SOUTHERN CROSS
AMERICAL DIVISION
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Enemy's Salty Industry Closed When Uncovered

By SGT MARK L. WOLF

LZ GATOR — Soldiers of the 5th Bn., 46th Inf. have gouged deeply into VC salt supplies, capturing more than 230 tons in what is believed to be one of the largest caches discovered in Vietnam.

The salt, a vital part of the enemy's diet, is used extensively as a preservative, and at times is used for bartering.

"I've been in Vietnam for 16 months now, and anything I can do to hurt the Viet Cong is fine with me," said CPT Steven Schopp (Eldon, Mo.), commander of the battalion's cache-finding B Co.

The stores were found in a series of caches on the Batangan Peninsula 10 miles east of Quang Ngai City.

"We're distributing it to refugees in our area through CAP teams (joint U.S. Marine-South Vietnamese Combined Action Platoons) and Vietnamese district and province headquarters," said CPT Anthony Phelps (Smithtown, N.Y.), civil affairs officer for the 5th Bn., 46th Inf.

The cache-finding company had been conducting normal search operations along the southern part of the peninsula looking for VC by day and answering sniper fire by night. On the third day, 1LT Gary Byler (Parsons, Kan.), 1st platoon leader, reported that his early afternoon patrol had found a four-foot-high structure which, after careful examination, was discovered to contain a large quantity of salt.

"I thought this was just an isolated case of finding a salt cache," said CPT Schopp, "but after running some more patrols in the area, we found so much salt that I moved the rest of the company into the area."

By the end of the day the men had filled 200 bags with 16,000 pounds of salt, which was flown by choppers to LZ Gator, base camp of the 198th Inf. Bde.'s 5-46.

When the size of the find became apparent, C and D companies were rotated into the area to help with the removal of the salt. At the same time, other large amounts were discovered hidden under haystacks within a mile of the original find.

Since then an average of 25 tons a day has been moved from the enemy storage area.

It was soon discovered how such a large quantity of salt came to be on the peninsula — the VC had been processing it from the nearby South China Sea.

They terraced off the area, surrounded on three sides by salt flats, and let the high tide fill it with sea water which was then trapped by a hastily built dike. As the water evaporated under the hot tropical sun, salt residue remained to be raked together, scooped up and hidden by the VC for future use.

Meanwhile, the battalion continues to find and sack more salt by day, and patrol at night to fend off constantly harassing enemy snipers.

Moving several tons of salt daily requires a lot of transportation. "It became such a problem getting all that salt by 'hook' to LZ Gator every day that we decided to take it over to the beach and coordinate with the U.S. Navy to have it moved by ship to its various destinations," said LTC Julian Wagner (Green Cove Springs, Fla.), battalion commander.

Musing over the huge amount of salt his men had found, Col. Wagner came up with a few interesting figures of his own. There is enough salt to make salt tablets in a quantity to furnish every American in Vietnam with two tablets per day for an entire year. Laid end-to-end, the tablets would stretch 2,658 miles. (198th IO)

ALTHOUGH FEW IN NUMBER, even newspapers reach Division soldiers in the field. PFC John Maverman (Salt Lake City), an infantryman from the 3rd Bn., 21st Inf., reads a paper that has already passed through several hands.
(Photo by SP5 John Ramanauskas, Americal IO)

Have Book Will Read

CHU LAI — A book or magazine is precious to the soldier in the field, prized nearly as much as the letter from home.

In the hands of the Division soldier they are read in bunkers, tents, APC's and helicopters. During a break, drivers can be found perched on their trucks reading the spread pages of a newspaper or sitting in the grass under the shade of a tree engrossed in a paperback book.

Publications provide information and entertainment on subjects of interest to the soldier that field living would otherwise deny them. Soldiers value the reading material they are able to obtain. Books and magazines are shared like water and ammunition.

"Someone is always coming into the bunker looking for something to read," explained PFC John (Japhy) Maverman (Salt Lake City), a member of the 3rd Bn., 21st Inf.'s recon platoon. "If we have something that we have read, we just pass it on to the next guy."

Hard to Get

Although at times everyone seems to have some reading material, it is usually hard to come by in the field. Publications like newspapers and magazines rarely reach the soldier before the news is old but their appeal remains nevertheless.

Usually carrying either a book or magazine in his pack, PFC Walter R. Skeate (Chicago), also from the 196th Bde. recon platoon commented, "It's hard to get exactly what you want, so you settle for what you can get."

When soldiers come to Chu Lai on "stand down", some usually manage to boost their exhausted supply of reading material with a trip to the PX. Some, though not many are aware of the offer, get their resupply of books free from USO book shelves.

Regardless of the difficulties soldiers may have obtaining reading material, co-operation amongst themselves has helped the flow of material to reach the field where it can bring a touch of the world and home to the soldier and in these few minutes, transfer his mind to thoughts other than those of his present duty. (Americal IO)

HOISTING A SACK OF CAPTURED RICE on his shoulder to take to a waiting helicopter is this soldier of the 5th Bn., 46th Inf. Troops of the 198th Bde. found more than 230 tons of salt in a series of caches found on the Batangan Peninsula. (U.S. Army Photo)

New CO For 1-52 Infantry

LZ BAYONET — The homeward bound LTC Reed E. Davis Jr. (Omaha, Neb.) handed over the reins-of-command of the 1st Bn., 52nd Inf., 198th Inf. Bde. to LTC Arthur E. Brown Jr. (Savannah, Ga.) in a change of command ceremonies here.

MG Lloyd B. Ramsey (Somerset, Ky.) Americal commander presented LTC Davis the Legion of Merit with First Oak Leaf Cluster, the Bronze Star Medal for Valor, and the Purple Heart.

LTC Brown recently arrived from his last assignment at the U.S. Army War College at Carlisle Barracks, Pa. The departing battalion commander will return to the United States for his new assignment with the Office of the Secretary of the Army, Washington D.C.

Same Soldier, Same Unit, Together Again

LZ BALDY—Rejoining his old unit after three years lapse, one Vietnam returnee finds considerable change in "personnel and equipment."

SFC Samuel O'Neal (Stevenson, W. Va.) came to Vietnam July 15, 1966, after the 196th Inf. Bde. was activated at Ft. Devens, Mass. He was attached to the 3rd Bn., 82nd Arty. at that time and worked in communications.

The 196th Bde. was at first stationed at Tay Ninh for seven months, then moved to Chu Lai during O'Neal's last five months.

"We brought raw recruits over with us when we came in 1966," said O'Neal. "We trained the men by putting them through an advanced individual training course (AIT), my job being to train in the field of communications. The recruits learned fast and adapted quickly to their new environment."

After serving that first year in Vietnam, O'Neal returned to the United States and was stationed at Ft. Bragg, N.C. in the communications section; he stayed there until July 1969.

Now in his second tour O'Neal is back with his old unit, the 3-82, and working, as might be expected, as communications chief.

"The 3-82 certainly has changed since 1966," noted O'Neal. "The unit has acquired more personnel and equipment and has expanded its area of operations. One of the biggest changes is the living quarters. When we settled at Tay Ninh and Chu Lai our only shelters were tents. The hooches we now have make living more comfortable."

Religion And You

God's Night Laager

By CHAPLAIN (CPT) RONALD W. BENZING
11th Inf. Bde.

Psalm 34:7 The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him and delivereth them.

Every soldier in Vietnam is undoubtedly familiar with the importance of a good defensive perimeter around his position. Whether he is with a small unit in the field, a company, a battalion forward basecamp, or even the large divisional size complexes, one thing is common—a perimeter.

The Psalmist was aware of this same defense when he penned the words of this verse many years ago. Implicit within the words, "encampeth round about" is the idea of a perimeter.

The defensive perimeter about which the Psalmist writes is not merely the results of man's imagination, ingenuity, or ability. It far surpasses even the greatest of these. Rather, the source of this protection is "the angel of the Lord." This then is God's perimeter.

What a reassuring thought this should be to us! That God has established a place of safety for his own. That all the attributes of the Lord are integrated into the very construction and defense of this position. His omniscience can foresee impending danger; His omnipresence assures us that He is everywhere at all times; His omnipotence tells of His power to overcome the enemy; His wisdom encourages us that He will not act foolishly; and His love upholds us that all these other attributes are for our benefit.

The God who has established this perimeter is interested in those within. Since God is the originator and the builder, we need not expect that the enemy will overrun this position. Although the devil may seek to probe, though he may cast his fiery darts of wickedness, and though he may even use psychological operations to influence men, still the enemy will not succeed against God's own. He will never penetrate into the perimeter of God's love. The creator's love and power will protect through both the physical and spiritual warfare.

The promise of the verse, however, is not indiscriminate. To those who "fear the Lord" these words are directed. By "fearing" the Lord the Psalmist is not implying that we are to tremble and shake in horror before God, but that we should reverse, respect, and obey him. The man who fears God in the Biblical sense is that man who loves God and obeys him. To this group God says, "I will protect you within my perimeter."

The People Persuader

VIETNAM-STYLE

By SP4 JAMES BROWN

The Land Of Plantations

A large-scale of production in a single commodity for sale or export, is defined as plantation agriculture. The plantations in the Republic of Vietnam produced rubber, sugar, tea, coconuts, and coffee before the Indochina War. The French financed and managed most of these plantations, employing Vietnamese labor. A few wealthy Vietnamese owned such operations. Over 55,000 persons were working on plantations in 1961.

In 1897, the first rubber (Hevea brasiliensis) was introduced from Malaya and tapped in 1905. Most of the rubber plantations were located on the red and grey semilateritic soils of the southern slopes of the Central Highlands.

At the conclusion of the Indochina War, the planted area increased to 352,642 acres in 1963. However, due to VC harassment, new planting has been decreasing. In 1962 the yearly production had reached a peak of 77,870 metric tons, but decreased to 74,200 metric tons in 1964. Still, the export of rubber has become South Vietnam's chief foreign exchange product since the VC have disrupted rice deliveries to Saigon.

In 1937 during the colonial period, sugar production totaled 20,000 tons, most of which was produced in the southernmost slopes of the Central Highlands northeast of Saigon and in some of the coastal deltas.

Many of the canefields were diverted to other food crops during the Indochina War. Some fields were abandoned altogether, and by 1954 sugar production had fallen to 4,000 metric tons. However, production on approximately 38,000 acres had risen to over a million metric tons in 1964—sufficient to meet one half of the country's rising requirements.

Tea is indigenous to the area where it is grown in the highlands. It was being cultivated on approximately 23,800 acres in 1964, mostly in the Central Highlands where the climate and soil are ideal. Most of the 5,000-ton crop was processed as green tea which the Vietnamese prefer, and the rest as black tea for export.

SOUTHERN CROSS
AMERICAL DIVISION

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By SP4 JAMES BROWN

The pacification program could be more destructive to the enemy than the most elaborate "Weapons System" in man's reach. Being an American fighting man, you are an intrinsic part of Vietnam's pacification.

If you are an advisor, field medic, administrator, or just plain "soldier" in 'Nam — your pacification efforts will help destroy the VC and hew a stronger nation.

Aiding the government of Vietnam's National Development Program and strengthening the odds for its success will get you a quicker ticket home. Think about it!.

Helping The People

What's it all about? Security, peace, prosperity — those are the definitions of pacification that have meaning for the Vietnamese people.

It's the Viet Cong's deadliest enemy.

It drives the VC from the hamlets — and keeps them out.

It brings a free and elective government to the village.

It provides products and prosperity to the countryside.

It helps refugees return to their homes.

It weakens the VC/NVA.

It can shorten the war.

When ARVN troops "sweep out" the VC from hamlets and RFs and PFs keep them from returning; when the People's Self Defense Force provides civil defense for their hamlets and villages, while the National Police maintain law and order and protect life and property; or when the U.S. and allied forces destroy VC/NVA main forces and bases, it is merely to establish security so that the pacification objectives can be successful.

But territorial security isn't enough; getting rid of the VC political control over the hamlets and villages must also be accomplished.

While the National Police finds the VC, and captures or neutralizes them, imprisoned VC are given the chance to think — to help rather than destroy Vietnam.

It can be rightly said that reducing the Viet Cong infrastructure is pacification.

Chieu Hoi! Chieu Hoi! Conducting a national amnesty program also means security. The VC is a hardened, trained and effective enemy. He isn't stupid either; he soon finds out he is outgunned and outclassed — fighting for a lost cause. Then he begins to think — and rallies to the GVN.

When the VC comes over he is a Hoi Chanh. He provides valuable information about enemy units and ammunition-food-weapons caches. Also the enemy must replace him, which is a hard job in itself.

Pacification means more than security; it also means development. It means free elections without fear, and more effective community management. Pacification reflects a stronger local government in the making.

Spirit

Yes, pacification means a lot of things. It means progressive self-help projects for each village to improve its public health, education, agricultural services, and public works.

It means a community spirit through established strong government in all villages. Community spirit involves the elements of community defense through an organized People's Self Defense Force.

An effective defense force should be capable of protecting a hamlet or village; alert to warn the people of VC attacks; ready and capable of defending their friends, families, and homes.

With security and self defense in the hamlets and villages, the process of nation-building begins.

Nation-building is a big job. To stimulate the rural economy the following must take place: Increased rice production, cultivation of better crops, breeding healthier livestock, improved irrigation and roads, helping farmers to get low interest loans.

What do you do about refugees? Refugees are part of pacification and can help a developing nation. But they need relief and asylum and they must be resettled or returned to their villages.

Refugees can contribute greatly to pacification by self-help programs, training, and education.

The population must be motivated to be active in pacification. This means getting the word to the people. They must be told and shown how the government will benefit them.

Everyone's Job

The pacification program is a GVN effort — directed by the government ministries and a central pacification and development council.

Its objectives are based on the principle of "community spirit" with emphasis on the village and the people.

The U.S. Government is the principal advisor to the GVN. It advises through such agencies as the State Department, U.S. Agency For International Development, and the Military Assistance Command.

Pacification means a one way ticket home for the U.S. soldier. With your help pacification can be successful. We are all responsible for its success. So, do your part today — until that important job is completed.

Awards & Decorations

BRONZE STAR MEDAL W/"V" DEVICE

SP4 Gregory S. Adams, 198th Bde; SGT Philip L. Behe, 11th Bde; SGT John H. Burton Jr. (1st OLC), 196th Bde; SP4 Earnest O. Campbell, 196th Bde; PFC Willie Collins, 11th Bde; 2LT William A. Cox, 198th Bde; PFC Noel R. Cultice, 11th Bde; SSG Claude M. Edwards, 196th Bde; SGT Douglas F. Harkins, 11th Bde; CPT Wyland W. Hopkins (1st OLC), 11th Bde; PFC Franklin E. Kenslow, 198th Bde; SP4 Charles H. Knapp, 198th Bde; SGT Dale W. Lawrence 328th RR Co.; SP4 David J. Meek, 11th Bde; SP4 Ronnie S. Miodowski, 198th Bde; PFC Manuel M. Morales, 11th Bde; SP4 Richard A. Padden, 198th Bde; SP4 Ray F. Patten Jr., 11th Arty; 1LT Mark S. Richards, 11th Bde; CPT James D. Schramm, 56th Arty; SSG David T. Sollenbarger, 198th Bde; SP4 Dennie Strahan (1st OLC), 11th Bde; SP4 James L. Tock, 11th Bde; SP4 James C. Todd Jr., 14th Arty; PFC John W. Troutman, 11th Bde; SP4 James P. Turner, 11th Bde; 1LT John R. Wallace, 198th Bde; PFC Albert J. Yankle Jr., 196th Bde; PFC James M. Young, 11th Bde.

ARMY COMMENDATION MEDAL W/ "V" DEVICE

SP4 James B. Bennett Jr., 196th Bde; SP4 Jack Calamia, 11th Bde; SP5 Roy C. Carpenter, 198th Bde; SP4 Dean E. Craven, 198th Bde; WO1 Wayne D. Clark, 123rd Avn. Bn; SP4 Gary E. Eiring, 198th Bde; SGT Benny H. Ferguson, 11th Bde; SP4 Gary E. Fuchs, (1st OLC), 198th Bde; PSG Billy D. Horn, 196th Bde; SGT Gradley A. Hougard (1st OLC), 198th Bde; SGT John P. Isely, 196th Bde; SP4 Willard G. Jones, 198th Bde; SGT David J. Kasa, 198th Bde; SP4 David H. Lake, 196th Bde; SP4 Gregory D. Mainous, 196th Bde; SP4 Terrence M. Meyer, 196th Bde; SP4 James F. Mingey, 196th Bde; SP4 Dan V. Peterson, 198th Bde; SFC Thomas F. Potts, 1st Cav; SP4 Pedro Quiroz, 196th Bde; SFC Everette E. Rice, 198th Bde; PFC Jerry E. Roderick Jr., 198th Bde; 1SG Adolph J. Smith, 198th Bde; SP4 Joe L. Ware, 196th Bde.

Traffic Safety Aided By Signs

CHU LAI — The 57th Trans. Bn. of the U.S. Army's 1st Log. Cmd. decided something should be done about traffic safety throughout the Southern I Corps.

The initial step came with the erection of international road signs in the village of Binh Son 11 miles south of LZ Gator. The road signs will eventually be placed from Sa Huynh, south of Duc Pho to LZ Baldy in the north.

"We are not only working around the villages, but at the staging areas, and any place where there is heavy military traffic," commented MAJ Bernard Clark (Seattle, Wash.), XO of the 57th.

Along with the signs PSYOPS broadcasted a message using their "Early Word System," warning people to heed the road signs and telling them that this has been done for their safety.

No matter where the small convoy stopped, people of all ages gathered to see what was happening. They were eager to read the pamphlets that were passed out explaining the new signs and the reasons for them.

The idea for the road signs originated with the 57th, but many hands entered into the planning and execution of the project. The 23rd S&T Bn. and the Naval Support Activity Detachment worked on the lettering. The 737th Trans. Bn. will handle the continuing project over the next few months. (Americal IO)

MAKING A SWING FOR SAFETY, a soldier with the 57th Trans. Bn. erects one of the new international road signs in the village of Binh Son. (Photo By PFC Timothy Vaughn, 523rd Sig. Bn.)

Grooving With Games And Home-Style Smiles

LZ BALDY — When you have attractive Red Cross girls around to cheer you up, Vietnam somehow ceases to be the arena of rice paddies, booby traps and trip flares — at least for a little while.

Periodically at the request of the battery commanders, Red Cross girls from the Division visit the batteries of 3rd Bn., 82nd Arty. Their mission is to entertain the soldiers with programs of activity and to help them to take their minds off the combat situation.

Called the Supplemental Recreational Activities Overseas (SARO), the program is sponsored by the Red Cross and is found only in Korea and Vietnam.

The Red Cross girls bring with them a program of fun and surprises.

"We offer such activities as matching games, puzzles and quizzes," said Miss Laraine Young (Lexington, N.C.). "The activities give the fellows a chance to compete with one another and feel a sense of achievement; in this way they relax and take their minds off war. It also breaks up their daily routine," continued Miss Young.

In their visits to the individual fire support bases, the girls often bring books and refreshments in addition to the wide assortment of games.

"Informality is a key-note of the program," stated Diane Schmidt (Richmondfield, Wisc.). "Even if the boys don't actually learn anything from the activities, at least they're in a setting where they can have a little fun."

The job of these Red Cross volunteers is often-times more than just providing amusement.

"Everyday is different. You never know who you'll meet from day to day. And sometimes just a smile is all you need to build up their morale of these soldiers," concluded Miss Young. (196th IO)

Letter—$1000

You have a chance to express your ideas and possibly collect as much as $1000 prize money at the same time. All you have to do, is write a 500-word letter on "My Hopes For America's Future."

Letters must meet a deadline of November 1 to Freedoms Foundation, Valley Forge, Pa. 19481. The only restriction is strict adherence to the contest theme.

Writers must include their name, rank, social security number, full military address, unit, and home address.

Winners will be notified February 1970.

Land Of Creepy Crawlers

Snakes Slum In Jungle

By PFC DENNIS L. SELBY

CHU LAI — What, in the jungles of Vietnam, is irregularly colored and probably frightens more soldiers than "Charlie" himself?

Why, snakes, of course.

The countries of Southeast Asia have the greatest variety of snakes of any region in the world.

Of the 115 species of land snakes found in Vietnam, 17 are known to be venomous. Besides land snakes, there are 15 or more kinds of sea snakes found in the South China Sea and the Gulf of Tonkin, all of which have highly toxic venom.

In comparison to the 115 species of snakes found in the United States, of which 19 are venomous, there are 30 or more poisonous snakes in Vietnam.

Legendary

About half the venomous land snakes are Pit Vipers with a broad, distinct head, "cateyes" and a deep pit in the side of the face characteristic of these snakes.

One of the first "war stories" heard by a new Vietnam trooper is the tale of the five-step snake, the white-lipped Bamboo Viper, commonly called the Green Bamboo Snake.

A person bitten by the snake allegedly lives long enough to take only five steps.

The Bamboo Viper is encountered in the Mekong Delta region and along the narrow coastal plain to the north, including the Americal area of operation. The Green Bamboo Viper's venom is only weakly toxic to man, and contrary to popular belief, death from the bite of this snake is almost unknown.

Deadly

Probably the most dangerous snake in Vietnam is the Asian Cobra. Averaging less than five feet in length, the venom glands of the average adult contains sufficient poison to kill three to four men. These deadly cobras are generally found in the heavily populated delta and coastal plains.

Perhaps the most impressive of all dangerous snakes is the King Cobra. The "King" has reportedly attained a length of more that 18 feet, with an average adult size of 12-14 feet. It has a very large supply of toxic venom — enough, reportedly, to kill an elephant.

Land snakes are not alone. Approximately 15 species of sea snakes abound in the waters off Vietnam. Relatives of the cobra, sea snakes have become adapted to an aquatic life, having a flattened oar-like tail and valvular nostrils.

Aquatic Inhabitants

In the Saigon region and southward, Hardwick's Seasnake, one of the more deadly species, comprises 75 percent of the sea snake population.

North of Nha Trang, the Banded Small-headed Seasnake makes up the main population. The Small-headed Seasnake feeds on small or elongated fishes and, as its name implies, has a very small head. It is not considered dangerous to man.

In spite of the more than 30 venomous snakes found in Vietnam, few offer any serious danger to the American soldier. (Americal IO)

Learning The A B C's

This Popular Force officer candidate is learning to read English out of Stars and Stripes. SP4 Ronald W. Mandersheid (Lansing, Iowa) instructs each class on the basics of English as part of the RF-PF training program at the Americal Combat Center. (Photo by SP5 Tom Maus, Americal IO)

Convoy Grinds Up Road, Vital Link

The narrow, dusty streets of Tam Ky mark the start of supply convoy to the isolated outpost of Tien Phuoc.

After providing convoy security, A Trp., 1st Cav. refuels at their homebase, Hawk Hill.

For

o Distant Base

HIGHWAY 533 — The grinding roar of powerful engines shattered the silence of the peaceful-looking valley, but the anxious drivers were listening for more than the noise of their motors.

Many of the sun-tanned men who wheeled their big trucks down the semblance of a road between the city of Tam Ky and the small Special Forces CIDG (Civilian Irregular Defense Group) camp at Tien Phuoc had travelled the road before — and they knew what could be lurking in the green hills and tangled underbrush that strangle the roadway.

"I've been down this trail three times now," said SP4 Kenneth S. Compton (Indianapolis), "and it was pretty rough the first two trips. In March, we had several heavy mortar attacks and in May there were quite a few snipers along the route taking potshots at us."

Challenging

Today, with the bright sun making rifle barrels and steering wheels hot to the touch, the 40-plus drivers and guards from B. Co., 23rd Supply and Trans. Bn. had little time for talking as they concentrated their skills on conquering the road and any possible Viet Cong attempts to disrupt the convoy.

The narrow road itself is as much an enemy as a man with a rifle. Opened during mid-1968 as part of the Americal's Operation Burlington Trail, the road has been under attack constantly by the elements of nature and the encroaching underbrush. What were once chuckholes are now approaching gully size, and the supply-laden trucks must bypass them to continue the journey.

"The only safe way to get through here after the minesweep teams have checked for mines is to drive hard and fast and try not to stop," said one sweat-stained driver, SP4 Carbell Bouie (Attapulgus, Ga.). "If you stop or go too slow you make too good a target for 'Charlie' but in many places the holes are so steep and wide that you have to inch your way through so you don't tear up the truck."

Ready For Trouble

On the other side of the truck cab, sitting beside the driver, the security guard has his own worries. The entire 17-mile stretch of dirt is a possible ambush site, with ample cover and concealment provided by the dense foliage and rugged hills that menace on each side.

"It's kind of spooky — that's the only way to describe it," said PFC Ray Price (Chamblee, Ga.). "We have to travel at a wide interval to avoid giving the VC a bunched-up target, and the road is so winding and there is so much underbrush that you can't help getting a feeling of being all alone when you can't see anyone in front or back of you."

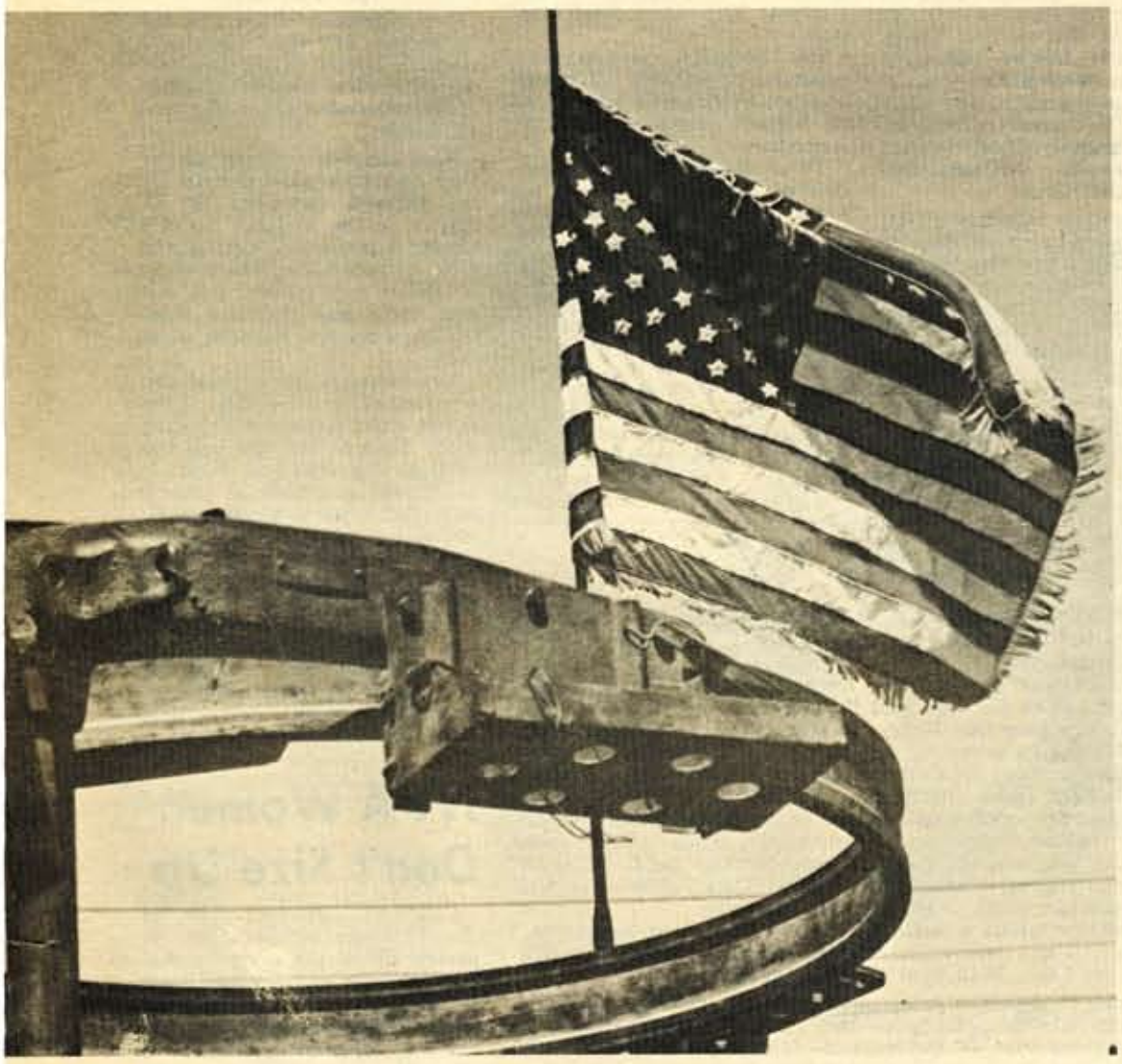
Glad To Be Back

Although the overwhelming feeling throughout the route is loneliness and isolation, there was plenty of help at hand. Besides the U.S. Army trucks and 20 Vietnamese trucks — each loaded with food supplies and building materials for the Tien Phuoc outpost—a platoon of armored personnel carriers of A Trp., 1st Cav. were along to add extra firepower, and helicopters zipped along the route, providing an umbrella of firepower if needed.

The men of B Co. were more than glad to listen to the hum of their well-tuned engines instead of any interruptions planned by the elusive Viet Cong.

Gunners from 23rd S&T Bn. keep a close watch for enemy activity.

Story And Photos By
CPT Cecil A. Green And
PFC Dean K. Williams
Americal IO



ring of power, "Old Glory" and a .50 cal. machinegun stand ready for cargo run.

A truck climbs a steep incline along Hwy. 533.

Squad Takes Cover In Enemy Cemetery

LZ BALDY — A four-man point squad was searching for a suspected VC basecamp when they walked into a deadly ambush and ironically hid behind enemy gravestones to stay alive.

The morning was cloudy with only a slight breeze as D Co., 2nd Bn., 1st Inf. began searching for a possible VC fortification near the Song Ly Ly River about 35 miles northwest of Chu Lai.

Reports indicated the area contained caches of rice and weapons. Two days prior, a VC element had been seen moving through the location.

Leaving the rest of the 196th Inf. Bde. unit 40 meters behind, the four-man point element cautiously moved toward the suspected enemy camp.

Spotting what looked like a camp, the four men crouched low and crawled into the apparently abandoned enemy base. Suddenly, the enemy opened fire from a woodline a short distance to their front.

"Hit the ground," yelled SP4 Tim Miles (Boise, Idaho). Pinned to the ground, the young forward observer carefully reached for the radio strapped to his back and called A Btry., 3rd Bn., 82nd Arty., for support.

"I raised my head slightly to survey the situation," said Miles, "and noticed the point man of our squad was wounded in the leg. I yelled for the medic, who crawled to help the wounded man."

Another member of the squad raised to his knees and was ready to throw a grenade when an enemy round ripped through the upper part of his arm.

The remainder of D Co. was laying down a wall of protective fire for the point element against the estimated platoon-size VC ambush.

"The company was still too far away to help evacuate the wounded," said Miles, "so we dragged them about 50 meters to a graveyard beyond the camp and hid behind headstones."

For two hours D Co. battled the VC force and after consistent pounding of the postion by artillery, the enemy retreated. After the wounded were taken out, the infantrymen swept the area, finding five VC killed and more than 300 pounds of rice hidden in bunkers. (196th IO)

1-52 Circles VC Soldiers

LZ STINSON—"It was a text book operation," said CPT Claude G. Smith Jr. (Columbus, Ga.) commander of A Co., 1st Bn., 52nd Inf., about a recent cordon operation of an enemy occupied hamlet about three miles east of here.

"The enemy discovered our presence only after we had them sealed off," CPT Smith said. Thirty minutes after the 1-52 soldiers circled the village, the enemy discovered their predicament and attempted to flee behind a wall of small arms fire.

The waiting troops of the 198th Inf. Bde. killed three of the enemy while foiling their escape. A Viet Cong village chieftain was among the dead. Found on the influential enemy were 36,000 piasters and a .38 ca. revolver.

At dawn, C Co. was airlifted into the entrapped village with an IPW (interrogation prisoner of war) team, armed propoganda squad, and four national policemen. The surprise entrance yielded four captured NVA, including a warrant officer and three Viet Cong. (198th IO)

(Totals for Jan.-June 1969)

STATISTICAL LOOK AT DIVISION

ENEMY KILLED	——	6,838
CHIEU HOI RETURNEES	——	1,171
WEAPONS CAPTURED	——	1,383
MEDCAP MISSIONS (PATIENTS)	——	2,777 (264,753 Treated)
FOOD DISTRIBUTED	——	112 Tons
SELF-HELP KITS	——	5,081

Combat In Review

Ready To Fire

Artillerymen from the 3rd Bn., 18th Arty., await to fire the self-propelled 175mm artillery piece in support of 196th Inf. Bde. soldiers operating in Que Son Valley.
(Photo by SP4 George Hawkins, Americal IO)

57th Trans., Service With A Smile

Moves All, Ya Call, We Haul

CHU LAI — Any transportation unit takes pride in a hard-earned "can do" reputation for delivery of supplies to troops in the field. But the 57th Trans. Bn. (Truck), has at least three other sources of pride — warehousing and servicing the same supplies its truckers distribute, and performing direct support maintenance for divisional and nondivisional units.

The battalion supports all 1st Log. Command elements located in Chu Lai and provides logistical support to all Army units located in Quang Tin and Quang Ngai provinces. Elements of the 57th also establish and operate forward logistical support activities as required.

More Than Supply

After spending 11 months in the Northern I Corps Tactical Zone, the battalion moved south to Chu Lai in December. Now it not only transports supplies, but also receives, stores, issues, and accounts for those same supplies.

The battalion supports approximately 35,000 divisional and nondivisional troops, with its biggest customer being the Americal.

To accomplish the supply portion of its broad mission, the battalion has attached the 126th Supply and Service Co., a National Guard unit from Quincy, Ill., a bakery platoon, a fortification and construction platoon (supply), and a class I (rations) supply platoon.

To furnish service support, there are two maintenance companies and a laundry platoon. Transportation support is furnished by two attached transportation companies, one of which is an Army Reserve unit from Yakima, Wash., the 737th Trans. Co.

Supply Two Bases

Transportation support is the backbone of the battalion's resupply effort to its two forward logistical support activities (LSA) located at Duc Pho and LZ Baldy.

Most supplies destined for the Duc Pho LSA are received by sea through the port at Sa Huynh, at the southern tip of I Corps. A platoon of light trucks plus a "reduced" platoon of 5,000 gallon semi-trailers and several stake and platform semi-trailers transport supplies overland.

The battalion has several other areas of responsibility. It operates eight helicopter refueling sites: Four at Chu Lai and two each at Duc Pho and Baldy. It supervises a petroleum laboratory that insures quality of all petroleum products, and monitors and supervises a squad that receives and distributes Army air cargo entering Chu Lai.

These are not a normal mission for any battalion-sized transportation unit, making the 57th one of the most unique organizations in the Army. (Da Nang Spt. Cmd. IO)

KCS Outwits VC

LZ WEST—Alertness and the ability to track the enemy are two attributes that make Kit Carson Scouts valuable assets to Americal infantrymen.

This fact was proven once again during a joint operation involving the 196th Inf. Bde. and Popular Forces (PFs).

Working in Hiep Duc Valley, 24 miles west of Tam Ky, C Co., 4th Bn., 31st Inf., was moving into position as a blocking force with the PFs. Lee, a young Kit Carson scout assigned to 4-31 was walking with 1LT Jerry Josey (Bishopville, S.C.).

Suddenly, Lee stopped and pointed at the ground. There, partially hidden by the grass, were fresh sandal tracks in the moist earth. Josey cautiously followed his scout through the dense underbrush running along a nearby river bank. They followed the trail onto a sand bar which jutted out into the water.

"I was sure whoever made the tracks had crossed the stream," said Josey. "I was peering across the stream trying to catch sight of him when Lee's M-16 went off right by my ear!"

Spinning to his right, Josey observed a VC, clutching an AK-47 rifle, slump onto the sand a few meters down stream. Unseen by the infantryman, the VC had made a right turn and walked down the river's edge. The alert Kit Carson Scout had spotted him before he could set up an ambush. (196th IO)

NVA Women Don't Size Up

CHU LAI — Soldiers of the 1st Bn., 46th Inf., 196th Inf. Bde., reported one of the more unusual caches of the war. Found among 30 NVA packs were 20 brassieres (size 20-26, A-cup), 29 pairs of women's panties, and 116 pairs of black pajamas. (Americal IO)

This groovy young miss likes to gamble and catch some rays in Las Vegas. But she would never gamble on catching malaria. She takes her pill, and advises you to do likewise.

Reckless Driving Can Be Your Worst Enemy

CHU LAI—Telling "war stories" is popular with many Vietnam returnees, but who wants to go home and tell about how he broke his leg when his jeep locked horns with a deuce-and-a-half?

In an attempt to cut down on motor vehicle accidents, USARV has proclaimed September as Motor Vehicle Accident Prevention Month.

"The Vietnamese are not familiar with western techniques of driving, nor are they prepared for the large volume of traffic currently on their roads," remarked 1LT Joseph I. McCormack (Memphis, Tenn.), the Division safety officer.

"Drivers must reduce their speed and be especially alert for any situation when driving through villages, hamlets, and other populated areas," the lieutenant added.

1LT McCormack gave a list of precautions to be taken to make September a successful month for the Americal.

A. Get the feel of the road surface upon starting and at frequent intervals during weather and road surface changes.

B. Always allow an added safety margin. Give other vehicles a wide margin of safety at all times. Be a defensive driver. Anticipate and avoid accidents.

C. Signal your intention early. Anytime you have a change in speed or a change in direction, be sure that you notify traffic to your front and rear in plenty of time of your intention by signaling early.

D. Avoid quick acceleration. Quick acceleration can cause a driver to momentarily lose control of the vehicle.

E. When poor visibility exists, use lights to warn other drivers of your position. If visibility is reduced to near zero and the tactical situation permits, stop and park off the roadway and wait for weather conditions to improve.

F. Check the windshield, rear glass, or rear view mirror for cracks, dirt, or any defect that may obstruct visibility.

G. Make constant checks of the tires, oil, water, and battery.

Following these tips will undoubtedly improve your driving ability. But, without applying a certain degree of common sense, all the tips in the world won't be able to help you.

In a combat zone, there are enough enemy hazards to endure without adding to the toll by simple carelessness. (Americal IO)

Part VI In A Special Series On R&R Sites

Daring Land Of Ancient And Neo-Sights

By SP5 JOHN RAMANAUSKAS

The city is alive, pulsating with the movement of over 1,800,000 people, a myriad of darting vehicles. Man and machine merge profusively in this port city, and flow in a thousand colorful directions. Intensifying colors, bright during day, glitter at night as neon signs and brightly lit store-windows flash advertisements that capture the eye in a rainbow of color. This is Bangkok, one of the cities offered to you for your R&R tour.

An exotic city of lights and sights, a distant dreamland with its ancient culture and customs, blended with the modern in a bustling metropolis, Bangkok is just a jet's jump away for the R&R bound soldier. For entertainment, sightseeing and shopping, there is no place in the world quite like it.

After you land in Bangkok and make a brief customs check at the airport, you are boarded on a bus destined for the R&R Center located downtown where you will convert your money and make hotel reservations. But first you are directed into a large, conference-like room where a pretty Thai girl will show you slides on what you can see in the city.

Then you are given the opportunity to change your money and make hotel reservations. The exchange rate is approximately 20 Baht for one U.S. dollar; one Baht equals a nickel. Under no circumstance may you cash a Treasury Check or personal check with a money changer, or make purchases with "greenback" on the economy.

Fine Hotels

Offered for your comfort are some of the most modern hotels in all Asia, with rates that range from $6 to $12 for a single room and $12 to $16 for a double nightly. All R&R Center recommended hotels, for $6 a night, offer air conditioned rooms complete with bath and 24 hours room service. You have the option, however, to stay at whatever hotel you please, the only stipulation being that the R&R Center knows where you will be staying.

Now that you have settled into your room and changed into some lightweight civilian clothes you almost forgot existed, you are ready to discover the allure of Bangkok.

Your first glance at the flow of vehicles outside the hotel may confuse you as you wonder which mode of transportation you should take. Buses and streetcars operate throughout the city but visitors tend to favor taxis and the Thai version of the cyclo, the "Sam Law". Fares average about 25 cents a mile for taxi and even less for a "Sam Law", but whatever you choose, be sure that you set a price before you start.

The Thais expect you to bargain, so do not accept the first price because it is usually too high. If you plan much traveling, a cab can be rented for the length of your stay for about $25.

Now that you have an idea on how to get started toward fun-time, the problem lies in where to go to have that fun. Numerous possibilities arise.

Night Life

After a satisfying meal you are prepared to take in the night life, which will easily surpass your expectations of a swinging time. Nightclubs galore, in both eastern and western style, await you featuring music, dancing and other professional entertainment. Beautiful Thai girls will be your dance partner for about $2 to $4 dollars an hour. The company of a hostess can be yours for the price of her drinks. You will never again experience a night like the one in Bangkok.

So as not to ruin your chance to cram activity into every minute, you would be wise to heed a few precautions. One is to remember that the tap water in Bangkok is unsafe for drinking. Your hotel will provide pitchers of potable water in your room. Another is to eat in the better restaurants and avoid food served by street vendors or in nightclubs.

Also available to you are PX facilities, including a snack bar and commissary. Military medical facilities for routine treatment of emergencies are there as well.

When the time comes to leave and you are on that flight back, you can be sure foxholes nor rearline offices can blank out the memories floating in your head. (Americal IO)

MEDCAP Aids Refugees

LZ WEST — Each day, some 3,900 Vietnamese refugees are receiving medical care thanks to the efforts of the MEDCAP team of the 4th Bn., 31st Inf. This five-man medical element can be transported by chopper to any location in the division in a matter of minutes.

"The purpose of the MEDCAP team is to provide daily medical care for the people of Hiep Duc," said CPT Phillip Kinman (Petersburg, Ind.), the battalion surgeon.

The Hiep Duc Refugee Center, located near LZ West, 35 miles northwest of Chu Lai, contains over 3,900 refugees who have recently returned to the area following several years absence caused by VC terrorism. MEDCAPs have been conducted at Hiep Duc before, but only on a weekly basis. "The MEDCAP team can provide follow-up treatment as well as aid in the instruction of the Vietnamese medics who assist in the daily treatment," said CPT Kinman.

The Vietnamese constructed the dispensary which houses the daily MEDCAPs. Twelve Vietnamese medics are currently in Tam Ky to receive intensive training related to their duties in Hiep Duc. They will assist in the daily treatment of refugees at Hiep Duc upon the completion of their training. (196th IO)

Sky Lift

A wounded NVA soldier is lifted to a waiting Division Medical Evacuation chopper. He was wounded in action against the 1st Bn., 52nd Inf., northwest of Quang Ngai.
(Photo by PFC D.K. Williams)

Time Savers

To better assist the Americal soldier in determining his chances of getting on an R&R flight while on an ordinary seven day out-of-country leave, the following R&R sites and the average number of seats available to people on leave is provided: Sydney (none), Hawaii (3), Bangkok (3), Hong Kong (4), Taipei (6), Okinawa (14), Manila (18), Tokyo (19), and Singapore (45).

Forecast: Cloudy & Wet

CHU LAI — The monsoon season, extending from October until April, is fastly approaching the southern I Corps area.

There is no getting around it — we are going to have plenty of rain. The heaviest rainfall should be during October with an average level of 25 inches. A decline is expected in November. However, the monsoon season does not follow a standardized pattern.

Every chance you get dry your feet, use foot powder, and carry extra socks for frequent changes; ensure that your sleeping area is protected from flooding and cloudburst; check with your supply room for rain suits.

Damp weather is destructive to equipment, especially on weapons. Clean weapons daily and apply light coat of oil. (Americal IO)

Drop-Out Ad No Takers, Closed Song

LZ BALDY — "Oh, give me a home, where the buffalo roam, and the deer and the antelope play. . . ."

PFC Nataniel Scipio (Columbia, S.C.) of E Co., a recon element of the 196th Inf. Bde., couldn't believe his ears. The unmistakable strains of "Home On The Range" drifted to his listening post from the dark jungle.

The tune could have been fine entertainment — something to relieve the monotony of Scipio's post.

But the midnight crooners tipped their hand when programming a "commercial" to interrupt the entertainment.

"Come over to our side GI's," chorused a score of squeaky-voiced NVA Regulars.

The 196th troops respond quickly. Counting to three they yelled in unison . . . "Ha, Ha, Ha!" It worked.

"We just wouldn't dance to their tune," concluded PFC Scipio.

But Civil Affairs Work Continues

6-56 Arty Left A Paradise

By SGT ALFRED ANTHONY JR.

KY HOA ISLAND — Heavy triangular sails pull the fishermen and their families of this island out into the South China Sea each morning and bring them back at dusk. Ky Hoa is a refuge of peace, rare in Vietnam.

When the 6th Bn., 56th Arty. departed the Americal for the United States, it turned over civil affairs responsibility for this island paradise to the 198th Inf. Bde.'s 1st Bn., 6th Inf.

Before he departed for home, CPT Michael D. Foncellino (Patchogue, N.Y.) civil affairs officer for the artillery unit drew an informal picture of the island and its people for CPT William D. Hyde (Merced, Calif.), civil affairs officer of the 1-6.

"There are no Viet Cong on Ky Hoa Island," said CPT Foncellino.

Situated just north of Chu Lai, across the Truong Giang River, Ky Hoa from the air looks propeller-shaped. At sea level it is a south sea island paradise — tall, strong coconut palms stretching out from the beach's edge.

For the 6,300 inhabitants, fishing is their chief means of income, and one can always see fishing nets hanging on four-foot poles along the island's magnificent shore.

For years the artillery's Hawk Missiles sat poised atop the only hill on Ky Hoa. But now the 6-56 is gone.

"One of our first projects is to find new jobs for the 200 villagers who worked on the missile compound," said CPT Hyde.

"We are planning to pave the one road which links the seven separated hamlets and we should be able to use many people on this project. We will give them the tools and supplies, but they will do the actual construction work."

"We're giving nine scholarships which will provide a little extra money for nine kids to get through another year of primary or high school," said CPT Hyde. "This means a great deal to the people here because the islanders hold education in very high esteem."

Ky Hoa is almost completely self-sustaining, and with its receptive attitude toward American aid, living standards are rising considerably.

Other plans for the future include introducing a more productive species to the offshore schools since fishing provides the main income of Ky Hoa Island.