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SOUTHERN CROSS

AMERICAL DIVISION

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Sweeping Pacification Program Underway

'Operation Hardin Falls' Joint U.S., GVN Effort

By SP4 JOHN WOLFORD
Americal IO

CHU LAI—While top Vietnamese and U.S. emissaries are talking of peace in Paris, the first steps toward an end to the armed conflict in Vietnam are being realized through an accelerated pacification program now being carried on in the Americal AO.

The program is a three-phased, 70-day operation, "Operation Hardin Falls," aimed at clearing out and pacifying six hamlets in the Thang Binh district that have been under Viet Cong control for more than four years.

Located just north of 1st Sqdn., 1st Cav. headquarters at Hawk Hill, the operation consists of U.S. and Vietnamese military forces as well as Vietnamese medical and civil affairs teams.

U.S. forces involved during the first steps of the operation include B Trp., 1/1, commanded by CPT Kenneth W. McCarley, OIC of the first phase of the operation. Also participating are A Co., 1/46, 196th Inf. Bde., and D Co., 26th Engr. Bn.

Assist GVN

According to CPT McCarley, the main purpose for U.S. involvement in the operation is to assist GVN (Government of Vietnam) forces in all phases of the operation and to provide security for the hamlets whenever needed.

The GVN forces, under the command of CPT Tran Vinh Quan, include one Regional Forces company, two Popular Forces platoons, and one platoon of the National Police Force.

Vietnamese Civil Affairs teams, MEDCAP personnel, and Psychological Operation (PSYOP) teams also are working in the operation.

These teams are the most important elements in the pacification program, according to operation planners, because they are instrumental in establishing the people's faith and trust in the Vietnamese Government.

Construct Fire Base

"Operation Hardin Falls" is being executed in three phases, the first being the construction of a fire base in what was once the middle of Viet Cong territory.

The first fire base constructed by the engineers was nicknamed "Fiddler's Green" after the old cavalry legend that tells of a broad meadow dotted with beautiful trees and crossed by many streams.

Cordon And Entry

The second phase of the operation is the actual cordon and entry into the hamlets. U.S. forces will surround the village while GVN forces move into the area in search of Viet Cong suspects and weapon caches.

CPT McCarley said the primary mission of U.S. forces during this phase is to provide all necessary security for GVN pacification activities.

"We cordon the village while GVN forces move into the hamlet, chase out 'Charlie,' show some muscle, and make it safe for the villagers who have left to return to their homes," explained the 'Dragoon' company commander.

(Continued on Page 7)

AMERICAL CHAPLAIN lends a hand to the pacification program in Thang Binh district. (Art by SP4 Alfred Anthony Jr, 198th Inf. Bde.)

"DRAGOONS" OF THE 1ST SQDN., 1ST CAV. keep watchful guard while working as a security force in "Operation Hardin Falls". The program aims at clearing out and pacifying six hamlets in the Thang Binh district. (Photo by SP4 Eric Lamberson, 1st Sqdn., 1st Cav.)

Suspected Interplanetary Visitor Teases Perplexed Huey Crew

By 1LT
MICHAEL E. WOLFGANG
Americal IO

CHU LAI—Except for the flying saucer, the flight would have been one of those routine hops from Da Nang.

WO-1 Joseph E. Clark (Miami, Fla.), a pilot with the 123rd Avn. Bn., had turned the controls of his UH-1B (Huey) over to his co-pilot, WO-1 Roger "Seymour" Loomis (Miami, Fla.) shortly after departing Da Nang.

"We were flying 'feetwet' (over the ocean) that morning and had just buzzed past the battleship New Jersey, about five miles south of Hoi An, when I spotted the 'thing' out of the corner of my eye," Clark said, half smiling.

There, in front of the chopper, at about half its altitude of 1,600 feet, was the strangest aircraft the aviator had ever seen.

Pilotless UFO

It was first thought to be an H-13 model helicopter, but as the Huey neared the UFO the two pilots, an unidentified passenger, and the crew all noticed the absence of a tail boom and, most conspicuously, there was no pilot!

Without further delay, Clark, fighting an impulse to make a 180-degree turn, took control of the helicopter to seek out the unknown.

"It was heading toward the sea at about 30 knots so I slowed our speed from 110 knots," Clark continued, "dropped to 800 feet, and pulled right up alongside a gray, white, and silver tailless aircraft with a rotor system and skids. There were no markings or a pilot visible.

Report Saucer

"As we watched, the UFO flew under the chopper. I did my best to keep close without risking a collision, but every time I approached it would move away and change course. After about 20 minutes of playing with the 'saucer' I decided to report my sighting for further guidance."

With some reluctance, the 11-month Vietnam veteran radioed the artillery warning net (Sav-A-Plane) located at division headquarters.

"I want to report a UFO five miles south and one-half mile east of Hoi An...looks like a little helicopter...but no one's flying it."

Skeptical Reply

As he had feared, the net came alive with the chortles of disbelieving pilots monitoring the unlikely conversation.

"Okay, UFO! Whaddya got up there, a flask? I suppose you've seen little green men!"

Advised to refrain from further action with what was likely to be a monitoring craft from the New Jersey, the beleaguered pilot turned his craft south and headed for Chu Lai.

Naval officials with the Naval Support Activity Detachment (NSAD) at Chu Lai later confirmed the UFO was probably a "DASH" (Drone Anti Submarine Helicopter), radio-controlled from a destroyer providing security for the big battleship.

Avoided Incident

Clark admits that after close observation of his "UFO" he was pretty certain it wasn't extraterrestrial.

"I was going to shoot it down at first, but I didn't want to risk an international...or interplanetary incident."

Religion and You

Concern, Not Worry

By CHAPLAIN (CPT) JOHN A. MACDONALD
198th Inf. Bde.

There is a big difference between careful concern and worry. We have been given life and a certain measure of health, wealth, and happiness. The One who gave us these gifts expects us to be proper stewards of them.

For example, a good soldier takes careful measures to protect himself and those around him. He is concerned but not necessarily worried. We might call worry a negative kind of concern. If we are concerned, we look for ways of making things better.

When we worry, we are constantly afraid that something bad is about to happen. Genuine concern rarely causes ulcers; worry usually does. Seldom does a man lose any sleep over his concerns, but worry has kept countless people awake many nights.

Why do we worry? Basically, it reflects a lack of faith. Such an answer may sound too simple, but our relation to God is not nearly as complicated as we sometimes try to make it. Our relation to God can be compared to the relation of a young child to his father.

There isn't anything too complicated about a child's life. He eats, sleeps, and plays. How often as a child did you worry about the size of your father's paycheck? Did you ever spend a sleepless night worrying about from where the next day's meals were coming?

Our relation to God is simply one of relying on Him to meet our needs. Of course He expects us to do our part; but "our part" isn't what causes people to worry. It's what is beyond what we can do that we worry about.

When we worry, do you see what we are saying to God? "You're a good guy, God, but not quite big enough to meet my needs. So I've got to worry and fret to make sure everything goes right."

The basic question, then, is "How big is your God?" Big enough to meet your needs? God is as big as we will let Him be and the more trust we place in Him, the bigger He becomes.

VIETNAM-STYLE

By CPT CARY S. SKLAREN

Enchanting Music

In the village marketplace, in the rice paddies, on the highway, you can often hear a soft, mournful chant echoing in the wind. The sound may seem harsh, monotonous, almost tuneless to our ears, but this is because the music of Vietnam is based on a far different system than that of the West.

While our music developed from an eight-tone scale devised by the ancient Greeks, the familiar do-re-mi-fa-so-la-ti-do, Vietnamese music is based on a five-tone scale which was derived from the music of China.

Its influnce was first officially recognized in Dai-Viet (the nation's ancient name) during the Le Dynasty and the reign of the celebrated Le Thanh-Tong. In 1470, the King commanded two ministeries be formed: the Ministry of Oriental Arts to create musical works and the Ministry of the Execution of Music to train and employ people in the art of singing.

The Vietnamese also have borrowed the instruments of China to play their music. Percussion instruments such as drums, cymbals, tambourines, castanets, and gongs, along with a mandolin-like stringed instrument played with a bow and small wood winds such as flutes are still used today.

But the characteristic oriental flavor of their music is slowly changing. The Vietnamese people are adapting their distinctive chants and songs with the melodies and instruments of Western music, and the music of this nation will be a blend of two cultures.

SOUTHERN CROSS
AMERICAL DIVISION

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Prisoners must be treated humanely and given food, shelter, and clothing.

By SP4 JOHN W. HEATH

Arms raised in surrender, the scrawny, impish VC stood trembling before your anxious M-16.

He's probably the same VC whose booby trap ruthlessly shattered your buddy's legs just yesterday.

Your only thought is revenge...Blow his head off. He deserves the worst.

You Lose Out

But pause and think a minute. Killing that prisoner hurts you and your buddies more than anybody.

Mistreatment of prisoners is a violation of international law and the uniform Code of Military Justice, for which you can be severely punished.

And you might eliminate a good intelligence source that could have saved American lives.

Geneva Conventions

In case you have any doubts as to how a PW should be treated, the Geneva Conventions spell it all out.

Binding on all Free World forces in Vietnam, the Geneva Conventions go into effect in any armed conflict, even when war has not been declared such as here in Vietnam.

It's true that Vietnam is an unconventional situation. For example, your prisoner is not always a clearly defined enemy soldier.

Besides being a uniformed North Vietnamese Regular, he may be a guerrilla, spy, or innocent civilian.

The important point is that as long as the "detainee" is in your custody, he is treated as a prisoner of war and entitled to all protections of the Geneva Conventions.

Treat PWs Fairly

So how should you handle prisoners of war?

According to the Geneva Conventions and MACV directives, you must first disarm, search, and keep prisoners carefully guarded.

Second, treat them humanely. That involves protection from torture and humiliation, and adequate food, shelter, clothing, and medical attention.

Third, tag and evacuate PWs from the combat zone to a safe area as soon as possible.

International Law

Since mistreatment of prisoners is a violation of international law, violators, may be classified as war criminals, in spite of the fact the VC may never have given you a break.

"An eye for an eye does not apply in treatment of prisoners of war," said CPT Donald F. Cady, Assistant Staff Judge Advocate.

"The Geneva Convention is not like a personal contract," he explained. "The United States is obligated to abide by the Conventions regardless of violations committed by other nations."

Support Chieu Hoi

Besides breaking international law, harming PWs threatens the success of the Chieu Hoi (Open Arms) program.

If a VC knows he'll be zapped should he decide to give up and become a Hoi Chanh, he'll stick with his unit.

That means one more guy tossing lead at you.

Also, if fairly treated, a prisoner can be a valuable source of information. Dead, he is useless. Mistreated, he only will show silent resentment.

Bolsters U.S. Image

A more general reason for giving a fair shake to PWs is that it creates favorable world opinion for the U.S.

Maybe you could care less about that.

But look at it this way. "Favorable world opinion benefits our side in peace negotiations," said CPT Cady. "That may mean a quicker settlement of hostilities and fewer American lives lost."

Violation of UCMJ

Practically speaking, following the Geneva Conventions' guidelines can help you keep out of a world of trouble because harming prisoners is also a violation of the UCMJ.

Killing an unarmed prisoner who does not threaten you is premeditated murder punishable by death or life imprisonment.

You also can be punished severly for other offenses such as rape, larceny, and assault of prisoners.

The law is the same in Vietnam as it was for you in the States, and it is the responsibility of officers and NCOs to enforce it.

Let Conscience Be Guide

If in doubt about how to treat a PW, follow your conscience.

"You know by instinct when you have done something wrong," CPT Cady related. "That twinge of conscience should guide you here just as it did back home."

TOC: Nucleus Of Americal Decision-Making

CHU LAI — The Americal foot soldier, while walking through mud or rain-soaked jungle, has probably asked himself if anyone knew where he was.

He can be reassured because the Tactical Operations Center (TOC) knows his every move.

TOC is a command installation where the necessary communications facilities and personnel are centralized to control and coordinate current tactical operations of every battalion, company, and platoon.

It provides the commander current, evaluated information and recommendations concerning combat operations and the use of resources.

Nerve Center

The heart of TOC is the Operations Center, which receives and coordinates reports from all units in the division.

Area operations are noted on two large wall maps divided into "friendly operations" and "enemy operations." Bases, landing zones, artillery positions, and troop movements are just a few of the things shown on the "friendly operations" map.

If contact is made with the enemy, it is recorded on the map as soon as it is received. In this way unit requests for immediate support can be coordinated by TOC.

"Charlie's" movements in the division area are tracked on the "enemy operations" map. Sightings and contacts made with the enemy are marked on the map as soon as they are received.

Source of Decisions

"TOC is the hub of combat activities of the division," said MAJ Wade Medbery, TOC Operations Officer. "From here verbal orders can be issued."

In the operations room, MG Charles M. Gettys or his staff can study the area activities and make appropriate decisions.

The general's staff also can study proposed operations submitted by brigades in the area and give their approval or disapproval.

Inter-Service Effort

All branches of the service are represented in TOC's many sections: Tactical Air Control Center (Air Force), Artillery Warning Control Center (Army and Air Force), Combat Support Information Section (Army), Signal Center (Army), Naval Support Section (Navy and Marines), Operations (G3 and G2), Artillery Section (Army), and Division Aviation (Army).

The Division Aviation Center handles the Army Aviation element, coordinating all helicopters used by the division.

Save-a-Plane

Another section of TOC is the Artillery Warning Control Center, nicknamed "save-a-plane," which is exactly what it does. Present and proposed artillery fire is recorded on a wall map which is used to help direct airplanes and helicopters around the proposed target areas.

Air Force SGT John C. Hill, who works in the Artillery Control Center, said that a pilot will call in and state where he is from and where he intends to go, and then will be directed around the target areas.

Friendly forces outside the Americal area keep TOC informed of any military targets which border the division.

Naval and Artillery Fire

Within the Artillery Control Center is the Naval Liaison Officer, which coordinates Naval gunfire with ground troops. Any Naval support that is needed in the division area, such as spotters for gunfire, can be called in from here.

The Artillery Fire Support Element (FSE) is located with the G3 section.

"The FSE coordinates fire from all field artillery positions in the division and maintains an artillery situation map which can be used to direct fire support when there is an immediate request for it," noted CPT Craig MacNab, OIC.

Intelligence Funnel

It is the G2 section's job to evaluate information for its intelligence value. Results of interrogation of prisoners and sightings of enemy movements are processed here.

When all the information is compiled by each section, it is interpreted and utilized to determine what "Charlie" will do next and what measures are needed to counter him.

In effect, the "brain" is receiving messages from its information-gathering "nerve system" and reacting with the division's "muscle power."

The soldier may think he goes into the field alone, but anytime he needs help, TOC knows about it.

REPORTS OF OPERATIONS are coordinated and recorded on wall maps by SSG Thomas O. Finch (left), CPT Louis T. Newkirk Jr., CPT Vernon A. Campbell, and CPT James W. Miller, Asst. OIC of the TOC operations room.

LATEST TACTICAL DEVELOPMENTS are relayed to the division commander and his staff by SP4 James D. Roche in the operations room. Information is processed, then decisions transmitted to field commanders. (Photos by SP4 Steve Shingledecker, 523rd Sig. Bn.)

Vietnamese National Policeman Awarded ARCOM For His Valor

DUC PHO—A Vietnamese policeman recently received the third Army Commendation Medal with "V" device presented to a member of the National Police Force, Republic of Vietnam.

Vietnamese National Policeman Tran Ngoc Thinh was the first to have been recommended for the medal.

The citation presented to Thinh said that he "...distinguished himself by his intrepidity and valorous action on 11 August 1968 while on a search and clear operation with National Police Field Forces and Co. A, 1st Bn., 20th Inf."

During the operation with the 11th Inf. Bde., Policeman Thinh discovered a tunnel and volunteered to aid his National Police Field Force adviser in uncovering the entrance.

While Thinh was exploring the entrance, the enemy threw three grenades which exploded and blew the adviser's M-16 rifle out of his hand.

The citation said that Policeman Thinh, "...although wounded and bleeding profusely, did, with complete disregard for his safety, expose himself to both hostile and friendly fire."

Thinh was credited with saving his own life and the life of the adviser.

The award was presented at MACV Headquarters in Duc Pho by COL John W. Donaldson, 11th Bde. Commander.

Your Interpreter

A 14-year-old Vietnamese who acts as interpreter for a unit of the 11th Inf. Bde. interrogates a VC suspect during a sweep operation on Cigar Island north of Tam Ky. (Photo by SP4 Steve Shingledecker, 523rd Sig. Bn.)

AME

Phc

Art

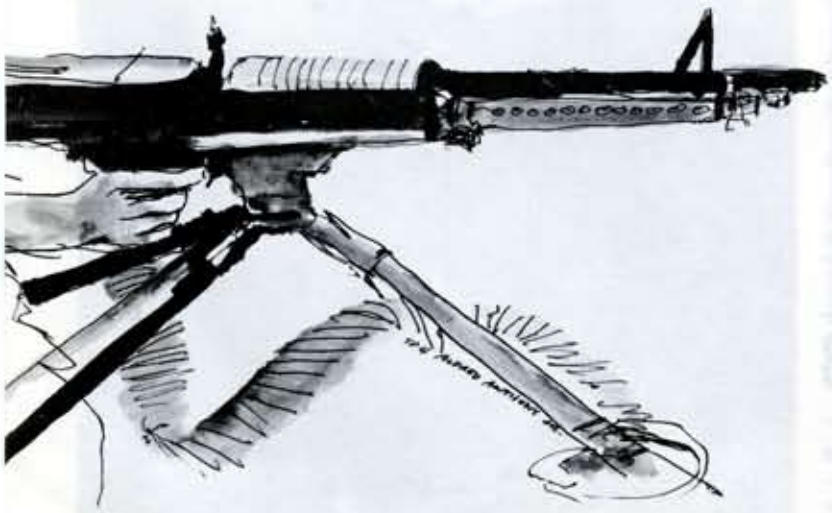
Vietnamese ID card is checked by member of 23rd MP Co.

An MP watches out for trouble on heavily-travelled Highway 1

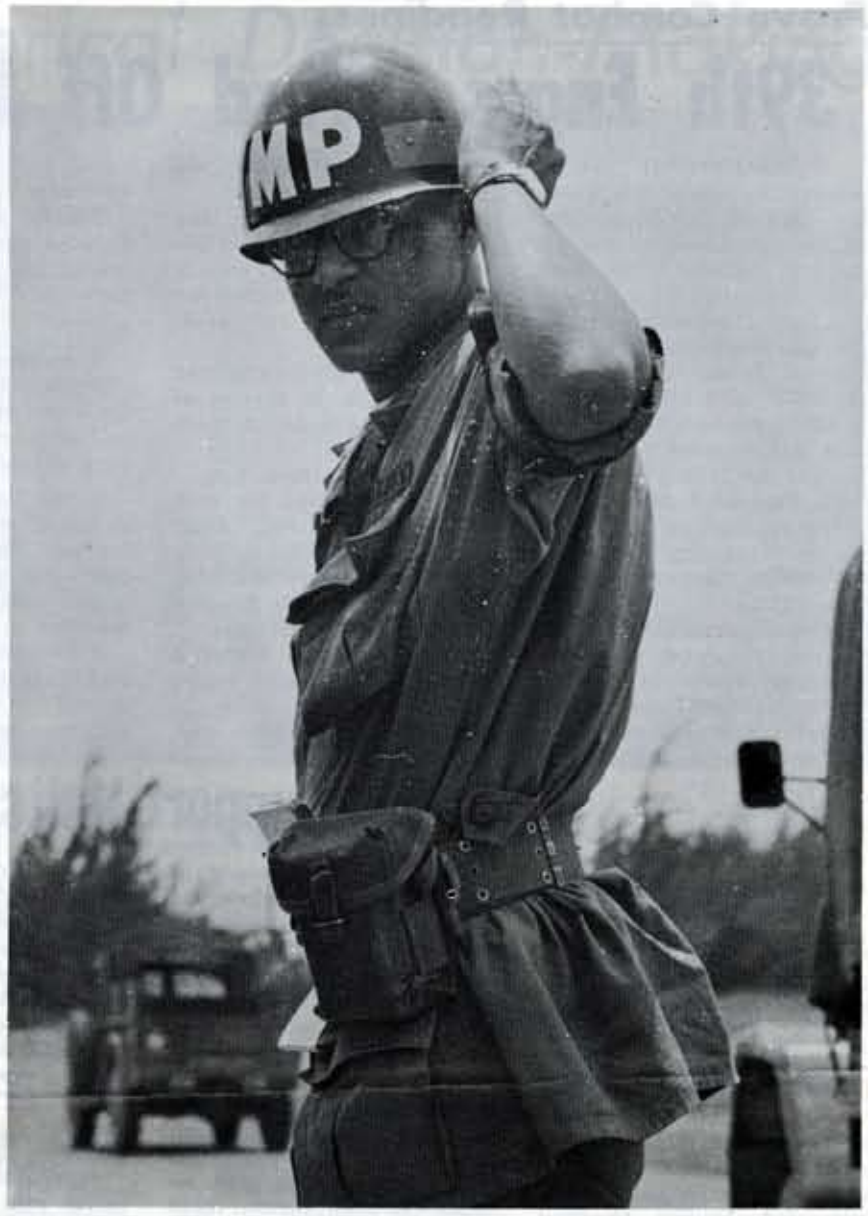
Vietnamese National Policeman, ARVN MP,

RICAL MP

tos By SP4 BILL GUERRANT



By SP4 ALFRED ANTHONY JR



In a familiar pose, MP keeps traffic moving

and Americal MP team up to make routine vehicle check

Inspections maintain "spit and polish" of MPs

Prove Combat Readiness

39th Engrs. Ward Off Enemy

LZ SNOOPY—In recent weeks the enemy has given the 39th Cmbt. Engr. Bn. ample opportunity to live up to the "combat" in their title.

After a relatively quiet period, broken only by occasional sniper rounds, both local VC units and NVA regulars unleashed their forces in a sudden burst of activity against the 39th.

Two-sided Attack

The first major move was an early morning attack on LZ Snoopy, base camp of the 39th's C Co.

Mortar rounds began striking the area during pre-dawn hours, as an enemy force of an undetermined size moved against the compound, coming from north-northeast in the helipad area.

The action swung around to include the southeast corner of C Co.'s perimeter, neighboring on the nearby ARVN unit, which also was under attack.

In this area two bunkers set up a deadly crossfire against the attackers, accounting for nine VC kills.

Support Called

CPT Torrence M. Wilson, the CO, called for gunships and flareships to open up on the VC.

By dawn the enemy had retreated, leaving 14 dead and two captured. C Co. suffered light casualties.

Road Ambush

While still recuperating from this attack, the 3rd Plt. of the 630th Lt. Engr. Co., attached to C Co., was ambushed on the way to a work site a few days later.

An estimated enemy force of platoon size fired on the engineers from 50 to 100 meters east of the road.

1LT L. E. Erdmann, the platoon leader, deployed his force, directed a large volume of firepower, and called for gunships, APCs, and artillery.

After the artillery placed rounds within 75 meters of the road, the gunships went into action.

APC, Arty Clean Up

As activity from the east began to die down, small arms rounds came in from the west. Artillery and APC fire was immediately directed on those enemy positions.

To complete the action, a Montagnard company swept the area.

In all, nine VC were captured and 14 killed in the encounter.

Twelve hours later, LZ Snoopy received 20 mortar rounds, as if to let C Co. know that "Charlie" was still around.

Sweep More Mines

During the same period, B Co. found an increasing number of enemy road mines in its daily minesweeps.

In all the line companies at least one or two sniper incidents have been reported with each minesweep. Friendly losses, however, have been confined to light wounds.

B Co. also has received a large amount of ordnance turned in through the VIP program during this period.

1/52, Support Units Net 18

TAM KY—A company of 1st Bn., 52nd Inf., supported by airstrikes and helicopter gunships, killed 18 enemy soldiers recently in a day-long series of skirmishes near here.

The "Ready Rifles" Co. B, 198th Inf. Bde., led by CPT Larry D. Allgood (Columbus, Ga.), was on a sweep in an area west of Tam Ky when they made contact with an unknown size enemy force shortly before noon.

The "Brave and Bold" pinned down the enemy and began to maneuver for better positions while calling on gunships for fire support.

Good Vantage Point

"We were on a hill where we could observe the whole area," said CPT Allgood. "We called on artillery and gunships and just kept pounding them."

Skyraider jets also were called into the fray in the central highlands area.

When the enemy tried to break off contact and flee the area, the Americal soldiers pursued them.

Support Turns Tide

"The outstanding support we got from the gunships and the airstrikes really made the difference in the battle," said CPT Allgood.

Nine of the 18 kills were credited to gunships and airstrikes, with the other nine being killed by the company's riflemen.

Several items of enemy equipment were captured, including three SKS rifles, medical supplies, and several Chicom grenades.

Savings Power Grows With 'Big Ten' Plan

Americal soldiers can increase their savings power through the Army's Uniformed Service "Big Ten" Savings Deposit Program.

It allows you to earn 10 percent per year compounded quarterly on funds deposited through allotments or direct deposits up to $10,000.

For further information, read Americal Fact Sheet No. 69-6 or ask your first sergeant or finance officer.

Words Turn Into Bullets

CHU LAI — Three Viet Cong who thought the Psychological Operations (PSYOP) team broadcasting in their area was "all bark and no bite" were in for a shock.

The team was using a Navy swift boat to patrol a portion of the Americal coast line. "We were broadcasting standard taped messages," said CPT Banta York, the 198th Inf. Bde. PSYOP officer.

As the team cruised off the shore, a helicopter flew out towards the swift boats and opened fire on the tree line.

The VC reacted immediately by returning a hail of automatic weapons fire.

The swift boat got into the act and placed 50 cal., M-60, and 81mm mortar fire on the enemy position.

"While we were placing suppressing fire on their position, the gunships from F Trp., 8th Air Cav. came in and really worked the area over," CPT York said.

Three VC were killed in the action.

Combat In Review

Up, Up, And Away

A lot of water comes from the sky in Vietnam, but in this case it's not in the form of rain. Slung beneath this "Hercules" Chinook Helicopter from the 132nd Air Spt. Helicopter Co. are a 400-gallon water trailer and three 500-gallon water blivots. (Photo by SP4 Steve Tipton, 11th Inf. Bde.)

Captured Medical Supplies Benefit Province Hospital

QUANG NGAI CITY—Captured enemy medical facilities are being put to good use in the Quang Ngai Province Hospital thanks to efforts of the 11th Inf. Bde.

The majority of the enemy medical facilities have been found in an area 25 miles southwest of Quang Ngai City by elements of the 1st Bn., 20th Inf. and the 4th Bn., 21st Inf. participating in Operation Vernon Lake II.

Doctors Find Use

The problem of what to do with all the captured supplies and equipment was solved by two "Jungle Warrior" doctors.

After carefully inspecting the drugs and equipment for serviceability, Bde. Surgeon CPT Edward N. Davis (Walhalla, S.C.) and CPT Michael B. Lester (Houston, Tex.), XO of C Co., 6th Spt. Bn., hit upon the idea of donating the items to the Quang Ngai Hospital.

Abandon in Haste

In their haste to vacate the area ahead of the "Jungle Warriors," the VC and NVA have been forced to leave large quantities of medical equipment and supplies. The majority of the captured drugs and instruments had been manufactured in communist nations.

A sample of the captured items included a Czech-made microscope, a blood pressure gauge, sterilizer, surgical kits, needles, syringes, survival kits, plasma, and a variety of drugs and pills.

MEDICAL EQUIPMENT AND SUPPLIES captured in Operation Vernon Lake II are delivered to the helipad at Quang Ngai Province Hospital by an 11th Inf. Bde. doctor, CPT Michael B. Lester. (Photo by 1LT Frederick A. PeLeate, 11th Inf. Bde.)

Small MEDCAP, Big Contribution

CHU LAI—In an area of South Vietnam where trained medical personnel are hard to find, a three-man team from the 198th Inf. Bde. is working daily to help raise the health standards of the civilian population.

It is a big undertaking, but signs of progress have already become apparent to the members of the team working in the division area south of Chu Lai.

SFC Lloyd Laughnan (Killeen, Tex.) is chief of the small team which makes daily MEDCAP visits to villages in the northern portion of Quang Ngai Province. This is his second tour in Vietnam.

Small, But Effective

"My team is rather small," noted Laughnan. "I have one driver who doubles as an aidman and one other medic. But with a small team, the people can trust us and gain confidence in us better."

The team of medics from the 5th Bn., 46th Inf. is authorized to take an infantry fire team with them on their MEDCAPs for protection, but they rarely do.

Unescorted and armed only with their personal weapons, the team journeys to isolated hamlets to treat the sick and injured. They seldom have been fired on.

Welcome Visitors

As the medical vehicle with the big red crosses painted on the sides and top approaches a village, children stand alongside the road to wave greetings. They run behind the vehicle in a steadily growing group until it stops in the village.

The "bac-si" (doctor) opens up his medical supplies and begins to treat patients.

There are all sorts of ailments. Primarily, the team treats sores, cuts, and infections. They sometimes pull teeth, cast fractures, give shots, and treat people for major diseases such as malaria and plague.

Patient Becomes Aide

The other two members of the medical team, SP5 Roger Stanford and PFC Harold Thedfold, are dedicated to their work just like their team leader. They know many of the village children by name.

The medical team has adopted one young girl as an assistant, and has taught her many of their basic treatment techniques. The girl first came to them as a patient.

After recovering from her injury, she expressed a desire to aid the medics in their work, and they began to teach her how to clean sores, apply bandages, and give some medications.

She is now considered a valuable asset to the team's operation, and she goes with the medics on MEDCAPs to several villages other than her own.

Her ability to speak English and Vietnamese helps solve many communication problems.

Pill Swap

The people in the villages have very little knowledge of correct medical practices, Laughnan explained.

On one occasion, he saw women in a village engage in a pill trading session after his team had completed a MEDCAP visit there.

He pointed out, though, that such problems are gradually being licked. The number of people to be treated at a given village on a given day has decreased.

"The people still show up at our MEDCAPs," he said, "but fewer of them need treatment. Now many just come to watch and talk."

Sharon Freer

This lady is a drummer. Sharon recently appeared in the division area with an all-girl musical combo—"Renee And The Shoolettes." By the way, the lucky dog's name is Bao Chi, Division Information Office mascot. (Photo by SP4 Peter Schwarz, Americal IO)

'Hardin Falls'

(Continued from Page 1)

After the hamlet is cleared, Vietnamese Civic Action teams, MEDCAP personnel, and PSYOP team members enter the area and assist the people in any way that they can.

Phase-Out Forces

The third phase of the overall operation is to withdraw all American forces from the area and leave it to the GVN.

The most important result of the operation thus far was explained by CPT Tran Vinh Quan, Vietnamese forces commander.

"We have had an increasing number of Hoi Chanhs since the operation has begun, as well as voluntary informants who have led our soldiers to Viet Cong tunnel complexes and land mines in the area," he said.

Shift In Emphasis

The overall significance of "Operation Hardin Falls" is two-fold. It is the first time the division has launched such an accelerated pacification program.

Second, and most important, it marks the shift in emphasis from continuous armed encounters to an intensified program of pacification in the Vietnam conflict.

"Operation Hardin Falls" is the beginning of a concentrated joint effort by Vietnamese and U.S. forces to educate the people of Vietnam to the ways of the enemy.

23rd S&T Supplies The Troops

Truck Convoys Are Division's Lifeline

Story and Photo By
SP4 DEAN NORLAND

CHU LAI—In a war noted for its innovations, the time-tested convoy continues to move more materials overland in Vietnam than any other form of transportation.

An estimated 80 percent of all supplies transported in the division are relayed from here to satellite supply points by the men and trucks of B Co., 23rd Supply and Transportation (S&T) Bn.

Leave Driving To Us

"We run resupply convoys on Highway 1, Highway 535, and the Tien Phuoc road," explained B Co. commander CPT Jerret Grisham (Birmingham, Ala.).

It is not unusual for the company to have two convoys on the road at the same time, one convoy headed south to Quang Ngai City and the other moving north to LZ Baldy.

From Dec. 20, 1967, to Dec. 1, 1968, the company logged 1,007,528 road miles.

Thorough Preparations

B Co. convoys don't just happen, they are planned. The company receives its commitments from 23rd S&T at 1700 hours for the next day's convoy.

The two-and-a-half- and five-ton trucks are loaded during the night, and at 0800 hours the next morning the convoy starts to form.

CARRYING VITAL CARGO, two-and-one-half-ton trucks of 23rd S&T Bn.'s B Co. travel along a rough stretch of Highway 1 while plying its route between Chu Lai and LZ Baldy. Each truck maintains a specified interval with the vehicle in front of it for both reasons of safety and to avoid damage if another hits a mine or is struck by enemy fire.

To prevent a chain reaction disaster, gasoline tankers and ammunition trucks are scattered throughout the convoy.

Usually two armored jeeps with mounted machineguns from the 23rd MP Co. act as lead and trail vehicles. The front jeep sets the pace, normally 20mph in rural areas and 15mph in villages or towns.

The convoy commander, an NCO for less than 10 vehicles and a lieutenant for more, briefs the drivers before every convoy.

Insuring Proper Spacing

"My job is to insure there is a proper interval between vehicles," said convoy commander 1LT Mike Findley (Memphis, Tenn.). "If there are any breakdowns or vehicles get stuck, I see they are taken care of."

"When we reach our destination I determine if the trucks are off-loaded properly. Also, I must make sure all units are ready to make the return trip to Chu Lai."

Assist Stragglers

Vehicles that do falter along the route are quickly taken care of. The ailing truck pulls over to the side of the road and the rest of the convoy continues.

A jeep with radio and firepower, a wrecker, and a maintenance truck with a mechanic then stop.

Depending on the severity of the breakdown, one or more of the emergency repair vehicles remain with the downed truck until it is either repaired on the spot or towed to a secure area.

Radio transmission between the MPs and the convoy commander insure a smoother operation. Also, the convoy's progress is charted by the division's Tactical Operations Center.

Rugged Roads

Land mines buried in or along the roads prove to be more of a hazard to convoys than sniper fire.

The biggest antagonists of B Co., however, are the roads themselves. "Some of these roads are the worst I've ever seen," shrugged CPT Grisham.

"The vehicles just get beat to death. The trucks that aren't deadlined are on the road just about every day."

When a convoy is completed and trucks return to Chu Lai in late afternoon or early evening, each driver inspects his vehicle.

The trucks are then dispatched to various loading points in preparation for the next day's journey as the never ending job of the Americal convoy crew continues into the night.

H_2O May Well Bubble Trouble

Water in Vietnam often can be more dangerous to you than the enemy.

Most of the water here comes from surface sources, wells, or municipal systems offering varying degrees of water quality, but nearly all are contaminated or open to contamination.

Don't assume water is safe to drink because you see the local people drinking it. They may have built up an immunity to the impurities over a long period of time.

And the absence of any symptoms of illness for the first few days after drinking impure water does not mean the water was safe to drink.

A certain period of time passes before the disease organisms grow and reproduce within your body.

If you are in the field and can't get any potable water, use iodine pills for purification—one tablet per canteen of clear water, two tablets per canteen of cloudy water.

Boiling the water also does the job.

Your best bet for water is a clear, running stream.

Even here, pop an iodine tablet in your canteen just to play safe.

DON'T ASSUME water from a well is safe because you see the local villagers drinking it. They may be immune to the diseases that are carried in the water. If you can't get potable water, be sure to use purification tablets or boil it.

DO LOOK for clear, running streams as a source of drinking water. But to be on the safe side, drop a couple of iodine tablets into your canteen before putting it to your lips. (Photos by SP4 Steve Shingledecker, 523rd Sig. Bn.)