. The areas which are still unpacified are relatively small," he said.



Soldier Earns New MOS

LZ BRONCO – On the job training Army style! That was the order of the day for four former infantrymen assigned to the division's C Battery, 6th Battalion, 11th Artillery, on LZ Bronco near the town of Duc Pho.

CPLs Elmer Bennett (Canton, Ohio), Keith Johnson (Cannon Falls, Minn.), Dennis Lyons (Fullerton, Calif.), and SP4 William Kennedy (West Dennis, Mass.) took infantry training in basic and advanced levels only to be sent to Vietnam.

"I had never seen an artillery piece before coming to Vietnam," said CPL Johnson, who is now serving as a gunner on a 105mm howitzer. "When I first arrived at the battery, I just stood around and watched but before I knew it, I was carrying artillery shells during actual fire missions."

Joined by CPLs Lyons and Bennett, the trio worked to master their new jobs. The OJT continued during off hours as members of C Battery gave the newcomers helpful instruction on how the different parts of their howitzers operate and what was necessary to put a round on target.

SP4 Kennedy, also a gunner, was just getting to know his duties after two nights and one day of firing when he was switched to the Fire Direction Center (FDC) where he began new training on the maps.

"Whe they moved me to FDC I had to start learning all over again," said SP4 Kennedy. "It liked pretty quiet in there at first." (Div. Arty. IO)

Artillery Troops Build Large Swimming Pool

LZ HURRICANE – What is 60 feet long 40 feet wide, and varies in depth from three to eight feet?

An ammo bunker? A bomb crater? Sorry about that, it looks like only the division artillerymen from the 1st Bn, 82d Arty. are "in the know" these day.

The answer to the problem is the dimensions of the huge swimming pool.

Called the Chappell Memorial Pool, it was named in honor of PFC Edward L. Chappell who was the first man of the battalion to give his life in the service of his country in Vietnam.

The "Survey" section built the pool which has a 70,000 gallon capacity. All that fresh, potable water is pumped from a 16 foot well through an elaborate plumbing network that the "Como" section constructed.

Other men from the unit, not wanting to be out done, contribute a diving board made from a main rotar blade discarded by a helicopter unit.

Recently opened for its second season in a ceremony that has headed by COL Leslie B. Hardy, Div Arty, CO, the pool is only a part of the recreational facility that the cannoneers have constructed for their off duty. (Div. Arty. IO)

Long Haul

CHU LAI – "Hello Nick. I hear you are going to Germany," began the letter to a division artilleryman. The letter, from a U.S. Army serviceman in Korea was addressed to a buddy who was in fact on his way to Germany 15 months ago!

SP5 Clifton E. Nichols (White Settlement, Tex.) participated in the NATO exercise REFORGER I, as a cannoneer with A Btry., 3d Bn., 11th Arty. His unit was air-lifted to Germany from Fort Riley, Kan. in January 1969 for the 20 day exercise.

SP5 Nichols' friend, SP4 David H. Struckman, stationed with a helicopter unit in Korea, heard of REFORGER I and sent a letter last Dec. 2, 1968 to see if Nichols was involved.

The letter reached Ft. Riley but Nichols was in Germany so it was forwarded to the Directory Service for a search of their files. Thirteen date stamps, all duly initialed, three forwarding address, four Postal Directory Stamps and 15 months later, Nichols received his letter.

"I've got a lot to write about," said Nichols, "not only Germany and my eight months here in Vietnam, but there is the matter of rank."

The letter was addressed to "Private" Nichols. (Div Arty IO)

ONE LETTER CAN BRIGHTEN a soldier's day when he is far from home. Mail call takes place twice a day at a designated hour. Smiles and frowns indicate the results. SP4 Edward M. Epp (Philadelphia, Pa.), a Division soldier from the 3d Bn., 18th Arty., had a wry smile on his face after a mail call in which he received not one but 88 letters. The letters had been written by students from the Holy Innocents High School where his cousin Sister Maria Dorothy is a teacher. By the next mail call, things were down to normal. Epp received only eight letters! (Photo by SP4 Warren E. Nordman)

Change of Comd. For 2 Div. Units Honor Officers

In a recent change of command ceremony LTC Jack D. Wilson assumed command of the 723d Maintenance Bn. replacing LTC Homer J. Finch.

In another change of command ceremony LTC Chester C. Phillips Jr. (Columbia, S.C.), former executive officer of the 198th Bde., assumed command of the 1st of the 52d Inf. replacing LTC Arthur E. Brown Jr. who will become a Regiment Advisor in the IX Corps area. (Amcal IO)

For Better Trained Soldiers

Americal Division Offers Combat Courses

CHU LAI – History has shown that there are many types of warfare, but basically there are only two types of soldiers: the combat soldier, and the support soldier.

The American combat soldier receives the highest quality of instruction possible dunng training, as does the support soldier.

The division has recently introduced a program of instruction that concentrates on the support soldier rather than the combat soldier.

According to 1LT Ronald L. Coleman (Dayton, Ohio), the OIC of the new program, "The goal of the additional instruction is to provide the best possible training for the leaders that operate at squad level so that he can better support the front-line soldier and safeguard his own defenses."

Each man that is assigned to the Americal Div. undergoes a three to seven-day period of instruction at the division's Combat Center, depending upon his MOS.

After a man has been assigned to a unit in the division the Combat Center offers various classes for the support and combat personnel as required.

In the past, classes for the support soldiers, generally in the MOSs of engineer and artillery, the center has offered additional instruction such as Airmobile Operations, Forward Air Control and the Ambush. Under the new program, these classes have been dropped and classes such as Rigging and Loading of Aircraft, Maintenance of Vehicles and Heavy Equipment have been provided.

The streamlined Support Leadership Course now being offered by the Center has also reduced the number of hours normally required in the classroom from 10 to 12 days.

'Flying Red Horsemen' Net Awards

LZ SIBERIA – Six 'Flying Red Horsemen' of the division's Btry. C, 3d Bn., 82d Arty., received valor awards in a ceremony here recently.

The awards were presented to the artillerymen for their actions dunng an attack on this firebase last year.

NVA Sapper Force

A battalion-size NVA sapper force armed with flame throwers and RPCs and under heavy mortar cover, recoilless rifle and B-40 rocket fire attempted to penetrate the perimeter of this remote fire base. Heavy fighting continued throughout the night, but the artillerymen from Siberia and the infantrymen of the 196th Inf. Bde. held their ground.

The battle resulted in 32 enemy killed and one captured; 11 AK-47 rifles, 1 AK-50, two rocket launchers and one flame-thrower were confiscated.

Silver and Bronze Stars

Receivng the Silver Star were 1SG Carl F. Victor Jr. (Newburn, N.C.) and SFC Melvin Townes (Augsburg, Germany). Also, 1LT George Marcinko (Marietta, Ga.) and Albert J. Weller (Shoals, Ind.) along with SGT James Lynch (Jersey City, N.J.) received the Bronze Star for Valor. The Army Commendation Medal for Valor went to SP4 Jerod Caputo (Hoboken, N.J.).

Presentations were made by COL Leslie B. Hardy.

"ATTA BOY, DUKE!" SP4 Jimmy L. Gibson (Phenix City, Ala.) of the 59th Inf. Platoon (Scout Dog) coaxes the five-year-old German Shepard through a canine confidence course.

(Photo by SGT Don Naughton, 11th Bde. IO)