

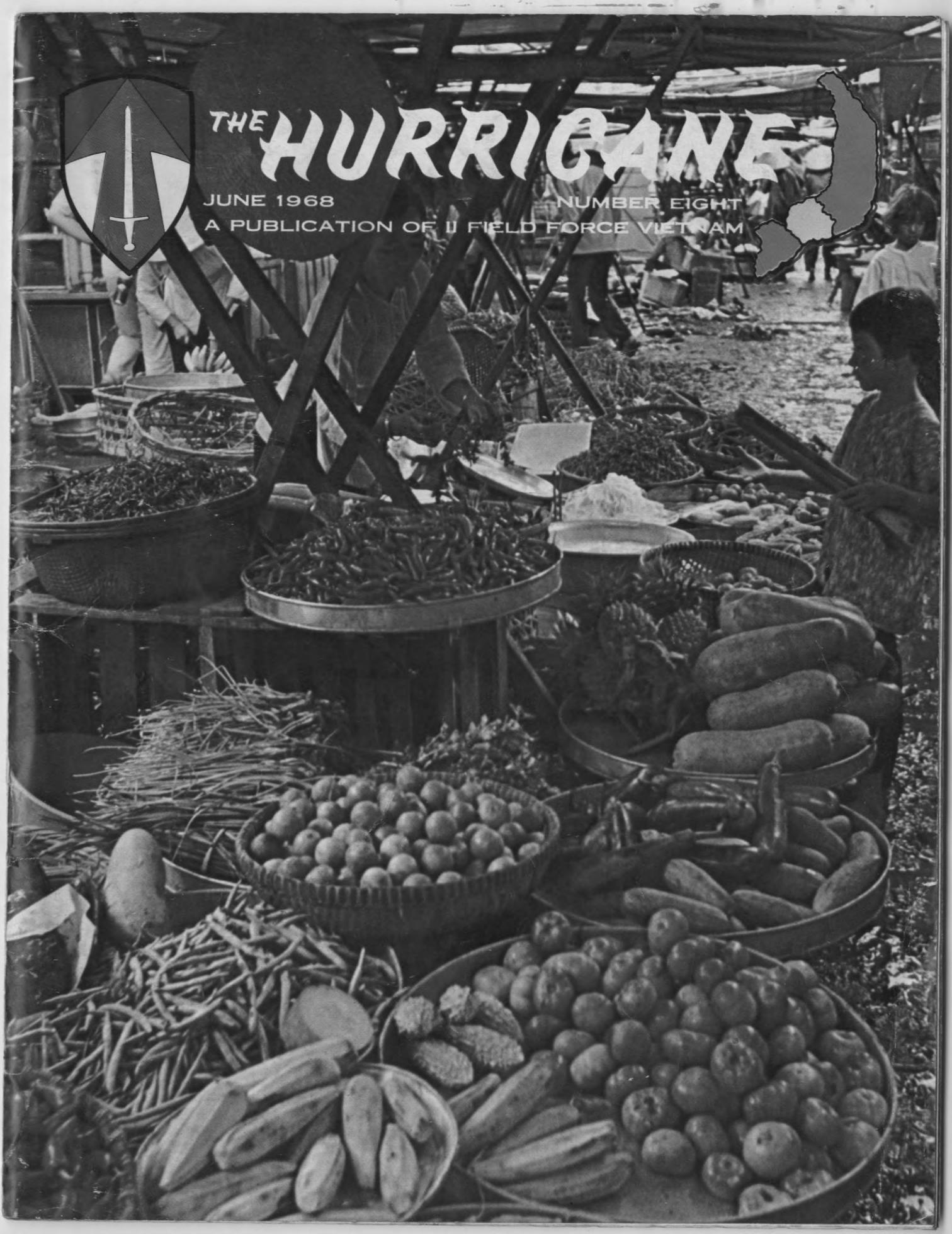


THE HURRICANE

JUNE 1968

NUMBER EIGHT

A PUBLICATION OF II FIELD FORCE VIETNAM





It waves over outposts and schools; it flies in new life hamlets and in the cities. Men have died for it; men are dying for it. The national emblem of the Republic of South Vietnam, adopted on June 14, 1948, is a solid yellow rectangle with three horizontal red stripes across the center, each having a height equal to one-fifteenth of the total height and separated by an equal distance. The flag was first flown on the ship Dumont D'Urville where the historic Franco-Vietnamese Treaty was signed. The yellow background is the symbolic color of the former imperial dynasty and stands for the golden rice grains and the most precious metal; it is also the color representing the Buddhist faith. Red, symbolic of success, was used for the three stripes which represent the northern, central and southern regions of Vietnam, reunited in the national community

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SP4 Paul Temple is our photographer for both the front and back covers. On the front, he has illustrated colorfully the market potential of Long Khanh province, this month's Hurricane province story. On the back, he shows a National Police patrol searching for Viet Cong weapons.

On page 2, SP4 Ronald Pejsa writes about a powerful defensive weapon that has never been used in Vietnam. Read the story of the Hawk missile in "Air Defense."

Every American soldier should know something of the weapons he faces in combat. Starting on page 14 there is a description of some of the more formidable ones.

The 3/17 Air Cavalry tells its story in words and color pictures starting on page 17. Author is SP4 William Nordstrum.

The Editor

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53D SIGNAL BATTALION *Photo Support*

AIR DEFENSE

by SP4 Ronald Pejsa

photography by SP5 David Labiosa

The 6th Battalion, 56th Artillery is like a fire department. Its presence is a must, but no one ever wants to use its service. The battalion provides air defense protection for III Corps Tactical Zone.

The Hawk missile battalion is commanded by Lieutenant Colonel John Evanchick and is composed of a headquarters and headquarters battery and four firing batteries, all located in the Bien Hoa—Saigon area.

The battalion arrived in Vietnam in October, 1965. Although they have yet to fire a mission, the men are hardly bored with their tour of duty. Each day they are required to pull preventive maintenance on the missiles. "Because the equipment is so complex and in use nearly 24 hours a day, it must be checked regularly. I hope no one ever thinks these people and missiles aren't ready. If they ever have to fire, they'll be in A-1 shape," said Battery D First Sergeant Paul R. Dandridge.

The men also prepare themselves mentally for their mission. They attend at least three classes a week on missile operations, maintenance or changes in the system. Other time is spent in repairing and refortifying bunkers around their defensive positions. Perched on top of "Hawk Hill," the men of D Battery feel their home is one of the best fortified in all of Vietnam. Bunkers and shelters with walls three to six feet thick attest to their boast.

The men also are proud that they have built every building on their compound with materials they have "found." "This working together has created a tremendous feeling of unity. Our new enlisted men's club, dayroom, and other buildings



Pulse Acquisition Radar (PAR) finds medium and high altitude enemy aircraft

are something we're all proud of. When I got here almost a year ago, we hardly had anything. Now that I'm about to leave, I look around and see how much these men have really accomplished," said SP 4 William J. Fanelli, a military policeman with D Battery.

All is not work for the men, however. They have movies in their club almost every night and live stage shows at least twice a month. The men also get a day off each week to go swimming at the Bien Hoa Air Base, to get caught up on letter writing or to just relax.

The primary mission of the battalion is to attack high speed, low and medium altitude enemy aircraft, to destroy them or to nullify or reduce their effectiveness. To accomplish this mission four basic functions must be performed: detection, identification, tracking and killing.

Detection is achieved by Continuous Wave

The Hawks seek their targets by reflections emitted by Illuminating Radar



The Hawks stand silent guard

Acquisition Radar (CWAR) for low altitude coverage and Pulse Acquisition Radar (PAR) for medium altitude targets.

The CWAR is a low altitude detection radar which operates on the Doppler principle, transmitting radar energy and receiving reflected returns continuously. The CWAR is capable of distinguishing between stationary and moving objects. The PAR is used for medium and high altitude coverage and is not affected by returns from stationary objects. Target information from these two radars is synchronized into a visual display on a Tactical Control Console in the Battery Control Center (BCC).

Identification begins as soon as a target is detected. Once identified, it is evaluated as a



Low altitude enemy aircraft are tracked with the Continuous Wave Acquisition Radar (CWAR)

The Hawk...

threat to the determined area. If identified as hostile and determined an immediate threat, a firing battery is assigned to make the engagement.

Tracking is accomplished by High Power Illumination Radar. It locks its radiated energy on and automatically tracks the target until the end of the engagement.

The target kill is accomplished by the small, light-weight, but deadly Hawk missile. The Hawk is less than six meters long and weighs less than 1,300 pounds. It has a high explosive, blast fragmentation warhead and a range of 22 miles. The missile uses a semi-active homing-guidance system to close with the target and destroy it.

The system consists of a transmitter on the ground, the illuminating radar and a receiver in the missile. The illuminator strikes the target with radar energy as it is being tracked. Some of this energy is reflected off the target and picked up by the missile in flight with a built-in target tracking antenna. This signal gives the missile data concerning the target location and enables it to make necessary maneuvers. A reference signal from the illuminating radar also is picked up in a rear reference antenna. This signal causes the

missile to position itself in space for interception of the target.

There are two distinct advantages of the homing-guidance system. Each missile resolves its own steering commands allowing for more than one missile to be in the air at a time, and as the distance between the missile and the target decreases, the reflected signal from the target becomes stronger, improving system accuracy.

The Hawk system also has a rapid-fire capability. A missile can be fired every five seconds. The launchers can turn the missiles 360 degrees in azimuth and elevate them to near vertical positions.

Although the Hawks have not been fired in Vietnam, their combat effectiveness has been tested in other places. They have destroyed aircraft at less than 30 meters height and at more than 1,500 meters. They also have fired at ranges of more than 31,000 meters. Because of these bold credentials, Hawk systems here and around the world have taken their place as one of America's primary air defense systems, ready to deliver their deadly blow to any enemy attempt to penetrate our air defenses.

G-2

INTELLIGENCE—"secret agents" or "cloak and dagger" sleuths attempting to infiltrate foreign agents to uncover secret information. In reality, a military intelligence section of a major command is much more complex and involved. Such is the case with the G-2, Intelligence Section, of II Field Force Vietnam, headed by Colonel J. D. Foulk.

G-2 is divided into various working elements, all interwoven to provide comprehensive up-to-date information on enemy activity throughout the II Field Force Vietnam Tactical Area of Interest. This is blended with data from the G-3, Operations Section, and placed on the wall-sized maps in the Tactical Operations Center (TOC). The combined data is then used to brief anyone "having a need to know" current intelligence and operational data.

- The G-2 Operations Section coordinates all G-2 activities. Intelligence documents are also written here after incoming data is analyzed and then distributed through proper outlets.

- The Plans Section prepares intelligence input for any operations orders for G-3. Data pertaining to weather, terrain, economics and sociological conditions are all figured into their reports. Operational Lessons Learned and special studies on infiltration and particular enemy activities are also prepared.

- Data processing is the most recent section to join G-2. Specially trained personnel transfer various data onto IBM cards for easy future reference. The cards are divided into three categories and pertain to all incidents within the III Corps Tactical Zone.

- The Targets Section has the primary responsibility of recommending targets for B-52 bombing raids, artillery fires and air strikes. It also makes recommendations for psychological operations or leaflet drops. Targets are determined through a variety of methods—all classified—and then evaluated by priorities.

- Counter-intelligence gathers data pertaining to the infrastructure of low level guerrillas and coordinates efforts against sabotage or subversive activities. CI also is responsible for personnel security clearances and supervises document security.

- The Order of Battle and Interrogation of Prisoner of War Sections are part of G-2 but assigned to the 219th Military Intelligence Detachment. Order of Battle maintains up-to-date information on enemy activities for analysis of enemy capabilities and operations. IPW interrogates detainees to determine intelligence information which may be of value to our military.

- G-2 Air manages all aerial reconnaissance and aerial sensor assets in the II FFV TAOI. These include aerial radar, infra-red sensors and visual reconnaissance. They also provide for aerial photography and the reading of aerial photographic prints through imagery interpreters assigned to the 219th MI Detachment.

- The Administrative Section centralizes all administrative activities. Reports, files, documents and regulation distribution is coordinated here.

How accurate is intelligence data once it is compiled? Recently information was gathered about a suspected enemy location north of Dau

Weather...

Terrain...

And the enemy

Tieng. After a thorough analysis of the information, B-52 strikes were called. Eleven secondary explosions were recorded, more than 70 bodies were counted and numerous bunkers and trenches were destroyed.

A document found on an enemy body shortly after the Tet Truce Attacks gave intelligence insight into how successful Allied efforts had been. A personal notebook found on Lieutenant Colonel Ba Quan, deputy commander of the Viet Cong Dong Nai Regiment, indicated that prior to the offensive his regiment had 2,230 men. After the offensive the notebook stated the strength had dropped to 1,180.

The Dong Nai Regiment, consisting of three battalions, had operated in the area of Tan Uyen in Bien Hoa Province before taking part in the Tet attacks.

By analyzing documents such as these, G-2 is able to determine not only how successful Allied efforts are but also to project future effectiveness of enemy units.



Captain John Uecke, target officer (right), gets new data about a possible enemy location from Warrant Officer Richard Denson, assistant target officer (kneeling), and SP4 Larry Plaza, imagery interpreter

LONG KHANH

The dragon with

by Major Cleve Cunningham

the golden bell in its mouth

Long Khanh could easily be the "Land of Happiness" which its name expresses. Underpopulated (about 150,000 inhabitants in an area of 397,192 hectares) and heavily covered with virgin jungles owned by the Government of Vietnam, the province could be the "truck farm and fruit source" for the densely populated areas of Saigon, Cholon, Bien Hoa and Long Binh.

Its name translates idiomatically into "The Dragon With The Golden Bell In Its Mouth". "Long" stands for dragon and "Khanh" for bell. The dragon is the highest ranking of the four sacred animals (dragon, unicorn, turtle, phoenix) and the bell is significant because a temple bell emits a beautiful sound and is a symbol of luck and protection.

Formed in April 1957 and subdivided into the three districts of Xuan Loc (Sawan Lock), Kiem Tan and Dinh Quan, the province is northeast of Saigon. The Province Chief, Lieutenant Colonel Bui Kim Kha, is considered one of the finest in Vietnam, both as a soldier and as an honest, efficient, administrator.

Long Khanh's economy has been dominated by rubber, but the assets of 207 kilometers of good highways (including Routes 1, 2 and 20), coupled with nearly half-a-million acres of virgin land available for homesteading, offer the provincial authorities the opportunity to transform the economy into one producing up to six varied agricultural crops a year.

Greater security in the province accounts for its increased share of Vietnam's declining rubber production. In 1966, the province produced 11,020 metric tons (compared to the nation's 49,455 metric tons) and in 1967 its contribution was proportionately higher. Even

so, the plantation owners point out that they are caught between rising labor costs and declining world rubber prices.

But rubber was for years the most important export of the province and even today some 5,000 families are employed by the plantations. While this produced a valuable export item for the Government of Vietnam, the rubber industry tended to keep its employees in semi-serfdom to the plantations and didn't encourage the development of other agricultural enterprises.

In fact, for years the area was one in which people passed through as quickly as possible, preferring to



TỈNH LONG-KHÁNH
Kính tặng

Long Khanh

Truck farm for Region III

settle in the cooler areas around Dalat or the pleasant sea coast areas. Most of what is now Long Khanh remained either in rubber or jungle. Xuan Loc, the provincial capital, was a sleepy little village until the 18th ARVN Division moved its headquarters there.

Until the large scale resettlement of Catholic families who fled North Vietnam during the 1954 exodus, most of the province was uninhabited and the jungles were the haunt of Montagnards and guerrillas. Only along the lines of communication could settlements survive. Even today there are only 16 active villages composed of 105 hamlets in the entire province, and more than half the population is clustered in and around Xuan Loc.

The closest resemblance to industry in the province is logging, a field which has hardly been de-

veloped. The mountainous upper third (which includes War Zone "D") will someday be an important source of lumber which can be easily trucked to Saigon. Even with the fledgling timber industry, the province lists only one official sawmill. Another 40 or so operate at least part-time, according to advisory authorities, but to evade taxes have failed to register.

The province is extremely fertile where the jungle has been cleared away. Among the six different crops which are grown each year are coffee, peppers, tea, sweet corn, tobacco, bananas and other vegetables. More soybeans are grown in Long Khanh than in all other III CTZ provinces. In 1966, there was a national soybean crop of 7,585 metric tons; Long Khanh produced 3,970 tons of the valuable bean. Another bean, mung, grows well in

the province, which grew 3,700 metric tons last year compared to total national production of 14,410 tons.

The province only manages to produce about one-third of its rice needs. Use of the miracle strain, IR-8, rice coupled with improved use of fertilizers, insecticides, pesticides and modern irrigation techniques might raise that figure to 50 or 60 percent, but authorities believe the province will continue to be rice deficient.

Governmental efforts to improve the lot of the people are more successful in Long Khanh than in many other provinces. By the end of 1968 the government will have an effective presence in 77 of the hamlets and by the start of 1970 the GVN flag should wave in all of the hamlets. This continued and aggressive administration was

highlighted in 1967 by 15 village and 69 hamlet elections. In the national elections 49,418 ballots were cast from among 62,000 qualified voters.

The 1968 Revolutionary Development program calls for seven Ap Doi Moi's (new life hamlets), 10 Ap Cung Co's (consolidation hamlets) and two Ap Binh Dinh's (pacification hamlets). In 1967, 11 hamlets received RD attention. In 1966 there were 26, and 23 in 1965. Additionally, nearly five million piasters are earmarked for funded self-help projects in 77 different hamlets during 1968. Pacification efforts in the province were virtually unaffected by the Tet Truce Attacks.

Long Khanh's civilian police chief, Tranh Hoanh Son, described by the CORDS advisors as "top-notch", presides over a force of 423 National Policemen who are actively engaged in giving greater security to the area. They operate 10 resource control checkpoints, four of which are mobile to prevent the Viet Cong from evading them. Several more of the fixed points will shortly be converted into mobile posts.

As a result of these effective police operations, there is less threat from the approximately 700 members of the Viet Cong infrastructure in Long Khanh than in many other provinces in III Corps



Farmers use traditional tools to clear land

Tactical Zone. Police authorities feel the shadow government has been neutralized in Xuan Loc, is weak in the predominantly Catholic communities and is strongest on the plantations. The police are engaged now in the difficult task of gathering enough evidence to support judicial convictions of known or suspected members of the communist underground.

While the province has the same chronic shortage of doctors suffered by the rest of the nation, it does have a 150-bed provincial hospital in Xuan Loc. An additional 44 other medical facilities have been established or renovated throughout the province. These range from village dispensaries to maternity clinics. The plantation owners also operate an attractive hospital for their employees just outside Xuan Loc on Highway 1.

Additional medical support comes from MEDCAPS (Medical Civic Action Programs) conducted by teams from the 18th ARVN Division, 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment, 54th Artillery Group, and the advisory team for the 18th Division. Also, a team of Filipino doctors, nurses and administrators, hired under the auspices of Operation World Freedom, support the province.

Sixteen thousand students attend school throughout Long Khanh. At present there are eight high schools in the province, a total of 262 elementary and secondary classrooms, and 318 teachers with 20 more in training.

Religion is one of the strong unifiers in the province. More than 60 percent of the population is Catholic. Xuan Loc is the see of the diocese which includes the provinces of Bien Hoa, Long Khanh, Binh Tuy, Phuoc Tuy, and the autonomous city of Vung Tau. Its Bishop Anh is a notable dignitary in the international Catholic hierarchy and is the honorary chaplain for the Army of Vietnam.

Roughly a fifth of the population is Buddhist and the remaining fifth are primarily Confucist ancestor worshippers. Some Cao Dai and Protestants are also in the province.

Military security in Long Khanh comes from both the 18th ARVN Division and the 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment, supplemented by more than 4,000 Regional and Popular Force soldiers. The RF/PF forces are subdivided into 16 RF companies and 52 PF platoons. The seven Revolutionary Development Cadre Teams are another important supplement to security.

Truck farming is a way of life for many in Long Khanh province





Long Khanh



Modern irrigation waters a test farm in Long Khanh (left); a sawmill marks the beginning of industry (above); and the fertile land will support several different crops (below)



Approximately 350 Viet Cong still are operating in local force units in the province. Sporadic ambushes and blown culverts serve as reminders of their presence. Main force VC and NVA units have continued to use the wilderness to effect resupply for areas closer to Saigon but, with the exception of the Tet Truce attack on Xuan Loc which was decisively beaten, large scale military actions within the province are infrequent.

According to Lieutenant Colonel Alvin C. Hutchins, the Province Senior Advisor, the real theme—and dream—of pacification efforts in Long Khanh will be the opening of thousands of acres of virgin land to resettlement and development. He and his CORDS advisory staff get excited when they discuss the thousands of people the government can assist in homesteading the land along Highway 1. This, they maintain, can develop real pacification as well as improve security for this important line of communication.

The government plans to give or sell two-and-a-half acres to each single person or twelve-and-a-half acres per family. When there is security to permit survey teams to accurately plot land titles, the plan could start the Vietnamese equivalent of the Oklahoma land rush.

Actually, land reform is already an established fact in the province. There are no landholders with more than 250 acres. Some 651 people have true land titles, 9,600 have their titles in processing and more than 20,000 farm personnel are on GVN land waiting for security to permit final land grants.

Progress is steady toward this goal. As the enemy is pushed back, neutralized or destroyed, more land is cleared and planted in crops to feed the growing appetites of the urban population centers. The all-weather highways have remained open. Experimental farms and forestry projects are revealing visions of rural prosperity to the farmers.

The rumble of tanks and military convoys can be replaced by the sound of tractors and buzz saws and commercial traffic flowing along the highways. Someday, the temple bell in the dragon's mouth will tinkle tunes of prosperity and peace.

Vast rubber plantations grow in Long Khanh

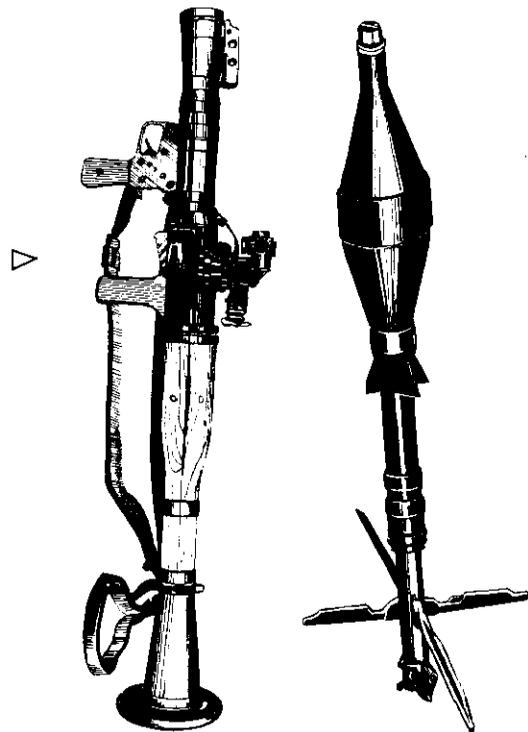


ENEMY WEAPONS

Just as every soldier should know the capabilities of his own weapons, he should know something of the weapons he faces.

Soviet RPG-7 Antitank Launcher

This weapon is the most advanced shoulder fired antitank launcher in the communist arsenal and also is being used as an area weapon against military installations. The RPG-7 has an optical sight, two hand grips and a large blast shield at the rear of the launching tube. Like the RPG-2, this weapon uses a heat grenade. The rocket motor boosts the velocity of the grenade to 300 meters per second, giving an effective range of 500 meters and a maximum range of 900 meters. It will penetrate 14 inches of steel armor.



82mm Mortar

This mortar is similar to the U.S. 81mm. It is easy to identify by the circular baseplate with a flat surface across the back edge. It weighs 123 pounds, has a maximum range of 3,040 meters, uses a high explosive ammunition and can fire 25 rounds per minute.

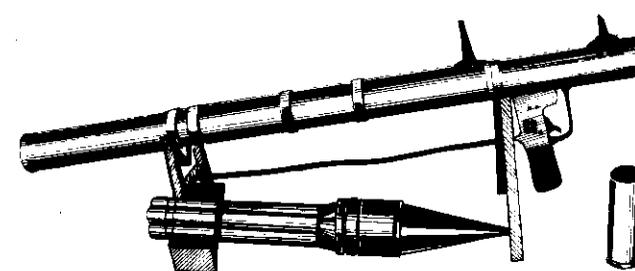


Soviet 7.62mm Assault Rifle AK-47

This rifle is the basic individual weapon used by communist soldiers throughout the world. There are two major types: one with a conventional wooden stock and one with a folding metal stock. The rifle has high front sights, a long receiver with the safety on the right side and a curved magazine. Weight of the AK-47 is 10.6 pounds. On semi-automatic, it has an effective range of 400 meters and fires 40 rounds per minute. On automatic, it has an effective range of 300 meters with a 90 to 100-rounds per minute rate of fire. It uses either Soviet or Chinese communist rimless cartridges.

North Vietnamese Modified 7.62 Submachinegun

This submachinegun can be identified by its exposed barrel with a high front sight, tubular stock guides on the sides of the receiver and the ammunition selector inside the trigger guard. On semiautomatic, it has an effective range of 200 meters and fires 40 to 50 rounds per minute. Used as an automatic, it has a 100-meter effective range and fires 90 to 100 rounds per minute. Fully loaded, the weapon weighs nine pounds and uses either Soviet or Chinese communist pistol cartridges.



60mm Mortar

This mortar has a square baseplate, a hand-crank on the end of the elevating screw housing and a two-piece cross leveling mechanism. It can be recognized by its brass feet. It weighs 44.5 pounds, has a maximum range of 1,530 meters and can fire 20 to 35 rounds per minute. It uses high explosive ammunition.

Soviet RPG-2 Antitank Launcher

The RPG-2 launcher is a shoulder fired anti-armor weapon. The warhead of the round is twice the diameter of the launcher tube and projects beyond the tube. The tube has a detachable blast deflector. The RPG-2 uses a heat grenade as ammunition and can penetrate 10 to 12 inches of steel or 16 to 18 inches of aluminum armor. It has an effective range of 160 yards and a maximum range of 650 yards.



OPERATION

QUYET THANG

Quiet Thang (Resolve to Win), the second largest operation in the Vietnam War, ended a success. The mission of the Allied forces was to search out and destroy enemy elements within the boundaries of Gia Dinh, Long An, Hau Nghia, Binh Duong and Bien Hoa Provinces. Allied forces killed 2,658 Viet Cong and North Vietnamese Army Regulars while suffering 298 killed.

Participating units were elements of the 1st, 9th and 25th Infantry Divisions, elements from the 5th and 25th ARVN Infantry Divisions, an ARVN Airborne Division Task Force, and a Vietnamese Marine Corps Task Force. Elements of the 5th Ranger Group and National Police Forces also participated.

The multi-division operation, which involved more than 50,000 troops, began March 11. Contact during the first week killed more than 800 enemy and 105 suspects were detained. More than 300 individual and 60 crew-served weapons were captured.

Numerous weapons caches were discovered. One cache found by the 25th Infantry Division 12 miles north of Saigon contained twenty-four 122mm rocket motors and 12 rocket warheads. The 9th ARVN Airborne Battalion discovered another cache seven miles north of Saigon. It contained 31 rounds of 122mm rockets, 30 rounds of 75mm recoilless rifle ammunition, 13 cases of plastic explosives and TNT, 138 B-40 rocket grenade rounds and 1,200 rounds of 82 and 60mm mortar ammunition.

A large enemy food cache was discovered by the 25th ARVN Division in a sweep northeast of Truong Lap. The food cache included rice, salt, peanuts, peas, dried fish, and canned goods. A further search of the cache revealed 60 and 82mm mortar rounds, small arms ammunition, rocket propelled grenade rounds, Chinese communist radios and 122mm rocket warheads.

The overall operation was characterized by light and scattered actions except for a series of heavy contacts in Hau Nghia Province. More than 300 of the enemy were killed near Trang Bang in a 24-hour fire fight on March 24.

When the operation concluded Allied forces had a total of 521 detainees and had captured 821 individual and 199 crew-served weapons.



3/17 Air Cavalry



3/17 Air Cavalry

by SP4 William Nordstrum

Located just seven miles from the Cambodian border and eight miles south of Nui Ba Den Mountain, is the headquarters of the 3rd Armored Squadron, 17th Air Cavalry. Presently commanded by LTC William W. Brannon, the squadron arrived in Vietnam in early November 1967 and was the first air cavalry unit to join the 12th Combat Aviation Group.

The 3/17 Cav is composed of five "Troops"; a headquarters troop and four lettered troops. A cavalry troop is the rough size equivalent of an infantry company and is the smallest combined arms team organic to the Army. It is a tactical aviation unit engaged in finding, fixing, and destroying enemy troops and fortifications. The usual aviation role is support.

To accomplish its mission, A, B, and C Troops are each equipped with 10 OH-6A Light Observation Helicopters (LOH), 10 UH-1C "Huey" gunships equipped with rockets and miniguns, and five UH-1H lift ships for transporting troops.

D Troop is the Cav's ground force. It is equipped with armed vehicles which include, for each of the three platoons in the Troop, four 1/4-ton scout jeeps with mounted machineguns, two 1/4-ton antitank vehicles with mounted 106mm recoilless rifles, one 3/4-ton truck with an 81mm mortar launcher attached, and one infantry squad.

The squadron normally operates under the tactical control of an infantry division, which assigns its missions.

After receiving information from the infantry that an area is suspected to contain enemy elements, a scout team is assigned to fly over the area to look for signs of the enemy. This team consists of two light observation helicopters which fly slowly and close to the ground. (For an LOH, slow and close to the ground means 50 knots (55mph) or less and between five feet and 50 feet high.) A gunship normally flies overhead to provide support in case the LOH's receive enemy fire.

If the area proves suspicious or if the scouts



The Light Observation Helicopter gets down among

the trees. It searches for the elusive enemy

have received fire, a long range reconnaissance patrol (LRRP) is inserted, followed by an aero-rifle team if the LRRP team encounters the enemy. Uncovering a significant enemy force brings one or two infantry companies to the area, and the LRRP and rifle team are lifted out.

When performed at night, the lift-out operations are hazardous. The only reference pilots have to guide their ships into the landing zone is an occasional flare from a strobe light that ground troops use to indicate their positions.

Since their arrival in Vietnam, the 3/17 has participated in operations with the 1st, 9th, and 25th Infantry Divisions throughout the III Corps area, including operations Uniontown and Yellowstone.

During the recent Tet Truce Attacks, the entire squadron was called upon to resist the aggression. "A" Troop participated in defense of Long

Binh complex and the Bien Hoa Air Base, "B" and "C" Troops were assigned to defend the city of Saigon and Tan Son Nhut Air Base, and "D" Troop, the ground force, provided vital escorts and ground security on the main supply convoy route between Cu Chi and Tay Ninh.

Recently, C Troop worked with the 9th Infantry Division in operation Valley Forge, which was conducted in the northern Mekong Delta region. B and C Troops are under the operational control of the 25th Infantry Division in a large area south and east of Tay Ninh, and A Troop provides surveillance and security in the Long Binh, Bien Hoa and Saigon area.

In addition to the five troops assigned to the squadron, the squadron has "adopted" an aircraft maintenance detachment from the 520th Aviation Company in Phu Loi.

A crew member carries rockets to his helicopter



In this unusual photograph, the LOH hovers at treetop level





3/17 Air Cavalry



THE

NEW

LOOK

by SP4 Peter Bie

The sign to the entrance of the district house says: Welcome to Binh Phuoc—The New Look. And from what has occurred within the district in the past several years, the sign means exactly that.

The most amazing fact about the progress of Binh Phuoc is that the district is a low priority area. It receives little in the way of monies and materials from the Government of Vietnam (GVN) and there are no Revolutionary Development cadre in the district.

But the particular success of the district—located about 30 miles southwest of Saigon in Long An Province—can be traced to the efforts of the district chief, Major Truong Van Nhut. Major Nhut said, "It's the people who have made it what it is, through their confidence in me and the Government of Vietnam."

Thua Ta (Major) Nhut, a native of North Viet-

nam, came south following the Geneva Agreements of 1954. He had fought with the French against the Viet Minh and attained the rank of sergeant major. In the south, he joined the Army of the Republic of Vietnam (ARVN) as a first lieutenant in command of a company. In 1960 he switched to the Marine Corps for what he terms "a challenge." Then in 1963 following the overthrow of Diem, he received his orders as the district chief of Binh Phuoc.

"I was grateful for this new assignment," he says, "because now I would have a chance to do more for the people. I knew it would be tough, but I liked the challenge."

When he arrived at Binh Phuoc, Major Nhut, the only Marine officer who is a district chief in Vietnam, was told that VC forces were only a few hundred meters away in the daytime and practically controlled everything at night. He immediately began preparations to stop that.

Working with the 848th Company of Regional Forces and about 200 Popular Force soldiers, the major conducted operations in the area surrounding Binh Phuoc to clear out the VC. "We started going into many places where the VC were to show the people that the VC were not as strong as they said. I also started sending out night patrols and ambushes," he said.

The local guerrillas countered by mining roads and issuing bounties for Major Nhut's death. About eight months ago the major and the MACV district advisor were riding in a jeep that detonated a mine. Both men were injured and the Thua Ta has a scar on his left arm that runs from his shoulder to his wrist.

But that has not slowed down the energetic, stocky man who looks more like a judo or wrestling champion than a major in the military. He is personally initiating much of the "new look" of Binh Phuoc by revamping many of the outposts manned by the RF/PF.

"My best defense is offense," he says, "That's why I'm going to build strong fortifications as day installations." Much of the materials will come from the GVN, CORDS (Civil Operations and Revolutionary Development Support), and whatever the district advisor, Major James E. Rose, can obtain.

The outpost at Tan Phu Long, isolated and accessible only by helicopter, has gone through vast changes. Where once stood small, inadequate and poorly built bunkers, there are now three concrete fortifications. The walls of these bunkers are up to four feet thick and each bunker is reinforced with several layers of sandbags. Yard upon yard of barbed wire surrounds the outpost. Intertwined with this are booby traps and mines to slow up any attacking force.

At night, several women volunteer to stand watch with the PF soldiers. The rest of the women and children are moved to an island in the middle of the river that passes by the small village.

The RF/PF personnel have improved under

New Look...

Major Nhut's command. Before his arrival, most of the troops were poorly equipped. Now, with the assistance of the GVN, he has been able to get most of what the RF/PF need. The major hopes that soon his men will be completely outfitted with the most sophisticated weapons.

While the military picture improves, so does the civilian. The townsfolk of Binh Phuoc are helping build a meeting house for a local village council—one of the many self-help projects in the area. The entire district is fulfilling the RD guidelines by making the hamlet and village councils function—without RD cadre. The village and hamlet councils are required to make plans, give estimates and finally, when they have the materials, to supervise the construction of the project.

A maternity clinic is 40 percent complete. The entire project was designed, estimated and is being supervised by a soldier from the 848th Company. The building is being erected by the RF Company and is taking some time to finish because construction stops when the soldiers are on an operation. "But it's another beginning," beams Major Nhut.

Binh Phuoc also has a civilian defense group consisting of more than 120 members, mostly men. The group guards the town at night and each person is outfitted with a weapon and ammunition. The group had formed before the Tet attacks but,

following the massive attacks throughout the country, more men joined the defense group to protect their homes and businesses as well as their town.

Even the women of Binh Phuoc are pitching in. More than 50 of them have volunteered to form a "nurse corps." Ranging in age from 15 to 25, the women attend classes in first aid, treatment of minor wounds and care of patients. These classes are taught by the local Vietnamese health official with help from the battalion surgeon of the 5th Battalion, 60th Infantry (Mech) of the 9th Infantry Division at Binh Phuoc.

English classes are being held also. "Many can write and read the language, but have difficulty in speaking it," said Major Nhut, 39.

The projects that have been completed in Binh Phuoc District show that the people have drawn closer to the GVN. Schools, for instance, have been vastly improved in the last year.

Most just needed a new coating of paint or some minor repair. The teachers filed their requests with the local village and hamlet chiefs, who in turn passed them along to Major Nhut. The requests met with approval and soon the teachers had paint and lime to redo the walls and ceilings of their schools.

"Whereas before they wouldn't request formally their needs, now they are utilizing the proper channels to acquire what they need," said Major Nhut. "That shows me a definite faith in the local as well as the national government."

Major Rose commented, "I think that the interest generated by the district chief and the people of Binh Phuoc is impressive in that it's beginning to show the first, true stable formations of self-confidence in themselves and in their government. For our effort as advisors, that's progress, that's success."



This maternity clinic, designed and built by the 848th Regional Force Company, is almost half completed.

ARTILLERY

AIRLIFT

Artillery support in Vietnam is faster and more accurate than it has ever been in American history. Artillery airlifts are one of the primary reasons for the increased effectiveness.

Battery A, 2d Battalion, 11th Artillery exemplifies how airlifts are being used throughout the republic. Recently the 5th Special Forces Group planned an operation near Loc Ninh. Medium range artillery support was needed. Battery A with its 155mm Towed Howitzers was notified.

Planning began immediately for transportation, types and amounts of ammunition, food supplies and living conditions. "We must plan for all situations when preparing to move. If we don't, we may find ourselves dangerously short of necessary supplies," according to Captain James S. Harrington, battery commander of Alpha Battery.

An advance party was sent to the support site. Its mission was to disburse ammunition which was airlifted in before the guns arrived. "This must be done immediately. If not, one mortar or rocket round could ignite it all. It must be disbursed so that if a mortar or rocket strikes one ammo pallet, it will not ignite all remaining pallets," CPT Harrington said.

The advance party also selected sites for personnel and ammo bunkers, gun positions, and directions of fire. "By making these arrangements prior to the arrival of the guns and personnel, the guns can begin suppressive fire within five minutes after their arrival," CPT Harrington said. The guns have a firing range of about 10 miles.

Once these preparations were made, giant CH54 flying cranes from the 273d Assault Support Helicopter Company swooped down and airlifted the 12,000-pound howitzers to the operation area. "The airlift enabled us to arrive in about 45 minutes. A forced road march would have taken three to four days," CPT Harrington said.

CH47 Chinooks from the 205th Assault Support Helicopter Company airlifted the troops and supplies in. When they landed, the guns were immediately placed in their firing positions and firing zones were determined.

Personnel and ammunition bunkers were constructed and the men were ready for fire missions.



They were called several times to deliver their hammering fire on enemy concentrations.

Three days later the operation was completed and the firing battery prepared to depart on its next mission. Personnel and ammo bunkers were torn down. Expended and remaining ammunition was collected and prepared for pick-up. "It is imperative that we collect all our expended shells, because if we didn't and Charlie could get his hands on them, they could be used in various forms as booby traps," CPT Harrington said.

NATIONAL POLICE

Mission: Community Security

Responsibility for final victory in Vietnam lies with the National Police. Given the demanding mission of "community security", National Policemen must maintain public law and order as well as identify and destroy the enemy infrastructure.

Military operations directed toward overt VC activity usually have little effect on the clandestine infrastructure, the Viet Cong "shadow government", that plans to take over South Vietnam when the military situation permits. Organized as a parallel government on all levels, the infrastructure controls Vietnamese by fear and subversion. National Police, trained in detection and interrogation, are the Government's primary weapon against the nebulous enemy.

The National Police Force is organized at national level with logistic and administrative support from Saigon, but individual police departments are under operational control of province chiefs. The organization, known officially as the Directorate General of National Police, is headed by sub-Brigadier General Nguyen Ngoc Loan. (His rank is equivalent to a US brigadier general). Loan heads a staff of a deputy and six assistant directors for administration, personnel and training, intelligence, operations, Field Forces and scientific police.

Four regional directorates throughout Vietnam have replaced the amorphous individual hamlet police force. The Director of



photography by SP4 Paul Temple



National Policemen and an American advisor search a hamlet (left); go on a patrol (above); and a National Policeman directs traffic in Bien Hoa (right)



Community Security



Police in Region III, geographically nearly equivalent to III CTZ, is Major Buy Hop. He is a graduate of courses at Fort Holiburd and Fort Bragg. The National Police in each province under the present system are directed by a police chief who delegates authority in a tightly controlled chain down to district chiefs. There is comparatively little delegation of authority to field units. In this respect, the Vietnamese system is closer to the French system than to the American.

The force is expanding to meet its difficult mission. In 1966 there were 7,000 National Policemen in III Corps Tactical Zone. At the end of 1967 there were some 10,000. Despite the expansion, policemen usually are well trained. All recruits go through an intensive training program at Rack Dua near Vung Tau and members of the National Police Field Forces, the primary arm of the force for its attack on the infrastructure, go to a specialized school at Dalat. Advance training for top-notch policemen is available at the International Police Academy in Washington, D.C., and in several other foreign countries.

The National Police perform several activities to fulfill their overall mission of "community security." They conduct resource control operations, support other GVN agencies in the "holding" phase of the pacification program and, acting on American as well as their own intelligence, collect evidence for criminal convictions of infrastructure members.

Operations are often combined efforts with Military Policemen from US forces. For example, the familiar green and white sedans that patrol Highway 1A from Saigon to Bien Hoa are manned by an American MP, a Vietnamese military policeman and two members of the National Police. Resource control operations also are combined. A typical checkpoint might consist of an American MP, a Vietnamese MP, a National Policeman and a National Policewoman. The checkpoints are set up to stop any illegal movement of equipment, people or food. Emphasis in recent months has been on mobile rather than static checkpoints to make it

National Policemen make camp after a patrol



An American advisor explains a tactical point to members of the National Police Field Force (NPF)

difficult for Viet Cong shipments to bypass the control.

The resource control program is one of the most important of the National Police efforts. In one recent week, 2,439 arrests were made of known or suspected VC, ARVN deserters, draft evaders, illegal dwellers and ordinary criminals throughout Vietnam. Some 1,100 rounds of ammunition, nine weapons and eight grenades were seized and 13,731 kilos of illegal foodstuffs were intercepted. A large quantity of equipment and fuel was captured, some of it from Communist bloc countries.

Because of their effectiveness and because they are a symbol of the GVN, National Policemen are prime targets for VC terrorism. An average of five policemen are assassinated each week in III CTZ. In that area 78 policemen were killed during the VC Tet Truce Attacks.

It is beyond the capability of the GVN to support the growing Na-

tional Police Forces. CORDS (Civil Operations and Revolutionary Development Support) supplements Vietnamese resources with American as part of the economic aid program. CORDS is strengthening the capability of the provincial and district police organizations, particularly with respect to counterinsurgency. It has helped the National Police establish and train a tactical field force consisting of small, highly mobile and lightly armed units capable of controlling low-level armed insurgency and banditry. CORDS, primary supplier of weapons, ammunition and vehicles to the force, has supported a more aggressive attack on the infrastructure, an increased use of mobile checkpoints and is helping the National Police start a new identification card program. The program, which eventually will re-register all Vietnamese above the age of 14, will help the National Police identify and destroy Viet Cong.

Although their effectiveness is growing, the National Police are hampered by several problems. They have a poor image because corruption has been a way of life to many of them, caused in part by low pay. National Policemen receive as little as 4,592 piasters (\$38) a month, although there are allowances for families. Advancement, in the traditional mandarin manner, is usually based on education rather than experience and this in some cases has led to lack of motivation. Official apathy toward the force is changing as the GVN realizes that National Police are performing a vital mission but the change is too slow for many policemen and advisors alike.

But the National Police are fulfilling their mission and are overcoming the series of problems they have. Before the war in Vietnam is won, the infrastructure must be destroyed, banditry must be eliminated and true "community security" must be restored. The National Police will do it.



A PERFECT FRIENDSHIP

... *Vietnamese legend*

Duong Le worked long hours as a common laborer to finance his education. He had a friend named Luu Binh who, through inheritance, possessed a fortune. Both were working for the degree of cu nhan. Luu Binh, understanding Duong Le's problem, invited him into his house to live and study. Many a day and night they shared the same lamp as they learned.

Duong Le was grateful and spent many a long night with his books. At the same time, Luu Binh became overconfident with his wealth and spent less time with his studies.

When the examinations were held, Duong Le received his degree and was appointed district mandarin. Luu Binh failed the test.

Heartbroken by his disgrace, Luu Binh threw away his fortune by reckless squandering. He then tried the examinations again, only to fail again. Luu Binh decided to see his old friend who was at the time in charge of a district administration. But Duong Le had the guards throw Luu Binh out.

With all his possessions on the end of a stick, Luu Binh wandered over the countryside. One night he stopped at a roadside inn and was welcomed with a cup of tea by the mistress, a woman named Chau Long. After hearing about Luu Binh's failures, she said that if he would stay at the inn she would help him in every way she could.

Her friendship gave Luu Binh a new determination to learn. He again took the examination but this time achieved the best mark on the list. He rushed back to the inn to tell Chau Long the good news but she had disappeared.

Years later, Luu Binh passed through Duong Le's district and decided to pay him a visit. This time, Luu Binh was welcomed with tea and warm friendship. As he sat talking with Duong Le, Luu Binh noticed a woman approach them. To his complete surprise it was Chau Long, the supposed inn mistress. Duong Le explained that more than money was necessary for successful study. He had sent his own wife to help Luu Binh, to encourage him, and to give him faith in himself. He made this sacrifice in the name of friendship.

This legend is one reason the people of Vietnam understand when they hear a story of a perfect friendship.

