Deadly blues

CHU LAI (23rd Inf. Div. IO) -- Elements of D Troop, 1st Squadron, 1st Cavalry trapped and destroyed a fifteen man element five miles south of Chu Lai during a recent daylight operation.

An aerial observer working with the 1st Battalion, 6th Infantry spotted three sampans loaded with Communist troops moving north along the Tra Bong River and called for support. The enemy immediately took evasive action, beaching their boats on an island and attempting to hide in the thick underbrush growing in the two feet of water that covered the island.

Diverted from another mission, the 123rd Aviation Battalion's Sabre flight (combined air-ground force) moved into the area. LOH pilots Captain Sidney Austin of Mineral Wells, Tex., and Warrant Officer Doyle U. Miner of Council Bluffs, Iowa, spotted 15 enemy soldiers occupying the island, confirming the aerial observer's report.

Receiving instructions from flight leader Lieutenant Ralph V. Cain of Valparaison, Fla., members of the troops Aero-rifle Platoon (Blues) were inserted on the opposite shore, 50 meters away.

The enemy failed to respond to repeated attempts by the LOH's to force their surrender and were then subjected to a CS attack in hopes that they would give up. Failing to receive any response, the Sabres requested permission to open fire and were cleared immediately by the district chief. Supported by Cobra gunships, the LOH's blasted the island.

A team of volunteers, led by Lieutenant Aruther L. Galloway of Williamsburg, Va., and including Staff Sergeant Wheeler Brooks of Ollie, Iowa, Sergeant Kevin O'Brien of New York City and Private First Class Michael Tyson of Hermit, Calif., was inserted by UH-1H (Huey) pilot Warrant Officer John M. Allen from Arlington, Tex., on the submerged island.

Sweeping the area, the team detained two suspects. Thirteen enemy KIA's were accounted for and credited to the LOH's. Continuing the sweep, the "Blues" recovered eight AK-47's and one 9mm pistol plus twenty Chinese Communist grenades. Also discovered were 25 packs containing uniforms.

This APC and its personnel from a 23rd Infantry Division cavalry unit are part of the task force securing Route 9 between Route 9 between Lang Vei and the Laotian border during Operation Dewey Canyon II taking place west of Quang Tri. (U.S. Army Photo by PFC Darrell McGillen)

SOUTHERN CROSS
AMERICAL DIVISION

Vol. 4, No. 11 Chu Lai, Vietnam March 12, 1971

Quang Ngai gets 55 Hoi Chanhs

By SGT Kenneth Perry

FSB 4-11, (11th Inf. Bde. IO) -- Disgusted with Viet Cong objectives and eager to begin a new life, 55 local force VC Montagnards and approximately 350 refugees turned to the Government of Vietnam for help the first 12 days of February in the 11th Infantry Brigade area of operations.

"The large number of people who came over to the government is a sign that these people are not being treated well by the enemy and are finding out that treatment is excellent with the GVN," explained Captain Rial V. Coleman, the 11th Infantry Brigade S-5.

The significant exodus of former VC sympathizers occured west of Quang Ngai city at Ha Thanh. Several of the psychological operations ralliers carried Hoi Chanh leaflets dropped by the brigade Psyops (psychological operations) personnel and many offered assistance in encouraging their comrades to rally.

For two hamlet guerrillas who secured an NVA base camp, pinpointing the location of the camp was a token of their appreciation and desire to encourage others to follow them in rallying.

With the aid of the two enthusiastic Hoi Chanhs, Company A of the 3rd Battalion, 1st Infantry and Popular Forces platoons from the Son Ha District planned a joint operation to penetrate the enemy sanctuary deep in the rugged mountains south of Ha Thanh.

"We quickly searched the area after our insertion and found a container with hot food which indicated the recent departure of whoever had been securing the camp, related Alpha Company Commander, Captain Villiam Ferguson of Wilmington, Del.

The swiftly executed raid resulted in the capture of three Chinese Communist carbines, two 60mm mortar rounds, seven ruck sacks, and 1,000 pounds of rice along with miscellaneous clothing and medical supplies. All captured items were evacuated.

While on the ground, one of the Hoi Chanhs used a megaphone to persuade any enemy in the area to hold their fire and consider rallying. There were no ralliers at the camp-site, but within a four-day period 46 rallied at Ha Thanh.

Americal gets 66 enemy

By SP4 David P. Goodrich

Action was light during the week past as the men of the 23rd Infantry Division killed 66 enemy soldiers.

IRON MOUNTAIN

Towards the end of the week, while sweeping an area near Mo Duc which had been the scene of action involving Delta Troop, 1st Squadron, 1st Cavalry, Charlie Company of the 1st Battalion, 20th Infantry found 8 AK-47s, one RPG launcher, one RPG round, two NVA rucksacks, 19 hand grenades, 80 lbs. of rice, three NVA canteens, two NVA shovels, 13 AK-47 magazines, seven NVA helmets, nine NVA belts, two NVA ponchos, two B-40 rockets and an NVA holster. More significantly, 14 NVA KIA's were confirmed and one woulned NVA was captured.

Earlier in the week assorted elements of the 1st Battalion, 20th Infantry destroyed five tunnels, a bunker, a tunnel-bunker complex and an enemy structure. The battalion also captured 1,000 rounds of .30 caliber machinegun ammunition and found five booby traps.

While flying in support of the 11th Infantry Brigade, early in the week Company B of 123rd Aviation engaged and killed three NVA. Three days later, while working northwest of Duc Pho, Company B destroyed eight enemy structures and killed three enemy soldiers. A day later the company destroyed 29 enemy structures and killed a Viet Cong.

Elements of the 4th Battalion, 21st Infantry killed one VC, found four enemy booby traps, captured an AK-47 and found two enemy structures containing 30 AK-47 rounds, two pounds of explosive and various cooking utensils.

The 3rd Battalion, 1st Infantry also saw extremely light action, as the battalion's recon unit killed one enemy soldier and captured his AK-47, and Company B found an enemy rocket hidden in a cave, and Company C destroyed two enemy structures and a bunker.

Hawk Hill

Action was light to moderate for the men of the 196th Infantry Brigade during the week as the "Chargers" terminated the existence of 25 enemy soldiers.

Early in the week, Company D, 3rd Battalion, 21st Infantry killed a VC with M-16 fire during a search and clear mission.

Later in the week, the company engaged four VC west of Tam Ky, killing one. Four rucksacks containing ammunition, medical supplies a 9mm pistol and a carbine were captured in the action.

The next day, while in their night defensive position, the company killed one enemy soldier.

Company B of the battalion engaged five NVA with small arms fire, killing two and wounding one while on a search and clear mission. Two AK-47 rifles were captured in the engagement.

(Continued on page 6)

A 155mm Howitzer throws her deadly round at an enemy position near New Hau Duc as men from C Battery, 3rd Battalion, 16th Artillery protect their ears from the deafening blast. (U.S. Army Photo by SP4 Guy Winkler)

Recon assault nets 5

By PFC Mark Cook

FSB LIZ (11th Inf. Bde. IO) -- After sighting from 15 to 20 NVA moving towards them, a recon element of the 11th Infantry Brigade Jungle Warriors hastily maneuvered on the enemy and killed five near Fire Support Base Liz recently.

"It was beautiful," said 1st Lieutenant James Ellis, Echo Recon leader of the 1st Battalion, 20th Infantry as he described the action. Ellis said the recon squad was ready to set up a night position in the rice paddies when the NVA were spotted.

An NVA pointman was killed first when he walked within 10 meters of the concealed squad. Automatic weapons fire from enemy gunners followed, but four squad members assaulted under the heavy fire.

Specialist 4 Larry Osborn, Sergeant Dennis Dervin, Sergeant Raymond Campbell and Sergeant John Slabich maintained steady bursts of fire from their M16's and moved within 20 meters of the NVA.

The NVA failed to break up the aggressive maneuver and retreated, leaving four KIA behind. A sweep of the contact area also yielded numerous packs and Chinese Communist hand grenades.

It was the second time that Recon of the 1st Battalion, 20th Infantry has spotted and engaged a large enemy element.

Happiness is 14 day leave back home

By MSG William Turner

CHU LAI, (23rd Inf. Div. IO) – "Enjoy your trip?" "How was it?" "Was it worthwhile?" "Would you do it again?"

These were the type of questions fired in rapid succession at Sergeant Major Samuel Moultrie, 23rd Infantry Division G-1 Sergeant Major by members of the section upon his return from a fourteen-day leave to the United States and a reunion with his family.

Moultrie's answer to all the questions was a definite and unqualified, "Yes!" "The only drawback was the short time it takes the fourteen days to pass."

"The procedure for going home is simple and painless once the initial request for leave has been approved."

With a definite date of leave in mind, Sergeant Major Moultrie had submitted his request for leave through his company and work section for approval. Once approved, the request was forwarded to the Division Special Services Section where the reservations with the airline are made and the tickets purchased.

For the sum of $509 round-trip, Moultrie traveled from Saigon to Browns Mills, New Jersey with intermediate stops in Japan, Alaska and Chicago. Round trip fare from Saigon to Oakland, including meals and refreshments was $369. Flying military standby from Oakland to JFK International Airport in New York City was a nominal $140 round-trip.

"On the commercial flight, which I took with 249 other soldiers, we were treated like VIP's," Moultrie said.

"From the time we checked in at Tan Son Nhut to our destination, the service was superb, not to mention the treatment upon arriving in California. Everyone was most helpful in assisting us in making connections to other destinations.

"Upon arrival at Tan Son Nhut, my group was bused to the civilian terminal," he continued, "where they checked the manifest, cleared us through Customs, converted our MPC and moved us to the loading ramp for the 22 hour 'red Carpet' flight to the 'world' where we arrived the same day we departed Vietnam.

"Personnel may draw gloves, overcoat and scarf and other items of clothing for wear in the states prior to departure for home, however, these items must be returned to the issue point upon return from leave. If they are lost, a statement of charges is processed to recoup the loss."

As the time drew near for his return to Chu Lai, Sergeant Major Moultrie said even though departing was "such sweet sorrow," he was glad to be getting back to work and the completion of his overseas tour.

Asked if he would do it again or recommend the flight to others, he said, "You bet!"

A medic with Charlie Company, 1st Battalion, 20th Infantry, dresses a cut on the foot of a Vietnamese child during a recent MEDCAP in Duc Pho. (U.S. Army Photo by PFC James Dunn)

New G-1 LTC

By PFC Fred A. Abatemarco

CHU LAI, (23rd Inf. Div. IO) – Lieutenant Colonel Clyde J. Tate recently assumed the duties as Assistant Chief of Staff, G-1 (personnel and administration), of the 23rd Infantry Division. He replaces Lieutenant Colonel Lee W. Roberts who has been reassigned as battalion commander of the 3rd Battalion, 21st Infantry.

Tate comes to the division after completing a year of schooling at Mount Saint Mary's College. He received a Bachelor of Science degree there, under Operation Bootstrap, the program which enables career personnel to complete their education with assistance from the Army.

This will be his second tour in the Republic of Vietnam, having previously served with the 9th Infantry Division in 1967. "I'm looking forward to the challenges and excitement that this job entails," commented Tate.

"The G-1 revolves around the welfare, law, and discipline of the entire division and should prove to be a very important function of the command," he added.

Lt. Col. Tate

Tate's last duty assignment was at the Operations Group, U.S. Army War College, Carlisle Barracks, Pa. He is originally from Bluefield, West Virginia, but his wife and two children now reside at Fort Ritchie, Md.

Americal gets new Chief of Staff

By SP4 Lee Habich

CHU LAI, (23rd Inf. Div. IO) -- Colonel William R. Richardson, a veteran combat infantryman and West Point graduate, has been assigned as the 23rd Infantry Division's new chief of staff. The change is scheduled to become effective the first week of April.

Upon assuming his new post, Richardson replaces Colonel Alphus R. Clark who is being reassigned to Ft. Jackson, S.C.

The colonel comes to the post from his present assignment as commander of the 198th Infantry Brigade. Richardson has been with the Americal since July of last year and is currently serving his second tour in the Republic of Vietnam. In his first tour he served with the 3rd Battalion, 39th Infantry of the 9th Infantry Division.

He entered active duty in 1951 after graduating from the U.S. Military Academy at West Point. Shortly after receiving his commission he served as a platoon leader and company commander in Korea.

His assignments have ranged from company level to the Department of the Army. In addition, Colonel Richardson has served as an instructor at West Point.

The West Point graduate has also attended the Canadian Army Staff College at Kingston, Ontario, the Armed Forces Staff College at Norfolk, Va., and the Industrial College of the Armed Forces in Washington, D.C. In addition, he has received a master's degree in business administration from George Washington University.

Medcap team saves lives

By 2nd Lt. Fred G. Vigeant

HAWK HILL, (23rd Inf. Divarty IO) -- Prompt, on-the-spot action by a U.S. Army Medcap team saved the lives of two Vietnamese mine victims and kept several others from serious permanent injury recently in Thang Binh Province, northeast of Hawk Hill.

Captain Leonard Maldonado of San Francisco, head of the Medcap team and medics SP4 Bradley Anderson of Galesburg, Ill., and PFC Clinton Morey of Hollywood, Calif., were returning to a nearby ARVN command post after treating over 100 Vietnamese as part of the Medcap program when an explosion rang out nearby.

"We hadn't reached the CP when the blast came from behind," said the Captain. "A mine, apparently command detonated, went off right in the area we had been working in."

Anderson and Morey rushed back to the scene of the explosion and administered emergency medical aid while Maldonado called in an evacuation helicopter.

SOUTHERN CROSS
AMERICAL DIVISION

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This little Quang Ngai City resident took time out from his merry-making show a 23rd Infantry Division photographer some of the booty he collected at the 2nd ARVN Division Fair. (U.S. Army Photo by SGT. Matt Gryta)

PFC Larry Flurry of East Tallahasse, Ala., (left) still wasn't to thrilled about having anything to do with the Song Chang Creepy Crawler. It doesn't seem to bother 1st Lieutenant James F. Dowling of Honolulu any though. (U.U.S. Army Photo by SGT. Richard Adamski)

It's the creepy crawler

By SGT. Matt Gryta

CHU LAI, (23rd Inf. Div. I0) – The Loch Ness Monster has nothing on the Song Chang Creepy Crawler, but it does know better than to tangle with a group of infantrymen on patrol.

Creepy's troubles began when a six-man patrol from Bravo Company, 3rd Battalion, 21st Infantry disturbed its abode in the forest primeval along the banks of the Song Chang (Chang River) leading into Hiep Duc Valley some thirty miles northwest of Chu Lai.

First Lieutenant James F. Dowling of Honolulu was leading the patrol in search of a suitable crossing point for the company along the north bank of the river.

Tall elephant grass, tangled bushes and overhanging bamboo made for slow movement by the troops.

"We were heading up a little hill, moving low because of the bamboo hanging over the top of us," related Dowling. "I was third man in the patrol and when I heard shots up ahead I went to check it out."

What he found was his normally steady pointman, Private First Class Larry Flurry, of East Tallahassee, Ala., visibly shaken after being attacked by a large, hideous creature which had charged from out of a clump of bushes in front of him.

"At first I though it was a crocodile," mused the young platoon leader, "but I didn't think they had crocodiles in Vietnam. In any event, it had scurried back into the bushes so fast that we couldn't get a really good look at it."

"To make sure we did away with whatever it was we pumped ten more rounds into the bushes," he countinued.

"While in its death throes it made a low grunting noise. When that stopped I moved the bushes apart and pulled out a seven feet long lizard weighing about sixty pounds with dry skin and yellow and orange markings on its body.

"We all just stood there looking at it in amazement. PFC Flurry wasn't too thrilled about the whole thing, though, especially when we examined its claws, inch-and-a-half long teeth and forked tongue," remarked the lieutenant.

"Some men on their second tours over here said they had never seen anything like it. The largest lizard they had ever seen in Vietnam was a little under four feet long.

"We figured there must be more of them around because it was typical reptile country, with a sandy river bank where they could lay their eggs, but we didn't continue our safari because we had to get on with our mission."

Bad weather, which prevented helicopter resupply to the unit, made it impossible for the 196th Briagde troops to get their prize catch back to a rear area and after a day and a half of toting it around they had to abandon it.

As Dowling put it, "Curious as we all were about the lizard, the smell just got too much for anyone to handle."

The "Gimlets" prize catch turned out to be an "unusually large" Asian Monitor Lizard.

That fact became known when a photo of the reptile was shown to Specialist 5 Ronald G. Dalbeck, head animal technician at the 175th Veterinary Detachment in Chu Lai.

Dabec, of Worcester, Mass., knows whereof he speaks, having worked at an aquarium specializing in the sale of exotic animals and fish for nearly eight years before being drafted.

"The lizard's actions were purely defensive," he noted, "but it could have easily broken a man's leg with its tail or torn his arm to shreads with a swipe of its claw.

"Presuming anyone wanted to buy one that size back in the United States they would probably have to pay a minimum of around $175."

Pacification is a success in 3 villages

By SGT Terry Williamson

LZ DOTTIE, (198th Inf. Bde. 10) – Three villages in the 198th Infantry Brigade area have come the full cycle in the pacification program. No longer do the three villages require American assistance for security and aid and now all three are described as self-sufficient.

The entire three square mile area, about five miles northeast of Quang Ngai City, is a model example of success in the allied pacification effort. The once Viet Cong-infested area now resembles a flourishing farm area, and the smiles of a happy people have returned after a long absence.

Infantrymen of the 1st Battalion, 6th Infantry played a major role in the pacification of Van Thien, An Thien and Giem Diem. The "Regulars" provided security for the people–most of them refugees forced away from their land–and helped the villagers get back on their feet.

It has been less than a year since the creation of Van Thien, the first hamlet of the three, and the results of that beginning can serve as a beacon to other efforts of the future. The atmosphere for pacification was good and the village of An Thien sprang into existence almost immediately. Thhe refugees involved were ready and now the villages needed the proper indigenous personnel to insure success.

A Revolutionary Development Cadre team (RDC) and a People's Self-Defense Force (PSDF) were formed as the inhabitants went about the chore of building their new homes and putting the area under cultivation.

The main task, however, was to insure that inhabitants were provided with security. The 1st Battalion, 6th Infantry was on hand to see that the proper protection was provided, but the ultimate goal of the program would have villagers self-supported, economically as well as militarily.

This goal has been reached with even greater efficiency than had been hoped. In fact, things went so smooth that still another village, Giem Dien, was created in the same area, and now the three support nearly 5,000 people.

"There are so many factors involved in the success of this program that it is hard to say which helped the most," said 1st Lieutenant Ron J. Johnson of New Carlisle, Ohio, Brigade Civil Affairs Officer. "But you have to say that the people themselves worked hard, and were eager to make this effort a success."

In conjunction with providing security, the battalion was involved in a program of training the local forces, both Popular Forces and Regional Forces, to assume full responsibility for their own security. The basis of this training program centered around combined US and GVN patrols and ambushes. This, in turn, was complemented by informal instruction in basic military subjects.

Supplementing these activities, the battalion also implemented a civic action program which involved conducting regular Medcaps, and assisting the people with their construction problems as much as possible.

"We feel that our greatest responsibility in the pacification effort is the personal example set by the men of the battalion in preparing the local forces to provide security for themselves," said 1st Lieutenant Daniel J. Boccolucci of Buffalo, a civil affaris officer. "Their devotion to the program allowed us to complete the job in record time."

Combined military operations in the area were not the only factors in insuring a pacification success. The 59th Land Clearing Company and Bravo Company, 26th Engineers, also helped to make the area safe. The two units have been involved in a massive land clearing project that has destroyed endless enemy sanctuaries on the Bantangan Peninsula. The villagers also formed a common bond among themselves, and could not be intimidated by the Viet Cong.

This has left the enemy in this area confused, scared and ineffective. Ralliers have been turning up in greater numbers than ever before, and most of them say they no longer have any support from the people.

The infantrymen of the 1st Battalion, 6th Infantry left the people to assume full responsibility for their homes without much fanfare, which showed a great confidence on the part of the people in handling their problems alone.

"The people were ready to take care of their own lives," said Boccolucci. "They are self-sufficient now, and they deserve it after all of the work they have put into their villages."

The villages are able to market their produce in Quang Ngai City, and now their economic condition is sound after their first bumper crop. The people are actively involved in local politics and support their leaders. They now have their own schools, and many children are getting the education that was denied them before.

1st Lieutenant Jeffery Hasleft, with bayonet clenched in his teeth, squirms his way to the surface after he had probed the interior of a bunker found by Company B, 5th Battalion, 46th Infantry. (U.S. Army Photo)

Mission: Hoi Chanh evacuation

On a cold and cloudy day, B Co., 123d Aviation Battalion (The Warlords), along with units of MACV and ARVN forces from Quang Ngai Province made a daring evacuation of 15 Hoi Chanhs 10 miles west of Duc Pho.

The hard work of two weeks of preparations paid off when the Warlords swept into the designated pick-up area and in a matter of minutes evacuated the Hoi Chanhs to safety without any incident or mishap.

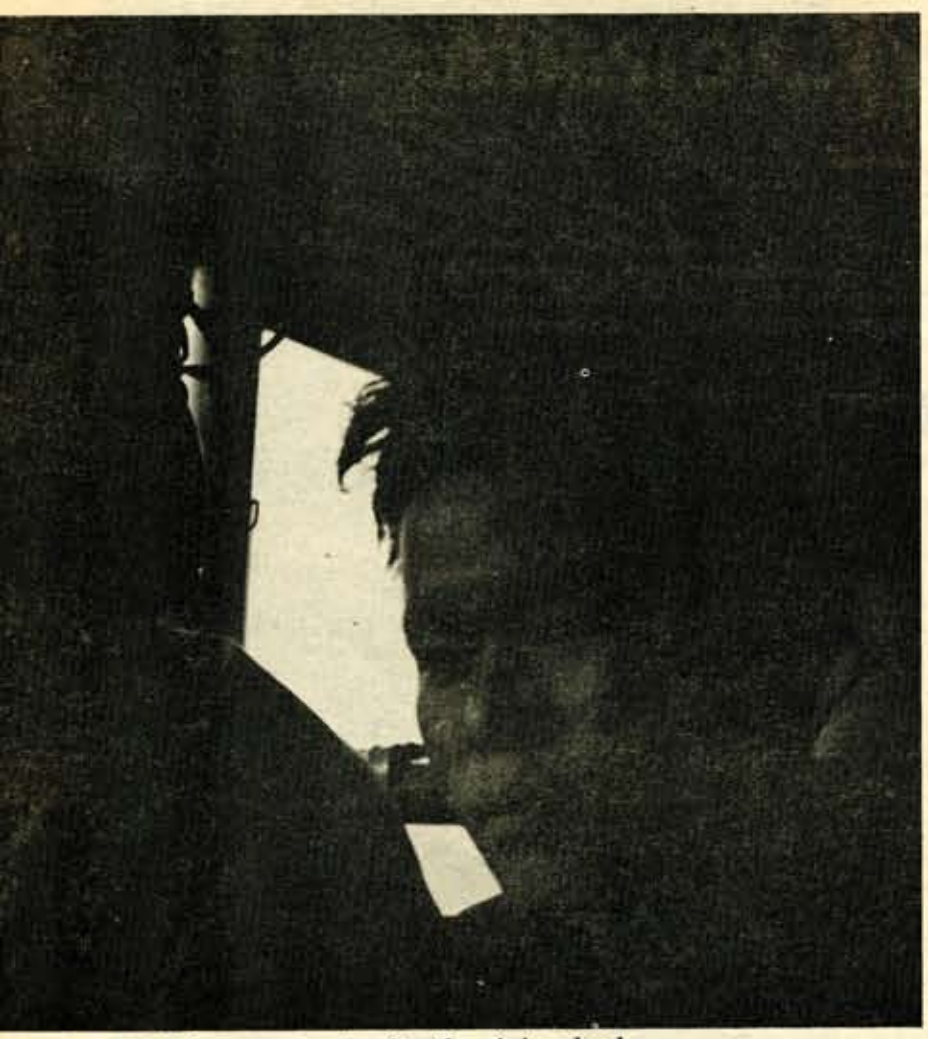
The war lord team prpares to take off for their evacuation mission.

MACV and ARVN elements in this mission discuss their plans with Warlord pilots.

SSG Leo

Story & pho

PFC Ed

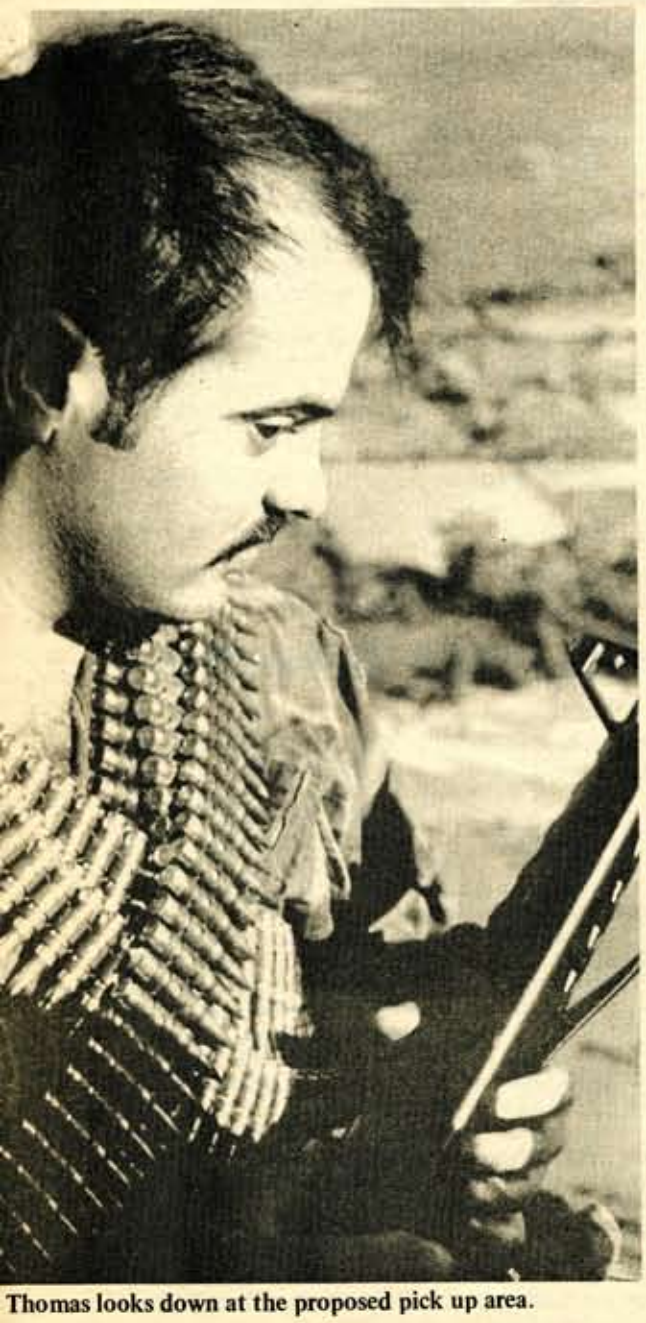


ott and an ARVN interpeter contemplate the mission ahead.

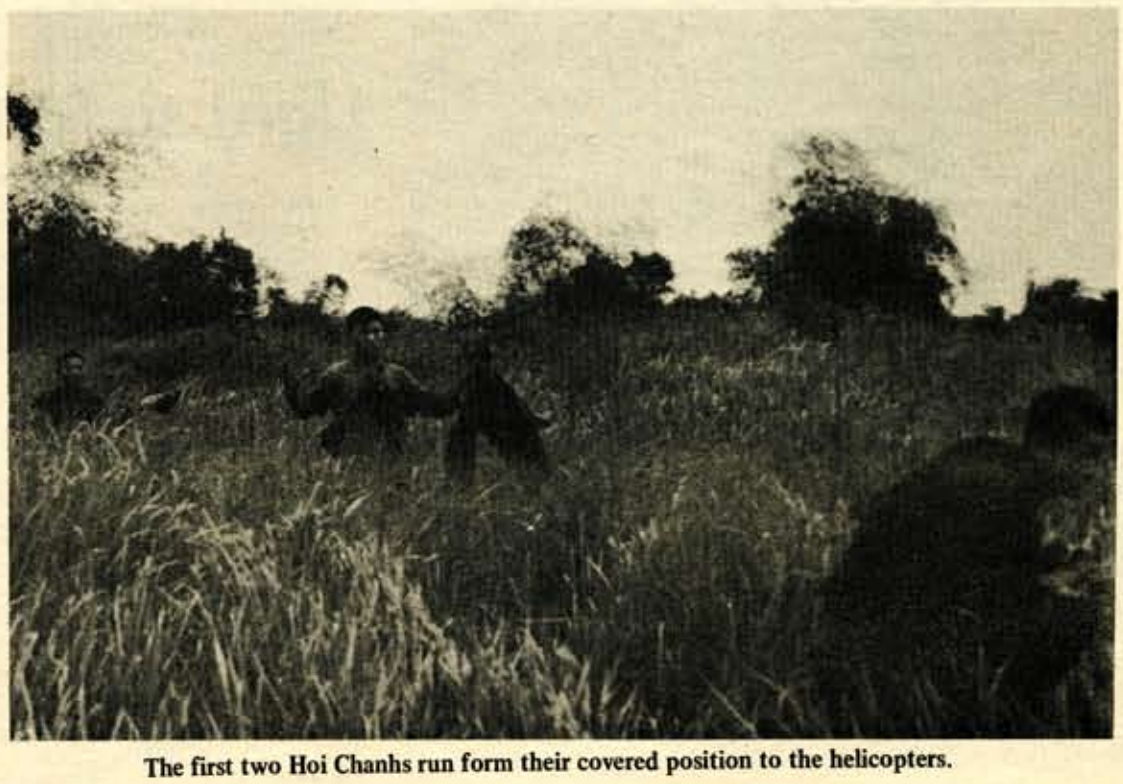
Three more Hoi Chanhs run from their hiding place to the awaiting helicopters.

os by 2Lt Henry Grambergu

The Warlord crest is displayed on the Cobra that provided security for the operation.



Thomas looks down at the proposed pick up area.



The first two Hoi Chanhs run form their covered position to the helicopters.

'Ready Rifles' kill 3

By SGT Louis Miller

LZ STINSON, (198th Inf. Bde. IO) – Infantrymen from the 198th Infantry Brigade teamed up with helicopter gunships in a recent encounter and killed three Viet Cong soldiers and captured four hand grenades. The next day, carefully searching the same area, the men found 500 pounds of rice, six booby traps, and five tunnels.

An element of Charlie Company, 1st Battalion, 52nd Infantry was returning from patrol in an area south of Chu Lai when the rear of the element began receiving sniper fire. The infantrymen quickly laid down a base of fire towards a nearby woodline and then maneuvered towards the suspected enemy location.

When they reached the woodline, the firing had stopped but the men, sweeping the area, discovered a tunnel. One element remained at the location while another element returned to the laager sight, they again took sniper fire, this time from three different locations."

The squad leader called his platoon leader and, within minutes, the rest of the platoon was on its way. As the reinforcements moved through the hedgerows, they also came under fire.

"At this time I called for gunships," Capt. Basnar said. "I also instructed another platoon to move from its laager site and set up as a blocking force to the north."

Meanwhile, one of the elements pinned down by the sniper fire, directed the gunships to the suspected enemy location. After the aircraft engaged the area, the "Ready Rifles" swept the location and found one enemy killed and two hand grenades.

Another platoon of the company, hearing the rifle fire, maneuvered behind the enemy location and engaged the enemy with small arms fire. A sweep turned up two more Viet Cong killed and two more hand grenades.

"The following day, we made a further sweep of the entire area and found six booby traps and five tunnels," said the captain. "Inside the tunnels there was about 500 pounds of rice."

The rice, in poor condition, was destroyed as were the booby traps and tunnels.

Sarge gets even

By 1Lt John W. Peterson

FSB SAN JUAN HILL, (11th Inf. Bde. IO) – "I'm thankful to God that bullet didn't hit my head," Sergeant William L. Scott repeated over and over again.

Scott had an AK-47 round pierce his helmet, but he escaped injured when his squad from Company C, 4th Battalion, 3rd Infantry engaged four NVA northwest of San Juan Hill.

"We were moving in on a basecamp we destroyed the day before and found four NVA trying to rebuild some of the hootches," said Scott, who is from Richmond, Va. "The squad immediately maneuvered on them and a firefight developed."

Three of the enemy made a hasty retreat but one stayed and poured AK-47 fire on the advancing element. That's when Scott felt a bullet go through his helmet.

"I was just sort of numb after it hit and I laid on the ground," exclaimed Scott. "I didn't want to get up for fear of getting into the line of fire, and all I could do was keep feeling my head." A fellow 11th Infantry Brigade Mountaiman had pulled him out of the line of fire right after he was hit.

Scott can't remember for sure why, but he said he put his helmet on and advanced on the NVA who was still quite active, "I got myself back together," he said, "and I wasn't going to let him get away."

And it was Scott who crawled to a position behind the enemy and killed him. After that, he said he really didn't think about the kill, but was just happy to be alive.

The day before the unit had discovered and destroyed what Scott called and "R&R center". It had nine hootches, a mess hall with stoves, a game room with games in it and a dispensary. In addition, the men found 2400 AK rounds still in crates.

Chief has short reign

By PFC Mark Cook

FSB LIZ, (11th Inf. Bde. IO) – A Viet Cong district political chief was killed and his bodyguard wounded recently when the two attempted to evade an 11th Brigade unit near Firebase Liz.

The 1st squad of the 1st Platoon of Charlie Company, 1st Battalion, 20th Infantry, had discovered a booby-trapped ammunition box in a spider hole near an old railroad bridge. Sergeant Ronnie Ray of Moore, S.C., called his demolition specialist forward and positioned several men around the railroad berm for security.

Shortly after the booby-trap was exploded in place, Private First Class Larry Mueller, of Hamburg, Minn., reported seeing two VC crossing a nearby rice paddy.

Ray immediately positioned his squad along the berm and Mueller shouted to the two VC to stop, but the armed guerilla replied with several rounds of rifle fire and dashed for a treeline.

The Syke's Regulars engaged with small arms and automatic weapons, killing one and wounding the other.

Infantrymen with Charlie Company, 4th Battalion, 31st Infantry examine a sewing machine they found in an abandoned Viet Cong structure during a patrol in the 196th Infantry Brigade. From the looks of the trooper's fatigues, the discovery came at an opportune time. (U.S. Army photo by PFC Stephen Belfeld)

Regulars kill 4

By PFC Dale Wilson

FSB LIZ, (11th Inf. Bde. IO) – While operating in the Iron Mountain region, 11th Infantry Brigade Jungle Warriors engaged and killed two NVA, and "Shark" gunships were credited with an additional two KIA.

"I had split the company for extraction," recalled Captain James D. Davidson of Orlando, Fla., commanding officer of Bravo Company, 1st Battalion, 20th Infantry. "We were waiting for extraction when we got word that gunships of the 174th AHC had sighted and engaged two NVA with weapons."

The 11 men of the company and 2nd Platoon Command Posts were extracted and immediately dropped into the contact area, said 1st Lieutenant Thomas H. Glover of Nashville, the company's forward observer.

The infantrymen advanced on the woodline and found the two NVA bodies. "I was talking to the 'Shark' and trying to coordinate our movements," said Private First Class Leonard B. Smith of Kansas City, Mo., CP RTO (radio-telephone operator). "The 'Hsark' pilot said our people had found the two NVA, and he informed me that he saw two more crawling in the treeline."

Smith forwarded this information to Davidson who, with the aid of 1st Lieutenant Frank Korona of Uniontown, Pa., advanced on the NVA engaging them with hand grenades and small arms fire, killing both.

The Syke's Regulars found three AK-47's, one AK-50, eight Chicom grenades, and a first aid packet after the contact.

Working with Bravo Company, 5th Battalion, 46th Infantry, a local RF soldier from Quang Tin Province investigates a newly found bunker. (U.S. Army Photo by SP5 H. Wells)

Light action nets 66 less enemy

(Continued from page 1)

Upon seeing three NVA to their front, Company B, 2nd Battalion, 1st Infantry engaged the enemy with M-16s, killing one as the others evaded.

Later in the week the company killed another VC while on a search and clear mission. Later in the day they discovered three structures and a tunnel complex containing two submachineguns, an AK-47 and 250 rounds of SKS ammunition.

While on a patrol, the battalion's recon unit engaged and killed an NVA with small arms fire southwest of Tam Ky.

Company B of the 1st Battalion, 46th Infantry killed one NVA while two other managed to evade southwest of Tam Ky. An AK-47 and 10 pounds of rice were captured in the action.

In the same area, Company A of the 1st Battalion, 46th Infantry engaged and killed two enemy soldiers while in their night defensive position. Two rifles were captured.

Charger 13 of 196th Brigade Aviation discovered a possible base camp area. Artillery was called in, resulting in four NVA dead.

GENEVA PARK

Action was light for the 198th Infantry Brigade as Operation Geneva Park accounted for 18 enemy killed and 12 enemy weapons captured.

Early in the week, Delta Company, 5th Battalion, 46th Infantry killed two NVA when the enemy approached the "Professionals" night position. Two AK-47 rifles were captured and sent to Chu Lai. Later, Company A of the battalion killed one VC on patrol.

Company C of the battalion found six military structures and two bunkers during the week. Captured were 365 pounds of rice, 50 pounds of salt, and an SKS rifle. The same day, Bravo Company found a structure containing 60 rounds of machinegun ammunition. Later in the week, the company killed one VC as the enemy approached the infantrymen's night position.

Company A, 1st Battalion, 52nd Infantry killed one Viet Cong and captured an AK-47 and an AK-50. The "Ready Rifles" also discovered and destroyed an old enemy base camp containing 12 bunkers and a 35-meter trench line.

Bravo Company, 1st Battalion, 52nd Infantry killed three enemy soldiers and captured one in scattered engagements south of Chu Lai during the week. One AK-47 was captured.

When you look real close, lovely Michele Carey does appear to have a savage look on her face. She acquired it practicing for her role as an Indian in MGM's "Dirty Dingus Magee", starring Frank Sinatra and George Kennedy. (Photo courtesy of MGM)

'Regulars' uncover Viet Cong hospital

By SGT Terry Williamson

LZ DOTTIE, (198th Inf. Bde. IO) – Infantrymen from the 198th Infantry Brigade recently uncovered an enemy hospital, captured a Viet Cong and detained four members of the Viet Cong infrastructure southeast of Chu Lai.

The hospital, which was listed as the Binh Son District aid station by the Viet Cong, was found by a platoon from Company D, 1st Battalion, 6th Infantry. Reports of a hospital in that area had been mentioned frequently in the past three months by intelligence sources.

The finding of the hospital turned out to be a surprise for the "Regulars". Private First Class Dennis Violette of Van Buren, Maine, pointman, found an NVA poncho and a pack lying on the side of a small trail while the platoon was maneuvering to their day defensive perimeter. The observant pointman then notified his squad leader, Sergeant Chuck Adams of Topeka, Kan., of the find.

"It's not too often that we find field packs just lying in the open like this," said Sergeant Adams. "So I thought we should start looking a little closer around the area."

Violette found a camouflaged cover that appeared to be the lid of a deserted well, but when the cover was lifted, three Vietnamese popped out of the entrance of a well-concealed tunnel complex.

"This turn of events really surprised me," said Violette. "I didn't know if they were armed or not, but I kept a close eye on them."

It turned out that two of the detainees were nurses for the VC infrastructure, and the third occupant of the tunnel had been a wounded patient of the aid station for the past three days. The VC had been wounded by Popular Force units the week before.

Private First Class Jim Parker of Detroit drew the responsibility of searching the tunnel, and found a large amount of medical supplies in the underground hospital.

"The tunnel could hold 10 people, and they had hammocks strung up to serve as hospital beds," said Parker. "The tunnel was H-Shaped and was really built nice."

The hospital was set up to perform everything from child birth to major surgery. A complete medical kit was found in the tunnel, and was well equipped.

"We found drugs, surgical equipment, and medical textbooks that had been written in long hand," said Private First Class John Cvitak of Omaha, the platoon medic. "I would say that the hospital was very well equipped."

Meanwhile, Violette was at it again. Nearby, he found another tunnel, and detained a doctor and a medic of the VC infrastructure. Later, the doctor stated that he had been extensively trained in North Vietnam.

Parker also searched the second tunnel, and found a 9mm pistol, and more medical supplies. The "tunnel rat" said later that he was glad that this was the last tunnel to be found.

"I like to find the tunnels and let Parker search them," Violette admitted. "He does all of the hard work, and I just watch."

Four of the detainees were evacuated to a nearby LZ for further treatment.

GI keeps snake in pocket

By SGT Terry Williamson

KY TRA, (198th Inf. Bde. IO) – Infantrymen have been known to carry some pretty unusual objects in their pockets, but an officer in the 198th Infantry Brigade recently surprised everyone when he learned he was sharing his rain pocket with a snake.

In fact, 1st Lieutenant Ted A. Mieling of Naperville, Ill., a platoon leader with Company C, 5th Battalion, 46th Infantry, even surprised himself when he saw the foot-and-a-half boa constrictor sticking his head out of his newly acquired and extremely warm sleeping position. The lieutenant thought he had better things to use the jacket for, but he was a little hesitant about arguing with a character who displayed such an agressive personality.

"I had hung the jacket up in a tree the night before and I guess my little friend crawled into the pocket," he said. "It must have made a nice place to sleep because the snake did not seem very anxious to leave when I found it."

He noticed the snake when he got up early in the morning to ward off the cold air that had settled in the area. But the lieutenant found more than he had bargained for to heat himself up.

The snake stuck his head out of the jacket flap just as Lt. Mieling was putting on the jacket. Displaying true combat reaction, he threw the jacket to the ground in a heap that completely covered the unwanted guest.

"We were working with a Popular Forces unit and I called one of them over to take a look," said Lt. Miehling. "They knew more about the snakes in this area than I, and I didn't want to take any chances."

The Vietnamese soldier took a stick and slowly turned the jacket over. He then shouted, "Number 10, Number 10!", leaving no doubt in anyone's mind that the snake could be dangerous. The PF soldier then took a machete and quickly relieved the snake of his head and the good lieutenant of his irritation. No one in the group seemed upset over losing the potential pet.

Showdown on trail surprises 3 Viet Cong

By PFC Gene Colling

LZ DEBBIE, (11th Inf. Bde. IO) – On the run from one element of Recon, 4th Battalion, 21st Infantry of the 11th Infantry Brigade, three VC had the misfortune to run head on into another. The collision was fatal to all three.

The face to face confrontation occurred when three elements of recon were heading back to LZ Debbie after searching and area three miles southeast of Duc Pho.

"My element had just come from our position," said the squad leader, Sergeant Robert Carter of Norfolk, Va. "And we were walking toward Debbie on a well used trail."

Walking point for the eight-man element was Specialist 4 Orlando Avila of San Antonio.

"I came to a bend in the trail," Avila said, "and when I rounded the corner, I saw the three VC walking toward me. They saw me too, and we both started shooting."

The VC point man only got off two shots, said Avila, before his SKS rifle jammed. Avila's M-16, however, was in good working order, and his burst of fire killed two VC and wounded the third.

The wounded VC took off down a hedgerow. Part of the element gave chase, headed him off, and were forced to kill him when he resisted capture.

The reason the VC only got two shots was evident when it was discovered that one of Avila's bullets had smashed the chamber of the SKS.

Nguyen Van Ngo, a former NVA doctor who now works for Company A, 4th Battalion, 31st Infantry, finds bottles of enemy alcoholic beverages close by from where a large munitions cache was found by the company. (U.S. Army Photo by SP4 Guy Winkler)

Proving that four backs are better than one, these troopers of the Americal Division team up to attach a 105mm howitzer to a big tractor so it can be towed to the parapit. (Photo by 1Lt. Dana Maynard)

It's a flying bunker

By SGT Matt Gryta

CHU LAI, (23rd Inf. Div. IO) – If you happen to be in Chu Lai one day and spot an immense helicopter toting what looks like a small house under its belly, have no fears; 23rd Infantry Division Headquarters isn't moving out from under your nose.

Its defense system is merely being rearranged to a certain extent.

Since the end of October the third platoon of Charlie Company, 39th Engineer Battalion (Combat) has been involved in the relocation of guard bunkers and watch towers along the Chu Lai defensive perimeter.

Working in conjunction with the Chu Lai Defense Command and the 132nd and 178th assault helicopter companies, the engineers have seen to the air movement of nine bunkers and one fifty-foot tower to date.

"A typical bunker lift took place recently when an abandoned bunker was moved more than two miles from the southern tip of the perimeter to a position on the Division Combat Center beach along the South China Sea," explained 1st Lieutenant Michael L. Shaw of Forest Park, Ga., platoon leader.

"A similar bunker situated there had been washed away during Typhoon Kate," he added.

"Prior to lifting the structure we have to remove the outside revetment walls and sandbags," he said. "A CH-47 'Chinook' can lift the small bunkers but a CH-54 'Flying Crane' is required to transport the much heavier guard towers."

The engineers have the airlift technique down to a science now, but it wasn't always so.

"We learned that when moving a bunker by air it's a good idea to paint an arrow on the roof showing the direction of placement," recalled Lt. Shaw.

"Some of our first attempts landed with the entrance way facing the enemy or perpendicular to the enemy."