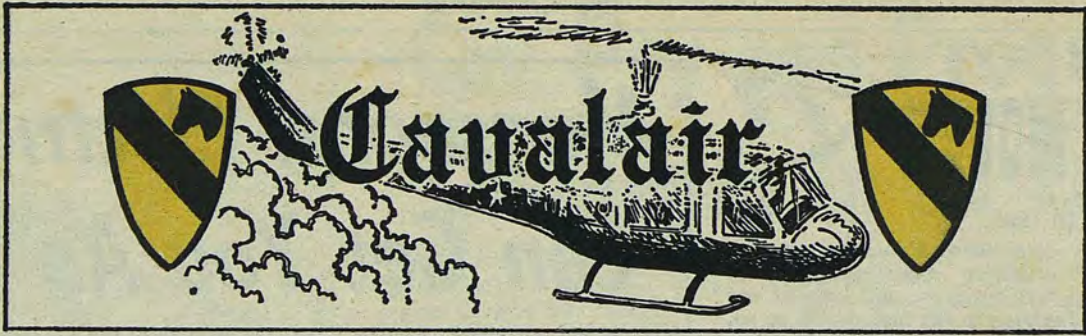


BUY
U.S.
SAVINGS
BONDS



Vol. 3, No. 17

1st Air Cavalry Division

April 23, 1969

Index

Horse's Mouth .. Page 2
 Firefight Page 3
 Prep School Page 3
 Switchboards Pages 4-5
 Rangers Page 6
 Kim Page 7

'Old Glory' Flutters Proudly Again

Enemy Repulsed Atop Hill 54

By SP4 CHRIS DEAN
 QUAN LOI — Memories of Iwo Jima, a tattered American flag fluttering high over a war-torn hill, recurred this week on Hill 54 in South Vietnam.

Hill 54 is an observation post a few miles north of the Song Dong Nai River and northeast of Bien Hoa. Under the hill spreads several square miles of open field. The security of this little forward operations base was left to a unit of the 1st Battalion, 7th Cavalry.

About 1:30 a.m. on March 17, a mortarman guarding the northern side of the perimeter spotted two figures moving towards him. He had to hold his fire because of a listening post stationed to his front. Then the unbelievable happened — an NVA grenade bounced off his helmet, without going off.

That signaled the start of a four-hour B-40 rocket attack and raging gun battle.

All of the above-ground bunkers were falling under the bar-

rage of B-40's, forcing the inhabitants to the mortar pits.

Just as Cobra gunships arrived, the ammo dump began to blow, adding to the confusion. The Cobras' fire was restricted as two listening posts (LPs) were still outside the perimeter.

A rifleman on one of the LPs said, "We were getting frags (fragmentation grenades) all around us so we decided it was time to go in. When we got to the perimeter wire we started yelling 'Friendlies!', but no one answered. The whole side of the perimeter was gone and frags were blowing everywhere. I thought the whole place had been overrun until I saw a friendly figure in the middle of the hill. When I reached him he was patching up the wounded and passing out ammunition."

During this phase of the attack, the company's Vietnamese interpreter was running around distributing ammo, water and cigarettes. "Whenever he heard NVA yelling, he would run up and interpret what they were saying," said Captain David P. Niles, the company commander.

This is when the interpreter heard the NVA company commander regroup his men and shift the battle to the southern side of the hill.

An estimated force of two enemy platoons positioned themselves on both sides of a ridge-line to the southeast of Hill 54. From there they fired B-40's and threw Chicom (Chinese Communist) grenades at the bunkers.

"An enemy rocketeer stood up about ten meters in front of me, aiming straight at our bunker," said a rifleman with Company E. "I opened up on him with the .30 caliber machinegun and saw him fall. The next morning we found him on the ground, with a bead still drawn right on our bunker. It was the NVA company commander."

"Our bunker took *boucoup* (many) direct hits from Chicom grenades," continued the rifleman. "When we heard them bounce off the bunker we'd stay low, waiting for them to go off; not knowing whether they had landed inside or on top of the bunker. Those were the longest seconds of my life."

Several enemy bodies and several hundred pounds of enemy equipment were found within a few meters of the perimeter.

"The men did a fantastic job. They held their positions, controlled their fire, and conserved their ammunition," said CPT Niles. "I wanted the NVA to know what a fantastic job my men did and I wanted to know they weren't going to have Hill 54. So we got the flag out and rigged it up on the old antenna mast so it would be the first thing they would see when the sun came up."

This left two of the men from the LP still out.

One of the remaining two could be heard yelling at the bottom of the hill. Six cavalrymen broke from the bunker to get him, shooting an NVA on the way. When they were all back in the bunker, only one man from the listening post was still outside the perimeter.

He'd gone around the northern side of the ridge and crawled into a bomb crater. There he passed out from wounds. When he came to, he heard two NVA talking next to him. He shot one of them and started up the hill. He shot another just outside the perimeter. When his buddies pulled him into the bunker, he wouldn't let go of his rifle. He said he was going to hold onto it until the day he went home.

With everybody from the LP accounted for, the .30 caliber was free to fire and quickly cleared the hillside.

75th Rangers Termed 'America's Finest'

By SP4 AL PERSONS
 PHUOC VINH — The jungle is terrifying enough with its denseness, its eerie sounds, its rank odor, and its steaming heat. In short, it intensifies the natural fear of the unknown.

At night, the blackness is so thick it seems one would have to cut through it to move along. In this void, sight is nonexistent. The rest of the senses increase in keenness, which makes the sounds, the smell, and the heat even more horrifying.

In Vietnam, the terror of the jungle is increased even greater by the fact that another enemy is there, blending in with the background, ready to kill anything that moves.

One evening, after the sun had gone down, a patrol advanced step by step, keeping alert for any move "Charlie" might make. They had been moving since late that morning, so they decided to stop for the night and set up an ambush.

At sun-up, after no one had crossed their path, they were on the move again, this time able to see where they were going. A grubby sight they were too. Their "tiger fatigues," their faces blackened with camouflage stick, and the stubby little CAR-15's that they carried made them look just as formidable as their environment.

Their job was to check out trail complexes in the area and obtain information about enemy strength, dispositions, and resources.

While traveling down the trail junction which they had found the night before, they came across a position that had just recently been occupied by enemy forces. There they found a small mess hall, a rest area, and a small cache of spilled rice.

While they were checking the position out more thoroughly, one of the men spotted two enemy troops moving down the trail toward them about 30 meters away. The man who spotted them, camouflaged and sitting perfectly still, apparently was not spotted in turn, so he imme-

diately fired at the communist soldiers. One was hit and fell out of sight, moaning. The other got away.

The team leader moved forward shouting "Chieu Hoi!" to the wounded man, making sure that it wasn't a trap. But the soldier was wounded too badly to offer any resistance. After attempting to converse with him, the team leader found that he could speak English fairly well. The wounded man was given first aid and a stretcher was made so he could be carried back.

As the Skytroopers carried the wounded man back near a river where the choppers had let them off before, they discovered that a communist reactionary force

(Continued on Page 6)



"By the dawn's early light" Old Glory still waves after a vicious attack launched by NVA soldiers failed to budge Skytroopers of Company E, 1st Battalion, 7th Cavalry on Hill 54 northeast of Bien Hoa.



THE HORSE'S MOUTH



Here's a question I'm sure many saddle-sore Skytroopers would appreciate an answer to: What's the straight poop on the move of the division rear from An Khe to Bien Hoa? Is it really going to happen and, if so, when will the facilities at Bien Hoa be operational? Will Skytroopers who DEROS during the time the rear is moving get drops? If so, do you have any guesses as to how much of a drop and what dates?

Saddle-Sore Short-timer

Dear Short:

Whoa! Hold on with all those questions. Let me catch my breath and I'll tackle one at a time.

Yes, the Cav's rear at An Khe has already begun to move its component sections (AG personnel, finance, R&R, DEROS, Division Training Center, consolidated supply, etc.) some 250 miles south to Bien Hoa. Men and materiel will be transported by Air Force C-130's and by commercial vessels leaving the port city of Qui Nhon.

Most administrative services at Bien Hoa should be operational by the end of April. This move south has been carefully planned to insure that there be no interruption in critical services, such as R&R, DEROS and the like.

As far as your upcoming DEROS is concerned, here's the date of 16 April or earlier will still report to An Khe, while those with a DEROS date of 17 April or later will report to Bien Hoa for out-processing. You are advised not to report to the DEROS center more than four days prior to your DEROS date.

Although it must still be approved, it seems likely that Skytroopers going on R&R or leave and those going back to the world will fly out of Bien Hoa rather than Cam Ranh Bay.

Skytroopers scheduled to DEROS during the move will not get a special drop. Sorry 'bout that, troop..

Hoss

Hi Hoss,

You know, I've seen a lot of newspaper correspondents and television crews out here at our firebase in the last month or so. I'm just wondering if the Cav ever makes the papers or TV back home. I think we "grunts" would make a pretty good story and one that should be told. What say you, Hoss?

Photogenic Grunt

Dear Photogenic:

I'm with you — and so are the correspondents, believe me. They know that where the grunt goes, that's where the real action is. And every reporter wants this kind of hot news.

To answer your question, yes, the Cav is definitely making news back home. For example, recent successes at LZ Dolly and LZ Grant were reported on the evening news programs of the three major TV networks. Cav operations near the Cambodian border were also mentioned on NBC and CBS radio.

Let me give you another example. The March 21st issue of TIME magazine had this to say about recent enemy attacks at LZ Grant:

Some of the fiercest close-in fighting came at Landing Zone Grant, a U.S. fire-support base in III Corps. . . Two weeks after the (post-Tet) offensive began, no fewer than 800 Communist troops stormed LZ Grant, charging through three rows of concertina barbed wire. . . Last week, armed with machine guns, satchel charges and flamethrowers, they tried again. This time the Americans were waiting; cranking down their opened up on the attackers pointblank. The two extended battles took the lives of 17 Americans and 285 North Vietnamese.

In addition, the Cav was mentioned prominently in recent stories in the *New York Times*, *Washington Post*, *Miami Herald*, *Denver Post*, *Chicago Sun-Times* and *Los Angeles Times*, just to name a few.

(If there is anything any of you Skytroopers would like to get the word on, drop a line to Information Office, 1st Air Cavalry Division, Attn: Horses' Mouth, APO 96490. If I don't know the answer I'll find it and hoof it out.)

Monsoons, Electrical Storms Can Get You An Early Out

During the upcoming monsoon season, electrical storms can be expected to occur as often as 15 days a month. To reduce the potential hazard to Cav personnel and equipment, every Skytrooper should be familiar with the following safety rules.

In an electrical storm, stay away from isolated trees or poles. If in the jungle avoid tall trees.

Avoid open fields or bare hill-tops. When unavoidably caught in such terrain, lie flat on the ground to reduce the target height.

Avoid large masses of steel in open terrain (e.g. mounted guns, wire fences and vehicles). If

caught suddenly while riding a rubber-tire vehicle, stand fast; personnel in these vehicles usually escape injury in thunderstorms because the tires insulate the vehicle from the ground.

Do not seek shelter under a vehicle. The insulating effect of the tires may make your body the conductor of an electrical charge.

If in a group, disperse immediately. Do not huddle together. A mass of bodies attracts lightning.

If inside a building during an electrical storm, remain clear of water pipes and electrical or communication lines.

Whenever possible, disconnect the lead-in wire to field switchboards and telephones. If you must use the phone during a storm, keep your conversation to a minimum.

When an electrical storm is imminent, supervisors of outdoor theaters should cease oper-

ation and disperse the crowd.

Move away quickly from explosive items armed for electrical detonation, such as Claymore mines, since lightning strikes can cause detonation.

If at all possible move from atop guard towers if they are not equipped with lightning rods.

When outdoors during an electrical storm and your hair feels as if it were standing on end, fall flat immediately in a ditch or depression. You could be struck by lightning if you remain upright.

Never fuel aircraft or equipment when lightning is within three miles of your position, unless absolutely necessary in a combat mission.

If an individual is struck by lightning, do not assume he is dead. Prompt application of mouth-to-mouth resuscitation and treatment for shock may restore breathing. Seek medical assistance as soon as possible.

1st Cav Ass'n Honors Troops

If you want to keep in touch with the guys you've met in Vietnam, the best way to do it is through a membership in the 1st Cavalry Division Association.

Founded in 1944 in the Admiralty Islands, the Association was incorporated in 1949 as a non-profit fraternal veterans' organization. The Association seeks to preserve friendships formed in battle and perpetuate the Cav's tradition and esprit de corps. Moreover, it is dedicated to the honor of cavalymen who fence of our country.

The Cav Association provides scholarships to dependents of men killed or disabled while serving with the division.

A lifetime membership costs only eleven dollars (a single membership fee with no subsequent dues) and includes a lifetime subscription to the Association's newsletter, a volume of the division's history and a membership directory, plus Cav decals, insignia cards and pins.

If you're interested in joining, contact the Cav's Information Office or your unit's Association representative.



SGT RE-UP
SER
"DID YOU KNOW???"



I was asked recently, "Why should I reenlist?" Let's apply this question to everyone. I will answer with another question— "Why should you not reenlist?"

I will be one of the first to agree that not everyone should reenlist. On the other hand, there are many individuals who should—those individual who are qualified and stand to benefit by reenlisting. Include among the motives for reenlisting in the Army are job security, promotion and advancement, specific assignment or training, education, money, travel, and retirement; and let's not leave out another very important motive—to complete your military obligation.

Consider for a moment this last motive, to complete the individual military obligation. Just about everyone who is qualified mentally, morally, and physically, has a six-year military obligation to complete. There are several ways this requirement can be satisfied. One way is to serve six years on active military duty.

Through a little logical thinking with an open mind, the method of completing your military obligation on active duty may not be as "far out" as some may think. Perhaps you are completing your first "hitch", either as an enlistee or a draftee. And, you have not yet made any real plans for your future! Another "hitch" for you could give you a little more time to think about your future and will enable you to complete more, or all, of your military obligation at the same time. Remember, too, that this isn't the only gain. During this additional time, you will be gaining more experience, education, job knowledge, and maturity—the very qualifications you need for your next job.

I don't want to leave you hanging in the air. In case you're wondering what I had in mind when I agreed that not everyone should reenlist, I had in mind a school teacher. Most certainly this man also has a future in the Army and we have a job for him. But, this is one example of an individual who possibly can do himself and society more good back in his profession.

As to whether you should reenlist, only you have the answer. Think it over. It is your decision! Keep an open mind and look at all aspects. If you're not sure, another three or more years may be your answer. Remember, the decision you make now should be a good one. It may have to last a lifetime!



The CAVALAIR is published weekly under the supervision of the Information Office, 1st Air Cavalry Division, APO SF 96490, and is an authorized Army publication. The command newspaper is printed by Pacific Stars and Stripes, Tokyo, Japan.

Opinions expressed in the CAVALAIR are those of its editorial staff and not necessarily those of the Department of the Army.

Commanding General MG George I. Forsythe
Information Officer CPT John T. Kallunki
Press Officer CPT Frank Carrara
Editor SP5 Al Garcia
Assistant Editor SP5 Steve Haldeman



Awards

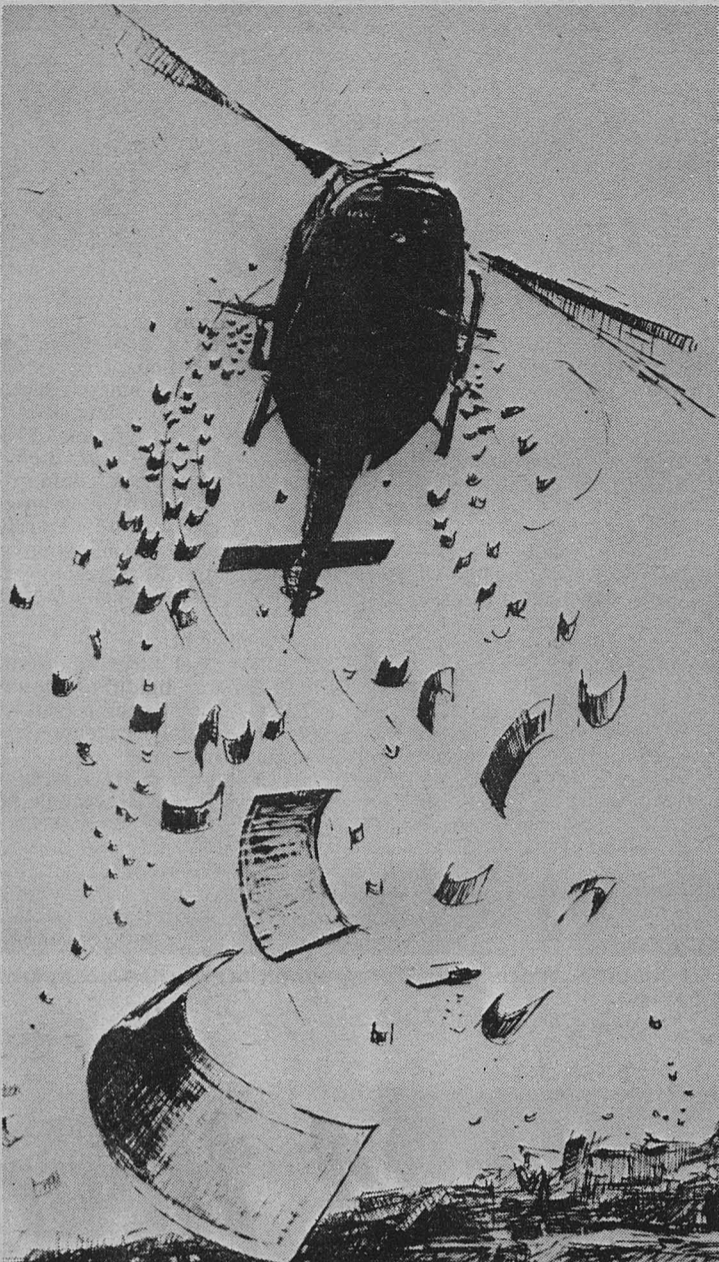


The following awards were received by Skytroopers of the 1st Air Cavalry Division:

SILVER STAR
SURBER, 1LT Clark C.
Troop D, 1st Sqdn, 9th Cav
MURPHY, 1LT Chester J.
Co B, 2nd Bn, 7th Cav
GARCIA, SGT Daniel P.
Co B, 2nd Bn, 7th Cav
MC DONALD, MAJ Edward M.
HHC, 2nd Bn, 7th Cav
HOLTZ, SGT Edward A.
Co B, 2nd Bn, 7th Cav
BENSEMA, 1LT George T.
Co D, 1st Bn, 50th Inf
CONNERS, SP4 James O.
Co C, 227th Avn Bn
DAVIS, SP4 Winston
Co A, 1st Bn, 5th Cav
DISTINGUISHED FLYING CROSS
MACKIN, WO1 Robert V.
HHC, 2nd Bde

LOPEZ, WO1 Alfred A. Jr.
Co B, 229th Avn Bn.
BLUDWORTH, 1LT Robert S.
Troop A, 1st Sqdn, 9th Cav
MORGAN, 1LT Carl R.
Co B, 229th Avn Bn.
HEWITT, WO1 John E. Jr.
HHC, 1st Bde
PITTS, CW2 Archie L.
Btry C, 2nd Bn, 20th Arty
THORTON, MAJ Glen D.
Co B, 229 Avn Bn.
KALETA, 1LT Albert F.
HHC, 229th Avn Bn.
WILLIAMS, 1LT Clinton L.
Co B, 229th Avn Bn.
JONES, WO1 Robert R.
Co B, 229th Avn Bn.
BRONZE STAR MEDAL WITH "V"
AMENT, PSG Arthur R.
Co C, 1st Bn, 7th Cav
HOOD, SGT Leonard G.
Co E, 2nd Bn, 12th Cav

KUTNYAK, SGT Kenneth A.
Co E, 2nd Bn, 12th Cav
WHEELER, PFC George E.
Co C, 1st Bn, 8th Cav
STEINWART, SGT John M.
Co C, 2nd Bn, 5th Cav
STEINWART, SGT John M.
Co C, 2nd Bn, 5th Cav
SEILNER, SGT Robert
Co C, 2nd Bn, 5th Cav
EARLEY, SGT Joseph
Co D, 1st Bn, 5th Cav
PACE, SGT James D.
Co D, 1st Bn, 5th Cav
ADAMS, SP4 Robert K.
Co A, 1st Bn, 12th Cav
BEST, 1LT, Joseph A.
Co C, 5th Bn, 7th Cav
FAUST, CPT Edmond L. III
Battery A, 1st Bn, 30th Arty
ORTIZ, SP4 Raymond L.
Co C, 5th Bn, 7th Cav



Loudspeakers blare and leaflets float to the ground as members of the division's Psy-ops teams conduct a mission during operations in the "other war."

Cav Psy-ops Program Reaps Dividends in III Corps Zone

By SP4 Richard Craig

TAY NINH — When most people think of the Vietnam conflict, they think of a shooting war, fought on battlefields with conventional weapons.

For a small group of men at Tay Ninh, it is much more than a war of steel and bullets. To the men of PSYOPS (Psychological Operations), it is a battle for the human mind. And it's a battle the 1st Cav. is becoming increasingly adept at fighting.

As a 1st Brigade message stated recently, "During the months of December and January, there were 108 Hoi Chanh (North Vietnamese or Viet Cong returnees) within the Cav's area of operations. From the standpoint of the enemy, a Hoi Chanh is a combat loss. He is both a loss to the enemy and a positive asset to the Allied cause. He may be of significant intelligence value; he may induce others to defect. He is living proof of the potency of the Allied effort and the futility of the enemy's. He will likely become a constructive citizen of the Republic of Vietnam and may serve as a Scout. In every respect he symbolizes the failure of the Communist effort."

How do we get the enemy to rally to the side of the Government of Vietnam? According to Major Richard Browning, who

runs the PSYOPS program for the 1st Brigade.

"There are two angles we generally exploit. First, we play on the enemy's dissatisfaction with his personal situation. Usually his discontent is the result of Allied military pressure. Second, we try and inform him about more attractive alternatives to fighting, particularly the Chieu Hoi Program."

Working closely with the 6th PSYOPS Battalion, Bien Hoa, the 1st Brigade team uses an Air Force C-47 fixed-wing transport when it has a general message to deliver to a large area. The aircraft is specially rigged with 1,000-watt speakers. Each week, these flights account for the dropping of over three million PSYOPS leaflets dealing with a wide-range of topics.

For special missions, each brigade is provided with one utility helicopter. Generally, whenever a battalion has a unit in contact or a special need for a mission, all it has to do is contact Brigade PSYOPS and the mission will be "laid on".

On a typical mission, Staff Sergeant Jim Dickman obtains the helicopter and notifies the brigade's Tactical Operations Center of the location and type of mission being flown. Then he selects the appropriate psychological operations tapes for broadcast.

While he is doing this, Specialist Four Robert Sanchez, mounts the powerful 1,000-watt portable speaker system on the chopper and loads the specially prepared leaflets into the bird.

SSG Dickman briefs the chopper pilot on the type and location of the day's mission.

As the helicopter flies over the Saigon River, the many trail systems used by the enemy come into view.

That is the target area, dense tropical jungle riddled with exposed trails.

The pilot flies in a giant circular pattern so the speaker system is aimed towards the ground. SSG Dickman then turns on the tape recorder and, with a hand signal, instructs SP4 Sanchez to drop the leaflets.

Between the blaring falsetto of the speakers and the tons of thousands of leaflets, the message is slammed home to the enemy.

"How many mothers must weep?"

"How many sons must be buried?"

The tape then appeals to the enemy to surrender, and explains the benefits of the Chieu Hoi Program.

After repeating the mission over several target areas near the Cambodian border, the pilot brings his ship home to Tay Ninh.

The mission described above is just one of the many facets of PSYOPS operations, however.

Often, when an enemy soldier "Chieu Hoi" after a contact with Allied forces, he is questioned by PSYOPS personnel in the hope his comrades will defect when they hear of the treatment he has received.

Since the North Vietnamese Army is usually divided into cells, it is essential to learn the names of the Hoi Chanh's partners.

One feature that is practically unique to PSYOPS is the responsibility accorded to the men of the unit.

"If I'm not here and something comes up," stated MAJ Browning, "any man in this office can make the decision in my absence. This places a lot of responsibility on my men, but they've never let me down."

Cavmen, Gunships, Jets

Kill 34 Enemy Troops

By SP4 GARY QUILLEN

TAY NINH — The helicopters circled overhead dropping flares, robbing the enemy soldiers of their concealment by darkness. Using the illumination, 1st Cav. soldiers fired on the evasive enemy.

The night had begun as a quiet one for the infantrymen from Company B, 2nd Battalion, 5th Cavalry. But soon enemy movement had filled the area.

"Elements of Company B spotted small groups of individuals moving around shortly after midnight," said First Lieutenant Joseph Jackson, battalion air operations officer. "Around three o'clock, another element from Company B spotted a company-sized enemy force."

As the Skytroopers began firing at the enemy soldiers, fire was returned from all sides. Before long, B-40 rockets and mortars were slamming into the company's position.

Immediately called to the area were gunships from Company D, 229th Assault Helicopter Battalion (AHB) and Cobras from Battery A, 2nd Battalion, 20th Artillery (ARA). The helicopters released their ordnance on the enemy emplacements, immediately followed by Air Force jets dropping bombs.

"We knew that we had run into at least an enemy company," said 1LT Jackson.

To help the embattled cav-

alrymen, two more companies were combat assaulted into the swampy area 15 miles south of Tay Ninh.

Helicopter after helicopter from Co B, 229th AHB flew into the area dropping off the cavalrymen from Company C, 2nd Bn, 5th Cav and Company A, 1st Bn, 8th Cav.

The battle raged throughout the early morning hours, finally breaking at sunrise.

Sweeping through the area, the 1st Air Cav infantrymen found 34 North Vietnamese Army soldiers lying on the battlefield.

We Made A Booboo

TAY NINH—The new battalion commander of the 2nd Battalion, 19th Artillery is Lieutenant Colonel Edward M. Knoff. The colonel's name was misspelled in the April 2 edition of the Cavalair.

Prep School Benefits Men Entering West Point

BIEN HOA — There are various ways of becoming an Army officer, but according to First Lieutenant John T. Boyt, one of the most strenuous, and at the same time rewarding routes, is through West Point by way of the Preparatory School.

Presently assistant S-2 for the 1st Air Cavalry Division's 3rd Brigade, 1LT Boyt left basic training in 1962 to attend the Prep School at Ft. Belvoir, Ga., and then went on to graduate from West Point in 1967. Designed to prepare active duty personnel for admission to the Military Academy, the school offers one year of intensive military, physical, and academic training.

"One of the best features about the school is the regimented environment in which you live," 1LT Boyt said. "By the time you finish the Prep School and go on to West Point, you are ahead of the rest of your classmates. You are adjusted to the minor details of Army life and are more aware of the regulations on personal appearance and behavior."

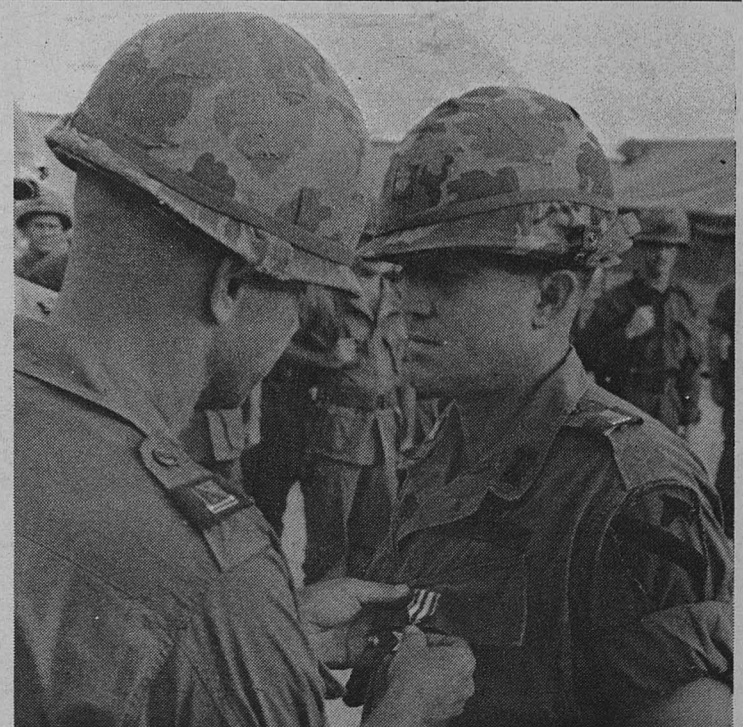
At the school, the students learn how to study and receive courses daily in math and English. The instruction ranges from a comprehensive review of high school subjects to an in-

troduction to college-level courses. When the academic day ends at 3:30, athletics occupy the rest of the day. "Our teams from the various sports competed regularly with teams from the Naval Academy and other prep schools," continued 1LT Boyt, who was co-captain of the la crosse team while at Ft. Belvoir.

Students are also given various temporary assignments such as platoon or squad leader, aimed at developing their leadership potential. Although the requirements for completing the Prep School are rigorous, the accomplishments are well worth the effort. "We began with over 250 in our class, and only 90 made it through," 1LT Boyt stated. "Of those, 63 went on to West Point."

Upon graduation from USMA, the cadet receives a Bachelor of Science degree and a commission as a second lieutenant in the U.S. Army.

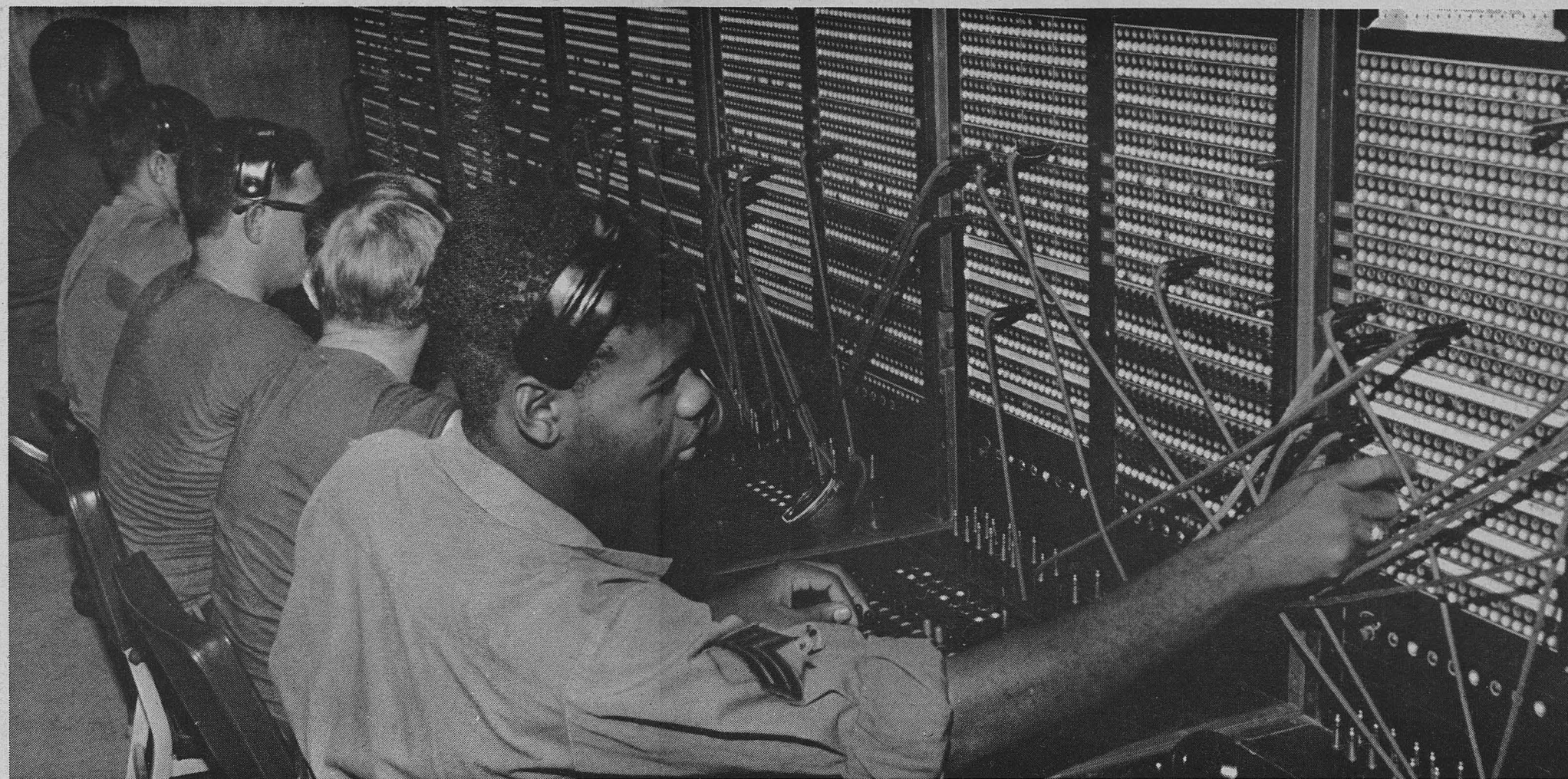
An additional duty with 1LT Boyt's assignment at the 3rd Brigade is that of interviewing personnel who are interested in attending the Prep School. "The best summary of the Prep School's advantages that I could give to them," he stressed, "is that it is a good opportunity to increase your education, to discover what West Point is all about, and to see if it is what you want. The experience is invaluable, and is a big help in any assignment you may have in the Army."



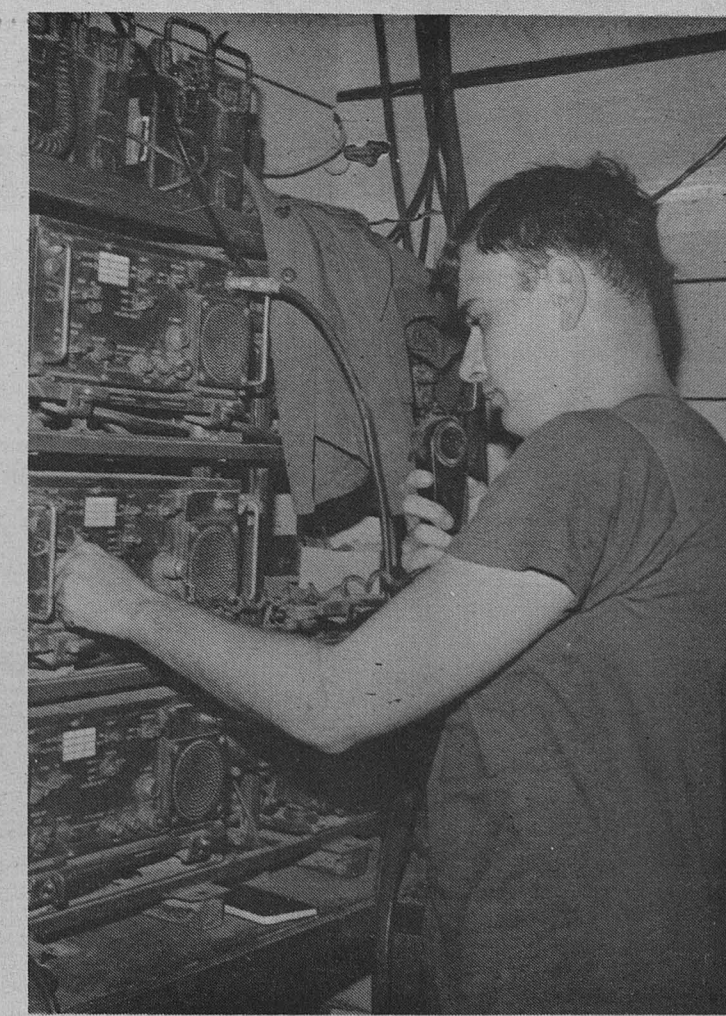
Major Bradley Johnson receives the nation's third highest valor award, the Silver Star, from Lieutenant Colonel Quay Snyder, commander of the 229th Assault Helicopter Battalion.



Switchboard operators at the Skyking switch prepare to break down their calls and resume the job of answering as 'Skyking, Sir.'



SGT Albert T. Washington (foreground), a switchboard operator with the 1st Signal Brigade, prepares to put a call through the "Phuoc Vinh" switch at Camp Gorvad.



SGT James R. Harris prepares to find out what is causing the trouble to this Skyking switch radio-telephone.

Switchboards Kept Busy 24 Hours A Day



"Working, Sir?" seems to be the order of the day as SSG Dorsey M. Byrd takes a call on the systems control switchboard at the Skyking communications operation center.

PHUOC VINH—Winding in and out, crossing each other in all different directions, the wires of a switchboard seem to form a fantastic maze.

To a skilled telephone operator, however, the intricate pattern of wires means that widely separated points on the map can communicate. Its complexity usually causes him little or no problem.

The telephone communications for Camp Gorvad are carried by two major switchboard systems. The first one, the Phuoc Vinh exchange, is a permanent part of a network covering the III Corps area. The second exchange, called Sky King, is operated for the 1st Cav by the 13th Signal Battalion.

A five-day survey was conducted on both switchboards and it was found that the Sky King exchange completed about 1,380 calls a day, whereas the Phuoc Vinh board made about 5,500 connections a day.

If there is a breakdown, the first stop is to check the switchboard to see if anything has gone wrong there. If the switchboard is working properly, then the main distribution frame is tested. If there is nothing wrong there either, chances are the trouble is along one of the telephone lines. When all else fails, a wireman is sent out to check and repair the line.

"This procedure is taken only if the call is a local one," said Specialist Four Ron Muhr, the man in charge of the Sky King switchboard's operation. "If there is a breakdown on a long distance call, and our equipment is working the way it should, we turn the call over to the Systems Control (Syscon) switchboard, which is operated by the 13th Sig Bn and used by signal personnel as an auxiliary network for the control and maintenance of regular lines. Syscon can usually handle the situation from there.

"Another factor that may affect a call going through, however, is its order of priority," added SP4 Muhr. "First of all there are routine calls which are calls made that have no extreme importance. They may be interrupted by any call with higher priority.

"Above the routine call is the immediate call, containing vital information such as immediate operational effects of tactical, safety, or rescue operations.

"Next in priority is the Blue Arrow call which is placed by a general or colonel to another general.

"Overriding the Blue Arrow call is the Flash call. Flash calls are used for alert warnings, Presidential use, and intelligence reports of an imminent enemy attack.

"The call with the highest priority is the Flash Override. It is reserved for the President, Secretary of Defense, Joint Chiefs of Staff and any commander in case of a defense emergency.

The people most vital to the operation of the telephone communications are the telephone operators. Behind the Sky King switchboard sit two operators with one on the DTOC lines. The number of operators behind the Phuoc Vinh exchange vary from five to six depending on the work load. All work a 12-hour shift.



SP4 Tony F. Mulkey waits for a call to get through during a typical work day at Camp Gorvad.

Ex-LRPs Continue as Rangers

(Continued From Page 1)

was after them. They carried the man about 200 meters and reached the river. By that time, the choppers they had called in after the contact had arrived.

Suddenly, three men jumped from a helicopter into the river. While one of the men guided the aircraft in, the other two helped put the wounded man aboard the chopper. Within minutes, the detainee was on his way to Bien Hoa for medical treatment and interrogation.

The team was then picked up by more helicopters just before the reactionary force reached them. ARA was called in on the enemy.

This incident is an example of the work of the men of Company H, Rangers, 75th Infantry (Airborne), commanded by Captain George A. Paccoroli, formerly known as Company E, 52nd Infantry Long Range Patrol (LRP). The team leader was Sergeant David B. McWilliams.

The Rangers are on call at any time. If intelligence indicates the enemy is in an area, they go check it out.

Like the big cats of the jungle, the Rangers are experts at stalking their prey. However, with the Rangers it is more like playing a game of hide and seek. The big difference is that the stakes are higher. Basically, the Rangers' job is to seek out the enemy, but not to fight him themselves. If the situation should arise, though, they are



Three Rangers from the 1st Cav leap into a muddy stream from a chopper to rescue a wounded enemy troop.



A member of Ranger Team 31, Company H (Rangers), 75th Infantry (Airborne) wades through murky jungle streams in search of Charles in III Corps.

perfectly capable of handling themselves.

Every member of a Ranger Team has volunteered for the job and has usually served with the infantry for a while.

Before actually joining the team, a prospective Ranger goes through 10 days of jungle training. During this time, he is cross-trained in the arts of map reading, communications, patrolling, tracking, firing enemy weapons, and first aid.

According to First Sergeant Jerry L. Prico of Company H, who is Airborne, Ranger, and Special Forces qualified and veteran of the Korean and Vietnam wars, the Ranger is the best soldier to be found.

He said, "These are the best troops I have ever served with. Even though they are young men, they can still be considered 'America's Finest.'"

One time, the patrol was watching for the enemy and, from nowhere, a tiger came up and started sniffing the men out. SSG Seymore said they were pretty scared because the tiger's head was bigger than their packs. When the tiger finally spotted them it became frightened and ran off.

Their report of the incident was as follows: "Probed by tiger within 10 feet of position but evaded successfully to west."

According to SSG Seymore, Team 32 had taken 4 AK-47's, one B-40, one detainee, some documents, and has had four confirmed kills in the last few weeks.

Because of its size, a Ranger team rarely engages a large enemy force, if it engages the enemy at all. However, sometimes a Ranger team unavoidably comes in contact with a force

too big for it to handle. Such was the case with Team 34, led by Staff Sergeant Douglas Windham Jr.

The Skytroopers were moving down a trail checking out an area when they heard noises on the other side of a wooded area next to them.

At the time, they had a Kit Carson Scout with them who identified voices as those of enemy soldiers.

The next morning, the cavalrymen heard what sounded like motorcycles traveling down a road. That afternoon they heard brush breaking. They crossed over a road to check it out and saw fresh bicycle and motorcycle tracks along with many footprints.

Suddenly an enemy soldier stepped out from behind some bamboo about 25 meters away.

"He must have spotted our Kit

Carson Scout and thought he was one of them, because he didn't seem alarmed until I stepped aside and he saw me," said SSG Windham. "I fired at the man and he fell. We then heard a lot of running behind the bamboo. Suddenly, the whole woods opened up.

"We engaged them with small arms and tried to establish radio contact with ARA, but were unsuccessful. We had about a company-sized force on top of us.

"A B-40 rocket then slammed into our position and I got shrapnel in my arm. We had to crawl back about 75 meters to the other side of the road under heavy machinegun fire. We still couldn't establish any radio contact.

"The enemy continued to fol-

low us and we kept firing back on them. We did kill two for certain. I then gave the word for everyone to drop all extra heavy gear.

"They kept following us and we had to keep moving back. They then fired another B-40 round, cutting down a tree.

"It was after we were driven into an open area that we finally established radio contact. The ARA came just in time. As the enemy was being driven back, we were extracted from the area."

Not everyone who desires to be a Ranger can make it. The training doesn't end after the formal instruction. The men must go out on a number of patrols. It takes a certain type of man to be a Ranger.



From a muddy river spot, a Ranger scans the terrain anxiously, waiting for the chopper that will extract his team and the detainee. Charles may get there first.



Come On Up

Getting ready to ascend into a Cav chopper is Kim Novak, who seems to be waiting for company. You aren't there yet?

From CAs to Resupply

Lightning Bug Pilots Perform Varied Missions for 1st Cav

BY SP5 STEVE HALDEMAN

PHUOC VINH—The drone of a Huey helicopter reverberates from one side of the river bank to the other and the rotor blast ripples the night-darkened water when suddenly, the late-night sky is illuminated by a second Huey.

A three million candlepower parachute flare exposes two NVA stealing across the Song Dong Nai River in a sampan. Immediately, the slow, deliberate thumping of a .50 caliber machinegun fills the air and its tracers snake out to envelope the sampan.

Another "Lightning Bug" mission has ended in success — the enemy has been stopped from infiltrating into the south across the river.

Two helicopters fly the "Lightning Bug" missions. The gunship, equipped with a .50 caliber machinegun, flies along at a low altitude. The second chopper, a flare ship, carries Naval flares in two 50-gallon drums hung from the sides of the Huey. It flies at about 3,000 feet above the ground.

The crews and ships flying these sundown to sunup flights are from Company C, 227th Aviation Battalion, 11th Aviation Group.

Although their main mission is to stop or slow down Communist infiltration across the rivers in the III Corps Tactical Zone, the "Lightning Bug" crews double as log (logistics) birds, light fire teams, and medevacs.

In the early morning hours of March 17, Warrant Officer William Tisdale and his crew were required to be both gunship and medevac while being shot at by the Reds with B-40 rockets.

"We were cranking up about 2 a.m. after refueling when we got a call from the 1st Battalion, 7th Cavalry. They had heavy contact and needed support," said Mister Tisdale.

The two ships pulled out of Bien Hoa and headed north to a knoll above the Song Dong Nai River where the 1st Bn, 7th Cav had collected to repel the unknown size enemy force. Upon arrival at the site of the contact, the "Lightning Bug" crews rendezvoused with "Blue Max," a helicopter from the 2nd Battalion, 20th Artillery (Aerial Rocket Artillery).

"All of us were orbiting about 1,500 feet and the flare ship was lighting up the area," stated Mister Tisdale, "when all of a sudden I saw this orange glow coming at us. I asked the crew what it was and they said we were being shot at with B-40 rockets."

Neither of the three helicopter

crews were able to spot from where the rockets were coming but ground unit was instructing "Blue Max" to fire to the north and west of the 40 by 60 foot knoll.

"'Blue Max' expended, leaving us as the only gunship," said Tisdale. "Our highly sensitive 50 cal wouldn't work and we only had about 450 pounds of fuel left. But, they needed help on the ground so we went down and used our M-60's."

The "Lightning Bug's" door gunners provided suppressive fire for the ground element until another "Blue Max" arrived on the scene.

A direct B-40 hit on a bunker had wounded five Skytroopers. A medevac ship was needed. Tisdale's ship fielded the request.

"We didn't know what the LZ (Landing Zone) looked like but we said we were coming in," stated Mr. Tisdale.

The bird was forced to hover over the uneven terrain on top of the knoll during the loading of the soldiers. Specialist 4 James Pernell sprayed the area with suppressive fire while SP4 Raymond Behe threw 50 cal ammo off the aircraft to reduce the

weight. The crew chief, SP5 Tom Miller aided in the loading of the medevacs while the co-pilot, WO William Hodges assisted Mr. Tisdale in maneuvering the ship.

"We were loading the first guy on the bird when a rocket hit to the left-front of the ship, about 25 yards away," said Tisdale. "A second rocket came at us when we were helping the next medevac on the ship then a third and fourth B-40 exploded below us as we put the last guy on."

The "Lightning Bug" ship flew the casualties to medical facilities and then returned once again for two more wounded Skytroopers. These were also taken to hospital facilities.

Their day was not over yet, however. When they shut down on the POL (fuel) pad they had 80 pounds (about 10 minutes) of fuel left. At 5 p.m., only an hour after the previous engagement had ended, a call from an ARVN unit in contact with an NVA battalion-plus sent the chopper crews into the night air once again. Specialist Behe fixed his .50 caliber machinegun and the flare ship was restocked with light. They were ready for more action.

Switchboard Operator's Job Demanding: 'Most People Are Patient, But Some...'

LAI KHE — As you enter the "Shelter, Electrical Equipment" that houses the 2nd Brigade's switchboard, it isn't difficult to see why the switchboard operators call the green, camper-like, metal structure the "Sardine Can."

Within the five feet by five feet container the phrase "Silver, sir," is repeated over a thousand times a day. These two words invariably preface more problems than were in Pandora's Box.

"Although there are equipment malfunctions, the biggest single problem is people,"

stated Specialist Four Douglas J. Becker, switchboard operator and member of the Blackhorse Brigade's Headquarters and Headquarters Company. "Most of them are patient, but some of them..."

"Bzzzz." One of the 42 lines in front of him registered a white flag indicating an incoming call. "Silver, sir. Yes sir. Ringing the motor pool, sir. . . . I don't know why they don't answer, sir, but I'll keep ringing them for you. Disregard? Yes sir."

"Then there are others that just don't understand the equipment or how to use it. Bzzzz."

"Silver, sir. That line is busy, sir. No sir, I don't know why the line is busy. You'll hold? Yes sir. Bzzz."

"Silver, sir. No sir, that line is busy. You can hold if you wish, sir, but I already have one call holding that line. You have a priority call, sir? I'll put you through now."

"I don't know who it is, sir, the call is coming from Skyking. Bzzzz."

"Yes sir, I know you are holding, but I have a priority call there now. No sir, I can't give you another line. There aren't any. Yes sir, I'll call you back."

"Sometimes a line goes out or something, but you still have to stay here and handle calls. You couldn't check the line if you wanted to. Bzzzz."

"Are you working, sir? Yes sir, ringing Skyking. . . . Bzzz. . . ."

"Silver sir, did you get Skyking? There is static on the line? We have been having trouble with the line, sir. No sir, I can't fix it sir. I'll try another line for you sir. Bzzzz."

"No sir, that line is still busy. Bzzz."

Stacked Deck Battalion Deals Cav Winning Hand

BY SP4 Gary Quillen

TAY NINH—"Stacking the deck" in a card game usually results in a winning hand. The same is true with the 1st Cav's "Stacked Deck" Battalion—the 229th Assault Helicopter Battalion (AHB). Due to their performance, the battalion is constantly dealing itself a winning combination.

The battalion acquired the nickname of "Stacked Deck" in August, 1964. Prior to this time, the Cavalrymen had been activated as part of the 11th Aviation Group, 11th Air Assault Division. Upon becoming the "Stacked Deck" Battalion, the 229th AHB began working with the 1st Brigade.

Deploying to Vietnam from Fort Benning, Ga., in August, 1965, the aviators confronted new problems — terrain, temperature, and a dusty environment. But before long, the men overcame these obstacles and began tactical operations.

Primarily operating with the 1st Brigade while at Ft. Benning, the battalion continued their support to the brigade when tactical operations began in Vietnam.

"We habitually support the 1st Brigade," said Lieutenant Colonel Quay C. Snyder, battalion commander. "Whereas other units give general support, we are assigned to the 11th Aviation Group and can support other brigades; but we have always stayed with the 1st Brigade."

Supporting the infantrymen, the pilots have accomplished their mission of providing tactical air movement of combat troops, supplies, and equipment in airmobile operations within a combat zone with great success.

Although their two main missions are logistical resupply and combat assaults, other missions are also conducted by the cavalrymen of the battalion. These include snatch, cordon, swooper,

flare drop, lightning bug, insertion and suppressive fire missions.

"We overlap with the other 1st Brigade aviation units on some of these missions," said LTC Snyder, "but we are working as a team and that's what really counts."

When one refers to this battalion as a "Stacked Deck", the reference is very true. In addition to Headquarters Company, the battalion consists of three lift-ship companies and an aerial weapons company.

The Hueys from Companies A, B, and C are not only used for lifting troops and supplies, but also for the other missions performed by the battalion. Company D's Cobras, with the Walt Disney-designed "Smiling Tiger" painted on the front, are primarily used as escorts on combat assaults or to prep the area with rockets before inserting troops.

With the numerous helicopters, maintenance is also a part of 229th Assault Helicopter Battalion.

"Our maintenance support comes from the 15th Transportation Corps," said LTC Snyder. "They make two types of inspections — periodical and intermediate. The intermediate inspection is performed every 25 flying hours and the periodical, every 100 flying hours. This means quite a bit of work because the Hueys in our battalion average over 4,300 flying hours per month."

Throughout its tour in South Vietnam, the battalion has established several records. Company D was the first aviation unit to be completely equipped with Cobras and Company C the only aviation company in the division to go an entire fiscal year without an accident.

Cav Skindivers Find 'Treasure'

By 1Lt William Dimascio

TAY NINH — Skytroopers dipped into the canal like South Sea divers, but pearls were not what they found. Instead, they salvaged NVA "valuables" in the form of a five-ton ammunition cache.

Men of Company D, 1st Battalion, 8th Cavalry spotted the buried munitions while patrolling the open marshes near of Cu Chi. One of the men sighted the metal canister sticking out of the mud near the bank of a small canal.

The ammunition-bearing canisters were buried in clusters in several locations. The cavalrymen found three groups.

"None of these caches were significantly large," commented 1st Lieutenant Ian Ingersoll, the battalion's intelligence officer. "But the men are still bringing in additional small caches found in the same area, and we hope it will lead to something bigger."

The haul amounted to more than 790 82mm mortar rounds, 1180 60mm mortar rounds, 900 Chicom grenades, 290 recoilless rifle rounds, 480 RPG (rocket-propelled grenades) rounds and 19,000 7.62 and 12.7 rounds.

LTC Wood Assumes Command of 2/8th

TAY NINH — As the intense heat from the sun beat down on a small, dusty landing zone approximately 14 miles from here, the men of the 2nd Battalion, 8th Cavalry stood at attention under the battalion colors.

Two men shared the spotlight in the change of command ceremony — Lieutenant Colonels Frank Henry and Richard W. Wood.

First, LTC Henry was presented the Silver Star by Major General George I. Forsythe, division commander, for an action which occurred while he was battalion commander.

After receiving the award, LTC Henry made his farewell speech to the men of the 2nd Bn, 8th Cav.

"I have been very proud and happy to be commander of this battalion. You have shown me that this is one of the better battalions in the Cav. The statistics

speak for themselves.

"While I have been commander, you have killed over a battalion of North Vietnamese Army soldiers and captured over a company of NVA and Viet Cong. You have also captured enough rice to feed two divisions for 40 days."

In his closing remarks, LTC Henry wished the soldiers the best of luck in a phrase which means a lot to the infantryman — "May all your landing zones be green."

Then the spotlight was on the now commander, LTC Wood. After having the battalion tabs placed on his epaulets by MG Forsythe and the battalion sergeant major, the former 1st Inspector General addressed the men of his battalion:

"It is a pleasure and privilege to be here and I'm very proud to assume command of such a highly praised battalion."