

GIMLET NEWS



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3d Battalion, 21st Infantry

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HEAD GIMLET DEPARTS

After six months of inspiring leadership, Lieutenant Colonel Robert C. Bacon relinquishes command of the Gimlets. On 15 February a change of command ceremony will take place and the new Battalion Commander, LTC John M. Misch, will assume command.

LTC Bacon took over as Commander of 3-21 Infantry during the month of August, while the Gimlets were engaged in fierce fighting against the 2d NVA Division in the southwestern section of our area of operations. His initial duties saw him on the ground and personally leading his new command to a complete victory.

As the rice gathering months approached, LTC Bacon initiated a rice denial program aimed at prohibiting the enemy's access to the abundant rice crop so vital to his existence. The program was an immediate success; over 40 tons of rice were confiscated in a two month period.

LTC Bacon was no stranger to Vietnam when he arrived at LZ Center. In 1964, he served his first tour in Vietnam as Battalion Advisor to the 2d Battalion, 3d Regiment, 1st ARVN Division.

Prior to serving in Vietnam, LTC Bacon had a varied and interesting career. After receiving his commission at West Point in 1956, LTC Bacon attended Fixed Wing Aviator School and served two and one-half years in Germany as an aviator with the 3d Armor Division. He has also seen duty as aid to Lieutenant General Train, Commander of the First Army Area.

While serving in Germany, LTC Bacon met his wife Irene, a professional ice skater. LTC and Mrs. Bacon are the proud parents of three boys. Mrs. Bacon and the boys are presently residing in Falls Church, Virginia.

LTC Bacon's awards earned while leader of the Gimlets include the Silver Star, the Legion of Merit (pending), the Bronze Star with "V" Device, the Air Medal with First Oak Leaf Cluster (2d, 3d, 4th and 5th Cluster pending), and the Vietnamese Cross of Gallantry with Palm.

We know the rest of the Battalion will join THE GIMLET NEWS in wishing him the best for the remainder of his tour as Senior Advisor to the 51st ARVN Regiment.

A FAREWELL MESSAGE

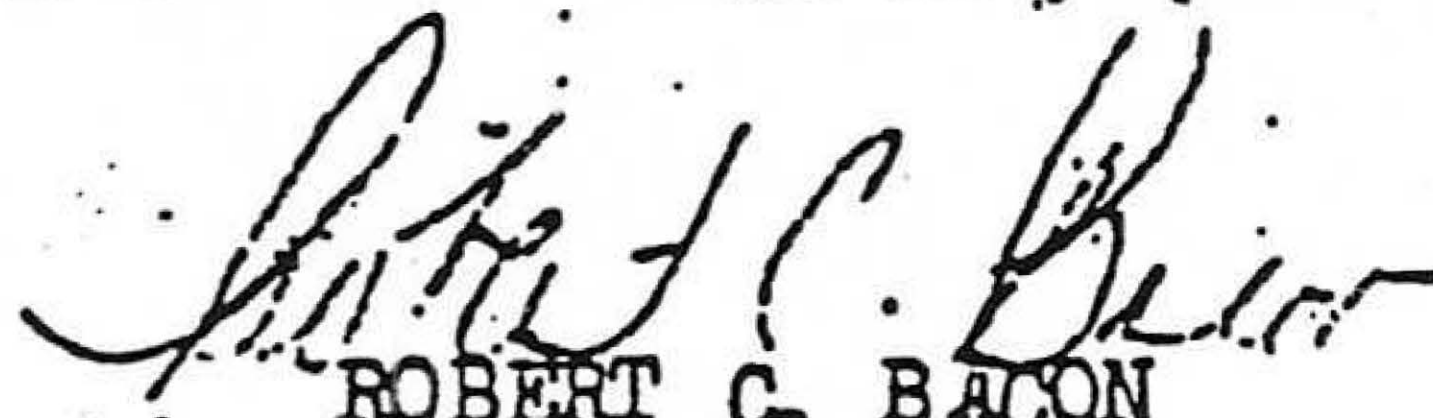
Upon my departure from 3d Battalion, 21st Infantry I wish to thank each and every one of you for the loyalty and support you have given me over the past six months. On numerous occasions we have fought and defeated well equipped NVA and VC forces. These victories have been possible because of the leadership, professionalism and teamwork that radiates from every element in the Battalion. Of course the bulk of the credit goes to the gallant and courageous American infantry men who closes with and eliminates the enemy. However, each of you has played a significant role in defeating the enemy.

To mention a few: The mess hall that works day and night to insure that our men are properly fed. The communications platoon, who work with little sleep and have provided us with the best communications of any battalion in the Division. The mortars, 81's and 4.2, and the 106 section who have time and again, both in the field and on Center, provided us the accurate, timely, close and continuous support that has given us an additional edge on the enemy. Our superbly trained nurses who have time and again shared the rigors of combat and risked their lives to save their fellow man. Our service platoon and the company supply representa-

tives that insure that the units in the field have everything they need to achieve victory. Our reconnaissance platoon that operates as a small but effective fighting force constantly gathering information on the enemy. Our motor pool which is the finest I have ever seen and provides us support on Center as well as support the myriad of functions necessary in Chu Lai to support the Battalion. Our S and T Section who have expended a tremendous amount of time and energy to correct and update our supply records and have constantly worked and checked with higher headquarters to insure we receive all the vital equipment to fight the battle. The radar section that works all night every night to give us surveillance on the enemy. Our Chaplains who constantly give us support and spiritual encouragement. My faithful staff and BTOC personnel who with crisp efficiency and dedication solve daily a multitude of problems. And none of us can forget the magnificent job that has been done for the Gimlets by our artillery, Forward Air Controllers and Kit-Carson Scouts in helping us attain victory. Words cannot express my admiration for our Sergeant Major and leaders at all levels who have cheerfully accepted all missions and carried them through to successful conclusions. Being limited on space there are many of you I have not mentioned—but I do appreciate your contributions.

Working together we have been able to achieve a very high 18 to 1 kill ratio. This is because each of you has worked together and done your job. Your new Battalion Commander, LTC John M. Misch, is imminently well qualified to command this unit and I know you will support him to the fullest and under his guidance raise the reputation of the Gimlets to new heights.

I salute each and every one of you and commend you for your outstanding contributions. My hopes and prayers are that each of you will return and enjoy a happy and successful future.


ROBERT C. BACON
LTC, Infantry
Commanding

BUSHMASTERS UNCOVER CACHES

The Bravo Co "Bushmasters" have made significant finds of large enemy weapons caches recently. Two caches were uncovered during a one week period, both with the aid of recent Chieu Hoi.

The first rallier led Bravo Company to a sizable cache consisting of three bangalore torpedos, 2 mortar rounds, 38 RPG rounds and 2000 rounds of rifle & machine gun ammunition.

"The cache was well hidden along the side of a trail," said PFC Clark Taylor (Leesburg, Florida).

Several days later, a patrol from B Company confiscated over 16,000 rounds of rifle and machine gun ammo and 48 mortar and anti-tank rounds.

The patrol left their night position early in the morning and were guided by a Hoi Chanh who had mustered the night before.

"We followed a trail to the base of a hill," recalled SP4 Ray Fruge (De Quincey, La.), "Then the rallier led us down a smaller path."

The path was overgrown with brush but the Bushmasters plowed into it for 400 meters. Then they came to several walls terraced one above the other. Here the Hoi Chanh stopped.

"We saw two booby traps placed in front of the walls," said PFC Arlyn Schroeder (Menona, Iowa).

The Americans disarmed the booby traps and began to search the walls.

"We found ammo everywhere," said PFC

Schroeder. "It was behind, under and around the stones."

The cache consisted of 9,700 rounds of rifle ammunition, 6,680 rounds of machine gun ammunition, 42 anti-tank rounds and 6 mortar shells.

NO TOUR CHANGE
FOR MEN IN RVN

WASHINGTON (AFPS)—The 12 month tour established in 1965 for troops serving in the Republic of Vietnam has been frequently reviewed," according to Defense officials.

So far, the officials report, "circumstances have precluded any reductions" in the tour length.

Among the reasons given are:

--The effect of tour length on the operations readiness of the overseas forces.

--The ability of the services to support short-term rotation within authorized numerical strength and skill resources.

--The movements generated by increased movement of personnel to and from overseas areas.

Officials also cited the turbulence that would be created in activities located in the United States which must continually supply personnel for overseas shipment and absorb returning personnel.

So much for the latest rumor!!

GIMLET SCORE BOARD

January	February
Enemy killed.....113	4.....Enemy killed
Chieu Hoi.....19	0.....Chieu Hoi
Weapons captured.....29	2.....Weapons captured

THE GIMLET NEWS is an authorized biweekly publication of the 3d Battalion, 21st Infantry. The views expressed are not necessarily those of the Department of the Army.

LTC ROBERT C BACON...Commanding Officer
SGT DAVID R McKEON....Editor-in-Chief
SP4 RICHARD T WASHINGTON.....Designer
SP4 THOMAS J HOOTEK.....Acting Editor

BLACK DEATH ANNIHILATES NVA

During early January, members of the 2d Platoon of Black Death and elements of armored cavalry killed 39 NVA and confiscated a large weapons cache in bitter fighting 14 miles northwest of Tam Ky.

B Company, 3-21 and F Troop, 17th Cav were moving along in a column when they spotted several NVA moving into a woodline.

After returning small arms fire the infantrymen moved in to search the area.

"Within minutes," said SSG Steve Rivenburgh (Mesa, Ariz.), "they started firing automatic weapons and RPG rounds at us."

The Americans hit back hard. While the infantrymen continued to shoot back, the tracks poured machine gun fire and canister rounds at the enemy.

The Americans then assaulted the woodline. Armor and infantry moved side-by-side. They pushed 200 meters before the terrain became rocky.

A subsequent search of the area revealed 4 RPG's with launchers, 2 machine guns, one complete 60mm mortar, and 16 AK-47 rifles.

TIGERS TERMINATE VC ENLISTMENT

Charlie Tigers were again successful in eliminating the enemy. In action 9 January C Company observed several VC attempting to evade. The unit engaged the enemy with machine gun fire which terminated another VC enlistment.

VC were coming out of a woodline and moving along a rice paddy field. Specialist 4th Class Roger Sinclair (Browning, Mont.). Two of the enemy reached the cover of the woodline but the third sought the safety of a bunker.

C Co was on a sweep 6 miles Northwest of Tam Ky when the action occurred.

EDITOR'S NOTE - SGT David R. McKee, Editor-in-Chief of THE GIMLET NEWS is presently home on emergency leave. At last report his father is doing fine.

A CO. FINDS VC BASE CAMP

In early afternoon operations, Alpha "Annihilators" uncovered a Viet Cong base camp 12 miles northwest of Tam Ky.

On a routine search and clear mission, an A Co patrol entered a large structure area which possessed all the earmarks of a VC base camp. Of the six structures in the area, two were 10 x 20 meters, two 10 x 10 meters, and two 10 x 5 meters.

"One of the largest ones contained shackles," said SSG John Borrelli (Lawrence, Mass.) "enough to restrain nine people. The second large structure appeared to be used for a mess hall; a third was used as a latrine; while the three remaining and smaller ones housed sleeping quarters."

In and around the base camp were found one canteen, kitchen utensils, a pick and a hoe. In addition, parts of an RPG along with two fully loaded AK magazines and some loose ammo were found.

"All around the area," continued SSG Borrelli, "were numerous trails leading in every direction. We took one leading eastward and 200 meters away found two observation points." These sites contained several enemy documents, which were extracted to LZ Center for closer examination.

Meanwhile the remainder of Alpha Co made sure the base camp would no longer be useful to the enemy.

EARLY DISCHARGE LESSENS SCHOOL ENTITLEMENTS

WASHINGTON (AFPS)--Some servicemen who are discharged early may be losing part of their G.I. Bill education benefits, the Veterans Administration warns. "Some servicemen who are separated after 17 months of service are entitled to only 25 months of educational assistance, the VA said, while those who are separated a month later are entitled to the full 36 months.

VA has asked each service to insure that the servicemen leaving active duty understands the 18-month qualification for full VA educational benefits.

ECO. 4.2, RECON

HEADQUARTERS CO. NEWS

During recent weeks 4.2 mortars have been called upon to fulfill a variety of requests for support. In addition to the usual program of H & I's and perimeter illumination, the big mortars have been firing preps for the line elements, at enemy troops, intelligence grids and defcons. for the companies in the field. Also, on several nights the RF-PF forces in Nui Loc Son have requested illumination and HE support.

In addition to providing support for the hill and line companies, Echo personnel have been improving defenses on the east end of the hill and helping to double the perimeter wire around the entire hill. The extra man hours put in by these personnel have increased the security of the eastern end of the perimeter and contributed to an improved appearance of the hill.

Recon, having returned with a full complement, has returned to its previous haunts as a semi-permanent OP. The new strength of Recon should enable the platoon to increase its effectiveness and provide stronger surveillance operations. With two heavy weapons attached, the self defense capabilities of the "Assassins" has also been heightened. A radar team also aids in Recon's mission.

A new year has brought a new face to LZ Center. The hill looks like it did a month ago only from several hundred feet up, and not even then to the keen eye. A great deal of work by Headquarters Company, along with personnel on the hill temporarily, has gone into the building of several new bunkers from scratch. Included are a new quad 50 bunker and two new engineer bunkers for personnel involved in this construction and in otherwise improving the hill. In the works is a new Headquarters C. P. located near their present quarters, which when the new C. P. is completed, will be used only to house C. P. personnel. The new bunker will thus provide Headquarters Company with a spacious office and meeting facility.

The company welcomes a new commo officer CPT Wendell Lowthers, and extends a thank you for a job well done during a bad month for generators to 1LT John Thornton, our departing commo officer. We also welcome a new field first, SSG Donald Fleshman from Bravo Co, and a new Sergeant of the Guard on the east end of the hill, Staff Sergeant Jon Engwis from Alpha Company.

READER: Please use the following space provided for "personal message."

Free

SIN:-----

3/21 196th Brigade

APO San Francisco 96374

FOCMASTER: Please note that this newsletter contains a personal message to the addressee, thus qualifying it to go as "free" mail.