

## VC 'Grip Slips'

## Chieu Hoi's Soar in April

The Viet Cong have apparently lost the iron grip on their own people as a result of Operation "Makalapa."

A spokesman for the 2nd Bde., 25th Inf. Div., stated that the number of "Chieu Hoi" (Open Arms) ralliers has risen 200 per cent in the past 30 days.

The increase was credited by brigade officers to the heavy pressure placed on the Viet Cong by allied combat operations and the increased security offered ralliers.

"The control of the Viet Cong in this area was so strong in many cases, that ralliers feared what the VC would do to them if they came to the allied side," explained Capt. James Meador

of Milton, W. Va., a brigade staff officer.

The massive operations in the area provided the security needed to insure safety for Viet Cong who took advantage of the "Chieu Hoi" program.

Leaflet drops carried out by the brigade's psychological operations personnel explained the program thoroughly to prospective ralliers.

Specially equipped helicopters carrying high powered public address systems blared the "Chieu Hoi" message throughout the combat area, especially

after contact had been made with the Viet Cong.

"These methods were effective," said Meador, "but the greatest single reason for the increase in the number of ralliers was the intensity and size of allied operations in the area."

Brigade forces made intensive sweeps of the vast pineapple field areas along the Oriental River. More than 500 Viet Cong bunkers were destroyed in a single day of the operation.

Helicopters swept brigade soldiers into unprepared areas constantly maintaining the pressure on the Viet Cong.

"It was this pressure, plus the opportunity to come forward that convinced them to move to the side of South Vietnamese government," Meador concluded.

## VC Hit CP

Soldiers of the 1st Bn., 35th Inf. and the 2nd Bn., 9th Arty. had the scare of their lives when a Viet Cong mine detonated in the center of their forward command post.

Although the command-detonated mine blew a hole five feet deep and 10 feet wide and sent shrapnel flying throughout the CP, scratches and bruises were the only injuries taken.

Men of Alpha Btry., 2nd Bn., 9th Arty., who were bunked on top of the bomb, had been called to their posts for a fire mission seconds before the explosion occurred.

The 250-pound bomb and 105-mm rounds—believed to be U.S. ammunition which failed to explode when it was dropped into a nearby VC stronghold a week earlier—had been buried prior to the "Cacti Green's" arrival in the landing zone.

MSgt. Francis G. Corcoran, who traced the wire leading from the bomb to where it had been detonated, said the VC had taken great pains to conceal the wire and bombs.

## Patrol Clicks, Gets Charlie

The Viet Cong in the Boi Loi Woods couldn't wait to be ambushed by the "Bobcats." They blundered into a patrol led by SSgt. Carson Peacock Jr., before his men actually had time to complete their ambush site.

"We were just setting up when we saw four Viet Cong 350 meters away," Peacock, of Benson N.C. said. "We all opened fire immediately, killing one and wounding another who left a trail of blood as he ran away." The body was found with a pistol belt, canteen, medical bag and rice. The blood trail from the wounded Viet Cong was discovered the next day. It had been missed because of the darkness.

The ambush patrol of Co. B, 1st Bn. (Mech.), 5th Inf. moved to another ambush site after they had made the body count.

## Former 1/27 Gives 1 R&amp;R

Sgt. Weldon Merchant will enjoy rest and recreation (R&R) with his wife and two children because of an old "Wolfhound."

Merchant, Co. B, 2nd Bn., 27th Inf., had planned to meet his wife during R&R in Hawaii. "She was discussing the trip with friends at a club meeting back in Roanoke, Va.," said Merchant.

Jack Miller, who had served with the unit during the Korean War, heard about the R&R plan and offered to take Mrs. Merchant and her two children to Hawaii free of charge.

Merchant said "we are certainly thankful to Mr. Miller and I'm looking forward to comparing 'Wolfhound' experiences with him in May."



Red Cross representative Shelley off, but is subjected to full "Cacti" shampoo. She was visiting the s on Operation "Pershing." (Photo by 1st Lt. Peter Wascher)

s Marines  
ome in North

rans of jungle fighting in War Zone C home at Chu Lai Marine Base.

command of Brig. Gen. Richard April 10 to the area 375 miles north- operate under control of Maj. Gen. the 1st Marine Division.

the brigade would primarily protect t program in troubled Quang Tri and g the Marines for direct combat with he north. This program of developing ite target of the Communists.

rans of jungle fighting in War Zone C t was in this area they inflicted some e war on the North Vietnamese and

d the 196th joined two U.S. Marine two and one-half Vietnamese govern- the rising guerrilla activity near the

Now Utilizing  
re in Tunnels

no gence sections. However, the 25th Inf. Div.'s "Wolfhounds" now plan to take an active part in the psychological warfare program by depositing leaflets in any tunnels or bunkers they



POOPED TROOP—A scout dog supporting a Co. C, 1st Bn., 35th Inf. patrol in the 506 valley takes a break to rest. The "Cacti Green," men of the 3rd Brigade Task Force, are on Opera-