Allies Battle At Ha Thanh

By PFC KENNETH AINSLIE
11th Inf. Bde.

LZ BRONCO—The village of Ha Thanh, swallowed up in a valley 18 miles west of Quang Ngai City, has become the object of persistent harassment by combined Viet Cong-NVA forces.

The small village is the site of a Special Forces camp which plays a strategic part in protecting Quang Ngai City from infiltrating NVA units from the west. Hampered in troop and supply movements through this valley, the communists have begun an attempt to eliminate the Green Beret barricade. For this purpose, estimated battalions-sized enemy units have dug in around the tiny fortress.

Allied Units

But allied units in the area have been quick to react to the situation, and a combined force of Civilian Irregular Defense Group soldiers (CIDG), Mike Forces, Popular Forces, Regional Forces, a handful of Special Forces advisors, and 11th Inf. Bde. liason personnel have joined in the camp's defense.

Situated nearby to reinforce the camp with fire support are elements of the 6th Bn., 11th Arty., and 3rd Bn., 1st Inf.

The build-up of communist forces around Ha Thanh continued on a steady scale until the NVA assaulted a strategic OP protecting the camp.

Before Dawn

Before dawn, an estimated NVA company attacked and overran Outpost 4 about one and one-half miles west of the main camp. Air strikes throughout that day and the next kept the enemy pinned down and prevented their

(Continued on Page 8)

SOUTHERN CROSS
AMERICAL DIVISION

Vol. 1, No. 9 | CHU LAI, VIETNAM | October 11, 1968

HOVERING HUEY—A division soldier guides the landing of an 11th Inf. Bde. helicopter at the strategic Special Forces Camp of Ha Thanh west of Quang Ngai City. (Photo by SP4 Michael Reckeweg, 11th Inf. Bde.)

300 Killed

NVA Force Smashed

By PFC DEAN NORLAND
Staff Writer

HAWK HILL—On a rainsoaked battlefield in the flooded rice paddies near Tam Ky, soldiers of the Americal Division killed 300 NVA regulars in two days of fighting.

The 1st Sqdn., 1st Armored Cav., and three companies of the 198th Bde. and one company of the 11th Bde. under the Cav's. operational control combined forces with F Trp., 8th Cav. helicopter gunships and Air Force jets to rout an estimated battalion-size enemy force.

The first morning of the battle, "Dragoons" from B Trp. and D Co., 4th Bn., 21st Inf., began the action against well-entrenched NVA soldiers.

Furious Firefight

LTC Richard D. Lawrence, commander of the 1st Sqdn., 1st Armored Cav., directed the ground attacks. "The action during the first afternoon was one of the most furious firefights that the squadron has been in since I've been here," he recalled.

Forward air controlled jet strikes were called in to soften up the enemy positions. Then night fell on the first day of battle and the Americal troops kept an eye on suspected enemy positions waiting for the fight to resume in the morning.

Additional Units

During that first night, Cos. A, B, and C of the 1st Bn., 52nd Inf., 198th Bde. joined the forces on the scene.

The next morning dawned gray and wet. The rain of the day before continued without let up. More air strikes were called, and helicopter gunships of F Trp., 8th Cav., fired at the enemy.

Steps were taken to seal possible escape routes. Elements of A Trp. of the "Dragoons" and D Co. of the

(Continued on Page 8)

Recaptured Howitzer Fires Back At VC

LZ BRONCO—"Back to Charlie, compliments of the 'Old Guard'" read the inscription on the artillery round. It was being sent to the enemy through the barrel of the 105mm howitzer that the 4th Bn., 3rd Inf., recaptured from the Viet Cong recently.

The weapon was at LZ Chevy, fire support base for Operation Champaign Grove, and MG Charles M. Gettys was on hand to pull the lanyard.

The general remembered a similar ceremony involving the 11th Inf. Bde.'s 6th Bn.,

See Photo-Story Page 3

11th Arty., in late August. At that time, SGT Gerald L. Smith, a gunner in the battalion's C Btry., accidently fired Division Artillery's two millionth round while briefing the general on how to operate the gun.

So the general asked for SGT Smith. "You did such a fine job firing the two millionth round that I would like you to fire this one," he said with a grin. And once again, SGT Smith stepped up to the howitzer, grabbed the lanyard, and fired the round, assisted by General Gettys.

198th Bde, Discovers NVA Camp

LZ BAYONET—It was the first day in a new operational area for the 1st Bn., 52nd Inf. of the 198th Bde., and C Co. was on a sweep 12 miles west of Tam Ky. Suddenly, they came into contact with an unkown size enemy force.

After a brief firefight and tactical air strikes, the enemy began to flee, with the "Ready Rifles" close at their heels. It was during this advance that the soldiers discovered a battalion base camp, along with five enemy bodies.

The area was honeycombed with trenches, and commo wire was strung throughout the camp connecting bunkers and spider holes with command posts.

(Continued on Page 8)

New Commander

CHU LAI — Lieutenant Colonel Ronald R. Richardson has assumed command of the 5th Bn., 46th Infantry of the 198th Infantry Brigade. He replaces Lieutenant Colonel David K. Lyons, who has been assigned to the Americal Division's G-4.

RECAPTURED ROAR—Men of the 6th Bn., 11th Arty., fire a round at the enemy with a 105mm howitzer recently recaptured by the 4th Bn., 3rd Inf. On hand is division commander, MG Charles M. Gettys (far right). (Photo by PFC Kenneth Ainslie, 11th Inf. Bde.)

Religion And You

Frog On The Burner

By CHAPLAIN (LTC) JACK C. RANDLES
Asst. Div. Chaplain

I am not an expert on bullfrogs. Once, however, I read the results of an experiment upon one. There is no way I can determine the truth of what was claimed, but I do believe it serves as a good illustration for all of us.

It appears that a bullfrog was put into a pan of water, which was at room temperature. A Bunsen burner was then placed beneath the pan at sufficient distance to heat the water at a rate of .017 degrees per second.

The report maintains that the frog did not move throughout the experiment and died at the end of two and one half hours. He had been boiled alive.

In the 150 minute period, the water temperature changed 153 degrees. At no time was the change abrupt enough for the frog to notice, and he was thus lulled into a state of insensitivity and died.

It is agreed that man is smarter than a frog. We can, however, fall victim to the same subtle death. The compromises and the sins of today are not in such contrast with those of yesterday that we will notice them. This way there will be pricked consciences, no need for confession and repentance.

The water is hotter, and spiritual death is nearer; but we do not notice it. Wake up and check that water! Show the Great Manipulator of man that you have more sense than a frog.

The Lawyer's Corner

Charge Accounts

By CPT SALIM J. BALADY
Former Legal Assistance Officer

The most convenient and most common type of seller financing is the charge account, usually found in department, furniture, and clothing stores.

Their operations are simple.

You fill out a credit application through which the store checks your "credit rating" by following up on the information you have given. If the store approves your application, it will send you a charge card or some other device which enables you to charge purchases.

It may be an "open" account with no limit on the amount of credit, or it may be a "revolving charge" with a maximum balance you will be allowed to carry in the account.

With either, you will be billed monthly and assessed a "service charge," usually 1½ percent of the amount.

This amounts to an "interest" cost to you of 1½ percent monthly, or 18 percent per year.

Cost Increases

This type of credit is convenient for small purchases, especially if there are a number of them in a month. Remember, however, that it increases the cost of every purchase by **at least 1½ percent and more if not paid for with the first** bill.

In addition, a charge account makes money easy to spend. The buyer is no longer hampered by an empty wallet.

If you use a charge account, keep track of what your balance is at all times so that you don't overspend between billings. This can be done simply by keeping all sales receipts and adding each new one to the old balance. This will help you avoid the real problem of "easy payments"—which is "easy bankruptcy."

There is another risk in a charge account which must be recognized: You might lose your credit card. If you do, notify the store IMMEDIATELY so you won't be held liable for any unauthorized purchases.

Anyone Can Use It

A credit card can usually be used by anyone who holds it, no matter whose name it bears. Consequently, if you lose yours, the finder could run up a large bill in a short time and you will be held responsible for every purchase made up to the time you notified the store of the loss.

If you lose your card, notify the store or company which issued it by the quickest means available. If possible, send a telegram. It will give you and the store a written record of the exact time and date of the notice.

Most furniture, appliance stores, and automobile dealers use a time sales program different from the "charge account." Their program of seller financing is called the "installment sale."

Installment Buying

Under this system, the buyer signs an agreement to pay for the purchase in installments. For the privilege of spreading his payments over a period of time by paying in installments, the buyer pays interest or service charges, or both. There is usually a stated interest rate of about 1 to 3 percent per month which equals an annual interest rate of anywhere from 18 to 42 percent.

In addition, there may be charge for such things as credit insurance, credit investigation, bookkeeping, and sales fees.

Be cautious, make sure every charge is listed and all promises and guarantees are in writing.

"Psst . . . Guess What?"

By SFC LARRY BABITTS
Staff NCOIC

Armies the world over are the same if the articles used in their publications are any indication.

Several months ago, the **Supthai Sentinel,** troop newspaper for the U.S. Army Support Command Thailand, published a humorous article illustrating how a simple order can be garbled as it passes down the chain of command.

The story was attributed to a Peruvian military magazine.

A 1st Sig. Bde. soldier in Bangkok saw the story and brought it back to Long Binh. It was reprinted in the brigade's mimeographed newspaper and attributed to a German Army magazine.

Three Continents

This story, which has so far appeared on three continents, begins with a colonel telling his exec, or major telling his adjutant (depending upon which version you prefer): "Tomorrow morning at 10 a.m. there will be a solar eclipse, a thing which doesn't occur every day. The men should fall-in for a roll call in fatigues in order to watch this phenomenon from the company street. I'll explain it to them. In case of rain, we won't see it and they should go to the gymnasium."

Next Phase

Eventually, the sergeant tells the specialist (or the first sergeant tells the sergeant): "Tomorrow at ten the eclipse of the colonel will take place because of the sun. If it rains in the gym (something which does not take place every day) you will fall out in the company street."

Inevitably, the GIs discuss the matter among themselves: "Tomorrow, if it rains, it looks as if the sun will eclipse the colonel in the gym. It is a shame this does not occur every day."

Borrowed Story

This story was "borrowed" from the Aug. 15 issue of the **1st Signal Brigade Communicator,** and it illustrates very well what happens when a story, no matter how simple, passes on and on.

Rumors often begin in fact, and as each man interprets and embellishes upon the facts with his opinions and "guesstimations," the tale tends to change.

Sometimes, as in the illustration, the original facts change and become meaningless. Other times it develops a personality all its own and becomes a useless rumor with no more basis in fact than the message relayed by the Peruvian-German-Thai sergeant (or specialist) to his troops.

A Rumor

You can easily identify a rumor. Use your common sense. It may begin with "they said" or end with "going somewhere in a few days."

It may be a simple "have you heard?" or a mysterious "psst, guess what?"

Who are "they." Where is that "somewhere?" Be a skeptic, inquire further into the "what."

Watch out for rumors and trample them the first chance you get.

SOUTHERN CROSS
AMERICAL DIVISION

THE SOUTHERN CROSS is an authorized periodic publication of the Americal Division Information Office for all division units in the Republic of Vietnam. Opinions expressed are not necessarily those of the Department of the Army. Contributions are encouraged and may be sent to the Information Office, Americal Division, APO 96374, Tel: Chu Lai 3212. The editors reserve the right to edit all contributions.

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An 11th Inf. Bde. interrogator and his ARVN counterpart question two Montagnard informants on the location of the buried 105mm howitzer.

Montagnards Lead Troops To Buried 105 Howitzer

Story And Photos
By 1LT ARTHUR J. DUNN
Former 11th Inf. Bde. IO

LZ BRONCO—Two Montagnard informants earned 25,000 piastres apiece recently by leading infantrymen from the 4th Bn., 3rd Inf., to a 105mm howitzer buried eight miles west of Quang Ngai City.

The artillery piece, captured by the enemy when the Tra Bong Special Forces Camp was overrun three years ago, has been cleaned, reassembled, and used by the 11th Bde. in Operation Champaign Grove. Six months ago, the VC used the cannon during the Tet attack on Quang Ngai City.

The 18 year-old tribesmen, their wives, and one sister turned themselves over to elements of the brigade's Task Force Garcia late last month. They claimed the VC used them as forced laborers and were planning to indoctrinate them as guerrillas before they decided to seek allied protection.

One Big One

During routine questioning here they were asked if they knew the location of any weapons.

"Yes, one big one," they answered. "It took 30 men to carry it."

The young laborers had no idea what type of weapon they had carried into the hills and buried after Tet in early February. The informants said the wheels were rubber, just like our jeep tires, and the barrel was eight feet long. These two things indicated an artillery piece.

It took the interrogators over six hours to narrow the location down to one grid square on a map.

A few days later, the two boys joined B Co., 4th Bn., 3rd Inf., on a hilltop west of the province capital to locate the weapon.

"I was walking up front, firing my M-79 into the trees behind the stream," said PFC Wayne Yarbrough. "The interpreter was afraid there'd be an ambush near the weapon. Then he pointed into the underbrush and said 'they say VC artillery here.' We pushed through the tall grass and dug into the sand. We got about six inches down when I hit something."

Everything's Here

It took the "Old Guard" soldiers two hours to dig the cannon out of the four holes. "Everything's here except the panoramic telescope," said 1LT Michael Reid, B Co's. artillery observer. "It's pretty rusted, but the VC put the small, movable parts in plastic bags. I imagine it could be cleaned up and fired without too much trouble."

The infantrymen lugged the barrel, shields, cradle, and wheels across a small rice paddy where a Chinook lifted the weapon back to LZ Bronco to be reassembled.

It took 11 men just to move the barrel a few meters. They had heard about the 30 Vietnamese who dragged the 5000lb. cannon through the hills.

"Where are those 30 men now when we need them," one of them muttered.

"Jungle Warrior" infantrymen struggle to lift the buried 105mm howitzer from its sandy grave eight miles west of Quang Ngai City.

Americal Division soldiers strain as they lug the barrel of the 5000-pound artillery piece to a rice paddy landing zone for pickup and evacuation to LZ Bronco.

A Chinook lifts the recaptured howitzer which had been in the hands of the VC for three years after being captured at the Tra Bong Special Forces Camp.

523rd Sig. Bn.—"The

The 523rd Signal Battalion, commanded by LTC Lewis F. Magruder, serves as the "voice of command." It provides the Americal Division with the communications systems so necessary for its vital functions: command control, intelligence, and firepower and combat services support.

The battalion also renders special staff and technical assistance for the control of all division communications. In addition, it delivers direct support cryptologists and photographic services.

Not A Newcomer

Although not activated until Jan. 10, 1968, the 523rd is by no means a newcomer to the Americal area of operations. The unit arrived at Chu Lai in April, 1967, from An Khe as the 509th Sig. Bn. Its job was to provide communications support for Task Force Oregon.

The mission of providing reliable and efficient communications for a division which covers so large an area as the Americal is a difficult one. Various sites must be maintained throughout the AO to adequately meet the requirements of the division's tactical elements.

Radio Station

To supplement this aid, the signalmen operate the Armed Forces Radio Service (AFRS) rebroadcast station at Chu Lai. In addition, they monitor major news teletype services for command information purposes.

Another service the 523rd provides for the men of the Americal is the chance to communicate with their loved ones in the United States via the Military Affiliate Radio Station. The men from MARS, by means of a combined radio-telephone hookup, send the call from Vietnam to a receiving station in the states. The only charge is for the cost of a call from the station to the soldier's home over commercial telephone lines.

Organization

The battalion consists o a headquarters detachmen command by 1LT Raymon E. Starr and two line com panies.

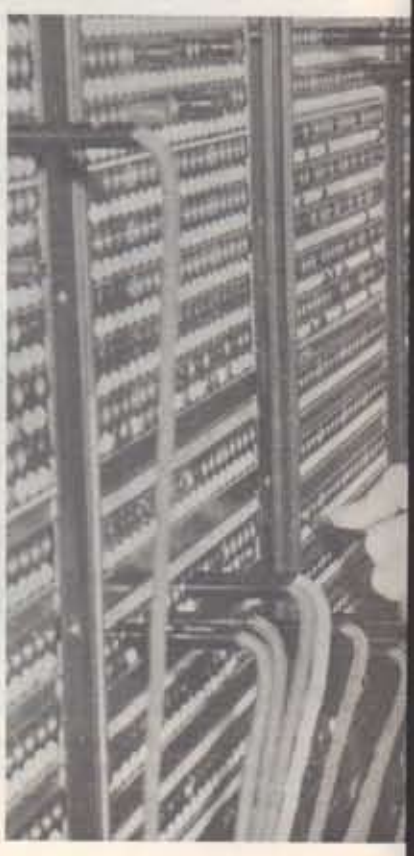
A Co, commanded by CPT Stephen L. Singer, is the command operations com pany and provides communi cations support mainly t division headquarters.

CPT John M. Waktins commands C Co., which is the signal support operations element of the battalion. I provides support to most o the wide-spread brigade and battalion fire support bases

Photos By
SP4 Harry Ottey, 523rd Sig. Bn.

One happy MARS customer

Signalman notes circuit change at Division Systems Control facility



e Voice Of Command"

Battalion Insignia

The battalion insignia (below), which is colored both orange and white for the Signal Corps and blue and white for the Infantry, was authorized by the U.S. Army Institute of Heraldry in August, 1968.

The three fleurs-de-lis (center, lower left and lower right of shield) represent France and the honors awarded the unit for the Ardennes-Alsace, Northern France, and Normandy campaigns, during World War II. The ermine spots (upper left and right of shield) relate to Europe and are used to represent the Central European and Rhineland campaigns that sealed the fate of the Axis Powers.

Operator adjusts AFVN retransmitting unit

Unseen operators are the voice of Americal

Cableman dwarfed by VHF antennas

400,000th Round

COL Lawrence M. Jones, Jr., Divarty CO, pulls the lanyard to launch the 3rd Bn., 18th Arty's 400,000th round fired in Vietnam. Ceremonies honoring the battalion's support to the division were held at "Fat City." (Photo by PFC Larry Eppiy, 3rd Bn., 18th Arty.)

On A Bamboo Pole

Flag Flies Over LZ

LZ BALDY—High above a small command post at LZ Mellon, Old Glory waves gently in the breeze.

The landing zone is the home of C Co., 4th Bn., 31st Inf. of the 196th Inf. Bde.

Solemn Ceremony

A squad from the 3rd Plt. forms in front of an improvised bamboo flagpole. Their platoon leader calls them to attention and men all over the area pause and salute as the retreat ceremony is conducted.

"Everyone on the hill stops what they are doing at 6 p.m.," said 1LT Edward Henry, the CO. "All the men don their steel pots and shoulder their weapons."

Tradition Begins

1LT Dickie Dixon, leader of the 3rd Plt., explained how the tradition began. "One of my men brought back a small American flag from R&R. We had the flag at our CP for a few days when my platoon sergeant suggested a makeshift flagpole outside."

"The bamboo flagstaff was built and then someone suggested a small group should raise and lower the flag daily.

"Things seemed to snowball from then on," noted LT Dixon. "Now everyone comes out when retreat is called each night. It isn't mandatory, but everyone does it and looks forward to it."

Morale Factor

LT Henry remarked that the evening retreat had become a great morale factor for the company. No one has to be reminded and all seem to appreciate the moment of honor for their flag.

Except for the calls of jungle birds, there is a respectful silence on LZ Mellon, as each man stands next to his position, saluting his nation's flag.

Chopper Spoils AM Rendezvous

LZ BAYONET—The morning rendezvous of a group of Viet Cong soldiers was absolutely ruined recently when an uninvited guest chanced to drop by. Before the intruder departed, 11 of the VC lay dead.

Aerial Guest

LT Dan Dore of the 4th Bn., 3rd Inf., (an 11th Bde. unit under the operational control of the 198th Inf. Bde.), was conducting a visual reconnaissance flight in the "Brave and Bold's" area five miles south of Tam Ky when he spotted the armed enemy.

"I looked down and saw them moving all over the place," said the New Iberia, La., officer.

Enemy Engaged

He immediately ordered the machinegunners on the command and control helicopter to engage the enemy and called for gunships, artillery support, and air strikes.

The VC initially responded with a heavy volume of fire, but they were forced to break contact and flee in the face of the overwhelming fire superiority, leaving behind 11 bodies.

Photos?

The Americal Division Information Office is interested in representative photos taken by men of the division. Both color and black and white photos are requested. Contact the IO for details.

Stumbling Saves Clumsy 'Charger'

By SGT PAUL FORMAN
196th Inf. Bde.

LZ BALDY—One awkward infantryman from the 2nd Bn., 1st Inf., 196th Inf. Bde., can be as clumsy as he wants to be, as far as his friends are concerned.

PFC Francis Mihalek of Terre Haute, Ind., was on his way to get some hot food at the B Co. command post when he stumbled.

Old Well Explodes

"I was looking at an old well when I stumbled over a portion of the bucket rope and the bucket fell into the water," said the soldier.

Seconds later, a booby-trapped grenade exploded in the well, sending water flying in all directions.

Saved By Chow

"I guess they figured some GI would be hanging over the side of the well when the rope was lowered; and if I hadn't been going to the CP for hot chow, I might have been that man," he said.

Mihalek's friends still got their fresh water from the well, but not before thanking the awkward soldier.

Combat In Review

Scout Dogs Alert Patrols To Danger

LZ BAYONET — Moving quietly down a trail at the head of a 198th Inf. Bde., patrol, the dog suddenly halted in his tracks and pointed his ears straight up. His handler recognized that danger lay ahead and warned the patrol members.

Forewarned, the soldiers were fully prepared as they moved forward and engaged the enemy ambush.

Twelve times since the 57th Inf. Plt. (Scout Dog) joined the "Brave and Bold" brigade six months ago, the dogs have enabled 198th soldiers to turn the tables on enemy ambushes.

280 Missions

After more than 280 missions the dogs' and handlers' alerts have led to 54 enemy killed in action and 104 captured enemy weapons. The dog teams have led brigade soldiers to the discovery of 2,715 pounds of food in caches, 28 mortar rounds, 19 grenades and 3,425 rounds of small arms ammunition. In addition, they have saved numerous lives by alerting them to 25 booby traps.

LT John Ryan, commander of the 57th Scout Dog Plt., listed booby traps, intense heat, and the mountainous terrain as the main problems. "The booby traps over here are a lot more sophisticated than we anticipated," he said.

In Great Demand

The dogs are in great demand. "As soon as a team is ready and rested we have a place to send it," Ryan said. The teams have worked in Operations Muscatine, Wheeler/Wallowa, Burlington Trail, and in the Chu Lai defense area.

"The men and the dogs know the areas very well," Ryan said. "They have become accustomed to working with the units in the field and have proven to be a big help."

All of the men in the 57th Scout Dog Plt. are volunteers. The platoon was formed last October at Ft. Benning, Ga., and trained there for 12 weeks before being sent to Vietnam.

Trooper Pauses

A 196th Bde. infantryman takes a break during a lull in the heavy fighting south of Hoi An in Operation Wheeler/ Wallowa. (Photo by PFC David Samp, 196th Inf. Bde.)

Soldiers' Precious Cargo Delivered Daily By APO

By PFC DEAN NORLAND
Staff Writer

So you got a letter from home today.

Great, isn't it? But have you ever stopped to think about the trip that letter has taken—the number of times it has been transported, sorted and sent on its way again—and the fact that the letter has finally reached you.

One of the links in the postal chain that stretches from your home to you is the Americal Division Army Post Office (APO). It handles more mail than any other Division APO in Vietnam; 28,000 pounds of incoming and 8,000 pounds of outgoing mail daliy.

Airlifted

Four commercial flights—two each from San Francisco and Seattle—arrive at Da Nang daily with cargos of nothing but mail. It is then transported here by C-123 and C-130 aircraft on a space available basis.

The pallets of mail are hauled by truck from the airport to the APO, where they are broken down according to units. When unit clerks arrive to pick up their mail they bring in a load of outgoing mail, and the reverse process occurs.

Multi-Service

The local APO provides service for not only Americal soldiers but also other Army, Navy, Marine and Air Force personnel. It was set up to handle mail for 15,000 persons, but it now serves over 30,000.

CPT James N. Hawthorne is the officer charged with the responsibility of operating the Americal APO. One of his many duties is the inspection of suspicious packages.

Detector Used

"We use a mine detector on all packages," he explained. "If metal is detected in a parcel that has no metal objects declared for customs, we suspect something is wrong."

All questionable packages —usually ten to twenty a day—are then opened and inspected here. Many which are not scrutinized at Chu Lai are inspected when they reach San Francisco.

This time of year numerous holidays only make the flow of incoming mail greater. When you get that Thanksgiving or Christmas package just think about the route it took to reach you.

PACKAGES ARRIVE—Mail is transported from cargo planes to the main APO at Chu Lai by trucks, where clerks channel the mail to each particular unit. (Photo by SP4 Anthony Paul, 523rd Sig. Bn.)

Helen Morris

A 60-month Vietnam tour has not lessened the bubbling enthusiasm that Miss Morris displays when entertaining the troops. A resident of Hong Kong, her delightful British accent has wowed them from Duc Pho to LZ Baldy. (Photo by SP4 Bill Guerrant, Photo Editor)

Tactical Discussion

BG James V. Galloway, commander of Task Force Galloway, discusses Operation Champaign Grove with COL N.T. Luc, Dpty. Cmdr., 2nd ARVN Div. and Mr. John Coates of NBC News at LZ Chevy. The operation, which involved units of the 11th Bde., 1st Sqdn., 1st Armored Cav., and 2nd ARVN Div., terminated on Sept. 24, after killing 176 NVA and 147 VC, discovering 45 NVA and 10 VC bodies, and capturing 57 individual and 17 crew-served weapons. The task force, which was formed to relieve pressure on the Ha Thanh Special Forces camp and prevent a threat to Quang Ngai City, began on Sept. 4. (Photo by SP4 Bernard Gmiter, 11th Inf. Bde.)

300 NVA Killed

(Continued from Page 1)

"Gimlets" ran into some heavily defended and well fortified NVA positions.

NVA Dug In

LTC Lawrence said, "The two units were receiving anti-tank rocket fire at a distance of less than 25 meters. The enemy had dug in to stay."

It took a pair of rifle companies most of that second afternoon to ferret out the North Vietnamese soldiers. One NVA corporal was discovered hiding under a mound of dirt.

LTC Lawrence noted, "Two of his fingers formed a 'V' for victory which was not to be the case for him and his comrades."

More Air Strikes

Again air strikes were called in. Air Force forward air controllers pin-pointed some of them to within 100 meters of friendly troops. One position which had come under six bombing attacks was taken by the infantrymen with relatively few shots.

Tunnel Complex

One of the final areas assaulted by ground troops revealed a large tunnel complex with entrances measuring four feet square. A unit commander thought that the maze had recently housed a rocket cache, however, none was found.

By the end of the second day, what remained of the NVA force had disappeared under the cover of rain into a valley to the southeast. Once again, the Americal Division had stifled an enemy threat in Quang Tin Province.

No Helmet Saves Medic

FSB WEST—A 196th Inf. Bde. medic feels that he is alive today because his helmet was off—not on.

SP5 Edward Foley, of Little Rock, Ark., was with Co. A of the 4th Bn., 31st Inf. on a search and clear mission when the infantrymen made contact with an enemy force.

When one of the company's riflemen fell, the medic rushed to his assistance.

"I sat my aid bag down and put my steel pot on a tree stump," he said.

"When I put on my helmet, there was a neat little hole through the front," Foley said.

"I was just glad the bullet passed through the stump and not through my head."

"Dragoons" Get Awards

By PFC ERIC LAMBERSON
1st Sqdn., 1st Cav.

HAWK HILL—The Chief of Quang Tin Province presented two plaques to the 1st Sqdn., 1st Cav., in ceremonies here recently, for defending the city of Tam Ky during a bloody three-day battle.

Two NVA regiments, which were threatening Tam Ky and the surrounding villages, were badly mauled during the fighting leaving behind 473 dead.

CPT James D. Logan, "Dragoon" S-3, accepted the engraved plagues on behalf of the men of the unit.

The inscription on the plaques read, "The Military Administration and the people in the Quang Tin Province award this souvenir to the 1st Squadron, 1st Cavalry, in appreciation of the Quyet-Thang operations on the twenty-fourth through the twenty-sixth of August 1968."

The "Dragoons" were supported in the battle by units of the 196th and 11th Inf. Bdes., F Trp., 8th Cav. gunships, and tactical air and artillery.

Allies Fight At Ha Thanh

(Continued from Page 1)

effective use of the captured OP.

Then on the third day, after three infantry assaults had been repulsed, the outpost was recaptured late in the afternoon by Mike Forces and Special Forces troops. They counted 23 NVA bodies, numerous AK-47s, rocket launchers, and machineguns.

Joint Artillery

"American and Vietnamese artillery have done a tremendous job of picking up targets we sighted visually and through intelligence," said CPT Joe Rhinehart, "Jungle Warriors" liason at the camp. "We have discovered numerous mortar and bunker positions and have been able to depend on this close support to eliminate them."

See Photos Below

The enemy continues harassing Ha Thanh, but the situation has improved. The valley and the gateway to Quang Ngai City is still threatened, but the enemy knows that the allied forces are ready to fight. An Army photographer on the spot to record the fighting remarked, "Now I have a small idea of how those Marines at Khe Sanh must have felt."

NVA Camp

(Continued from Page 1)

"The enemy soldiers were taken completely by surprised when we moved in," said LTC William C. Stinson, Jr., battalion commander. "It appears that we forced them to move out without their supplies."

Equipment Uncovered

Included among the equipment uncovered were 39 B-40 rockets, six 122mm rockets, seven 77mm recoilless rifle rounds, an 82mm mortar with 11 rounds, and a large amount of small arms ammunition. In addition, rice, commo wire, uniforms, and medical supplies were found.

The "Ready Rifles" searching near the site also discovered an enemy slaughterhouse, complete with 25 sides of water buffalo.

Vietnamese, CIDG soldiers pass through the village of Ha Thanh on their way to reinforce a recently recaptured outpost near this strategic position west of Quang Ngai City.

A Popular Forces soldier has made certain that he left nothing behind, including his family, as he travels to the outpost. (Photos by 1LT Stephen H. Cobb, 11th Inf. Bde.)