SOUTHERN CROSS
AMERICAL DIVISION

Vol. 4, No. 28 Chu Lai, Vietnam July 16, 1971

LTG Sutherland gives command of XXIV Corps to LTG Dolvin

DA NANG, (XXIV Corps IO)–With the passing of the colors, Lieutenant General Welborn G. Dolvin assumed command of the U.S. Army's XXIV Corps during ceremonies in Da Nang, June 9. XXIV Corps commands the U.S. forces in the five northernmost provinces of the Republic of Vietnam.

General Dolvin was promoted to his present rank during ceremonies held at Headquarters, U.S. Military Assistance Command, Vietnam June 8. He came to the position of Commanding General, XXIV Corps, after serving as Chief of Staff, MACV, since March 1970. The 55-year-old general's assignments' prior to his Vietnam service include commanding the 3rd Armored Division in Europe, Chief of Staff, CENTAG, and Commanding General, U.S. Army Element, Central Army Group, Europe.

The new commanding general replaces Lieutenant General James W. Sutherland, Jr., 53 who has been named Chief of Staff, U.S. European Command. General Sutherland, a native of Rogers, Ark., assumed command of XXIV Corps one year ago after serving as Deputy Commanding General, II Field Force, Vietnam.

Under General Sutherland's leadership, XXIV Corps forces conducted operations against the enemy by attacking the NVA strongholds and supply areas deep in the mountainous terrain of western Military Region I. Operating along the demilitarized zone and in the A Shau and Da Krong valleys while conducting pacification operations in the lowlands, XXIV Corps forces destroyed enemy supply caches and isolated the NVA from the Viet Cong and the population.

General Creighton W. Abrams passed the XXIV Corps colors from General Sutherland to General Dolvin during the traditional ceremony at the Corps headquarters at Camp Horn, Da Nang In attendance were the commanders of the Corps' major subordinate units as well as American and Vietnamese military and civilian dignitaries. Prior to passing the colors, General Sutherland was awarded his second Distinguished Service Medal.

General Dolvin, a graduate of the United States Military Academy, entered the Army on June 12, 1939 as a second lieutenant of Infantry. He is a graduate of both the Command and General Staff College, Fort Liavenworth, Kan. and the Army War College, Fort McNair, Va. His decorations include the Distinguished Service Cross, Distinguished Service Medal with Oak Leaf Cluster, the Silver Star with three Oak Leaf Clusters, the Legion of Merit with Oak Leaf Cluster, the Bronze Star Medal for Valor, the Air Medal, and the Purple Heart with two Oak Leaf Clusters.

General Dolvin is a native of Greensboro, Ga. He is married to the former Cynthia Kent Burress, and they have two sons and one daughter.

Lieutenant General Welborn G. Dolvin (Greensboro, Ga.) receives the XXIV Corps colors from General Creighton W. Abrams, commander, U.S. Military Assistance Command, Vietnam, during ceremonies. LTG Dolvin assumed command of the Corps from LTC James W. Sutherland (Rogers, Ark.) (U.S. ARMY PHOTO)

General Cao Van Vien, Chairman, JGS, RVNAF (left) and Lieutenant General Hoang Xuan Lam, commanding general, I Corps, present Lieutenant General James, W. Sutherland Jr., with the National Order of Vietnam in ceremonies at Da Nang. LTC Sutherland also received the Vietnam Army Distinguished Service order and the Gallentry Cross with Palm. (U.S. ARMY PHOTO)

Engineers construct mess hall

FSB SAN JUAN HILL, (23d Inf. Div. 10) – Engineers of the 23rd Infantry Division recently labored for nearly a month building the only structure on this pile of rocks that does not consist of ammo boxes and sandbags.

First Lieutenant David Sauer (Buffalo, N.Y.) and ten men of Delta Company, 26th Engineer Battalion constructed a 32 by 64 foot mess hall for the men of the 4th Battalion, 21st Infantry.

"Three days after we started work a 'Chinook' helicopter flew over the old mess hall and blew down part of it, making the new mess hall a first priority project," Sauer said.

FSB San Juan Hill can only be reached by air, so all building materials had to be brought in by CH-47 "Chinook" and UH-1 "Huey" helicopters. Most of the lumber came from Chu Lai, headquarters of the 23rd Infantry Division, and tin for the roof was flown in from a recently closed fire base.

The only power tool the engineers had was a chain saw. With it, they cut all their timber and posts and as much of the rest of their lumber as possible.

"We did a pretty good job with what we had," observed Specialist Five Robert Bartnuff (Kearny, N.J.)

"At one point the plan called for one inch by eight inch boards and four inch wide boards, but all we had were boards one inch by twelve inches, so we cut our narrower boards out of them."

The structure, built from the ground up without prefabricated parts, includes a kitchen, storeroom and a dining area which seats 75 men.

Broadcast team brings the VIP program to the Vietnamese

By Sp/5 Gregory Wright

FSB BRONCO, (11th Brigade I0) – As the 3/4-ton truck edges off the road and stops, small Vietnamese children flock from all parts of the village to stand grinning at the Americans, chattering with delight at the unexpected visit.

A hush falls over the crowd as a Luc Luong 66 Scout raises a microphone and begins to speak, telling the people of the Volunteer Informant Program (VIP) and urging them to participate.

Although the scene may be new to these villagers, it is one which is repeated every day in the heavily populated areas along Highway One.

Members of the 11th Brigade's Ground Broadcast Team move out every maning to speak directly to the people in the areas surrounding FSB Bronco. This type of broadcast enables the people to actually see the Scout as he speaks, thus conveying a message which is somehow more personal than those delivered from helicopters.

The team, according to Specialist Four Larry Lengel, team leader, is almost always warmly received when it goes out to broadcast and distribute leaflets.

"We have never had an incident of hostility on the part of the people during our work," he said as his truck cruised slowly along the highway. "Possibly this is because we inform the people of programs and events which are beneficial to them. Besides, with our music, we're like a one-vehicle parade, and everyone loves a parade."

Whatever the reason, the team does seem to be getting the message across as seen by the success of VIP. Another favorable aspect of the team's work is that it helps to bridge the gap which sometimes exists between the American soldier and the Vietnamese citizen. The people in the streets of their villages have the opportunity to see the Luc Luong 66 Scout and U.S. personnel working together as equals, emphasizing the fact that American troops are in the Republic of Vietnam to help.

As the truck finishes its run on Highway one and heads back to Bronce, Lengel takes the microphone from the Scout and starts a recording of Vietnamese music.

"I suppose we're just a means of communication, "Lengel concluded. "When the 11th Bde. says something to the people, we do the speaking."

On June 17, Private First Class Alphonoso Buchanan, Company A, 4th Battalion, 3rd Infantry, 23d Infantry Division (Americal) was tried by a special court-martial authorized to adjudge a bad conduct discharge. He was tried for AWOL, disobeying a lawful command, intentionally injuring himself in order to avoid field duty, failure to obey a lawful general regulation and possession of heroin.

He was sentenced to be discharged from the service with a bad conduct discharge, to forfeit $100 per month for six months, to be confined at hard labor for four months and to be reduced to the grade of private.

Reporters compare feelings on rockets

EDITOR'S NOTE: The following is a comparison of a "newfer's" and a veteran's feelings about a rocket attack on Chu Lai, Vietnam. Sgt. Gryta and PFC Rousso are both Army correspondents with the Americal Division Information Office.

By Sgt Matt Gryta

CHU LAI (23d Inf. Div. IO) – Some soldiers get a special charge out of a rocket attack. I do not.

That body chemistry which provides many a career soldier with a rather strange form of release upon hearing the loud whoosh of incoming is not to be found in my physiological makeup.

I just get sick to my stomach.

After a while, one begins to react automatically to incoming. You "hit the dirt", either by jumping out of bed in the middle of the night or diving for the ground at other hours. The ideal place to be is in a bunker below ground before the first rocket hits, but, early warning systems often being ineffective, placing one's self flat on the ground is the next best thing.

Fear doesn't play a part in your initial reaction, which only involves your reflexes. It's after the first round has hit and you've made a dash to the nearest bunker that that gnawing feeling in the pit of your stomach begins.

You start asking yourself where the next one will hit and you hope you can hear it whiz overhead because that means it will land a safe distance from you.

To take your mind off your surreal predicament, you start checking your body for injuries sustained in the mad dash to the bunker. This time you only skinned your knee and bruised your forearm.

Maybe you stop to think about the fact that the combined might of the Allied forces cannot always stop a band of the enemy from plopping a few rockets into American installations across Vietnam. It might be worth a chuckle or two some day, but right then it's another matter.

Early morning rocket attacks are the worst. You're woken out of a sound sleep by the sound of a nearby explosion. Still only half-awake, you scramble out of bed, disorganized and moving in total darkness. That cockroach you killed the evening before was more systematic in his attempt to flee your boot than you are in reacting to the immediate danger.

You're never quite sure when the last rocket will come in, so you wait for the all-clear signal so everybody can leave the bunker. Maybe you sit on the sandbagged blast wall of the bunker and have a smoke with a couple of your buddies.

Somebody tells of the problems he had making his way to the bunker and everyone breaks up in laughter. A good laugh just then helps sooth a lot of frayed nerves.

You get the word a few hours later that no one was killed or wounded in the attack and that gives you a good feeling. Then you stop and think about the feeling of helplessness you experienced during the rocketing–the same feeling that crops up in your innards during each indirect fire attack.

Dut it doesn't pay, psychologically, to think about a rocket attack for too long. The best thing to do is cross another day off your "short-timer's" calender and pretend you're ten-years-old and just finished playing a game of soldiers.

By PFC Sam Rousso

CHU LAI (23d Inf. Div. IO) – I've been in country three weeks, so I'm not really a newfer. Not really. But every day in 'Nam is a new experience. My experience for the day-hell, for the year, came recently in the form of a rocket attack.

That morning my alarm was set for 5 a.m. However, I got a rude awakening–and a few minutes early at that.

By the time I figured out what was happening–about the time the second rocket hit–I had almost forgotten where the bunker was.

Bare foot and blind (I didn't stop to find my glasses and put them on), I took off in the direction everybody elso had. I saw some shadows of people running–for all I knew they could have been out for some early morning jogging, but I was determined to follow them.

Rushing through a darkened hootch, while 122mm rockets were imparting, isn't my idea of a whole lot of fun.

Anyway, on the way out I stumbled over a guy who was trying to crawl out of the hootch. Later, it was something to laugh about, but right then, it wasn't EVEN funny.

As I dove into the bunker, I landed on someone's foot. By the time I apologized, It was quiet outside. I waited a couple of minutes.

The air started to stifle me and I thought I heard rats running around on the floor of the bunker. I was forced with a dilemma.

On one hand, I could wait around in the bunker and take a chance on being bitten by some insect. Or I could climb out and take a chance on being hit by shrapnel from a rocket.

When I finally did get out of the bunker, after the rocket attack, I had time to think. And time to get really scared, like I've never been scared in my life. This was the first time, even indirectly, that someone had tried to kill me.

After awhile, everybody started wandering back to the hootch.

I don't know how long I sat there like a vegetable before someone came in and told me to get on with the program–it was time to go to work.

One rocket attack in a lifetime is enough.

196th made move to DaNang seem easy

By Cpt. George F. Bennett

DA NANG (196th Inf. Bde. IO) – When it comes to moving, people have mixed emotions. Some revel in the sense of adventure and opportunities to see and do new things. Others gasp at the considerable amount of sweat, toil, and effort involved in resettling. There are even the few who drown in memories left behind and of a fear of the unknown.

All of these emotions were quite evident when the 196th Infantry Brigade, 23rd Infantry Division made the jump from LZ Hawk Hill to Da Nang.

Though the task was massive, and at time seemed impossible, it was made with relative ease. The manuever elements probably relocated with the least amount of effort. When you're a "grunt" and carry your "worldly possessions" in a 90-pound rucksack, all you have to do is travel.

The support personnel, however, hassled their way from LZ Hawk Hill to Da Nang in leap-frog fashion. And to a degree it was a hassle. Sections were forced to split in order to function in two separate locations. The field soldiers in both areas of operation had to have the necessary support. There was no way a section could just close up shop, move, and the reopen for business.

Of course there were problems. There always are, when a family or a unit makes a move. During the actual movement, tensions were high and tempers on edge. Still, after a hot shower and cold beer it didn't seem so bad.

Much of the credit for the successful deployment can be attributed to the clerks, drivers, and supply personnel. The young professionals, draftees and the "old pros" fused into a well-oiled machine.

First Sergeant Robert H. Loving (Tacoma, Wash.), first sergeant, Headquarters Company, 196th Inf. Bde., was one of the main cogs in the wheels of the movement.

His experience speaks for itself. He has moved his family eight times during his 19-year army career. He was also instrumental in four previous unit moves in the Republic of Vietnam.

"Moving a company is quite similiar to moving a family," said Loving. "Each time you move you find you've acquired a lot of unnecessary equipment. You must be constantly checking to get rid of the functionless property."

"When I was alerted for the move, I had to know what I was going to do," continued the first sergeant. "To keep all sections operating, I had to split my forces down the middle so we could operate in two places. Maintaining proper control was my biggest problem."

As the company and the brigade take over from the Marines, the conversions seem extremely smooth. "I've received outstanding cooperation as we've assumed the missions from the Marines," stated Loving. "It couldn't go any better."

Loving is extremely proud of the men who performed the actual move. Frequently, the trucks were loaded in the morning at LZ Hawk Hill and driven to Da Nang where they were unloaded for immediate return to Hawk Hill. Until the move was completed, it was an endless cycle between the two sites. "What really surprised me was that we didn't have one unit vehicle break down on the road," concluded Loving.

It's a good bet the men of the 196th would rather take the place of the Marines for the trip home. However, they can feel a sense of pride as they replace them in Da Nang. They are now one move closer to home.

Members of the 198th Inf. Bde. softball champions stand at ease during a special softball awards ceremony. Colonel William R. Richardson, chief of staff for the 23d Infantry Division, presented team members with their first place awards. (U.S. Army Photo By Sp/4 Ron Cryderman)

Interest sparks new programs

By MSG Bill Pickett

CHU LAI (23d Inf. Div. IO) – The 1971 Division Volleyball Championship--a double elimination tournament–is presently underway here, with six matches daily at the USO beach courts.

Division special services officer, First Lieutenant Charles T. McGeehan, announced that the tournament will continue through late July, with the winning team scheduled to represent the division in the Military Region I (MR I) championships, to be hosted here during the last week of the month.

Games are played daily at the two courts beginning at 4, 5 and 6 p.m. A clinic for team coaches and officials was conducted June 26, at which time drawings were also made to determine positions for the beginning of the tournament.

Play is being conducted according to the current U.S. Volleyball Association rules.

According to McGeehan, information from XXIV Corps indicates that the MR I tournament will be a double elimination event. Entries are expected from the 101st Airborne Division, Da Nang, and the Demilitarized Zone (DMZ) area, in addition to the Americal representative.

McGeehan, who succeeded CONUS-bound First Lieutenant Samuel E. Torbert, also expressed hopes for a division slow pitch softball tournament in the near future, and mentioned the possibility of a cross country meet if enough interest is generated in such an event.

In other secial services related activities recently, Colonel William R. Richardson, division chief of staff, presented team and individual trophies to the top four teams in the recent softball tournament, won by Headquarters Company, 198th Infantry Brigade. Runner up was Company A, 523d Signal Battalion; 635th Military Intelligence Company was third, and Company B, 523d Signal Battalion, finished fourth.

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LZ Rawhide

Gunsmoke recovery rigs up 'Cobra'

Photos by Sp/4 William Hutchison

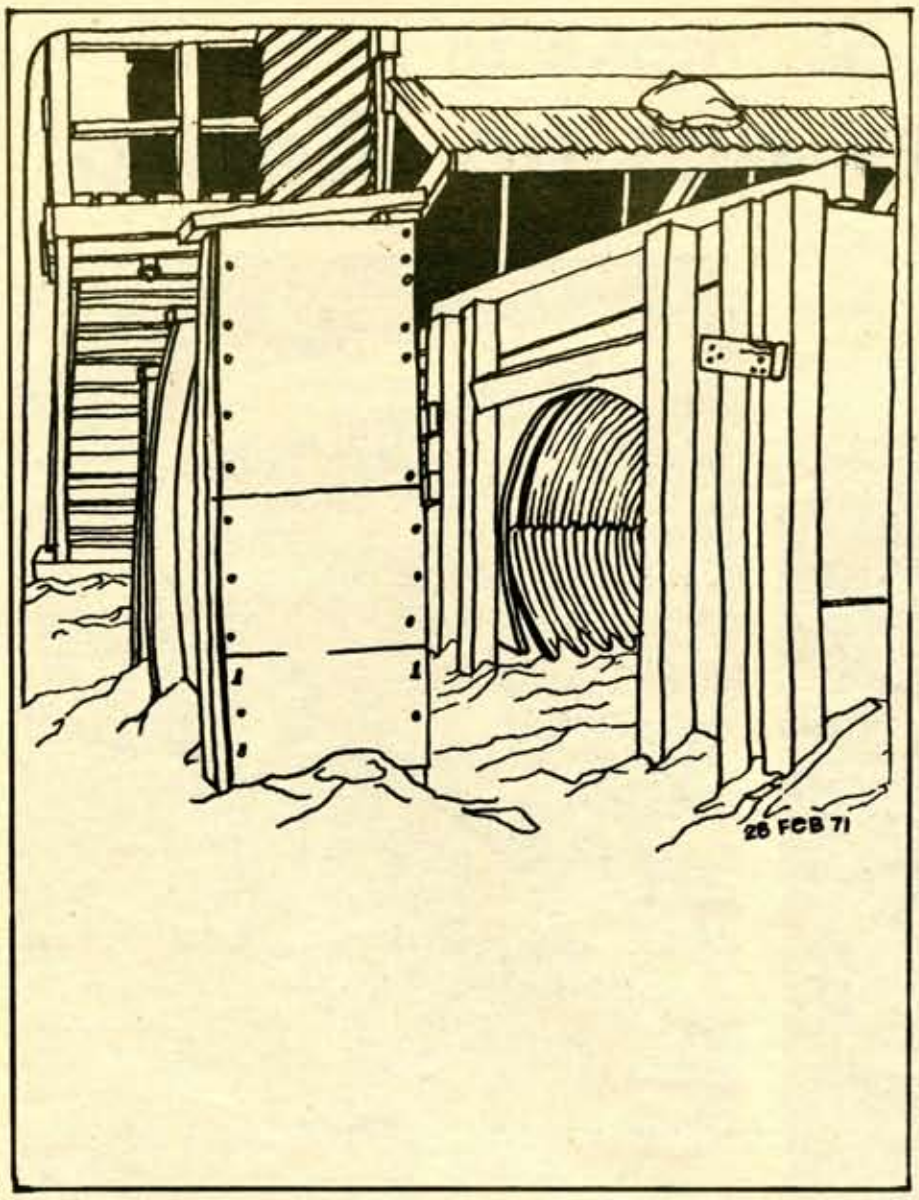
ABOVE, LEFT: With a striken AH-1G "Huey Cobra" on the ground the officers and Pathfinders all pitch in to rig the ship for pick-up. From left to right are: Corporal Lee Swank (Bellsville, Ohio), team leader; Corporal Dennis Hamon (Marysville, Calif.); First Lieutenant John Swartzel (Waynesville, Ohio), co-pilot; corporal Gregory Larson (Orum, Utah); Corporal Bob Tomlinson (Oklahoma City Okla); and Captain David Sebright (Hopkins, Mich.), pilot.

ABOVE, RIGHT: When a mechanical failure caused the crash of this "Cobra," it was carrying a full load of rockets which had to be removed from the ship before pick-up. Here an unidentified helicopter armorer gingerly removes the numerous rockets.

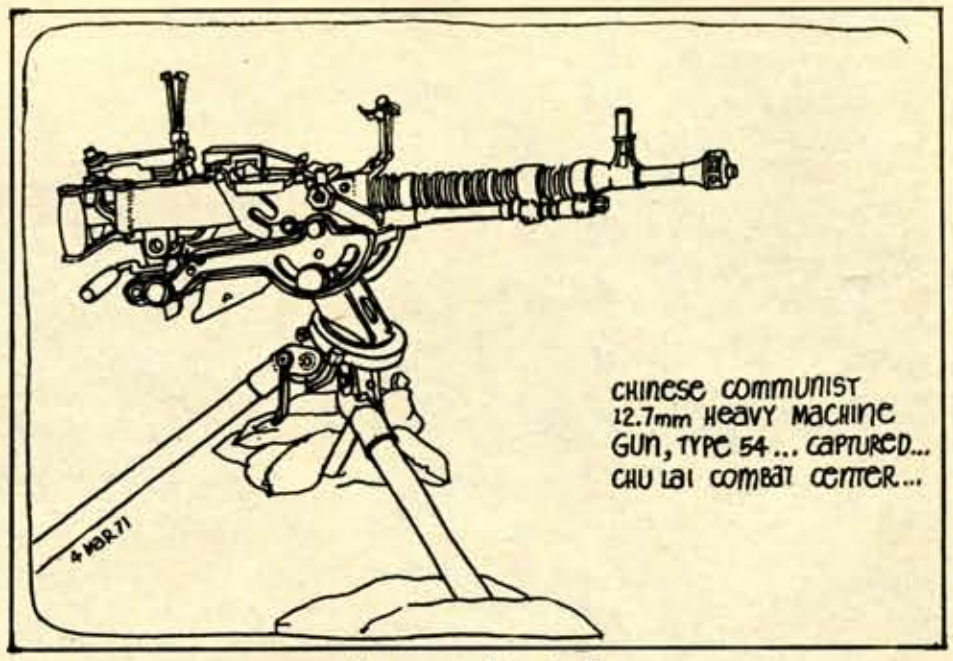
BELOW, LEFT: Here Swank, at rotar blades, and Tomlinson, at cockpit, complete the belly rigging of the fallen chopper. Huge straps are hooked by chains under the belly of the copter to keep it balanced while being transported to Da Nang by a "Chinook".

BELOW, RIGHT: Officers, Pathfinder riggers and spectators all join in to help "hump" the Cobra's severed tail boom up the side of a hill to LZ Rawhide, where it was loaded into the belly of a waiting "Chinook". Though the gunship sustained severe damages, the crew was unhurt. The "Cobra" had just finished refueling at Rawhide when it unexpectedly developed control problems, causing the pilot to have to set his ship down just outside of the LZ's perimeter wire.

A soldier comes... to Cam Ranh Bay... to Chu Lai ...

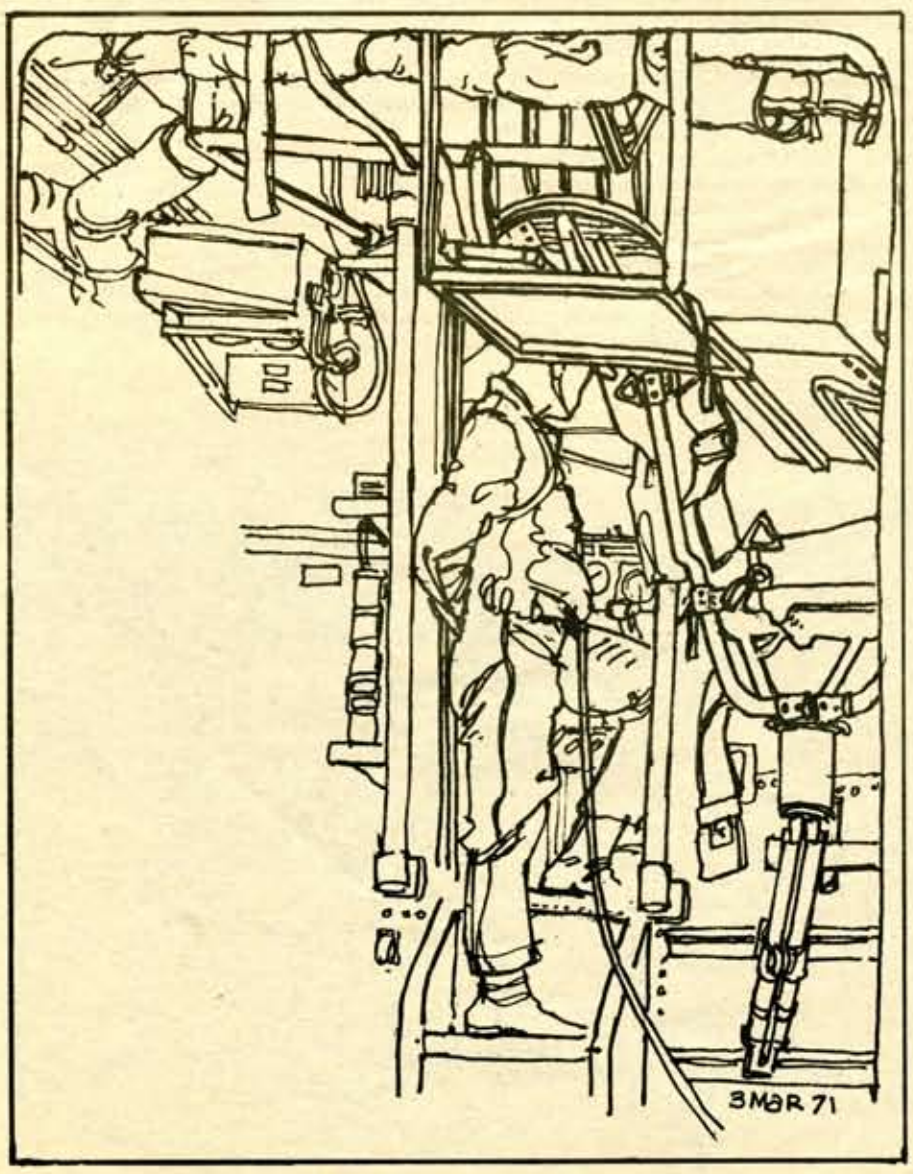


a bunker in Cam Ranh

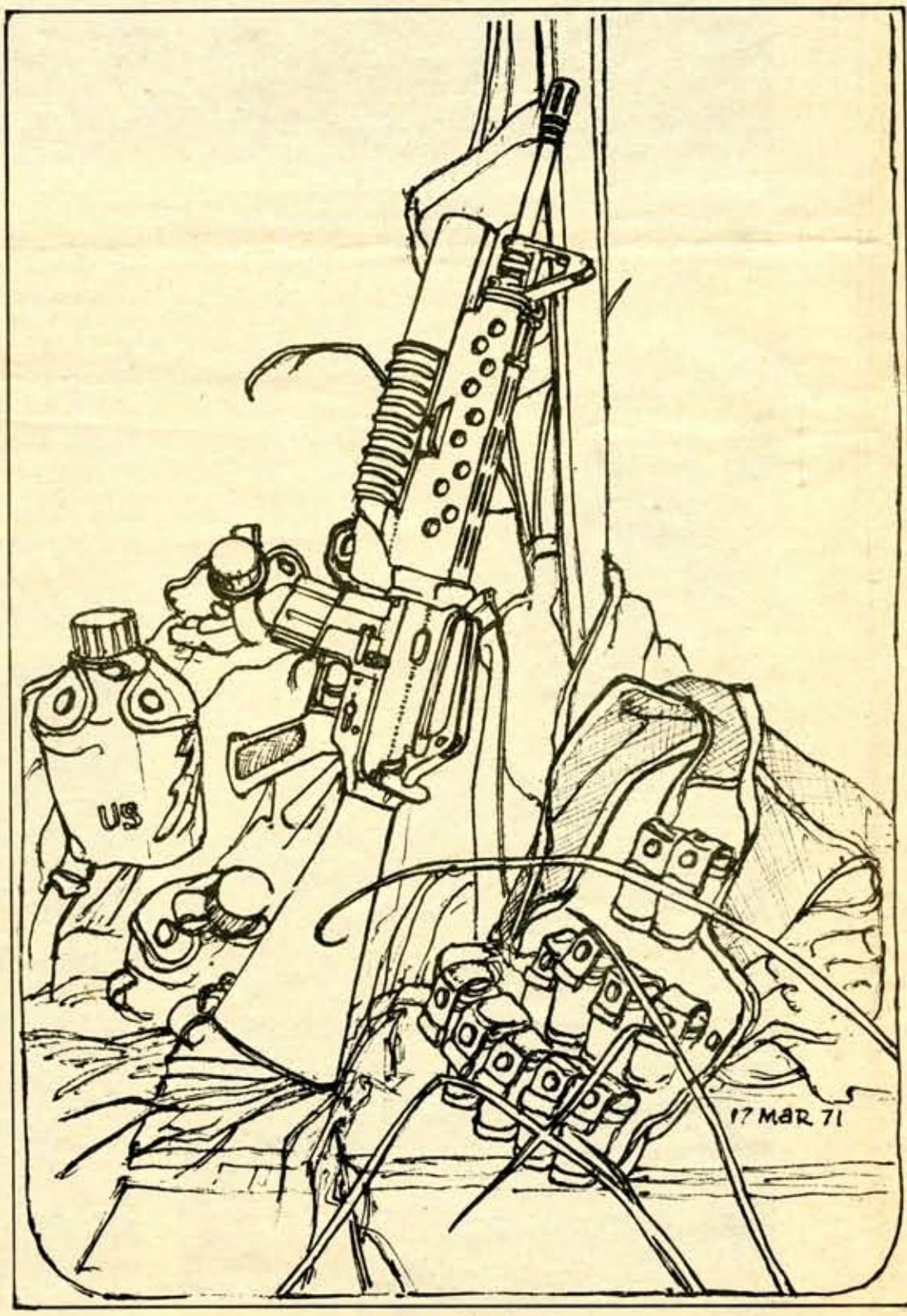


the enemy fires back

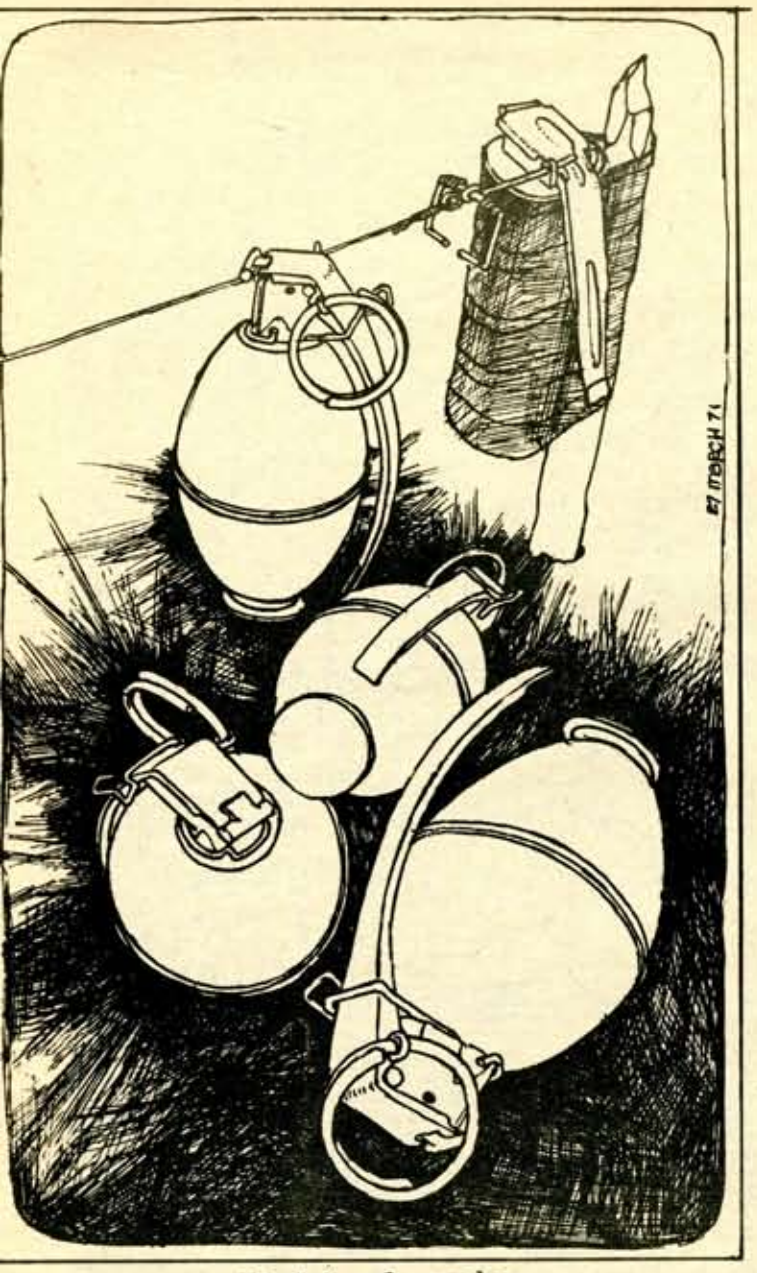
Artwork courtesy of PFC Tim Steinmeir



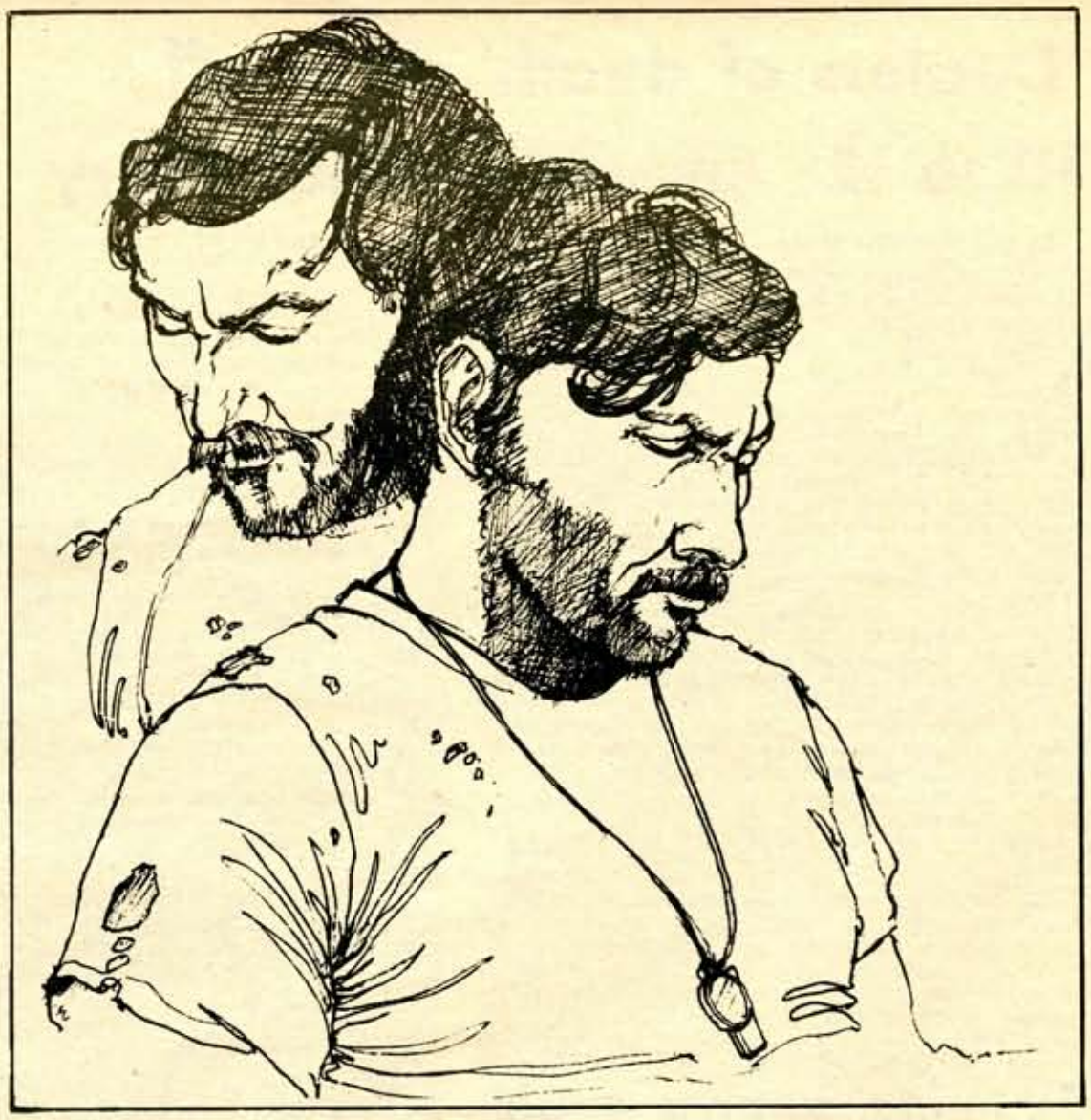
that first in-country flight



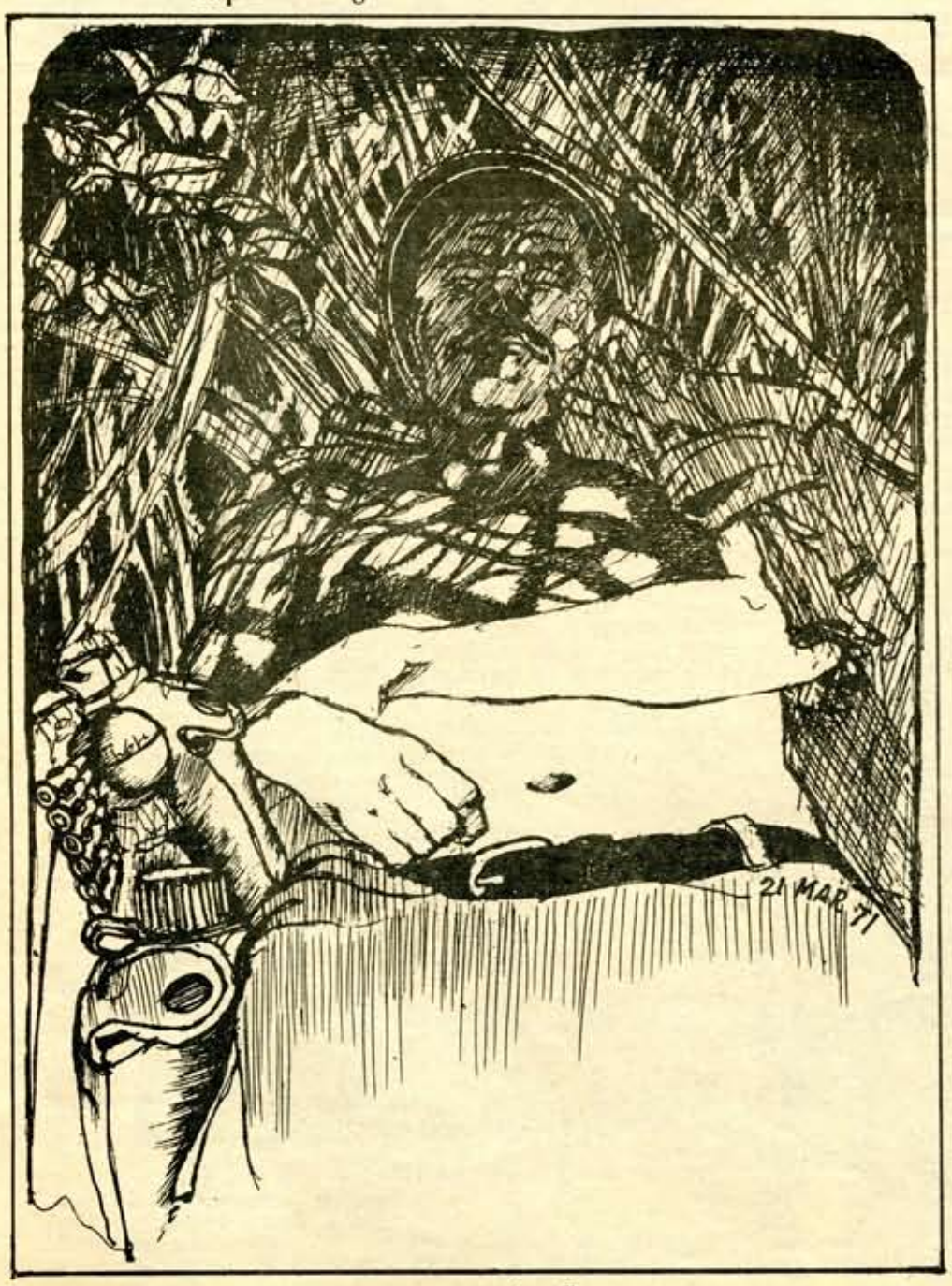
over and under



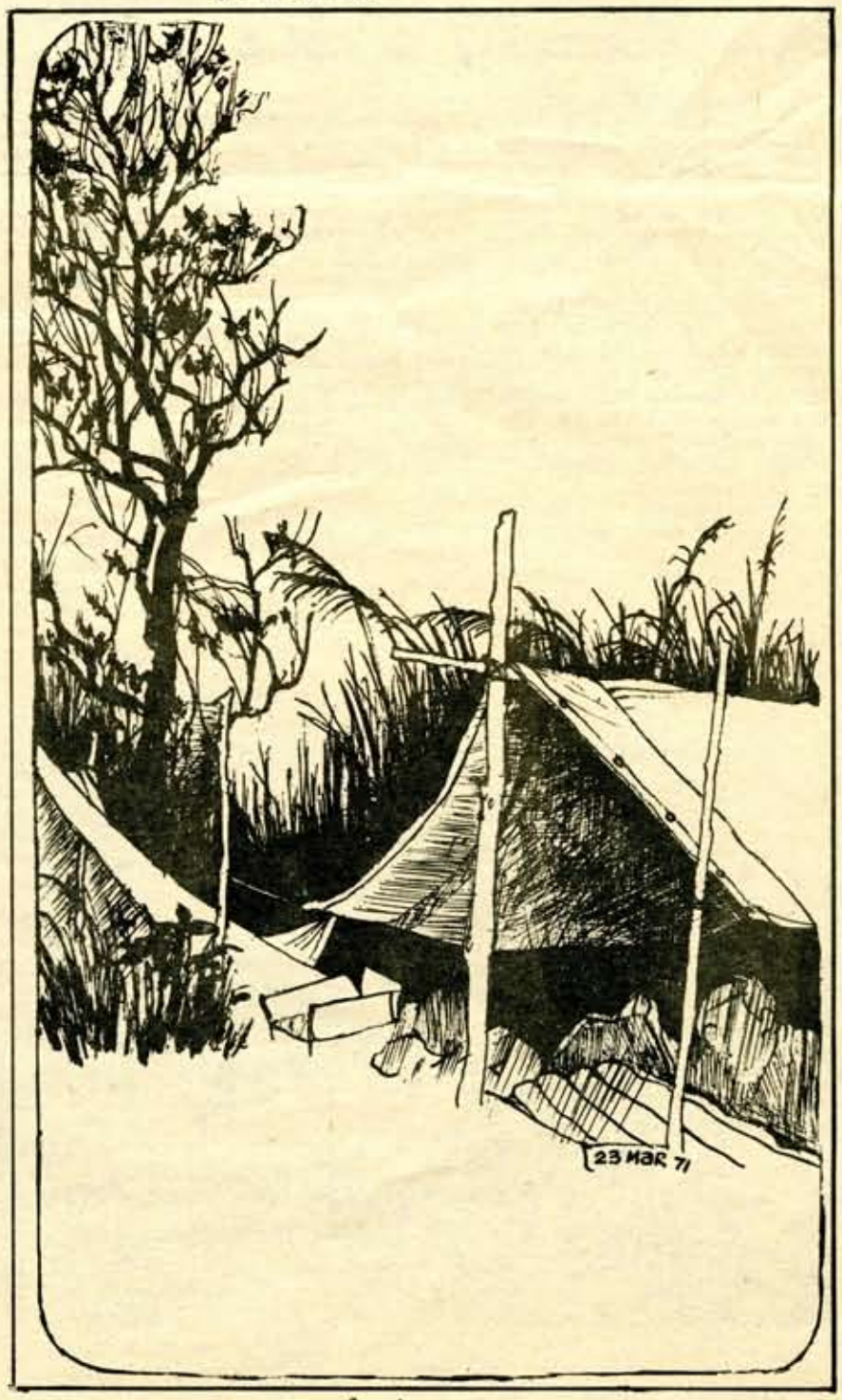
trip flair and grenades



a tired soldier



a grunt takes five



a few hours sleep

'Dealers of death' drive off 10 to 12 enemy without injury

By Sp/4 William Hutchison

CHU LAI (23rd Inf. Div IO) – An element of Alpha Company, 1st Battalion, 6th Infantry, 198th Light Infantry Brigade, while on a patrol in the mountains west of Chu Lai, encountered a large enemy ambush of ten to 12 NVA soldiers using a B-40 rocket and AK-47 rifles. The "Dealers of Death" were able to deal the enemy a loaded deck when they drove off the enemy without sustaining any injuries.

Specialist Four Kenneth Holley (Logansport, Ind.) was leading the 12-man patrol up a ridgeline when he and the cover man, Private First Class Gerald B. Goodman (Douglas, Ga.), entered a small clearing and spotted some well concealed hootches. They signaled back for the M-60 machinegun to be brought up to recon the area by fire.

As the signal was being silently passed back, Holley spotted a NVA soldier who was preparing to fire a B-40 rocket at the patrol. As he dove to the ground Holley pressed off a quick burst of automatic fire knocking the NVA soldier off balance and causing the rocket to go off course. The rocket passed two feet over the pointman's head and exploded harmlessly in the trees.

With the explosion of the rocket the patrol found themselves engulfed in fire from numerous enemy positions to their front, left and right. Every man hit the ground and began to return a heavy volume of fire.

Within three minutes of the initial contact, the FO (forward observer), First Lieutenant Ron Noce (Brooklyn, N.Y.), had artillery zeroed in on the area. The artillery, fired by Charlie Battery, 1st Battalion, 14th Artillery, was worked in toward the patrol's position, the enemy fire ceased and the artillery stopped.

Captain Ward Odom (Martinsburg, W. Va.), Alpha Company commander, sent parts of his element to the left and to the right to sweep the area. One group stayed put to "keep the back door open, in case the NVA soldiers decided to try and close it," remarked Odom.

The element to the right was led by Noce who stated: "When we first got hit, I hit the ground so hard I must have lost my mind, for I went charging up that stupid hill. I took fire 15 feet from the first hootch and I hit the ground. The M-60 gunner was covering me all the way up, putting out beaucoup rounds and I guess that's what saved me. Someone threw a hand grenade and the firing stopped."

The men swept the hootch area, throwing "frags" into each hootch before they entered. The enemy had pulled out and left nothing.

"They took everything; they were just sitting there waiting for us;" remarked Holley.

The patrol had uncovered an enemy basecamp capable of easily servicing 40 or 50 men. Each hootch had bunkers built into the floor. The concealed camp was impossible to see from the air and almost as hard to find from the ground. Its only give-away was a complex series of well-used trails leading in and out of the base, which Alpha Company had been searching for the past few days.

"What can you say about an ambush? We walked into one. They were set up waiting on us. Sure they outnumbered us, but we turned around and walked out. Why? Because the men were doing what they were supposed to do, when we were coming in, when we got hit, and when we were leaving. They did it silently, quickly and efficiently," stated Odom, who had nothing but praise for his "Dealers of Death".

A 198th Brigade radio telephone operator takes a break for a drink of water on a patrol near FSB Professional northwest of Chu Lai. Professional is now the home of the 4th Battalion, 3rd Infantry (U.S. Army Photo by Sgt Thomas F. Boehler)

Planning, surprise enable Delta Company to net 5

By Sgt Thomas F. Boehler

LZ STINSON, (198th Inf. Bde.IO) – Perfect prior planning and the element of surprise enabled infantrymen from the 23d Infantry Division's 198th Brigade to kill five Viet Cong soldiers and disrupt enemy resupply.

The element of Delata Company, 1st Battalion, 52d Infantry, had moved into an ambush site near a river in the heavily vegetated mountainous area southwest of Chu Lai. The "Ready Rifles" set out their defense and waited in heavy rain for the enemy.

"We set up along a tail leading down to the river, figuring the enemy might use it to get water," said Sergeant Dale Rine (Antigo, Wis.) the platoon sergeant. "I set two claymore mines to our front covering the trail. We didn't have to wait long for five enemy to come along."

When the Viet Cong soldiers were in line with the infantrymen, Rine detonated the two anti-personnel mines, killing three enemy instantly. The two other enemy evaded down the trail pursued by four "Ready Rifles".

"When the enemy reached our position they just stopped and stared at us," said Rine. "I don't think they expected to see any GI's out in a rainstorm. They were walking down the trail like they thought they owned the place. We sure surprised them!"

The infantrymen engaged and killed the evading enemy and proceeded to sweep the area of contact. In addition to five Viet Cong soldiers, they found five rucksacks containing rice, clothing and other enemy equipment.

Duo stops enemy supply

By Sgt Tom Frey

CHU LAI, (198th Inf. Bde. IO) – They may not be Batman and Robin, but two men known as the "Dyanmic Duo" from the 198th Infantry Brigade, 23d Infantry Division, get a job done just as well. The fearless duo single-handedly killed three NVA soldiers, captured another, and stopped an enemy supply team from reaching its destination.

Sergeant William Peterson (Glen Ellyn, Ill.) and Sergeant Billy Oliver (Palestine, Tex.) are members of Bravo Company, 1st Battalion, 52nd Infantry, and were working in an area southwest of Chu Lai. Their element was moving parallel to a river when they heard enemy voices ahead of them.

"After we stopped the patrol, Oliver and I decided to move up and check the area," said Peterson. "We thought it would it be better if just the two of us went to avoid noise and keep as little detection of ourselves as possible."

The pair had crawled up approximately 100 meters when they came to a main trail along the streambed.

"There were old bunker complexes on both sides of us, and well-traveled trail which proved there were NVA soldiers around the area," said Oliver.

The two infantrymen moved across the trail and when Peterson stepped down into the small streambed, he came face-to-face with the pointman of the NVA supply team.

"I whirled and fired as fast as I could," said Peterson, "and I managed to hit him in the shoulder, dropping his AK-47 rifle."

As soon as Peterson fired, Oliver jumped to his side and killed the next two soldiers. The last soldier jumped behind a rock for cover from the blazing action.

"After I fired my magazine, I grabbed a grenade and tossed it over the rock where the last NVA soldier was hiding," said Oliver. "Peterson threw one also and when we checked the area, we found the last one killed."

The enemy soldiers were a supply team, carrying materials for immediate use. The rucks they carried contained five gallons of fish oil, 20 pounds of soap, five pounds of vegetables, 75 flashlight batteries, 12 sets of fatigues, two ponchos, one mosquito net, one poncho liner, a rice knife, two AK-47 magazines, two pistol belts and a hammock.

"The rucks weighed about 120 pounds each, so we only took one and destroyed the rest of them and their contents," said Oliver.

As soon as the two victorious soldiers had destroyed the supplies, they made their way back to their element with the wounded NVA soldier, the AK-47 and one ruck with supplies. A resupply chopper was called in to pick up the prisoner and captured materials.

Because of their meritorious actions, Peterson and Oliver were both awarded the Silver Star by Major General James L. Baldwin, commanding general of the 23d Infantry Division.

A round leaving a 105mm howitzer is caught at detonation at FSB Linda Battery A, 3rd Battalion, 82nd Artillery fires from Hill 151 in support of the 196th Infantry Brigade. (U.S. Army Photo by Sp/4 David Prim)

Beautiful Lana Wood shows you where it's at as she enjoys the grassy outdoors. (Courtesy Photo)

Is the chain there to keep the jeep in place or the pole? Only the Air Force jeep knows for sure, and it's not talking. (U.S. Army Photo by Sp/4 William Hutchison)

Ready Rifles find basecamp, 3 weapons

By Sgt Thomas F. Boehler

LZ STINSON (198th Inf. Bde. IO) – While war normally involves shooting and loud noises, one element from the 23d Infantry Division's 198th Brigade used somewhat quieter tactics recently to detain five Viet Cong suspects and capture 15 barrels (14,00 pounds) of rice, without firing a shot.

An element of "Ready Rifles" from Charlie Company, 1st Battalion, 52nd Infantry, were on an eagle flight from their day laager position and had just arrived at the landing zone when they spotted a figure in a blue shirt evade into a hedgerow.

The pointman, Specialist Four Roger Flint (Pavlding, Ohio) followed him into the bushes, dragged him out and turned him over to the National Police, who were working with the infantrymen. The detainee admitted there were more Viet Cong soldiers in the area.

"We moved on a little farther," said First Lieutenant Robert E. Harper (Coraopolis, Pa.), the platoon leader, "when our Luc Luong scout saw another person hiding in a hedgerow. We also gave him to the National Police and found a Chicom hand grenade, a full rifle magazine, and two pistol bolts where he was hiding."

The platoon then moved about 100 meters to a small village, put out security and began to search one of the hootches. In the false walls they found five barrels of rice.

The rice was in barrels about three feet in diameter and four feet high. Some of the men began bagging the rice they found, plus two more barrels which the National Police found in a hay stack. The others began searching another nearby hootch.

The infantrymen found eight more barrels of locally grown rice in the surrounding area, bringing the total to 15 barrels.

Later that day in the same area, another platoon from Charlie Company found ten more barrels of rice. For the day, the "Ready Rifles" deprived the enemy of 22,000 pounds of rice. The rice was tuned over to local authorities for disposition.

"I saw a piece of clothing hanging down from the ceiling," said Harper. "I pulled on it and heard a shout, it was being worn by another person hiding there. We gave him to the National Police along with the owner of the two hootches."

Enemy who operate in that area may have to tighten their belts a few notches.

Engineers clear 20 acres for Vietnamese refugees

By Sp/5 Daniel McVann

CHU LAI (39th Engr. Bn.) – The Vietnam War has resulted in vast numbers of casualties, but few Americans fully realize the extent to which the Vietnamese people have been victimized by this war and in turn driven out of their own homes. In truth, there are literally hundreds of thousands of refugees who are searching for new places to settle and start anew.

For many, the immediate flight from their home village is to the closest major town in their particular province. Here, most often, the homeless refugees are met with an already overcrowded town–the result of the large influx of villagers. Fleeing one problem, they are suddenly confronted with another. Often as not, they resort to building a cardboard box and scrap lumber shanty. A home that leaves much to be desired but for the most part there still lingers that ray of hope for a chance to improve their plight.

It was with this in mind that the 39th Engineer Battalion's 59th Engineer Company (Land Clearing) responded to the pleas of the MACV advisory team and the district chief of Binh Son. The request was for assistance in a civic action program planned to aid the Vietnamese of Binh Son Province. The task would be to clear 20 acres of land near the village of Phuoc Tho, which is located approximately 4 kilometers off highway QL-1 near Binh Son. With the land cleared, many of the Vietnamese that have been forced into a cardboard shack existence could vastly improve their lot–an answer to their unanswered hopes.

For the men of the 59th, the task was a relatively simple one. The task of clearing the land is complete and already construction for the new village has started. The dozers of the 59th opened up not only the land but also opportunities for these people that were previously just dreams.

The men of the 59th likewise have the feeling of accomplishment. As you talk with them about the job you hear comments like, "This is where it's at....., "They deserve a chance and we can help them get it..., "Gives you a good feeling to know that you have been able to do what they would not have been able to accomplish themselves..., "Makes being in the 'Nam seem worthwhile.."

Another job completed for the 59th, but for the men it won't be so easily put aside. For it is the civic action projects that bring the war down to a very personal level. The value and importance of their work shows. Their work has meant new life for the people of Phuoc Tho.

They look for 'bird', find eggs

By Sgt Tom Frey

LZ STINSON (198th Inf. Bde. IO) – An element from the 198th Brigade, 23d Infantry Division, started out looking for a bird but also found a nest full of eggs on a recon mission near here. The bird was actually a Light Observation Helicopter (LOH) and the nest full of eggs turned but to be an NVA basecamp containing a large amount of munitions and weapons.

Charlie Company, 1st Battalion, 52d Infantry, was on LZ Stinson, south of Chu Lai, when they were called to secure a LOH that had been shot down and rescue the two men in the chopper. The infantrymen were inserted by gunships about 100 meters from the bird, and when they reached the downed LOH they found the two men, one wounded and the other suffering from shock.

"The pilot was hit pretty bad but we had to move down the hill to a clear area to get the rescue bird down, because the terrain was thick where we were," said Staff Sergeant Robert Bell (Cumberland, Md.), the platoon sergeant.

As the men moved down the hill, they walked right into an NVA basecamp with bunkers and military structures.

"There wasn't anyone there, except for one dead NVA soldier shot by gunships, but we could tell the NVA soldiers had just left," said Specialist Four Tom Coleman (Stark, Fla.), an assistant M-60 machine gunner. "We found a lot of weapons and supplies they didn't take with them."

Half the patrol continued down the hill where the choppers picked up the wounded pilot and co-pilot, while the rest of the men went through the basecamp collecting munitions.

The "Ready Rifles" found nine B-40 rockets, ten B-40 boosters, three RPG's, two 82mm mortar rounds, ten recoiless rifle rounds, 13, 9mm rounds, and a machine gun tripod.

"We found most of the material concealed in holes in the bunkers," said Bell, "but the NVA soldiers won't be using them any more."

1/52nd wages quiet war, capture VC without a shot

By Sgt Tom Frey

CHU LAI (198th Inf. Bde. IO) – During a recent mission southwest of Chu Lai, an element from the 198th Infantry Brigade had a rather busy morning, killing three enemy, finding an NVA basecamp and capturing three weapons.

A squad from Delta Company, 1st Battalion, 52nd Infantry, had set up an ambush along a fresh trail waiting for any enemy movement. At daybreak two NVA soldiers approached the "Ready Rifles" position.

"When the NVA pointman got within 50 meters of us he stopped and possibly sensed trouble," said Sergeant Dale Rine (Antigo, Wis.) the squad leader. "That's when we opened up so they wouldn't have to worry any longer."

The infantrymen killed both enemy soldiers and captured one AK-47 rifle, one Czeck .47 caliber rifle and four Chicom hand grenades.

"As soon as we searched the area and picked up the weapons, we joined our squad and moved out to join the rest of the company," said Rine.

The patrol hadn't moved very far when the infantrymen came upon an NVA basecamp, consisting of approximately 18 structures including a mess hall, classrooms and hospital, complete with water system.

"They must have left in a hurry," said Specialist Four Gary Shinn (Hooly, Mich.) a pointman, "because their rucks, animals and supplies were still there."

The men found two 60mm mortar rounds, three Chicom hand grenades, three packs, clothing and food supplies.

After destroying the materials, the patrol moved out again. They hadn't gone far when they spotted a couple bags of rice next to a tree.

"When we started to check out the bags, an NVA soldier jumped from behind a tree and started shooting toward us," said Staff Sergeant Terry Gilson (Clio, Mich.) the platoon sergeant. "We all returned the fire–killing him–our third victim of the morning."

The unit destroyed the rice and captured another weapon, an SKS rifle.

"I was mighty glad to get out of that area," said Gilson. "That's too much excitement for any man!"

Rangers shot with needle

By Sgt. Tom Mano

CAMP REASONER, Da Nang, (196th Inf. Bde. IO)-Twenty-one rangers were recently shot here 21 times apiece. Why-to keep them alive.

The "enemy" in this contact was a small four-legged ball of fur. His weapon was his mouth and his bullets were parasites which could be more lethal than an AK-47 round.

"He snapped at some people, but wasn't really mean," said one of the men from Company 2, Company G (Ranger) (Provisional), 75th Infantry. "We named him Chicom because we never knew when he was going to explode."

Chicom got all the benefits of a military veterinarian when he was with the unit in Chu Lai, but apparently it was too late. Rabies were already running in his blood.

The first sign of Chicom's affliction was his irritability. "He was grouchy, ate little and had the dry heaves," said Sergeant Thomas W. Hydek (Seattle, Wash.) "Two or three days later I decided to take him to the vet."

On the way to the veterinarian, the dog got furious and started biting everyone around him. Once at the animal hospital he was confined to a rabies pen.

The Next morning Chicom died. An autopsy on his brain concluded that he was indeed rabid. Now came the decision of whom to shoot.

The brigade surgeon decided that anybody who had been bitten or had come into contact with the dog and had an open sore would have to bear the 21 shot ordeal. Nobody looked forward to it.

Waiting in line for his puncture, one ranger muttered laughingly, "It was probably a VC trick to put everubody out of action." Asked how he bore the shots, another commented, "We all take it with a happy grin and a sore gut."

"Chicom was a good dog," interjected another ranger. "but when he died, we stripped him of all his rank and buried him in the company area."

The men seemed to take the shots with a mixture of pleasure and pain. Oh, there were those who fainted, but we won't mention names. This was on the fourth shot, what about the 20th?

"They're just laughing about it now," said Specialist Four Walter Dilley (Circleville, Ohio), the medic administering the shots. "but wait until they get to about the 15th shot, then things might change."

As the medic proceeded to stick one ranger in the stomach, the recipient summed up the situation neatly when he said, "War is certainly hell."