

4 Years in Country

Fightin' Third...

The Hill Humpers



SEA TIGER



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III Marine Amphibious Force, Vietnam

March 7, 1969



HISTORICAL LANDING—Marines of 3rd Bn., 9th Marines and 1st Bn., 3rd Marines wade ashore at Red Beach 2, Da Nang, in March 1965, signaling America's commitment of its fighting units in Vietnam. (USMC Photo)

'G' Co. Beats The Odds; Guns, Guts Whip NVA

By Capt. Robb Robinson

DONG HA—The men were exhausted. They had eaten the last of their rations some 50 hours before and despite an ordeal that few men in their generation will ever experience their moral was high.

"It is an emotion that I can't describe. I'm a grown man and I don't cry very often but I did then," said HM2 George H. Naeve (8300 Regis Way, Los Angeles, Calif.). "It was the greatest thing I've ever seen, but I just hope I never have to see anything like that again."

Naeve spoke of the heroism and determination of a company of U.S. Marines.

His knowledge was first hand. He and another Navy hospital corpsman, Michael Monnot (1414 Northwest 37th St., Oklahoma City, Okla.) volunteered to accompany a relief column attempting to reach Company "G", 9th Marines. The unit had been days without food and had suffered casualties from action with the enemy.

"We started out in the fog and rain, hacking a trail through the thick growth toward the Da Krong River," explained Naeve. The corpsman was in the front of the group helping to clear a path.

Naeve and Monnot carried a double supply of medicines — penicillin and intravenous fluids. To the southwest, through 6,500 yards of jungle, half way

up a mountain 3,650 feet high, wounded Leathernecks would need them. They would also need the medical skill of the two men. All but one of the corpsmen with the company had been hit by enemy fire.

The mission of Golf (from the phonetical alphabet for "G") Company had been succinct: Move up the razorback ridges of Co Ka Leuye, a mountain on the border with Laos and secure the right flank for the regiment.

The attack by units of the 3rd Marine Division was underway.

But nature failed to cooperate. Realizing that a difficult climb lay ahead for his men, Capt. Daniel A. Hitzelberger (104 Sylvan Terrace Glassboro, N.J.), the company commander, had them equipped with ropes. Each man also carried rations for five days.

"After crossing the river at night and starting up the mountain, the weather grew steadily worse. At times we could not see more than 25 yards ahead because of fog. There was a steady rain," Hitzelberger, a former enlisted Marine, explained.

Following an enemy communications line up one steep ridge after another, the company continued the attack as the enemy tried to slow its advance.

"We killed seven of the reds after crossing the river and starting up the mountain. They tried to impede our progress by fighting a delaying action. It was tough going. We had to go up and down grades in excess of 50 percent at times. Often we had to scale sheer rock faces with our ropes," the captain said.

(Continued on Page 11)

DONG HA—A heavy squall line hung off the coast of Da Nang and with sporadic rain and choppy seas it was a grey, overcast day. The date was March 8, 1965, and the outline of ships appeared through the mist only to be swallowed up in darkness.

By 7:30 a.m. Brig. Gen. Frederick J. Karch and his staff had landed at Da Nang after taking off in a helicopter from the USS Mount McKinley. Within hours two Marine battalion landing teams, composed of the 3rd Bn., 9th Marines and 1st Bn., 3rd Marines would stream ashore north of the city at Red Beach.

American's ground combat troop commitment to the war in Vietnam had begun.

It was one of the strangest landings in Marine Corps history. Units of the Army of the Republic of Vietnam had patrolled and secured the beach

area inland to the far side of Route 1.

Waiting on the beach for the first wave was Premier Nguyen Cao Ky, a host of Vietnamese officials, Gen. Karch, a large group of newsmen flown from Saigon and Vietnamese flower girls. Each girl carried floral leis to place around the necks of Leathernecks wading ashore.

Gen. Karch wore garlands around his neck as he stepped toward the beach to greet Lt. Col. Charles E. McPartlin, Jr., commanding officer of 3/9.

Moving off the beach rapidly, lead elements charged inland (Continued on Page 6,7)

NVA Munitions Fall to Leathernecks, Resistance Crumbles

By Gunnery Sgt. Samson

DA NANG—Operation Dewey Canyon a multi-battalion thrust into the northern Ashau Valley complex by the 3rd Marine Division's 9th Marines entered its sixth week Feb. 26 against increasing enemy resistance.

The operation began Jan. 22, when the Leathernecks, under the command of Col. Robert H. Barrow (St. Francisville, La.), in a startling departure from previous helicopter assault tactics, landed on the northern edge of the North Vietnamese Army (NVA) stronghold and began driving south toward the Ashau.

"The method we are using takes advantage of knowledge gained from earlier ventures by other units into the southern end of the valley (Operation Delaware Valley by the 1st Air Cavalry Division in April in 1968 and Somerset Plain by the 101st Airborne Division in August 1968)" said Barrow. "I believe the enemy was prepared for a full-scale helicopter assault."

Instead Barrow proposed and carried out a ground assault on the enemy's perimeter, rendering useless the NVA's extensive anti-aircraft capabilities in the area (the 1st Air Cavalry lost a number of helicopters to AA fire the first day of Delaware Valley).

The change of tactics paid off for the Marines during the first five weeks of the operation. Enemy losses were 971 killed, 17 detained and 182 individual and 30 crew-served weapons captured in addition to vast stores of ammunition, food, medical and other supplies.

The Leathernecks also captured 4 122mm artillery pieces, the largest enemy artillery captured thus far in Vietnam. A mass grave containing 185 NVA bodies was also found by the advancing Marines.

Marine casualties remained light.

"We are moving forward in an almost classical regiment-in-the-attack envelopment," said Barrow as he outlined the maneuver on a map. We are working up the ridgelines with two companies per ridge, one always in trace."

The leading company sweeps the area searching out and destroying the enemy and clearing trails. The company in trace

(Continued on Back Page)

72 Reds Caught in Vice

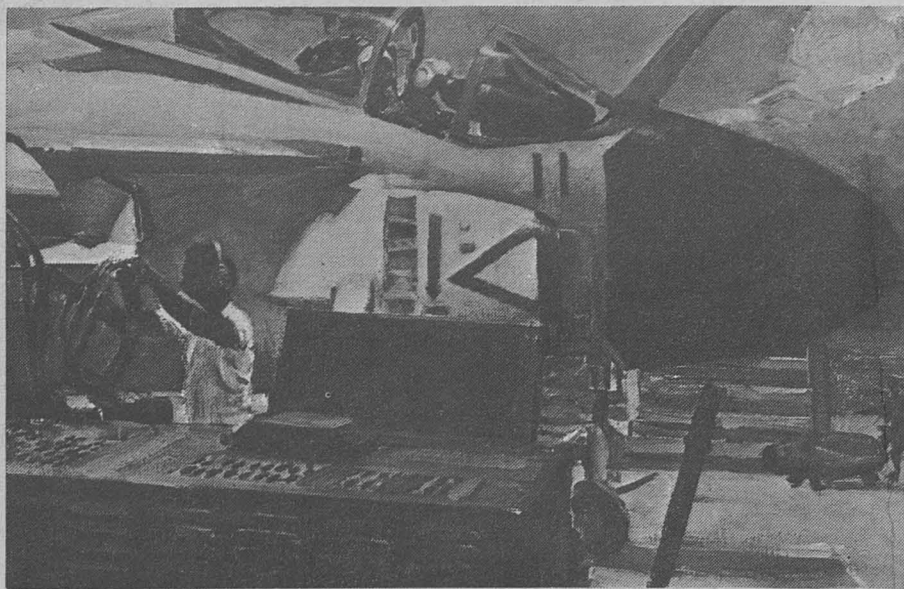
By LCpl. Art Kibat

AN HOA—An estimated battalion of North Vietnamese soldiers escaped a forming cordon during Operation Linn River, but when they tried to cross a river, 72 of the fleeing communists wound up on the kill-in-action list for Operation Taylor Common.

The winding river, that serves as the boundary between the 5th and 7th Marine Regts., is constantly patrolled by the 1st Bn., 5th Marines to stop any infiltration from the flatlands into the An Hoa Basin.

One night two companies from the battalion were positioned along the river's most prominent crossings.

A small peninsula consisting of high ground, in contrast to the vast, flat, surrounding rice (Continued on Back Page)



Paintings by Lt. Col. Peter M. Gish (left) and Maj. Albert M. Leahy are included in Marine combat art reproductions now available in full color.

In Color

Combat Art Lithos Available

A new edition of full color, litho-reproductions of works in the Marine Corps Combat Art Collection is now available to both units and individual Marines, Headquarters Marine Corps announced.

The new edition contains 16 selected works on Vietnam by nine Marine combat artists. The average size of the reproductions is 16 x 20 inches. Instructions for matting and framing them are enclosed with each set.

Unit commanders may order the sets by submitting an AA Form (5216) to the Commandant of the Marine Corps (Code AGE). Full details are in Marine Corps Bulletin 5750 of Jan. 10, 1969.

Individual Marines who desire to purchase the new edition may do so by ordering the set from the Superintendent of Documents, Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C. 20402. The Government Printing Office catalogue number for the set is D-214.16:C73 and the price is \$2.75 per set of 16.

Don't forget to include the catalogue number when ordering.

Doc Charlie Makes Last 'House Call'

By Cpl. Robb Straub

VANDEGRIFT COMBAT BASE — An alert Marine patrol intercepted a North Vietnamese Army medical corpsman and put an end to his "house calls."

The patrol from "K" Co., 3rd Bn., 4th Marines was operating in an area south of Ca Lu when the Marines detained the communist medic.

"We were several hundred meters out from our perimeter moving through heavy foliage and had just stopped for a brief rest when we encountered the enemy," said Cpl. Edward Terrazas (129 N. Gerhart Ave., Los Angeles, Calif.), leader of the squad-size patrol.

"Our rear security man, Pfc. Jose R. Valdez (Firebaugh, Calif.), heard movement and quietly slipped into a clump of bushes. When he saw the NVA

wasn't armed, he jumped out and captured him," explained Terrazas.

Examining the NVA's pack, the Marines discovered it well stocked. The pack contained 13 pounds of rice, a hammock with lining and mosquito net, a full change of uniform, some documents, several bottles of vitamins, razor blades and a complete medical kit.

HM3 John R. Walter (Winchester, Va.), a member of the patrol, described the enemy's medical equipment as "quite adequate for field use."

Walter concluded, "He had almost the same gear that I carry in the field. Some of it was a little old, but all of it was still usable."

The NVA medic was turned over to South Vietnamese government officials for interrogation.

From CG FMFPac, Marines Everywhere

Congrats to MAGs 12, 13, 16

Congratulations to the officers and men of Marine Aircraft Group 12 on your group's 27th anniversary, 1 March 1969. The combat record of your group is indeed a proud one, and your daily accomplishments in Vietnam are even further enhancing a magnificent history of dedicated service to country and Corps.

All Marines of Fleet Marine Force, Pacific, join me in expressing praise and appreciation for a job well done, and best wishes for future success.

Congratulations to the officers and men of Marine Aircraft Group 13 on your group's 27th anniversary, 1 March 1969. You may be proud of your distinguished unit's excellent combat record, both past and present, which reflects vital contributions to the causes of freedom and security. Your outstanding combat support of U.S. and other allied ground forces in Vietnam this past year

is a story of unexcelled valor, dedication, and professional excellence.

All Marines of FMFPac join me in extending birthday greetings and best wishes.

Congratulations to the officers and men of Marine Aircraft Group 16 on the 17th anniversary of your group, 1 March 1969. You may be deservedly proud of your distinguished unit and the role it has played in the development of helicopter tactics in the Marine Corps.

Your magnificent accomplishments in Vietnam are a tribute to Marine aviation and in keeping with our finest traditions.

All Marines of Fleet Marine Force, Pacific, join me in wishing you happy birthday and continued success.

Lt. Gen. Henry W. Buse Jr., USMC
Commanding General, FMFPac

Sea Tiger Mail Bag

Lee Morf
235 W. 22nd Pl.
Chicago, Ill. 60616
Age 16

Darlene Joiner
1929 Kimwatt Dr.
Knoxville, Tenn. 37919

Lanette Goosgen
Rt. 1, Box 135
Clinton, Okla. 73601

Cheryl Andreason
7639 Gingerblossom Dr.

Citrus Hts., Calif. 95610
Sharondale M. Romeo
5 Circuit Rd., Apt. A33
New Rochelle, N.Y. 10805

Shirley Biskey
6476 Townsend Rd.
Applegate, Mich. 48401

Sandi Webb
2135 S. Park Ave.
Pomona, Calif. 91766
Age 16

Jane Swift
Rm. 50, Clara Hall
Berry College
Mt. Berry, Ga. 30149

Linda Snow
161 Coventry Ct.
New Orleans, La. 70123

Patricia Atchison
2301 Mogan Ave.
Sacramento, Calif. 95838

Phyllis Perez
6613 Mavion Dr.
Citrus Hts., California 95610

Johnna Stanford
Rt. 3, Box 121-B
Coushatta, La. 71019

Diane Lickly
8 West Bacon St.
Hillsdale, Mich. 49242
Age 15

Christina Friedberg
10043 Terrier Way
Sacramento, Calif. 95827
Age 16

Kitty Spahr
56 Griswold St.
Hillsdale, Mich. 49242
Age 16

Kerry Burden
14292 Tiburon Rd.
San Leandro, Calif. 94577

Barbara Sargent
11584 Norton
Chino, Calif. 91710
Age 17

Audrey Pecot
1376 Woodley Rd.
Montgomery, Ala. 36106

Anastacia Bettencourt
1378 Orchard Ave.
San Leandro, Calif. 94577

Karen Nelson
10501 Croetto Way, Apt. 11
Rancho Cordova, Calif. 95670
(Continued on Page 11)

Fund For Scholars

The 3rd Marine Division Association has announced a scholarship memorial fund honoring Maj. Gen. Bruno A. Hochmuth, the division's former commander. Gen. Hochmuth was killed Nov. 14, 1967 when his helicopter was destroyed by enemy fire.

The program provides financial grants up to \$3,200 for four years of undergraduate collegiate education for needy dependents of 3rd Division Marines killed in action.

The fund, undertaken at the division's request following the general's death, has received more than \$15,600 for potential scholars.

Marines wishing to contribute may send donations to Association headquarters, P.O. Box 7154, San Diego, Calif., 92107.

SEA TIGER

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Deputy Commander, III Marine Amphibious Force
Brigadier General George E. Dooley
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FISO Col. P. Moriarty
Editor Cpl. M. W. Starn
Asst. Editor Cpl. J. W. Lasseter

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62 Tons Something to Rice a Fuss About

By LCpl. Hank Berkowitz
AN HOA — "We sat down for a ten-minute break and since I've learned to thoroughly probe whatever area we are in, I pulled out my knife and punched it into the sand. It didn't sink in all the way, so I tried again. It still didn't sink in!"

This was how Pfc. Steven D. Grant (28117 Palomino, Warren, Mich.) described how he found

an enemy rice cache totalling more than 62 tons on Operation Taylor Common.

Leathernecks of the 7th Marines were sweeping across a river, eight miles northeast of An Hoa, when they stopped for a break on a small sand bar extending into the river.

"My first thought was, I had found a bunch of enemy bodies since we hadn't found where

they had been hiding their dead," said Grant, "but when I had dug a little of the sand away, I could see rice falling out of a burlap bag."

Grant called his platoon commander over, and the men started searching. Row after row of neatly laid rice bags were uncovered.

Eight rows were discovered in the cache totalling 40 tons, buried

two bags deep and running 150 feet long under 18 inches of sand. Two other caches of 10 and 12 tons were found within two-hundred yards of the main cache, laid out in the same neat manner.

"The rice hadn't been there too long and it was still in very good condition," said Capt. J.M. Romero (1405 Bragdon Ave., Pueblo, Colo.), the company commander. "The Marines were doing their job and probing ev-

erywhere, otherwise we wouldn't have found the cache. There was absolutely no way to tell it was there unless you happened to dig up the sand as Grant did."

It took two-and-a-half days for the company to dig up the rice, more than 1,100 bags.

Capt. Romero concluded, "Even after we had dug it all up, it was still hard to believe the amount we found."

Marine Finds Job a Breeze

By Sgt. David Butler

PHU BAI — Marine Pfc. Larry T. Jones (Rector, Ark.), stands up under the rigors of his job quite well... it's not easy.

Jones, while everyone else on a landing zone is scurrying for cover, must stand beneath huge Marine helicopters, descending on him like so many locusts, and tell the pilot, by arm and hand signals, where to drop his cargo net full of supplies.

It's an occupational hazard shared by Jones and other Marines who are members of a helicopter support team, Marines who make sure the Leathernecks on the ground are resupplied regularly, and in the right place, by helicopters of the 1st Marine Aircraft Wing.

At a landing zone north of Phu Bai, Jones and his teammates — Cpl. Charles A. Strahan (Staunton, Va.), and LCpl. James R. Phillips, (Falmouth, Me.) — bring in as many as 25 or 30 helicopters a day, and are responsible for delivery of everything from artillery pieces to the men and supplies needed to sustain a mountain top fire support base in the enemy's front yard.

All three are with "A" Co., 3rd Shore Party Bn., 3rd Marine Division. They are the last link between a Marine infantryman and his supplies, delivered by the 1st MAW helicopters.

"This job has its drawbacks," said Jones, "principally the wind these helicopters throw down. That wouldn't be so bad except for all the rocks and dirt it kicks up, not to mention empty ammunition boxes and boards

that have been known to fly around too."

"But it's really great," he added, "to see these guys get all the gear they need, when they need it."

FO, Arty Double Team NVA

By Cpl. Rob Straub

VANDEGRIFT COMBAT BASE — Twelve North Vietnamese Army soldiers have learned that the teamwork of a Marine forward observer (FO) and Marine artillery is a deadly combination.

The FO, 2nd Lt. David Wallingford (32 Marion Ave., Albany, N.Y.), was instrumental in trapping communist soldiers in an artillery barrage.

Wallingford, attached to "A" Co., 1st Bn., 4th Marines was making a routine observation check of the area from atop Fire Support Base Neville, northwest of Vandegrift Combat Base. Using a pair of binoculars, Wallingford spotted what appeared to be a squad of Reds walking across an old helicopter landing zone (LZ) four miles north of his position.

"At first I couldn't believe my eyes. They were standing right out in the open," said the FO. "I looked, and saw the same thing again. I called in artillery fire to hit them before they had a chance to escape," added Wallingford.

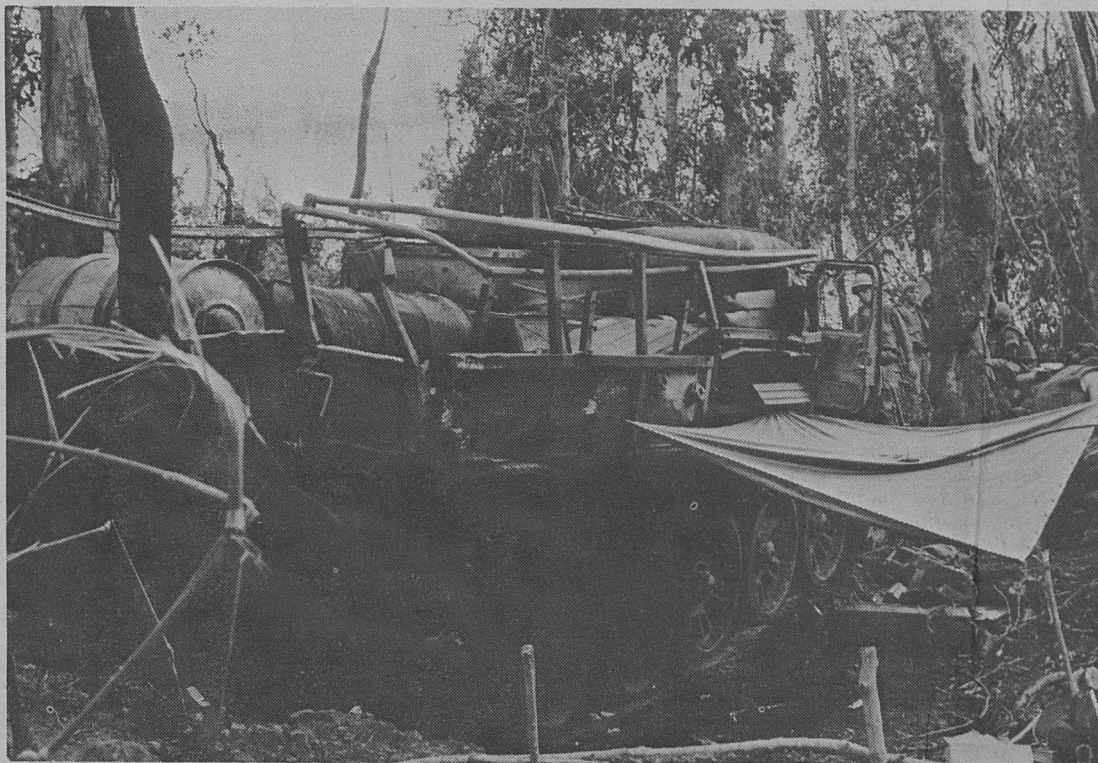
Within minutes artillery rounds began landing on the LZ, sending the enemy running for cover.

Two Marine artillery batteries from the 12th Marines continued to pound the area until an observation plane arrived on the scene.

The aerial observer failed to spot any further enemy movement on the now barren and shell cratered hillside. He confirmed that four NVA bodies were lying in the open and also noted a nearby stream running red with blood.

"We had hit them hard with artillery and I didn't expect to see them again," said Wallingford, "yet, two hours later when I scanned the area with my binoculars, I spotted several more of the enemy digging bunkers on the landing zone."

Again the two artillery batteries went to work and blasted the hillside, forcing the enemy into their unfinished bunkers.



PRIME MOVER—A North Vietnamese Army track prime mover stands immobilized in the jungle in the Osbau Valley complex. The 5-ton vehicle was captured by the 9th Marines during Operation Dewey Canyon. (Photo by Cpl. D.L. Randolph)

Leathernecks, Choppers Dig Out Dug-in Enemy

By Lance Cpl. Ray Wolf

VANDEGRIFT COMBAT BASE—When a small enemy force opened fire on a squad-size patrol from 2nd Bn., 9th Marines, south of Vandegrift Combat Base, it got more than it bargained for.

The contact developed into a six-hour running firefight that sent the North Vietnamese Army soldiers fleeing into the jungle.

During the initial contact with the NVA soldiers the Leatherneck patrol made a stand in an old deserted enemy camp site and called for reinforcements. When additional Marines arrived to join the firefight, the patrol was still engaged with the well entrenched enemy troops.

With reinforcements on line, Marines moved through tall elephant grass to assault the enemy-held hilltop position. Out maneuvered and on the verge of being overrun, the band of NVA soldiers withdrew to seek new cover in other bunkers and fighting holes further back in the jungle.

A Marine aerial observer and two helicopter gunships from 1st Marine Aircraft Wing were called in as the infantrymen continued to pursue the enemy.

The gunships opened fire with machineguns and rockets in an effort to dislodge the dug-in enemy force. As the helicopters made their strafing runs, they came under small arms fire from the NVA position.

"The helicopters were right on target everytime they made a pass at the bunkers," recalled LCpl. Frank L. Juliano (Elizabeth, N.J.). "They ignored the enemy fire and kept on hitting the NVA positions."

The gunships, continued their assault until they expended all their ammo.

Now it was up to the Marines on the ground. They rose again to assault the enemy bunkers, but the NVA force, which had initiated the firefight, decided it had had enough and fled into the

thick jungle taking their casualties with them.

Following a thorough search of the enemy bunker complex the Marines returned to their base camp.

3rd Dent. Fills a Gap

By Cpl. Robb Straub

VANDEGRIFT COMBAT BASE — For infantrymen in the field it is sometimes impossible to get to the dentist. Members of 3rd Dental Co. have alleviated this problem by traveling to where the patients are — in the field.

A two-man mobile unit, consisting of dental officer, Lt. Cmdr. R.C. Turhane (Salem, Ore.) and Dental Technician Third Class L. Gerringer (South English, Iowa), travels around the 3rd Marine Division area to provide dental care for Marines operating in the field.

"We got the idea after talking to several Marines who had to

come in from the field for dental treatment," explained Doctor Turhane. "We learned of the time lost in traveling back and forth from the field and decided to do the traveling ourselves."

For Marines in remote fire support bases the mobile dental team saves at least two days of traveling to and from a rear-area dental facility.

After arriving at a field location, it's just a matter of choosing a site and a few minutes later the clinic is open for business. Their equipment consists only of a small dental chair with head rest and a dental first aid kit.

"We are handicapped a little by being away from our regular

office and, of course, by the lack of electricity, but it is surprising how much we can do," said Turhane. "We can perform extractions and temporary fillings that will hold until the Marine has a chance to see a dentist at one of our regular facilities in the rear."

In addition, the team also makes routine dental checkups and distributes new toothbrushes to the men to replace their old and worn-out ones.

"So far we have had a great turnout wherever we have gone. Judging from the smiles and thanks we receive from the Marines, I would say our efforts have met with success," concluded Turhane.

Promotion—Simple Matter These Days

By Capt. Rob Robinson

SOUTHEAST OF VAN-DEGRIFT COMBAT BASE — Being promoted from private to lance corporal wasn't too difficult for a 20-year-old Marine.

All Pvt. David O. Sullivan (83 Safford Street, Lindsay, Mass.) had to do was to walk into a thatched hut occupied by eight North Vietnamese soldiers, attempt to capture them, have two of the enemy reach for their weapons, shoot them and then find that his own rifle had jammed.

The day following the action, Sullivan was promoted to private first class and the next day, elevated to lance corporal.

"It was just after 9:00 a.m.," said Sullivan's battalion commander, Lt. Col. Elliott R. Laine, Jr., (204 Fifty-fifth St., Virginia Beach, Va.), "when a platoon-size patrol with Sullivan in the front came on what appeared to be a hut."

The Marines were about 800 meters out on a finger leading from Hill 561 when they heard voices. The brush was extremely thick and the hut was well hidden, explained Laine.

"Sullivan saw the hut and walked in to surprise the enemy. They were eating with their automatic weapons laying nearby. The Marine wanted to take them prisoner. He leveled his rifle at them and several of the reds started to raise their hands," stated the colonel.

However a pair of them grabbed for their rifles and Sullivan shot them. He turned back toward the others only to find that his weapon would no longer shoot.

"As the other enemy soldiers became aware of Sullivan's predicament they reached for their rifles too. The Marine dashed out the door as the reds found shelter in a bunker beneath the hut," Laine said.

The battalion commander

added that the story had been relayed to him on the radio after the engagement and he decided to promote Sullivan.

"The rifle fire alerted some 60 more of the enemy who had been hiding in other concealed huts. They came pouring out and tried to surround the platoon," Lt. Col. Laine related.

The platoon commander, Second Lt. Blaine L. Liljenouist (3750 North Thirteenth Place, Arlington, Va.), immediately

saw what the communists were trying to do.

"The lieutenant did just the thing to do under the circumstances," said the battalion commander. "He kept his men from being encircled, and being outnumbered, he radioed for assistance from a nearby platoon while his unit took the enemy under fire."

"Sullivan was a real ball of fire. His platoon commander reported that several times he

dashed into the hut to grab enemy weapons and equipment. He got a brand new red machine gun," added the colonel.

As the Leatherneck's fire increased, the enemy began to melt back into the jungle. When things finally quieted down there were five NVA bodies left behind. The enemy also left three AK-47s, a carbine, five SKS rifles, a large assortment of ammunition and 6,000 pounds of rice.

New Enemy Arsenal?

By Sgt. Bob Morris

DONG HA — Third Marine Division infantrymen operating northwest of the Ashau valley are discovering that the enemy is using some unusual weapons.

A 16-man patrol from 9th Marine Regt., discovered an enemy arms cache that included six 1936 vintage French service rifles, four hand made crossbows and two spears.

"We found the weapons hidden under a large North Vietnamese Army living hut," said Cpl. Charlie Brown (Nashville, Tenn.), the patrol leader.

Although none of the men of the patrol had ever seen the enemy employ the antique weapons in combat, they all felt that they could be effective.

Lance Cpl. Leroy Fanning (Cincinnati, Ohio) theorized that the enemy might have used the crossbows and spears to hunt game.

"Since they are silent weapons, the NVA probably used them, rather than rifles, to hunt in order not to give away their position," said Fanning.

The spears were made from long wooden shafts and had

sharp cutting edges on each side. The crossbows were skillfully handcrafted from polished wood and each had a bamboo quiver containing small arrows of thin slivers of bamboo. The arrow points varied from blunt ends to barbs, and sharp points that were cut from the shaft itself.

Although small, the crossbows proved to be very effective.

Fanning fired one of the thin wooden shafts at a tree and the arrow buried itself deeply in the hardwood tree trunk.

"I sure wouldn't want to get hit with one of them," said Fanning.

Rather Had Dear

Deer Attacks Marine

By Sgt. Mike Stokey

DA NANG — Marines in Vietnam have been attacked by tigers, pythons, water buffalo and rock apes, but LCpl. Raymond R. Caballero (201 W. 3rd St., Antioch, Calif.), believes he is the first to be wounded by a four-point buck.

Caballero was on a platoon-sized patrol during Operation Taylor Common when he heard a rustling in the brush on the mountainside. Thinking it was an enemy soldier, the Marine

and squad leader shouted at the intruder to surrender. Not understanding Caballero's broken Vietnamese, the 400 pound deer crashed through the foliage and charged — right over the astonished Marine.

Caballero was able to sidestep just enough to evade the full brunt of the attack, but was cut slightly on the right hand and arm.

He had his wounds treated and returned to duty.

The buck escaped unharmed.

Enemy Executive Officer Goes UA

By PFC Ralph Evankavitch

DA NANG — A North Vietnamese Army officer, on his way to a new job as a battalion executive officer, will not be reporting to his post.

An eight man reconnaissance patrol from the 1st Reconnaissance Bn., modified his orders.

The Marines were setting in a defensive position, 24 miles southwest of here when they spotted three NVA coming down a trail. They opened up on them with small arms killing the enemy soldiers.

When they searched the bodies, they discovered that one of the dead NVA had a note book and a diary stating he was an officer on his way to a new job as battalion executive officer.

They also found three AK-47 assault rifles, six Chinese-communist grenades, documents, personnel and supply rosters, Chieu Hoi papers and some quotes from Mao Tse-Tung.

Sgt. Steven Farris (102 Three Hills Ave., So. Key, Calif.) said, "That's one NVA who won't have to worry about his next duty assignment."

Two Faces of a Leatherneck



*Known As The
'Singing Sniper'
He Anticipates
The Day He'll
Lay Down His
Rifle and Sing
Professionally*

Enemy Convoy Struck

By SSgt. P.L. Stacy

QUANG TRI — Three ammunition-laden North Vietnamese Army vehicles were destroyed recently through the combined efforts of a Marine Bronco (OV-10) observation aircraft and Air Force jets.

A heavy overcast, which prevented Captain John Pierson (Pensacola, Fla.), pilot of the Bronco, and his aerial observer from flying into their designated area, led to the discovery of the truck convoy.

"We were scheduled to fly along the Demilitarized Zone," said CWO Joseph W. Luckenback (Jacksonville, N.C.), the aerial observer, "but a low and heavy cloud cover prevented that so we headed for the Khe Sanh area."

Finding the same weather conditions there, the two Marine Observation Squadron 6 aviators headed west where they were again foiled by the ground-hugging clouds.

The two found a break in the overcast at Tiger Mountain near the Ashau Valley. Within a few minutes they spotted the three NVA vehicles, two of which were half-trucks.

Calling for an air-strike, they were informed that a flight of Air Force Phantoms were in the immediate area and on the way. "To keep the enemy in check, we made a couple of runs on the trucks, causing the lead vehicle to stop and its driver to run for cover," the observer said.

The jets arrived overhead and after a series of runs, the trucks were destroyed, preventing ammunition from reaching enemy weapons.

"Of course, credit for the destroyed vehicles goes to the jets, but I have to attribute a good share of the credit to Capt. Pierson whose staunch determination to find the enemy, lead us to the convoy," said CWO Luckenback.



MOMENT OF PEACE—Infantrymen of the 9th Marines and artillerymen of the 12th Marines take time to attend church services at Fire Support Base Razor high in the mountains of northern I Corps.

(Photo by Pfc. E.C. Sickler)

Old Tricks Fail In NVA Ambush

By Cpl. Rob Straub

VANDEGRIFT COMBAT BASE — The sound judgement of a 3rd Marine Division company commander foiled a North Vietnamese Army ambush northwest of here.

An enemy squad had set up an L-shaped ambush, complete with an early warning device and evenly dispersed automatic weapons, outside Fire Support Base Neville.

The next step was to bait the trap.

The communists fired six

rounds of 60mm mortars hoping to draw a reaction force outside the artillery base's perimeter.

"We knew they were up to something other than just a mortar attack, because if that was their intent, they would have hit us with more rounds," said Capt. K.S. Russom (Sallas, Ga), commander of the Marine infantry unit that provides security for the artillerymen at Neville.

Within seconds, Capt. Russom's men were firing counter-mortar fire on the suspected

enemy position 300 yards outside their perimeter.

The company commander formed a squad-sized reaction force. This is what the enemy had hoped for.

The Leathernecks, however, pulled a major switch to upset the enemy's plans. They left their perimeter in an unexpected position.

"Because of the rugged terrain around the fire support base, there are only two directions in which to leave the base," explained Russom

"Since we suspected that the enemy was out there waiting for us, we sent a patrol out in the opposite direction to circle behind them."

The patrol came up behind the unsuspecting NVA and opened fire.

"At first my point man thought that they were Marines because of the camouflaged uniforms they wore. But a second look changed that," said Sgt. D.J. Ogden (Mexico, Mo.), the patrol leader.

"We really caught them off guard," continued Ogden. "I hate to think what would have happened if we had used the route the NVA expected us to take."

After a brief firefight the enemy broke contact and fled into the jungle.

A search of the area the following day turned up a small amount of rice, Chicom grenades and numerous blood trails and body drag marks indicating the enemy had suffered casualties.

Pilots Have Job On Ground, Too

By Sgt. David Butler

PHU BAI — On a lonely landing zone atop a mountain southwest of Dong Ha, two Marine pilots have turned infantrymen for 90 days to ensure that the bridge between Leatherneck ground troops and their support from the air is coordinated.

The two 1st Marine Aircraft Wing aviators are Capt. Herman C. Shipman, (Washington, D.C.) and 1st Lt. Gary O. Henkel (Grand Rapids, Mich.).

Capt. Shipman, with nearly five-years service as a Marine aviator, is presently Air Liaison Officer for the 9th Marines, 3rd Marine Division.

"Because of the terrain out here," said Shipman, "we have a constant flow of requests for helicopter and fixed-wing support from the units in the field — requests for everything from resupply to medical evacuations to air strikes on enemy positions."

"Once air support is called for by a company's forward air controller (FAC) I work out all the details of location and descrip-

tion," he added, "and check with command officials here to see what problems are involved."

Meanwhile, the second member of the two-man team goes into action. As battalion Forward Air Controller, 1st Lt. Henkel must be on hand to direct the incoming aircraft to the right location.

Henkel joins Shipman in linking up the Marine air ground team by making sure the prospective target is marked (by 81mm mortars or smoke rockets) and by contacting the pilot of the incoming aircraft.

"While I am directing the pilot into the target or pick-up area," he said, "Capt. Shipman stays in contact with the requesting unit — checking and rechecking coordinates."

"Once I have a good vantage point of the target area and a confirmation from the pilot that he also knows where it is, we warn all other aircraft in the area of an impending strike, and continue to 'talk' the aircraft in," he added.

From there, the success of the mission depends on the Marines flying the jet or helicopter; but eventual success of all close air support everywhere depends on, and is measured by, the work of

those pilots on the ground who, like aviators Shipman and Henkel, carry the Marine air ground team into the mountains and jungles from which the infantry operates.

Can't Escape Marine Fire

Enemy Killed Near 1/5 CP

By LCpl. Hank Berkowitz

AN HOA — When 21 North Vietnamese Army soldiers were spotted within 600 yards of the 1st Bn., 5th Marine's command post Leathernecks killed 19 with a barrage of Marine firepower from air and ground forces.

"B" Co., spotting the first group of 11 NVA, called in a Marine aerial observer while two platoons moved up to block their escape.

"K" Co., 3rd Bn., 1st Marines

attached to the 1st Bn., spotted the second group of 10 NVA about 200 yards from the first. They called for tanks to support them while they moved one platoon up as a blocking force.

Pushing toward the treeline where the enemy was hiding, the two companies flushed them out the far side into the rice paddies where the aerial observers made two strafing runs, killing nine.

"D" Co., in a blocking position prior to the enemy contact, killed four as they fled toward

its position. From the battalion CP, 106mm recoilless rifles were brought up and they accounted for another NVA.

The surrounding enemy again tried to flee through the paddies and were met by a 90mm barrage from the tanks. Three more NVA were dropped.

Changing direction, they tried to flee through "B" Co., lines. They were met with a hail of small arms fire that killed three more.

In all, 19 NVA lay dead.

There were no Marine casualties.



"M" Co., 3/9 Marines set up a defensive position while the remainder of the battalion lands at Red Beach 2, Da Nang, four years ago this month.



An Ontos rolls off the ramp at Red Beach 2 during the historic landing.

Official Marine Corps Photos



Lt. Gen. V. H. Krulak, (left) then CG, FMFPac, and Brig. Gen. F.J. Karch, CG, 9th MEB in '65 surveyed BLT 3/9 positions atop Hill 327.



Combat equipped Marines rush ashore in March 1965. America's combat troop commitment to the war, one-half million by 1969, had begun.



Marines of "I" Co., 3/9 move to defensive positions near Hill 327.

Hill Humpers Mark 4th Year in 'Nam

(Continued From Page 1)
among pine trees and scrub growth to assume hasty defensive positions along the blacktop road.

Within a short time other waves of men were ashore passing through those already landed. Beach masters worked throughout the morning as a steady line of vehicles and equipment rolled over the beach.

The move down the road toward the Da Nang airfield was underway. For the next two days, until March 10, the BLTs assumed positions in bunkers and behind berm walls along the airfield runway. Their initial

mission was to defend the large base.

McPartlin's battalion moved up onto Hills 327 and 268 to provide security for the LAAM battery and the Brigade Engineer Group in the vicinity. The hills dominated the terrain immediately west of the field.

Almost immediately patrols were sent out west of the hills toward a valley where Marine helicopters, operating ashore from Da Nang for more than a year (having been relocated from Soc Trang in the Delta during 1963) had been taking small arms fire while landing ARVN troops.

The first night, a patrol of Marines and Vietnamese slipped through the wire and moved off into the darkness. There was no contact with enemy units, but the following night the lines were probed in various areas atop the hills by small numbers of Viet Cong seeking to assess Marine strength.

For some of the Marines the landing was the second time in Vietnam. One of the company commanders, Capt. John J. Sheridan, "L" Co., 9th Marines, had been in Da Nang with his unit providing security for the Marine side of the airbase. He had recently returned to Okinawa before the landing.

As the area of operations rapidly increased with the number of men coming ashore, so did the scope of Marine activities.

"Our mission then was to protect the growing air, harbor and logistic facilities. We didn't have enough forces to prowl in depth. Working with Regular and Popular Forces, we patrolled vigorously and sought to identify and separate the Viet Cong guerrillas from the people," explained Brig. Gen. Frank E. Garretson, now commanding Task

Force Hotel at Vandegrift Combat Base west of Dong Ha. Garretson was in command of the 9th Marines in Vietnam in 1965.

At 9 a.m. on June 4, 1965, Maj. Gen. Lewis W. Walt relieved Maj Gen. William R. Collins as commanding general, 3rd Marine Division. The Division had completed almost a month of operations in Vietnam, with all the Marine ground units that were ashore under Division control.

McPartlin's battalion remained in the immediate vicinity of Da Nang until it was relieved by BLT 1/9 on June 16, 1965.

During June 1965, the 3rd Marine Division's headquarters remained in the Da Nang airbase compound close to the 1st Marine Aircraft Wing and III MAF. The division's area of operations stretched north for 35 miles to Hue-Phu Bai and south from Da Nang to Chu Lai, 65 miles away.

On July 4, the 9th Marines' regimental headquarters was brought from Okinawa to Da Nang by Gen. (then colonel) Garretson. The regiment soon became part of the III Marine Amphibious Force in Vietnam.

By Aug 15 all three battalions had reached Vietnam and the regiment had all of them committed against the Viet Cong.

As the tactical areas expanded, the village of Le My was freed of communist control and the Division embarked on a civic action program.

During the next four months, Division strength increased to more than 25,000 officers and men, and a steady stream of 1st Marine Division units began to flow into I Corps to reinforce Marine ground combat strength.

Also during this period, the 1st Marine Aircraft Wing brought all its units in country to provide

(Continued on Back Page)



Vietnamese welcome for BLT 3/9 in March 1965.

Hours of Staring Out Window Pay Off Big For Crew Chief

By Cpl. Jim De Witt

QUANG TRI—A helicopter crew chief's knowledge of terrain and enemy positions throughout I Corps was credited with averting possible disaster recently.

Marine Corporal Wendall "Sandy" Amos (Scottsboro, Ala.), has been a member of Marine Medium Helicopter Squadron 262 for more than a year, averaging two missions daily.

During his more than 700 hours of aerial combat, Amos has been downed in enemy territory 18 times and has lost count of the number of times his craft has been fired upon.

While in flight, Amos spends much of his time observing the landscape passing below. This isn't idle time for the young crew chief. He's visually soaking up all the terrain features he can for possible future reference; knowledge which was put to good use on a recent resupply and medical evacuation mission.

Amos' CH-46 Sea Knight transport helicopter launched on a resupply mission, carrying an external load of supplies to a fire support base.

Extremely poor weather forced the twin-rotor aircraft to fly at less than 500 feet altitude with reduced speed.

However, Amos had been fly-

ing in that area nearly every day for the past month and felt he knew the terrain features sufficiently to brief the pilot along the way.

Major Harvey E. Britt (Warrington, Fla.), pilot of the aircraft, decided they might be able to do it with Amos' help and headed the helicopter up the narrow Da Krong River Canyon.

Britt, monitoring the aircraft's intercom, listened to Amos' comments and steered his aircraft right or left as he evaded the enemy positions which his crew chief remembered were below.

"We counted at least half-dozen different positions firing at us, but we still missed the worst of it," said Britt.

Arriving at the FSB unscratched, the Sea Knight hurriedly delivered its cargo and continued on the medical evacuation nearby, thanks to Amos' memory of the terrain.



HOWDY—A Marine of Force Logistic Command's Provisional Rifle Co. pauses during a recent cordon-and-search operation near Da Nang to strike up a friendship with a Vietnamese child. The unit was looking for Viet Cong and possible enemy weapons caches.

(Photo by Cpl. M. Teramoto)

Pilot Recalls Hard 1000 Flight Hours

By SSgt. Bill Graham

PHU BAI—Maj. William J. Gash (Parkin, Ark.), a pilot with Marine Light Helicopter Squadron 367, may not be a major league baseball player, but he's finishing out the season with better than a 1,000 batting average.

Since joining the Huey squadron late in December 1967, the major has been the unit's maintenance officer. Despite the demanding job, Gash has also managed to log a record 1,000 combat flight hours, and stack up more than 1,000 combat missions to earn 50 Air Medals. This according to LtCol. Richard L. Robinson (King of Prussia, Penn.), squadron commander, was in addition to putting in an 8-or-10-hour day as squadron maintenance officer.

The lean, 35-year old pilot recalled one particular mission which, he says, "will take a long time to forget."

Piloting his UH-1E (Huey) gunship north of Da Nang, the major was called in to pick up a seriously wounded Marine and evacuate him to the Da Nang hospital. "It was about 2:30 a.m.," he says. "We were circling watching for a signal from the ground, marking the landing site. Suddenly, the chopper went out of control. There was a lot of action on the ground, and we must have taken a hit. However,

none of us in the copter heard anything peculiar," he adds.

Not wanting to land into the dark jungle below, Gash was able to guide the aircraft's descent out toward the sea. The next few tense moments were spent hurriedly preparing for the crash while continually trying to get the chopper functioning at full-power again.

Although injured when the aircraft hit the water, Gash managed to cling to a small portion of the rotor blade and float. It was nearly four hours later when he was spotted bobbing in the water near the coast line and was rescued.

"A lot passed through my mind during those four hours," he says. "But now, I can't really think of any one thing that was foremost in my thoughts. I think I knew in my mind all the while that I'd be rescued."

2/9 Finds NVA Cache

Easter Egg Hunt For Marines

By Cpl. Larry White

VANDEGRIFT COMBAT BASE — A patrol of Marines from "H" Co., 2nd Bn., 9th Marines, started out to search for a trail and ended up locating a large North Vietnamese Army munitions cache.

"It was like an Easter egg hunt," said Cpl. William D. Morgan (427 Serrano Ave., Pittsburgh, Penn.) as he described his feelings when the patrol found 22 Russian made rifles, 19 sub-machine guns, 209 cases of small arms rounds, and other munitions.

The patrol was on a reconnaissance mission to scout the area for enemy trails when it made

the find.

"After about an hour of searching, we found a trail. We followed it and pretty soon we came across a small deserted village," said 2nd Lt. Allen D. Guins (Savannah, Georgia).

The Marines started to search the village and found three enemy rifles, but it was a "friendly" chicken that led them to the large cache.

Cpl. Morgan was chasing a stray chicken when he noticed some boxes in the bushes.

"I forgot about the chicken and began looking in the bushes. I found one box of ammunition and then another and another. It was like an Easter egg hunt,"

he exclaimed.

The NVA had hidden the ammunition and weapons in bushes around the village. The enemy cache also included 600 sticks of TNT, 363 rocket propelled grenades, 161 60 mm mortar rounds and 7 pounds of documents.

Scout Dog Sniffs Out Enemy

By Cpl. Jim Gramling

CON THIEN—A scout dog on a sweep and clear operation with "G" Co., 2nd Bn., 4th Marines, aided the Marines in locating a North Vietnamese Army bunker complex north of Con Thien.

"When the dog broke loose and charged forward, I knew that he had spotted the enemy," said PFC. Paul E. Hill (8612 Forest Hills, Dallas, Tex.), the scout dog's handler. "The dog must have scared one NVA soldier. He jumped up and opened fire on the dog giving away his position."

The dog suffered a minor flesh wound and there were no other friendly casualties.

The Marines advanced on the NVA position, but the enemy fled.

"We pursued the enemy for about 800 meters before breaking contact," said 1st Lt. Hayward L. Sawyer (10110 Asher St., El Monte, Calif.).

The platoon then began a thorough search of the area and uncovered more than 30 enemy bunkers.



TANK AHOY—1st Marine Division tankers on Operation Linn River push through swampy ground in search of enemy forces.

(Photo by 1st Lt. Crane Davis)

Villagers, Marines Solve Problems Together

By Sgt. Gary Clark

DA NANG—As it winds northward to spend itself in the harbor here, the Han River twists and churns through the city, splitting it in half.

The eastern half of the city is on a long, sandy peninsula, bleached white by the sun and ending in a fist-like mass of mountains and villages. Slicing

through the length of the peninsula is a two-lane highway known as Route 538.

Flanking the highway are numerous South Vietnamese and U.S. Military installations, each with the barbed wire of its defensive positions joining that of its neighbor, making a solid wall of wire running the length of both sides of the peninsula.

Herein lies one of the major problems facing the 50 families of Son Thuy (1), sandwiched between the western wall of wire and the Han River. The village nestles against the wire surrounding the compound of the 1st Engineer Bn., 1st Marine Division. Unable to reach the road through the wire, the villagers have found it necessary to travel

almost to the base of the peninsula, near the Marble Mountain complex, to reach the road.

Their ultimate destination on these trips is to reach Da Nang to sell and trade their crops for the goods they need. However, by the time they reach the road it is usually late and they are too tired to travel all the way to the city.

Therefore, many of the villagers have taken to doing their trading and buying with the merchants in the smaller villages near the Marble Mountain complex. Aware of the problems of the villagers, the merchants raise their prices and enjoy the profits they reap at the expense of the villagers.

Lt. Col. Donald H. Hildebrand (1414 Spurgeon Rd., Santa Ana, Calif.), battalion commander, became aware of the problem when the battalion moved into the area in October.

"We know that a matter of pride was involved," said Hildebrand, "but more important was the fact that many of the villagers were not getting the things they needed from these merchants."

To alleviate the problem, the 1st Engineer Bn. is planning to build a road from the hamlet, through the battalion area to the highway.

"We plan on making it a joint project," added the colonel. "As soon as the Tet holidays are over the villagers and the battalion will begin the work together. We think the road will cut the travel time to Da Nang in half for the villagers and end the merchant's monopoly."

Weekly conferences are held between the village elders and the Marines. New projects and problems facing the villagers are discussed at this time.

Typical of these problems was the one of Marine patrols moving from the battalion area to the banks of the Han River. The patrols had to pass through the villager's rice paddies.

"The patrols crushed many of the rice plants," said Lt. Col. Hildebrand, "so we built a metal 'dike' from the village to the river. Now the patrols can get out and the villagers also have a way to get to the river, which they didn't have before."

"I think one of the most important projects is the experimental garden we have encouraged the Vietnamese to start," said Lt. Douglas Patterson, (Route 4, Theodore, Ala.), the battalion's civil affairs officer. "They're growing Chinese cabbage, peas, beans and corn with our help and guidance. We're also helping to build new water wells in the hamlet and we provide school materials for the children."

That the assistance the Marines are offering is appreciated, is evident in the fact that the Marines have been invited to share the Tet holidays with the villagers this year and, as Lt. Col. Hildebrand said, "that's quite an improvement over last year."

VC Block Own Escape With Grenade

By Sgt. Ron Staff

DA NANG — An exploding enemy grenade placed a young Marine from "H" Co., 2nd Bn., 1st Marines right where he wanted to be — in the path of two escaping Viet Cong.

LCpl. Royce E. Heinze (Forks-ville, Penn.), a 19-year-old clerk with the company, was on a cordon and search operation south

of here when he received the unexpected help from the enemy.

The Marines were "counter-sweeping" a village, rechecking everything in it, when a small, heavily overgrown area in the rice paddies on one side of the village was spotted by the company commander. He decided someone should search it.

Heinze was checking a tunnel

entrance when the first enemy soldiers were discovered.

"As soon as they started yelling that they had a Viet Cong, three of us started over the knoll from the tunnel entrance we were checking," said Heinze. "I was sort of leading the group over. We started to holler not to fire because we were coming over."

"The VC must have heard us because they threw grenades at us. The concussion threw me down to the edge of the water surrounding the place. I was a little dazed as I got up so I stayed right where I was."

"I saw two VC try to escape

from a secret entrance they had at the water line. There was grass growing over the bank and covering the entrance."

The enemy grenade had "put" him in exactly the right place. As two enemy soldiers emerged from their tunnel, Heinze killed them both.

"Later on, another VC tried this escape route and was captured," he added. "Tunnel rats got right in there and twenty minutes later all the gear was pulled out."

Three M-16 rifles, three AK-47 assault rifles, one SKS rifle, two pistols, a light anti-tank assault weapon and a B-40 rocket were found in the tunnel.

NVA Buried Up To Neck By Bulldozer

By Sgt. Ken Corbett

DONG HA—A Marine infantry unit and a U.S. Army bulldozer teamed up to literally "uncover" two North Vietnamese Army soldiers during a 3rd Marine Division land-clearing operation southeast of Con Thien.

The bulldozer from the Army's 45th Engineer Group and a security force from "G" Co., 2nd Bn., 3rd Marines were destroying old enemy bunkers and dense undergrowth in the area when the two NVA were excavated from their underground hiding place.

"We were providing security for the bulldozers as they cleared brush off the ridgelines southeast of Con Thien," explained LCpl. Louis H. Cardenas (14001 Doty St., Hawthorne, Calif.), a fireteam leader with "G" Company. "One bulldozer was clearing off a high ridge-line when we noticed the area he had just passed over was caved in and two heads were sticking barely above the ground."

Further investigation by the Marines revealed the two NVA soldiers buried up to their necks in dirt.

"I was pretty surprised and they were too," said Cardenas. "At first glance I thought they were in a foxhole, but as I began to dig the NVA out, we discovered an entire bunker complex."

A search of the enemy bunker complex revealed a large radio

with headsets and a telegraph key, one AK-47 rifle, one 9mm pistol, numerous grenades, several pounds of explosives and a pack containing North Vietnamese money and communist propaganda material.

"The two NVA were wearing new uniforms and were in real good physical condition when we dug them out," said 2nd Lt. C.W. Murray, Jr. (Midland, Texas), platoon commander of the Marine security unit. "They were immediately taken by helicopter to higher headquarters for questioning."

A further search of the area proved to be unsuccessful as the Marines encountered no other enemy soldiers.

"It appears that the two NVA were a forward observation team as their position on the high ridge afforded them a view of several Marine bases in the area," said Murray. "Fortunately, we were able to put them out of business."

Hit by Bullet

Rifle Lost in Flight

By LCpl. Ray Wolf

VANDEGRIFT COMBAT BASE—To be caught in a firefight can be a frightening enough experience, but to find yourself in a fight without a weapon is worse yet.

LCpl. Chelman Rhodes (125 Bitford Way, Montgomery, Ala.) a member of 2nd Bn., 9th Marines was the point man for a small patrol when the Marines suddenly came under enemy automatic weapons fire from a well concealed enemy bunker.

"The first enemy round hit my rifle and sent the weapon flying out of my hands," said the 20-year-old Marine. "I dropped to the ground and began looking for my rifle, but I couldn't find it in the dense elephant grass around me."

After the forward elements of the patrol were safely behind cover, a squad moved to the left of the enemy position, while the remaining Marines made a frontal assault on the enemy position.

"I borrowed a rifle from one of our radiomen for the assault," said Rhodes, "and after we overran the enemy position I went back and looked for my weapon."

When Rhodes found his rifle he found that the enemy bullet had struck the rifle's stock, but that the weapon was still operative.

"It's the closest that I've come to being wounded," said Rhodes. "I think I'll keep this same rifle for the rest of my Vietnam tour as a reminder."



ON THE MOVE—A patrol from Force Logistic Command moves down a road northwest of Da Nang during a search-and-clear operation.

(Photo by Capt. D.G. Menely)

Recons Escape Enemy Cordon

By Sgt. David Butler

PHU BAI — A daring Marine helicopter pilot and his crew chief teamed up to beat the odds, and an eight-man Marine reconnaissance patrol is alive today because of it.

The odds came in the form of a substantial force of North Vietnamese Army soldiers who had surrounded the recon Marines and were slowly tightening the cordon.

Knowing there was only one way out — by air — the patrol called for help from the helicopter that had inserted them not long before, the CH-46 "chopper" piloted by First Lieutenant Welsey R. Marks Jr. (Jackson Hole, Wyo.) of Marine Aircraft Group 36. His crew chief was Sergeant William D. Wise (San Mateo, Calif.).

"We had just finished inserting another recon team," Marks said, "when the call came that the first team was surrounded and wanted out.

As the NVA soldiers continued to close in, Marks realized that time was running out, and decided to go in and make the pick-up without the benefit of the Huey gunships, enroute.

"There was a Bronco (OV-10A observation plane armed with rockets) to support us. I was about to go in when the Hueys arrived, much to my relief," he said.

With that, the pilot began to maneuver his large helicopter into the pick-up area, and at the same time began drawing enemy fire from at least 15 different positions.

"By now," continued the pilot, "it was really dark and I couldn't see the landing zone. Sgt. Wise climbed outside the aircraft, hung onto the external hoist with one hand and fired his M-16 rifle with the other, while talking me into the zone."

As the crew chief clung to the descending helicopter, Lt. Marks dropped to ground level and the recon team scrambled aboard.

By this time, Wise had climbed inside the aircraft and had begun firing the .50-caliber machine gun at the enemy 30 yards away.

"But in a few minutes the machinegun jammed," said Lt. Marks, "Sgt. Wise had to stop and clear it.

"Within seconds he had cleared it but it would only fire a single round at a time. He still managed to fire at least 100 rounds before we were out of range of the enemy fire," he said.



LIFTING POWER—A Marine Sea Stallion helicopter lifts a bulldozer at a fire support base in northern I Corps. The huge choppers make Vietnam's mountain top accessible to Marine ground troops and deliver supplies to sustain the posts.

(Photo by Capt. Joe Collins)

3/3 Uncovers Supplies, Bunkers

By Cpl. Larry White

AN HOA—Operating from a fire support base high in the mountainous terrain west of An Hoa, a patrol from the 3rd Bn., 3rd Marines uncovered a North Vietnamese Army training area, aid station and a supply staging point.

First Lt. John R. Everhart (Kingwood, W. Va.), led the patrol that made the discovery.

"I took out a squad of Marines and a Vietnamese Kit Carson scout to search out some trails. We were moving along one trail when the Kit Carson scout started pulling what appeared to be small trees from alongside the path. He just kept on pulling them out and tossing them to the side," recalled Everhart.

The NVA had tried to camouflage the trail by sticking

branches into the ground, but the alert Vietnamese scout recognized the cover-up and uncovered a trail leading to the tip of a ridgeline.

"At the top of the ridge we discovered the NVA bunker complex and training camp," continued Everhart. "The NVA had a real thorough set-up, with vines used as barbed wire and

made to resemble our defensive perimeter wire. One area was fixed up with benches and a speakers stand, complete with notebooks and one 'textbook' with drawings of all our helicopters, airplanes and artillery pieces," said Everhart.

As the patrol continued its search of the area, the Marines uncovered more enemy bunkers.

In one area they found an elaborate messhall, a first aid station, a target range with silhouette targets and a dam built on a stream to provide an ample water supply.

The patrol also found 38 Chi-com grenades, two anti-personnel mines and several hundred rounds of small arms ammunition.

Vietnamese, U.S. Pigs Interbred

By LCpl. Gene P. Smith

DA NANG — The 1st Marine Division Civil Affairs Section has started a program designed to improve the breed of Vietnamese pigs.

First Lt. Samuel E. Shore (Rt.

6, Maryville, Tenn.), Division agricultural advisor, heads the project which has farmers in 15 hamlets in the division's area participating.

"The idea is to breed large American boars with the smaller Vietnamese sows and get a better offspring," said Shore. "The American boars average 350 pounds whereas the Vietnamese sows average only 150 pounds. The first offspring double their mother's weight when full grown. Breeding the offspring produces even better results."

Army 1st Lt. Gary Snider (133 Ducareli Dr., San Francisco, Calif.), 29th Civil Affairs Co., Food and Agricultural Advisor, is also helping in the project.

"When we first presented the

program to the Vietnamese farmers they were reluctant to go along with it," said Snider. "They were afraid the boars would harm their own sows if they were bred. After we showed them the results of the first offspring the farmers became very enthusiastic towards the program."

The American boars are much larger than the Vietnamese pigs but the Vietnamese pig can live on much less food and is used to the environment of Vietnam. With these characteristics combined, the offspring have proven to be of better quality than either of its parents. They also grow very fast.

Very well pleased with the results of the program, Lt. Shore is planning to expand it.



THIS WAY—A Marine radio operator of Force Logistic Command's Provisional Rifle Co. gives directions to Vietnamese villagers during a search-and-clear operation near Da Nang. In order to effectively search the area, all villagers were temporarily moved to collection points where the sick were treated and the people screened for possible enemy suspects.

(Photo by Capt. D.G. Menely)

Leathernecks Tour Da Nang Factory

By LCpl. Trygg Hansen

DA NANG — A factory tour is giving Marines of the 1st Military Police Bn., Force Logistic Command, a new outlook on Vietnam.

The tour, conducted weekly by the battalion's civil affairs team, takes the Leathernecks through the Sicovina textile factory near Da Nang.

Marines serving with the battalion normally get a limited view of Vietnam. Farmers, small shops in outlying hamlets selling handicrafts and nicknacks and local village market places are the limit of their contacts with the Vietnamese. The tour, is designed to broaden the

Leathernecks outlook.

"The aim of our program," said Cpl. Thomas Larsen (2544 N. 2nd St., St. Paul, Minn.), a member of the civil affairs team, "is to show our men the potential of Vietnamese industry and broaden their view of the Republic's economic situation."

The multi-building factory complex utilizes the latest in textile machinery and production methods to transform raw cotton into rolls of finely woven material ready for shipment to Saigon and world-wide clothing manufacturing markets.

"We plan to continue the tours until all our men have had a chance to see the complex," said Larsen.

Sea Tiger Mail Bag

(Continued From Page 2)

Peggy Shamsie
433 Bouny St.
Algiers, La.

JoAnn Shamsie
4021 Harvard St.
Lake Charles, La. 70146

Konny Welch
1522 Levin St.
Alexandria, La. 71301

Dale Wyllie
6226 Kaywood Dr.
Cincinnati, Ohio 45243

William K. Mallory
28002 203rd Ave., S.E.
Kent, Washington 98031
Director, "Operation Thanks"

Nancy Reid
2064 Joan Way
Sacramento, Calif. 95825

Linda Harris
5920 Stanley Ave. #21
Carmichael, Calif. 95608

Linda Voge
5024 37th Ave.
Sacramento, Calif. 95820

Elaine Riesberg
Rt. 1
Carroll, Iowa 51401

Pat Lukashie
2001 S. Cirby Way
Roseville, Calif. 95678
#3

Debbie Onstad
10875 Snowdown Ave.
Oakland, Calif. 94605
Age 14

Irene Woodworth
R.D. #1
Sterling N.Y. 13156
Age 17

Bev Wallace
4444 Surita St.
Sacramento, Calif. 95825

Mamie D. Thomas
P.O. Box 973
Bryte, Calif. 95605

Shirley Foster
Rt. 3, Box 158
Denham Springs, La. 70726

Cecilia Oates
6512 Clara Way
North Highlands, Calif. 95660

Lois Pryor
207 W. Fifth St.
Oswego, N.Y. 13126
Age 16

Amy Herrick
1302 Harriet Ave.
Carroll, Iowa, 51401

Linda Mason
Rt. 5, Box 58
West Monroe, La. 71291

Luann MacQuarrie
1024 Belmont St.
Watertown, Mass. 02172

Carole Richards
219 Orville St.
Jonesville, Mich. 49250

Jill Pease
Rm. 604
Cabaniss Hall

Medical College of Va.
Richmond, Va. 23219
Age 18

Louise Witkaskie
Box 308

Muhlenberg College
Allentown, Pa. 18104
Age 18

Pat Jancura
352 Meadowlane Rd.
Cleveland, Ohio 44131

Norma Loza
247 E. Harris St.
Raymondville, Texas 78580
Age 18

Melody Madesitt
351 Harding Ave.
Sacramento, Calif. 95833

Lori Sava
4436 Surita
Sacramento, Calif.

Jacqueline Kay Bulla
5506 62 St.
Sacramento, Calif. 95820

Jan Heinand
3205 St. Old Shakopee Rd.
Bloomington, Minn. 55431
Age 20

Bette Dahlberg
336 Sheridan Rd.
Kenosha, Wisc. 53140
Age 18

Nancy Hagy
10414 Dakins Dr.
Richmond, Va. 23235
Age 18

Geri Woods
7019 Valeriana Ave.
Citrus Heights, Calif. 95610

Sheryle Wittig
Colleen Wittig
4536 Ambuley Way
Sacramento, Calif. 95821

Adele Brosch
5172 West 5th St.
Cleveland, Ohio 44131
Age 16

Ronda Beaman
4533 S. Spring
Independence, Mo. 64055

Gail Forquer
Student Mailbox
Central Connecticut State College
New Britain, Conn. 06050
Age 19

Terry Decker
2623 Main St.
Rocky Hill, Conn. 06067

Adrienne Hayew
19935 San Juan
Detroit, Mich. 48221
Age 13

Sandra Hurst
4746 SW Dillard Hwy.
Roseburg, Oregon 97470

Andrea Dubin
15883 Fairfax Ave.
Southfield, Mich. 48075
Age 16

Mary Larick
8804 Winding Way
Fair Oaks, Calif. 95628

Gina Guilding
5255 Flagstone
St. Carmichael, Calif. 95608

Renee Gilding
2621 Sarda Way
Rancho Cordova, Calif. 95670

June Carlson
3361 Niki Court
Sacramento, Calif. 95827

Kathy Callahan
121 Craig Ave.
Freeport, N.Y.
Age 17

Connie Toglia
35 Cliff St.
Yonkers, N.Y.
Age 17



SEWING SCHOOL—A young Vietnamese girl from Phuoc Xuan Village near Da Nang alters a dress at her village sewing class. The school is sponsored by the Civil Affairs Office of Force Logistic Command's Supply Bn., which distributed the CARE Sewing kits, clothing and materials donated by United States civilian organizations.

(Photo by Cpl. John Krill)

Guns, Guts Whip NVA...

(Continued From Page 1)

In rain, deep mud and thick fog, the move upward continued. On the fourth day, with a final lunge up an incline more than 75 percent, the Marines had reached their objective. It was now the evening of the fifth day and visibility was less than 15 yards.

"It had taken us over three and a half hours with climbing ropes to reach the final objective," related Hitzelberger. "Fog surrounded us and overhead was a jungle canopy over a hundred feet high. We were to be resupplied with food, ammunition and water by helicopter when we reached the top."

The thick fog and tall trees, up to six feet in diameter, meant that a chance for resupply was impossible.

The company could not remain on the mountain without food, and the regimental advance had been halted by bad weather. Golf was ordered back down to link up with another unit near the river.

The ordeal was about to become a chapter seldom equalled in the chronicles of courage.

"We started down with our ropes. It took more than four hours just to get off the summit. The mud was calf deep and if a man started to slip he would keep on sliding," said Hitzelberger.

"By 2 p.m., the Marines had reached a slope. Below was a cluster of large rocks amid thick bush. Below, too, was a determined enemy well concealed.

"The point man spotted one North Vietnamese (NVA) soldier standing on the trail below us. Somehow it seemed right; he was just easy to spot. The NVA dropped to the ground. I felt that he might be trying to suck us into an ambush so I halted the column while the point fire team moved to the right to check things out," recalled the captain.

As the point team moved off to the right it came under heavy automatic weapons fire. The enemy had set up a reverse-slope defense. They could look up and see the Marines, who, looking down, could see only thick foliage.

Hitzelberger started to deploy his men. The second platoon fanned out to set up a base of

fire and was almost immediately pinned down. The communists were firing rapidly now.

"I deployed the first platoon around to the left to try to flank them," the company commander explained. "At that time the enemy opened up with machine guns and rifle grenades. Snipers hidden in the trees also started to shoot.

"We forced them to spring the trap early. They thought our entire company was pinned down but it was only one squad. The third platoon was sent around to the right," Hitzelberger said.

The company gunnery sergeant, Charles A. Baker (302 South Seventh St., Sentinel, Okla.) continued the story: "A sniper hidden in a tree had hit one of the men. Another man, a hospital corpsman, dashed out to aid him. As he was treating the wounded Marine, the corpsman was also hit by enemy fire."

LCpl. Thomas P. Noonan Jr. (46-17 Fifty-sixth Road, Maspeth, Long Island, N.Y.) saw the men get hit and he also saw where the enemy were firing from.

"He knew it might mean certain death," related Baker. "Noonan warned everyone else out of the area. Then he ran forward, firing his weapon at the NVA positions. He reached the two men, stood over them and fired right at the enemy.

Pulling one of the men toward our lines and stopping to fire as he came in, Noonan made it in unharmed.

"Out where he had been, Noonan heard the corpsman yelling for help. He ran back out there despite the heavy enemy fire.

"Noonan got to the man and was leaning over to pick him up when he was felled by a bullet. He died next to the corpsman who also died from his wounds," added Baker. "He knew what would happen and he still went out."

With increased pressure from the Marines, the enemy began to pull back from the rocks toward a ravine.

"Just as they entered the ravine, an artillery concentration exploded right on top of them," Hitzelberger said. "We know we killed eight NVA but there was no time to look for the rest of their dead. We had five of our own dead and seventeen

wounded who needed medical attention badly."

Hitzelberger said that despite the courage of his men up to that point, he considered that the real story began after the battle.

"We realized what we had to do to get down off the mountain as a fighting unit. No commanding officer ever had to ask more of his men than I did. It was a long way down without food and we were determined to leave with our dead and wounded and all of our equipment," Hitzelberger commented.

By this time it was totally dark. The captain called for artillery illumination over the trail. In deep mud, struggling under the weight of the casualties and negotiating slopes of more than 70 degrees, Golf Co. moved on.

"It was so bad that it took eight men more than 30 minutes to move the stretcher cases up a slope. At times we had more than half of the company carrying wounded. By 2 a.m., the men were totally exhausted. It was impossible to go farther because we couldn't get any more illumination. We stopped for the night and tried to treat the wounded as best as we could," the captain said.

Men in the unit had taken first aid kits containing bandages off the enemy they killed.

"By 7 a.m., we were moving again. Making about a thousand yards, we were nearing Echo Co. to the east. By 2 p.m. we got a radio message that the relief column had reached our rendezvous point in an abandoned village along the trail," said Hitzelberger.

"I knew we would make it," explained Pfc David S. Whitman (416 Hembree Street, Knoxville, Tenn.). "We joked to keep each other's morale up. We talked about things we used to eat back home. That way, no matter how hungry we got, we could keep going."

Down a sheer rock cliff 150 feet high, the wounded were lowered by rope. Ropes were used for hand holds by stretcher bearers as steps were dug into muddy slopes to make the footing less tricky.

"I've never in my life seen

(Continued on Page 12)



PATROL'S END—Pfc. Philip L. Sirois (Madawaska, Me.) returns to FSB Base carrying a communist rifle he found on Operation Taylor Common with his unit, "K" Co., 3/3. (Photo by LCpl. C.E. Woodruff)

4 Years in Country...

(Continued from Page 6, 7)
support for the burgeoning Marine ground troops.

There were seven major operations conducted by 3rd and 1st Division units, including air support. Starlight, Golden Fleece and Harvest Moon were among the most important. Operation Midnight, west of Da Nang, was the first night helicopter assault of the war. Taking part in it were elements of the 2nd Bn., 3rd Marines.

Heavy losses were costly to the enemy during these months as he lost large installations, supply caches and equipment.

After January 1966, Marine units stepped up ground action against the enemy with a high number of small unit contacts over the next three months.

On Oct. 9, 1966, the 3rd Marine Division moved north to Phu Bai. Many of its units had already been tasked with sealing off the DMZ against northern infiltrators. The pattern had been

established in the northern sector of South Vietnam.

Today with headquarters in Dong Ha and Quang Tri, the Division continues the search for the enemy from the coast line to the border of Laos. The same battalions that landed on Red Beach in 1965 are heavily committed now in the dense jungles, a far different locale than in the early days of combat in Vietnam.

At times the enemy changed his tactics back and forth between guerrilla and terrorist warfare and more conventional military operations, employing main force VC elements and regular NVA units and support troops.

One thing has not changed—the caliber of the Marines carrying the fight to the enemy. Within the last 24 months these men have inflicted almost a thousand casualties on the enemy in Operation Dewey Canyon.

"The size of our forces, the scope of our operations and our highly mobile posture now are dramatic changes from our early days in Da Nang," said Gen. Garretson. "Today with landing zones and fire support bases dotting key terrain features all over northern I Corps, we are keeping watch over a vast area. We can drop out of the sky on the enemy whenever and wherever we find him."

Resistance...

(Continued From Page 1)
carries the extra ammunition, takes care of the wounded and provides a reserve.

"When the leading company loses its punching power due to continued enemy contact or heat fatigue from slashing through the jungle, the trace company passes through and takes the lead," explained Barrow. "Members of the rear company then have a chance to catch their breath and recuperate."

The NVA apparently thought highly of its previously unexplored jungle sanctuary and made several desperate attempts to halt the Marines' drive, including attacks on two Marine artillery fire support bases, that cost them 67 dead.

"Nine days of bad weather shortly after Dewey Canyon began to cost us some momentum. It also gave the enemy time and an opportunity to plan and organize his defenses," said Barrow.

Enemy resistance stiffened as the Marines moved forward with contacts ranging from individual snipers to platoon size units in bunkers.

The largest contact came on Feb. 23, when a Leatherneck company came under heavy fire from an estimated NVA battalion entrenched in a bunker complex. The enemy used mortars, RPG's and automatic weapons in their effort to stop the Marines.

Marine artillery and air strikes and a second company of infantry was needed to dislodge the determined enemy force. When the bitter fighting ended the Marines counted 105 NVA dead and a search of the battlefield turned up four enemy light machine guns, two grenade launchers, 19 rifles, 47 grenades, 27 RPG's and 20 enemy packs, each containing an NVA flag.

Ten Marines were killed in the fighting and 61 wounded.

"This isn't a second-rate enemy," commented Col. Barrow. "These are well-groomed, well-disciplined, well-equipped troops. The way they are fighting speaks well of their discipline. It is a well organized and planned defense."

As an example of the enemy's discipline, Col. Barrow pointed out that despite the number of enemy dead the Marines had yet to identify the units involved. None of the bodies had any personal papers or insignia. Uniforms were relatively new and several new types of AK-47 automatic rifles were captured.

Col. Barrow also felt that the lack of good observers had ham-

pered the NVA's artillery effort.

"Our aerial observers (AOs) have contributed to his problems," said Barrow. "When the enemy fires our AOs are likely to spot his muzzle flashes and call in 1st Marine Aircraft Wing air strikes or 12th Marines artillery on his positions. So far we have destroyed two and damaged one of his 122mm artillery pieces in addition to the 4 we have captured."

"I'm not sure what the enemy is protecting," Barrow concluded "but he obviously seems willing to pay a high price for it."

Golf...

(Continued From Page 11)
men perform like these men. And I've seen a lot of Marines," said Baker.

One of the corpsmen who had treated himself after he was twice wounded only to be hit again while helping Marines in worse shape, gave advice to those treating the men despite his own great pain.

Naeve had arrived with the relief column and set up an aid station in the isolated village. He continued up the trail and caught sight of the company. "It was the steepest part of the trail and Marines were passing stretchers down in a chain of human hands. I assessed what needed to be done to keep the wounded alive."

For the first time in 56 hours the men of Golf Co. ate a meal. Each man in the relief column led by 2nd Lt. Robert L. Hanover (New London, Conn.) had pockets crammed full of food for the men in "G" Co. Hanover's men traveled more than 1,600 yards in three hours, through thick jungle.

The following day the Marines reached an area where they attempted to cut a landing zone so helicopters could remove the wounded. But the helicopters couldn't land because of the fog.

"We could hear them flying above us but they just couldn't find us in all the soup," Naeve said. "Everyone's heart just sank."

Just before dark the units reached the river bed at the base of the mountain. It was dark and foggy, but the rescue choppers managed to land on a large, flat rock on the bank and take the wounded and dead aboard.

After a few days rest Golf Company moved out again in search of the enemy.

Reds Trapped...

(Continued From Page 1)
fields, housed one company while the second company set in at a similar position approximately two thousand yards away.

At 10 p.m., the night's silence erupted into a cacophony of sound as the unsuspecting enemy force approached.

The Leathernecks on the peninsula readied themselves.

In a matter of seconds artillery illumination rounds lit up the night, silhouetting the NVA along the river bank.

The Marines opened fire with every weapon at their disposal.

"Spooky," a converted CA-47 transport plane with three 7.62mm mini-guns capable of firing 16,000 rounds-per-minute, began its deadly circle over the hapless enemy force, followed by every Marine artillery battery in range dropping its high

explosive rounds upon the North Vietnamese.

A portion of the enemy force escaped but only momentarily. The fleeing group ran head on into the second Marine company which had all their weapons pointed in the direction of the original battle, anticipating the NVA's retreat. Seventeen of the enemy died within moments after the Marines opened fire.

At dawn the Leathernecks swept the battle area and found 72 dead NVA.

Drying pools of blood marked the beginning of grass-crumpled paths where the North Vietnamese carried away some of their dead and wounded.

"We don't know where they came from," said Lt. R.F. Daly (140 North Broadway, Irvinton, N.Y.), battalion commander. "My men will do business like that with them anytime."

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