

Recondo School Not Easy, Says Top Grad

CU CHI — "The third week was the real thing. The Viet Cong were not in the lesson plan," said Sp4 Russell Woodrum, 26, a 25th Div soldier recently graduating first in his class at the 5th Special Forces Recondo School in Nha Trang.

Woodrum of Mount Vernon, Mo., has been a member of the 3d Sqdn, 4th Cav's Long Range Reconnaissance Patrol (LRRP) Det since his arrival in Vietnam

four months ago.

"Recondo School is not easy," were his sentiments. Of the 71 men starting his three week cycle, 41 finished.

Especially geared to train LRRPs, the three week school starts each morning with rigorous physical training (PT). Up at 4:30 a.m., the men do sit-ups, pull-ups, push-ups — the Army "Daily Dozen." After PT, students loaded with a 30 pound

pack, weapon and web gear "force march" for 5 kms, each day adding an extra km until they march 19 kms.

Breakfast is at 6 a.m. and after breakfast, classes begin and continue until 8 o'clock at night. The courses cover subjects essential to proper reconnaissance techniques — map reading, patrolling and radio use.

The second week sees more physical training early in the

morning. Now the students run 5 kms rather than walk, working up to eight. Courses are expanded to include weapons firing, landing zone selection and target detection.

The third week is spent in the field undergoing actual reconnaissance missions. Woodrum was a team leader.

"My old team leader, SSG Larry Goods, is responsible for

my graduating first in the class. His advice and assistance in the field during missions before going to the school gave me a real advantage," Woodrum added.

In recognition of his achievement, Woodrum was presented a handsome knife and cigarette lighter, both inscribed with his name by the instructors of the Special Forces School.

462,000 lb. Rice Cache Discovered

3RD BDE—Sweeping the thick jungle 90 kms north of Saigon a 3rd Bde, 25th Inf Div unit uncovered a rice cache totaling 231 tons, one of the largest single finds ever uncovered by the division. The cache was found during a sweep and destroy mission by the 2nd Bn, 12th Inf "White Warriors," while participating in Operation Yellowstone, under the operational control of the 1st Bde.

The first of the grain bins was discovered by Alpha Co as they swept through the triple canopied jungle only 4 kms from the Cambodian border. Continuing their sweep the company came across two more of the 29 x 30 x 8 foot storage bins which were still well concealed in the thick jungle even after numerous bombing missions in the area.

The following day Charlie Co, sweeping 700 meters from the first find, uncovered three more of the large bins and a complete diesel powered rice mill for processing the raw grain.

After uncovering the cache the (Continued on Back Page)

4.2 Platoon Fires 20,000th Round

3RD BDE — During a recent exhibition firing the 4.2 mortar platoon of the 3rd Bn, 22nd Inf, sent its 20,000th round into VC territory.

Under the command of 1LT Philip J. Hallisy from Chicago, Ill., the platoon fired 20 rounds into the hills north of Dau Tieng. On hand to witness the firing was LTC Thomas U. Harrold, battalion commander.

The exhibition underscored the increasingly important combat support role of the 4.2 mortar.

There on the floor, only a few feet away, lay a four-foot cobra. As Findlay watched, the snake raised his body and began waving his head from side-to-side. "All I could see were those beady eyes and that forked tongue flicking in and out," Findlay later recalled, "I just drew my pistol by reflex." He snapped off four quick shots from the hip and then beat a hasty retreat.

After waiting a few minutes, he peered cautiously around the corner, and saw that the snake was stretched out on the floor dead from a bullet through his head.

Mech Bn Helps Harvest Rice

2ND BDE — Vietnamese farmers stopped work in their rice paddies to watch the massive convoy snake slowly down the road toward them. Frowns creased their faces as the armored personnel carriers and the smoke-belching trucks swerved off the road into the partially harvested fields and began setting up a huge defensive perimeter.

The farmers, who were barely able to make a living with the rice profits, worried about the destruction to their crops with

TROPIC LIGHTNING NEWS



Ready To Strike.... Anywhere, Anytime

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25TH INFANTRY DIVISION, VIETNAM

January 29, 1968



PULLING OUT—A 2nd Bn, 27th Inf "Wolfhound," scrambles for the helicopter that will carry him and his company to a landing zone some 45 kms northwest of Saigon where the 2nd Bde is conducting Operation Saratoga.

(Photo by SP4 Joe Carey)

"Overwhelming" MEDCAP Held By Wolfhounds In Hoc Mon

2ND BDE — The next day, acting battalion commander, MAJ Ralph Hook of Parsons, Kan., arranged for the owners of the rice crop to enter the battalion's camps and finish their harvest.

Working with small sickles, the people soon had the rice cut and stacked in large bundles.

A truck was borrowed from the 65th Cbt Engr Bn and with the help of several men, the bundles were loaded and hauled to a mill.

2ND BDE — "There were men, women and children climbing in the windows and squeezing through the doorway trying to get treated," was how PFC Robert Bond of Kirkland, N.M., described a recent 1st Bn, 27th Inf, Medical Civic Action Program (MEDCAP).

"The villagers were coming from all over," continued Bond.

The turnout for the MEDCAP in the village of Hoc Mon in Hau Nghia Province, was termed

"overwhelming" by civil affairs officials.

Discussing the villagers' response to their MEDCAPs, CPT Lonnie Wall from Marion, S.C., says, "There's no doubt in my mind that we're doing a good job here."

Figures released by the 25th Div's 2nd Bde confirm Wall's statement. The 1st Bn has accounted for over half of December's total patients treated by the entire brigade.

Silver Star

MAJ William W. Roush, HHC, 4th Bn, 9th Inf
 MAJ Charles D. Franklin, 116th Aslt Hel Co
 CPT George Coleman, Co A, 2nd Bn (Mech), 22nd Inf
 CPT Vernon Smith, Co C, 2nd Bn, 12th Inf
 CPT Richard W. Newport, Co D, 2nd Bn, 12th Inf
 CPT Richard C. Pahland, Co B, 2nd Bn, 12th Inf
 CPT Jerry L. Thompson, 57th Med Det
 1LT Burnet R. Quick, Co A, 2nd Bn, 12th Inf
 1LT Edward J. Domaleski, HHC, 2nd Bn, 12th Inf
 2LT Victor D. Massaglia, Co A, 2nd Bn (Mech), 22nd Inf
 2LT John R. Oosterhuis, Co D, 2nd Bn, 12th Inf
 SSG William T. Poston, Co B, 2nd Bn, 12th Inf
 SSG Rodger A. Moore, Co B, 4th Bn, 9th Inf
 SP5 Dennis J. Bellotti, 57th Med Det
 SP4 Douglas W. Mc Carty, Co C, 4th Bn, 9th Inf
 SP4 Jack O. Sweeney, Co A, 2nd Bn, 22nd Inf
 SP4 David G. Purdon, Co D, 2nd Bn, 12th Inf
 SP4 Myron M. Nelson, Co A, 2nd Bn (Mech), 22nd Inf
 Army Commendation Medal (Heroism)
 MAJ Wyatt L. Schneider, 116th Aslt Hel Co, 269th Avn Bn
 1LT John W. Knox, A Btry, 7th Bn, 11th Arty
 1LT George R. Potter, HHC, 1st Bn, 27th Inf
 WO1 Charles F. Davis, 116th Aslt Hel Co, 269th Avn Bn
 WO1 James T. Stoeser, 116th Aslt Hel Co, 269th Avn Bn
 WO1 Marshall E. Clarke, 116th Aslt Hel Co, 269th Avn Bn
 WO1 Richard L. James Sr., 116th Aslt Hel Co, 269th Avn Bn
 PSG Troy L. Gurganious, Co D, 2nd Bn, 12th Inf
 SSG Charles L. Kostos, Co B, 2nd Bn, 14th Inf
 SSG Roy C. De Weese, Co A, 4th Bn, 23rd Inf
 SP5 Anthony M. De Muzio, 116th Aslt Hel Co, 269th Avn Bn
 SP5 Franklin D. Howard, HHB, 3rd Bn, 13th Arty
 SP5 Grover R. Hopper, 116th Aslt Hel Co, 269th Avn Bn
 SP5 George H. Cathey, 116th Aslt Hel Co, 269th Avn Bn
 SGT Thomas W. Dearolf Jr., Co A, 2nd Bn, 12th Inf
 SGT Robert E. Winquist, Co A, 2nd Bn, 12th Inf
 SGT Dennis J. Feldrichner, Co D, 2nd Bn, 27th Inf
 SP4 Garnett T. Farris, Co B, 2nd Bn, 14th Inf
 SP4 Thomas L. Glendenning, A Btry, 7th Bn, 11th Arty
 SP4 Richard S. Roberts, A Btry, 7th Bn, 11th Arty
 SP4 Joseph P. Burr, A Btry, 7th Bn, 11th Arty
 SP4 Randal W. Bissenger, HHC, 4th Bn, 23rd Inf
 SP4 Fritz C. Daube, HHB, 3rd Bn, 13th Arty
 SP4 Sidney A. Quintal, 25th MP Co
 SP4 Donnie Stirgus, Co D, 2nd Bn, 12th Arty
 SP4 Cleman A. Durst, 116th Aslt Hel Co, 269th Avn Bn
 SP4 Perry J. Mc Kinnon, Co B, 2nd Bn, 12th Inf
 SP4 John F. Wolfe, Co A, 2nd Bn, 12th Inf
 SP4 Roy Williams, Co B, 2nd, 12th Inf
 SP4 George W. Booth III, B Btry, 3rd Bn, 13th Arty
 SP4 Robert J. Schodorf, Co B, 2nd Bn, 12th Inf
 SP4 Carl D. Simmons, HHB, 3rd Bn, 13th Arty
 SP4 Randal W. Bissenger, HHC, 4th Bn, 23rd Inf
 SP4 Michael J. Mooney, 116th Aslt Hel Co, 269th Avn Bn
 SP4 Ernest W. Fryer, 116th Aslt Hel Co, 269th Avn Bn
 SP4 William J. Kiernan, 116th Aslt Hel Co, 269th Avn Bn
 SP4 Phillip L. Chambers, Co B, 2nd Bn, 12th Inf
 SP4 Leroy M. Johnson, Co B, 2nd Bn, 12th Inf
 SP4 George Lepre, Co B, 2nd Bn, 12th Inf
 SP4 Daniel H. Stone, Co B, 2nd Bn, 12th Inf
 SP4 Marvin Livingston, Co D, 2nd Bn, 12th Inf
 SP4 Wilbert Wiltz, Co D, 2nd Bn, 12th Inf
 SP4 Douglas A. Courtney, Co D, 2nd Bn, 12th Inf
 SP4 Robert Higgins, Co D, 2nd Bn, 12th Inf
 SP4 Raoul P. Fury, Co B, 2nd Bn, 12th Inf
 SP4 Oscar Jackson, Co B, 2nd Bn, 12th Inf
 SP4 Lanny L. Kunselman, 116th Aslt Hel Co, 269th Avn Bn
 SP4 Dale A. Darst, Co B, 2nd Bn, 12th Inf
 SP4 John M. Hoesly, Co B, 2nd Bn, 12th Inf
 SP4 James H. Wigton, Co D, 2nd Bn, 12th Inf
 SP4 Charles J. Officer, Co B, 2nd Bn, 12th Inf
 SP4 James M. Reddy, A Btry, 3rd Bn, 13th Arty
 SP4 Larry L. Sheaffer, Co A, 4th Bn (Mech), 23rd Inf
 PFC Richard A. Patterson, HHB, 3rd Bn, 13th Arty
 PFC Matthew Gundrum Jr., Co D, 2nd Bn, 27th Inf
 PFC Duane W. Farley, HHB, 3rd Bn, 13th Arty
 PFC George A. Blauvelt, Co B, 2nd Bn, 27th Inf
 PFC Samuel A. Williams, Co A, 2nd Bn, 12th Inf
 PFC Winston R. Williams, HHC, 4th Bn, 23rd Inf
 PFC Satrou L. Hayashida, Co A, 2nd Bn, 12th Inf
 PFC William J. Klevins, Co A, 2nd Bn, 12th Inf
 PFC Lawrence Pasquette, Co A, 2nd Bn, 12th Inf
 PFC Jose Mendoza, Co A, 2nd Bn, 12th Inf
 PFC James P. Raynes, Co A, 2nd Bn, 12th Inf
 PFC Richard R. Fuller, Co A, 2nd Bn, 12th Inf
 PFC Paul R. Newman, Co B, 2nd Bn, 12th Inf
 PFC Jose G. Lopez, Co A, 2nd Bn, 12th Inf
 PFC Sammy Buffington, Co A, 2nd Bn, 12th Inf

VC-NVA Have Paid Heavily In Both Men And Equipment

SAIGON (MACV) — North Vietnamese and Viet Cong forces fighting in the Republic of Vietnam paid heavily in both men and material during the year 1967, according to figures recently released by a MACV spokesman.

Quoting statistics covering the period Jan. 1-Dec. 30 of last year, the spokesman said 87,534 of the enemy were killed and 28,614 individual and 2,933 crew served weapons were captured. The total of enemy dead is the equivalent of more than 144 North Vietnamese Army battalions.

In addition, the foe lost 2,327,341 rounds of small arms ammunition, 22,418 mortar rounds, 56,980 grenades and 12,776 mines. During the same period, 13,779 tons of rice and 162 tons of salt were taken from the enemy.

For the entire year, 27,178 persons defected from the enemy ranks to join the Government of Vietnam under the Chieu Hoi (Open Arms) program. Of these, 17,671 returnees (more than 29 NVA battalions) were fighting men, members of the military units opposing the Free World Forces.

Figures released for Free World Forces showed that the total U.S. Armed Forces strength increased from 389,000 on Dec. 31, 1966, to 486,000 on Dec. 30, 1967. Other Free World military strength rose from 53,000 to 6,000 fighting men.

During the year, the U.S. lost 9,353 men killed in action while other Free World casualties (excluding the Republic of Vietnam) totaled 1,102 dead. In all, 15,997 Americans have died in Vietnam between Jan. 1, 1961,

Clothing Allowance For EM Is Reduced

According to Department of the Army Message 843910, the monthly basic cash maintenance allowance of \$5.10 is changed to \$4.80 and the monthly standard rate of \$7.80 drops to \$7.20. The monthly standard rate is for personnel with over three years service.

The decrease in the allowances is due to a drop of about \$16.88 in the cost of the basic individual clothing issue required. Twenty-two items of individual clothing are now cheaper for the serviceman to purchase.

and Dec. 30, 1967. The Vietnamese Armed Forces reported approximately 10,750 of their men were killed in action during the year.

Enemy terrorists and acts of terrorism claimed the lives of 4,080 Vietnamese civilians during 1967. An additional 8,072 civilians were wounded and 5,454 civilians abducted in these

incidents during the year.

The year-end figures showed that U.S. military forces included 320,000 Army, 78,000 Marines, 56,000 Air Force, 31,000 Navy and 1,200 Coast Guard.

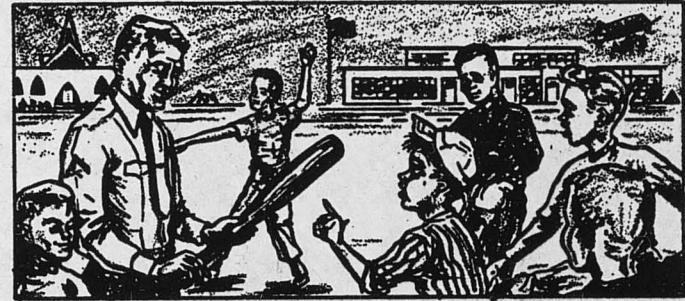
It was estimated that the enemy had a total military strength of 248,000 with an additional 85,000 individuals serving the political infrastructure.

EDITORIAL

A Soldier and a Citizen

Ambassador, community leader, youth advisor, volunteer worker, protector of his nation, today's serviceman is more than just a soldier or a sailor — he is a first class citizen.

Concerned and compassionate, he is often found working with and for charity organizations and youth councils the world over. Children seem to hold a special place in his heart, and he gives time, money, food, clothing and love to underprivileged youngsters.



He can be seen directing traffic around an accident, building a little league baseball park, fighting fierce brush and forest fires, coaching athletics or bringing food to starving animals and people trapped by a severe blizzard.

He is a scout leader, a member of the church choir, a member of a community organization, a leader in the local Parent-Teachers Association. He is a good neighbor, a loyal friend, an asset to the community.

No matter whether he is stationed in the United States or abroad — the serviceman is found at the head of the line when representing himself, his service and his nation.

He is without question that most important combination needed in a free society — the soldier and the citizen. (AFPS)

New Postal Service For Heavier Parcels

Military personnel serving outside the continental U.S. will be able to mail parcels weighing up to 30 pounds via air mail at rates nearly as low as those for surface mail. The new service is effective Jan. 7.

Provided for in the Postal Rate Bill signed into law Dec. 16, the new airlift service is in addition to the present Surface-Air-

mail (SAM) regulation. Under SAM, packages weighing five pounds or less are airlifted at parcel post surface rates to U.S. ports of entry and then go by surface transportation to their destination.

Under the new program, parcels weighing 30 pounds or less and not exceeding 60 inches in combined length and girth will be carried on "space available" basis from all overseas APOs and FPOs at parcel post surface rate plus \$1.

The additional dollar insures air transportation all the way from the overseas base to the destination address.

The special airlift regulation also applies to packages mailed from the U.S. to military personnel served by APOs and FPOs.

The airlift rates are expected to produce considerable savings in most cases. For example, the Post Office Department pointed out, a serviceman in Vietnam will pay \$.30 to send a 15-pound package to Chicago. The regular air parcel post rate for the same package is \$12.08.

In some cases, the Postmaster General said, it will be cheaper to use regular air parcel post. He advised servicemen to check with military post office officials for information on the best service to use.

TROPIC LIGHTNING NEWS



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ALL DRESSED UP TO SEE THE DOCTOR—MG F.K. Mearns, 25th Inf Div CG, pauses to admire the colorful dress of one of the children waiting to see a 3rd Bde. doctor during a MEDCAP in Dau Tieng. (Photo by SFC Roy Doupe)

At Dau Tieng

New MARS Station Opens

3RD BDE—To end the year the right way, the 3rd Bde, 25th Inf Div, has opened a MARS Station (Military Affiliate Radio System) at their Dau Tieng base camp. The men of the brigade can come into the MARS Station any time, 24 hours a day, and place a phone call to any one in the United States of America.

The ground work for the planning and construction of the new communication center was started by the brigade signal

officer. The building is completely soundproof. There are three radio rooms that can handle three phone calls at one time. Also, there is a MARS Gram Room that can send radio grams to all parts of the world. The building is completely air-conditioned and has a lounge so that personnel making phone calls can relax, watch TV or read while they are waiting for their calls to be put through.

The MARS Station equipment was installed and is being

operated by the 587th Sig Bn. These men keep the station open 24 hours a day.

The equipment is the finest MARS equipment there is. The men got the manuals and reference books out so that they could make sure that the equipment was operating to the efficiency that it is capable of. The antenna which is the field expedient type, made of bamboo and commo wire, gave the men no problems.



SGT Autry Key of the 587th Sig Bn places a call to the states from the new MARS station at Dau Tieng. (Photo by SP4 Vince Housden)

Army Announces Promotion Policy

The Army's new accelerated promotion programs were announced last week in DA Message 843548. While normal promotions will continue to be made under the provisions of AR 600-200, some 167,000 additional grade boosts are expected to be made during the next six months under the new policies.

Because of the wide range of the new programs and their unusual significance for all enlisted men, the partial text of the Army policy message is published below as a service to readers:

a. All E2s may be promoted to E3 as soon as they arrive in Vietnam.

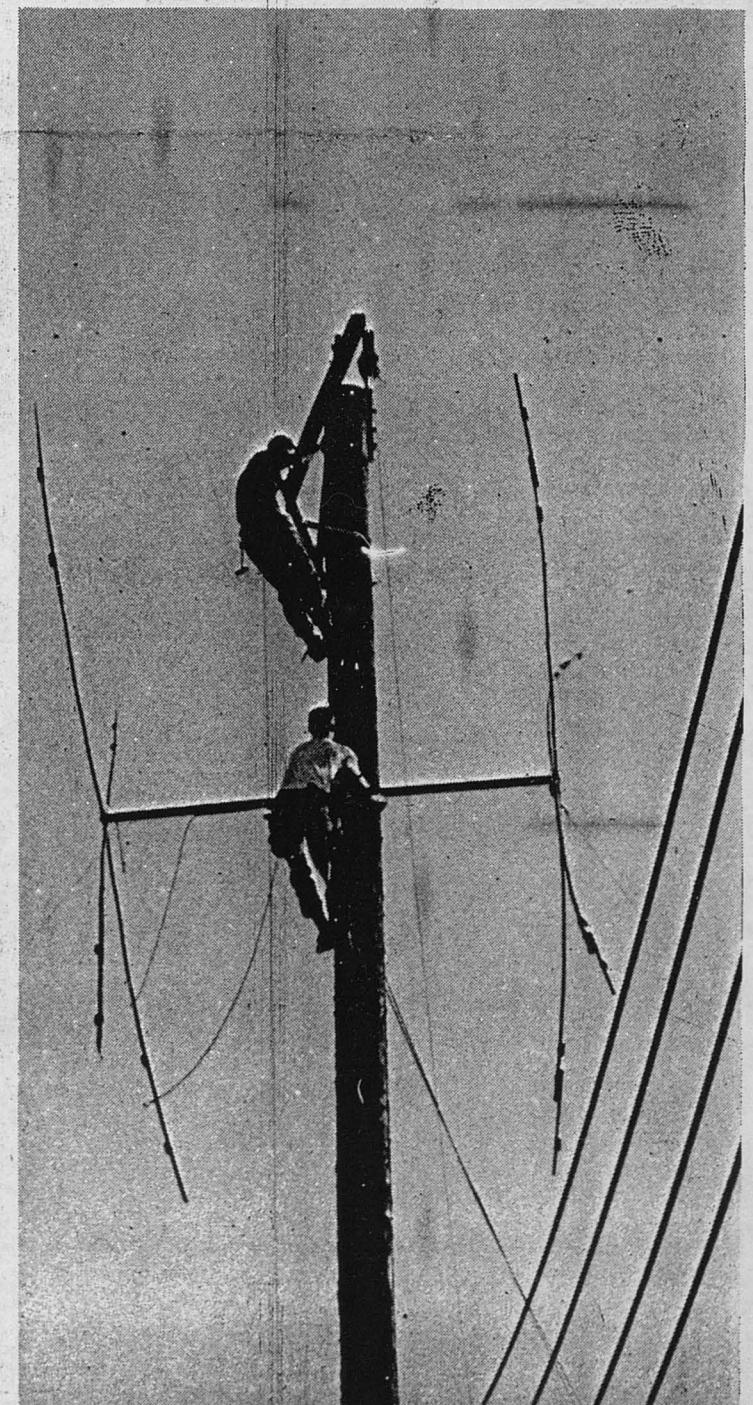
b. MACV may promote each month without regard to position vacancies 9 E7, 65 E6, 60 E5 and 54 E4.

c. MACV and USARV may promote to fill vacancies in grades E4, E5 and E6 without regard to DA quotas. Commanders are authorized to promote monthly up to 4 per cent of the authorized E4 strength to E4; up to 4 per cent of the authorized E5 strength to E5 and up to 2 per cent of the authorized E6 strength without regard to time in grade and time in service to recognize demonstrated potential and outstanding performance.

d. With the exception of the 9 E7 quotas to MACV, all promotions to grades E7, E8 and E9 in Vietnam are controlled by DA quota allocations based on Army-wide requirements.

e. Commanders are authorized to promote in frozen MOS on a basis of 1 E5 promotion in a frozen MOS for each 30 promotions made to E5 in other MOS, 1 E6 promotion in a frozen MOS for each 25 promotions made to E6 in other MOS, 1 E7 promotion in a frozen MOS for each 20 promotions made to E7 in other MOS, 1 E8 promotion in a frozen MOS for each 10 promotions made to E8 in other MOS.

f. There is no limitation on the number of in-country promotions enlisted personnel in Vietnam may receive if otherwise qualified.



Men of the 587th Sig Bn install a field type antenna by the new MARS station. (Photo by SP4 Vince Housden)

The Battle Of Soui Cut Is Over

3RD BDE—It was just getting dark when the Viet Cong started mortaring Fire Support Base Burt. The Viet Cong had been doing the same thing at the same time for the past few nights, so it wasn't anything new to the men of the 3rd Bde who were defending the forward base camp at Soui Cut.

As the hours started to slip by, the defenders knew that this was more than their nightly mortar attack. They started receiving RPG rounds and small arms fire along with the mortar rounds. The ambush patrols were reporting heavy movement around their positions. As the contact became heavier the patrols were being pulled back into the perimeter. At 11:30 p.m. the perimeter was under very heavy ground attack. All patrols that had not returned to the perimeter at this time were reporting that their positions were in danger of being overrun by the enemy. One patrol led by SGT Mark Ridey of C Co, 2nd Bn (Mech), 22nd Inf, was calling in concentrated artillery fire on his position. His patrol which stayed in its position all night accounted for 16 of the Viet Cong killed.

At 1:30 a.m. the main Viet Cong effort had shifted to the sector of C Co, 2nd Bn (Mech), 22nd Inf. The Viet Cong elements had succeeded in reaching the bunker line but their progress was thwarted when the guns of the light artillery started firing and the heavy artillery started firing direct fire into their positions. The attack at this point was broken and contact slackened.

Again after regrouping their forces the Viet Cong attacked the same sector. Their fires increased and all areas of the perimeter were engaged. As the Viet Cong directed their fire to one concentrated area all tactical air, along with artillery, direct and indirect fire, gun and flare ships were being employed to stop the attack.

When it started getting daylight the Viet Cong started to withdraw leaving blocking forces to screen their movement. All available fire continued to interdict their withdrawal routes.

As the dawn of the new day broke it was obvious that the men of the 3rd Bde had put out a tremendous amount of fire power. The surrounding wood line had been all but completely leveled. After scanning the immediate area of the fire support base it was obvious that the Viet Cong body count was going to be high. By the end of the day the body count was at 300. With a further search of the adjoining jungle and wood line the count increased to over 400 dead. Of course many more will never be found to add to the official count.

Just as the 3rd Bde proved itself eight months ago at the Battle of Soui Tre, again they gallantly outfought the Viet Cong at the Battle of Soui Cut at Fire Support Base Burt.

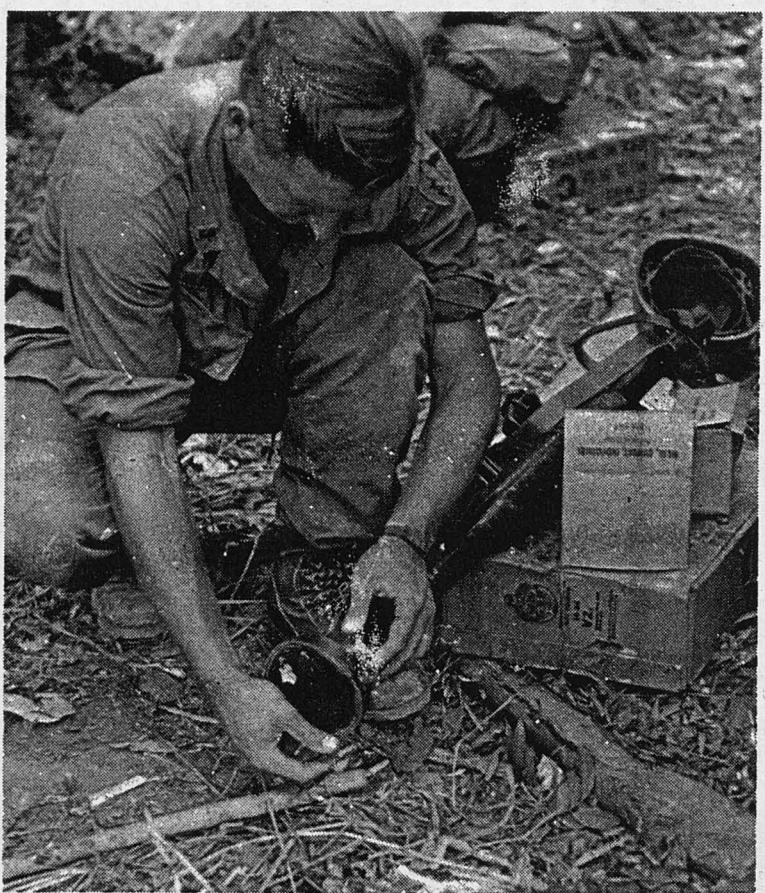


A FEW OF THE MANY RPG ROUNDS AND LAUNCHERS FOUND BY THE 3RD BN, 22ND INF.



AFTER FIVE-HOURS CONTACT WITH THE VC, MEN OF THE 2ND BN (MECH), 22ND INF, HAVE A JOB OF CLEANING THEIR "QUAD FIFTY."

For Some The Memory Lingers



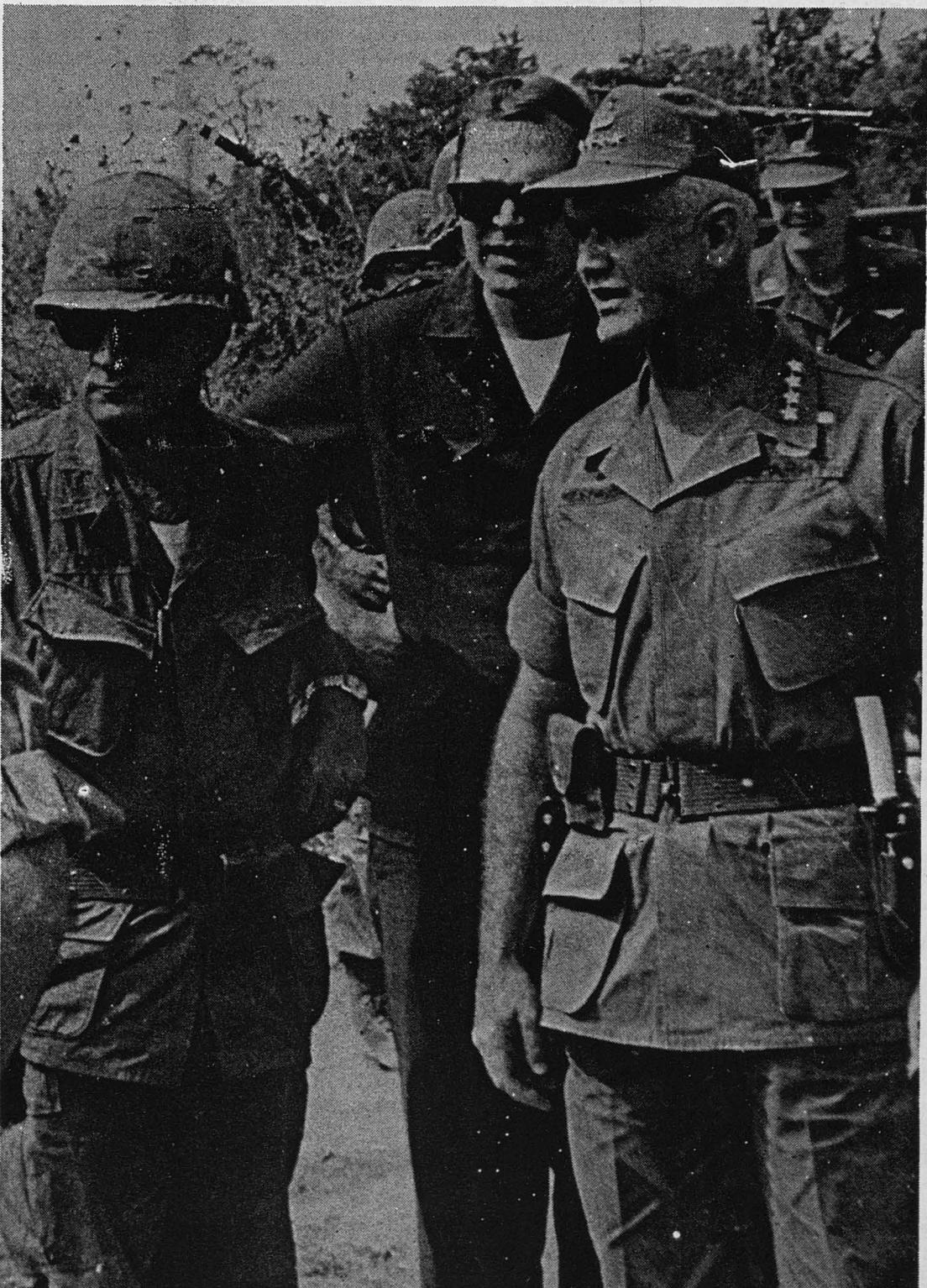
1LT JOHN KEPFERER LOOKS AT VC RPG LAUNCHER.

Photos by
SP4 William Fix

BATTLE OF SOUI CUT.



JOE WISE EXAMINES SOME CAPTURED WEAPONS.



COL LEONARD DAEMS, 3RD BDE CO, BRIEFS GEN WILLIAM C. WESTMORELAND.

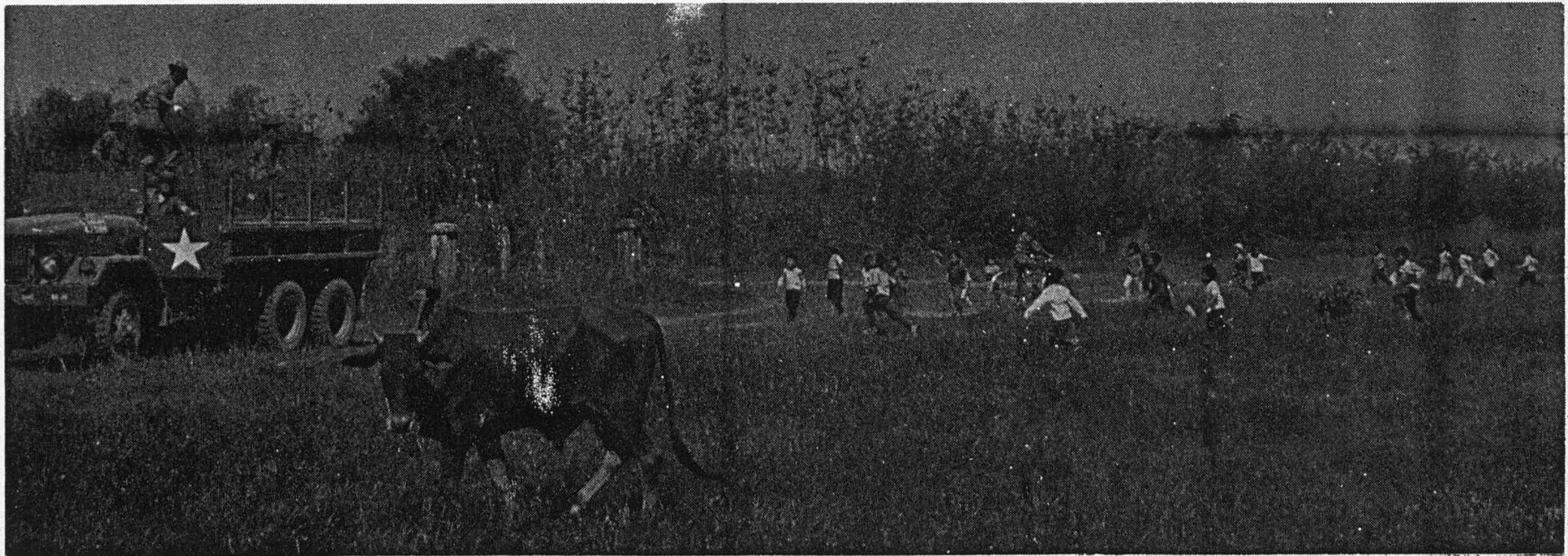
3RD BDE—Aggressively reacting to key points on the perimeter, the reconnaissance platoon of the 2nd Bn (Mech), 22nd Inf, played a key role in the defense of Fire Support Base Burt during the attack on the night of Jan. 1-2. Several times that night, elements of the recon platoon who were not already on the line, were called to critical portions of the perimeter to provide the additional firepower necessary to drive back the Viet Cong attackers.

Alerted to react at the start of the main attack, the recon platoon mounted their "tracks" and prepared for action. Shortly after midnight three tracks were dispatched to support Charlie Co, who was in heavy contact with the enemy on the southern portion of the perimeter. The recon elements moved swiftly down the road that bisected FSP Burt directly into the face of the enemy who had already reached the bunker line on the perimeter. Laying down a heavy base of fire with M-60 and .50 cal. machine guns and M-79 grenade launchers, they drove the enemy back into the woodland.

A second time the Viet Cong poured out of the woods against the combined recon-Charlie Co positions firing RPGs and small arms. Although two of the recon vehicles and one of Charlie Co's were put out of action, the men, led by 1LT Erhard Opsahl, set up their automatic weapons and M-79s on a berm behind the destroyed tracks and maintained intense fire on the enemy, pushing them back into the jungle where they were finally destroyed by artillery beehives and air strikes.

Shortly after the first three tracks were sent to Charlie Co, more recon tracks were dispatched to bolster Bravo Co, who was heavily engaged with the enemy on the opposite end of the base from Charlie Co. Recon track 74, commanded by SGT William Storey, assumed a position where it could deliver its firepower directly upon the Viet Cong who were advancing down the road toward the base from the north. The track poured forth a heavy volume of fire against the enemy, despite sustaining two direct RPG hits, until finally the entire crew of the vehicle fell wounded.

Had the recon platoon failed to react quickly enough, part of the southern perimeter might well have been overrun, greatly endangering the guns of the artillery directly behind the line. As it was, the aggressive response of the "Triple Deuces" recon platoon played a great part in the tremendous victory achieved by the 3rd Bde at Fire Support Base Burt in the Battle of Soui Cut.



"Bossy" seems bewildered as dozens of Vietnamese children rush to waiting trucks which will transport them to a Christmas party sponsored by the 554th Engr Bn at Cu Chi.

Engineers Host Children For Christmas Party

554TH ENGR BN—The 554th Engr Bn played host on Christmas day to 230 Vietnamese children from the Hau Nghia Province village of Bac Ha.

The children, ranging in ages from 2 to 16, were accompanied by Father Joseph Phan of St. Marys Church in Bac Ha, during their visit to the 25th Div's base camp.

CWO Chester D. Hollingsworth of Louisville,

Ky., described the party as a two-way affair, with the children entertaining the engineers, after which SSG Juan Hernandez, Hqs Co mess sergeant, served the youngsters a steak dinner.

According to Chaplain (CPT) Wayne Kuehne of Salt Lake City, the children were not as impressed with the steak as they were with the ice cream. "I think the kids got as much ice cream on them as

they did in them," he said grinning.

At the end of the party it was reported that the chaplain took the role of Santa Claus and handed out bags filled with candy and fruit.

"I don't know who enjoyed the party the most . . . the kids or myself," speculated the Chaplain, "I hope their Christmas was just a little bit happier because of the party . . . I know mine was."

Story by

SGT G. L. Ott

Photos by

SP4 Thomas Keller



Children entertain the engineers as they perform a colorful Vietnamese ballet.



Father Joseph Phan directs children as they sing Vietnamese Christmas carols for the engineers.



Steak dinners are gobbled up quickly, but ice cream was the biggest treat of all.

Engr's Ingenuity Provides Meal

1ST BDE—While the 588th Engr Bn was recently constructing a bridge over a small stream south of Katum, two men on the job noticed that there were small fish swimming around under the bridge site.

So SP4 Ralph Smith of Kansas City, Mo., and SP4 Dennis Musselman of Kendallville, Ind., decided to try their luck during lunch hour.

They cut bamboo poles, made

Wild Boar Tasty Treat

1ST BDE—On a search and destroy mission, 8 kms south-east of Katum, Co A of the 4th Bn, 9th Inf, didn't find any Viet Cong but did find a treat for that night's dinner.

The 25th Div company had been sweeping the area for some time when they heard and saw movement on their right flank.

PSG Robert Bonner of Yakima, Wash., said, "It had been a long day, and when we saw movement everyone took action. We all hit the dirt and sprayed the area with fire."

When the company moved up to check the result of the action, they found a very large boar.

"It was a little embarrassing at first . . . it wasn't what we expected to find, but as we were eating it for dinner we were happy we did find it," stated 1LT Michael Hatalowsky of Riverside, N.J.

Alert GI Saves Platoon

2ND BDE—"Just a few more seconds—a minute at the most—and he would have had us," said 1LT David E. Jurcy of La Grange, Ill., describing a close call in which a Viet Cong nearly detonated a CHICOM claymore and a 500 pound anti-tank mine in the middle of the weapons platoon of Alpha Co, 2nd Bn, 27th Inf "Wolfhounds."

CPL Roger A. Fiftal of Norfolk, Va., was sure the same man was throwing hand grenades at him a few hours before. "It was in the same area we had swept through earlier," said Fiftal. "All we knew then was that the grenades were coming from a hedgerow to our left front, but we didn't find anything." It was on the way back to the forward base camp that the Viet Cong was spotted.

The company had just halted to wait for an air strike. One of the point men thought he spotted movement in a hole just a few feet from him. He threw a hand grenade in to the hole.

"When we went in the hole to get the body, we found that he was clutching a switch to detonate the claymore right in front of the hole. He also had rigged up a command detonation device for a 500 pound anti-tank mine we found near the hole," said Jurcy.

The man was wearing complete web gear and carrying five grenades as well as about 100 rounds of AK-47 automatic rifle ammunition.

"It could have turned out a lot worse," said the 25th Div officer. "We consider ourselves pretty lucky."

lines out of the heavy thread from their sewing kits, and fashioned small wire hooks. Using C ration bread for bait, they started angling in earnest.

"It was pretty frustrating at first," Smith recalled, "the fish were so small—three or four inches—that they would steal the bait without getting hooked." To counter this problem, the men made smaller hooks, baiting them with only a tiny bit of bread.

Musselman caught the first fish, a three inch "keeper" that put up a spirited but hopeless fight. "Not like the big bass back home," remarked Musselman, "but still a fish."

A half-hour of hard fishing netted the two men a dozen fish, most of which were small perch-type known as Ca Ro. The men also caught a couple of tiny catfish.

That night the men cleaned their catch, roasted them over a small fire. The fish fry attracted a big crowd, and there was barely enough for a small bite for each man, however all those who tasted the fish agreed it was pretty good.

The 25th Div soldiers are making plans for a second fishing trip, apparently in an attempt to get "the one that got away."

A Reminder

U.S. Army personnel and their families are reminded that the Immigration and Nationality Act requires all aliens in the United States to report their addresses to The Attorney General during the month of January. (ANF)

Trip Flare Stalls Attack

1ST BDE—"When I finally realized what was happening, I dove for the M-60 and opened up," said SGT David Robbins of Monroe, N.Y., describing what happened when a trip flare suddenly revealed some 40 Viet Cong standing not 20 meters from his position.

Following a heavy mortar attack, the Viet Cong had launched an assault on the fire support base occupied by the 4th Bn, 9th Inf, 65 kms northeast of Tay Ninh City in War Zone C.

As Robbins opened fire with his machine gun, the rest of

his squad scrambled for their positions and poured small arms rounds and grenades into the enemy.

What Robbins didn't know at the time was that the entire camp was being hit by an estimated 200-man enemy force.

It was learned from Robbins that artillery and helicopter gunships aided the infantrymen in breaking up the enemy assault, and pushing them back into the jungle.

At dawn, the defenders found 21 Viet Cong bodies strewn along

the perimeter. They also found nine AK47 and six of the newer AK-50 assault rifles, two pistols and three RPG-2 rocket launchers.

He's Best Water Boy They Have

1ST BDE—An infantryman has details to do even after a hard day's sweep.

Recently, during the 25th Div's Operation Yellowstone, after the "Manchus" of the 4th Bn, 9th Inf, had secured a perimeter, PFC Kevin Sullivan, rifleman with Bravo Co was selected to fill his squad's canteens. As Sullivan crossed the clearing to where the water tank was situated, a supply chopper landed in front of Sullivan.

"Just then, the door gunner started motioning furiously at me to get aboard the chopper," said the Hartford, Conn., soldier. "I was tired and thirsty and I thought I was being put on detail. Next thing I knew, I was airborne."

When the chopper landed in Tay Ninh, Sullivan and the gunner got things straightened out. "I found out he was waving to the tactical operations officer to get clearance for take-off."

The chopper refueled at Tay Ninh and Sullivan discovered he would be there for at least half an hour.

"So I saw this litter bag and filled everyone's canteens with ice water and bought a case of sodas from the EM Club," Sullivan said.

Meanwhile, SGT Douglas Cracker of Eugene, Ore., Sullivan's squad leader was pulling his hair out. "After about thirty minutes, I began wondering where he went for the water."

What the Manchus want to know now is—are there any more free chopper rides to Tay Ninh?

Cav Unit Now at Tay Ninh

3RD BDE—Elements of the 3rd Sqdn, 17th Air Cav, recently completed a move from Soui Da to a new forward base of operations at Tay Ninh.

The squadron, currently operating in support of the 25th Inf Div, had maintained the forward base camp at Soui Da since November, shortly after arriving in country from Fort Knox, Ky.

It was from the Soui Da camp that the squadron acted in support of various 25th Div operations in the regions of Tay Ninh province. The most notable of these support actions came during the New Year's cease-fire when a large enemy force attacked fire support base Burt, some 20 Kms northeast of Soui Da. The squadron responded by assisting in the direction of artillery support on the enemy and by sending gunships to the scene of the battle.

The squadron's stay in their new Tay Ninh home is expected to be short lived, however, as they continue their support of Tropic Lightning units during the course of "Operation Yellowstone."

Larry Had Quite A Day

554TH ENGR BN—SP4 Larry Borrie certainly must be the proudest jeep driver in all Vietnam.

Borrie, of the 554th Engr Bn (Const), was given the honor of driving Miss Raquel Welch from the airstrip to the theater

area recently as the Bob Hope Show arrived to entertain soldiers of the 25th Inf Div's base camp at Cu Chi.

"I must admit, I was a little nervous when she (Miss Welch) got into my jeep," said Borrie. "Just wait till the boys back



QUIET A DAY—SP4 Larry Borrie (driving) manages a nervous smile as he transports the talented and beautiful Raquel Welch to the theater area during the recent Bob Hope show at Cu Chi. Sorry fellas . . . the man in the back seat (white shirt) is her husband.

(Photo by SSG Garford Albright)

