'Regulars' kill 4 VC from concealed positions

By SGT Louis Miller

LZ BAYONET (198th INF BDE IO) – Using surprise and well concealed daylight positions, men from the 198th Infantry Brigade killed four VC, captured one, and took one weapon and several munitions southeast of Chu Lai recently.

An element of Charlie Company, 1st Battalion, 6th Infantry, resting in preparation for nighttime patrolling, had set up three separate laager positions at breaks in a hedgerow. Five feet to the front of the hedgerow was a trail, running east to west about four feet below the laager positions.

"It was late in the afternoon when we heard voices coming from the west end of the trail," recalled Private First Class Paul Cramor, Green Bay, Wisc. "The other positions were alerted and we just waited for the enemy to move closer."

Minutes later, a group of VC moved in front of the first position. The enemy group continued past the second position, all the time the "Regulars" holding their fire. When the VC pointman reached the third position, Charlie Company's machinegunner opened up.

"It was too late for them to do anything," said Private First Class Richard Hooter, Natchitoches, La., the machinegunner. "Their pointman stopped right in front of my position."

PFC Hooter brought down one VC while nearby riflemen brought down two more. Other VC, not yet in the kill zone, turned and attempted to evade. But they ran right into the other two positions manned by the "Regulars"–the positions the VC had just walked past.

"By the time the enemy ran down the trail to our position, they were scattered," said PFC Cramer. "But two of them one with an AK-47, stayed on the trail and ran in front of my position, giving me a clear shot."

After Cramer fired, one enemy lay dead and another wounded. The wounded VC was soon evacuated to a Chu Lai hospital.

When the firing had stopped, the "Regulars" found several trails of blood running into the trail. The infantrymen followed them, but darkness forced them to call off the search.

Along with the four enemy killed and one captured, one AK-47, one handgrenade, and several blasting caps, detonating cord, and fuses were confiscated in the action.

Division recap

Kill 130, find huge rice cache

CHU LAI (AMERICAL IO) – The tempo of fighting in the southern part of the First Military Region remained moderate as division soldiers accounted for 130 enemy killed. The 198th Brigade topped the action by killing 38 enemy, 17 in one skirmish, and by discovering a cache of more than 30,000 pounds of rice. The "Chargers" of the 196th Brigade surprised and killed 28 enemy in Operation Frederick Hill. Gunships from F Troop, 8th Cavalry in the 11th Brigade accounted for four NVA kills in action southest of Quang Ngai City.

Geneva Park

The "Ready Rifles" of the 1-52nd Infantry saw the heaviest action as they accounted for 28 enemy kills and uncovered the massive rice cache.

Infantrymen from Charlie and Alpha companies, 1-52nd Infantry, teamed up with gunships from the 176th Aviation Company to kill 17 Viet Cong and capture an enemy arms cache. Charlie Company, working south of Chu Lai, observed and engaged a large group of enemy soldiers. In the ensuing contact, Cobra gunships from the 176th were called on station and engaged the enemy, who evaded east into a cave complex in a heavily vegetated area.

The infantrymen moved toward the complex after the gunships had expended, engaging the enemy at distances as close as one meter. Alpha Company, reacting as a reaction force, was combat assaulted into the area and set up a blocking force. The next morning, Charlie Company swept the area and found 17 Viet Cong killed.

Found in the cave complex were an RPG launcher, 16 RPG rounds, a radio, an SKS rifle, a mine, a mortar tube and two mortar baseplates, seven mortar rounds, a machinegun, 11 Chicom hand grenades, two AK-47 magazine, and 25 pounds of rice. All items were extracted to a nearby firebase.

Alpha Company was responsible for finding the unusually large rice cache. Working south of Chu Lai, Alpha discovered more than 30,000 pounds of polished rice hidden in bins and metal containers and buried underground. An unusual rise on the surface of the ground brought the unit's attention to the area.

Because of the possibility of booby traps in the area, a mine sweeping team was called in. The soldiers made good use of the devices and used them to help locate the presence of the hidden barrels of rice.

In the same general area, an aero rifle platoon from F Troop,

(Continued on Page 6)

SOUTHERN CROSS
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Division cannoneers brace themselves against the shock as their 175mm gun roars its defiance to the enemy.
(Photo by 1LT Steve Gailar)

Infantry, artillery, gunships team up to net six

By SGT Louis Miller

LZ BAYONET (198th INF BDE IO) – In an all night action, men from the 198th Infantry Brigade, teaming up with gunships and artillery, turned back an attack on their night defensive position and killed six enemy and destroyed a bunker complex northwest of Chu Lai.

Moving through a heavily vegetated area, Delta Company, 5th Battalion, 46th Infantry, came upon a group of well constructed bunkers on a small hill overlooking the rice paddies below. Members of the company carefully began checking the area for booby traps and signs of enemy activity.

Inside the structures, the "Professionals" found rice, other food items and clothing, and plenty of room for shelter from allied artillery attacks.

"The bunkers were capable of housing about twenty enemy soldiers during an artillery attack," said Captain Gary Watson, Elkhart, Iowa, company commander of Delta. "They could take a direct hit from a 105mm round without causing much damage."

The "Professionals" planted explosives in each of the bunkers and, after detonating the devices, found that another charge was needed to destroy the bunkers.

After finally destroying the bunker complex, the company moved to the lower ground to set up their night defensive position. The infantrymen set up their perimeter about a hundred meters from a woodline, set up their mortars and adjusted their positions.

Then, about dark, movement was detected in the woodline. The mortar platoon was instructed to place several rounds in the area.

A short time later, Private First Class Larry Stevenson, Cordarville, Calif., and Private First Class Michael Kruse, Mosquite, Tex., noticed two enemy soldiers crawling toward their positions.

As one enemy tried to remove an emplaced claymore mine, PFC Stevenson detonated the mine with his triggering device, killing the enemy. At the same time, the other enemy got up and attempted to evade but PFC Kruse brought him down.

A few minutes later more movement was detected and mortars again provided explosive rounds and illumination. When the illumination rounds went up, the presence of two enemy soldiers was revealed a short distance from the perimeter. The enemy, realizing their positions attempted to evade but were killed by a barrage of small arms fire from Delta's position.

"They both ran into a clearing and they made easy targets," recalled Private First Class Richard McCall, Salem, S.C., a rifleman with the "Professionals"

During the remainder of the night, the enemy tried several more times to penetrate the perimeter of Delta Company. Captain Watson requested gunship support from F Troop, 8th Cavalry, and illumination from Charley Battery, 1st Battalion, 14th Artillery. The illumination lit up the area while the gunships pounded the enemy position with rockets and miniguns.

"Each time the gunships left station to reload and refuel, the enemy would come in closer to the perimeter and pick up the dead bodies," recalled First Lieutenant William Kotas, Brooklyn, N.Y., a platoon leader with Delta Company.

The gunships stayed on station with the "Professionals" the remainder of the night placing supressive fire around the perimeter and soon began to take machinegun fire from the site of the destroyed bunker complex. The gunships returned fire on the enemy killing two and bringing the total to six enemy killed during the night-long battle.

The Southern Cross camera caught this candid shot of SP4 David C. Kolpak, a medic with B-Troop, 1st Squadron, 1st Cavalry.
(Photo by SP4 Ed Breidenbach)

Red Cross director wants to help

HAWK HILL (198th INF BDE IO) – A flattened, dusty red hill devoid of green means Landing Zone Hawk Hill, home of the 196th Infantry Brigade, "Chargers."

Also based here is Red Cross Assistant Field Director Fred M. Theilen, Rurlock, Calif. When servicemen have personal or family problems, whether militarily oriented or bad news from home, Theilen is there to offer assistance.

"I want them to know I will always try to help every man who comes to me in any way I can, even if all he needs is someone to talk to... a sounding board for his problems. After all, we are here to provide service to military personnel and that word 'service' covers a wide area," he said.

His job includes more than just sitting at a desk waiting for people to come to him. Often he goes out and hunts up people. Traveling by jeep and helicopter, Theilen visits the firebases of the 196th as often as he can.

"When I get to a firebase, the first sergeant will usually pass the word that the Red Cross is there," Theilen said. "It's then that GI's with problems will come up to talk to me."

When he goes to these isolated spots he often brings "goodies" for the men--items like stationery and pens, combs, nail clippers and heavy vinyl bags to protect personal valuables. He also brings greeting cards, Kool-Aid, magazines and sometimes playing cards.

"They are often the ones who might otherwise not have bothered. That's why the visits are important. It lets the men know you care. And by showing your face everywhere they get to know you. So, when they do have a problem, they'll come and see me."

There are more than 150 Red Cross staff members in strategic locations throughout Vietnam, who assist more than 25,000 American servicemen every month.

A graduate of Stanislaus State College, Turlock, Calif., Theilen dates the beginning of his interest in social service to his student days. "In school you go into what you think you can do best and what you find most interesting. For me it was sociology and psychology."

"People as individuals and in groups fascinated me more than cold mechanical things. From there it was a logical step to turn this interest into efforts to help people in need."

Theilen worked two years as a correctional officer in California. Later he worked with the Job Corps. More than 16 months ago, he joined the Red Cross. "Most people out of college are looking for a better financial situation," he said. "But this was not too important to me, certainly not as much as doing something worthwhile. It may sound corny but I wanted a 'work for humanity' type thing. What attracted me to the Red Cross was the opportunity to serve as well as travel overseas."

"I found I could learn a lot and get excellent counseling experience with the Red Cross. In addition, the organization has an educational incentive program whereby Red Cross will assist you to go back to school for further studies. I hope to take advantage of that. I can get more education and so do a better job."

The special satisfaction of the Red Cross job comes when you know you have really helped a guy out and taken a load off his mind, Theilen noted.

"Sometimes these guys are so grateful, they shake my hand and their grip grinds my ring into my finger. That iron handshake hurts physically, but it's a great booster."

5/46th aids school, road building

By SGT Thomas C. Elmer

LZ BAYONET (198th INF BDE IO) – The people of Tich Tay (2) wanted a new school and the people of Long Phu (2) needed a road to a market place, and both hamlets were willing to build the necessary structures, but they needed help.

The answer was the Civil Affairs section of the 5th Battalion, 46th Infantry, of the 198th Brigade, which is helping the people help themselves.

"The people needed a school in Tich Tay," said Sergeant First Class Gaylord A. Thomas, Columbus, Ga., Civil Affairs NCOIC with the 5th of the 46th. "But before they could begin construction, they needed cement, reinforcement rods and lumber."

SFC Thomas, coordinating with the Civil Operations Rural Development Support (CORDS) representative in Ly Tin District, who approved the people's request for the material, acquired the material and the villagers began work.

"The people do all the work themselves," said Thomas. "They make their own bricks from the cement, construct the rafters from the lumber and do all the construction without outside help."

The building of the school has progressed well and after three months' work the building is nearing completion. All that is needed to finish the project is the corrugated metal, which the province will furnish.

"The school means much to the people," said Sergeant Nguyen Duy Khue, interpreter for the Civil Affairs section. "When the school is finished, nearly 200 children will attend."

The children are now going to school in An Tan and must pay tuition to attend. Tich Tay already has two teachers ready to instruct the children when the school is completed.

Also under construction with the support of the "Professionals" is a road connecting Tich Tay with the hamlet of Long Phu. The road will cover about 1500 meters between the hamlets and will provide an access to Long Phu for motorized vehicles. Previously, Long Phu could only be reached by foot over a small trail.

"The people managed to get rock and gravel from a nearby quarry," said SFC Thomas. "But they needed culverts to allow the water to run between the rice paddies. We managed to acquire enough culverts to construct the six crossings needed."

The road, when finished, will allow the people of Long Phu to reach Tich Tay and then to travel the road to Highway One.

"Much of the produce raised by the villagers of Long Phu is marketed in An Tan on Highway One," said SGT Nguyen Duy Khue. "Now the people can transport their produce to An Tan with their motorized carts and trucks."

The construction of the road and the school is largely a self-help project and the people of Tich Tay and Long Phu are working enthusiastically to complete construction. But without the aid being given by the 5-46th, the projects might still be only a plan.

4-21 nets 7-ton rice cache

By PFC Joseph F. Alward

FSB DEBBIE (11th INF BDE IO) – Grateful villagers living near here on the southern boundary of the First Military Region have watched their food vaults grow to record size as a result of determined searches by elements of the 11th Brigade.

The smiles on their faces give testimony to their appreciation of the unexpected dividends which come at the expense of the enemy. During the latter part of April and the month of May, the 4th Battalion, 21st Infantry "Gimlets" recovered more than 7 tons of stolen rice from the enemy.

Continuing searches by the battalion in southern Quang Ngai Province are still yielding thousands of pounds of the enemy-stored rice, most of which is redistributed to the local villagers.

One of the more successful of recent sweep operations was conducted by two companies from the 4th Bn. 21st Inf., in the lowlands near Duc Pho. The four-day search and clear operation netted seven caches within a six-square mile area, for a total of nearly 14,000 pounds of rice.

First Lieutenant John P. Lappini, Cambridge, Mass., the commanding officer of Bravo Company, explained, "The small hamlets suspected of being VC-influenced would be cordoned by one platoon while another would conduct an intensive search in, around and under the various hootches. Most often we would discover half buried 55-gallon drums full of rice concealed in nearby hedgerows. More conspicuous containers were found with an 18-inch layer of potatoes on top. But underneath it was all rice."

All of the rice gathered during the four-day operation was evacuated to FSB Bronco for subsequent redistribution.

Newly assigned Dolly makes troops cry 'short'

CHU LAI (AMERICAL IO) – Whenever a division soldier asks Terre Deegan how long she's been in Vietnam, her answer makes him feel short.

"I've been here almost a month," the 1970 graduate of the University of St. Louis admits, "and when the guys on the firebases find out, they go wild. All you can hear for a few minutes is people yelling 'short'."

Terre is from Downers Grove Ill., a suburban community 25 miles southwest of Chicago. "But when people ask where I'm from, I just say Chicago," she says. "It saves a lot of explanations."

A few months after she received her degree, Terre decided she wanted to come to Vietnam. "When you see people like Bob Hope and Martha Raye and the tours they make to Vietnam, it fires you up. I wanted to see what I could do to help, too," she said.

"A friend of mine told me I didn't have to be an entertainer to be a Donut Dolly, but I didn't find out until later that the American Red Cross sponsors the program," she added.

"When I finally found out I would be going to Vietnam, my friends were surprised. Some said I was crazy, but others said something like, 'you must be crazy, but now, what an experience'."

"They were right. It's been an experience so far. I hesitate to say I love it–I've been here only a short while–but it looks like I've started out lucky."

"Sometimes I worry a little about becoming a phony. When you're riding in a jeep and everyone is waving, it could make you feel like a homecoming quen or something. I hope I don't get that way," she noted.

And the rest of the Americal Division hopes she stays the way she is, too.

This eight-inch gun from Delta Battery, 1st Battalion, 82nd Artillery is silhouetted against the evening sky after a day of support to division soldiers.
(Photo by SP4 Gerard Paulin)

SOUTHERN CROSS
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After humping all morning these division soldiers move into a day laager position south of LZ Siberia. The men are from Bravo Company, 1st Battalion, 46th Infantry, 196th Infantry Brigade. (Photo By PFC James Dunn, 523rd Sig. Bn.)

11th Bde cuts enemy rations

By SP4 Gregory P. Wright

FSB BRONCO (11th INF BDE IO) – "Rice!" exclaimed a disgusted 11th Infantry Brigade soldier recently as he shoveled rice into bags for transportation from the field. "What can the Army possibly do with all this rice?"

Questions such as this are fairly common whenever an 11th Brigade unit uncovers an enemy rice cache. The men in the field take it for granted that they must find the enemy's food, but wonder why the trouble is taken to save it.

In the long run the answer is simple. The rice is returned to the Vietnamese people. But with a staggering 450 tons of the VC foodstuff discovered since the first of the year anyone might wonder just how much rice the Vietnamese are capable of eating.

According to Major Robert W. McLaughlin, Providence, R.I., 11th Brigade S-5, only a portion of the rice in any cache is immediately delivered to the Vietnamese District Chief for distribution to needy people in his area.

About 200 tons have been delivered to the people straight from various cache sites in this manner. The remaining rice is bagged and brought to this firebase for storage until further need arises in the 11th Brigade area of operations.

Approximately 100 tons of this stored rice have been doled out to various villages and orphanages for celebrations, village dedications, and other special occasions. In addition, the "Jungle Warriors" are ready to respond to pleas for food from outside the 11th Brigade area of operations.

Knowing this, the Vietnamese people in this area may be assured that should they lose their crops, for any reason, they will not starve. The doors of the 11th Brigade's warehouses stand ready to be opened whenever the need arises.

Rice which is taken from the people by way of threats and extortion is returned to the rightful owners to ease their hunger and win their support for the GVN.

Former VC sapper now 11th Bde scout

FSB BRONCO (11th INF BDE IO) – Pham Van Binh was drafted into a local Viet Cong sapper company in August, 1969, but three months of life with the VC was enough for him and he, along with three comrades, slipped away from his company's mountain sanctuary and allied himself with elements of the 2nd ARVN Division near Quang Ngai City.

Following the customary short period of orientation in Quang Ngai, Binh, then 18 years old, volunteered his services as a scout for the Americal Division. He became a fully-accredited Kit Carson Scout in November 1969 after graduating from Chu Lai's four week scout course where he studied English.

In February of this year, Pham Binh was assigned to Alpha Company, 4th Battalion, 21st Infantry. His cheerful personality soon won him the friendship of the entire unit. During his seven months of service he performed creditably as a scout for the "Gimlets" and has been awarded the Bronze Star for Service.

In late August, Binh returned with Alpha Company to the familiar surroundings of his home for the first time since becoming a Hoi Chanh. In response to intelligence reports of heavy enemy troop movements, the Gimlets established LZ Ann in the flatlands near Binh's home, 25 miles southwest of Chu Lai.

"Binh knew that area like the back of his hand," recalled Sergeant Keith H. Harwell, Memphis, Tenn., the second platoon leader. "I think he had become a little bored just sitting around helping secure the day laager. He was excited about being so near his home and he couldn't keep still. Shortly after dark Binh walked outside the perimeter and called back for some of us to follow him."

Members of the second platoon, led by Sergeant Kenneth Bosc, Terre Haute, Ind., followed Binh to an abandoned hootch area where he began using the "thump" method on the ground, listening for the hollow sound which would signal the presence of something buried.

"He seemed to know there was rice there, even before we arrived at the location," explained Bosc. "After Binh uncovered the first barrel, which was buried under 10 inches of dirt, we intensified our search and found 11 more."

"Eight of the barrels had recently been emptied," added Harwell. "Binh found signs indicating that a platoon of NVA soldiers had been recently drawing their rations from this cache. The four remaining barrels, however, were full of polished rice, about 2,500 pounds. We were unable to evacuate the rice so we destroyed all but a small portion which Binh kept that evening and ate," concluded Harwell.

ARVN engineers reopen road to Hiep Duc

By PFC Don Newton

LZ HAWK HILL (196th INF BDE IO) – ARVN engineers recently reopened the only road which connects the coastal areas from Highway One with Hiep Duc, a village area located in the mountainous terrain west of Tam Ky.

No convoys had used the throughway since November, 1969, when a resupply convoy last rolled into Hiep Duc loaded with foodstuff for the villagers. These villagers have remained under the security of a control-fire zone in the 196th Infantry Brigade.

The 2nd ARVN Engineers, working out of Tam Ky, repaired an approximate eight mile section of the road which enters the village of Hiep Duc and its surrounding hamlets. Marine engineers of the 1st Division had maintained eastern portions of the road which originates at Da Nang.

"ARVN engineers swept the area for mines, installed culverts and graded the road with minimal assistance from our advisory team," said Captain Aaron D. Evans, American Fork, Utah, commander for Company A, 26th Engineers, here at Hawk Hill. "It showed them what they'll have to do when we pull out."

"The ARVN engineers impressed me," added Platoon Sergeant Cecil Collins, Middletown, Ohio, Company A, 26th Engineers. "In a two-hour period one afternoon they finished construction on three 20-foot long culverts. That's optimum efficiency in my book."

ARVN infantrymen supplied coordinated security for their own engineers and the American advisors throughout the eight-mile operation. "It gave me confidence to know the PFs were out there," said Sergeant Collins. "And they always were. When one company of PFs reached the border of their area of operations, another company would immediately pick us up."

The projected three-day allied operation was finished successfully in two days, allowing a small ARVN convoy to reach the Hiep Duc people with foodstuffs a day early.

Enemy resistance during the road repairing involved only one estimated 12-pound mine, which ARVN engineers detected and blew in place. No firefights occurred, thanks to tight security precautions.

"When you build such a road, it's comparable to a similar event in the days of the 'old West'," commented Captain John A. Cope, Jackson Heights, N.Y., operations officer for 3rd Battalion, 21st Infantry.

"You're bringing the frontier closer to civilization," continued Captain Cope. "We have linked to the pacified areas along Highway One. In so doing, we should solidify the government's control of the entire area, thus pushing back the enemy's sphere of influence while weakening it at the same time.

Engrs, Cav team up to kill 4

By SP4 Terry Williamson

LZ BAYONET (198th INF BDE IO) – H Troop 17th Cavalry quickly answered a call for support from Bravo Company, 26th Engineer Battalion, and with help from gunships, killed four VC and repelled heavy sniper fire in the division's 198th Infantry Brigade area of operations south of Chu Lai.

The engineers were conducting a road sweep operation when they came under heavy small arms fire from approximately 12 VC from a nearby woodline. H Troop was a short distance away waiting for a convoy for which they were to provide security.

The engineers immediately called for support form the nearby tracks. One sheridan assault vehicle and three armored personnel carriers quickly answered the call and took a position on a small hill overlooking the woodline that contained the enemy element.

"We opened fire with our .50 caliber and M-60 machineguns," said Sergeant Lucion J. Broadstreet, Gary, Ind. "That stopped a lot of the enemy fire right then, but we were still getting sporadic fire from the woodline."

The Sheridan then moved into position on the small hill and began to unleash a flurry of cannister and heat rounds at the point of hostile contact.

"I fired three canister rounds and one heat round into the woodline, and the VC started withdrawing from the area," said Sergeant Donald K. Tate, Norphlet, Ark., a member of the Sheridan assault vehicle crew.

At this point it appeared that the enemy soldiers had evaded to the other side of a river that lay in back of the woodline. Sergeant Tate then made a request for gunship support in an effort to cut off the enemy escape route. Within minutes, gunships from the 176th Aviation Company were raking the area with mini-gun and rocket fire.

"I only saw two of the enemy when we got on the top of the hill, and after we had fired on the area, I didn't see any more. But we were still getting a small amount of fire," Sergeant Tate said. "That's when I realized that I might need gunship support if they made it to the otherside of the river."

When all enemy resistance had been quelled by H Troop and gunships, the tracks made their way back to complete their former mission of securing the convoy.

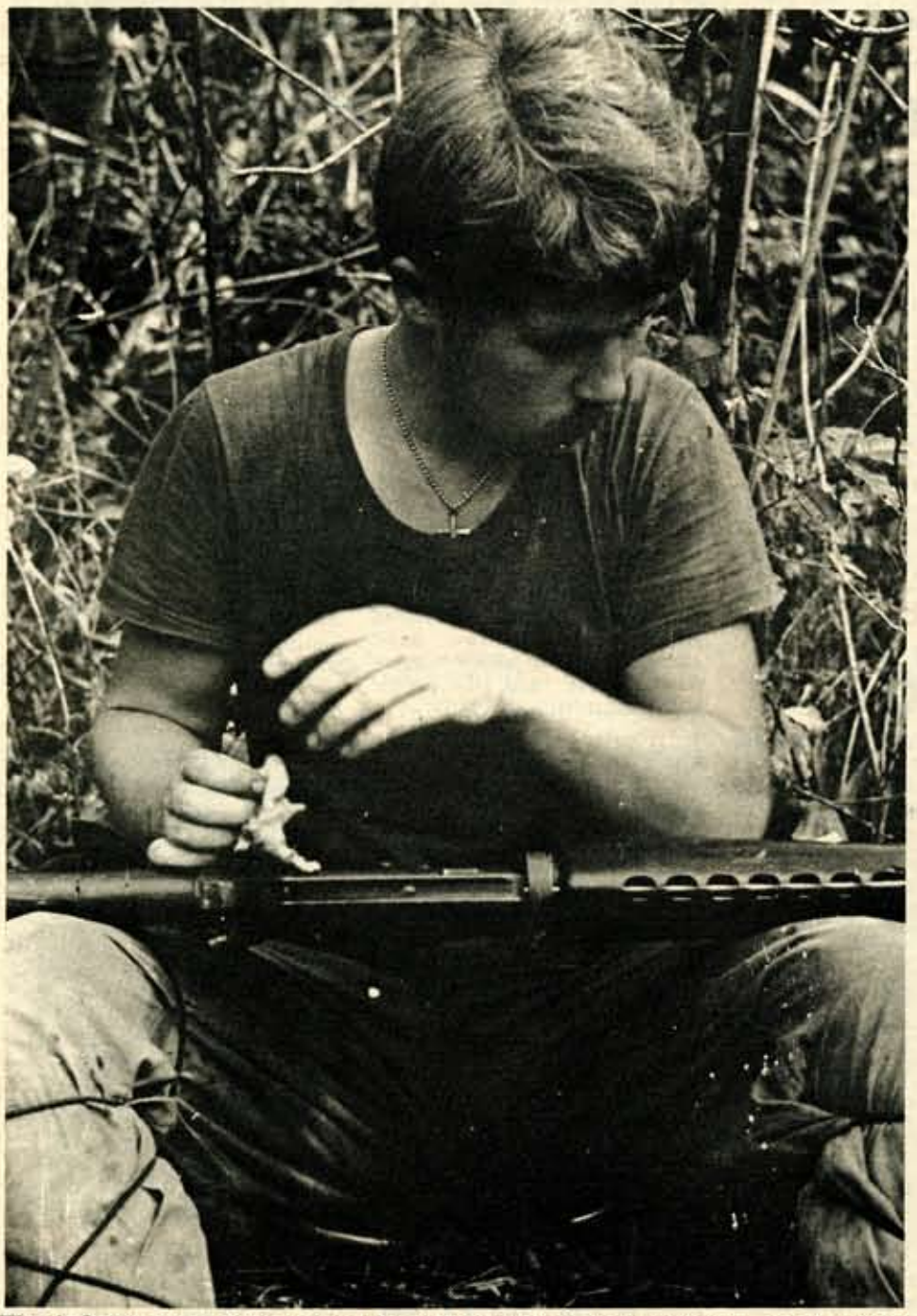
A Popular Force team swept the area of contact and found four VC that had been killed in the action. Two of the enemy had been killed in the initial contact by H Troop, and two had been killed by gunships. Also found was on AK-47 rifle.

Infantrymen from the division's 1st Battalion, 46th Infantry, 196th Infantry Brigade and armored personnel carriers from the 1st Squadron, 1st Cavalry, work their way up a hill on a mission near Hiep Duc. (Photo by SP4 Herbert Brady, 523rd Sig. Bn.)

Out in 'the bush' with Charlie Company, 3rd

"Tigers" run toward a resupply bird as it lands in an open field. The "Tigers" of Company C, 3rd Battalion, 21st Infantry, 196th Infantry Brigade, were on a sweep and clear operation northwest of Tam Ky.

Charlie Company Infantrymen n
northwest of Tam Ky.



The infantrymen of Company C, 3rd Battalion, 21st Infantry, don't waste time during a break period. This "Tiger" is making use of a break to clean his M-16.

Photographs by Specialist Four Robert A. Spangler

A "Tiger" on point is no exaggeration in the case of this "Gimlet" from Compa

Bn, 21st Inf

ke their way through tall grass while on a sweep

Members of Company C move out across an open field northwest of Tam Ky while on a sweep and clear operation.

C, 3rd Battalion, 21st Infantry.

A member of the 48th Scout Dog Platoon gives his thirsty dog a drink. The scout dog team was working with Company C, 3rd Battalion, 21st Infantry, 196th Infantry Brigade.

Troopers see moderate action

(Continued from page 1)

8th Cavalry, was inserted and found an additional 2,000 pounds of rice. Alpha Company prepared the rice for extraction to Son Tinh District for further redistribution to refugee centers and orphanages.

Frederick Hill

"Blue Ghost" gunships started the week with three kills from mini-gun fire during a Night Hawk mission. Later that day, Charlie Company, 1st Battalion, 46th Infantry, encountered two VC during a sweep and clear mission northwest of Tam Ky. The element of surprise was instrumental in the deaths of the enemy soldiers.

Less than 10 minutes after they were airlifted into double canopy jungle northwest of Tam Ky, Recon Platoon, 3d Battalion, 21st Infantry, flushed out two VC. Both enemy were killed and a pack, containing personal items and medical supplies was confiscated.

The next day, Recon Platoon, 1st Battalion, 46th Infantry, killed two VC while on a sweep southwest of Tam Ky. Four Viet Cong met their demise at the hands of Company B, 2nd Battalion, 1st Infantry, northwest of Tam Ky on the same day. Eight Chicom grenades and five pounds of rice were confiscated.

While on a search and clear mission southwest of Tam Ky during mid-week, Recon, 1st-46th, ran into two VC. Small arms fire from the "Professionals" killed one while the other fled southwest. The "Legionnaires" of the 2nd Battalion, 1st Infantry, killed two VC and captured two Chicom grenades northwest of Tam Ky.

Iron Mountain

Alpha Company, 1-20th Infantry, observed three VC at 300 meters while patrolling along the coast southeast of Quang Ngai City. The infantrymen engaged the VC, killing two while the third escaped to the southwest.

"Jungle Warriors" from the 11th Brigade accounted for six KIA's, while three other units added another three kills in the brigade's area of operations. In a stay-behind ambush, the 4th Platoon of Delta Company, 3-1st Infantry, killed four VC with small arms and M-79 fire.

A Recon element of the 1st Battalion, 20th Infantry, in two separate actions, netted two kills in the lowlands northwest of Duc Pho. The "Sykes Regulars" also captured three AK-47s, an automatic weapon, a pistol belt, three AK magazines and pieces of another AK-47 rifle.

Gunships of the 174th Aviation Company discovered one dead VC southwest of Duc Pho. The kill was attributed to D-Battery, 6-11 Artillery.

"Warlords" of the 123rd Aviation's Bravo Company, accounted for two more kills in the area of operations.

Later in the week "Sharks" of the 174th Aviation Company, observed five to six enemy soldiers with packs in the foothills west of Quang Ngai City. The gunships engaged the enemy and then inserted Delta Company, 3-1st Infantry. One VC kill was credited to the 174th Aviation Company and four were credited to Delta Company, 3-1st.

A young girl and her brother stare apprehensively at the camera as they eat a mid-morning bowl of rice in a hamlet 10 miles northwest of Tam Ky. The hamlet was used as a defensive position by two soldiers from B Troop, 1st/1st Cavalry and Regional Force troops.

(Photo by SP4 Ed Breidenbach)

Six NVA ambushed

By PFC Joseph F. Alward

FSB BRONCO (11th INF BDE IO) – Four AK-47s, one RPG launcher with RPGs and 30 Chicom grenades made up the bulk of the items confiscated by soldiers from Company A, 4th Battalion, 3rd Infantry during an operation which also netted six NVA soldiers.

One NVA, carrying an AK-47, 50 rounds of ammo and food, walked into an early morning ambush, which had been set up by the Third Platoon of Alpha Company.

"We heard movement coming down the trail toward our location so when the NVA entered our kill zone we blew our claymore," reported Sergeant George Larsh, Pontiac, Mich. The area was reconned with M-79s and hand grenades before being entered and the lone NVA was found dead on the trail.

With numerous signs of enemy activity in the area, another ambush was set up farther down the trail, an ambush which eventually netted the "Mountainmen" five more NVA before the day was over.

The Third Platoon saw action again late that afternoon when voices were heard moving down the trail toward the waiting infantrymen's location.

"We thought there were only two NVA coming since we heard only two people talking, so we only detonated one claymore," said Sergeant James Rippl, Neenah, Wis. The area was again reconned with M-79s and hand grenades before being entered. With good security out the men cautiously entered the area. To the surprise of most, not two but four NVA were found.

"We thought there were only two NVA so we were surprised to see how much damage the one claymore actually did," reported Private First Class Gordon Pooley, Jackson Heights, N.Y. Confiscated from the scene were two AK-47s, one RPG launcher with RPGs, charges and fuses, 30 Chicom grenades and 26 one-pound explosives.

Another claymore was set up near the bodies in hope that their companions would be around. The arrival of the victim's cohort was sooner than expected. Staff Sergeant Stephen Jones, Kokomo, Ind., and two other members of the platoon were pulling security and spotted another NVA moving down the trail. They engaged the enemy and killed him. His AK-47 was confiscated.

Quick-thinking GI fools NVA soldiers

By SGT Chuck Merdzinski

FSB BRONCO (11th INF BDE IO) – A six-foot-five division infantryman from 1st Battalion, 20th Infantry, 11th Infantry Brigade recently played the role of the tallest NVA soldier in Vietnam and tricked three NVA soldiers into believing that he was one of their comrades.

Private First Class John Bechtell, San Jose, Calif., was with the second platoon of Company A, on a night operation 18 miles north of Duc Pho at the time. The men had moved a mile and a half after dark before selecting a position in a dense woodline where they could observe a path crossing an open field.

When a light rain began to fall, PFC Bechtell covered himself with an NVA poncho made of thin green plastic that he had found. Glancing 15 meters to his left he suddenly found himself staring face-to-face with three NVA soldiers who were walking parallel to woodline.

"They seemed to have come from out of nowhere," explained Bechtell. "The brush near my position was too thick to allow me to see to the sides and it would have been impossible to see them from any distance due to the route they took.

"I heard a slight noise so I turned and they were standing there just staring at me. They definitely thought I was an NVA soldier, probably because of the poncho and the fact that we were so far out of our normal area."

"The moon was bright and I could see their pointman giving me a big smile. When I started to slowly move for my M-60 he said something in Vietnamese in a friendly tone of voice."

In seconds that seemed like hours, Bechtell inched his hands toward the machinegun. He then stood up and fired a burst of rounds that killed one and wounded the other two enemy soldiers.

The guerrillas were carrying one carbine and a rucksack containing NVA uniforms, supplies and a Chicom Grenade.

Delta Co., 5-46th reverses attack to net enemy pair

By SGT Thomas C. Elmer

LZ BAYONET (198th INF BDE IO) – Division infantrymen often find the need to replenish their water supply but a recent water patrol ended up permanently quenching the thirst of two NVA.

The patrol from Delta Company, 5th Battalion, 46th Infantry, working northwest of Chu Lai, had moved several hundred meters toward a stream at the base of a hill when the element leader motioned the patrol to halt. At this location he left his machinegun team to provide security as the remainder of the element approached the stream a few meters beyond.

"We left the machinegun and moved to the stream," said Specialist Four Perry Weatherman, Springfield, Mo., a squad leader with the element. "As soon as I began filling my canteen, several NVA opened up on us with AK-47s."

Weatherman and several others with him immediately returned fire but contact was soon broken. The men returned to their machinegun team to set up a hasty perimeter. Weatherman called his command post and asked for a platoon to join them to make a sweep of the area. After the platoon arrived, the infantrymen crossed the stream and moved to check out the area from which the fire had come.

"I was walking point and as we approached a bend in the river I spotted a blood trail," said Specialist Four Mike Druso, Mesquite, Tex., a rifleman with Delta Company. "We continued to follow the blood trail and soon came upon two NVA bodies. One was lying close to the stream and the other beneath some brush several feet from the stream."

The infantrymen also found one AK-47, three Chicom grenades and two jungle machetes. And they finally got their water.

Keeping his gun pit clean during a fire mission, this cannoneer of Delta Battery, 1st Battalion, 14th Artillery, hurls a spent 105 millimeter cannister out of the parapit.

(Photo by SP5 A.C. Barnett)

Just What Every Good Male Man Needs

Strictly a cover-up Edy Williams likes to get close to her pen pals as she prepares to read her fan mail. Miss Williams co-stars in 20th Century Fox's, "Beyond the Valley of the Dolls." We wonder what is beyond her valley?

Combat Center provides vital services for div

By PFC Lee Habich

CHU LAI (AMERICAL IO) – Since its first day of operation, December 17, 1967, over 50,000 incoming troops have passed through the division's Combat Center. In its first month alone the center processed 2,100 replacements, no mean feat for the young organization.

The Combat Center, created by General Order 1398 shortly after the division established headquarters in Chu Lai, has continually broadened its training classes to keep pace with the changing tactics of guerrilla warfare. Today, in addition to its replacement program, the Center conducts 125 different classes in five intensive training programs.

Regardless of our final assignment in the division, each of us in the division spends approximately a week at the Center. It is during this time, points out training coordinator Sergeant First Class John G. Austin, Natchez, Miss., "that the Center strives to refresh individual combat skills as well as familiarize incoming personnel with the division area of operations."

The staff, consisting solely of combat veterans, is more than adequately prepared to discuss in depth this area of operations.

Individuals having a non-combat MOS receive 23 periods of instruction during their stay at the Center. Topics covered range from Vietnamese relations to sapper techniques. Those with the combat MOS receive additional blocks of instruction such as communications security, map reading and survival tactics. In total, combat personnel attend 37 different classes.

While a great many of us sever ties with the Combat Center upon receiving our assignment orders, there are a number of other programs available at the Center for members of the division.

The senior of these programs is the Combat Leadership program. Originally established to alleviate the demand for NCOs during the formative days of division operations, the program has proven to be a lucrative source of squad leaders for combat units. It involves 12 days of intensive leadership training and is given to individuals who have spent three to four months in the field.

When it became obvious that the leadership school was making a valuable contribution to division effectiveness, the program was broadened to include combat support elements. Today both programs operate side by side with a slightly different emphasis determined by the nature of the unit involved.

In addition to the leadership schools the Combat Center maintains a reconnaissance program which trains whole platoon size elements. The emphasis is on field maneuver calling for close coordination among a large number of men. The Center also has an ARVN officer program which stresses leadership and forward observer techniques.

An interesting sidenote about the Center is that in addition to passing through it upon our arrival to the Americal, everyone leaving the division again processes through it. This is done through the liaison team which the Center maintains around the clock at the Chu Lai airport. In a very real sense it might be said that the Combat Center provides the uniting links in the division

1st-6th silences noisy enemy

By SGT Louis Miller

LZ BAYONET (198th INF BDE IO) – Two separate elements of Viet Cong violated the age old principle of noise discipline over a period of several days and infantrymen of Bravo Company, 1st Battalion, 6th Infantry capitalized on the mistakes by killing five, detaining four and capturing several weapons and munitions in an area south of Chu Lai.

Bravo Company was only a short distance from their previous night's defensive position when members of the "Regulars" heard loud voices coming from the far bank of a nearby river.

After the platoon leader halted his men, Sergeant Dennis Linn, Atlanta, Ga., and two other men went to the river bank to investigate the noise. After observing several Viet Cong with weapons, Linn sent one man back for the rest of the element.

"When the rest of the men reached us," Sergeant Linn recalled, "we spread everyone out on a line and opened up on the enemy."

A short time later, Bravo sent an element across the river and found two Viet Cong killed and one wounded. The wounded enemy was evacuated to a Chu Lai hospital.

The "Regulars" then followed a blood trail and found two more Viet Cong, both wounded from the contact, hiding underwater and using bamboo shoots to breathe.

Several days later, the enemy's carelessnes in noise discipline again took its toll. Bravo Company was setting up an evening perimeter when members of an element spotted a woman heading toward their position. About 600 meters from the perimeter, the woman passed on some food and other items to a Viet Cong who appeared from the brush along the trail. Then the woman continued toward Bravo's location.

"When she came right up on us all we had to do was reach out and grab her," said Sergeant Linn.

Later in the evening the "Regulars" again heard voices, this time the noise was coming from the south. "There was only one problem," said Linn. "There was a large sand dune between us and the enemy and we couldn't see them, we just heard them coming."

But the enemy soldiers kept advancing and stopped just short of Bravo's position, chatting and lighting up cigarettes. The Regulars then opened up on the enemy, killing two. At first light the company swept the area and found a blood trail and a knife. The men followed the trail and found another Viet Cong who had been killed during the contact.

The enemy's hard-learned lesson on noise discipline cost them a total of five killed, four detained, five rifles, 10 Chicom grenades and one knife.

Division infantrymen make a hasty exit from the area after an insertion three miles south of LZ Siberia. The men were part of 1st Battalion, 46th Infantry, 196th Brigade on a search and clear mission.

(Photo by PFC James N. Dunn, 523rd Sig. Bn.)

Two members of 3rd Platoon, Bravo Troop, 1st Squadron, 1st Cavalry attempt to trace the trouble of their APC while in a defensive position 10 miles northwest of Tam Ky.

(Photo by SP4 Ed Breidenbach)

'Refit' is welcome break from field

By SGT Louis Miller

LZ BAYONET (198th INF BDE IO) – Tired, dirty and sweaty but full of smiles and anticipation about the next several days of rest, recreation and relaxation is how "refit" begins for infantrymen of the division's 198th Infantry Brigade.

Refit is scheduled periodically to allow the infantrymen from the line units time to leave the field and spent several days at Chu Lai, where they can rest and attend to some of the things that cannot be taken care of in the field. In refit, steaks replace C-rations, hot showers replace steel pot baths, and floor shows replace patrols.

"The one thing I enjoy is having running water and being able to turn it on and off," explained Staff Sergeant David Fuller, Binghampton, N.Y., Alpha Company, 1st Battalion, 6th Infantry.

Another pleasure is wearing new, clean uniforms. Haircuts are another must and the men have a chance to visit the dentist and submit, reluctantly, to having their shot records updated. Other administrative items are also completed, including having dog tags and identification cards made up, and having finance records looked over.

But what the men really enjoy during refit is doing nothing. The 198th Infantry Brigade's refit area is located on the beach at Chu Lai. Here the tired troopers spend most of their time sleeping, sunning and swimming, and all without having to worry about setting up a defensive perimeter. And there is time for touch football, card playing and letter writing.

The men also spend a great deal of time commuting between the refit area and the main PX where they get the chance to buy items they could only think about in the field.

The entertainment highlight is the daily floor show, which is held early in the afternoon. The men can enjoy the music and dancing that were just thoughts in the "bush".

One other popular service available on refit comes from the Army MARS station where radio-telephone calls can be placed back to the "world". But the three minutes of conversation seems to last only a few seconds. Private First Class Soloman Witman, Chicago, Alpha Company, 1st Battalion, 6th Infantry, remembered, "Everyone was so happy to hear from me that all I listened to was three minutes of crying."

The least awaited event of refit is the inevitable final morning when the men have to return to the field.

"Sometimes you're more tired when you leave than when you get in," recalled Specialist Four Allen Greenman, Marshal, Mich.

Pointman foils booby-trap

By SP4 Terry Williamson

LZ BAYONET (198th INF BDE IO) – "I thought my time was up," related an infantryman from the 198th Brigade after he had tripped a Viet Cong booby-trap. But his nerve racking experience was just beginning.

The booby trap made a mere popping sound and failed to go off, but Sergeant Byron McConnaughey, Bonner Springs, Kan., point man for the second platoon of Charlie Company, 1st Battalion, 52nd Infantry, saw that the well-concealed trap had a delay time fuse on it. He realized that it could still go off.

"I told everyone to go back because I didn't know how big the booby trap was at the time," McConnaughey said. "Since I had found the booby trap the hard way, I thought I'd better do something about it before it blew up in my face."

He unscrewed the timing device, which also contained a blasting cap and a primer from a rifle round, and calmly threw it to the side of the hill.

Another scare was thrown into the platoon when the men were preparing demolitions to blow up the booby trap. The blasting cap on the timing device finally went off just about 15 minutes after the vine had been tripped.

"That really frightened me when I realized the thing actually worked," said McConnaughey.

The platoon blew the artillery round in place and continued moving toward their destination with Sgt McConnaughey, still walking point, a bit unnerved perhaps but still walking steady, according to the other platoon members.