

# Enemy Activity Increases In AO

By SP4 Jerry Norton

PHUOC VINH - The enemy's country-wide "high point" stepped up the action in the 1st Air Cav's area of operations in the week of March 29 to April 4, as the enemy launched combined indirect fire and ground attacks against two battalion headquarters in War Zone C.

First to be hit was Fire Support Base (FSB) Jay, 2nd Bn, 7th Cav headquarters 14 miles north-northeast of Tay Ninh and four miles east of the Cambodian border.

The NVA hit the jungle base at 4:50 a.m. March 29, shelling it with mortar rounds, recoilless rifle rounds and rockets. Under cover of the massive barrage the enemy tried to penetrate Jay's perimeter.

"There was what looked like an enemy battalion. Some of them were moving toward the wire when they ignited a trip flare and we opened up," said Maj. Gordon B. Frank, battalion S-3. "NVA in a tree line 150 meters to the southwest started firing B-40s and .51 caliber machineguns."

The enemy ground probe was repulsed by withering

fire from Jay's berm, and was broken completely as Aerial Rocket Artillery, tube artillery and an Air Force Shadow gunship sliced into the faltering enemy lines.

At 6 a.m. the NVA began to fade into the jungle, pursued by ARA and artillery. Sporadic sniper fire continued until 6:30 a.m. Seventy-four NVA were killed and three NVA, 12 AK-47 rifles and 50 Chicom grenades were captured.

FSB Illingworth, located on flat lowlands 18 miles north-northwest of Tay Ninh, was attacked by the enemy Apr. 1, when indirect fire attacks hit 1st and 3rd Brigades and division headquarters.

Illingworth, 2nd of the 8th headquarters, was manned by the battalion's Charlie and Echo-Recon Companies when the enemy began dropping the first of more than 200 rounds of mortar, rocket and recoilless rifle fire into the base at 2:18 a.m.

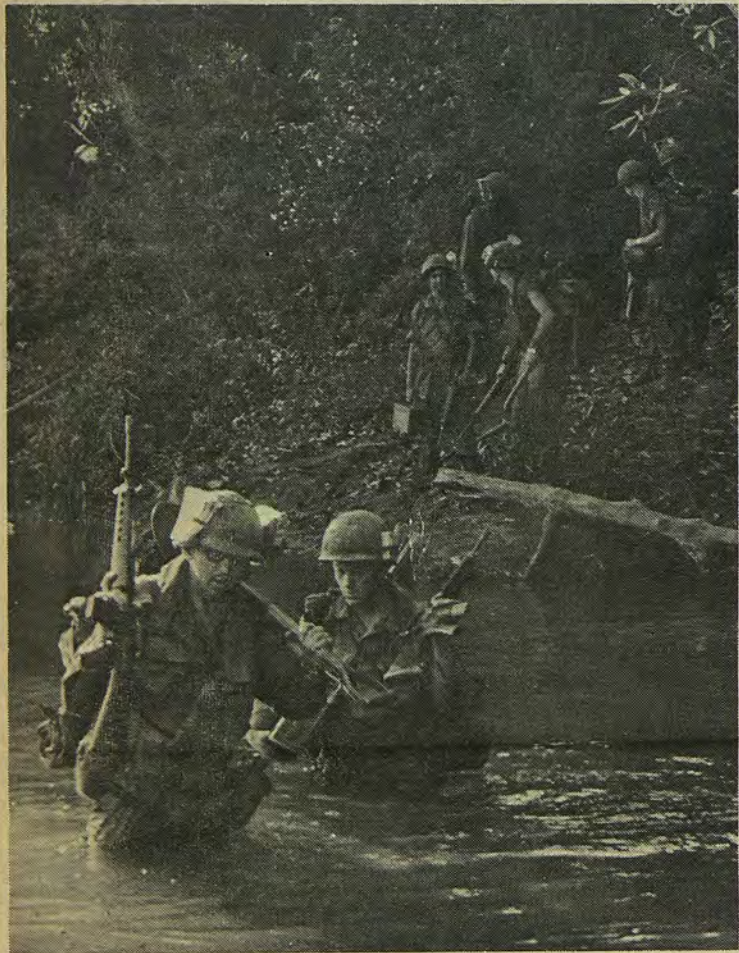
Once again the enemy tried to use the cover of incoming to break through the perimeter. Two NVA reinforced companies charged the base. The combined firepower of the infantry and the artillerymen from Bravo Battery, 1st Bn, 77th Arty; Alpha Battery, 1st Bn,

30th Arty; and part of a II Field Force eight-inch battery beat them back. Sixty-four NVA were killed and 28 AK-47 rifles were captured.

War Zone C was also the site of a firefight in which 11th Armored Cav units opcon to the division's 1st Brigade detained 14 NVA, the most enemy detained by the division in a single action this year.

Bravo Troop, 1st Sqdn, 11th ACR was on a ground reconnaissance Mar. 31 when the armored column spotted and killed two NVA in a small hut 23 miles north-northwest of Tay Ninh at 12:30 p.m. The ACAVs and Sheridans continued sweeping north and at 1:15 p.m. received small arms and 75mm recoilless rifle rounds from 50 NVA in a large bunker complex.

Bravo Troop opened up with its ACAV-mounted .50 caliber and twin-60 machineguns and the Sheridan cannons in return, cutting down 16 more NVA. As the battle continued, the Patton tanks of Delta Troop, 1st of the 11th ACR, rolled up to reinforce Bravo Troop. The Pattons ripped into the enemy bunkers with 90mm cannon and machinegun fire. Delta Troop killed 11 NVA (Continued on Page 8)



TREADING WATER - 1st Air Cavalrymen of Bravo Company, 2nd Bn, 12th Cav, wade across the Song Be River while on an operation 100 miles north of Saigon. (USA Photo by Spec. 4 Robert Borchester)



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## Caches Total 360 Ton

# Enemy Rice Losses High

PHUOC VINH - In two months, Allied operations in the 1st Air Cavalry Division's AO have deprived enemy forces of approximately 360 tons of rice, enough to feed two NVA full-strength regiments - 5,800 men - for three months.

The first big finds were made by the Cav's 2nd Brigade and the ARVN Airborne in mid-February along the Jolley Trail. The trail, one of the NVA's newest infiltration routes, was discovered in the last weeks of 1969, along the II Corps-III Corps boundary. The ARVN and Cav units were quickly committed to interdicting the trail.

In mid-February the interdiction began to show major results. In five days the ARVN and Skytroopers pulled 100,000 pounds of rice out of the area. Most of the grain had

been stored along the trail in 220-pound bags. On Feb. 19 Cav Rangers captured 1,500 pounds of rice and eight bicycles when they ambushed an NVA convoy on the trail. By the end of March the rice found in the area totalled more than 130 tons.

The next significant cache, one of the largest ever found in Vietnam, was discovered in northern Tay Ninh Province near the Cambodian border by Alpha Troop, 1st Sqdn, 9th Cav helicopters on Feb. 28.

Bulldozers, mechanical mules, and Huey and Chinook helicopters all aided in the rice removal effort. When it was over, the enemy had lost another 130 tons of rice.

Later in March the Cav's 3rd Brigade got into the act, cleaning out NVA food stores on yet another infiltration route, the

Serges Jungle Highway, a trail network running through Binh Long and Phuoc Long Provinces.

ARVN units and elements of the 2nd Bn, 5th Cav and 1st Bn, 5th Cav, discovered the rice in caches near the Song Be River, a key part of the Serges route. Most of the rice, located some eight miles southwest of Bo Duc, was in 220-pound bags.

Capt. T.C. Loomis, the commanding officer of Bravo Company, 1st of the 5th, said, "If the NVA hadn't started fighting us in this chunk of jungle as we moved through, we wouldn't have checked as closely and found all of this rice." Nearly 60 tons was captured in the area by the end of March, bringing the total enemy rice located in the division's AO in February and March to well over 700,000 pounds.

# 1-12 Lowers Boom On Enemy Element

PHUOC VINH - The mission of the 1st Air Cavalry Division Skytroopers on March 28 was to check the jungle valley for enemy activity. They found it. By the end of the day 44 NVA were dead on the valley floor.

"We ate chow, moved up a hill, then headed down into an enemy bunker complex," said Spec. 4 Arturo Sanchez of Alpha Company, 1st Bn, 12th Cav. The Alpha troopers were searching the area for NVA.

The Skytroopers found the bunkers that dotted the basecamp empty of foe, but as Alpha's 2nd platoon approached the jungle stream that crisscrossed the valley they noticed commo wire running to enemy positions on the opposite bank. Both sides opened up as the Cav men found themselves battling an enemy company.

"The 2nd Platoon was hit and as we moved up the flank to

support them we ran into NVA on our right," said Spec. 4 Richard Hester, a member of Alpha's 3rd Platoon.

For the next hour a deadly two-way traffic of fire crossed the river. The enemy used small arms, machineguns and B-40 rockets. Tube artillery and Blue Max rockets punched through the NVA positions as Alpha Company maintained a constant blanket of fire with M-16s and M-60s.

By 2 p.m., when the Skytroopers pulled back from the contact area to enable Air Force jets and heavy artillery to pound the dug-in enemy, they had counted 23 dead NVA.

When the company returned to the valley the enemy positions were silent. The troopers found 14 more NVA killed by artillery and another seven eliminated by air strikes. In all, 44 NVA had died.



SEARCHING THE JUNGLE - With M-60 at the ready, Spec. 4 Stanley Storm, 1st Air Cav doorgunner, watches for traces of enemy activity. Storm is assigned to the Cav's 227th Assault Helicopter Bn. (USA Photo by SP4 James McCabe)

# Hearing: Unnoticed Casualty of War?

**Editors Note:** The following article appeared in the January 28, 1970 issue of the "Pacific Stars and Stripes". Written by Spec. 5 Tom Benic, former press NCOIC of the Cavalair, while on temporary duty with "Stars and Stripes" and is being reprinted here to remind Skytroopers of the day to day occurrences that may effect their hearing.

**DA NANG** - If you don't wear earplugs, the danger of suffering a permanent hearing loss while stationed in Vietnam is high.

"This is probably the noisiest war we have ever fought," said Navy Capt. George R. Hart, commander of the 1st Marine Hospital Co. "The aircraft engines are louder; artillery units are stationed everywhere. Yet you can't get people to take simple precautions."

Lt. Cmdr. Franklin O. Black, ear specialist at the Da Nang Naval Hospital, said, "It's a rare person who doesn't suffer noise or blast-induced permanent hearing loss "to some extent while in Vietnam."

If you've ever flown in a C130, fired a 105mm howitzer, or operated a generator without using earplugs you've endangered your hearing, said Black. "Just sitting in the Da Nang Air Terminal when a jet flies overhead can be hazardous."

The Army's top ear doctor in Vietnam Col. James Albrite, takes a less critical view of the situation.

"I'd say that between 13 and 20 per cent of the men suffer from hearing loss in Vietnam," Albrite said.

"This is just about the same as it was in Korea. Perhaps the loss of hearing due to blast effects from artillery is higher in Vietnam."

Albrite said, however, that an individual can permanently lose part of his hearing on a single C130 flight from Da Nang to Saigon. "You just can't say how much noise over a given length of time will cause damage," he said. "Some people are more susceptible than others."

The Air Force has come up with a set of standards, however, and require that its personnel wear ear protection at a certain noise-duration level.

"After 23 minutes in a C130 we recommend ear protection," said Air Force Capt. Dennis F. Naugle, a bio-environmentalist at the Da Nang Air Base Dispensary.

"After four hours it's required."

Naugle said that any noise greater than 90 decibels is dangerous. According to his figures the noise in the interior of a C130 registers 98 decibels, while the C123 transport is more than 100. The noise of a ground power generator at 10 feet is 97 decibels, he said, while a jet plane at 100 feet averages 125 decibels.

Sometimes the noise is at such a high pitch that it is deceiving," Naugle Naugle said. "Jet noise is obviously hazardous but a passenger in a Huey helicopter with his head right up against a turbine engine is taking 113 decibels according to my reading."

Naugle also measured the noise at ear level of an M16 and 144 decibels but stressed the fact that this is impact noise, taking only a fraction of a second, and can't be compared with the steady noise level of a helicopter or generator.

"Intensity and the duration of the noise is the key," Hard said. "Although the shock waves from a blast can shatter the eardrum, this can be repaired with very little permanent loss of hearing."

"Once the noise destroys the hair cells in the inner ear, however, it's like breaking the insulation and causing a short circuit. You'll hear a hissing sound the rest of your life."

The experts offer two simple

rules for saving your hearing; avoid loud noise sources when possible; wear earplugs or ear muffs when you can.

"The standard earplugs cost the government seven cents a pair and will cut the noise level by 20 decibels," Naugle said. "We give them to everyone who comes in."

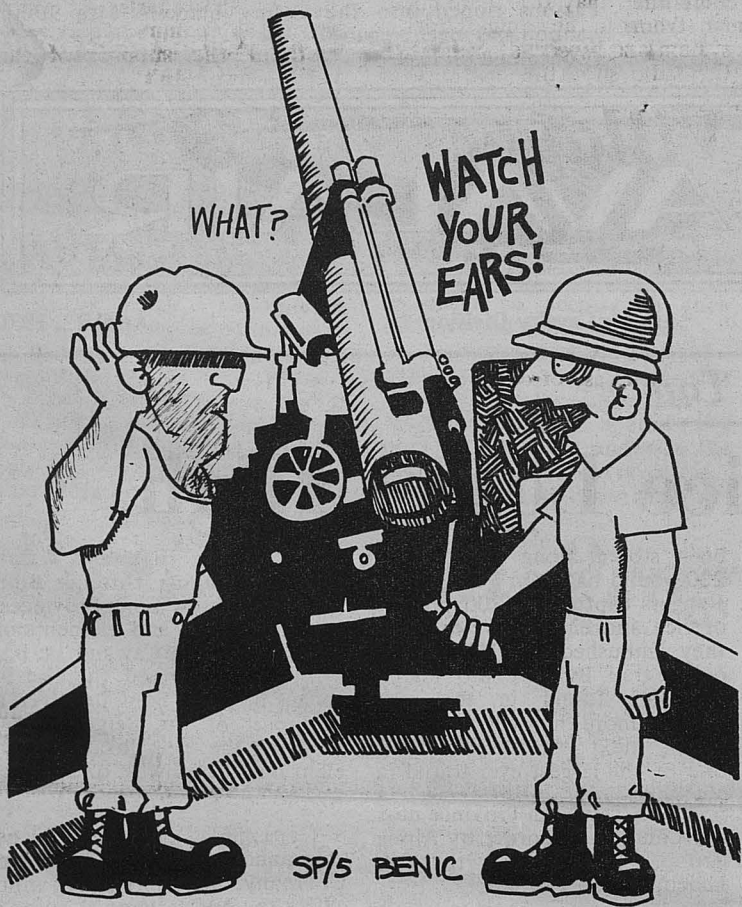
Albrite, Hart and Black agree they wouldn't be without them.

"You can actually hear someone talking in a noisy environment better with earplugs than without," Hart said.

"With the noise level cut, the ears aren't as fatigued."

None of the services now issue earplugs to everyone. You have to ask for them. The four specialists in Da Nang feel it's worth the effort.

"The only solution to the hearing problem is prevention," Albrite said. "Once you've had a noise-induced hearing loss there's no way it can be restored."



## B, 1-9 Most Decorated In RVN

**QUAN LOI** - In a recent engagement near the Cambodian border, one of the Hunter-Killer teams from Bravo Troop, 1st Sqdn, 9th Cavalry encountered heavy enemy fire. At the end of two days of nearly continuous contact, the men of Bravo Troop were credited with 72 NVA KIAs and captured a wealth of enemy equipment.

Included was an NVA flag bearing the inscription, "Most Victorious-Most Brave Unit." While the flag with its inscription was originally intended for an NVA unit, the inscription can well be applied to the men of Bravo Troop.

Bravo Troop, the highest decorated company size unit in the Republic of Vietnam, has received 2455 awards, 1100 for valor during the past year while

being credited with nearly 1500 enemy killed.

The awards were earned while flying more than 13,000 missions and 112 operations by the unit's Blue Platoon - the aero rifle platoon.

In addition to receiving credit for nearly 1500 enemy kills, the unit has destroyed 2,867 bunkers and 1,290 other military structures erected by the enemy, as well as numerous vehicles.

Bravo Troop has also denied the enemy tons of food and numerous weapons. The unit has captured 73,345 pounds of rice, nearly 11,000 pounds of salt and 72 weapons. A major enemy infiltration route, discovered by the unit, the Jolley Trail, was named after Bravo Troop's commander, Maj. Charles A.

Jolley.

A unit's efficiency is judged by its results and the results of Bravo Troop's operations speak for themselves. "The squadron initiates many of the 1st Cav's contacts and is credited with nearly 40 per cent of the kills recorded in the 3rd Brigade," said Jolley.

Staff Sgt. Richard B.H. Herron holds the distinction of being the most decorated Skytrooper in the troop. Among his awards are five Silver Stars, four Bronze Stars with "V" device, three Air Medals with "V" device, two Army Commendation Medals with "V" device, five Purple Hearts, nearly sixty Air Medals, one Army Commendation Medal and numerous Vietnamese awards for gallantry.

A breakdown of the awards presented the members of Bravo Troop during the past year include: 77 Silver Stars, 210 Distinguished Flying Crosses, 275 Bronze Stars with "V" device, 232 Air Medals with "V" device, 306 Army Commendation Medals with "V" device, 123 Purple Hearts, 388 Army Commendation Medals, 407 Bronze Stars and 437 Air Medals, a total of 2455 awards.

An entry for Ripley's Believe It or Not? Possibly, but it's a daily occurrence for the members of Bravo Troop, 1st Sqdn, 9th Cavalry.



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## ... For God And Country

By Chaplain (Capt.) Robert T. Comesky  
2/5 Chaplain

So far from my loved ones, why, O Lord? History tells me that my brothers, men before me have constantly waged war, Why O Lord?

I know that every man, like myself wants peace of mind and peace with his neighbor, why can we not get together?

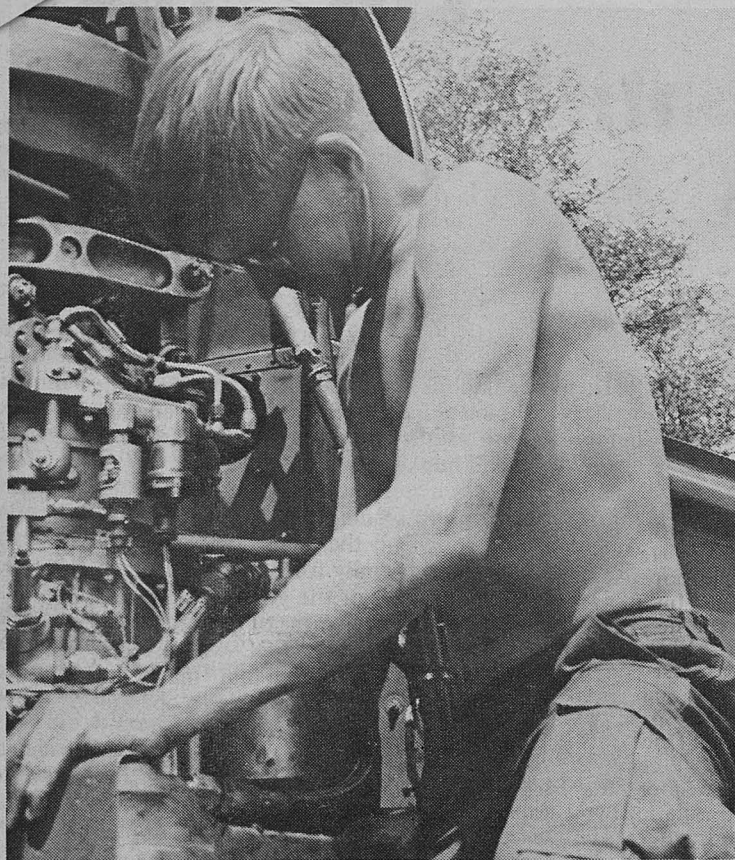
Because of an "MOS", some have to fight to keep alive; others must bear with one another the hassel of an office and a rear type duty. Then, why that freak accident in the rear or on the green line, my buddy dies, another loses his arm? We're here to help, why are we still struggling to help?

We look for an answer, no single one seems to suffice - one always hinges upon another. Four hundred years ago, the saintly reformer, Teresa of Avila, told us:

Let nothing disturb you.  
Let nothing frighten you.  
Though all things pass away,  
God does not change.  
Patience wins all things.  
But he lacks nothing who possesses God,  
For God alone suffices.



**AT THE READY**—1st Air Cavalryman PFC Robert Spangler takes a good look at the surroundings providing security while Delta Company, 2nd Bn, 12 Cavalry searches a bunker complex near Song Be. (USA Photo by SP4 James McCabe)



ADDS FINAL TOUCH -- PFC Gary V. Farmer puts the final touch on an engine tuneup at the 545th T.C. Detachment's maintenance shop in Quan Loi. (USA Photo by SP4 Doug Fuller)

## Medic Wants To Stay Where He's Needed

QUAN LOI -- "The people needed help, and I could help them, so here I am."

Perhaps that's why Spec. 6 Dave Brookshire, a clinical specialist in the 1st Air Cavalry's 1st Bn., 7th Cavalry's battalion aid station, is spending another year in Vietnam.

## Fixed Wing Flies Psyops

FSB BUTTONS -- A small, single-engined plane cruising high over the jungle is helping the 1st Air Cavalry convince VC and NVA soldiers to rally to the Government of the Republic of Vietnam.

A Cessna 02B, a specially built Air Force light plane from the 9th Special Operations Squadron, has been flying Psyops (Psychological Operations) for the Cav's 2nd Brigade, supplementing the Huey helicopter.

The new Cessna has a built-in system especially designed for Psyops missions. The craft has 1,500 watt speakers, compared to the 1,000 watt speaker usually hand-carried to Hueys. The pilots, from the 6th Psychological Operations Bn, are specially trained for the circular flying during a Psyops mission.

"A slot in the floor is designed for the distribution of pamphlets which beats peeling them off the doorgunner's face," said Olliff.

Another advantage of the Cessna is its range and speed. "We are able to run more missions near the Cambodian border with the fixed wing. It's quieter and there is less need to worry about ground to air fire than in the Huey," he said.

The results with the new Cessna are already coming in. During a recent week the Civil Affairs section of the 2nd Brigade attributed some 23 Hoi Chanh to the messages of the Cessna.

"As a child I once witnessed an automobile accident and felt completely helpless in the face of the terrible suffering of the accident victims. Ever since I've wanted to help anyone who needed it," Brookshire said.

"One time, when we went on a MEDCAP, we came on a boy with what we suspected was tetanus. His back was bowed and his jaw contorted. We treated him as best we could and sent him to the dispensary. We came a week later and he came bouncing into the room, one of the first ones in, all well. I couldn't have been happier."

And most of his patients feel the same way. Moving among the children and unsure elderly patients, he smiles and quickly draw them to him.

"Where medicine seldom comes out here is where I want to come. These people seldom see a doctor and certainly don't understand what we're doing, but look at them come."

A second semester junior in marine biology explored the program offered by the Army and decided that the medical corps was the best since he could realize his ambition best.

"I enlisted and ended up at the 8th Field Hospital in Nha Trang," he explained, adjusting his round wire spectacles. "We were having difficulty treating civilian patients who came in because we didn't have enough interpreters and the patients had difficulty explaining what was wrong. So I got together with one of the interpreters and learned Vietnamese bit by bit.

"Since I could speak the language a little I was sort of drafted into teaching English to some of the children in the area."

When he got back to the States, he decided he'd like to try it a little longer, so he re-enlisted.

"During this tour I think I've got a much better view of the needs of the field medics, just what was really going on out there."

# Mechanics Play Big Role In Keeping Birds Airborne

QUAN LOI -- For the men of Bravo Troop, 1st Sqdn, 9th Cavalry, the numbers 1 and 9 are more than just a unit designation.

For every hour the pilot spends in the air, it takes another nine man-hours of hard work on the ground by the unit's "grease-monkeys", to keep the birds flying.

Supplying the direct support for Bravo Troop, the men from the 545th T.C. Detachment provide the necessary maintenance to keep the "Hunter-Killer" teams in operation. The company, composed of more than 80 top notch "professional mechanics" is capable of repairing anything from engine malfunctions, communication failures, and jammed guns to helicopters damaged by enemy ground to air fire.

"Each man assigned to the 545th is highly trained in a specialized area vital to helicopter maintenance," said SFC Malcolm L. Pickett, noncommissioned officer in charge of the maintenance company. "We have eight specialized areas, and each plays a role in keeping an aircraft airborne."

The eight specialized departments include an engine, sheet metal, radio, armanent, prop and rotor, electric, and technical supply shop. "We keep all of these shops in operation 24 hours a day," Pickett stressed.

Constant inspection and checking of aircraft is of all importance in the day to day operations of Bravo troop. Each aircraft undergoes an intermediate inspection every 25 flying hours, in an effort to spot trouble before it starts. A periodic inspection is conducted every 100 hours in which a complete dismantling of the aircraft's primary parts is accomplished for scheduled maintenance checkup and repair.

"During the periodic inspection the aircraft hits almost everyone of the eight specialized shops," Pickett commented. Within a 24 hour period the bird is completely "overhauled" and ready to go back into action," he added.

Although the entire overhaul is highly technical it's essential for the highly efficient operation. It takes cooperation from all parties involved. The crew chief may feel there might be a short in the communication system and by coordinating with the radio shop this malfunction

can be corrected.

The pilot feels a vibration in his bird, which is caused by improper balance in the rotors. By working with the rotor section the blades are tested for the proper balance. By coordinating an all around effort the bird is double checked for safety.

"The face to face communication between pilot, gunner and maintenance personnel is the backbone of Bravo, 1st of the 9th Cavalry's success," Maj. Charles A. Jolley, Bravo troop commander, stated. "Without the support of the 545th we wouldn't exist."

## Villagers Get Shots To Prevent Cholera

By SP4 Ed Wene

PHUOC VINH -- When a Vietnamese boy came down with a suspected case of cholera in Phuoc Vinh, the 1st Air Cav, with local medical personnel, inoculated 1,500 villagers in a 48 hour period.

"Cholera can almost always be traced to the water supply of a village," said Capt. Robert J. Fritz, division sanitarian. "During the dry season especially, the water level is low in their shallow wells and it concentrates the organism."

The medical personnel swung into action in a two day program with the goal of inoculating as many of the people of the village as possible.

On the first day over 600 youngsters were given their immunizations by the Cav personnel and four Vietnamese nurses trained by the medical battalion.

On the second day the inoculation team set up a center in the business district of Phuoc Vinh and administered shots to all interested villagers. They then proceeded to two more schools and gave the immunizations to many more children. Approximately 400 more people received protection against the disease the second day.

Another 500 Vietnamese civilian workers received inoculations before they went to work at Camp Gorvad, the division headquarters.

Capt. Hoyt Ayres, the division preventive medicine officer, hopes that this program will be the start of a regular immunization program for the villagers. "In the future we would like to set up a program to immunize the people against cholera, tetanus, smallpox and plague," he said.

When the medical teams left the village, groups of small children were roaming the streets with newly acquired squirt guns -- discarded syringes, minus the needles, of course.



ANYONE HOME? -- After ripping an enemy bunker with a fragmentation grenade, 1st Air Cavalryman PFC Jerry Wienhoff takes a closer look. Wienhoff's unit, Delta Company 2nd Bn, 12 Cav was clearing a bunker complex north of Song Be. (USA Photo by SP4 Jim McCabe)



'Fire mission!' With these words the artillery Fire Direction Center swings into action. The FDC RTO Spec 4 John Little, A Battery, 1st Bn, 30 Arty, takes down the raw data and makes sure the area is clear of air traffic.

# FDC: The Men Behind The Gun

By SP4 Jerry Norton

Their calculations may make the difference in artillery winning a battle, ripping into the enemy before he can launch an attack, or destroying enemy trails and bunkers.

If they miscalculate, they may be responsible for artillery rounds landing where they do the Allied side no good and the enemy no harm, or worse, do damage to friendly forces or civilians.

The calculations that put the guns on target are the responsibility of the men of the artillery battery's Fire Direction Center—FDC—whose MOS is 13E20. It's a responsibility that makes it necessary for the "13 Echo" to be able to operate a radio, to read a map with pinpoint accuracy, to perform complex mathematical calculations, to be able to use an electronic computer, and to be a generator mechanic.

The newcomer in the FDC, fresh out of AIT at Ft. Sill, Oklahoma, or straight off one of the guns for on-the-job training, generally starts as an RTO. The raw data for fire missions; planned fires, defensive targets (Delta Tangos), and "mets" (computations based on weather reports) is all fed to the RTO. He has to understand every number correctly if the artillery is to be accurate.

The chart operators go to work next, checking the map, figuring the target's range, altitude, and direction relative to the guns. To be sure no mistakes are made, a second operator runs a "check chart," and compares results.

The computer (a man, not a machine) does the final work. He uses mathematics and formulas to translate all the data into the few numbers that tell the gun crews the charge, elevation and direction to blast the enemy. Here again there is no room for error, and the computations are doublechecked.

The computer has an electronic aide, FADAC, the portable Field Artillery Digital Automatic Computer. FADAC, powered by a generator FDC must maintain, can make the necessary calculations in a few seconds. The 13-Echoes still have to be able to calculate on their own, however, because the FADAC is manually checked and because, when batteries split, one of the FDC halves will be without a FADAC.

When the entire process is finished the guns have the information to lob the rounds into the proper spot. Complex though the procedure is, it all takes place a couple of minutes. The faster the rounds hit the target, the more effective the support will be.



Like everything else in the Cav, the FDC is airmobile. When dropped into a new firebase, or when in a temporary position on an artillery raid, the "Fire Direction Center" may initially be an open spot in a field. The important thing is getting the rounds out—fast.

(USA Photos By SP4 Robert Borchester)



FADAC — the Field Artillery Digital Automatic Computer—is the FDC's best friend, making firing computations with speed and accuracy that can't be matched manually. The tough little computer travels with every battery. Spec. 4 Lawrence Toomer, 1st Bn, 30th Arty, quickly calculates in preparation for a "fire mission".



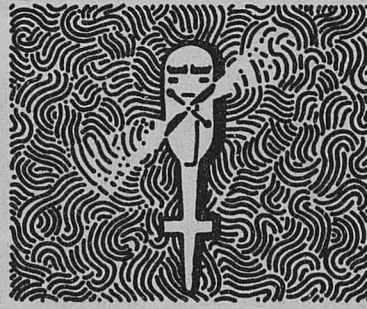
The chart operator Spec. 4 Dennis L. Helmhold, A Battery, 1st Bn, 30th Arty, gets the target location from the RTO, checks the map, then finds deflection and range on his chart with a Range-Deflection Protractor. He must be fast and, above all, accurate.



The Redlegs get the final directions, set the howitzer accordingly, and pull the lanyard to send a round on its way to the target.



Linda Harrison, a rising starlet with 20th Century-Fox, shares something in common with many Skytroopers. Clad in modified camouflaged fatigues she enjoys spending some of her time humping through the bush. Though foliage isn't as thick as the bamboo of Cav Country, it makes for a better vision. The terrain isn't bad, not bad at all.  
(Photo courtesy of 20th Century-Fox)



# ROTOR WASH

## Salute To Commander

DAU TIENG -- The whole town is talking about the Montemann boy. Maj. Wayne T. Montemann is helping tie the NVA in knots.

The officers of Bravo Co., 229th Assault Helicopter Battalion, recently took out a full page ad in the Nourborne (Mo.) Democratic Leader, Montemann's hometown newspaper, in a salute to their C.O.

The idea started out as something of a gag since Montemann took a lot of good natured kidding about his hometown of Nourborne, with its population of 985 residents, but soon swelled into an overwhelming show of appreciation by the officers of the unit for their C.O.

"He's the best CO this company has ever had," Capt. Leon Golembiewski, Bravo Company exec said, "and we want him to know we appreciated him."

## Montagnards Rally

FSB SNUFFY -- Fifteen ralliers to the Government of the Republic of Vietnam provided an unexpected bonus for the men of the 1st Bn, 12th Cav. The ralliers are the most recent group of Montagnards to rally in the 2nd Brigade, 1st Cav DDivision AO.

The fifteen Montagnard civilians related that about two weeks prior, a group of NVA had entered their village and taken fifty of their fellow villagers to work as laborers.

They said they were afraid of the NVA and frightened by air strikes in the area. They hid from the NVA until they learned that Americans had opened Bu Gia Map airstrip. The group then made their way to the airstrip where they were welcomed by the Skytroopers of 1st of the 12th.

## Operator Stays Busy

TAY NINH -- Even if the line isn't busy the switchboard operator is. He'll make 10 to 15 connections by the time you complete your brief call.

"I get a little uptight towards the end of my shift when people yell at me," said Spec. 4 Herbert Teal, taking a breather between calls at the 1st Air Cav's "Scorpion" switchboard. "But I try not to let it get to me. You really learn to have patience on this job."

A large fan and big pitcher of water nearby, the operator sits facing the console with its lights

and plugs and switches. Behind him is the network of towers and radios and other operators like himself throughout Vietnam, ready to make the connections that keep the Cav moving.

For the three men who are the voices of "Scorpion," the 1st Brigade switch, the days and nights melt into an endless parade of six hours on and six hours off, distinguishable only by the volume of calls and the amount of heat inside their commo bunker, both of which peak in the late afternoon.

## New 15th S&S Store Offers Faster Service

By SP4 Jay Grossman

HOA -- Resupply has been turned into a twice-monthly shopping spree at the Bien Hoa shopping center for 1st Air Cavalrymen.

Skytroopers can pick up 627 items at the S&S self-service market at Bien Hoa.

The store is a feature of the 15th S&S (Supply and Service) Battalion. Opened last October, the facility serves all units in the 1st Air Cav Division, offering fast service in obtaining a 15-day re-supply of basic materials.

"Before the store was opened, it would take anywhere from ten to twenty days to clear a requisition through channels," said Staff Sgt. J.B. Cannon NCOIC of the self-service facility. "Now it takes only one day," the sergeant added.

Each unit is allotted two days a month to do their shopping. Only those Skytroopers authorized on signature cards of 78 units may pick up materials.

"We handle five units each day. Shopping days are allocated in advance, so the unit can make up a list of the items they will need for the next 15 days," Sgt. Cannon explained. "This is an efficient, easy method of re-supply," he adds.

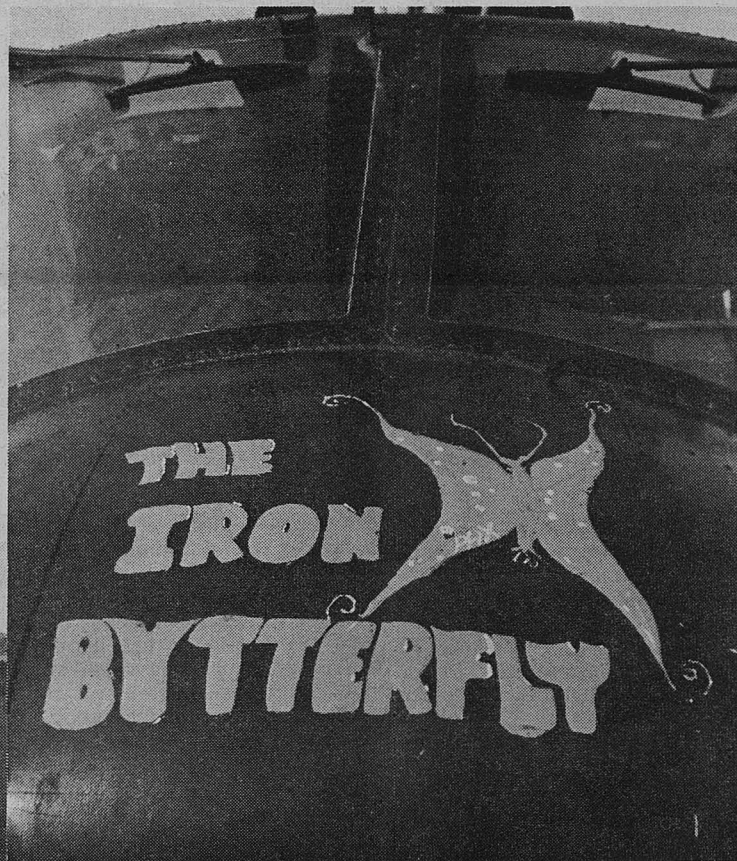
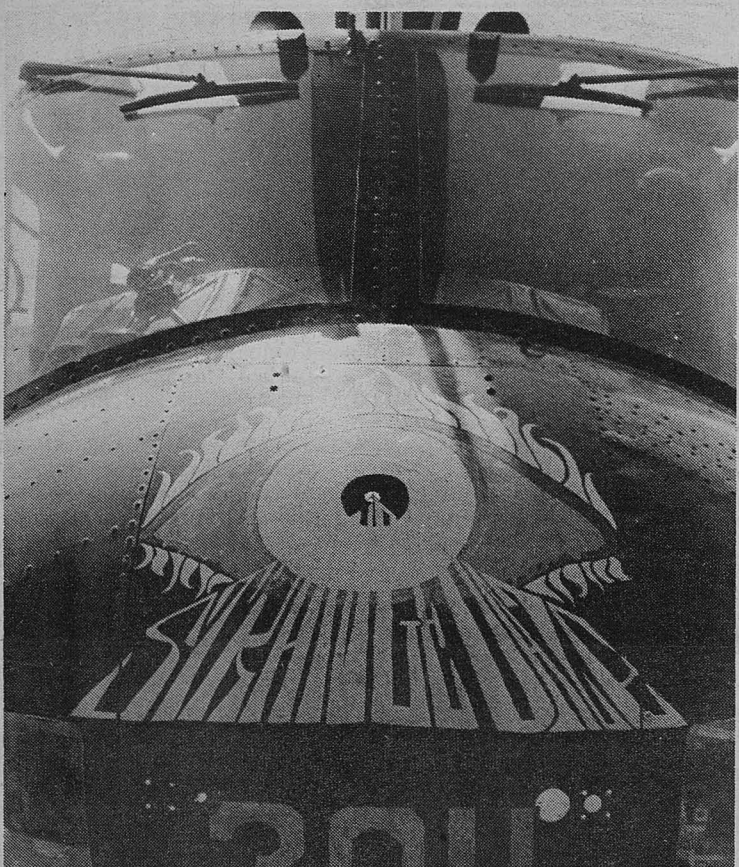
An average list contains approximately 300 items. After they are taken from the shelves, items are crated, addressed and transported by Caribou, all within one day.

The store's main building is stocked with any type of hand tool a man might need, office supplies and mess hall equipment. A second structure, the documents building, offers special equipment, such as power tools. Requisitions must be received in advance for these items.

Finally, there is a paint store offering a choice of 112 colors. According to Sgt. Cannon, "We stock mostly gray, black and OD. Cav yellow is hard to get.

"And we're out of peach," the sergeant quipped.

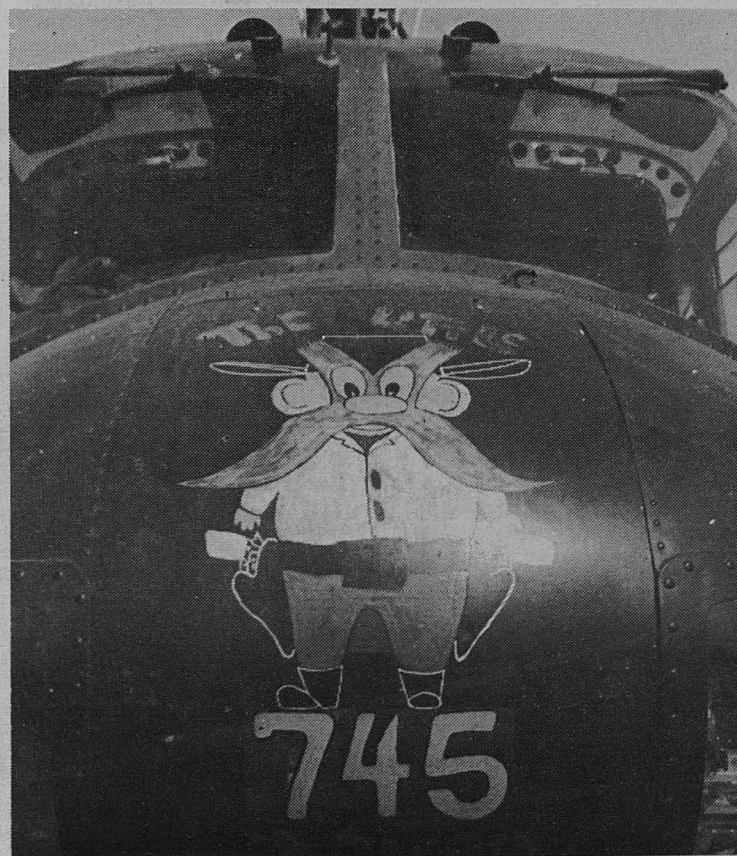
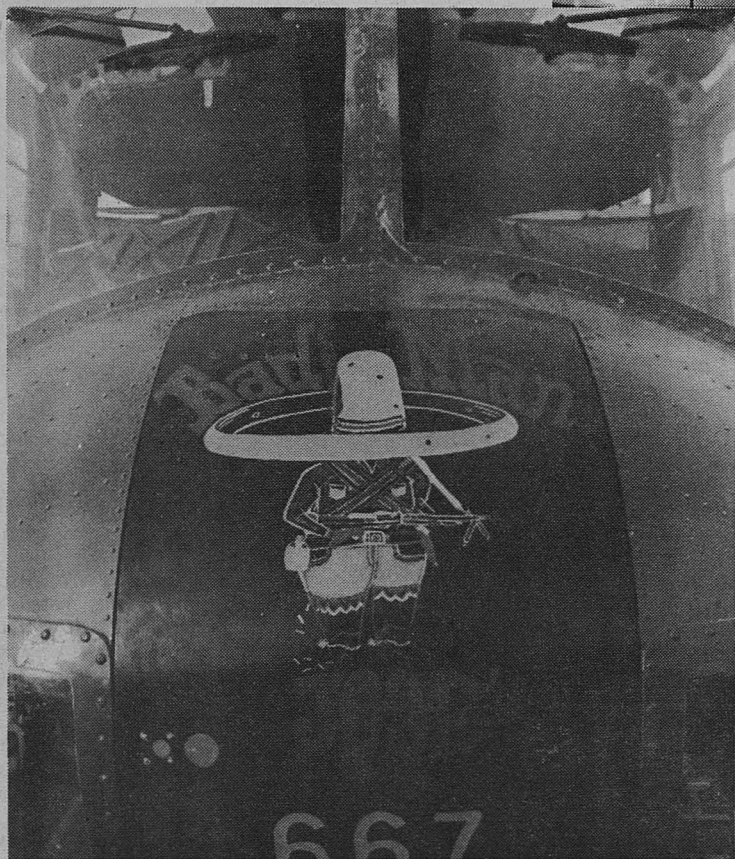
# Graffiti Gives Birds Colorful Personality



Nearly 30 years ago, with the formation of the Army Air Corps as an integral part of the Armed Forces, the crewman artists showed an adeptness for naming and decorating their ships. The graffiti painted on the ships fusilage normally remained, even though the crews changed.



The men of the 229th Assault Helicopter Bn at Tay Ninh seem to have exceeded themselves with this bit of artwork, keeping alive the old tradition and adding color to their otherwise Olive Drab Birds.



# Squad's Main Job To Rescue Pilots

By 1st Lt Brian Phipps

FSB BUTTONS — An aircraft is in trouble. As it limps its way to the airstrip or helipad, the men on the ground can all be heard saying, "It will crash for sure."

To most men on the ground there comes a feeling of desperation and helplessness. However, to a small group of four men, the possibility of a bird crashing springs them into action. They know that their reaction time and skill could ultimately determine whether the pilot and crew will live or die.

This squad is the "crash" squad from Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 11 Aviation Group, attached to the 2nd FSSE (Forward Service Support Element) in support of the 2nd Brigade of the 1st Air Cavalry Division at Fire Support Base (FSB) Buttons. A large fire or "crash" truck, a tanker truck and a large amount of intestinal fortitude comprise their equipment.

"Our main job is to rescue pilots who have crashed on the runway or helipad. Our second job is to extinguish fires that inevitably occur in a crash," said

Spec 4 Robert Broeker. "Occasionally we are called upon to perform other tasks, such as putting out fire in ammo dumps."

Recently, this all-purpose squad found itself in the village of Song Be, trying to control a large fire in an ammo dump at the old MACV compound that was threatening the village.

"No matter what the job, we try to do our best," replied Spec 4 Dennis Kearns. "We know that whenever we are called to action, lives and property are at stake."

Although there are few airplane or helicopter crashes at Buttons, the "Skyborne" firefighters are always ready to cope with any and every emergency situation.

When they are not on a mission they are pulling maintenance on their equipment, which has to be in excellent condition at all times, in order to accomplish their difficult and dangerous tasks.

"It is a dangerous job but I enjoy it. You get the feeling that you are helping other people. When we do have a crash and pull our pilot and save the aircraft, we really feel good," concluded Sgt. William H. Brant.

# Pacification Program Begins

By SSG Ron Renouf

TICH THIEN — The huge Chinook helicopter set down at the edge of this small village and disgorged its load of G.I.'s.

The 1st Air Cav's experiment in Pacification had begun. Playing the lead role is Charley Company, 1st Bn, 5th Cavalry, operating with the 3rd Brigade, headquartered at Quan Loi.

Less than 24 hours later, the residents were inviting the G.I.'s to their homes for a hot meal. The villagers' goodwill gesture was, according to Platoon Leader 1st Lt. James O. McKenna Jr., "the greatest display of appreciation toward the American soldier I have ever seen".

"Our primary objective here is to assist the local Popular Forces platoon enabling them to maintain a strong defense for the village, without our help,"

commented McKenna. "Our first job is to teach them to become more effective in patrolling and in setting up ambushes," he added.

The Pacification program, as one of its major objectives, seeks to neutralize the Viet Cong Infrastructure (VCI). The first step is to convince the local population that they need not be afraid to co-operate with GVN and Allied Forces.

The VCI attempts the exact opposite -- to convince the local population that the local Regional and or Popular Forces Unit can't protect the residents.

Charlie Company and the men of the 2nd Platoon, in undertaking the task to halt the VCI, underwent extensive training in preparation for its new mission. The Skytroopers studied common phrases in Vietnamese, Vietnamese culture

# Increased Activity in AO

(Continued from Page 1)

and supporting ARA eliminated three.

At 3:30 p.m. 14 of the surviving NVA were detained and two rallied.

On the other side of the division's AO, 23 miles north-northeast of Song Be, Montagnards trickled out of the jungle foothills to the sanctuary offered by the 1st Bn, 12th Cav. By the end of the week 61 of the mountain people had fled from the Viet Cong to the battalion.

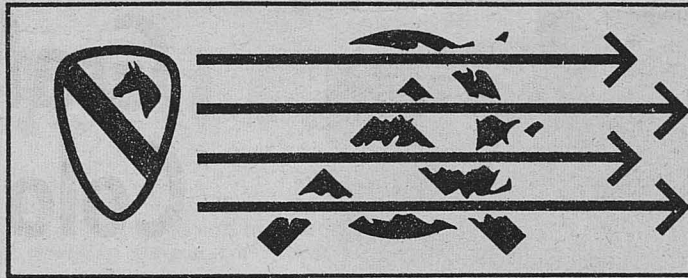
The Montagnards had served as forced laborers for the VC and NVA, and some had been drafted into enemy units. Cav operations in the rugged terrain, the first Allied activity there in years, gave them their first opportunity to rally. At week's end they had led the battalion to several small caches and bunker complexes.

On the last day of the week

Alpha Company, 1st Bn, 12th Cav found one enemy cache on its own. Reconning 25 miles north-northeast of Song Be, the Skytroopers pulled aside a covering of leaves and branches near a trail to discover 61,200 AK-47 rounds and 590 pounds of TNT. The hastily camouflaged cache was on the ground and was a month old.

The division killed 355 enemy soldiers during the week. Ground troops saw most of the action, killing 148 of the enemy. In the month of March the division accounted for 1,344 enemy, compared to 755 in February. The Cav took 225 tons of rice from the enemy during the month.

Thirteen Americans were killed and 30 wounded at FSB Jay. At Illingworth 24 Americans died and 54 were wounded.



Week of 22 - 28 March

TAY NINH — Hacking their way through thick jungle 22 miles north-northwest of Tay Ninh Mar. 26, 1st Air Cav Skytroopers spotted enemy in bunkers only 20 meters away. As several NVA emerged from the bunkers to fire B-40s, a Cav platoon leader cut them down with his M-16, sparking a seven hour battle in which 88 NVA were killed.

As enemy fire increased, the Skytroopers from Charlie Company, 2nd Bn, 8th Cav, quickly shifted in battle position. "I had the men get down, space out and close in the rear," said Capt. George J. Hobson, company commander. "We moved into a triangle, with a platoon on each flank and a third toward the rear protecting the CP."

As the Cav men dug in they began receiving fire from four sides. "We were receiving especially heavy .30 caliber, AK-47 and RPG fire from the north, northwest and northeast," said Hobson. "There were so many deadfalls that crawling was extremely difficult.

We had to get up and either go around or over the falls."

Despite the rugged terrain Charlie Company poured a steady stream of M-16, automatic weapon and M-79 fire into the enemy ranks. "The enemy was as close as 15 to 20 meters to our perimeter at times," said Hobson. The combination of Charlie's fire and support from artillery, Aerial Rocket Artillery and air strikes stopped the NVA.

The fighting continued sporadically from 11:45 a.m. until 5:30 p.m., when a relief

# NVA Snipers Silenced By 1st Air Cavalrymen

By SP4 Jerry Norton

PHUOC VINH — The 1st Air Cav. Div. Skytroopers were breaking brush on the rugged foothills nine miles southeast of Bu Gia Map in Phuoc Long Province when they spotted three NVA on a trail on March

22. In less than half an hour the Cav men had smashed a platoon-size enemy units, killing 17 NVA.

As the lead element of Alpha Company, 1st Bn, 8th Cav, cut down the surprised enemy trio with M-16s at noon, they began receiving small arms and machinegun fire from other NVA hidden in bushes and trees. As the Cav grunts dropped the enemy snipers one by one, more Allied firepower was brought into the fray. Blue Max Cobras from the 2nd Bn, 20th Artillery (Aerial Rocket Artillery), cut swaths in the jungle with rockets and minigun fire. More of the enemy's cover was blown away by bombs from Air Force strikes.

By 12:25 p.m. the enemy had had enough and retreated into the jungle. The Skytroopers swept the area and found 10 enemy killed by the rifles of Alpha Company, five erased by the air strikes and two eliminated by Aerial Rocket Artillery.

quarters that offered suitable protection against enemy mortar and rocket attack was the first order of business. Shortly after the arrival of the platoon, the supplies of sand bags and culvert arrived.

As the G.I.'s started "humping" the supplies from the LZ to the Popular Forces Compound where they are located, the members of the local platoon joined them in filling sandbags and setting up bunkers, in a genuine show of co-operation.

and traditions along with basic military skills.

"My men know how to zero their weapons, patrol and ambush, but we tried to teach them from the viewpoint of being instructors," states McKenna. "We will teach by example, the example of good soldiering. They may laugh at first, but when they see that our methods work, they'll ask to be taught. That's when we'll make real progress."

"Digging in," setting up living



WORKING TOGETHER — 1st Lt. James O. McKenna, platoon leader with Charlie Company, 1st Bn, 5th Cav, discusses possible future ambush sites with his Vietnamese counterpart. The platoon is working with the PF platoon at Tich Tienh in an effort to upgrade the local forces.

(USA Photo by Sp4 Doug Fuller)