

Self Help

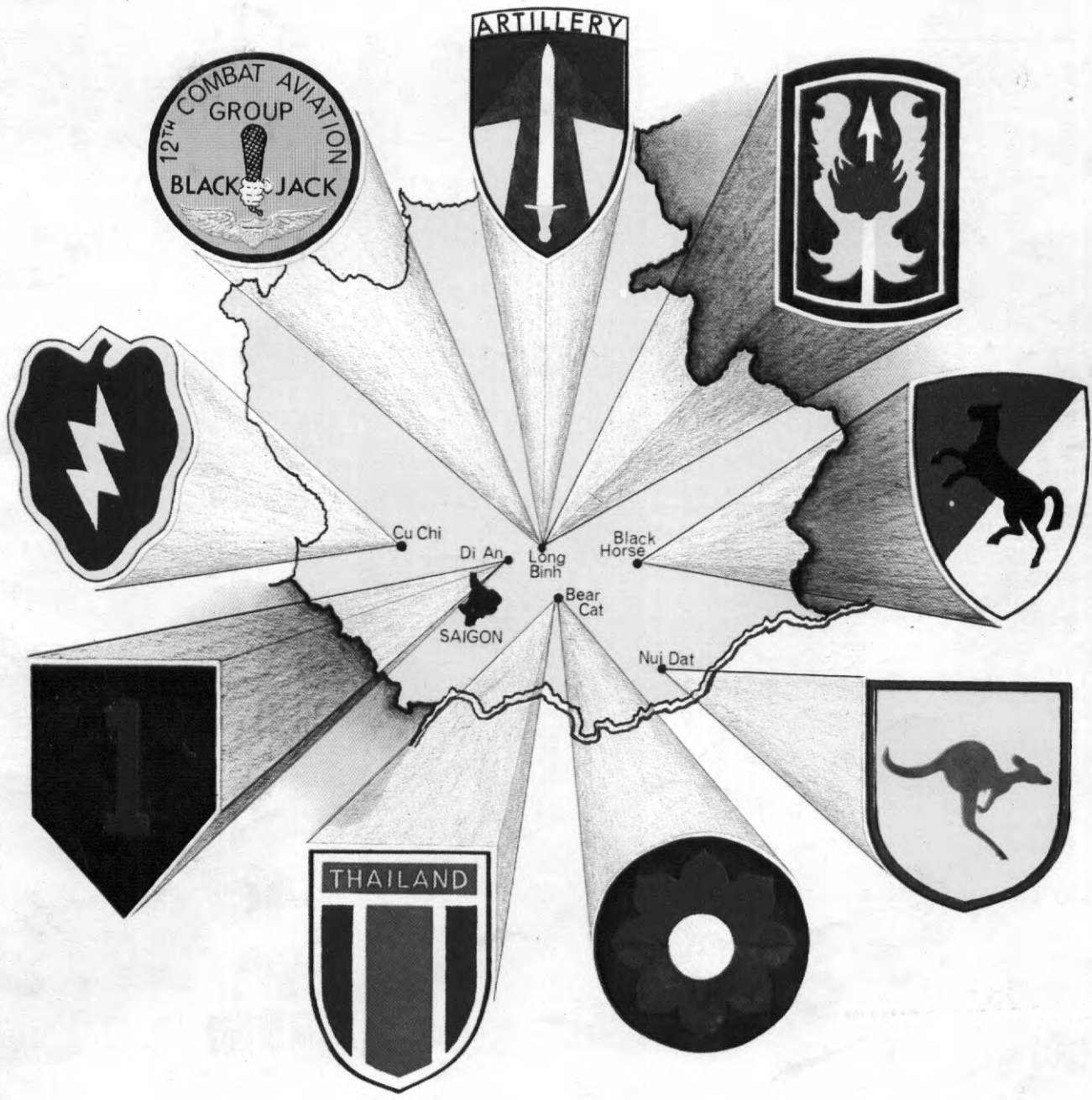


THE HURRICANE

NOVEMBER 1967

NUMBER ONE

A PUBLICATION OF II FIELD FORCE VIETNAM



LT. GEN. FRED C. WEYAND
COMMANDING GENERAL, II FFORCEV
SENIOR ADVISOR, III CORPS



Lieutenant General Fred C. Weyand was born in Arbutle, California, September 15, 1916. His military career began May 6, 1938, as a second lieutenant in the ROTC. He began active duty December 19, 1940, at the Presidio of San Francisco. In 1943, he was assigned to the War Department for special schooling followed by intelligence assignments in Burma and India. In March 1945, he was assigned to Headquarters, China Theater, in Chungking, where he served until the end of the war.

After World War II, General Weyand returned to the War Department as chief of the Military Branch, Intelligence Service. In August 1946, he was assigned to Headquarters, United States Army, Pacific, in Hawaii where he served as a member of Joint Task Force 7, conducting atomic weapons tests at Eniwetok; as a member of the Joint Staff of the Commander in Chief, Pacific; and as G-2, USARPAC.

In 1950, he served as Executive Officer of the 30th Infantry Regiment, 3d Infantry Division, at Fort Benning, Georgia and as Deputy Chief of Staff, 3d Division in Korea. In 1951, he commanded the 1st Battalion, 7th Infantry Regiment, through five battle campaigns, followed by assignment as Division G-3.

In January 1952, General Weyand headed an instructor group teaching regimental tactics at the Infantry School. From 1954 to 1957 he served as executive officer and Military Assistant to the Secretary of the Army.

From 1958 to 1960, General Weyand was assigned to Berlin, where he commanded the 3d Battle Group, 6th Infantry. His next assignment, as Chief of Staff, Headquarters, U.S. Army, Europe, Communications Zone, in Orleans, France, was followed by assignment in 1961 as Chief, Legislative Liaison for the Department of the Army. He served in this activity dealing with congressional affairs for three years.

On 22 August 1964, he assumed command of the 25th Infantry Division at Schofield Barracks in Hawaii. Beginning in December 1965, he deployed the 25th Division to Cu Chi and Pleiku, South Vietnam and commanded the division in combat until 7 March 1967 when he was assigned to II Field Force Vietnam.

On 12 May 1967, he assumed command of II Field Vietnam. On 1 July 1967 he was promoted to the rank of Lieutenant General.

General Weyand is married and has two daughters and a son. His family resides in Honolulu.

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A good portion of our first edition has been devoted to introducing you to II Field Force Vietnam and some of our operational units in the III Corps Tactical Zone.

Our cover, designed by SP4 Thomas Tyler, depicts the unit patches of II Field Force and includes our newest unit, the Queen's Cobras Regiment of the Royal Thai Army.

If you've enjoyed reading this edition of The Hurricane, why not share it with the folks back home. Your APU will explain the various methods you can use to mail The Hurricane home.

If you have a story you would like to submit for publication, give us a call. Our number is Plantation 282 or 237.

2LT Michael L. Gerson
Editor

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II FIELD FORCE VIETNAM





Enough rice to feed 10,000 men for more than a year was captured during Operation Cedar Falls.

II Field Force Vietnam, commanded by Lieutenant General Fred C. Weyand, carries on the lineage of its predecessor, the XXII U. S. Army Corps, which was activated in January 1944. After participating in the Rhineland and Central Europe Campaigns, the XXII Corps was inactivated at the end of World War II.

In January 1966, at Fort Hood, Texas, the XXII Corps was reactivated and the name changed to II Field Force. The word Vietnam was added on 15 March 1966 and this date marks the anniversary of the organization of II Field Force Vietnam.

On 15 March 1966, II FFORCEV consisted of a Headquarters and Headquarters Company and had operational control of five major units: the 1st Infantry Division, the 25th Infantry Division, the 173d Airborne Brigade (sep), the 12th Combat Aviation Group and the 23d Artillery Group.

During the past year, the combat capability of II FFORCEV continued to grow with the arrival of eight more major units: the 9th Infantry Division, the 1st Australian Task Force, the 196th Light Infantry Brigade, the 199th Light Infantry Brigade, the 3d Brigade of the 4th Infantry Division, the 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment, the 54th Artillery Group and the 2d Battalion, 34th Armor. The 23d and

54th Artillery Groups are under the command of II Field Force Artillery.

II FFORCEV is a tactical headquarters controlling all combat units of the Free World Forces in the Vietnamese III Corps Tactical Zone, an area of 10,000 square miles with 231 miles of border with Cambodia and 137 miles of coast line on the South China Sea. The terrain elevation varies from 0 to over 5,000 feet and of every type—from mangrove swamp, flooded rice paddies, flat land, heavy triple-canopied jungle to jungle-covered mountains. The II FFORCEV mission is to conduct military operations in support of the Republic of Vietnam in this vast area of geographical contrasts.

As its fighting forces grew in strength, II FFORCEV progressed from small unit attacks against the VC to multidivisional operations. From the beginning, it pushed into areas that had long been the VC's private domain. Thrusts were made into areas which had become notorious throughout the years of VC domination: War Zones "C" and "D", the Filhol rubber plantation, the HoBo woods, the Michelin rubber plantation, and the Iron Triangle.

As II FFORCEV grew in strength and firepower and as it increased its mobility, it pushed deeper into the VC secret bases. Units under its operational control engaged and routed the



Vietnamese and American civic action teams relocated civilians from the Iron Triangle to safe areas during Operation Cedar Falls. With civilians removed, the area became a free fire zone, thus depriving the VC of a safe haven which had existed for 20 years.

enemy's main force regiments, its local force guerrillas, and invading North Vietnam Army regiments. Each jab at the enemy kept him on the move, made him change his base camps and renew his vital supply lines.

Before II FFORCEV became operational, it was generally conceded that the VC master plan of aggression had started its move from Phase II to Phase III; i.e., from small unit guerrilla attacks at large scale conventional attacks. The VC strength and capability was reaching that point where they could stand toe-to-toe and take on the combined might of the Vietnamese Army and the Free World Forces in pitched battles.



The growing VC threat was met with combat operations such as SILVER CITY, TOLEDO, BIRMINGHAM, ATTLEBORO and the multi-divisional operations remembered as CEDAR FALLS, JUNCTION CITY, and MANHATTAN.

Launched by the 1st Brigade of the 1st Infantry Division, the 173d Airborne Brigade and elements of the 10th Division, Army of the Republic of Vietnam, Operation SILVER CITY was a combined operation in the dense jungles north of the Dong Nai River on the western edge of War Zone D.

Major VC supply installations were destroyed and VC communications and supply lines were cut. This push demoralized the VC forces by disrupting one of the "safe" areas he used to train, rest, and supply his troops.

In May 1966, the 1st Infantry Division, working closely with the Vietnamese 25th Infantry Division and three ranger and three airborne battalions, began Operation BIRMINGHAM. The combined force raged throughout Northern Tay Ninh Province uncovering large quantities of VC supplies near the Cambodian border. The force then turned its attention to the Michelin rubber plantation, which had been a VC stronghold since World War II.

Following Operations TOLEDO and ATTLEBORO was a II FFORCEV plan to rip up the Iron Triangle known as Operation CEDAR FALLS. D-Day was Sunday, 8 January 1967.

The 25th Infantry Division, the 196th Light Infantry Brigade, and the 2d Battalion, 34th Armor, closed on the Saigon River to block the VC's western escape route.

The 1st Infantry Division began maneuvering from the north.



Tribute For a Job Well Done



General Weyand assumed command of II Field Force Vietnam in a ceremony at II FFORCEV Headquarters in May. During the ceremony, General Weyand was awarded the Distinguished Service Medal by General William C. Westmoreland for his outstanding achievement as Commanding General of the 25th Infantry Division.



The II FFORCEV shoulder sleeve insignia, authorized by the Institute of Heraldry on 5 October 1966, consists of a shield arched at the top, 2 3/4 inches in width, with a crusader's unsheathed sword, point to top. The blade is white with a yellow hilt superimposed on a blue arrow. The areas to each side of the shaft are yellow and the areas to each side of the arrowhead are red. The insignia has a 1/8 inch white border. This insignia, depicted on the cover of this magazine, not only represents force, but alludes to the colors of the Vietnam flag as well as the combined actions of the three major combat arms: Infantry, Artillery, and Armor.



Vietnamese soldiers were decorated by General Weyand in an award ceremony held at II FFORCEV in August.



The eastern edge of the Iron Triangle was blocked by Task Force Deane, commanded by Brigadier General John R. Deane, Jr., and consisting of the 173d Airborne Brigade and elements of the 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment.

One of the key VC installations was the heavily fortified town of Ben Suc, ringed by mine fields and booby traps. To avoid civilian casualties, softening-up bombing and artillery were not used against the town. In a surprise move at 0800 on D-Day, the entire 1st Battalion, 26th Infantry, 1st Infantry Division, was airlifted into Ben Suc aboard 60 helicopters and seized the town.

West of the Saigon River, the 25th Infantry Division and 196th Light Infantry Brigade were placed in solid blocking positions.

Encirclement of the Iron Triangle was completed on D-Day+1 when four battalions of the 1st Infantry Division and two of the 173d Airborne Brigade were landed by helicopter.

Civilians were removed from the area by Vietnamese and American civic action teams and were relocated in government safe areas. Thus, the enemy was deprived of a civilian labor force, food, and military supplies. With civilians removed, the area became a free fire zone, depriving the VC of a safe-haven which had existed for 20 years.

With the objective of finding and destroying the Central Office South Vietnam, the supreme VC headquarters in South Vietnam, and to clear the zone of enemy forces and equipment, Operation Junction City was initiated.

After extensive bombing by the Air Force, three sides of the objective area were rimmed

Men of the BIG RED ONE find the going slow as they move through difficult terrain. Below, an RTO maintains radio contact with higher headquarters.



by a horseshoe of U.S. Forces. These included units from the 1st Infantry Division. 25th Infantry Division 173d Airborne Brigade, 196th Light Infantry Brigade and 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment.

Coordinated airmobile, airborne, and ground assaults blocked escape routes into Cambodia and the eastern portion of War Zone C. The 2d Battalion, 503d Infantry, 173d Airborne Brigade, made the first US combat parachute jump of the Vietnamese war. Then, combined elements of the 25th Division and the 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment swept northward into the horseshoe while two Vietnamese Marine battalions conducted an airmobile operation into its northwest sector. The operation swept all of western War Zone C.

The Revolutionary Development Program is designed and pursued in all its aspects by the Government of Vietnam. It is an integrated military and civil program to restore, consolidate, and expand government control so that nation building can progress throughout the Republic of Vietnam. Its aims are to liberate the people from Viet Cong control; restore public security; initiate political, economic, and social development; extend effective Government of Vietnam authority; and win the willing support of the people toward these ends.

II FFORCEV and all its units actively support Revolutionary Development. This support has taken the form of combat operations to reestablish security and government control, psychological and civic action operations in and around the villages.

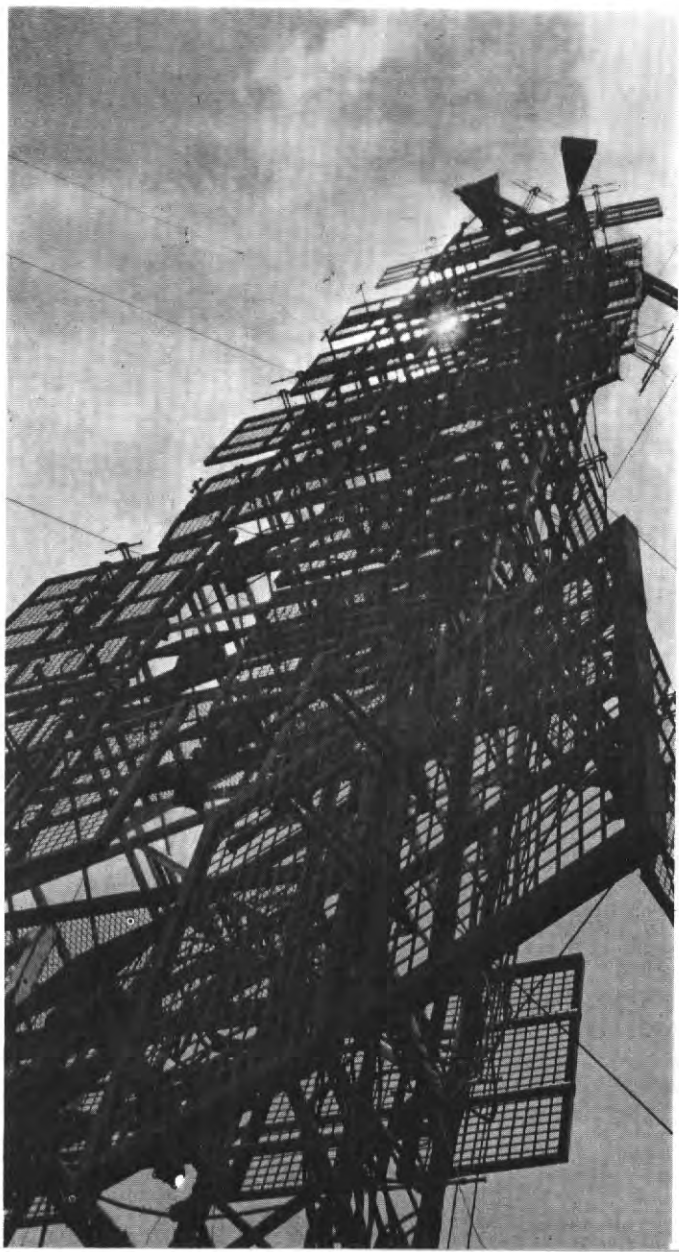


Major General George S. Eckhardt, Deputy Commanding General of II Field Force Vietnam visits with Military Advisor Teams in the III Corps area, accompanied by sector and subsector advisors.



HILL

Story by PFC Peter B. Bie
Photos by SP4 Evans King
53d Sig. Bn.



From Vietnam, the news about one hill seems much like that of another. Either a battle of major importance is fought on it, or it is being taken, retaken or lost.

But the news about Hill 837 seldom contains battle reports.

About 60 miles north-northeast of Saigon, the Hill juts from the thick jungle and rice paddy terrain, with its peak often above the clouds that cover 837 each day. The ride by helicopter, the only way on or off the hill, is always a race against the incoming weather. "We either get beaten or finish in a dead heat," noted one pilot.

At the top of Hill 837 are men from the 53d and 588th Signal Battalions, II Signal Group, whose job is keeping receivers and transmitters in running condition. Better known as Gia Ray Mountain, the Hill is one of many communications relay stations dotting the countryside, providing contact for hundreds of military units.

"We see to it that shots (calls) from our area are being transmitted on to the next station, said First Lieutenant John F. Tooles, officer-in-charge of the 588th. "We check circuits, boards and relays and monitor calls to make sure all shots are 'hitting' correct."

Neither the isolation nor the altitude (2,750 feet) seem to dampen the spirits of the men. They enjoy conveniences almost alien to any other war-time era—TV, radio, movies nightly, refrigerators in the barracks and three hot meals a day. Each man can rotate out at the end of three months, but most choose to stay atop Gia Ray. "It's not bad," commented a technician who has been on 837 since the site's construction over a year ago, "After awhile it seems to become a part of you."

837



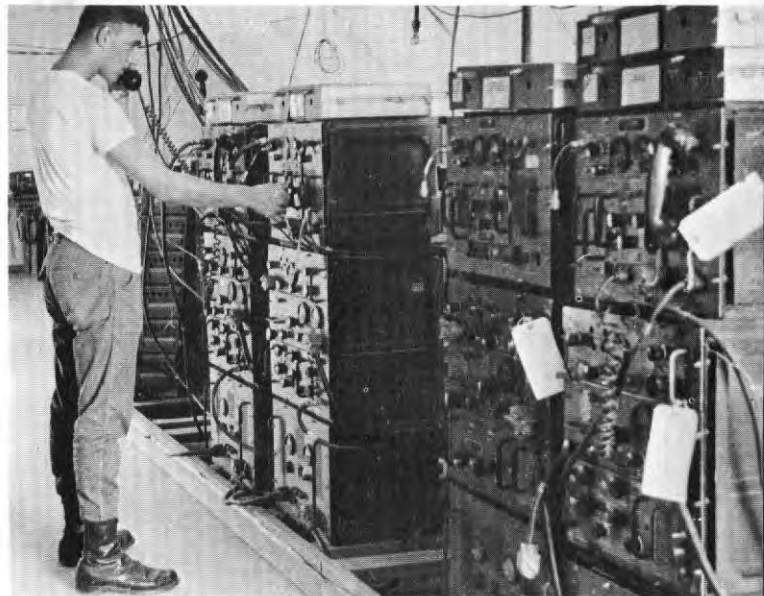
Security is provided by "Old Reliables."

But the big problem remains a routine one. "Many times we've gone without supplies or water," said First Lieutenant Ron W. Clegg, officer-in-charge of the 53d. "We're resupplied three times a week," he explained, watching the fast rising storm clouds, "but only if the weather permits."

Oddly enough, with the VC hiding in the mountainside jungle, incidents have been rare. The perimeter is guarded by infantrymen from the 9th Infantry Division who maintain a 24-hour watch. These men rotate out every week. On one occasion they exchanged small arms fire and grenades with the unseen enemy.

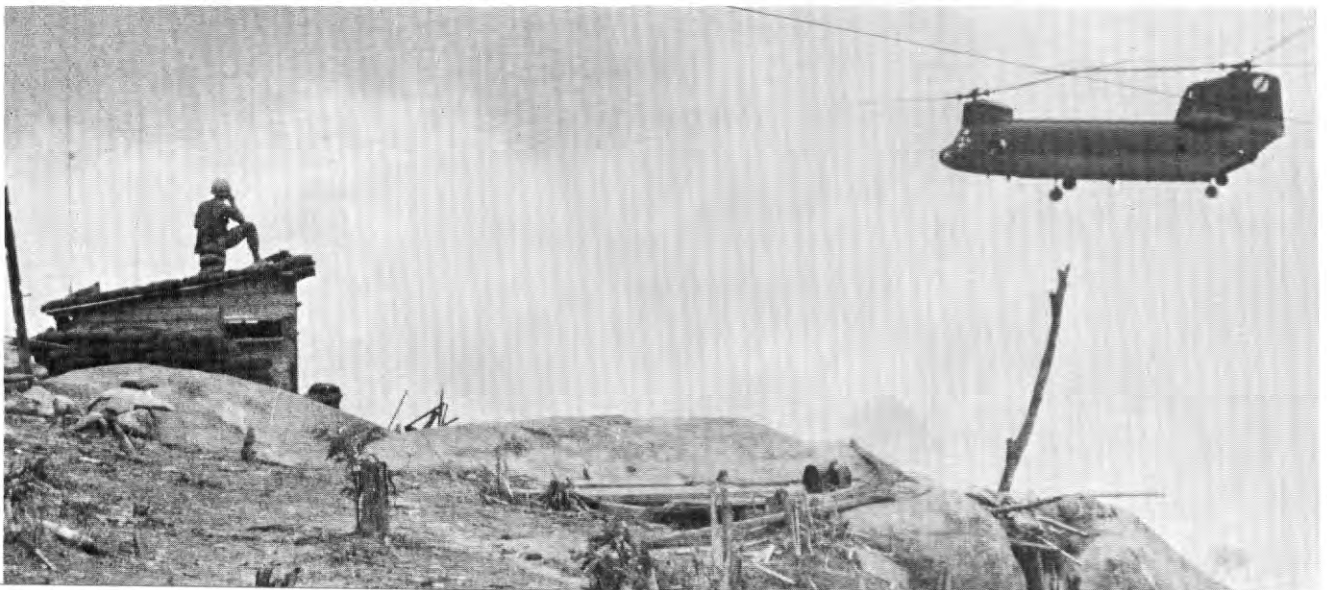
For the most part, life on Gia Ray is quiet—the silence broken by the sounds of crackling receivers and transmitters and the moaning wind.

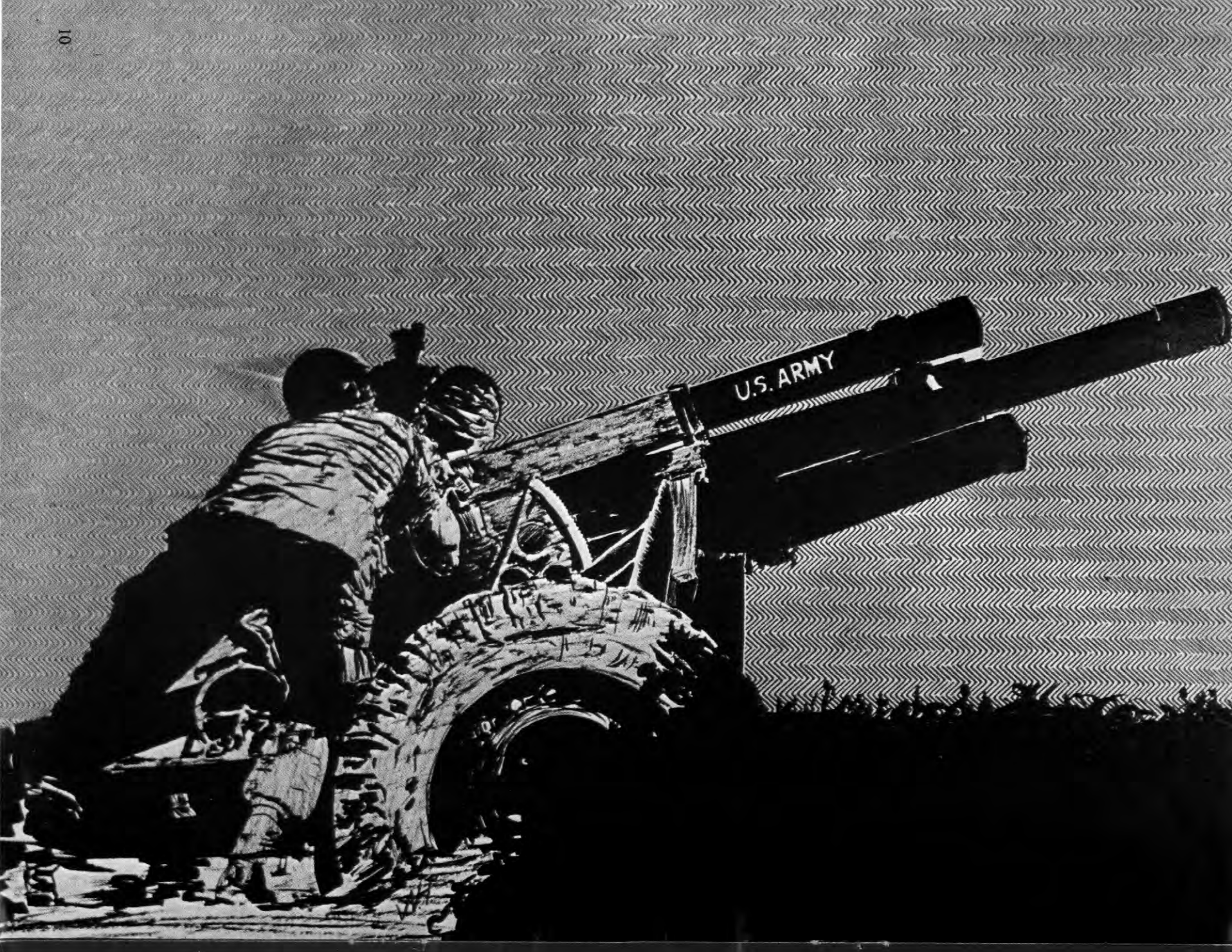
This link in the communications chain—Hill 837 and other stations like it is vital to the constant contact throughout the II Field Force area and Vietnam.

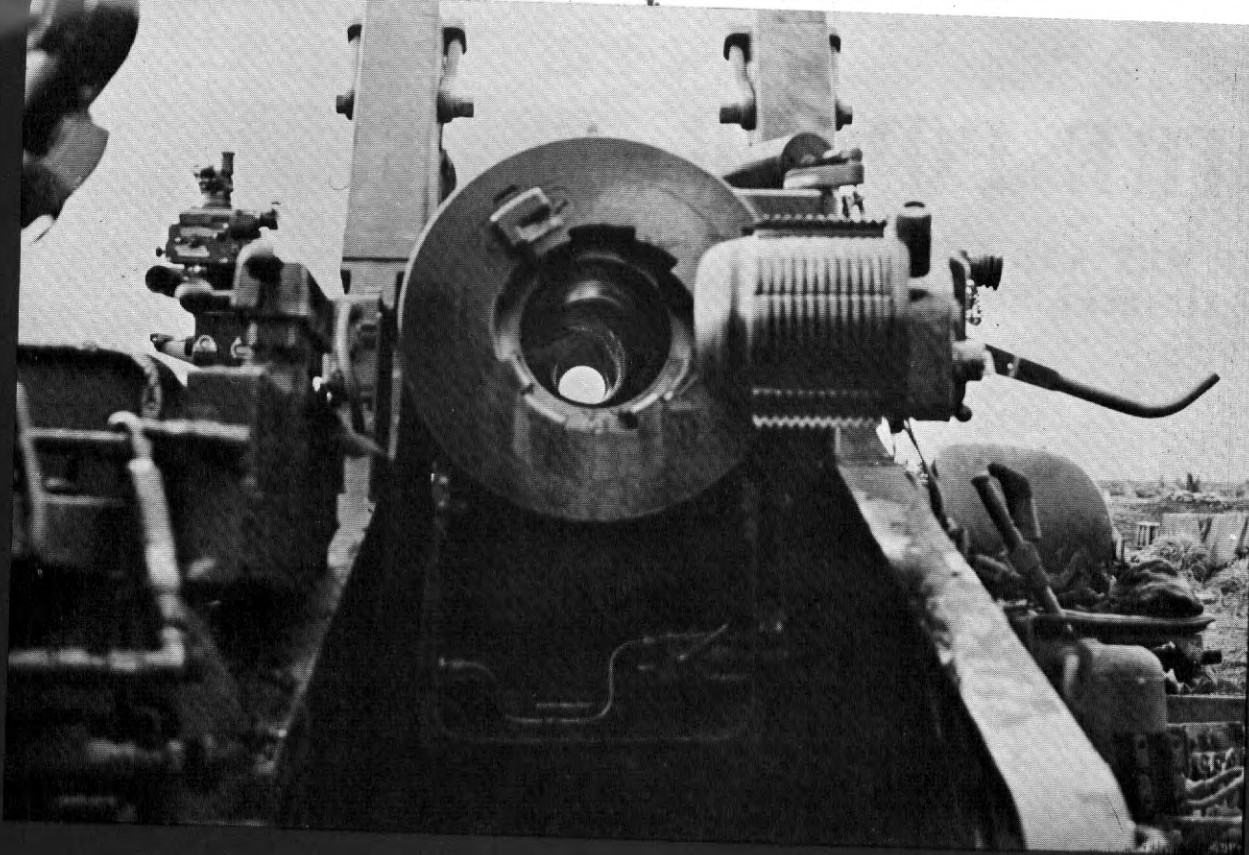


"We check circuits, boards and relays."

"... but only if the weather permits."







ARTILLERY

II Field Force Vietnam Artillery originated on 9 January 1944 as HQ and Hq Battery, XXII Corps Artillery, and was activated on 15 January 1944 at Fort Leonard Wood, Missouri. The headquarters saw action in Germany during World War II but was de-activated in that country on 20 January 1946 and allotted to the Organized Reserves, assigned to First Army. Re-designated on 31 August 1946 as HQ and HQ Battery, XII Corps Artillery, it was withdrawn from the Organized Reserve Corps and allotted to the Regular Army.

The headquarters was re-designated as II Field Force Artillery on 5 January 1965 and was activated on 17 January 1965 at Fort Sill, Oklahoma. It was re-designated II Field Force Vietnam Artillery on 15 March 1965 and on 20 January 1966 was assigned to CINCPAC. On 22 February 1966, an advance party deployed to Vietnam, followed on 10 March 1966 by the remaining elements. The headquarters became operational in combat on 15 March, gaining operational control of the 23d and 54th Artillery Groups. Headquarters, II Field Force Vietnam Artillery, is assigned to and co-located with Headquarters, II Field Force, at Long Binh and is responsible for providing additional artillery

support within the III Corps Tactical Zone.

Units of the II Field Force Vietnam Artillery support the US 1st, 9th, and 25th Infantry Divisions; 173d Airborne Brigade; 199th Light Infantry Brigade; 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment; 1st Australian Task Force, and all Army of the Republic of Vietnam units in III Corps area.

The 23d Artillery Group presently consists of the 1st Battalion, 27th Artillery (155MM SP); 2d Battalion, 13th Artillery (105MM Towed); 2d Battalion, 32 Artillery (8"-175MM SP); and the 6th Battalion, 27th Artillery (8"-175MM SP).

The 54th Artillery Group includes the 1st Battalion, 83d Artillery (8"-175MM SP); 2d Battalion, 35th Artillery (155MM SP); 7th Battalion, 8th Artillery (8"-175MM SP); and the 7th Battalion, 9th Artillery (105MM Towed).

In addition, the 5th Battalion, 2d Artillery (SP Automatic Weapons, Twin 40MM and Quad 50 Caliber "Dusters"; Searchlight Battery) and the 8th Battalion, 25th Artillery (Target Acquisition) are under the direct control of II Field Force Vietnam Artillery.

FIRE POWER

THE MEN AND EQUIPMENT
TO ACCOMPLISH THE MISSION



The menacing twin 40mm guns of the 5th Bn (AW) (SP) 2d Artillery.

Loading the big "8" howitzer.



General Murphy is prepared to pull the lanyard of a 105mm howitzer. The presence of Brigadier General Raymond P. Murphy is a familiar sight to the many cannoneers located with the firing batteries and battalions in base camps throughout the III Corps Tactical Zone. As a commander with a high interest in the activities of his officers and men, General Murphy can often be seen inspecting an artillery position, checking the bore of a howitzer or perhaps cocking an attentive ear toward a speaker as he is brought up to date on the latest action of II Field Force Vietnam Artillery Units.

Ready for a fire mission, a 105mm howitzer crew stands alert at their positions.



III CORPS: VALOROUS UNIT AWARD

Lieutenant General Fred C. Weyand, Commanding General of II Field Force, Vietnam, presented the 1st Battalion of the 43d Infantry Regiment with the valorous unit award during ceremonies held at Xuan Loc, the 18th Division Headquarters of the Army of South Vietnam.

General Weyand attaches the Valorous Unit Award to the guidon of 1st Battalion, 43d Regiment, Army of the Republic of Vietnam.



The Battalion Commander, CPT Pham Ngoc Linh, received the award for his unit while it was drawn up at attention in the compound. The red, white and blue streamer was attached to the Battalion's colors as the order was read presenting the Battalion the valorous unit award.

The unit won the Department of the Army award for its actions when it heroically defended the "New Life" Hamlet of Vo Xu against a numerically superior Viet Cong regiment.

When after three hours of fighting the Viet Cong regiment succeeded in penetrating the battalion's defensive perimeter and overrunning its command post, the battalion continued to fight, regrouped under the leadership of the 2d Company's Commanding Officer and expelled the enemy from its position, although badly outnumbered.

The citation goes on to say, "The action of the 1st Battalion, 43d Infantry Regiment, in defending, holding and later counter attacking a well armed enemy force more than four times its size, ranks as one of the outstanding accomplishments of the Vietnamese conflict and is in the highest tradition of military service."

LT. GEN. LE NGUYEN KHANG

The presentation ceremony was attended by the III Corps Commander, LTG Le Nguyen Khang, as well as the Division Commander, COL Do-Ke Gia, and the Regimental Commander, LTC Lam Quang Chinh.

Lieutenant General Le Nguyen Khang, III Corps Commanding General, entered the service in 1952 as a Second Lieutenant following his graduation from the Nam Dinh Reserve Army Academy. He served with the Rivery Forces in North Vietnam until 1954 when he joined the Marine Corps. In 1960 he became Commandant of the Marine Corps.

In June 1965 General Khang was given the assignment of Commanding General of the Capital Military District and Military Governor of Saigon-Gia Dinh. Latter the same month he was also given the position of Commanding General III Corps and III Corps Tactical Zone.

He is presently serving concurrently in all three positions: Commanding General III Corps and III Corps Tactical Zone, Commandant of the Marine Corps, and Military Governor

Saigon-Gia Dinh.

General Khang's military education included the Advanced Infantry Course at Fort Benning, Georgia in 1956 and the Marine Corps School at Quantico, Virginia, in 1958.

During his service General Khang has received numerous awards and decorations including the National Order of Vietnam, 2nd Class which is the Republic of South Vietnam's second highest award. His other medals include: Air Force Distinguished Service Order, Navy Distinguished Service Order, 5 Gallantry Crosses with Palm, Gallantry Cross with Gold Star, and 2 Gallantry Crosses with Silver Star.

General Khang was born in Sontay, North Vietnam on June 11th 1931 and is the eldest son of Mr. Le Nguyen Chan and Nguyen Thi Kinh. The family includes five brothers and three sisters.

Madame Khang, whose name is Nguyen Thi Minh Thu, was born in 1938. They have one son and two daughters.



RD: TOP PRIORITY IN TAY NINH PROVINCE

The pacification program in III Corps area is given top priority and is proceeding at a fantastic rate. Tay Ninh province is a valid example of the pacification program as it is being put into practice in III Corps. There are at present a total of 11 Revolutionary Development teams in Tay Ninh province totaling 674 members. A total of 80 such teams have been formed in the III Corps area since January of this year.

Nineteen "New Life" hamlets are being built throughout the province. Selfhelp projects include the building of houses, religious centers, schools and hospitals, as well as the digging of wells. Sixty-nine teachers are being trained to fill the sixty-nine new class rooms under construction. Twenty-three kilometers of road are being improved. An additional service of the Revolutionary Development program is the operation of a rock crushing plant near Tay Ninh city. The rock is provided free of charge to any one having a need for it; the only stipulation is that the customer must provide his own means of transporting the crushed rock. The rock, of course, is important as a building material.

The hamlet of Trung Luu, located seven kilometers southeast of Tay Ninh City, has an interesting history. For the six-year period ending in June of 1966 this hamlet had been a district headquarters for the Viet Cong, and was uncontested as a Viet Cong area. In just one year, this former Viet Cong stronghold was transformed into a model "New Life" hamlet as declared by Premier Ky during a visit to the hamlet. He stated that the hamlet with a population of 1,750 was considered one of the best in all of South Vietnam.

The new hamlet was started just three months ago on land donated by the Cao Dai religious order. It is a community effort built for the people of the community, and just as important, built by the people of the community. A labor pool was formed to include bricklayers, carpenters, electricians and other skilled and unskilled workers.

The population of the hamlet is expected to increase considerably as more and more families are relocated there. A popular forces unit is assigned to provide the area security, as is the case with all such hamlets.

Construction of four canals within the pro-

vince is underway to help major rivers as water supplies for the rice paddies. The canals will cover some 11 kilometers with nine kilometers already in operation.

A total of 135,000 \$VN has been allotted to each of the 19 hamlets for animal husbandry. The money will be used to purchase pigs and chickens, as well as veterinary drugs, seeds, and the construction of pig styes and chicken coups and the training of farmers in new and more effective farm methods.

A fishing wharf, drying yard, and landing stage are also under construction and facilities for the distribution of boats and motors are being organized.

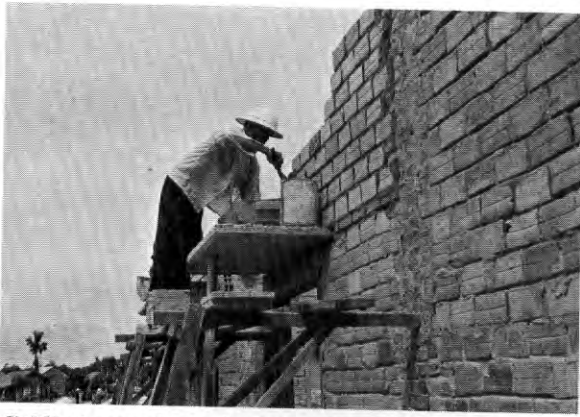
In the field of medicine, 10 maternity wards and dispensaries are presently under construction. The province will train their own health workers in an overall education program that will take approximately two years.

Four rural electric power plants are under construction at a total cost of six million piasters. A motor pool has been established and funds have been allotted to buy vehicles and provide a complete maintenance shop with tools, tires and a petroleum storage area, in addition to providing laborers to maintain the operation. The people of the province will have the use of the transportation throughout the hamlets to carry their crops and livestock to market. Two warehouses have also been started to provide storage area for crops.

Tay Ninh Province covers 380,000 square kilometers, and has a border with Cambodia that is 210 kilometers long. The province is further divided into four districts containing 28 vilages and 150 recognised hamlets. Currently 240,000 of the total population of 280,000 are living in pacified areas with the remaining area undergoing development.

It is estimated that there are approximately six thousand Viet Cong or Viet Cong sympathizers within the province. The Revolutionary Development Program has shown a marked effect on these personnel as is evidenced by the 600 who rallied to the government side to date.

The program underway in Tay Ninh Province is a classic example of what the Vietnamese people will do when given the opportunity.



Selfhelp projects include the building



of houses



religious centers and schools



as well as the digging of wells.

ARVN LIEUTENANT RECEIVES BRONZE STAR

1st Lt. Nguyen Van Tanh, Army of the Republic of Vietnam was presented the U. S. Army's Bronze Star Medal with "V" device for valor recently by Lt. Gen. Frederick C. Weyand, Commanding General II Field Force, Vietnam.

Lieutenant Tanh distinguished himself by aiding in the recovery of a helicopter downed by intense enemy fire. On May 25, Lieutenant Tanh was serving as the intelligence officer for the 7th Regiment, 5th ARVN Infantry Division. The unit had engaged with the enemy in a fiercely fought two-hour battle.

A helicopter supporting the action was shot down and could not be reached by ground forces. Immediately Lieutenant Tanh organized a small force and executed an air assault into the vicinity of the downed chopper to protect both the crew and the downed aircraft. The assault force had to set down about 200 meters from the downed craft because of the intense enemy fire.

Lieutenant Tanh and his men fought their way to the craft and quickly set up a perimeter encouraging his men and directing suppressive fire

on the enemy. As a result a recovery ship was able to helilift the damaged aircraft out of the battle zone.

As the force departed the area the recovery helicopter was shot down by intense VC automatic weapons and rocket fire. Although Lieutenant Tanh was injured in the crash, he assisted in aiding the more seriously injured and then led his force and the crew of the downed chopper to safety.



Each month the Hurricane will feature one of the units under operational control of II Field Force Vietnam. This month we feature the 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment, the "Blackhorse Regiment."

Throughout its sixty-six year history, the 11th ACR has served with pride and distinction. In 1916, under orders from General John J. Pershing, the Blackhorse Regiment entered Mexico in search of the Mexican bandit Pancho Villa. Their many outstanding achievements caused the *New York World* to write: "Among many instances of achievement since the troops entered Mexico, one to the lasting of the regiment stands out among the rest—the time when 208 men of the 11th Cavalry were cut loose from all communication on a desert march. On an issue of five days rations, the column, in twenty days marched 571 miles, only 100 less than the distance from Paris to Berlin.

"The country through which they marched was a desert waste. It afforded no fodder and only at long intervals was there water for the horses. During the entire march they were beyond reach of relief. They fought several engagements and suffered only one fatality. It is doubted if there are cavalrymen in the armies of Europe capable of equalling this feat."

On 7 September 1966 the Blackhorse Regiment arrived at Vung Tau, Vietnam and were back in Southeast Asia after an absence of 65 years. As in the Philippine campaigns of 1901 and 1902, where the Regiment won its spurs by quelling the insurgent uprising, the "Cav" was again faced with a counter-insurgency war. Less than three weeks after arriving in Vietnam the Armored Cavalry Assault Vehicles and tanks of the Regiment were in action against the Viet Cong.

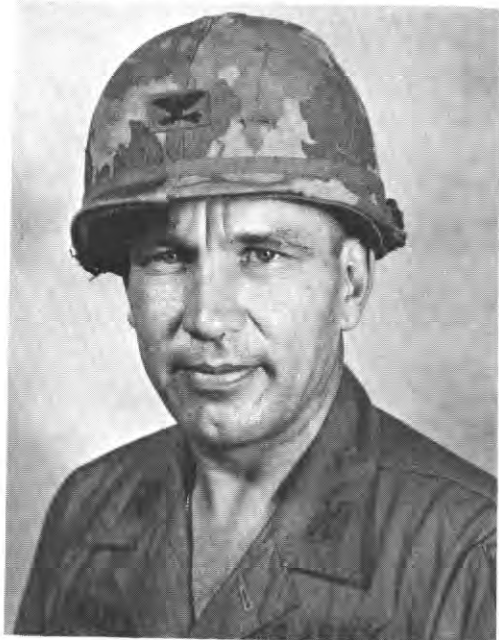
Throughout the years, the 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment has earned and upheld its motto, "Allons" (Let's Go).

The 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment

editor

THE BLACKHORSE

*Colonel Roy W. Farley
Commanding Officer, 11th ACR*



Since its arrival in Vietnam last August the 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment has proven conclusively that armor has a vital role in the counterinsurgency effort.

The Blackhorse Regiment's main fighting vehicles are 51 M48A3 Patton Tanks and 300 Armored Cavalry Assault Vehicles (ACAVs). The ACAV is an M113 personnel carrier modified with two extra side-mounted M-60 machine guns with shields and hatch armor around the commander's cupola.

Combined with the 19 gunships of the Air Cavalry Troop, this firepower and mobility has been used to open and protect lines of communications, spearhead multi-division offenses into enemy strongholds and to conduct search and clear operations.

Civic actions and Rural Development have been integrated into the 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment's daily activities.

Virtually every operation sees the Blackhorse troopers working with ARVN units, National Police, Rural Forces, Popular Forces, Revolutionary Development Teams, Vietnamese Information Service (VIS) personnel or other officials to increase the influence of the government of Vietnam over the hundreds of villages and hamlets around the Blackhorse Base Camp, 40 miles east of Saigon.



The 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment arrives at Vung Tau, Vietnam.

The Chieu Hoi Center near Xuan Loc has started furniture-making and swine-raising industries with advice and material from the 11th Cavalry. Returnees under this program have led the Blackhorse troopers to enemy bases and have participated in psychological operations.

To promote good will and safety and to increase prestige of village officials, the Cavalry has started a "Candy Wagon" program. After VIS representatives have prepared a village, a truck arrives with candy, soap or milk donated by the troopers from sundry packs. The village chief makes the distribution and the children are told to stay away from the road when convoys pass, since candy will not be thrown from the moving vehicles.

During Operation Emporia in July of this year, a major effort was made to upgrade the defenses of Regional Forces/Popular Forces outposts in the northern portion of Long Khanh Province.

In combat, the Blackhorse Regiment, as the only independent armor command in Vietnam, proved its value in such major operations as Cedar Falls, Junction City I and II and Manhattan. The jungle-busting armor has provided the necessary thrust to quickly place forces in position around enemy strongholds.

Operating independently, the Cavalry has secured the Vo Dat rice harvest, opened up National Route 2 which runs south from Xuan Loc to the coast, protected engineer work parties clearing undergrowth from the economically vital Highway 20, which goes to Dalat, and daily escorts logistical convoys from Long Binh to the Forward Support Area at the Blackhorse Base Camp.

The armor has operated in terrain from the dense primary jungle to the edge of the Delta. No season or terrain has stopped the tracked vehicles of the Regiment.

It's an action war—a go-get-em war. But it's also a waiting war. Sgt. Stewart E. Nelson of Amery, Wisconsin, waits this one out in the cupola of his Armored Cavalry Assault Vehicle (ACAV).



11th ACR

W A G O N T R A I N



Providing security for the Long Binh "Wagon Train."

Everyone agrees that the military effort in Vietnam would shudder to a halt without the extensive logistical system now in operation.

A good example of day to day support is the supply lifeline to the 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment's base camp at Long Giao. Virtually all goods move by the Wagon Train, nickname for the daily convoy making the 60 miles round trip to the Long Binh supply area.

Since the base camp was hacked out of the jungle last November, 3,360 tons of construction material have been hauled in by the convoy,

including 22,000 bags of cement, 15,000 feet of culvert and one and a half million board feet of lumber.

The 1st Logistical Command and 11th Cavalry drivers, piloting everything from a 1/4-ton truck to a 10-ton "Dragon Wagon" tank transporter, have pulled into Blackhorse Base Camp with everything from furniture, food and a fire truck to gasoline, grenades and goats. 10,000 tons of all classes of supply were delivered in April, a typical month.

In the 183 convoys so far this year, 10,585 vehicles have traveled 335,741 miles. If all these vehicles were lined up bumper to bumper, they would extend 70 miles. Moving down the road, the convoy would be 428 miles long, the air distance from Saigon to Bangkok, or driving in the States, from Los Angeles to San Francisco. If you were sitting in a road side cafe watching this imaginary convoy go by, you'd be drinking coffee for 14 hours.

The skilled drivers face dirt roads that are either mud-slick or a shower of dust. At the end of the line, cargo must be unloaded, new goods reloaded, and maintenance performed before the return trip starts hours later.

Since most of the trip is over unsecured roads, the drivers always wear their armored vest and helmet while moving and have their weapons at the ready. This preparedness paid off when the VC attempted to ambush the convoy on 21 Nov.

All drivers caught in the "killing zone" dismounted and helped their escort vehicles hold off the VC until a reaction force arrived. VC body count that day was 30.

Usually unglamorous, entirely essential, the Long Binh Wagon Train continues providing people, pickles, pencils, parts, petroleum and everything else it takes to keep a combat command clicking.

Mapping the convoy route.





Members of L Troop, 3d Squadron, 11th ACR display weapons captured from a VC base camp near the Cambodian border.

The 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment is not only making armor history in Vietnam, but is helping to preserve it.

Since arriving in Vietnam last September, the Blackhorse Regiment has shipped an assortment of captured enemy material to the Patton Museum at Fort Knox, Ky.

Also, in a fund drive just completed, the Regiment raised more than \$6,600 for the new, \$3-million Patton Museum, soon to be constructed. Some of the NCO's gave \$100 and C Troop led unit donations with \$1,357 for an average of \$6.85 per man.

Included in the 100,000 square foot museum will be a Viet Cong rifle, machine gun, carbine and rocket launcher captured by the Regiment. A complete uniform and set of field gear will show the museum visitor how the individual Viet Cong is outfitted. Also displayed will be captured medicine, propaganda posters, grenades and other equipment.

Major Bruce R. Nilsson, of Meridith, N. H., the Regimental Historian, is in charge of the fund drive and ships the captured equipment to the museum. "The only thing we need now," Maj Nilsson said, "is a VC tank."

The Armored Cavalry Assault Vehicle (ACAV) has often used its firepower and mobility to open and protect lines of communication, spearhead multi-division offenses into enemy strongholds and to conduct search and clear operations.





BASE CAMP BASICS

CU CHI, Vietnam (IO)—“Cu Chi, Cu Chi, worst place I ever did see,” laments the lyrics of a song written by a 25th Division Infantryman. But this lament was written in February, 1966 shortly after the 2d Brigade arrived at its then dusty new home.

Newsmen who visited the base camp early that year now say they wouldn't believe it's the same place. Roads that were once covered with choking foot-deep dust or soft unnavigable mud—depending on the time of day—are now paved and useable in any weather.

The disorganized array of tents which were both quarters and offices have given way to a cantonment of uniform tent-kits, keeping both men and gear out of the mud, and to a large extent, away from the ever present insects.

Even now tent-kit offices are being torn down to be replaced by customized quonset huts, or in some cases, air conditioned corrugated steel buildings with cement slab floors.

Nearly every military operation adds something to the base camp area when the troops return. Often referred to as “company beautification” entire battalions now have palm tree-lined sidewalks, or small rubber plants, or flowers.

It has been said that the war in Vietnam is one of the strangest ever fought. Rarely, if ever in a combat zone, did a soldier go out to do battle carrying cameras, transistor radios and his basic military equipment, knowing that when he pulls back to the forward base area there will be a cold beer or soft drink waiting for him.

Certainly then, comforts and conveniences have become a significant part in the life of the 25th Division “Tropic Lightning” soldier stationed at CU Chi. Companies compete with each other, and battalions play the game of one-upmanship to devise new and better creature-comforts which can mean the difference between high or low morale.

Cleanliness may be next to Godliness, but at Cu Chi it is a reminder of civilization that keeps moral high. The evolution of the shower these past months almost equals the development of the wheel by the cavemen.

Originally showers consisted of a 55-gallon oil drum on an overhead rack with a punctured tin can for a showerhead, but “Tropic Lightning” ingenuity has come up with improvement upon improvement in the base camp's bathing system.

Many varieties of showers exist, all efficiently

servicing their function. First came the quarter-master power shower, with a nearly unlimited supply of water from an adjacent well, electrically pumped out of the ground, sent coursing through pipes into a tent where it emerges violently to cleanse the 18 or 20 bodies jockeying for position near the eight shower-heads.

Sensing the need to ease the load on the quarter-master shower unit, battalions went to work. Airplane wing tanks were hoisted high in the air and several shower outlets were connected on platforms below. Some units went so far as to pressurize the tanks and to build benches for the men to change clothes.

Then the 25th Aviation Battalion came up with the ultimate—at least till now—in unit water systems. First, they hoisted a wing tank vertically so it looks like a rocket waiting for launch (after all, it is an aviation unit), then they dug a well, installed a pump, and connected it to keep the tank constantly filled. Not satisfied with this labor-saving device, the men went even further. They installed underground pipes, and now throughout the battalion area shower buildings and water faucets produce a constant supply of running water.

A lot has also been done to improve what must be considered the greatest morale factor of all—food. From meals of C-rations heated in GI cans and eaten on crude benches outdoors, the division has progressed through tent-kit mess halls with outdoor serving lines to modern half-brick, screened-in, cement-floored, nearly monsoon-proof dining rooms. And with the establishment of more efficient supply systems, fresh “A-rations” are reaching the troops more often.

Finally, the last “way back when” tale.

Catching a helicopter to the field or to Saigon once was a matter of sitting on the chopper pad located near the present division artillery headquarters, and running up to each ship as it landed, determining its destination and trying to hitch a ride.

Now, however, progress and sophistication have set in. No longer do the 25th Division soldiers have to homestead on the landing pad to get a ride. No longer is each chopper pilot approached from all sides with request for rides to all places. With a call to the helipad, the weary soldier can be assured—almost—of a scheduled flight to his chosen destination.

And this, too, is progress.

"How was it over there?"

Just as sure as you are reading this, you are going to be asked this question when you have completed your tour in Vietnam and have returned home.

How are you going to answer it?

Your friends and neighbors and family are going to listen to what you have to say because you will have been here. You will have first-hand experiences and information upon which to draw. You will be considered an authority, an "expert", if you will, on the subject. Your word will be taken above that of the TV commentator or the daily newspapers.

Are you an expert?

Have you really made an effort to learn something about Vietnam, its people, its customs, its religions, its government and its problems? Have you studied books and periodicals, worked with the people in Civic Action projects, met them as friends when the situation permitted it, acquainted yourself with their long history, traditions and way of doing things, examined their efforts in the light of what you have been told about our reasons for being in Vietnam?

Or have you drawn your opinions, experiences and information from the alleyways and the bars, from prejudice and frustration, from rumor and hearsay? Have you closed your mind to a people who have requested our aid and our assistance so that you see nothing beyond the fact that their standard of living is not as high as ours?

We often hear that the American serviceman of today is the most well informed and the best educated in the history of our nation. It is true! This is why it is possible to take him from his civilian environment and put him into a combat area such as Vietnam within the span of a few months.

It seems only right that you do your best to be informed about all aspects of your service in Vietnam. Thousands of others have. Your unit and command newspapers regularly tell of individual and unit achievements in all areas of the nation-building effort of which you are a part—a soldier-ambassador.

"How was it over there?" Keep an open mind and an open heart and be prepared to answer the question truthfully, factually and with pride in yourself and your comrades-in-arms. (MACV)





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