

Cav Beats Back Attacks on Tina



(U.S. Army Photo by SP4 Bob Borchester)

A machine gunner and his ammo bearer pour out firepower to defend Fire Support Base Tina in a mid-morning attack in which 44 NVA were killed. Company D, 2nd Battalion, 7th Cavalry fought off a pre-dawn attack then ran into more heavy contact at the treeline while on reconnaissance. For more pictures see pages 4 and 5.

By SP4 Ron Merrill

FSB TINA — Charging on line into the treeline outside Fire Support Base Tina, a company of 1st Cavalrymen killed 44 NVA and shattered an enemy company.

The counter-attack wound up a morning of alternate quiet and savage action. The day had begun before dawn with an abortive pre-dawn assault less than 12 hours before the firebase was scheduled to be closed.

FSB Tina, 17 miles north of Tay Ninh, had been established only three days earlier to provide temporary artillery support for units from the Cav's 2nd Battalion, 7th Cavalry operating in the jungles surrounding the area.

At 4:27 a.m. the stillness was shattered for the men of Delta Company who were manning defensive positions on the berm when a salvo of B-40s and 107 mm rockets crashed into the base and the surrounding clearing. With enemy small arms fire flashing from the woodland 200 meters to the south, the base's artillerymen lowered the muzzles of their 105 mm howitzers and fired directly into the trees.

Under cover of the initial barrage an estimated two enemy

platoons dashed out of their cover in the trees toward the base's single strand of concertina wire.

"Some of them made it to the wire," said PFC Steve Imboden. "But it didn't take them long to head back towards the trees."

The assault was beaten back within an hour and the dawn came quietly. The battle for Tina, however, had just begun.

At midmorning, a patrol from the recon platoon went out to sweep the south side of the firebase.

As the platoon making the patrol reached the treeline, after having found five dead NVA from the contact before dawn, the Cavalrymen were met by heavy small arms fire and grenades from the North Vietnamese concealed in the brush.

The patrol moved halfway back to the perimeter and hit the ground, then blasted the treeline with M-16s, M-60s and .50 caliber machine gun fire. From the berm behind them came supporting artillery and 90 mm recoilless rifle fire.

Blue Max Cobras and airstrikes slammed the enemy position and mortars popped steadily.

"By this time, the enemy had surrounded the firebase and the whole thing was receiving sniper fire from everywhere," said Staff Sergeant Larry Toney, the acting platoon leader for the 1st Platoon.

The rest of Delta Company moved out to reinforce the two platoons pinned down between the wire and woodland.

"When they got there, we just got on line and assaulted the treeline. The enemy fire had slackened somewhat. Twenty-five meters inside the trees, we ran into another firefight, but it didn't last long," said Sergeant Toney.

At 12:15, the enemy broke contact, leaving their dead and their equipment behind.

Fighting Savage Near Tay Ninh

2nd of 7th Hits Heavy Contacts

By PFC Charlie Pettit

PHUOC VINH — Savage fighting around FSB Tina in War Zone C, along with a series of running helicopter-to-ground battles in northern Phuoc Long Province near the Cambodian border, highlighted division activities Jan. 31 through Feb. 6.

The battle at FSB Tina Feb. 4 closed out a four-day sweep and reconnaissance operation by the 2nd Battalion, 7th Cavalry.

After having spent nine months at FSB Jamie, the battalion boarded birds Feb. 1 and combat assaulted into an area 17 miles northeast of Tay Ninh City. When they reached their destination, the air was still filled with the dust raised by intensive Air Force bombing.

While Company D and the Recon Platoon built and maintained security around the new firebase, Companies A, B, and C patrolled to the northwest in search of an NVA/VC element indicated by intelligence to be in the area.

The battalion killed a total of 72 members of the NVA forces, including 44 killed in an assault against the base on its last day of existence.

For the first two days of the operation, only light and sporadic contact was made by the Cav troopers. On the third day, Feb. 3, Companies A and C made the first heavy contacts with the enemy.

An Alpha Company ambush position and listening post were brought under sudden pre-dawn attack as AK-firing NVA

mounted a probe against the position shortly after midnight. One NVA was killed as the ene-

my was brought under heavy fire by the Cavalrymen.

The men of Alpha Company

Thieu Visits . . .



(U.S. Army Photo by SP4 Greg Cormany)

Vietnam President Nguyen Van Thieu shakes hands with 1st Cav 1st Brigade commander Colonel Joseph E. Collins during a visit to FSB Vicki. The president spent an hour and a half Feb. 3 at the ARVN firebase north of Tay Ninh which is supported by the Cav.

soon had supporting artillery slamming the enemy location. Blue Max ARA Cobras, Nighthawk, and flare ships arrived overhead. With ARA brought nearly to the friendly perimeter, the enemy force was driven off.

Two hours later, some of the (Continued on Page 8)

Series of Firefights Blasts Enemy Force

By PFC Charlie Pettit

FSB TINA — In less than 25 minutes, a company of 1st Air Cavalrymen, coordinating their mission with rocket-firing Cobra helicopters and division artillery, killed 19 NVA as they swept through jungle terrain long occupied by elements of an NVA regiment in central War Zone C.

The Cavalrymen, of Charlie Company, 2nd Battalion, 7th Cavalry, and crews of Blue Max ARA Cobras from Battery A, 2nd Battalion, 29th Artillery, suffered no casualties in the fast-moving series of firefights and ambushes.

Action began just before 12:30 p.m. when the men of Charlie Company lunged to the ground as small arms fire lashed out at them from North Vietnamese soldiers crouching in the heavy bamboo to the front of the patrol.

The call went out to bring up

the company's M-60s and the heavy volume of fire from the Skytroopers forced the enemy to fall back almost immediately.

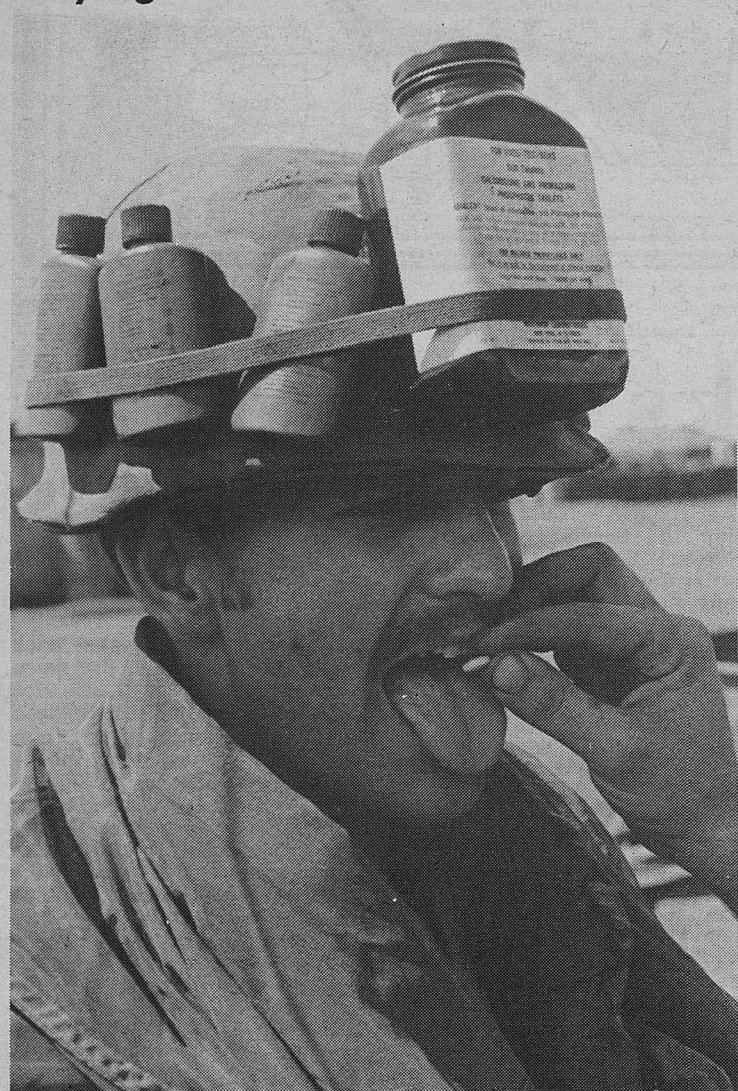
Contact wasn't lost for long. While the tense and wary Cavalrymen shoved through the brush after the enemy, Blue Max Cobras arrived overhead, their 17-pound rockets at the ready.

A dozen enemy infantrymen, their attention on the Cav patrol, dashed into the open and were blasted by "Max." Rockets streaked toward the surprised Communists, killing five and destroying three AK-47s.

On the ground, the Skytroopers moved through heavy bamboo and around small clearings to suddenly find themselves in an area loaded with trails and small groups of well-armed NVA soldiers.

It appeared that the enemy had decided to move out before (Continued on Page 8)

Playing It Safe . . .



(U.S. Army Photo by SGT Dennis Harding)
 Leaving nothing to chance, SP4 Sonny Larrimore, wearing a flak jacket and wrapped in mosquito netting, takes his malaria pill. Bottles of insect repellent and a year's supply of malaria pills are attached to the 1st Air Cavalryman's steel helmet.

Pot, Drug Amnesty Begins

Drug and marijuana users will have a chance to get help in breaking their habits without fear of disciplinary action under a new amnesty program offered by the 1st Cavalry Division.

Professional and personalized help will be made available to help drug users with their problems including counseling from the Division Surgeon and his staff.

The program will protect a previous drug user from all disciplinary action, both judicial and non-judicial, providing three conditions are met by the applicant.

A soldier entering the program cannot have drugs or marijuana in his possession, cannot be under investigation for drug or marijuana use and cannot be under charges for drug or marijuana use or possession.

Anyone who wants to join the program can see either his commanding officer or a Chaplain, Surgeon, Psychiatrist, the Provost Marshal or the Inspector General.

The only record made of participation in the drug program will be a confidential entry in the individual's medical record to be used only as an aid for treatment by qualified medical personnel.

If a participant in the program subsequently commits a drug or marijuana offense, the medical officer supervising therapeutic care will determine if the participant should receive further therapy or if he is simply hiding under the protection of this program in order to continue his use of drugs or marijuana. If the man is hiding from the law, he will be suspended

from the program and subjected to disciplinary action.

An amnesty program coordinator will be appointed for each company-sized unit to serve as local counselor for the

participants. Representatives of the Division Marijuana and Drug Suppression Council will brief commanders and program coordinators further on the program.

... For God And Country

EDITOR'S NOTE: Over four years ago, the 1st Air Cavalry Division engaged in its first combat action since arriving in Vietnam. Operation Shiny Bayonet sent three battalions into a VC infested valley east of the division's new base at An Khe. Writing a column for the Cavalair at that time was Chaplain (Major) Edwin R. Andrews. A powerful writer, Chaplain Andrews always told his story for "God and Country" in a unique manner, as this column so eloquently testifies. We are reprinting his story:

"Lord, help me."

The voice, shrill with pain and panic, broke the peaceful silence of the moonlit midnight. Chaplain Weldon Wright, the 1st Airborne Brigade's staff chaplain, hurried to the door of the medical clearing station tent as the litter was carried in.

"Help me, help me, God."

The desperate cry came from lips bright with blood from the gaping wound of throat and chin; the moving redness glittered under the surgical light as doctors and medics clustered around to staunch the flow. And again the plea went up for a higher power than they.

"When are you going to help me, Lord?"

Chaplain Wright, waiting in the background while the doctor worked, was almost unheard as he asked the medic: "What is the man's religious faith?"

"None," answered the medic.

Unable to believe his ears, the chaplain turned to the register where the soldier had been logged into the clearing station, and there read opposite his name—"Unit: 1st Bn, 12th Cavalry; Reason for admission: GSW, face and throat; Religious faith: no preference." The chaplain shrugged; when a man gets in trouble, he may have no religious preference—but he still calls for help.

A space opened in the wall of bodies around the table and Chaplain Wright stepped into it. His right hand was stained red as he slipped it gently under the trooper's head. Before he spoke the chaplain turned the soldier's dogtag to the light and read again, "Religion—No Pref." And again the hysterical call went up.

"When are you coming, Lord?"

The chaplain spoke, calmly and firmly, as he assisted medical personnel to tie off the bandages.

"The Lord is here," he said. The soldier's eyes, shiny and bulging with fear in a face now covered with running sweat sought the chaplain's face and steadied there; his struggle gradually ceased.

"I want you to trust in Him, believe in Him," Chaplain Wright's challenge pierced the veil of terror. He asked, "Can you believe that?"

"Yes, yes, I know that . . . I believe it." The response came eagerly, almost breathlessly.

There was time for only a few more words. The now-quiet soldier was moved on the litter to a waiting helicopter; it lifted off in the early morning darkness toward more extensive medical attention.

As they raced through the lovely night sky toward the dawn the young soldier died.

Stayed Close in Lines

School Buddies Still Together

By PFC Robert Hackney
 FSB JAMIE — It's a long way from Ord, Nebraska, population 3,000, to the jungles of Vietnam but two 1st Air Cavalry infantrymen are still together several months and 10,000 miles later.

Best friends since their grade school days, Sergeant Bill Petska and Specialist Four Ron Marshall volunteered for the draft together, but expected that the Army would send them on separate ways. Not so.

"We just stayed close together in the lines since we started our Army processing at Fort Lewis, Washington, and I guess we

were just lucky. We were assigned to the same companies in Basic Training and Advanced Individual Training (AIT)," Sergeant Petska said.

After Basic and AIT, the two went back home on leave then traveled to Oakland Overseas Replacement Center together. When they arrived in Vietnam, they found they had both been assigned to Bravo Company, 2nd Battalion, 7th Cavalry.

"I had hoped we might stick together all the way," said Specialist Marshall, "but I really had my doubts. I guess we were just lucky that we stood behind each other in all those lines."

"We've both grown up a great deal since we've been over here

and we're even better friends than before," said Sergeant Petska. "The experience of being in Vietnam makes you realize the importance of things like having a truly close friend."

Of the original group of 200 recruits which started their Basic Training unit, the two Skytroopers were the only ones who made it to the 2nd of the 7th.

Putting On the Dog . . .



(U.S. Army Photo by SP4 Dennis Harding)
 Touring USO shows entertain more than just the troops. Bowser seems more than pleased to share the view from a sandbag bunker at FSB Buttons during a recent show.



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Firepower Is Just a Breath Away



(U.S. Army Photo by SP4 Bob Borchester)

Maintaining the vital link between units in a firefight and often even calling in artillery, Cobras and Medevacs besides regular squad and platoon calls is the awesome job of the RTO. This radio telephone operator maintained his cool while under fire at LZ Tina during the recent attack there.

No Spurs Allowed

Snoopy Rules Strict

By SP 4 David Roberts

QUAN LOI—The daredevil aviator pushes up his goggles, removes his helmet and strides across the dirt runway. Through for the day, he unwraps his long scarf from his neck as his spurs click against the wooden floor of his barracks.

Direct descendants from death-defying World War I flying aces who challenged the Red Baron of Germany and the wing-walking barnstormers from the post-war experimental aviation period, 1st Air Cavalry helicopter pilots have much of the old daredevil spirit, plus some of the individuality and color of old.

The pilots of the "Snoopy" 11th Aviation Group platoon who man Huey helicopters for the Third Brigade at Quan Loi have tried to live up to the exploits of their namesake.

"Snoopy," of course, is the fearless beagle of the Peanuts comic strip who won fame as the "World War I Flying Ace" in his dogfights with the Red Baron which raged across the comic pages of thousands of newspapers then stopped off after a hard day's flying to have a root beer with Bill Mauldin.

An anonymous person tongue-in-cheekedly decided to crack down on the Snoopy pilots' antics by posting aviation regulations—originally written in 1920.

Some of the rules, such as "Never get out of the machine with the motor running until the pilot relieving you can reach the engine controls," hardly apply to the pilots flying the highly sophisticated helicopters of today.

But the ancient regulations constantly remind the pilots to be aware of safety, making its point through humor.

The list of regulations on the Snoopy bulletin board includes:

1. Don't take the machine into the air unless you're satisfied it will fly.
2. Never leave the ground with the motor leaking.
3. Don't turn sharply when taxiing. Instead of turning short, have someone lift the tail around.
4. When taking off, look at the ground and the air.
5. Never get out of the machine with the motor running until the pilot relieving you can reach the engine controls.
6. Pilots should carry hankies at the ready position to wipe off goggles.
7. Riding on the steps, wings, or tail of a machine is prohibited.
8. In case of engine failure on take-off, land straight ahead regardless of obstacles.
9. No machine must taxi faster than a man can walk.
10. Do not trust altitude instruments.
11. Learn to gauge altitude, especially on landing.
12. If you see another machine in your path, get out of its way.
13. No two cadets should ever ride in same machine.
14. Before you begin a landing make sure no machines are under you.
15. Hedge-hopping will not be tolerated.
16. No spins on back or tail slides will be indulged in as they unnecessarily strain the machine.
17. Aviators will not wear spurs.
18. Never take a machine into the air until you are familiar with its controls.

By SP4 William Block

TAY NINH — The "horn" is mightier than the sword, especially in the hands of an experienced radio telephone operator (RTO) who can use it to call in more firepower in a matter of minutes than an enemy regiment could muster in a week.

The RTO carries a powerful, 25-pound weapon, a rapid-fire communicator which can spell

success or failure of any mission. He is the voice and ears of an officer or NCO in the field, and can make that leader's job easy or hard.

"You're afraid to talk at first," recalled Sergeant Bob Smith of Company A, 2nd Battalion, 5th Cavalry.

"The horn scares you," he said. "It requires a whole new language — callsigns, different

names for people, terrain features, equipment and activities. You have to learn it all and use it, because you don't want to be the cause of a security leak that might get some of your men hurt."

"You have to be very observant," added Specialist Four Andy Beard. "If you come across a bunker, for example, you have to note its size, any overhead cover, how recently it was used, any trails near it and everything found in it.

"And if the platoon leader is hit, you may have to take over, to coordinate the unit's reactions until the platoon sergeant can reach your location," said Specialist Beard.

RTOs must develop an overall view of the unit's operations and then translate that view into clear, complete and concise communications. Nevertheless, despite, or often because of, the high degree of responsibility, they generally enjoy the job.

"I just like being informed, knowing where it's happening and when," observed Specialist Four Louis Brundage.

A key decision by any officer in the field is who to choose for his RTO. "For my RTO," offered Second Lieutenant Harvey L. Hopkins, "I always want a reliable informer who understands our operations, can react quickly in contact and can represent well both myself and my platoon."

No Loss of Love By NVA Troops

By SP4 Robert Hackney

FSB JAMIE — Some people are known by the friends they keep. One 1st Air Cavalryman is becoming known by the enemy he attracts.

The attention has not been a lasting one, however, as Specialist Four Joe Calhoun, a machinegunner from Company C, 2nd Battalion, 7th Cavalry, singlehandedly killed eight NVA in a series of four consecutive contacts.

"After a few contacts you get the feeling that they're going to be coming right at you. You're continually conscious of the fact that you have to stay alert; any sound that you hear or anything that you sense is different you have to alert on it and check it out," he said.

Like most soldiers who hump the M-60, Specialist Calhoun is an advocate of maximum firepower.

"You know that when you're firing the NVA are going to get down or run away because you're putting so much out. My favorite is the 550-round burst. That way you make sure you get no return fire," the Skytrooper said.

The machinegunner is also very particular about the care of his weapon.

"You have to check when you're walking through bamboo to see if little chunks break off and get in the gun. It simply has to be clean, so you know it will fire, because it's not just your weapon; it's protection for your whole platoon," he said.

Although the "60" is his baby, Specialist Calhoun also used the

Widows Get Tet Presents

FSB LEE — They weren't dressed as Santa, but the gifts they handed out were welcomed by the villagers.

Lieutenant Colonel Roderic Ordway, commanding officer of 1st Battalion, 12th Cavalry, together with Major Phuong, district chief, presented the Duc Phong war widows with gifts for Tet.

At a ceremony in the village, the widows were called forward individually and given the gifts representing a token of appreciation and sympathy. The gifts consisted of sandbags containing sewing kits, candy foodstuffs and other items.

"It was a combined effort," said 1st Lieutenant James Nix, S-5 officer for 1st of the 12th. "We worked together with the ARVNS. I think that's the most important aspect of the project."

M-16 and claymore mines on the enemy during the recent contacts. So rapidly did he work the M-16 that many of his buddies thought he was firing the M-60.

And while he is getting used to seeing the enemy, Specialist Calhoun admits that it is a mild shock each time.

"First you look at them and you can't believe that they're there. And in that brief instance of eye-to-eye contact, you can sense that they feel the same way. You just have to fire first," he said.

And so although he may be known by the enemy he attracts, Specialist Four is also known by the friends he and his "60" keep — alive.

Inspects Cache . . .



(U.S. Army Photo by SP4 James McCabe)

A 1st ARVN Airborne Division soldier takes a close look at an SKS rifle found in a cache by ARVN soldiers recently near FSB Buttons. Included in the cache were AKs, flamethrowers, a .51 caliber machinegun, several mortar rounds, small arms rounds and several land mines.

2nd of 7th Cavalrymen Repel Attacks at FSB Tina

(U.S. Army Photos by SP4 Bob Borchester and SP4 Greg Cormany)



Machinegunners from Delta and Echo Companies of 2nd Battalion, 7th Cavalry, immediately began raking the treeline when they were fired on while on reconnaissance just outside Fire Support Base Tina. An ammo bearer braved a hail of AK fire (above) to dash toward an M-60 machinegunner while others covered him. A .50 caliber machinegunner (below) soon opened up from the berm, while his ammobearer fed hundreds of rounds through the gun as an M-60 joined the firefight a few feet behind him.



Gunsmoke covers the battlefield outside FSB Tina (below) as M-60 and .50 caliber machineguns open up from the berm to cover the members of D and E Companies as they head for cover. The patrol had been fired on from the treeline as they were checking the results of a 4:30 a.m. ground probe at the firebase.



Led by an M-60 machinegunner (left), an element of Delta Company, 2nd of the 7th Cav advances on line toward the treeline rimming Fire Support Base Tina. Intensive machinegun fire, combined with support from Blue Max ARA and direct fire artillery, had been effective and enemy fire had diminished.



Two of Tina's defenders (above) begin the check for results of the firefight outside the base while a machinegunner unleashes another burst of M-60 fire (below), helped by his ammo man who unspools hundreds of rounds from his shoulders. Cavalrymen killed 44 NVA soldiers in a pre-dawn and another mid-morning attack at the temporary firebase which was closed as scheduled only hours later.



Babe in the Woods . . .



Curvaceous Christine Child (alliteration intended) of Woodford, Essex, says she's no "babe in the woods," but wouldn't it be nice to find her strolling along an NVA trail some sunny afternoon. Sadly, however, she chooses to spend her time sunning in Nassau, where the complications of combat do not interfere with her program.

Troop Keeps Cool But Loses Cover

By SGT Dennis Harding

FSB BUTTONS — In a tense situation some people tend to lose their heads. Specialist Four Michael Dow lost his pants.

"Our company had moved to an open area where we were planning to be extracted," said the Company A, 2nd Battalion, 12th Cavalry Skytrooper. "There was a river flowing near our position, and we decided to bathe and wash our clothes.

"Not realizing the swiftness of the river, one of the men lost his footing and was being swept away by the current. As I tried to help him, the surging water belted my pants and was pulling me down; I had to take them off or be towed under."

Both men made it safely to

shore, but Dow was missing pants and boots.

"Everyone in the platoon chipped in and tried to dress me the best way they could," laughed Specialist Dow.

He acquired three pairs of socks which he wore to cushion his feet and an extra shirt that he tied around his waist.

"One of the men's air mattress had a hole in it, so he made a pair of Ho Chi Minh sandals for me," he said.

Later in the day the company air assaulted into another area.

"The pilots looked at the way I was dressed and just shook their heads," recalled Specialist Dow. The following day the company was resupplied and he received a new pair of boots and pants.

Chaplain Serves Men

TAY NINH—After spending 34 months in Germany as an infantry officer, a young man decided to go to seminary school and become an Army chaplain "to serve the critical needs of man."

That junior officer is now a major serving as the 1st Air Cavalry's 1st Brigade Chaplain, Chaplain Charles H. Hosutt III.

Chaplain Hosutt spent the first half of his tour in Vietnam as chaplain for the Division Artillery. After making several trips out to the field around Phuoc Vinh on log days he requested to become a Brigade Chaplain "in order to serve the men out in the field."

One difference that Chaplain Hosutt noted between the men in the field and soldiers in other situations is "These guys care for each other. The brotherhood of the field is naturally created out of the environment and this is much stronger than an artificially created brotherhood."

Another conclusion of Chaplain Hosutt, who looks more like a middle linebacker for the Minnesota Vikings than a chaplain, is that the men out in the field, "are stripped of the possibility of being phony because the material things that foster this are nonexistent. The only thing the men have is themselves."

After completing his active service Chaplain Hosutt gained a Regular Army commission. Graduating from Garrett Theological Seminary in Evanston, Ill., he was ordained by the United Church of Christ and then returned to active duty in the Army in the Chaplains' Corps.

Money Raised for Biafrans

By SP4 David Roberts

QUAN LOI—For most GIs in Vietnam, one war is enough to think about. Specialist Four Francis Cabral is raising money for victims of another war—the impoverished Biafrans.

"During wartime we tend to become too concerned with our surroundings and don't fully realize the plight of others," said the Specialist. "Two million Biafrans have already died and perhaps another million more face starvation."

Soldiers from both the 1st Air Cavalry and the 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment have joined Specialist Cabral in his efforts at the Quan Loi basecamp.

"We have seen pictures of the starving people, many of them children," said one Skytrooper. "We wanted to help as much as we could."

Although not a Red Cross project, Alex Kostiuik, Red Cross field director at Quan Loi, is helping by insuring that the funds collected are sent to relief agencies in Biafra.

"He's making a great humanitarian effort in aiding these victims of war," Kostiuik said of Specialist Cabral. "We are more than happy to see that the funds get to the intended destination."

'Do You See Me?'

Chief Warrant Officer Three Richard A. Kundert of Monroe, Wisconsin, recently received this poem from his daughter, Kathy, aged 14. He is a food service supervisor for 1st Cav DIVARTY.

I sit beside you as you squat in muddy foxholes.
Do you see me?
Do you hear me above the ceaseless monsoon's song?
I walk behind you as you trudge from camp to camp.
Do you see me?
Do you hear me above the monotonous stamp of your boots?
I lean with you against the battered wall of your hootch.
Do you see me?
Do you hear me above the laughter of your companions?
I run with you to the safety of a sandbag shelter.
Do you see me?
Do you hear me above the crashing throb of your blood?
I kneel beside your cot, watching as you toss in the anxious night.

Do you see me?
Do you hear me above your desperate dream of home?
Your Loving Daughter,
Kathy

Cav's Goal: First in Fire Safety



By SP4 Barry Bjornson
PHUOC VINH — First Team,
First in Fire Safety.

That's the goal of the division-wide Fire Safety Week Feb. 22 through 28. Highlighted by a demonstration of fire-fighting techniques, the week will be one of instruction, demonstration and inspection.

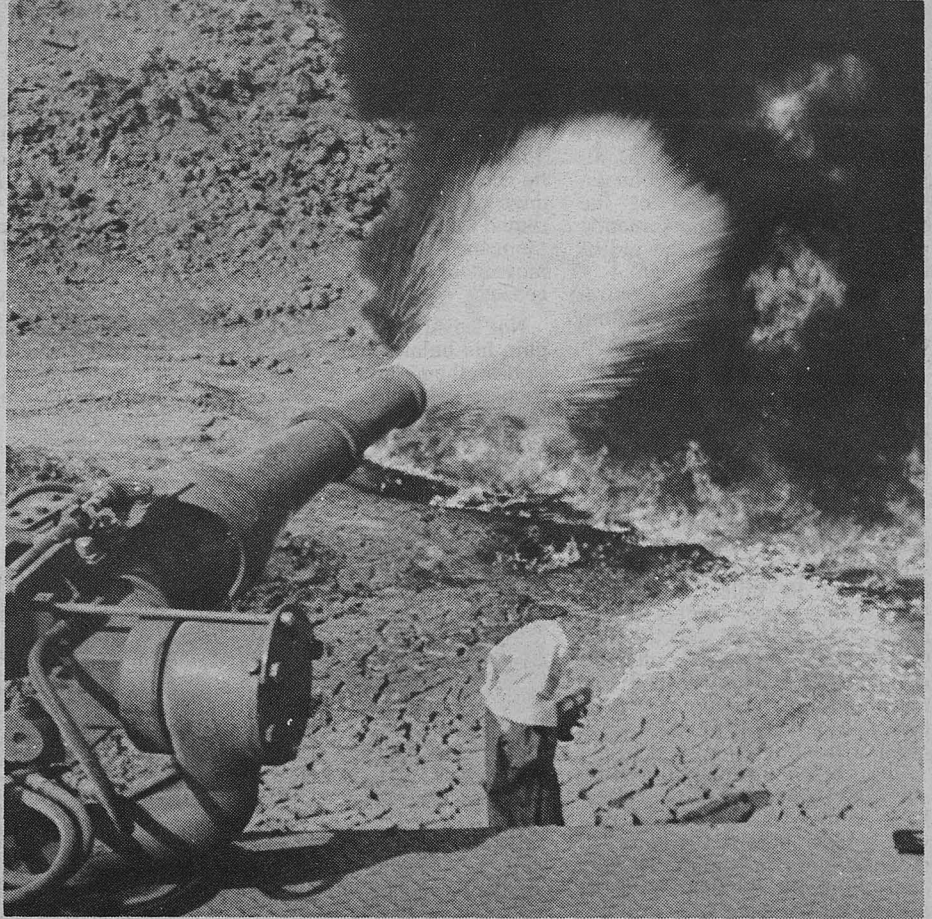
The Division Fire Marshal, Lieutenant Colonel Scott B. Smith, has planned extensive instruction periods for elements of the division, which will cover such subjects as aviation re-fueling techniques and the refilling of fire extinguishers.

On Feb. 24, a firefighting demonstration and a staged rescue of a downed aircraft will take place at the division's Phuoc Vinh basecamp airstrip. Firefighters equipped with the latest in protective suits, will demon-

strate their proficiency in putting out fires.

During the course of the week each company-sized unit within the division will be inspected for fire hazards. The company and the firebase with the least fire hazards will receive a plaque from Major General E.B. Roberts, division commanding general. Besides being a method of determining the fire-preventative conditions of each company, the competition will reward those units enforcing efficient safety procedures.

The program is designed to increase the fire safety of the division, and with the help of all personnel of the 1st Air Cavalry, there is no reason why the division can't add "First in Fire Safety" to the long list of firsts that are a part of the division's history, Colonel Smith said.

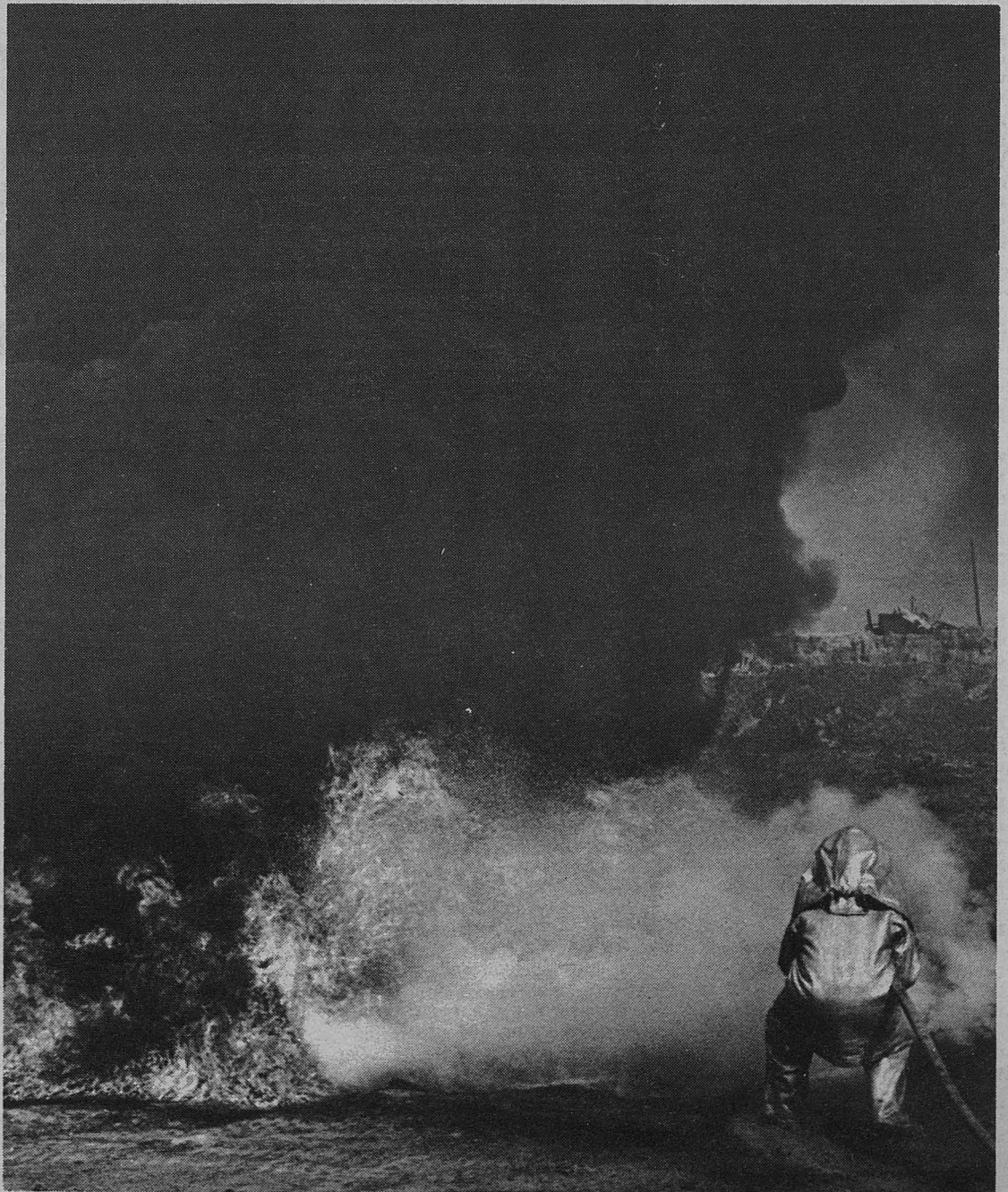


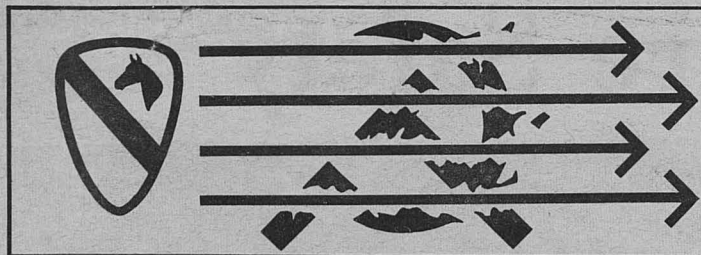
Although the 1st Air Cavalry Division has some of the most modern and efficient fire-fighting equipment, the Division Fire Marshal, Lieutenant Colonel Scott B. Smith, warns that the best means of fighting fires is good fire prevention. Cavalrymen dressed in heat-resistant suits battled a simulated aircraft fire while a fire truck pumped gallons of foam on the hot blaze during a demonstration at Phuoc Vinh recently. Feb. 22 through 28 is the Cav's Fire Prevention Week.

(U.S. Army Photos by SP4 Dean Sharp and SP4 Len Fallscheer)



The job of fire-fighting is a dangerous proposition. Part of that danger is the threat of smoke inhalation by the firemen. That problem has been alleviated, however, with the use of modern protective suits, designed to protect the fire-fighter.





ACTION OF THE WEEK

Pilots Fired At 25 Straight Days

TAY NINH — Although a Nighthawk helicopter is normally employed in flying reconnaissance and interdiction of the enemy's nighttime movements, one recently came to the aid of Cavalrymen on the ground.

Resourcefulness and teamwork is the name of the game and that combination sent one of the modified Hueys, accompanied by a Cobra gunship, from the 299th Assault Helicopter Battalion to break the back of an NVA probe against a 1st Cav NDP in War Zone C the night of Jan. 24.

Late that night, Charlie Company, 2nd Battalion, 7th Cavalry, in its position northeast of FSB Ike, 18 miles from Tay Ninh City, began receiving incoming rocket and mortar fire from an enemy element shrouded by darkness. The different platoons began reporting heavy movement to the south along a treeline.

The call went out for some sort of helicopter support. At FSB Jamie, where the situation was being monitored, it was decided to divert a Nighthawk mission to provide the instantaneous response so vital to a working airmobile division. Nighthawk arrived on station and brought the situation under control until Blue Max ARA Cobras could scramble from Tay Ninh.

The minigun and spotlight equipped Nighthawk Huey, under the experienced hands of Warrant Officer One Ronald L. Vanlandingham followed closely by a Cobra commanded by Warrant Officer One John L. Marshall, raced at full power to arrive at the ground unit's location within minutes of the summons.

"Roger that . . . we see the strobe light and understand that the bad guys are concentrated 75 to 100 meters to your south," replied the Nighthawk commander to the ground unit, which was by this time receiving Chicom grenades.

In the unaccustomed role of

support aircraft, WO Vanlandingham's bird responded as he shoved on the cyclic stick and dove for the jungle, minigun aimed into the treeline. Two thousand rounds later, enemy movement and grenade tosses ceased.

Not wishing the enemy to regain his balance, WO Marshall's Cobra then dove in, 17-pound rockets ready to go. No return fire met the first run as two rockets, several bursts of minigun fire and a blast of 40 mm grenades from the 'chunker'

slammed into the ground.

"I was circling above the Cobra on his second pass and redirected him a little. Just as he was in the middle of his gun run, he started receiving super-heavy AK and .51 caliber fire," said WO Vanlandingham.

WO Marshall, the Cobra commander, bore in on the big gun while his pilot, Warrant Officer Joe Adams, called off the altitude from the front seat and sent a steady stream of minigun fire into the angry muzzle flashes in the jungle below.

By SP4 Ron Merrill
TAY NINH — After five months of flying Huey lift missions, Warrant Officer Michael Reardon didn't know how well off he was.

But he soon found out after switching to piloting "scout" LOHs for Troop A, 1st Squadron, 9th Cavalry.

Every day for his first 25 days in the LOH cockpit, the pilot was fired on. On the 25th day, his bird was hit 17 times.

Cobra pilot Captain Steve Justus watched his Pink Team partner, WO Reardon, as his tiny LOH skimmed the tree tops

northeast of Tay Ninh City. Suddenly the LOH pilot peeked down at a battalion-sized enemy command post.

The Pink Team lost no time in engaging the location.

"The first time we expended our ammo, we evidently didn't get right on target. After we got back with more fuel and armament, we enlarged our target area," said WO Reardon.

"All of a sudden, on our third pass, there they were, standing in groups of eight to ten, looking up at me like I wasn't going to shoot them," he said.

Captain Justus, who was promoted to Captain three hours after the contact, rolled in hot. "One of my rockets hit right in the middle of one of the groups," he said.

"After I got hit by a sudden blast of AK fire, my ship began shaking like hell," said WO Reardon, who was circling the site, "but, then, so did I."

The LOH pilot headed for a nearby firebase. "When I was coming in to Vicky, I was later told, pieces were flying off the chopper and smoke was streaming behind it. There's one thing about Alpha Troop — you'll never find a surplus LOH."

An assessment of the damage done by the Pink Team revealed 11 NVA killed and WO Reardon escaped from his LOH without a scratch.

Later on that night, Captain Justus reflected, "When I go across this green line at Tay Ninh, there is no way that I'm going to win this war by myself, so I just put all I have into protecting that low bird."

Quick Check-up . . .



A Vietnamese refugee isn't quite sure what it's all about but he seems impressed with the concern of Specialist Six George T. Jenkins, chief medic with the 2nd Battalion, 8th Cavalry. As a part of the Cav's continuing expansion of its pacification program, medical aid to Vietnamese is made available to as great an extent as possible.

(U.S. Army Photo by SP4 Robert Conway)

Cav Saves NVA From Comrades

By SP4 Jay Grossman

FSB BUTTONS — It is somewhat unusual for 1st Air Cavalrymen to save an NVA non-commissioned officer from his own comrades. Yet that is just what an element of A Company, 2nd Battalion, 12th Cavalry may have done.

The second platoon was on patrol six miles from FSB Buttons when they spotted four enemy soldiers near a trail. One appeared to be wounded in the leg.

"We later found out that he had been hit by ARA," said Staff Sergeant Raymond Reynolds, the platoon sergeant. "The others had been carrying him for a few days, but had no supplies to take care of him. They were by a hole and it looked to me like they were going to bury him in it."

The Skytroopers interrupted the NVA with a hail of small arms fire, killing one; two others escaped, dragging off the body. The wounded soldier was left behind.

"He was yelling for his buddies to come back, but they wouldn't," said Sergeant Reynolds. "We called to him to surrender but all he said was 'No chieu hoi.'"

Intent on taking the enemy soldier alive, eight Skytroopers approached him cautiously. "We

could see that his AK, canteens and magazines had bullet holes in them, but it didn't seem like he'd been hit by our fire," said Specialist Four Randy Le Blanc. "Still, we were worried he would use his Chicoms." But when he found himself surrounded by

eight M-16 muzzles he had a change of heart.

While awaiting the arrival of the Medevac helicopter the platoon's Kit Carson scout interrogated the prisoner. He said he was a noncommissioned officer with an NVA heavy weapons

platoon, and gave directions to a small bunker complex.

The next day Alpha Company swept the enemy area and found a supply of B-40 rockets, .51 caliber and AK-47 rounds.

Quite a cache, considering it included a man's life.

2nd of 7th Hits Heavy Contacts

(Continued From Page 1)
Cavalrymen spotted several enemy soldiers moving across a clearing. A sudden burst of fire from the Skytroopers position cut down seven.

After an hour of relative quiet, an estimated enemy platoon attempted to approach the Alpha Company position, but a circling Blue Max Cobra from Battery A, 2nd Battalion, 20th Artillery didn't give them a chance to get close.

The bird's rocket pods spouted fire as a salvo of 17-pound rockets flashed into the enemy platoon, killing five and scattering the rest.

On the afternoon of the same day, several kilometers to the north, the men of Charlie Company made a rapid sweep through a stretch of thick bamboo and scattered clearings. The company hit band after band of

enemy soldiers and coordinated artillery and Blue Max with their own fires in a swift, 25-minute series of firefights. Nineteen enemy soldiers were killed.

The following day, an estimated company lost 44 men in a futile attack against FSB Tina. After warding off one pre-dawn attack, the men of Delta Company mounted a counter-assault at mid-day when the enemy renewed the attack and cleared the area of the enemy. They then slung out the artillery and closed down the base on schedule.

In Phuoc Long Province on Feb. 1 and again on Feb. 3, Bravo Troop, 1st Squadron, 9th Cavalry helicopters met heavy ground-to-air fire.

Eight .51 caliber machineguns opened up simultaneously Feb. 1 on one of the troop's LOHs as it reconned near the Cambodian

border west of Bu Dop, but the pilot took evasive action and managed to avoid being hit.

Action raged in the area throughout the day, with six more ground-to-air firings occurring. The Bravo Troop gunships doing battle with the NVA gunners were bolstered by Blue Max from Battery C, 2nd Battalion, 20th Artillery and Air Force jets to kill a total of 30 NVA. One truck, approximately ¾ ton, was spotted and destroyed with an Air Force bomb.

Thirty-three more NVA were killed well to the east of that location when the troop's helicopters teamed with an Air Force OV-10 (forward air controller) 12 miles north of Phuoc Binh and five miles from the Cambodian border Feb. 3. The birds braved several ground-to-air firings in making gun run after gun run.

Firefight Hit Enemy Hard

(Continued From Page 1)
the U.S. advance, but not all of them made it. The Cav company commander set out ambushes while calling in artillery in one direction and responding to enemy small arms in another.

The pointman observed six enemy in a treeline across a brightly-sun-lit clearing. The NVA got off one fast burst of AK-47 fire, but only one managed to escape the aim of the Cavalrymen. The patrol soon swept into the shadows and found five dead soldiers, their AKs dropped to the ground next to them.

Five more were observed to the northeast. Artillery fire directed in by the Skytroopers killed them all, and the patrol turned its attention through the shadows of a tangled bamboo thicket to the east where lay three to four NVA, their assault rifles barking angrily at the grunts from Charlie Company.

Crouching and diving behind cover, the Cav troopers aimed through sweat-stung eyes and gunned down two of the Communists. Two more AK-47s were added to the load being humped by the weary GIs.

An ambush set up on a small trail terminated the day's fighting as two NVA were caught in the lethal blast of a machinegun. One AK tumbled to the ground with two enemy soldiers.

As the jungle finally fell quiet, the Cavalrymen began to breathe a little easier. They had killed nine enemy soldiers and had called in ARA and tube artillery to kill ten more.