
THE HURRICANE
MAY 1968
NUMBER SEVEN
A PUBLICATION OF II FIELD FORCE VIETNAM
On patrol with
F Co., 51st Infantry

Dear General Weyand,

The fifteenth of March 1968 marked the second anniversary of II Field Force, Vietnam. It is with particular pride that I extend to you and your men congratulations from United States Army, Vietnam.

The actions of II Field Force, Vietnam during the past year have been characterized by courage, dedication and professionalism. Together with the RVNAF, your forces have fought with distinction in the jungles of War Zones C and D, in the heavily fortified base areas astride the Saigon and Song Be rivers, in the heartland around Saigon, in the wastelands of the Plain of Reeds, and in the Upper Delta, to name but a few areas. In countless engagements, whether large scale offensive operations or small unit pacification actions, your men have shown their determination to see this war through.

Your area of responsibility encompasses the political, psychological and economic heart of the Republic of Vietnam. No United States command in Vietnam faces a more difficult and complex mission than does yours. I know that II Field Force, Vietnam over the coming years will add even greater luster to its proud and distinguished record.

Warm regards,

BRUCE PALMER, JR.
Lieutenant General, US Army
Deputy Commanding General

To the officers and men of II Field Force, Vietnam:

As II Field Force begins its third year of operations in Vietnam, I would like to take this occasion to commend each of you for the professional and dedicated manner in which you have accomplished your missions during the past year. With your support, II Field Force has been able to apply unrelenting pressure on all levels of the VC local forces and NVA main forces, taking out of action approximately 3,000 enemy a month as KIA"S, prisoners, or ralliers.

On January 31, 1968 the enemy launched a sneak attack during his announced TET truce, expecting to catch you unaware. You were ready for him, and with your ARVN and Free Word allies, you killed 18,000 of the best troops that the Viet Cong and their North Vietnamese masters could field.

In the months that lie ahead, I am confident that you will add significantly to the victories that you have already earned.

FRED C. WEYAND
Lieutenant General, US Army
Commanding General

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SP4 Paul Temple, our cover photographer, accompanied a unit from F Company, 51st Infantry on a long range patrol. Temple, assigned to the 53d Signal Battalion, took three days of intensive training with F Company before the mission. On page 20, in words and pictures, is his story of the patrol.

Our back cover, photographed by SP4 Jerry Cleveland, shows the fruits of a successful rice harvest in Vo Dat. Read about this "Miracle Rice" on page 2.

One of the oldest provinces in Vietnam is our feature province for May. Read about Bien Hoa—the "Land of the Peaceful Frontiers" on page 9.

Although RF/PF units are thought of as "home defense groups," they serve on the frontiers of a war which has no front-lines. Read the story of the "ruff-puffs" on page 24.

1LT Michael L. Gerson
Editor


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53D SIGNAL BATTALION *Photo Support*

MIRACLE RICE

A "miracle" in Vo Dat has refilled the graineries in what was once a major rice-producing area.

The "miracle"—a successful rice harvest in March—is an example of "God helping those who help themselves."

Vo Dat is the capital city of Hoai Duc District, an isolated region some 70 miles northeast of Saigon in the sparsely inhibited province of Binh Tuy. It is also the common name for a region which once produced one-sixteenth of the rice grown in South Vietnam.

Smiles of success blossom on the faces of farmers' wives as they harvest the miracle rice of Vo Dat and the seeds for Vietnam's future freedom from rice shortages. The emergency crop at Vo Dat, planted in October and harvested in February, yielded 2.6 tons per hectare compared to the best yields in recent years of 1.9 tons. The Vo Dat rice is being traded for ordinary unmilled rice so that it can seed some 10,000 hectares in III Corps Tactical Zone in 1968.

War has crippled rice production in the Vo Dat area. Acres of fields lie fallow and the jungle has crept back to the edges of the district capital. Only some 10,000 hardy Vietnamese and Montagnards have remained to eke out a living by growing rice and vegetables for their own consumption. Their usual harvest is in December after an April-May planting.

Last September the life-giving Song La Nga, which nourishes the area, turned fickle and flooded more than 1,200 hectares (3,000 acres) of the rice bowl, totally destroying at least 600 hectares of rice.

Famine faced the friendly folk of Vo Dat who turned, in desperation, to their American Army Senior District Advisor, Major Malcolm S. Shaffer.

Major Shaffer, a gaunt military expert more accustomed to helping advise the Army of Vietnam officers on how to use American equipment and on how to mesh with U.S. artillery and air support, made a thorough tour of the flood-struck area.

Then he called for help from the office of Civil Operations and Revolutionary Development Support (CORDS) for the III Corps Tactical Zone. Ben Finley, the Agriculture Advisor for Binh Tuy Province, and Dale Thorngren, Regional Agriculture Advisor for III Corps CORDS, suggested that the people replant using the Philippine-developed IR-8 rice.

Impossible, replied the farmers, our fields are under water, the paddies aren't in condition for planting, and nobody plants rice in September. Thev then voiced a demand that the Government of Vietnam furnish them with relief commodities. This would have meant that they would be on relief for almost a year—until their next crop came in.

Thorngren explained that the IR-8 rice, especially developed in the Philippines for use in Southeast Asia, could be planted in October and have a 120-day growing season, compared to 180 days for normal Vietnamese rice.

Also, because it is a short-stalked rice, it can absorb more fertilizer and water without "lodging"—growing too tall and falling over. This enables the "miracle rice" to yield up to five tons per hectare (about 2.5 acres). In Vo Dat the yields per hectare for normal rice have ranged from .69 tons for the flood-damaged crops to highs of 1.9 tons for the best paddies.

The alternative, insisted Thorngren, was famine. The farmers and local officials glumly accepted his decision and agreed to plant the new strain if the seed was given to them.

Thorngren had another shocker. The seed wasn't going to be free, it was going to be loaned to the farmers on a kilo for kilo basis and the same was true for the fertilizer. The operation was going to be a venture in ingenuity—not a continuation of welfare.

Bothering Thorngren, though, was the rainfall data. After its problem of too much water, Vo Dat was soon going to be facing its dry season, despite the previous year's record of rain as late as January.

Other experts, Ray Russell, a USAID Senior Plant Protection Advisor, and Glen Buchta, the CORDS Agricultural Engineer, were brought into the project. Buchta did an in-depth study of the topography and announced that a massive irrigation project could furnish the water needed. While doing so, he found that the Japanese Army of Occupation had arrived at similar conclusions in 1944.

With the floodwaters only then receding, there was no opportunity to start an irrigation project that year. Should they go ahead with the gamble? Russell, who was put in charge of the enterprise, agreed with Thorngren: we gamble if the people will gamble. The district chief was willing to take a chance.

The seed was ordered, along with 150 tons of fertilizer, and replanting was scheduled for October 1. The various American and civilian advisors then began attacking what was going to become their most persistent problem—acquiring pumps to irrigate the fields—when a new problem struck. The local Buddhist and Catholic leaders had told their respective congregations that this innovation was wrong, that it was not virtuous to turn their backs on the ways of their ancestors.

The shock waves reverberated all the way back to the Bien Hoa Headquarters of III Corps CORDS where the Director, (Deputy to the Commanding General of the U.S. II Field Force Vietnam), John Vann, suggested that opinion makers, to include the dissident religious leaders, be invited to the pilot farm on Hiep Hoa Island, situated in the Dong Nai River by Bien Hoa.

Seven key farmers, various hamlet chiefs, the priest and the monk, were all flown by Army helicopter to Hiep Hoa where Government of Vietnam agricultural experts demonstrated the advantages of IR-8 rice over ordinary Vietnamese rice. Convinced, the group returned to Vo Dat and the planting resumed. Within a week the district chief, Captain Bui Van Quang, reported to Major Shaffer that he was "tired because people wake me even at night to get seed and fertilizer."

Pumps became the name of the game. Everyone in Advisory Team #82, the CORDS advisors, and GVN officials, fanned out looking for pumps. They went to official channels, they "scrounged", and some advisors even bought pumps to give or loan to the farmers. Water, the September scourge, became precious in October–November.

Along with the search for pumps came a

Women cut the lush IR8 rice in the fields of Vo Dat in February and March. The "miracle crop" saved Vo Dat from famine and will produce the seed which should make all of III Corps Tactical Zone green and brown with the miracle rice in 1968 and years to come. IR8 can yield up to five tons per hectare and can change planting seasons from one to two or three crops per year. It can also help solve South Vietnam's rice deficit of more than 800,000 tons.

Major Malcom Shaffer, left, District advisor for Hoai Duc District, and his engineer advisor, SFC Robert E. Richter obtained 31 pumps for the area.

search for pipe to carry water to fields which should have been fed by irrigation ditches. In the end, Vo Dat received 25 three-inch pumps, capable of pumping 25–30 gallons per minute; five eight inch pumps, 17000 gallons per minute; and one 10-inch pump with a capacity of 2200 gallons per minute.

Little problems became big ones in isolated Vo Dat. Minor breakdowns couldn't be solved without outside help because a common bolt, or fan belt, or other simple item wasn't available.

The engineer advisor on Major Shaffer's team, Sergeant First Class Robert E. Richter, tackled the problems "with good old American know-how." Although he claimed no more knowledge of internal combustion engines than "the average American," Sergeant Richter became an expert and pumps began purring noisily.

Other CORDS sub-divisions came into the act, too. Lieutenant Colonel Pete Hayes and Bill Grey, teamed up to help Vo Dat. Hayes controls the internal air and ground transportation for CORDS: Grey was in charge of the "housekeepers" in the 10,000 square mile tactical zone. He sent mechanics and spare parts to the area using borrowed aircraft obtained through the initiative of Hayes.

Russell, the USAID advisor then running the project, found time to show the farmers how to wipe out leaf hoppers and rice stem bore, two of the most critical enemies of rice plants, by bringing in 700 liters of lindane. He also was able to introduce improved means of rat and bird control. Then he returned to the United States and was replaced by Walt Bascom.

Bascom, who is Thorngren's deputy, found the project rolling along but with new problems cropping up every day. The last recorded rainfall was in late November. Pumps continued to break down for lack of points, spark plugs, and even the proper sized tools. The first convoy in several years arrived in Vo Dat from Ham Tam (by the South China Sea) but there was nothing in it for the rice project. Contact with the rest of Vietnam continued by air alone.

Toward the end of January the Vietnamese began their traditional slowdown for Tet—the luner New Year celebrations. After all, in normal times, the rice crop would have been in and the farmers would have had a holiday until late March or early April.

But a slowdown in Vo Dat could have been disasterous. Bascom worked with the district chief, the hamlet chiefs, and the monk and priest, to counter tradition and keep the farmers in the fields weeding, fertilizing, carrying water, and chasing away the hungry birds and rats.

The Viet Cong Tet Truce Attacks hit the cities but Vo Dat, like most of the countryside in III CTZ, had the most peaceful Tet in recent years. And the rice was beginning to be green, stocky, and lush.

Too lush, perhaps. Some farmers eagerly began trying to harvest the white gold and Bascom had to try to convince them that it was too early—they would lose too much from shrinkage. Some of the more stubborn farmers insisted and Bascom had to get tough. He and the district chief flatly announced that they wouldn't buy any prematurely harvested rice. Harvesting waited.

In the last week of February and all of March the farmers of Vo Dat began marching out to their fields; women to cut the rice, men to beat the grains, children to separate the chaff. The first yields were eagerly measured. They weighed out a 2.6 tons per hectare, not as much as the paddies will eventually yield when all correct proceedures are followed, but enough to show the farmers that their faith and determination was worth it.

Thorngren and Bascom had one more problem to solve. Their experiment had threatened the economic ecology of the district. Although they had originally planned to make the farmers pay back in kind for the seed, the project had blossomed to the point where the government wanted all of the IR-8 seed for 1968 planting throughout III Corps Tactical Zone. Yet, if they traded previously milled rice for the IR-8 seed, the millers in the area would be out of work. A deal was made; the government traded six tons of unmilled rice for five tons of IR-8. The farmers had a bonus, the miller's trade was assured, and III Corps should be green with IR-8 rice in 1968.

Looking back, Thorngren believes the experiment would have been successful merely if the farmers had planted the rice. "This would have been enough—just to get them to innovate rather than sitting and waiting for disaster relief," he says.

But the fact that the rice succeeded has also gotten the Government Ministry of Agriculture excited over the possibilities of IR-8 and now various large-scale schemes are in the planning stage for all of South Vietnam.

In Vo Dat, not only was famine averted, but the farmers who stuck with the program will have a larger cash crop to sell than they would have had if there had been no flood. Their confidence in the new rice will undoubtably result in more hectares planted in 1968 and a willingness to take advantage of the two-crop capabilities of the strain. 1968 should see the April crop harvested in July and a new crop planted by August for November reaping.

"These things have a way of expanding by geometric progression," muses Thorngren with a glint in his eye. "The farmers may be willing now to cooperate on a flood control and irrigation project for their mutual benefit; they may begin to grow so much rice that those who have fled the district will return to share in the prosperity; and that in turn may bring security to the road (Highway 333) between Vo Dat and the Xuan Loc and Saigon-Bien Hoa markets."

"It *was* a miracle," he concludes, "but one largely of the plucky farmers own making."

The military-civilian advisory team helped, too. (C.C.)

THE RICE STRAW MAN

"The Rice Straw Man" was well on his way to riches through a successful meeting of East and West, until the Tet Truce Attacks temporarily stalled his operations. Proving Rudyard Kipling wrong is 34-year old Nguyen Ngoc Cuong and his "mentor" Miss Elizabeth Landeau, Industrial Advisor for the office of Civil Operations and Revolutionary Development (CORDS), III Corps Tactical Zone.

One of the 36 balers under contract to Mr. Nguyen Ngoc Cuong packs rice straw at its farm location for subsequent shipment by barge to the Cogido Paper Mill in Bien Hoa. Mr. Cuong pays 2,600 piasters ($22) for a ton of the baled straw which otherwise would have been burned by the farmers. A hectare (2.5 acres) can produce four metric tons of straw. The straw is converted into pulp for paper-making.

Mr. Cuong collects rice straw for conversion into paper pulp, an enterprise started last fall with the help of the US Agency for International Development (USAID) Industry Division. His business, new to Vietnam, provides a "bonus crop" for more than 6,000 farmers in the III and IV Corps area. Formerly more than 80 percent of the straw was burned after the rice harvest with 18 percent used for cattle feed and another two percent used to cover mushroom plantings.

With Mr. Cuong buying the rice straw, a farmer can earn an additional 10,000 piasters ($88) for each hectare (2.5 acres) of rice paddy he owns. This can vary, depending upon the farmer's method of rice thrashing and whether he sells his straw baled or loose. Farmers who thrash their rice by hand produce the best straw for pulping, compared to those who use buffalo or tractors.

Mr. Cuong's enterprise also provided employment for more than 100 Vietnamese who work for him, and indirectly for the 700 employees of the Cogido Paper Mill in Bien Hoa. The mill, established in 1961, is the larger of two such mills in Vietnam.

Another national benefit of "Operation Rice Straw" is its effects on national imports. Now that the Cogido Mill has begun mixing rice straw pulp with other pulp products, Vietnam can reduce its imports of other pulps by a value of more than one million dollars annually.

The Cogido Mill can produce 8,500 metric tons of pulp from 25,000 metric tons of rice straw. Mr. Cuong has delivered 13,500 tons of rice straw to the mill and was preparing to furnish another 17,000 tons before the February actions.

His incentive is enormous. He pays the farmers 2,600 piasters ($22) for a metric ton of baled straw delivered at the mill, or 1,400 piasters ($11) picked up at the farm. (It then costs him 1,250 piasters to transport the straw to the mill.) Mr. Cuong pays another 800 piasters in taxes and baling expenses and sells the straw to the mill for 3,700 piasters ($31)—for a profit of $2.54 per ton.

Mr. Cuong, an animated businessman whose hands thresh like one of the 36 balers he uses in his business, exemplifies the new breed of middle class businessmen whom CORDS is trying to assist. Born a poor man's son in the Delta town of Chau Doc, he was raised in Saigon where his father peddled tobacco. The family eventually moved to Cambodia, where both parents died

Rice straw is delivered to the Cogido Paper Mill, Bien Hoa, by more than 150 barges under contract to Mr. Nguyen Ngoc Cuong-"The Rice Straw Man"-whose new enterprise is bringing extra cash to more than 6,000 farming families in III and IV Corps Tactical Zones. Mr Cuong has been assisted by CORDS and USAID officials.

when he was 17. He took a job as a tutor to grade school children until he could save enough money to return to Vietnam.

Back in his native land he worked as a secretary for two years, then made iron doors. His next job was with a Japanese firm working on the Dalat Dam—he organized and led a crew of Montagnards who cleared roadways. While there he saw the opportunity to purchase wood wholesale for subsequent resale to a lumber mill.

That enterprise was succeeded by a small shipyard which produced more than 300 boats for the Vietnamese Government. Then the Cogido Mill advertised for a supplier of rice straw.

Mr. Cuong knew nothing about the business. He canvassed the farmers and determined their capabilities and limitations. Fear of being caught in the crossfire of war, transportation difficulties, and the lack of equipment were three main problems.

Going to USAID authorities for help, Mr. Cuong received advice on how to establish his business and assistance in contacting military commanders to explain the farmer's problem. Although the project had never been attempted before, everyone was extremely cooperative, he says.

He decided on water transportation as the best way to get the straw to the mill. He was using 150 barges on a contract basis to carry 90 percent of the straw. He also pointed out to the Cogido Mill authorities that their ten balers would not be enough. As a result, the mill presently has 76 balers and 50 more arrived in Saigon in late January. Mr. Cuong uses 36 of these 190,000 piaster machines to bale the straw at the farms and the mill.

While the Viet Cong didn't directly attack the enterprise, they did occasionally extort tribute from the bargemen at the rate of 200 or 300 piasters per boat. The Tet Truce Attacks stalled the operation by temporarily restricting the use of water and road routes to the mill.

Also, a small unit of Viet Cong used the mill and the river area as one of their assembly areas for the fighting in and around Bien Hoa. The resulting military action destroyed most of the straw Mr. Cuong had already sold to the mill and did serious damage to Cogido.

Mr. Cuong himself was captured with other civilians by Viet Cong raiders and spent three nights and two days as a prisoner. After being released, he headed back for Cogido to inspect the damage and to begin planning reconstruction and reorganization. (C.C.)

A Budding Ingenuity

The Rice Man, Mr. Nguyen Ngoc Cuong, inspects rice straw which he hopes will make his fortune. His enterprise, to convert rice straw into paper pulp, received a temporary setback in February with the VC Tet Truce offensive which destroyed much of the straw already collected.

Workers employed by the "Rice Straw Man" bale the straw products at the Cogido Paper Mill, Bien Hoa, South Vietnam with one of the 36 balers controlled by Mr. Nguyen Ngoc Cuong. Cuong's enterprise provides direct employment for 100 Vietnamese, indirect employment for 700 paper mill employees, and gives a "bonus crop" to more than 6000 farmers in III and IV Corps Tactical Zones.

BIEN HOA PROVINCE

Land of Peaceful Frontiers

By Major Cleve Cunningham

Color by SP4 Jerry Cleveland

BIEN HOA—the "Land of the Peaceful Frontiers"—is the least typical of the eleven provinces in III Corps Tactical Zone. Comprising 3,209 square miles and with a population of some 370,000, the province is politically divided into six districts, with 66 villages which in turn are subdivided into 203 hamlets.

One of the oldest provinces in Viet Nam, Bien Hoa was caught in a power struggle in 1698, when Emperor Nguyen Phuc Chu appointed one of his trusted generals, Nguyen Huu Kinh as governor general of the Dong Nai area. The Dong Nai area then consisted of much all of what is now the Republic of South Vietnam. Emperor Chu then sub-divided the Dong Nai area into two parts and within each part created three "districts."

Bien Hoa was one of these "districts," known at that time as Bien Dinh. In 1832, Emperor Minh Mang reorganized his domain into six provinces, one of which was Bien Hoa. The emperor had governors for each province—Vo Quynh is recorded as being one of Bien Hoa's first.

During this time, and until the Vietnamese defeat in the south by the French forces under General Charner in 1861, the entire country was fighting the growing French domination of the nation. In December 1861 the province's administration was surrendered to the French. For the next ninety years Bien Hoa experienced colonization by the French, occupation by the Japanese, and finally Viet Minh directed insurgency which expelled the French.

After the Diem regime was established, the province's political boundaries underwent a series of major revisions, with the final change in November 1965. These adjustments sliced its size by attaching areas to other provinces or by creating the new ones of Phuoc Long (from Song Be district) and Long Khanh (from Xuan Loc). In 1965, when Phuoc Thanh Province was dissolved, the district of Tan Uyen was added to Bien Hoa. The last change was the transfer of Can Gio and Quang Xuyen districts to Gia Dinh Province.

Possessing an extensive network of highways and waterways and sitting on the northeastern edge of the Saigon-Cholon urban population base, Bien Hoa is expected to eventually be one of the most industrialized areas in Vietnam.

Yet the main fact of life in the province today, and particularly in the area of the sprawling Long Bien-Bien Hoa complex, is the massive presence of US and ARVN base areas. The Long Binh facilities, spreading southwest toward Saigon, house the headquarters of the United States Army Vietnam (USARV), II Field Force Headquarters, and miscellaneous logistical, medical and administrative units.

A few miles away, in Bien Hoa, is the Bien Hoa Air Force Base, now officially the busiest in the world. Built by the French, occupied by the Japanese in WWII, and now home of the largest U.S. tactical fighter wing, the airbase is under the jurisdiction of the Vietnamese Air Force (VNAF). Its U.S. 3rd Tactical Fighter Wing flies between one third and one fifth of all Air Force fighter strikes in South Vietnam. Although it has only one runway, the base has more than 60,000 landings and takeoffs in a month.

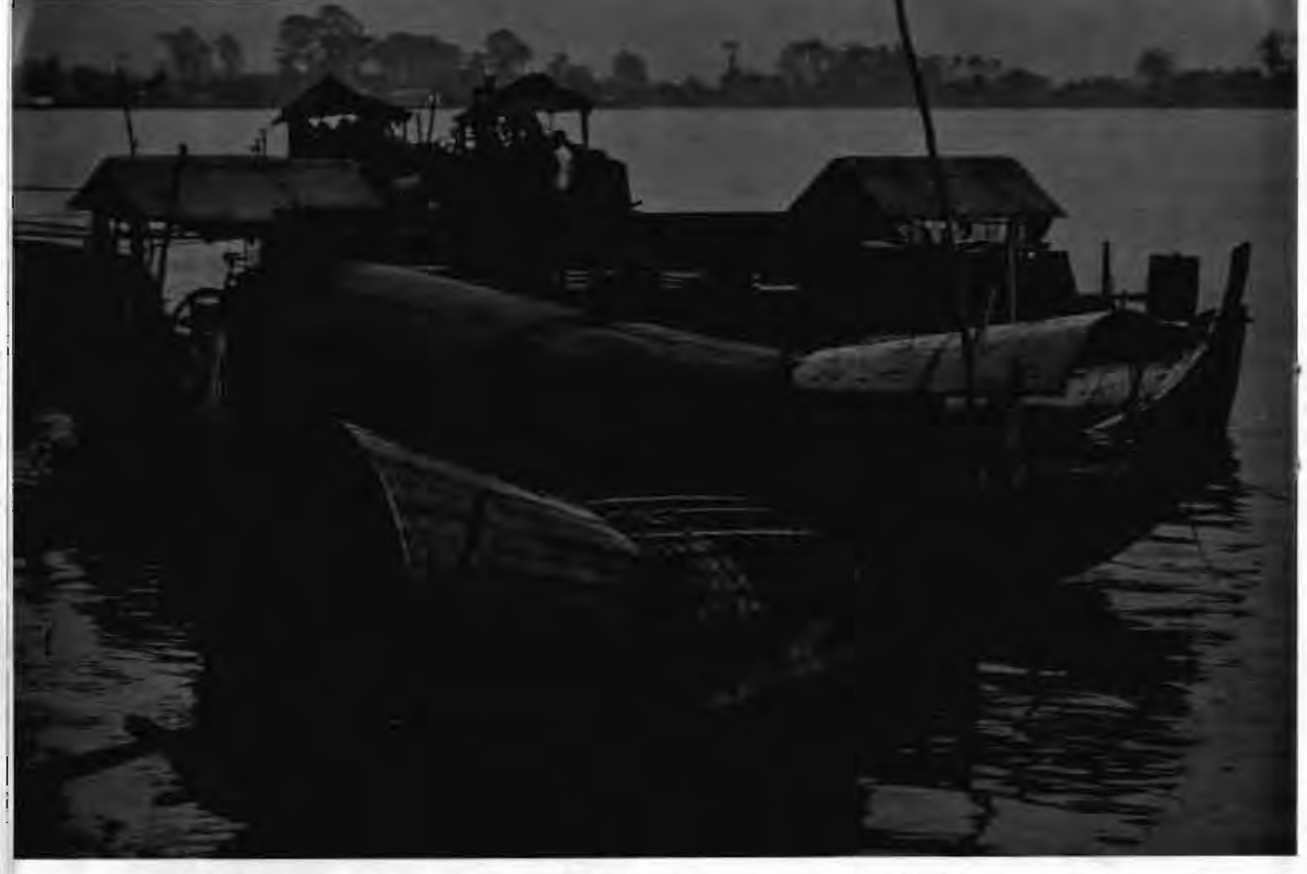
Also in Bien Hoa, on the edge of the airbase, is the headquarters of the Army of Vietnam III Corps, commanded by Lieutenant General Le Nguyen Khang.

The impact of this massive military concentration on the province makes the task of nation-building difficult for Province Chief, Lieutenant Colonel Tran Van Hai. The huge demand for labor by all the competing military installations and units has made the local economy dependent upon that employment. At the same time, the troops pour too much money into the economy for services—a fact which inhibits the growth of industries supplying the people themselves, and which contributes to an inflationary spiral which cheats people on fixed incomes.

On the other hand, the large number of troops in the province has contributed heavily to the area's security. During the Tet Truce Attacks, the enemy launched two regiments and a local force battalion against installations in the Bien Hoa-Long Binh area. None was successful in its attack. This may be a false security which masks the continuing problem of identifying and rooting out some 2,500 enemy in the "shadow government."

But the province, essentially, is secure and prosperous. Highway 1A, built by the U.S. and Vietnamese in 1956, has provided a modern superhighway link with Saigon, supplementing outmoded Highway 1, built by the French in the 1890's.

The Saigon-Bien Hoa Highway passes the beginnings of a modern industrial park, providing the capability of moving raw materials and labor to the park and returning finished products to the markets of Saigon and the world. Highway 1 also connects to the east with Xuan Loc and with Highway 20, over which flow the vegetables from Dalat.



The sun sets on sampans on the Dong Nai River, the most important inland waterway in the province.

BIEN HOA PROVINCE

The industrial base of the province includes some 48 brick kilns, 37 rice mills, 25 saw mills, 26 sugar cane presses, and 20 charcoal kilns. It also includes ice plants, manioc presses, three rubber products plants, three chemical plants, a jute bag plant, a tannery, a starch manufacturer, malt factory, auto battery plant, fertilizer plant and two large paper mills.

Although its industry and its role as geographical center of the military complex make the province seem to be urban-dominated, Bien Hoa is, like most of the nation, essentially rural in nature and thought. Rice and rubber are its two main crops, with some 25,260 hectares of rice in cultivation and 11,367 hectares of rubber. The province produced 54,000 tons of rice in 1967 and 4,587 metric tons of rubber.

Its grapefruit is reputed to be the best in the country. More than 1,540,800 of the golden fruit were grown in 1967 and exported to all 44 provinces in South Vietnam. Bien Hoa also grew more than 6,000 tons of vegetables, and 47,253 tons of sugar cane. The farmers also grow oranges, tangerines, watermelons, manioc, peanuts, mangoes, lemons and bananas.

This rural base surrounding the main urban area contributes to the difficulties of pacification. In the entire province there are only 524 elementary school classrooms and 763 teachers. Some 57,407 children in the age group of six to 11 years, out of an estimated 65,000 children of that age, attended school in 1967. Only 12,000 of 20,000 in the age group 11–20 were in class.

The province administration was able to train 83 additional teachers and built 29 additional classrooms in 1967.

The province benefits medically by its proximity to Saigon. Within its political boundaries it has two hospitals and the only mental hospital in Vietnam. Two large and six small maternity dispensaries were built in 1967. There are dispensaries in each district and 80 health stations scattered through the province. Additional help is given by the Australian Surgical Team which practices at the Bien Hoa Provincial Hospital (HURRICANE, March 1968) and which makes regular visits to the Mental Hospital and to the Ben San Leprosarium (HURRICANE, February 1968). There is also a Korean medical team and a Venezuelan doctor helping provide experienced medical assistance to the four Vietnamese doctors, 31 nurses and 30 assorted medical technicians and midwives.

Politically, the province displayed an acute awareness of the issues in the 1967 elections. There were 96,610 votes cast (out of 130,736) in the 42 villages elections; 69,179 (out of 115,201) in the 122 hamlet elections, and 141,503 (out of 179,450) in the presidential/senatorial elections.

The elections demonstrated more than political astuteness, say members of the Province Senior Advisor's staff—they also indicated a high degree of political organization within the province.

Ethnically, the province is predominately Vietnamese, with less than 2,000 members of such minority groups as Chinese, French, Montagnards, and Chams. Some fifty to sixty percent of the population is Buddhist or Confucian, although there are large Catholic communities such as the famous Ho Nai Village. (Ho Nai was founded by Catholic refugees who fled North Vietnam after the 1954 Geneva Agreement and were placed strategically along Highway 1 by then-President Ngo Dinh Diem. Their settlement has become one of the showplace refugee resettlement areas in Vietnam and a large proportion of the employees of Long Binh-based units live there).

Thus the average family in the province is probably non-Catholic, literate, and at least part-time farmers. Some of the male members of the family are in either the Army or in a Regional Force/Popular Force unit, while other members are employed by, or in direct support of, the military forces in their area.

Bien Hoa Province, then, is an anomaly. It is plagued by the basic problems shared by the other provinces in the tactical zone; problems which are simultaneously exacerbated by and relieved by the concentration of military resources in the heart of the province.

Yet the dream of the Vietnamese and Free World Military Forces advisors who work in the province visualizes a different Bien Hoa. They work toward the day when the area known as "Bien Hoa City" (but which is really only a "hamlet" of Binh Truoc Village) will lose its air of being a haphazardly-built penny arcade and will, instead, be a graceful province capital on the banks of the nourishing Dong Nai River.

From that capital, they hope, will flow the guidance and efficient government which will be able to cope with the needs of an essentially rural folk growing the crops to support a labor force engaged in making Bien Hoa-Long Binh a modern center of light and heavy industry.

It's a dream worth keeping.

ENGINEERS ... *ingenuity and resourcefulness*

Roads in Vietnam are essential for transportation and communication and are equally important for military operations. Because bridges are key points in any road system, they are important targets for enemy sabotage. The responsibility to keep tactical roads and other lines of communication (LOC) open lies with the US Army Engineers, in conjunction with other allied engineer units.

During the recent communist Tet Truce Attacks, the enemy tried to interdict the major roads in III Corps Tactical Zone to impede reinforcements to units under attack, to prevent resupply of ammunition and other supplies and to minimize the use of US and Free World Forces mobile resources. Main arteries, including bridges and culverts were damaged. The VC set up road blocks at key points along critical LOCs. Mines, both pressure and command detonated, were placed in key positions to prevent road travel by allied forces.

Allied engineer units throughout III Corps Tactical Zone rose to this challenge with famed "yankee ingenuity and resourcefulness" to repair damaged LOCs, remove road blocks and clear mines from the roads.

The mission of engineer units is to keep all main arteries open to traffic with a minimum of delay and inconvinience. Each night, trucks and other organic equipment are fully loaded with laterite, crushed rock and culvert material. At first light, aerial and road reconnaissances are made throughout the zone. Each OPCON unit in III CTZ reconnoiters its Tactical Area of Interest (TAOI) to determine the status of LOCs. An assessment of damage is made and repair work coordinated with supporting engineer units, who in turn dispatch the necessary equipment to promptly repair the damage and open the LOCs to traffic at the earliest possible time.

The 20th Engineer Brigade, located at Bien Hoa and commanded by Brigadier General Curtis Chapman of Alexandria, Va., has operational control over all engineer units in III CTZ., except units organic to major tactical organizations. All subordinate units assigned to the major OPCON units of II Field Force send daily spot reports concerning the status of LOCs in their respective TAOI's. If major damage is reported, support is provided by the 20th Engineer group from units located within the affected area and the appropriate equipment is immediately dispatched according to priorities and tactical necessity.

Engineer unit equipment includes armored vehicle launch bridges, capable of spanning 60 foot gaps in bridges and culverts; vehicles and equipment; preassembled cranes; and a dry span bridge which has skeleton sections pinned together and can be airlifted by Chinook helicopter. This bridge is emplaced by sling which provides the span with running surface and strength for the bridge. With it, a 38-foot bridge can be constructed in 20 minutes.

The engineers have perfected a system that insures that damage is repaired as quickly as possible. Routinely, engineers face great difficulties, but the job gets done.

The 20th Engineer Brigade, with more than 13,000 men, is responsible for 1,233 kilometers of road in III CTZ. During the Tet Truce Attacks, Viet Cong units made 347 road interdictions, ranging from log road blocks and brush and rock blocks to craters on blown culverts. Some 22 bridges were destroyed or damaged. But the engineers quickly and efficiently repaired all the damage.

For example, QL4 is a main supply route from the rice fields in the Delta to the markets in Saigon. The bridges along QL4 are natural enemy targets. On February 19, Viet Cong forces succeeded in blowing a bridge carrying QL4 over one of the tributaries of the Song Luu, near the small village of An Ngai.

The damage was discovered at 0730 on the 19th by a unit from the 15th Engineer Bn. (Combat), assigned to the 9th Infantry Division at Dong Tam. The Recon Team, which made the discovery, returned to headquarters and reported the damage to Division G-3 at 0830. 9th Div. G-3 informed II Field Force Engineering Section, which formulated the mission and sent it down to 20th Engineer Bde. Due to the importance of this bridge, the job was classified an Immediate Reaction Mission. The bridge was in the 34th Engineer Group's sector of responsibility and the mission was given to the 617th Engineer Company, the only Panel Bridge Company in the Group. Captain Stephen P. Wilson, commanding the 617th, received the mission at 1200 hours, just three and a half hours after the damage was reported. Verbal instructions are used to speed up operations and are backed up by written orders within 24 hours.

Within four hours of receiving the mission, CPT Wilson had all necessary equipment loaded on trucks. The morning of February 20, the 2d platoon, reinforced with the 1st and 2d squads of the 1st platoon, headed for Dong Tam. They were escorted by a convoy of mechanized infantry from the 9th Division. The 70 men arrived in Dong Tam at 1145, where they were to remain overnight to link up with the security force.

The VC had planned to have the An Ngai bridge stay out for a long time. In order to impede repairs, they had exploded cratering charges in the road from Dong Tam to An Ngai. The convoy was preceeded by 15 dump trucks from B Company, 15th Engineer Bn. These trucks, loaded with sand, literally paved the way for the men of the 617th.

The 617th arrived in An Ngai at 1630 on the 21st and set up a perimeter defense. The bridge site was later secured by the 1st of the 12th ARVN Infantry. This unit captured three Viet Cong suspects in the village of An Ngai.

Before a new bridge could be built, the remains of the old bridge had to be destroyed. This mission was given to the 51st ARVN Engineer Bn. By 1600 of the 22d, the ARVN unit, using demolitions, had removed what was left of the old bridge. The 617th began work on a 140-foot Bailey Bridge to replace the old span.

The work progressed quickly, and by 1800 hours of the 23d, the bridge was finished. When it was time to launch the bridge many of the villagers came out to help push the span across the stream. Traffic, which had backed up for miles in both directions, again flowed freely.

The 617th returned to its base camp in Long Binh and prepared for another mission. Some 106 hours had elapsed between the time damage was reported and the time the bridge was replaced.

The action was typical of the efficiency of the Corps of Engineers. Whenever a bridge is down, the engineers make sure that it is repaired in the shortest possible time.

FADAC

by sp4 ronald pejsa

The artilleryman's dream of scoring a direct first round hit is now a reality.

The breakthrough comes from the development of the Field Artillery Digital Automatic Computer, FADAC, now being used successfully by artillery units throughout Vietnam.

Artillery effectiveness is judged upon its ability to strike quickly and accurately. Prior to "firing for effect" under old systems, however, it was necessary to fire registration and adjustment rounds. But the enemy, seeing these rounds falling in, prepared defensive measures and reduced injury to himself and damage to his equipment.

FADAC eliminates the need for registrations and adjustments. It not only insures direct first round hits, but it also has improved firing tables, graphical devices, and fire direction techniques.

FADAC is a general purpose digital computer, weighing 200 pounds, and is capable of computing fire missions within seconds, saving valuable time used in manual computations.

The computer operates quickly and effectively once initial data concerning the firing battery and target locations is fed into it. FADAC then computes the range, selects the optimum powder charge and quadrant elevation.

Adding weather conditions, drag, muzzle velocity and projectile weight, the computer then "imagines" the location of the projectile at the end of its first fraction of a second of flight.

FADAC continues to compute the location of the projectile at the end of each succeeding fraction of a second of flight until it "detects" that the projectile would be on the downward leg of its trajectory.

It then determines if the projectile would reach a point below the desired altitude. If it would not, the computer continues to solve the equations until the projectile passes the burst point.

When this happens, the integration process is halted and the range is compared to the range of the target. If the miss distance is less than 10 meters, a final range correction factor is added to the computed range; a lateral correction is applied to compensate for drift, cross-wind, and earth rotation. Gun orders then appear in the indicator display panel.

If the miss distance is greater than 10 meters, however, a new trial elevation is selected and the entire process of simulating the projectile flight is repeated.

The ballistic computation is completed in a matter of seconds and is repeated each time a new gun order is required.

FADAC can also control the firing of two different weapons simultaneously; it can control five different firing batteries; and it can retain data on 88 different targets and nine observer locations.

FADAC represents simplicity in computer operations. All switches, controls, keyboards, and displays are directly in front of the operator, requiring the minimum of movement on his part.

For accuracy of operation, FADAC also has a variety of built-in warning devices to warn the operator of errors, omissions, or improper operations.

When the computer approaches either maximum or minimum temperatures or voltages, warning lights automatically turn on. If the problem continues, the machine automatically turns itself off without disturbing any of the information within.

If incorrect or incomplete data is fed into the computer, a "flag" number appears, telling the operator to check a checklist listing possible errors and omissions.

The computer also has been designed so it can be maintained with ease. Components, subassemblies, and all support equipment are interchangeable with any other FADAC computer or test set.

FADAC's use in fire direction centers has not only increased accuracy of fires (with subsequent savings in ammunition expenditures) while reducing reaction times, but it will lead into a more sophisticated automation program known as TAC-FIRE.

TAC-FIRE will further enable artillerymen to increase their effectiveness by providing even more automated fire plans. Digital plotter maps and electronic tactical maps will visually display targeting information and dispersal of suppressive fires. Production models of TAC-FIRE will appear in the early 1970's.

FADAC can control the simultaneous firing of two different weapons. Here is a fire mission being completed by a 175 mm gun and an 8" howitzer from the 7th Battalion, 8th Artillery. The computer can also store data on 88 different targets and control the firing of five different batteries.

A NEW KIND OF ADVISOR

Makes War Against Waste

Story by SP4 Ray Wolf

"We cannot do anything without the help of the Vietnamese people. Their work marks our progress."

These are the words of one of the seven American soldiers who are fighting a war on waste in the heart of III Corps Tactical Zone's Long Khanh Province. The hand-picked specialists from the 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment make up the two-month-old Logistical and Administrative Advisory Team (LAAT).

In December, II Field Force decided that every province in III Corps would have a LAAT team furnished by the major unit in that province.

Regimental Commander Colonel Jack MacFarlane tapped Major Roger T MacLeod for team leader and Deputy Province Advisor for Administration and Logistics. The 28-year-old MacLeod, then a captain who had just spent half a year commanding Second Squadron's E Troop, has served over two years in Vietnam, and speaks the language. Before his Blackhorse command he had been an advisor to ARVN armor units.

1LT Jerry D. Thompson was commanding the regiment's information detachment in Loc Ninh when he got the word to pack his bags. Several days later he was AG officer in charge of personnel and finance for Long Khanh Province.

SSG Carlos F. Algarin, formerly E Troop supply sergeant, came to the LAAT team just recently. A 43-year-old grandfather, he is the LAAT supply advisor.

SSG Robert Brinson was in charge of all First Squadron communications for seven months. When he heard about the LAAT team, he volunteered to be the commo NCO.

The maintenance advisor, SSG John Foggin, had been in the field for seven months as motor sergeant for Third Squadron's I Troop before coming to the LAAT team.

Sergeant Tommy McConnell, a squad leader in Third Squadron's K Troop for three months, is now the team's small arms and perimeter defense specialist.

Specialist Five Charles Busby had been serving for over five months with the 37th Medical Company at Blackhorse. He is now in charge of medical supply for the LAAT advisors.

The Blackhorse trouble-shooters, working side by side with their Vietnamese counterparts, are assuring the Province's Regional and Popular Forces a steady flow of personnel, supplies, and salaries to maintain top readiness and performance. When a problem crops up, the team attempts to guide the units in submitting requests and reports through proper channels quickly.

SP5 Busby gets as close as he can to the Vietnamese words he is trying to learn from his "co-workers."

The LAAT headquarters is the Administrative and Direct Support Logistics Company, or A&L Company, just south of Xuan Loc, the Long Khanh Province capital. At this home base they check and chart incoming personnel and logistics reports for discrepancies and outgoing supplies for deficits.

When a LAAT advisor discovers a problem, he tells his Vietnamese counterpart about it. Together they work out a way to remedy the situation.

Except for Major MacLeod, nobody on the team spoke Vietnamese. Nobody, either, had worked directly with Vietnamese before. They had been fighting for the Vietnamese, but had never worked with them. When they arrived they were apprehensive, but anxious to see this different facet of Vietnam.

Shortly they found the work to be the most personally rewarding assignments since they arrived in Vietnam. The Vietnamese they were advising began to know and trust them. Once given the materials and instructions, the people got the job done.

"When they see that we really want to help them, they find a way to use anything that we can get for them. The Vietnamese we work with don't waste anything," said a LAAT advisor.

Although the LAAT advisors have interpreters, they are gradually learning Vietnamese by trading words with the Vietnamese soldiers who want to learn English. But their job goes much further than merely making friends.

"One of the main functions of LAAT is to carry the influence of the A&L Company to the field," says Major MacLeod. So contact teams of Vietnamese and LAAT advisors from the A&L Company visit the RF companies and PF platoons throughout the province.

On these trips they check for missing and needed equipment, adjust outdated A&L rosters and reports, repair all deadlined articles possible, and arrange paperwork and shipment for equipment that must go back to the A&L Company for repair.

Some of the field units have difficulty picking up new or repaired equipment or parts from the A&L Company. When this happens, the LAAT advisors try to get helicopters to fly the supplies out to the field units.

Besides keeping track of the province's administration and logistics, the team also shares the defense for the Xuan Loc MACV compound and helps the A&L Company upgrade its defenses.

The team is under the operational control of the Military Assistance Command Vietnam (MACV), and receives instructions from the Long Khanh Province senior advisor. Its support comes from the 11th Armored Cavalry.

Working in conjunction with Captain Harvey Binns, MACV advisor to A&L Company since November, the LAAT advisors have helped the soldiers get barrier and building materials and ammunition for the company. The soldiers' families live inside the compound, so the project assumes many aspects of a community affair.

Since Long Khanh Province was not deeply scarred by the Viet Cong Tet Attacks, the LAAT advisors enjoy the advantage of working ahead rather than rebuilding. This, plus their personal enthusiasm, has enabled them to make noticeable progress in just two months.

Captain Binns says he has witnessed a tremendous overall improvement in the logistic and administrative capabilities of the company since the LAAT team arrived two months ago.

"The LAAT advisors were quick to grasp the problems of the Vietnamese logistics system," he says. Then he adds, "The morale of all the Vietnamese officers of A&L Company increased considerably with the coming of the LAAT workers."

Much of the team's success rides with Dai Uy (Captain) Nguyen Quy Hoan, the commander of A&L Company for many years, who once lived in North Vietnam. When the American advisors have any problems they take them to the Dai Uy. He and his staff confer with the Americans and resolve the problems.

The 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment's LAAT advisors are living proof of the progress that comes from mutual respect between peoples, as opposed to the products of threats and fear.

But they know the job is far from done. Staff Sergeant Algarin, the team's oldest member, says, "There is so much to be done, and so little time to do it. I can never do everything I want before I leave, but I can't forget these people. When I go home, they will be a part of me."

LRP

F Co., 51st Infantry

Photos and story by SP4 Paul Temple

The Long Range Patrol (LRP) team gathered in the briefing tent the night before its ambush mission to go over the location of the ambush site, radio frequencies and artillery support. A specialist checked out the team's equipment and supplies and a helicopter pilot pointed out LZ's on the briefing map and detailed insertion procedure. The patrol leader presented his plan and asked for questions. After discussion, the men returned to their billets for final preparations.

Preparation for a routine patrol? No, because LRP teams stay out for as long as six days, operating in contested and enemy controlled areas. Although they have the support of the most modern army in the world behind them, members of the LRP are in a real sense alone all the time they are out.

Twelve men, a "heavy" team, were on this patrol. Six-man teams, used for reconnaissance, avoid contact. The heavy team seeks it, attempting to kill the enemy in his own territory. The team is equipped with enough automatic weapons and claymore mines to engage and maul a large enemy force in a devastating ambush.

Members of the team work together, complementing each others actions. But each man is also an individual and his uniqueness is reflected in his gear. Each pack is different, according to the habits and physique of its owner. Some team members prefer the issue rucksack and frame, while others cut down the frame and mount the sack higher than usual. Some use claymore bags tied together and to the pack-frame with quick-release knots. Others use canvas rucksacks "scrounged" from ARVN sources. While the equipment carried is uniform, the manner in which it is packed varies as much as the rucksacks themselves.

The object in packing is to place the weight as close as possible to the body and make it comfortable, with no sharp protrusions into the wearer's back. The equipment is arranged in order of priority. Armament, of course, is the most accessible.

At 0600 the next morning the team arose, camouflaged themselves and had breakfast. The choppers—two slicks and a light fireteam escort—moved the team to the LZ.

The first chopper came in and its passengers made a quick sprint to the treeline. The second came in and there was another sprint. The team drew no fire; it was a "clean" insertion. Then the team waited an hour for the Forward Air Observer (FAO) to come overhead and establish contact.

The team assumed its order of march and moved out through heavy bamboo and undergrowth. Progress was slow, with frequent stops to check position with the FAO by mirror and radio signals and listen for the enemy. The dry season had made the underbrush and bamboo brittle and absolute silence was impossible. But daylight sounds, rustling leaves and broken twigs, don't carry like coughs, clanking of metal or voices. There were no unnecessary sounds.

After three hours, the team had not reached the ambush site and the FAO had to go back for fuel. The team leader decided to establish a perimeter in a small clearing near a stream.

Claymore mines were set around the perimeter and patrol members, soaked with sweat, sprawled in the grass among the bushes. A few minutes later, a VC was spotted downstream filling a water pail—he was less than 35 meters away. The point man from the LRP climbed a tree to spot the enemy and saw a small campfire and poncho spread for a sunshade. Headquarters decided to keep the patrol in the clearing to ambush the VC when he returned for water and wound him, if possible, to take prisoner.

The wait, the greatest part of a LRP, began. Twelve people huddled in a small circle, not communicating, turning either to sleep, introspection or a microscopic examination of the tiny universe around them. There were grasshoppers of different hues, red ants fighting black ants and sounds from birds and crickets.

As darkness settled, each man cleared the area his body covered of anything that might make noise as he slept. At dusk, when the jungle slipped into night, sounds became distinct. Men tightened at each one, then relaxed as an insect noise or wind in the trees was recognized. Much later, something unnatural moved in the brush not far away. It was impossible to tell how far away—darkness had removed all size from the tiny clearing. Then flashlights shone through the trees and seven VC moved through one end of the clearing, silhouetted by flares in the distance. The team held its breath, but the VC passed and removed the possibility of a firefight and a terrifying night extraction. LRP's have found that firefights at night are unsatisfactory unless the team is in position for an ambush.

The night settled again, left to the insects, the breeze and the birds. The team pulled guard in shifts, waiting for dawn when VC are likely to attack. Dawn passed with no attack. The team lay in the clearning all day and into the next night. The stillness was broken by small arms fire close to the team position and gunships sent death through the trees and artillery moaned overhead.

Headquarters, over the radio, announced that another LRP team had made contact and been extracted. The patrol would be picked up early in the morning because infantry was going to sweep the area.

There are two ways to move in the jungle, quickly or quietly. The LRP used the same LZ for extraction as they had for insertion but, while it took three hours to reach the clearing, it took 12 minutes to return.

The extraction was uneventful but all members of the patrol seemed disappointed that there had been no contact and no opportunity to take a prisoner. There was no disappointment about returning to showers and hot meals.

RF/PF

By 1LT Bart Stokes

Color by SP4 Jerry Cleveland

Territorial security within the 10,000 square miles of the III Corps Tactical Zone rests largely on the rarely publicized and poorly understood Regional and Popular Forces (RF/PF)—affectionately known to most Americans as "ruff puffs."

Composing more than half the ARVN (Army of the Republic of Vietnam) forces in the III CTZ, RF/PF represents over 57,000 soldiers in 234 RF and 734 PF units. Nearly all of the 550 triangular or square forts in the countryside are manned by them. The RF/PF accounted for over 40 percent of the Viet Cong killed by the entire ARVN forces in the III CTZ in 1967, as well as suffering over 40 percent of the casualties.

Paid as regular forces and attending the same training courses as the regular Vietnamese Army, the soldiers of the 123-man RF light infantry company are organized into three rifle platoons, a weapons platoon and a headquarters platoon. Each rifle platoon is composed of three rifle squads.

Regional Forces and the ARVN differ in that the RF are under province control. Raised from within their own province, they are trained at one of the National Training Centers, before being returned to their home provinces for assignment where they may be operating independently or with regular ARVN units.

(Continued on page 27.)

RF/PF

The second element of the RF/PF team—the 35-man Popular Forces rifle platoon led by non-commissioned officers—consists of three rifle squads and one headquarters squad. Each rifle squad has two fire teams. Recruited from a specific hamlet and then trained at province level, they are returned to their hamlet under the control of the village chief. They provide security for a particular village, installation, bridge or key building.

One of their problems is the fact that their pay, allowances and equipment are inferior to that given the Regular Army.

U.S. and GVN (Government of Vietnam) officials agree that the mud fort and watchtower tactics which presently dominate RF/PF employment are tactically unsound and wasteful. Whenever the VC need a psychological victory or need re-supply, they attack an outpost in force. Because the RF/PF are greatly outnumbered and outgunned in these attacks, the VC often are able to overrun the outpost.

Province officials are working to move the RF/PF out of the mud forts and into villages and hamlets. RF/PF units are to conduct ambush patrols and operate listening posts around the village along likely avenues of approach. In the daytime they conduct short range operations against the VC guerrillas.

RF Company 849 is an example of this positive approach. Located 40 miles southeast of Saigon at Bo Kinh Hamlet, the 849th Company, commanded by First Lieutenant Nguyen Cong Khanh, has proved successful on these daytime operations. Recent forays against the VC by this unit have resulted in seven VC detained and two killed plus equipment and weapons taken.

Living in villages and working on civic action projects increases the rapport between the RF/PF and the people. French influence and inertia caused by tradition make the mud fort concept difficult to alter. The forts have been in Vietnam so long that they have become part of the mental and physical "landscape."

When the "ruff-puffs" cannot be moved, a combined U.S. and ARVN effort goes to work to upgrade the RF/PF defensive capability, particularly their use of physical barriers, and their defensive artillery fires. This enables them to hold off an attack until U.S. or ARVN air and artillery ready reaction forces can support the action.

Upgrading the outpost puts a major strain on the RF/PF administrative supply and logistics system. As a result, three programs have been instituted by U.S. forces to deal with this problem.

Five-man U.S. Mobile Advisory Teams (MAT) from U.S. brigades in the III CTZ live in the outpost for at least three months, advising the local forces and aiding revolutionary development teams around the outpost. The MAT develops training programs for the RF/PF as well as supplying needed physical fixtures to upgrade the defensive positions.

Three-man IMPACT (Improvement Action Teams), living at a post for less than a week at a time, advise personnel in the RF/PF outposts on programs necessary for immediate defensive security. The team then moves to another post to repeat the process.

Second Lieutenant Steven Chung from the 25th Infantry Division's 1st Brigade, heads an IMPACT team. He defines his mission as "first helping them improve fortifications and security, then giving instruction in squad tactics, ambush techniques, mine emplacement, wire laying and other fundamentals."

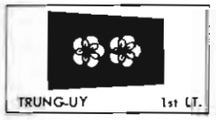
The seven-man Logistics Administrative and Advisory Team (LAAT), the last of the major U.S. programs instituted, has as its primary mission to insure that the Vietnamese supply system for the RF/PF functions properly. LAAT's efficiency experts concentrate on bottlenecks in the system, whether red tape, paperwork or problems in the supply flow. (See Hurricane story on page 18.)

Although RF/PF units are thought of as "home defense groups," they serve on the frontiers of a war which has no frontlines.

A final map reconnaissance before springing an operation is a small but vital part of the working relationship between US military advisors and the RF/PF.

Before every operation the RF/PF soldiers are inspected to insure that each has his required load of ammunition and ration. The unit may stay an an operation far several days. Close inspection insures the soldiers ability to carry out his mission.

KNOW YOUR ARVN COUNTERPART



"MIRACLE RICE"

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