



Flares and smoke mark sites of combat in Saigon during the 1968 Tet attacks.

Tet and the Aftermath ... 1968

*"The year ahead is destined to be one of
great challenge and opportunity."*

*New Year's Day Message
Lieutenant General Bruce Palmer
January 1, 1968*

A DOZEN names: Paris . . . Saigon . . . Hanoi . . . Tet . . . the Demilitarized Zone . . . Khe Sanh . . . the New Jersey . . . Hue . . . Abrams . . . these and many more studded the world's headlines during 1968.

And the names of thousands of Americans were printed in newspaper pages, etched on tombstones, whispered in lonely, tearfilled nights.

Seldom has a statement about the future been more prophetic than the one made on that New

Year's by the deputy commander of the U.S. Army, Vietnam.

This was, without question, the most eventful year completed during America's agonizing war in Southeast Asia. It saw the most savage series of attacks, the most brutal fighting and a strong glimmer of hope for an honorable end.

The most violent part of the war year was the Communists' winter-spring offensive. It began even before 1968 did, with a 36-hour New Year's truce that was violated by the Reds 177 times—"the bloodiest holiday truce of the Vietnam War," the papers called it, 30 days and several thousand deaths before Tet.

The bombers flew north to begin the fourth year of raids above the Demilitarized Zone on Tuesday, Jan. 3. There were dogfights and Air Force Phantom pilots bagged two MIG 17s that day.

There were rumors that Ho Chi Minh was seriously ill, but it didn't make much difference to Americal Division troopers—they beat off attacks by elements of two NVA regiments on Jan. 3 and began a massive sweep of their southern I Corps area of operation. About 200 Reds were killed that first day, and by the time the fighting was over, more than a week later, Skytroopers of the 1st Cavalry Division's 3rd Brigade had joined in to help kill more than a thousand North Vietnamese.

As January neared its end it began to look like an offensive was coming near the DMZ, where a string of artillery, rocket and ground attacks were unleashed on Allied posts all along the buffer zone. Khe Sanh and neighboring Lang Vei were hit—hard—for the first time on Jan. 21, beginning a three-month drama that would focus the eyes of the world on a small Marine garrison in the rolling, rusty-red hills of the Lao border country.

The U.S. command rushed 3,000 1st Cavalry Division troops as reinforcements into northern I Corps, and infantrymen from the 101st Airborne Division soon followed. A total of 10,000 Marine and Army troops were poured, in less than a week, into areas near the DMZ to guard against an expected "major offensive" there.

American intelligence reports indicated that a fresh North Vietnamese division had been infiltrated into I Corps, to make a total of between 40 and 50 thousand NVA soldiers—three full divisions—poised for a general attack.

On Saturday, Jan. 27, the Communists began their "unilateral seven-day truce" during the Tet holiday season in South Vietnam, which the North Vietnamese completely ignored in the northern part of the Republic. The carnage there went on. On Wednesday, Jan. 31, the Allies began their 36-hour version of the Tet truce. It lasted 15½ hours, until 9:30 Thursday morning when rockets began

slamming into Da Nang Air Base. Wild street fighting broke out in the peaceful seaside resort of Nha Trang and Communist sappers breached the security of the U.S. Embassy grounds in Saigon.

One senior American officer said of the northern provinces: "It is something I would label an invasion. It is no longer just an infiltration."

In Saigon, on Jan. 31, the government was distributing "Tet tote bags," little gift packets of soap and other hard-to get necessities. In each was a printed horoscope that predicted the new year, beginning that day, would be "favorable to the government but unfavorable to its enemies."

"VC Hit Saigon," screamed the headlines on Thursday, Feb. 1.

Street fighting raged in all eight major cities and at least 30 towns and provincial capitals. That first day, the U.S. command acknowledged full-scale attacks on Kontum, Ban Me Thuot, Nha Trang, Hoi An, Tuy Hoa, Qui Nhon and Pleiku, and, of course, in the capital itself.

But many towns, such as My Tho and Can Tho in the Mekong Delta, were ripped with battles that at first went unreported in Saigon because of the confusion.

There was more fighting in Quang Tri, Dalat and Bien Hoa. The North Vietnamese virtually occupied Hue—they assassinated more than 1,000 civilians in that city alone. They held half of Kontum. Terrorist slaughter was reported everywhere—foreign missionaries were slain, and anyone who worked for the Americans was murdered or tortured.

The Reds had lists of names marked for assassination in nearly every city. Those who waited too

Members of a long-range patrol carefully inspect an abandoned village dwelling in the Central Highlands.



THE 1968 TET OFFENSIVE

MPs hustle a Viet Cong detainee, apprehended near the American Embassy in Saigon during Tet, to a detention point. Corporal George Moyer (left) and Spec. 4 James M. Singer were among MPs rushed to the Embassy to assist guards in repelling an assault on the compound (bottom). Chopper lands atop the U.S. Embassy (below).

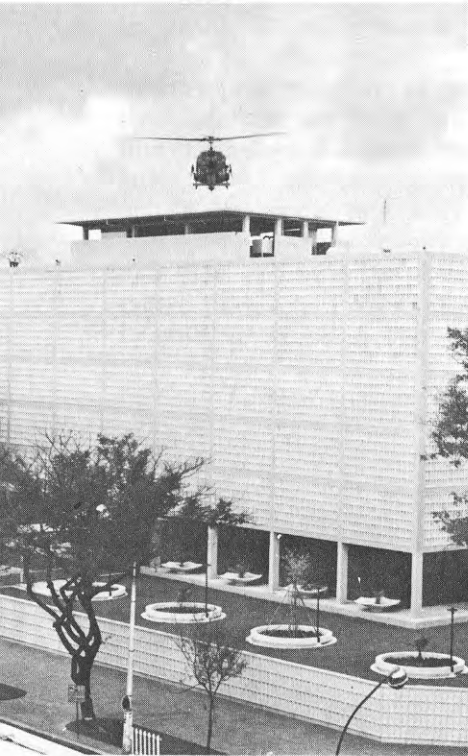


PHOTO BY SPEC. 5 DONALD A. HIRST



long, or who had no place to hide, were killed without compunction—men, women and children—by the “liberators.”

General William C. Westmoreland, U.S. commander in Vietnam, stated the attacks were “a diversionary effort to draw attention from the northern part of the country.”

Communist snipers were operating within 200 yards of his Tan Son Nhut headquarters. The Philippine Embassy residence had been destroyed by terrorists, the ambassador and his wife barely escaping death or capture. Tanks ringed the Saigon home of U.S. Ambassador Ellsworth Bunker.

Five thousand Reds had died in savage, confused fighting in the first of the Tet Offensive—that name was already burning itself into front pages and TV screens around the world. More than 650 enemy deaths occurred in Saigon alone.

By Feb. 9, 920 U.S. soldiers had died in the Tet fighting; 4,561 were wounded. Newsmen were reporting that “countless civilians perished in the fighting”—the final count was almost 20,000 killed or wounded.

Dive bombers and rocket helicopters were raining destruction on Red troops entrenched in the suburbs of South Vietnam's capital, the city that the world had considered “secure” until the morning of Feb. 1.

That's how it began. It went on, in Saigon, until mid-February, when fighting still flickered in the suburbs of Cholon and around the Phu Tho race track.

Who won the battles of the Tet Offensive? It's a hard question to answer. Certainly, the Communists were deprived of every major goal, with the possible exception of publicity.

It was by no stretch of the imagination a military win—27,706 Reds died in the Tet fighting. For this, the Communist high command had not one single prize to show.

It was not a psychological victory. In no clearly defined instance did any of the civilians in the areas of fighting join or support the Reds—unless at the point of a gun.

On the other hand, no one will deny that South Vietnam's city populace suffered terribly. There are scars of destruction that will last a long time—and scars of the mind that will last longer. As Dean Rusk said, “This is a time of trial for the South Vietnamese and their Allies. It may well be the climactic period of the struggle in Southeast Asia.”

As the cleanup began in mid-February, a drama was unfolding in Hue. Some 4,000 Reds had died there in the first three weeks of February, but an estimated 500 North Vietnamese had holed up in the old imperial Citadel, from which Vietnam's ancient emperors ruled. They decided to die there, and the Allies had no choice but to oblige them. A Communist flag had been raised on Jan. 31, and it flut-

tered for nearly a month over the Citadel as U.S. Marines pushed grueling street fighting back toward the center, step by step. On Feb. 24, a company of South Vietnamese soldiers charged the last hold-out—and the flag came down. The enemy soldiers were at last dead, but Hue lay in ruins.

There was one bright spot in the gloomy month of February—Hanoi, as a “goodwill gesture,” released three captured U.S. pilots on Feb. 16.

Friday, March 1, saw 4,000 paratroopers of the 82nd Airborne Division arriving in Vietnam, part of the 10,500 men that Washington had decided to rush to the Republic as reinforcements, acting on Westmoreland's request.

The first day of March also saw Clark Clifford sworn in as the new Secretary of Defense.

By the first week of the month, there were so many Army troops in the Marine bailiwick of the northern provinces that Westmoreland sent Army Lieutenant General William B. Rosson to assume a new command in I Corps, which was to serve as “a tactical echelon between General Cushman (Marine Lieutenant General Robert E. Cushman, senior I Corps commander) and the commanders of the U.S. Army and Marine divisions in the northern area.” It was called at first Provisional Corps, Vietnam, but is now XXIV Corps.

In mid-March, Operation Quyet Thang (Resolved to Win) was kicked off around Saigon. More than 50,000 Allied troops—including the 1st, 9th and 25th Infantry Divisions, the 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment and elements of the 7th and 25th ARVN Infantry Divisions, an airborne task force and the 5th Ranger Group plus National Police forces—swept and re-swept the provinces around the capital, searching for Communist troops and arms caches. Before it ended on April 9, 2,658 Reds had been killed.

On Thursday, March 21, the U.S. command announced it was kicking off five more general operations across South Vietnam “to regain the initiative.” Ten thousand U.S. troops were committed, and 799 Communist soldiers were reported killed in the early fighting.

On Friday, March 22, President Johnson announced in Washington that General Westmoreland would be promoted to Army Chief of Staff. Replacing General Westmoreland as commander of U.S. Forces in Vietnam would be General Creighton W. Abrams, then deputy commander. General Palmer would become the new Army Vice Chief of Staff, with Lieutenant General Frank T. Mildren replacing him as deputy commander of U.S. Army, Vietnam.

On the last day of March, the President made his famous “I won't run” speech and cut back the bombing in the north to below the 19th Parallel, marking America's broadest appeal to Hanoi for peace.

On Monday, April Fool's Day, Operation

Pegasus/Lam Son, a massive aerial-assault, began the several days of sweeping near Laos that would lift the siege of beleaguered Khe Sanh Marine camp—where up to 1,300 Red shells had been falling every day, but the promised tidal-wave ground assault that would relive Dien Bien Phu never came.

On the same day, President Nguyen Van Thieu told his nation that general mobilization, which would place more than 200,000 additional South Vietnamese under arms by the end of the year, was coming.

Operation Quyet Thang had been so successful that another mass Allied sweep, Operation Toan Thang (Complete Victory) was launched on April 8. Fifty thousand soldiers began a drive through 11 provinces around Saigon, with the same objective that the earlier operation had, but on a scale twice as large.

It was not as spectacular in results, but the Allies were to learn in the coming May Offensive how well both sweeps had done their jobs.

The Air Force and the Navy were doing their work, too. On Friday, April 19, the highest number of missions over North Vietnam for the year were logged—160. And on the Tuesday before that, B52 Stratoforts, South Vietnam's "man-made thunder," socked over a million pounds of explosives into the A Shau Valley in a single day, softening that area for Operation Delaware, a sweep by 1st Cavalry and 101st Airborne Division troops in which the major Communist stronghold and supply route was shattered.

On Friday, May 3, there was an announcement the world had been waiting for—the United States and Hanoi agreed to begin preliminary peace discussions in Paris.

The war was not, though, by any stretch of the imagination, ending in May—that was the month of the second Communist city offensive. The fighting was bitter, but the Red effort was a faint echo of the Tet campaign.

It began the night of May 4, with the near-simultaneous shelling of 119 cities, towns and villages in the Republic. There were ground attacks in Saigon and Bu Dop, three miles from Cambodia. The Bu Dop attackers were driven off in hours. It took longer in Saigon.

There was wild, confused street fighting in the western and southern suburbs of the city. The first secretary of the West German Embassy was assassinated. Brigadier General Nguyen Ngoc Loan, chief of the National Police, was wounded badly in a leg leading a charge against a machine gun position near the big Newport Bridge, in Gia Dinh. Two hundred VC were killed in the first day of the fighting.

But no U.S. installations in Saigon were even attacked this time, and there was absence of the wide-spread terrorism and sniping that had marked

the Tet fighting. On Monday, May 6, the Reds were turned back when they tried to break into Tan Son Nhut Air Base from the western perimeter—but the South Vietnamese commander of the base was killed by a Red rocket.

By the end of the week, the resistance had been localized into pockets in the western and southern suburbs, but they still had to be rooted out. This meant treacherous house-to-house fighting and more heavy damage to Saigon's badly needed housing areas. By Sunday, May 12, it was over—the last pocket of Reds surrendered, en masse. Enemy losses had reached a total of 2,982 killed. They had never entered the heart of the city itself. An intended 26 to 30 battalions had never gotten close enough to take part in the second assault on Saigon—the two big sweeps had cut them off or wiped them out.

The next day, May 13, the Paris peace talks began.

Fighting trailed off at this time. Although there were minor skirmishes in the Saigon suburban areas until mid-summer, there were no more "Tet Offensives." But on Ho Chi Minh's birthday, May 19, 20 big 122mm rockets slammed into downtown Saigon, killing 11 and wounding 51. It marked the start of a scatter-shot terror campaign of rocketings against Saigon and other cities that killed only innocent civilians and lasted till the fall.

The shellings did more to turn the population against the VC than to terrorize them into the Communist line. There were 12 straight days of rocketings in the worst period, in June. More than 100 civilians were killed and 400 wounded during those dozen days alone. Massive, close-in Allied sweeps turned up scores of Red rockets and put a stop to most of the shellings.

The last half of the year saw a switch in combat accent away from the cities and back into the countryside. The war tended to decentralize, although there was no lack of "significant" contacts, and the fury of the fighting was not for a moment abated by the on-going peace talks.

While 1968 brought the hardest fighting of the war to South Vietnam, it also brought a sweet, delicate breath of peace—and America took the first step away from escalation. President Johnson, after months of bitter wrangling with Hanoi's representatives in Paris, told the world he was ordering a total halt to the bombing of North Vietnam on the first of November, five months after he initially limited the bombing.

The great carriers in the Tonkin Gulf headed southward in silence.

In late summer, fall and winter, the other big news stories were:

—Defense Secretary Clark Clifford arrived for a four-day "complete review" of the war on July 14, promising South Vietnamese forces new equip-

ment, including M16s.

—Three more U.S. pilot-captives were released by Hanoi on Aug. 3. They went home, saying they were “well-treated” while in prison.

—The 4,500-man 27th Marine Regiment was withdrawn from Vietnam and sent back to the U.S. on Sept. 10. It had arrived during Tet as “temporary reinforcements.”

—Major General Keith L. Ware, commander of the U.S. 1st Infantry Division, was killed near the Cambodian border Sept. 13, when his helicopter was shot down by enemy fire.

—Brigadier General Frederick E. Davison, commanding the 199th Light Infantry Brigade, became the third Negro in U.S. history to win general's stars, given him on Sept. 13.

—The 56,000-ton battleship New Jersey, first dreadnought to fire in combat since Korea, returned to war, off the coast of Vietnam, Sept. 30.

—General Duong Van (Big) Minh, leader of the coup that overthrew the Diem regime in 1963, returned from exile in Thailand at President Thieu's invitation, Oct. 5.

Smoke from VC fired rockets lingers over one part of Saigon during May (bottom). A soldier checks the passport of a traveler as a precautionary measure (below).



The New Look

The thunder of rockets and mortars shattered the final hours of a Communist ceasefire period toward the end of February, marking the first broad enemy offensive of 1969. As the year moved into summer, the low level of ground action indicated that the enemy was changing his tactics. The Communist capability for large scale attacks had been whittled away by constant pressure from U.S., Republic of Vietnam and other Free World armed forces. Apparently the enemy would now have to depend on small unit, sapper-type attacks.

The new year got off on a hopeful note with the release of three American soldiers captured during 1968 by the Viet Cong (VC) and the escape the day before of Special Forces Major James Rowe, a VC captive since 1963. The peace talks were continuing in Paris and Richard M. Nixon was being inaugurated as President of the United States.

During the February offensive, more than 100 cities and military facilities in the Republic of Vietnam came under communist attack, but American and Vietnamese forces quickly repelled and routed the at-

tackers, inflicting heavy enemy casualties.

The Americal Division engaged the enemy in a number of sharp but successful battles. Operation Fayette Canyon, began Dec. 15, approximately 25 miles northwest of Tam Ky, resulted in 327 enemy deaths against only two U.S. fatalities by mid-February. In Operation Hardin Falls, which began on Dec. 2, the mid-February figures showed 78 enemy dead and 17 suspects detained.

On Jan. 13, Americal elements, ARVN troops and U.S. Marines joined forces for Operation Russell Beach. The operation ended Feb. 10, with a cordon on the Batangan Peninsula resulting in 158 enemy killed. Operation Vernon Lake II begun Nov. 2 west-southwest of Quang Ngai City, had resulted in 455 enemy killed and 181 suspects detained as compared with 23 U.S. soldiers killed.

The 101st Airborne Division (Airmobile) and the ARVN 1st Infantry Division continued Operation Nevada Eagle from late 1968 until the end of February. The operation resulted in more than 3,000 enemy killed.

The enemy hit Long Binh Post on Feb. 23, 1969, as part of the post-Tet offensive. This view from USARV Headquarters demonstrates the great firepower of U.S. aircraft.



Striking hard and often, Skytroopers of the 1st Cavalry Division (Airmobile) made their II Corps area of operations a hot-spot for Charlie during the early part of 1969. The infantrymen scored impressive kill totals, capped by one of the largest munitions cache discoveries in the war. During the third week of January, division elements discovered a 30-ton cache in a bunker complex 14 miles southwest of Katum.

After robbing the enemy of his munitions, the Skytroopers turned around and took his food from him—in huge quantities. In early February, a sweep by other elements of the division 12 miles northeast of Tay Ninh resulted in the discovery of 50.7 tons of rice one day and another 18.5 tons the following day. By the third day, the division's combined rice haul exceeded 100 tons. Soldiers of the 25th Infantry Division saw heavy fighting during late 1968 and early 1969. Just three days before Christmas, 103 NVA regulars were killed when they tried to overrun a patrol base about nine miles south of Tay Ninh City.

Defying Allied warnings that continued attacks could only end in defeat, Communist gunners stepped up the shelling of cities and military bases with rocket and mortar fire as their spring offensive got underway. The attacks continued through March, April and May. Enemy losses soared as U.S. and ARVN soldiers successfully defended military bases and positions while continuing to receive a minimum of casualties.

Toward the middle of April, rocket and mortar attacks began to taper off, but several sharp ground clashes flared in scattered areas of the Republic.

In late April, an estimated two battalions of NVA and VC troops attacked a fire patrol base occupied by an element of the 25th Infantry Division 20 kilometers south of Tay Ninh City. 25th Infantry Division troops manning the base were backed by artillery, air strikes and helicopter gunships, and at least 120 of the enemy were killed.

Operation Massachusetts Striker, a 69-day push into the A Shau Valley, ended in early May after 101st Division soldiers accounted for 176 enemy killed and an impressive amount of Communist supplies and munitions captured.

But not all was quiet as summer began. May 6 marked the beginning of what was to be a 56-day period of heavy enemy activity around a Civilian Irregular Defense Group (CIDG) camp at Ben Het, eight miles west of Dak To in the Central Highlands. During the period, Communist troops fired about 6,000 rounds of artillery, mortar and recoilless rifle shells into the base. At the start of the period, 12 U.S. Special Forces advisors, U.S. artillerymen and hundreds of Republic of Vietnam infantrymen and CIDG forces occupied the camp. American B52 Stratofortresses pounded the area around Ben Het. On July 1, Republic of Vietnam troops moved through dense jungle and to Ben Het without meeting opposition from the enemy. Communist activity around the base had subsided, and, for the first time since May 6, a 24-hour period passed without a round hitting the base.

Late in May, 101st Division soldiers and ARVN

infantrymen captured and occupied a 4,000-foot-high North Vietnamese mountaintop fortress along the rugged Laotian frontier. The action was the 10-day-long heavy fighting for Dong Ap Bia mountain. The Allied force, which included more than 1,000 troopers from the 101st and 400 ARVN infantrymen, stormed the mountain from four sides. The seizure of the mountaintop came after 10 previous assaults had failed to move the North Vietnamese, who fired rocket-propelled grenades and machine guns from bunkers built to withstand heavy bomb strikes. U.S. military spokesmen claimed more than 500 North Vietnamese troops had been killed in the battle for Dong Ap Bia mountain which overlooks the A Shau Valley, a major Communist supply depot and staging area for attacks in the northernmost I Corps Tactical Zone.

Monsoon rains didn't seem to cut down on enemy activity in the Mekong Delta. During the week of May 26, Old Reliables of the 9th Infantry Division experienced heavy contact in their area of operations. Several sharp ground clashes in Long An Province resulted in 537 enemy killed.

It was little more than a week later that Presidents Nixon and Thieu met at Midway Island and announced the 25,000 troop redeployment. President Nixon promised that further announcements would be made when the time was right for additional replacement of American troops with Republic of Vietnam soldiers. A task force lead by Admiral John S. McCain Jr., commander-in-chief, Pacific, recommended that 16,000 Old Reliable troops from the 9th Division and the Marine's 3rd Division be redeployed first.

The recommendation was adopted and plans were formulated to move part of the 9th Division to Hawaii and send others to the U.S. mainland for deactivation, leaving only the 3rd Brigade of the 9th in Vietnam. The plans were later changed and all the troops redeployed from the 9th were returned to the states and deactivated or reassigned. The 3rd Brigade remained at its base camp at Tan An in the Mekong Delta. Dong Tam, the division base camp, was turned over to the ARVN 7th Infantry Division formerly based at My Tho.

As President Nixon had promised, the initial contingent was leaving a month to the day from the announcement at Midway Island. Also as promised, all of the 25,000 troops were gone from Vietnam by the end of August.

During this time, the enemy was avoiding contact in order to resupply. U.S. installations were hit with fewer rocket and mortar attacks. There were very few ground actions of any consequence reported and almost no enemy unit attacks on U.S. bases.

As the low level of ground action continued into late July, President Nixon embarked on a world-wide tour which included countries of Southeast Asia. On July 30, the President made a surprise visit to the Republic of Vietnam. While on the Thailand leg of his journey, the President took a day off to visit with troops in Vietnam. He traveled to Saigon for meet-



The Navy's version of Army artillery sends off a broadside of rounds (above). Sleek and deadly, the Cobra has lived up to its name (upper left). River defenses continually check sampans for weapons (upper right). Marking time and the beginning of the withdrawal of U.S. forces, the men of the 9th Infantry Division follow their colors home (below).



ings with President Thieu. During mid-afternoon, President Nixon made a quick flight to Di An to talk with members of the 2nd Brigade of the 1st Infantry Division. The President received a warm welcome from the troops and spent approximately an hour talking individually with the men.

He told one man, "I came here to indicate that we at home are behind you. As a political leader I've come to say we're going to do everything we can to bring this war to an end."

To another he said, "I hope we can bring the war to an end worthy of your sacrifices."

Hopes again rose as both U.S. and Republic of Vietnam officials continued their efforts to get the Communists to come to terms.

As the summer wore into August, the lull came to an abrupt halt with massive Communist ground attacks on forward elements of the 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment, the 3rd Brigade of the 1st Cavalry Division (Airmobile) and several ARVN and CIDG units in the Quan Loi-Loc Ninh area near the Cambodian border. On Aug. 12, heavy fighting in and around Quan Loi, Loc Ninh and An Loc resulted in 452 Communists killed. Eighty-three were killed the next day, and on the 14th of August, as the fighting moved away from the cities, 74 Communists died.

In mid-August major clashes broke out in the Americal Division's area of operations. During the five-day period from Aug. 17 through Aug. 21, elements of the division engaged enemy forces in two major battles and other scattered actions around Fire Support Base West, 18 miles west of Tam Ky. The actions resulted in 325 enemy soldiers killed.

In mid-September, troops of the 3rd Brigade, 82nd Airborne Division were alerted for redeployment as part of Phase II of the plan and toward the end of the next month, the first contingent of All-Americans was on its way home.

Numerous operations took place during the next three months, resulting in high enemy kill counts and individual weapons captured, as U.S. troops increased the frequency of combined patrols with Army of the Republic of Vietnam elements under the Dong Tien (Progress Together) program.

Elements of the 1st, 9th and 25th Infantry Divisions, along with units of the 199th Light Infantry Brigade; 3rd Brigade, 82nd Airborne Division, and the 1st Cavalry Division (Airmobile), along with ARVN and other Free World forces, concluded the third phase of Operation Toan Thang, initiated Feb. 16 throughout III Corps. During the operation, a total of 41,803 enemy were killed. Additionally, over 13,700 individual and almost 2,900 crew-served weapons were captured.

During the first 15 days of Operation Toan Thang's fourth phase, begun Nov. 1st, units operating throughout III Corps combined to kill 1,891 Communists.

In a major engagement during September, Americal Division infantrymen manning an isolated hilltop fire base in the Hiep Duc Valley weathered a three-hour attack by an estimated North Vietnamese Army sapper battalion, killing 31 NVA regulars. Several of

the Communists made it to the outer defenses of Landing Zone Siberia, 24 miles west-northwest of Tam Ky, but were felled before they could penetrate the perimeter. A similar attack on nearby Fire Base West Aug. 17, touched off five days of bitter fighting in the valley in which 364 enemy perished.

Early the next month, 1st Brigade Red Devils routed another estimated NVA company which attempted to storm their hilltop positions 15 miles northwest of Quang Tri. The mechanized infantrymen were set up in tanks, dusters and armored personnel carriers along their night defensive perimeter. A listening post outside the defenses first detected enemy movement and prematurely triggered the Communist ground attack. A first light sweep of the hillside disclosed the bodies of 22 enemy killed.

In the largest action by Army troops in northern I Corps elements of the 1st Brigade, 5th Infantry Division, supported by 101st Airborne Division artillery and helicopter gunships under operational control of the Red Devils and Air Force jets, killed 245 members of an NVA battalion in four days of heavy fighting, near the DMZ.

Light action again prevailed for ground troops of the 4th Infantry Division operating in the Central Highlands with the majority of contacts coming in the form of air-to-ground engagements.

In early October, however, 4th Division reconnaissance elements retraced the footprints of two NVA soldiers killed in an early morning firefight directly back to the main body of a company-sized Communist force 26 miles northwest of An Khe where, supported by gunships, the troops killed an additional nineteen.

A three-week period of relative calm was broken in the first week of September when Army units operating throughout III Corps reported a sharp upsurge in enemy activity, the day following the death of North Vietnam's leader Ho Chi Minh.

The major NVA thrust of the day came in the pre-dawn hours against 1st Cavalry Division (Airmobile) Landing Zone Ike, five miles north of Nui Ba Den. After dumping about 20 107mm rockets inside the base's perimeter, a large Communist force charged the wire in a battle that lasted several hours. When the NVA finally fell back, they left behind 37 dead and 24 AK47 rifles. One of the attackers detained in the fighting told Allied forces that he was ignorant of Ho's passing.

During daylight hours two 25th Infantry Division units struck hard at two NVA troop concentrations on the southeast and southwest flanks of Nui Ba Den, five miles north of Tay Ninh City, killing 48 enemy soldiers in two separate encounters.

Later the same day, 1st Infantry Division troops battled with a company of Reds a mile northwest of An Loc. The infantrymen, supported by artillery from nearby fire bases, pounded the enemy's positions for two hours and fifteen minutes and an after-action sweep of the battle zone revealed the bodies of 40 enemy who perished in the fighting.

For the next several days, action in the tactical zone continued to center around the An Loc-Quan Loi-Loc

Vice President Spiro Agnew arrived in Vietnam New Year's Day, 1970. The Vice President is shown talking with 24th Evac Hospital corpsman.



Ninh area of Binh Long Province where a number of major battles developed.

Sheridan tracks and armored cavalry assault vehicles of the 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment virtually destroyed a company of 7th NVA Division troops during a 6-hour battle between Loc Ninh and the Vietnamese-Cambodian border, killing 70 of the enemy and taking five wounded detainees the next day.

At about the same time, 1st Infantry Division ground troops killed 60 Communists who attempted to ambush a 1st Logistical Command convoy heading for Quan Loi along Highway 13.

The next day 11th ACR tankers killed 70 NVA regulars in three actions in the Loc Ninh-An Loc area and 1st Cavalry Division troops added another 12 in a smaller skirmish five miles northeast of Quan Loi.

Early in November, Communist forces shattered a lull in fighting with three coordinated ground attacks on as many 1st Cavalry Division fire bases. All three attacks occurred during a 48-hour period and resulted in 330 NVA dead.

The major attack of the night began one-half hour later against Fire Base Buttons, three miles southwest of Song Be where clerks, cooks and infantrymen manning the base's bunker line killed 63 sappers. The previous day, a Skytrooper ranger team spotted NVA troops massing three miles from Buttons and directed gunships to the troop concentrations. In the ensuing 30-minute air-to-ground battle, 41 enemy soldiers were killed.

Though the 9th Infantry Division's colors officially left the Republic of Vietnam in late August, the division's presence nevertheless made itself heavily felt in the Mekong Delta during the quarter through the remaining 3rd (Go Devil) Brigade.

Operating almost exclusively in the Delta's Long An Province, the Go Devils continued to engage small parties of VC soldiers in the rice paddies and canals that characterize the province's terrain.

It was during the fall of 1969 that President Nixon's Vietnamization concept began to bear fruit. The security of the sprawling Mekong Delta was successfully turned over to ARVN forces and in all areas of the country U.S. units were working side by side with ARVNs.

The country gained a new posture of pride as each day better trained and better equipped South Vietnamese forces flexed their strength against enemy forces. Each day this new strength enhanced the possibility of future withdrawals of American units.

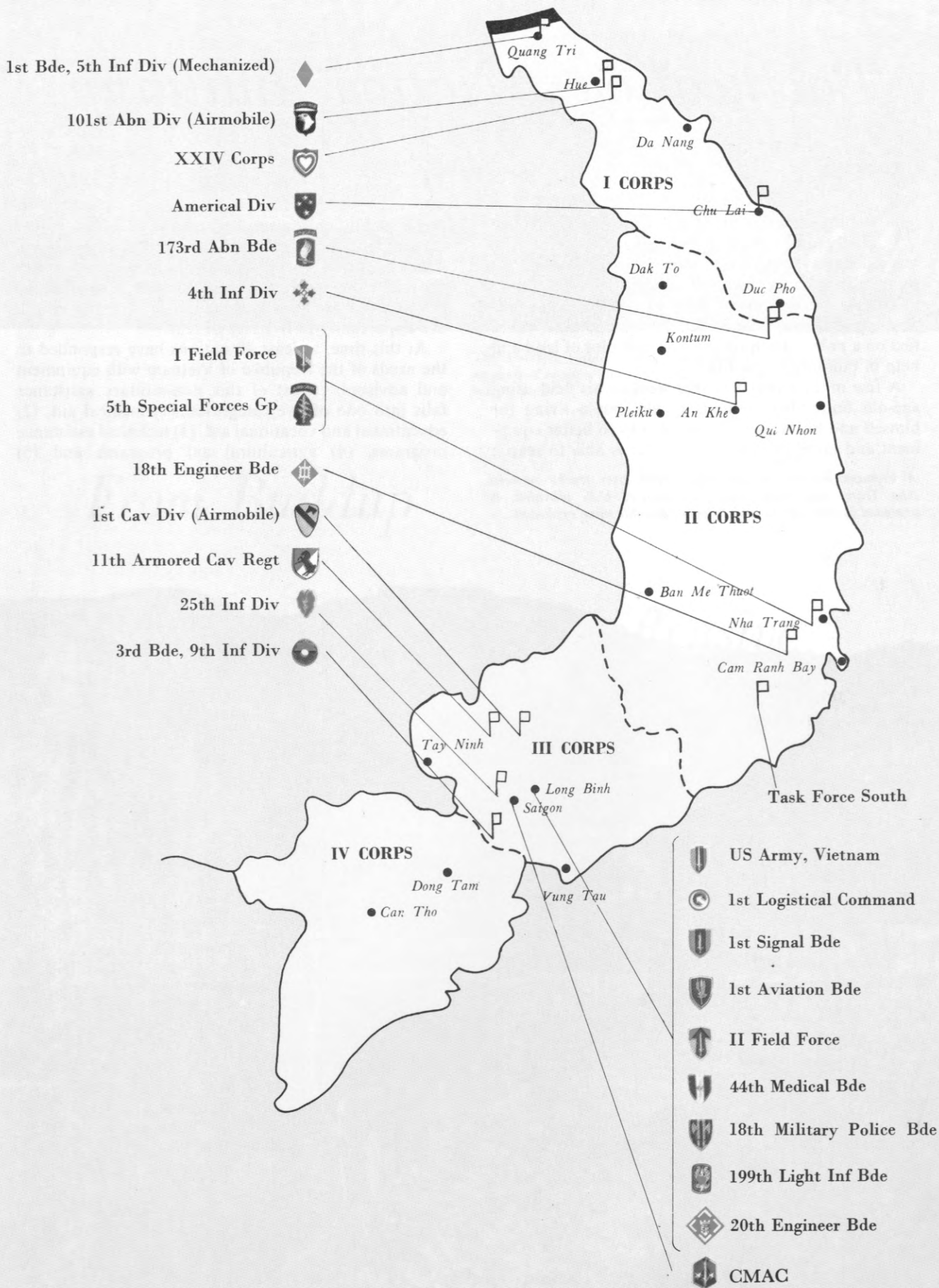
As 1970 began, Vice President Spiro T. Agnew visited Vietnam and met with South Vietnamese President Nguyen Van Thieu and inspected U.S. troops. As the new year opened, the low level of ground action continued with units reporting only minor incidents.

February brought another important dignitary as Secretary of Defense Melvin R. Laird flew to Vietnam to assess the potential of President Nixon's Vietnamization program. The defense secretary and General Earle G. Wheeler, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, spent three days in the war zone conferring with top U.S. and South Vietnamese officials. "A realistic assessment, such as we are just completing," Secretary Laird said, "requires recognition of the fact that hard problems lie ahead, both in the military and economic areas. We must anticipate some temporary setbacks." The secretary said, however, that "from a military viewpoint, Vietnamization is moving forward on schedule in some places and ahead of schedule in others."

But it took more than words to successfully determine the ability of Vietnamization—it took the Tet Holiday to prove its worth. The holiday began the end of the first week in February and all went smoothly. The preparations to deter another Tet of '68 worked because of the increased role and support of Vietnamese ground forces.

Vietnamization is the key to the successful completion of the war. Coupled with the Paris Peace talks and reduced ground action, the prospects for the remainder of 1970 look brighter than ever before.

Major Unit Locations



Pacification=Nation Building

A family slipped out of a Viet Cong controlled village and joined a resettlement community a few miles away, but a world away from the Communist tyranny they had known for so long.

Ralliers traveled many miles to a government outpost carrying their North Vietnamese political cadre tied on a pole. Each received a small plot of land and help in building a new life.

A few miles away, a farmer worked his field using age-old outmoded methods to eke out a living for himself and his family. Now, thanks to better equipment and more modern methods he is able to reap a

larger and more frequent harvest and provide a higher standard of living than his family had ever known. These are but a few of the many individuals who have profited from the Republic of Vietnam's pacification program—a program designed to give every citizen the opportunity to live free of fear.

At this time, at least 40 nations have responded to the needs of the Republic of Vietnam with equipment and advisors. Most of this non-military assistance falls into one of five categories: (1) medical aid, (2) educational and vocational aid, (3) technical assistance programs, (4) agricultural aid programs and (5)

A Vietnam Railway System train speeds over tracks between Nha Trang and Ninh Hoa. Locomotive, U.S. provided, is preceded by flat cars to take brunt of possible mine explosion.



resettlement programs.

The shortage of trained medical personnel has been a serious problem in the Republic of Vietnam. Currently, 13 Free World governmental and private organizations are helping meet this need.

To bring medicine to remote areas of Vietnam, medical teams from New Zealand, Korea, the United Kingdom, the Philippines, Australia, the Republic of China, Germany, Japan, Spain and the United States are stationed throughout the Republic. Here are a few examples:

- *A Spanish medical team is now operating in a provincial hospital and in Go Cong.

- *A Korean mobile medical unit works in the coastal city of Vung Tau.

- *New Zealand has a surgical team at Qui Nhon.

- *Philippine teams have operated in several provinces, including Tay Ninh Province.

- *Quang Ngai clinic and Quang Ngai hospital both have Canadian doctors and Cuban refugee doctors on their staffs.

- *The Republic of China has sent a medical team to work at the Phan Thiet hospital.

- *The United States has medical teams serving in many of the provinces of Vietnam.

- *More than 150 private physicians from the United States, on leave from their practices, have volunteered and served in Vietnam under a program sponsored by the American Medical Association.

- *The German hospital ship Helgoland docks at several ports along the coast to provide medical services as a floating hospital.

Medical teams could not operate were it not for the existence of adequate medical supplies. By 1967, more than \$10,000,000 in vital medical supplies had been donated by 10 different nations. A few examples:

- *Canada provided 1/2 million doses of anti-polio vaccine for a massive immunization program being conducted by the Vietnamese Department of Public Health.

- *In September 1966, three tons of medical supplies were donated jointly by the Brazilian government and 14 private organizations.

These are only a few of the varied and extensive types of medical assistance being given to the people of Vietnam by nations of the Free World. In a country engaged in war, good medical services for civilian and military populations are essential. Thanks to the Free World, Vietnam today is enjoying the highest standard of medical treatment in its history.

Key targets of Viet Cong assassins are the teachers of Vietnam. The enemy realizes that the destruction of the schools is necessary for the final subversion of society. To counter these atrocities, and to expand and improve the educational facilities of Vietnam, nations of the Free World have been giving various forms of educational aid to the Republic of Vietnam.

- *More than 1,400,000 textbooks have been provided for all school grades.

- *Free World professors are now lecturing in the



A doctor carefully examines a young boy while his father looks on. The child was one of 40 villagers treated by a Medcap team.

Republic, many of them on leave from their universities.

*Thousands of scholarships have been made available to deserving Vietnamese students for the purpose of studying abroad.

*Australia, New Zealand and Germany are providing technical training aids to Vietnam. Machines and equipment for two technical schools, one at Dalat and one at Gia Dinh, were given by Germany.

Free World educational aid is aimed in several directions. It seeks to give to Vietnamese people technical training in order that they might manage their own specialized industries. It seeks to give Vietnamese students the opportunity to study abroad. Above all, it tries to expand educational opportunities for as many young people as possible. As the military provides security in hitherto insecure areas, it will be possible for the students of Vietnam to pursue their education without fear of Viet Cong terrorism. Free World assistance will provide them with the tools and facilities for a better tomorrow.

There is no greater indication of the Free World's belief in the future of the Republic of Vietnam than in the long-range technical assistance projects now being undertaken in the Republic.

*South of Da Nang lies the An Hoa/Nong Son industrial complex, where the Republic of Vietnam's only coal mine is being developed with the aid of French and German investments. Germany has provided machinery for the construction of chemical plants near this complex and has funded many millions of dollars in long-term capital investments. Such a project will not only create jobs for the people in the surrounding areas, but also stimulate many other sectors of the economy and provide benefits far above the initial investment.

*The United States has given 48 locomotives and 225 freight cars for the Vietnamese national railway, an important contribution in the effort to reestablish communications with all parts of the nation.

*Australia constructed a 55-kilowatt radio station in Ban Me Thuot. This station helps bring the government's message to remote areas of the Central Highlands.

*At Thu Duc, the United States has completed a water purification plant which now services the entire Saigon area. For the first time, the Saigon-Cholon area can enjoy the benefits of pure water.

With the improvements and maintenance of Vietnam's communications, it will be possible to keep the country united and prevent the Viet Cong from isolating portions of the countryside.

Industry, communications, power—these are the fields in which Free World technical assistance is now being given. When the war is over, these projects will remain to help the Vietnamese people and economy.

Vietnam is one of the richest rice producing nations in all of Asia, and the development of agriculture is of prime concern. Many Free World nations are seeking to further the development of cooperatives to promote agricultural development.

The "miracle rice" IR8 has been introduced

into Vietnam. This strain of rice, developed by Free World nations, produces a stronger, more nutritious rice in much greater quantities than other varieties grown in Vietnam. As the use of this rice spreads, Vietnam will be able to provide more food for her own people, and may well be able to export quantities to other Asian nations. This effort in particular has the possibility of helping not only the Vietnamese people, but it may also develop a stable base for the nation's economy.

*The Republic of China has had an agricultural mission in Vietnam since 1959. Working through the Ministry of Agriculture and local farmers, the mission has been seeking to promote better crop development in the Hue, Phan Rang, Dalat, Bien Hoa and Long Xuyen areas.

*Australia has provided valuable material including an experimental dairy farm, irrigation equipment, farm tools, livestock and poultry breeding equipment, a milk plant, rice silos and animal vaccine production equipment.

*Germany has provided \$4,000,000 in long-term investment for the importation of machine tools and fertilizers.

The largest contribution, in terms of money, has come from the United States, whose agricultural aid program by 1966 had totaled \$64,000,000.

Today, an estimated seven per cent of all the Vietnamese population are refugees. The Republic of Vietnam government has been providing for these unfortunate people, but the magnitude of the problem demands much more. Free World governments and agencies are attempting to fill this need.

*Germany has provided \$6,000,000 for the construction of refugee centers and a refugee village for 2,000 people.

*Australia has donated milk, blankets, roofing materials and earth moving equipment for refugee resettlement.

On a more personal level, the drive to aid the refugees of Vietnam was felt in the Japanese city of Niigata. Hearing of the plight of the refugees of Song Be in Phuoc Long Province, the citizens of Niigata banded together and sent 2 1/2 tons of blankets, clothing and home medicine kits. Soon after this generous donation was made, the mayor of Niigata came personally to Song Be, where he was greeted by the local population.

It was fitting demonstration of Asian brotherhood and Free World solidarity in the face of Communist aggression.

Flags of eight nations fly alongside that of the Republic of Vietnam at the headquarters of the Free World Military Assistance Forces in Saigon. Each flag represents a nation which has sent military units to assist the Republic in its fight against aggression from the North.

In addition to the more than 400,000 American military personnel, Australia, New Zealand, the Philippines, Thailand, the Republic of Korea, Spain and the Republic of China have sent men to help win the war against Communist aggression.

Korea has the second largest non-Vietnamese fighting force in Vietnam, which includes the Capital (Tiger) Infantry Division located at Qui Nhon, the 9th (White Horse) Division located at Nha Trang and the 2nd Marine (Blue Dragon) Brigade. They are supported by the 100th Logistical Command, a construction support group, a Mobile Army Surgical Hospital and Naval and Air Force transport groups. More than 48,000 ROK troops are serving in Vietnam.

Thailand increased her force in Vietnam in 1968 by replacing the Queens Cobra Regiment with the Black Panther Division. The first increment of the division was deployed and operates in Bien Hoa Province with its headquarters located at Bear Cat.

The Australians, who were the first after the U.S. to come to the aid of the Vietnamese people, now have approximately 8,000 fighting men from all three services engaged in Vietnam. The Australian Navy has one guided missile destroyer on station with the U.S. Navy's 7th Fleet. Its Air Force maintains three squadrons in Vietnam. Australian infantry headquarters is located near Nui Dat.

A Special Air Service Troop from the 1st Ranger Squadron was added in mid-December to New Zealand's military assistance forces, which include two rifle companies, an artillery battery and a tri-service medical team. New Zealand has a total force of more than 500 men in Vietnam, which is 10 per cent

of her total army.

The Republic of the Philippines is expected to continue its effort in the field with its 1,500 man civic action group. The individual civic actions teams have completed more than 600,000 Medcaps and Dencaps. The teams are active in the Tay Ninh area. The Philippine group has been active since 1964. Nationalist China is providing a psychological operations group to act as advisors to various Vietnamese Armed Forces headquarters and schools. Almost all of the soldiers sent by China are field grade officers with a background in education.

It took the United States nearly 300 years to develop from a youthful frontier into the most powerful nation in the world. Vietnam, like many developing nations, is trying to modernize in much less time. The Republic of Vietnam is faced with the additional problem of trying to progress in the wake of constant war. She is fighting on two difficult fronts at the same time, but she is not alone in the fight.

The Republic of Vietnam, the United States and nations of the Free World are not waiting for the war to end in order to help the Vietnamese people. Free World nations are providing many types of assistance: military, medical, educational, agricultural, technical and economic. They are building a new nation.

All this has one common purpose: to enable the people of Vietnam to enjoy the fruits of freedom.

American soldiers join Vietnamese civilians in building a better Republic.





The Enemy We Face

“They came to my house and told my mother that I had been chosen to be one of them. They wanted me to become a *chien si* (soldier). My mother pleaded that I was too young. The North Vietnamese soldier said, ‘He is old enough—the draft age is 15 to 40.’”

This is how 15-year-old Nguyen Van Qui became one of the enemy you faced. His story is typical. He was then taken to a training camp near Com Ninh, in the southern panhandle of North Vietnam. There, he and other recruits were given their khaki uniforms and taught to aim and fire a weapon. The complete training cycle for duty as a regular *chien si* in the North Vietnamese Army (NVA) lasted six days.

After his training, Qui and 1,200 others were sent on a four-week journey down the Ho Chi Minh Trail. They moved in small groups to escape B52 raids. About 700 of them were armed.

“Many died on the trail,” Qui recalled. “Some died of malaria and others died of not enough food. It was very hard. Everybody was sick, but they kept

pushing us.”

The NVA now comprises perhaps over half of the total enemy forces in the Republic of Vietnam, with their percentage growing smaller as one travels toward the Mekong Delta. They depend upon infiltrated units for reinforcements and resupply, and few are paid anything more than a bag of salt for their efforts. Each unit has a political officer who tries to maintain morale with a steady flow of North Vietnamese ideology.

Still they often pose a more formidable threat on the battlefield than do the Viet Cong, who fill the remaining ranks of the enemy. This elusive, so-called Liberation Army consists of two basic elements—the paramilitary and the full military.

The paramilitary Viet Cong is generally a local civilian who is a part-time soldier, whose military duties do not take him far from home. In addition, he is not highly indoctrinated politically. The Liberation Front calls this force the Guerrilla Popular Army (GPA).

At the hamlet level the GPA unit is either a cell, a half-squad or squad—three, six or twelve men. The GPA unit at the village level, consisting of several hamlets, is the platoon, made up of three or four squads—36 or 48 men.

There are two basic classes of GPA members. The first is the Viet Cong in the village, frequently an older man, who is generally used as a village defender. He has little training and is armed with scanty or primitive weapons. The second is the Viet Cong combat soldier, who is younger and better trained and armed. He is frequently called upon to aid mobile columns or fill military units in the vicinity of his village or hamlet. The VC combat units also serve as manpower pools for the Viet Cong's full military units.

The full military element also is divided into two types—the Regional Forces and the Main Force. They are not organized or operated like an orthodox army. Their units are self-contained, not uniformed and rely primarily on guerrilla-type tactics. They depend on local populations for much of their logistical support.

The Regional Forces, also called Territorials, are units established by Front district committees, which provide their leadership and direct their activities. A Regional Force operates mostly in one area.

The elite units of the Viet Cong are the battalions of the Main Force. They have acquired the name of "Hard Hats" because of the metal or fiberboard helmets that distinguish them from the Regional Forces and paramilitary VC. These battalions are directed by the Front committees at the provincial level and range farther afield in their combat operations.

During the early days of the conflict, the Communists fought with older weapons used in previous wars by the French, Japanese and Americans. But today, largely as the result of aid from Red China and the Soviet Union, North Vietnamese Army troops and many main-force Viet Cong units are equipped with late model weapons comparable to those used by U.S. forces.

The most common of these are the SKS carbine, the Soviet AK47 assault rifle, or—more often—a Chinese copy of either. These weapons use identical 7.62mm rounds, similar to the round fired by the U.S. M14 rifle, but shorter. Both have a maximum effective range of 400 meters. The assault rifle most often captured is the Chicom (short for "Chinese Communist") Type 56, although soldiers in the field usually refer to it as the AK47, since it is a virtual copy of that weapon. It can be fired on automatic at a rate of 150 rounds a minute, or on semi-automatic.

The SKS carbine—or the Chicom 7.62 copy—is a semi-automatic weapon. It weighs nearly nine pounds when loaded with a 10-round magazine.

Until three years ago, the only machine guns available to the VC were obsolete French, Chinese and German models. Today, however, each NVA and Main Force VC battalion is allocated 36 light machine guns, usually the 7.62mm Type 56 RPD or

the older and heavier Type 58 RD46. Both can accurately fire 150 rounds a minute up to ranges of 800 meters. These automatic weapons were first supplied to the North Vietnamese in 1965.

A weapon which the enemy has been using with growing frequency, especially in stand-off attacks on U.S. and Republic of Vietnam military bases, is the mortar. Standard mortars in Charlie's arsenal are the 82mm—backbone of his high-angle fire support—and the 60mm, normally used in small-scale guerrilla actions.

Ready to fire, the 60mm mortar weighs 45 pounds and its 3.2-pound projectile travels up to 1,500 meters. The 82mm in firing position weighs 123 pounds and hurls a 6.72-pound projectile at targets up to 3,040 meters away.

The 82mm round was designed one millimeter larger than the U.S. 81mm round so the Communists can employ captured U.S. mortar rounds in their tubes.

During early 1968, a 120mm mortar, capable of hurling a 33.9-pound warhead 5,700 meters, was added to the Communist arsenal. With a total weight of 606 pounds, it is more difficult to transport and is not widely used.

The enemy also has stepped up his use of rockets within the past year. Charlie employs rockets in stand-off attacks of military installations and as general support artillery.

The simple but effective Soviet-made 122mm rocket launcher, first used in Vietnam in May 1967, can hurl with area target accuracy a projectile weighing more than 100 pounds up to ranges of 11,000 meters.

The 140mm rocket, with a carrying weight of 88 pounds and a projectile weight of 70 pounds has a range of 9,500 meters. This rocket was first employed in an attack on Da Nang in February 1968. Its use thus far has been largely restricted to the northern I Corps Tactical Zone, primarily because of logistical limitations.

The latest type of rocket introduced by the enemy is the Chinese-made 107mm, which weighs less than half as much as either of the others and has an estimated effective range of 9,000 meters.

In 1965 the enemy added to his grenade capability with the introduction of the Soviet-made RPG-2 anti-tank grenade launcher. Two years later the RPG-7 appeared.

The RPG-2 has a maximum effective range of 150 meters and can penetrate six to seven inches of armor. The RPG-7, with an improved sight, is effective up to 500 meters and can penetrate steel 12 to 14 inches thick.

Probably the most striking recent addition to the enemy arsenal is the Soviet PT-76—an amphibious tank equipped with a 76mm gun capable of firing 25 rounds a minute at ranges up to 13,300 meters. Highly maneuverable with its hydro-jet propulsion system, it can cross waterways at six miles an hour and has a cruising range of 155 miles.

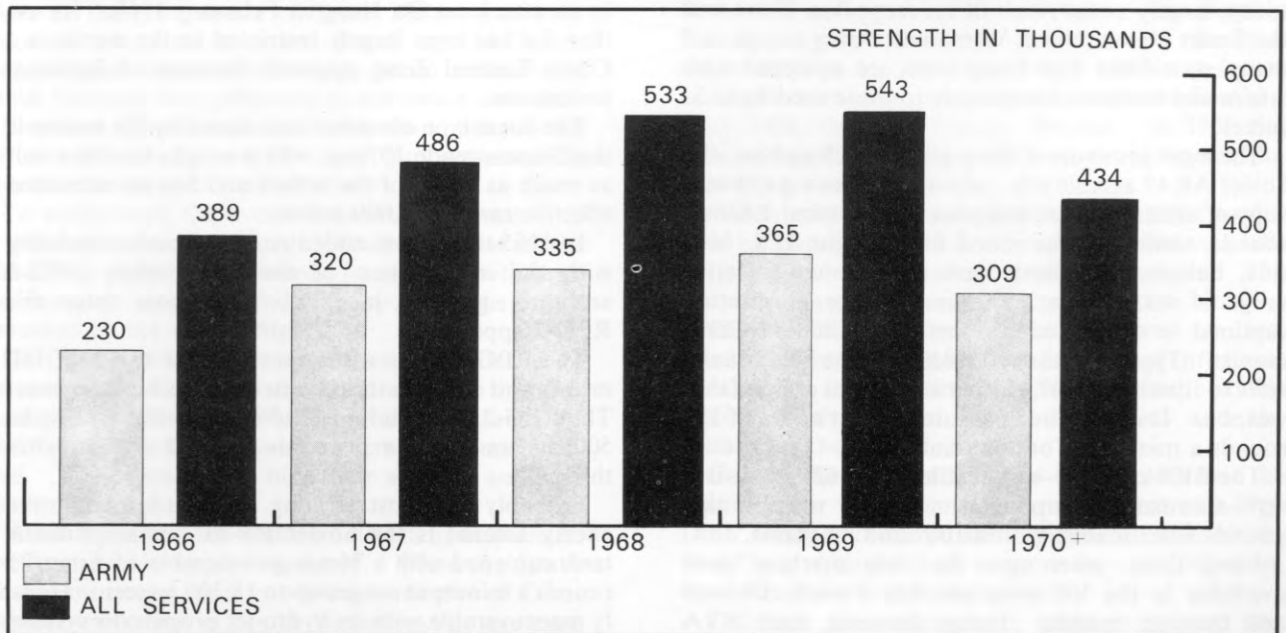
Statistics

ITEM	1967	1968	1969
Enemy Killed	88,104	181,149	156,954
Hoi Chanhs	27,178	18,171	47,023
Vietnamese Abducted	5,357	8,759	6,202
Vietnamese Civilians Killed	3,707	* 5,389	6,289
ARVN Casualties			
Killed	12,716	24,285	18,538
Wounded	29,448	60,928	64,044
FWMF Casualties			
Killed	1,105	979	866
Wounded	2,318	1,977	2,218
U.S. Military Casualties			
Killed			
Army	5,443	9,333	6,710
U.S.	9,378	14,592	9,414
Wounded			
Army	33,573	59,838	50,543
	62,025	92,820	70,216

* 1968 figures do not include Tet offensive (February).

Totals were 7,424 civilians killed; 15,434 wounded in February.

+ Totals through April 15, 1970.





ARVN soldiers rush to close with the Viet Cong after being inserted in a landing zone by U.S. Army helicopters.

Vietnamese Armed Forces

One out of every nine citizens of the Republic of Vietnam has been trained to fight Communist aggression. Almost a million and a half Vietnamese are now in the uniformed services backed by nearly as many civilian home-defense soldiers.

The 1968 Mobilization Decree boosted the Republic of Vietnam's national, territorial and paramilitary forces to put six per cent of the country's total population into full-time military service. This does not include the People's Self-Defense Group which is composed of unpaid civilians trained to defend their

homes and villages.

If the U.S. had a proportionate number of its population in uniform, the American Armed Forces would be increased from its present 3.4 million to 12 million.

More than 100,000 Republic of Vietnam Armed Forces (RVNAF) personnel have been killed fighting Viet Cong and North Vietnamese regulars since 1960. RVNAF forces in turn inflicted more than 100,000 casualties on the enemy during 1968, including 85,000 killed.



Vietnamese Air Force jets prepare for an air strike against enemy forces.

PHOTO BY SPEC. 5 DENNIS LEAKE

The Communist attacks during Tet 1968 marked a turning point for the Republic's armed forces in terms of morale, manpower and equipment. The Viet Cong (VC) and North Vietnamese Army (NVA) hurled 84,000 troops, many of them their most combat-experienced, against the Republic of Vietnam forces and their Allies. Hanoi had assured its forces that RVNAF units would desert in masses to the Communist banner. However, not a single unit went over to the enemy.

The enemy lost almost half his attacking force during the Tet attacks: 20,300 to the RVNAF; 18,581 to the U.S. and other Free World Forces. Within two days, the VC/NVA forces were pushed out of most of the towns and cities.

Much of the RVNAF toll of the enemy, however, has not been the result of large operations but small actions. Many of these involved Regional and Popular Forces (RF/PF). Stationed in villages and hamlets or operating from small bases, RF/PF personnel comprise almost 50 per cent of RVNAF.

These Regional and Popular Forces consist of locally recruited personnel who serve in their home areas.

The RF/PF have greatly increased in efficiency since the issuance of M16s began. All maneuver battalions of RVNAF have already been equipped with M16s, M60 machine guns and M79 grenade launchers.

The Army of the Republic of Vietnam (ARVN) combat units increased their transportation capability

last year by replacing old vehicles with new models while communications were improved by newer, light-weight PRC25 radios.

Armored commands added more personnel carriers and other armored equipment. Over-all number of armored personnel carriers in RVNAF double during 1968 and the armored units continued to fulfill a number of missions throughout the Republic.

In addition to separate armored, infantry and artillery units, the ARVN consists of 10 numbered divisions and an airborne division. The average ARVN division has three to four thousand fewer men than a U.S. division. Although usually employed in offensive operations against VC and NVA main force units, ARVN units also provide security for key areas and installations.

The destruction of enemy material and personnel has not been the ARVN's sole job over the years. The Republic's initial pacification work was done by members of the nation's young army and today many elements of the armed forces have pacification as their primary mission.

In addition to the Army divisions, the Republic of Vietnam has a 9,500-man Marine Division. Although primarily concerned with amphibious operations, the Marines often engage in joint operations with the Vietnamese Army and other Free World Forces.

Also supporting the ARVN is the Vietnamese Air Force (VNAF) which is playing an increasingly large role in the war. VNAF currently flies more than 20



ARVN soldier guards the Presidential Palace in Saigon (left). Vietnamese ranger stands guard over captured equipment during an operation in the northern portion of the Republic of Vietnam (below).

per cent of all tactical air missions throughout the Republic.

Organized in 1966 with a total of 95 pilots and 32 planes, VNAF now has more than 350 aircraft.

The Vietnamese Navy (VNN) is also expanding. All four of the major commands of VNN have, as one of their primary missions, the transportation and support of ground combat elements. The VNN also has a ground responsibility in the Rung Sat Zone, the swampy area between Saigon and the sea.

The Navy consists of the Fleet Command, the Coastal Forces, River Forces and the newly-formed River Assault and Interdiction Division (RAIDS).

The Army of the Republic of Vietnam, Vietnamese Navy, Vietnamese Air Force and Vietnamese Marines as well as the 3,500-member Women's Armed Forces Corps are headed by the RVNAF Joint General Staff (JGS). The JGS is located just outside Tan Son Nhut Air Base. In addition to the forces themselves, JGS is also responsible for the training of RVNAF personnel.

The Vietnamese Armed Forces school system includes the National Military Academy at Dalat; the Naval Academy at Nha Trang; the Air Force Training Center, also at Nha Trang; the Command and General Staff College at Dalat; the Reserve Officers School at Thu Duc, and a number of branch and trade schools.

Additionally, all divisions have their own training centers and there are also national training centers for basic and advanced training.



The Pleasant Moments

Much more so than his counterparts in any other war, the American soldier who served in Vietnam was the beneficiary of a myriad of programs designed to maintain his morale at a high level and improve his general welfare.

By far the most popular and important of these programs was the Rest and Recuperation (R & R) leave, which gave every soldier the opportunity to spend six full days in one of the exciting "fun capitals" of Asia and the Pacific.

The more than 20,000 servicemen who chose Australia will always remember with a smile the bikini-clad "birds" along Manly Beach. And the memory of the warmth with which the Aussies welcomed all "Yanks" will never fade.

In stately Bangkok, one was impressed by the pomp and grandeur of the ancient Court of Siam. And how about those delicate bargaining sessions with enchanting Thai salesgirls who had a "special deal" just for you? The majority of the Hawaii-bound travelers were joined there by their wives. But a vacation reunion with loved ones was by no means the only attraction. Gleaming beaches and luau delicacies enhanced their Hawaiian stay.

Variety was the watchword for those who chose Hong Kong for R & R. The prices in the world's most famous bargain basement made gift-buying a delight. And the night life ranged from cozy cabarets to colossal stage productions.

Manila was sheer joy for the shutterbugs. The harbor hydrofoil ride provided many opportunities for the camera enthusiast in search of *the* shot, while in the mountains, picturesque Baguio was captured on film for future reminiscing. Exotic Penang was a tropical paradise. You could have spent your whole leave just basking in the sun on one of the many beaches. But there were hills and temples, magnificent waterfalls and lush gardens to explore, too.

Taipei's provincial hospitality demonstrated the ancient tradition of service and efficiency. Visitors

were thoroughly satisfied, whether it was a pot of tea or a major purchase. Both shopping and sightseeing offered equal attraction.

The fast-paced life in the world's largest city stands out in the minds of those who headed for Tokyo. The bright lights and multitude of shops of the Ginza were an irresistible attraction. Electronics dealers offered outstanding buys on cameras, radios, stereos and more. And in contrast, the cherry blossoms and ancient beauty of old Japan tempered the hectic pace. Above all this year, there is Expo '70, Japan's first World's Fair—the first World's Fair to be held in Asia.

Once again, there was plenty of first-rate entertainment for Americans in Vietnam. Working with the USO's Hollywood Overseas Committee and the Department of Defense, Special Services continued to bring top names in show business and sports throughout the country.

The perennial favorite, Bob Hope, made his sixth consecutive Christmas visit—his 19th consecutive overseas tour. Having, as he put it, "some idea of what the troops wanted to see," Hope brought along a bevy of beauties to brighten the Christmas season. The Goldiggers, 13 of the luckiest good-looking talents ever to grace a stage, accompanied Bob for their second tour of Vietnam. Good medicine for sore eyes and ears.

Lovely actress-singer Connie Stevens, dancer Susan Charny and Teresa Graves of Laugh-In fame, rounded-out the show. But added this year was a team which enjoys world-wide acclaim—Astronaut Neil Armstrong, the first man to set foot on the moon, and "Miss World," Eva Rueber-Staier of Austria. Another facet of this year's show making it a very special happening was the Long Binh performance which was telecast live by AFVN-TV thus allowing an estimated 300,000 to view that show.

Of course, radio personality Johnny Grant visited Vietnam again, accompanied by several gorgeous



PHOTO BY LT. JOE E. MORELAND JR.



PHOTO BY MAJ. DAVID STANLEY

Steps away from the bustle of Tokyo's Ginza, the Imperial Palace elegantly represents the contrasts of the largest city in the world (above). Hawaii, the perfect place for that perfect reunion, still retains its native charms (left).

Bob Hope brought "the world" to Vietnam this year, Miss World that is—Eva Rueber-Staier of Austria.



PHOTO BY SPEC. 4 PHIL STERN

young ladies. And there were many others who did their part to make a year in Vietnam go a little faster.

Also not to be forgotten were the military tours sponsored by Special Services. Outstanding military musicians from each Corps were selected to give concerts throughout Vietnam. Since they were military men, these musicians could and did visit more remote locations than could other entertainers.

Many men were able to take advantage of the in-country R & R program, and spent three days on the beaches of Vun Tau, enjoying the sun, sand and surf in a picturesque setting.

For the men who wished to expand their educational horizons, Vietnam had plenty to offer. Servicemen could take courses for credit from the United States Armed Forces Institute, or resident credit from the University of Maryland. Those planning an Army career had the opportunity to take extension courses from several service schools.

Exchanges offered everything from razor blades and soap to radios, stereos and cameras. Most stores stocked snack items to offer a change from standard Army fare. A special program was launched to get radios, watches and cameras out to the smaller PXs to give the combat soldier an equal chance to purchase these luxury items.

The snack bars operated by the exchange system were a welcome addition. Situated at division and brigade basecamps, they were always popular with the men. The snack bars at the aerial ports always seemed to have a line of hungry customers in front of them.

The many EM, NCO and officers' clubs supplied a place to relax after a hard day. Many featured live entertainment in addition to snack items and cold beverages. Some of the larger clubs also operated concessions such as the always-popular massage parlor.

In make-shift theaters, wherever a projector could be set up, movies were shown. The schedule of productions and the quality of the films varied greatly from week to week, but they were always enjoyed, although many a man cursed a little as the alert siren stopped the show right in the middle of "True Grit" or "A Man and a Women."

The chaplain is sometimes regarded as detached from the mainstream of military life, concerned more with the spiritual than the real. But the men who serve in the Chaplain Corps frequently do more than conduct Sunday services. Chaplains have two principal duties. The first is to provide religious services and the second is to counsel the men. Often they accompany combat soldiers on assaults to know what the men experience, check on morale and help the wounded.

From Valley Forge to Dak To, American soldiers have endured the hardships of a thousand battles. In Vietnam, however, unprecedented morale and welfare opportunities help make the burdens of war at least a little more bearable.

The Medal Of Honor



"...for heroism above and beyond the call

CPT Roger H. C. Donlon

5th Special Forces Group, 6 July 1964

SGT Larry S. Pierce[†]

1st Bn, 503rd Inf, 173rd Abn Bde, 20 September 1965

PFC Milton L. Olive III[†]

2nd Bn, 503rd Inf, 173rd Abn Bde, 22 October 1965

1LT Charles Q. Williams

5th Special Forces Group, 9-10 June 1965

1LT Walter J. Marm, Jr.

1st Bn, 7th Cav, 1st Cav Div (AM), 14 November 1965

2LT Robert J. Hibbs[†]

2nd Bn, 28th Inf, 1st Inf Div, 5 March 1966

SP5 Lawrence Joel

1st Bn, 503rd Inf, 173rd Abn Bde, 8 November 1965

SP4 Daniel Fernandez[†]

1st Bn, 5th Inf, 25th Inf Div, 18 February 1966

SGT James W. Robinson, Jr.[†]

2nd Bn, 16th Inf, 1st Inf Div, 11 April 1966

SSG Jimmy G. Stewart[†]

2nd Bn, 12th Cav, 1st Cav Div (AM), 18 May 1966

SGT David C. Dolby

1st Bn, 8th Cav, 1st Cav Div (AM), 21-22 May 1966

1LT James A. Gardner[†]

1st Bn, 327th Inf, 101st Abn Div (AM), 7 February 1966

SSG Charles B. Morris

2nd Bn, 503rd Inf, 173rd Abn Bde, 29 June 1966

CPT Joseph X. Grant[†]

1st Bn, 14th Inf, 25th Inf Div, 13 November 1966

SGT Donald R. Long[†]

1st Sqdr, 4th Cav, 1st Inf Div, 30 June 1966

PFC Louis Albanese[†]

5th Bn, 7th Cav, 1st Cav Div (AM), 1 December 1966

SGT John F. Baker, Jr.

2nd Bn, 27th Inf, 25th Inf Div, 5 November 1966

CPT Robert F. Foley

2nd Bn, 27th Inf, 25th Inf Div, 5 November 1966

SP5 Charles C. Hagemeister

1st Bn, 5th Cav, 1st Cav Div (AM), 20 March 1967

SP4 Donald W. Evans, Jr.[†]

2nd Bn, 12th Inf, 4th Inf Div, 27 January 1967

1LT George K. Sisler[†]

5th Special Forces Group, 5-7 February 1967

CPT Euripides Rubio, Jr.[†]

1st Bn, 28th Inf, 1st Inf Div, 8 November 1966

PFC Billy Lane Lauffer[†]

2nd Bn, 5th Cav, 1st Cav Div (AM), 21 September 1966

PFC Louis E. Willett[†]

1st Bn, 12th Inf, 4th Inf Div, 15 February 1967

SSG Delbert O. Jennings

1st Bn, 12th Cav, 1st Cav Div (AM), 27 December 1966

SGT Leonard B. Keller

3rd Bn, 60th Inf, 9th Inf Div, 2 May 1967

1SG David H. McNerney

1st Bn, 8th Inf, 4th Inf Div, 22 March 1967

SSG Kenneth E. Stumpf

1st Bn, 35th Inf, 25th Inf Div, 25 April 1967

SP4 Raymond R. Wright

3rd Bn, 35th Inf, 25th Inf Div, 2 May 1967

SSG Elmelindo R. Smith[†]

2nd Bn, 8th Inf, 4th Inf Div, 16 February 1967

PFC James H. Monroe[†]

1st Bn, 8th Cav, 1st Cav Div (AM), 16 February 1967

1SG Maximo Yabes[†]

4th Bn, 9th Inf, 25th Inf Div, 26 February 1967

SGT Sammy L. Davis

2nd Bn, 4th Arty, 9th Inf Div, 18 November 1967

SP5 Dwight H. Johnson

1st Bn, 69th Armor, 4th Inf Div, 15 January 1968

Chaplain (CPT) Angelo J. Liteky

199th Inf Bde, 6-7 December 1967

CPT James A. Taylor

1st Sqdr, 1st Cav, Americal Div, 8-9 November 1967

SP4 Gary Wetzel

173rd AHC, 1st Avn Bde, 8 January 1968

of duty."

SGT Ted Belcher[†]
1st Bn, 14th Inf, 25th Inf Div, 19 November 1966

CPT Riley L. Pitts[†]
2nd Bn, 27th Inf, 25th Inf Div, 31 October 1967

PSG Matthew B. Leonard[†]
1st Bn, 16th Inf, 1st Inf Div, 28 February 1967

2LT Stephen E. Karopczyc[†]
2nd Bn, 35th Inf, 25th Inf Div, 12 March 1967

SSG Drew D. Dix
U.S. Senior Advisor Group, IV Corps Military Assistance Comd, 1 February 1968

SP4 George A. Ingalls[†]
2nd Bn, 5th Cav, 1st Cav Div (AM), 16 April 1967

SGT Joe R. Hooper
2nd Bn, 501st Inf, 101st Abn Div, 21 February 1968

PFC Clarence E. Sasser
3rd Bn, 60th Inf, 9th Inf Div, 10 January 1968

SSG Fred W. Zabitosky
5th Special Forces Group, 19 February 1968

1LT Ruppert L. Sargent[†]
4th Bn, 9th Inf, 25th Inf Div, 15 March 1967

CW2 Frederick E. Ferguson
227th Avn Bn, 1st Cav Div (AM), 31 January 1968

PFC Thomas J. Kinsman
3rd Bn, 60th Inf, 9th Inf Div, 16 February 1968

SFC Charles E. Hosking[†]
5th Special Forces Group, 21 March 1967

SP4 Don L. Michael[†]
4th Bn, 503rd Inf, 173rd Abn Bde, 8 April 1967

PFC Leslie A. Bellrichard[†]
1st Bn, 8th Inf, 4th Inf Div, 20 May 1967

PSG Bruce A. Grandstaff[†]
1st Bn, 8th Inf, 4th Inf Div, 18 May 1967

SSG Frankie Z. Molnar[†]
1st Bn, 8th Inf, 4th Inf Div, 20 May 1967

MAJ Patrick H. Brady
54th Med Det, 67th Med Group, 44th Med Bde, 6 January 1968

CPT Jack H. Jacobs
2nd Bn, 16th Inf, 9th Inf Div, 9 March 1968

SGT Robert M. Patterson
2nd Sqdn, 17th Cav, 101st Abn Div (AM), 6 May 1968

1LT James M. Sprayberry
5th Bn, 7th Cav, 1st Cav Div (AM), 25-26 April 1968

SP4 Carmel B. Harvey, Jr.[†]
1st Bn, 5th Cav, 1st Cav Div (AM), 21 June 1967

SP5 Edgar L. McWethy, Jr.[†]
1st Bn, 5th Cav, 1st Cav Div (AM), 21 June 1967

SP4 Dale E. Wayrynen[†]
2nd Bn, 502nd Inf, 101st Abn Div (AM), 18 May 1967

2LT Harold B. Durham, Jr.[†]
6th Bn, 15th Arty, 1st Inf Div, 17 October 1967

PFC John A. Barnes III[†]
1st Bn, 503rd Inf, 173rd Abn Bde, 12 November 1967

SP4 Robert P. Stryker[†]
1st Bn, 26th Inf, 1st Inf Div, 7 November 1967

MAJ Charles Joseph Watters[†]
173rd Spt Bn, 173rd Abn Bde, 19 November 1967

PFC Carlos James Lozada[†]
2nd Bn, 503rd Inf, 173rd Abn Bde, 20 November 1967

CPL Jerry W. Wickam[†]
2nd Sqdn, 11th Armored Cav Regt, 6 January 1968

SGT Gordon Yntemz[†]
5th Special Forces Group, 16-18 January 1968

SSG Webster Anderson
2nd Bn, 320th Arty, 101st Abn Div (AM), 15 October 1967

SSG Nicky D. Bacon
4th Bn, 21st Inf, Americal Div, 26 August 1968

SSG Paul Lambers
2nd Bn, 27th Inf, 25th Inf Div, 20 August 1968

SFC Eugene Ashley, Jr.[†]
5th Special Forces Group, 6-7 February 1968

SSG Clifford C. Sims[†]
2nd Bn, 501st Inf, 101st Abn Div (AM), 21 February 1968

(† indicates posthumous award)

...U.S. Awards Granted In Vietnam



Distinguished Service Cross



Distinguished Service Medal



Silver Star



Legion of Merit



Soldiers Medal



Bronze Star Medal



Air Medal



Joint Services Commendation Medal



Purple Heart



Good Conduct Medal



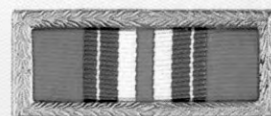
National Defense Service Medal



Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal



Presidential Unit Citation



Valorous Unit Award



Distinguished Flying
Cross



Army Commendation
Medal



Vietnam Service Medal



Meritorious Unit Citation



- ★ Vietnam Advisory Campaign—March 15, 1962 to March 7, 1965
- ★ Vietnam Defensive Campaign—March 8, 1965 to December 24, 1965
- ★ Vietnam Counteroffensive Campaign, Phase I—December 25, 1965 to June 30, 1966
- ★ Vietnam Counteroffensive Campaign, Phase II—July 1, 1966 to May 31, 1967
- ★ Vietnam Counteroffensive Campaign, Phase III—June 1, 1967 to January 29, 1968
- ★ Tet Counteroffensive Campaign—January 30, 1968 to April 1, 1968
- ★ Vietnam Counteroffensive Campaign, Phase IV—April 2, 1968 to June 30, 1968
- ★ Vietnam Counteroffensive Campaign, Phase V—July 1, 1968 to November 1, 1968
- ★ Vietnam Counteroffensive Campaign, Phase VI—November 2, 1968 to February 22, 1969
- ★ Tet Counteroffensive Campaign, February 23, 1969 to June 8, 1969
- ★ Current Campaign—June 9, 1969 to a date to be determined

Any member of the Army who is serving or who has served in Vietnam or contiguous waters or air space in accordance with AR 672-5-1, is authorized to wear a bronze battle star on the Vietnam service ribbon for each period in which he served in Vietnam.

...Vietnamese Awards



National Order
Of Vietnam



Army Distinguished
Service Order



Gallantry Cross



Armed Forces
Honor Medal



Staff Service Medal



Technical Service Medal



Training Service Medal



Civil Actions Medal



Vietnam Campaign Medal



Civil Actions Medal
(first class)



Gallantry Cross
(with palm)



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
HEADQUARTERS UNITED STATES ARMY VIETNAM
OFFICE OF THE DEPUTY COMMANDING GENERAL
APO SAN FRANCISCO 96375



Your tour in the Republic of Vietnam is now behind you. It has been a year of great progress--certainly a period in which the American soldier has performed in the best traditions of the US Army. You may leave this land of Vietnam--the jungles, mountains, and coastal plains--with that inner satisfaction of knowing you have served the cause of free men everywhere. The Republic of Vietnam and, indeed, our own nation, are greatly in your debt for your efforts.

The people of the Republic of Vietnam now enjoy a greater sense of security and more prosperity than they have ever known. The Armed Forces of the Republic of Vietnam have begun to replace our units in the field. These advancements have been made possible through the joint efforts of US and Republic of Vietnam soldiers working together in the areas of Vietnamization and pacification.

Now you are going home to rejoin your family and friends. They are proud of you and are anxiously awaiting your return. With you goes a world of knowledge and impressions based on the experiences you have had in Vietnam. Your friends, neighbors, and the people with whom you will work will look to you as an authority on what is happening in the Republic of Vietnam. This magazine, a history of this country and the year you spent here, may help you to tell your story.

I commend you for the fine job you have completed in Vietnam.
Warmest wishes for success in your future endeavors.

Frank T. Mildren
FRANK T. MILDREN
Lieutenant General, US Army
Deputy Commanding General

