

Cav Smashes Cambodian Sanctuaries

History was in the making May 1 when combined U.S. and ARVN forces moved across the Cambodian border in Operation Toan Thong 43, an effort to wipe out Communist sanctuaries in the neutral country of Cambodia.

The massive operation, under the command of Maj. Gen. E.B. Roberts, commanding general of

the 1st Air Cavalry Division, and spearheaded by Task Force Shoemaker, is expected to last six to eight weeks. The task force is named for Brig. Gen. Robert M. Shoemaker, assistant commander of the Air Cav.

Air Force bombers and Army artillery softened up the area of initial insertion and ground troops and mechanized infantry

poured across the border at 7:30 a.m. on D-Day.

The crossing point was in the area known as the Fish Hook, the snakey thin outgrowth of Cambodia which protrudes into Vietnam between Katum and Quan Loi.

Pushing north at the bottom of the hook were the 1st, 2nd and 3rd Sqdns of the 11th

Armored Cavalry Regiment. The regiment utilizes Sheridan and Patton tanks as well as armored personnel carriers.

Flanking the 11th ACR on the left were elements of the 2nd Bn, 7th Cav, the first committed ground troops in Cambodia. The 7th Cav Skytroopers advanced across the border and established Fire Support Base X-Ray six kilometers into Cambodia, northeast of Katum.

Flanking the ACR's right side was the 1st ARVN armored Cav. The unit was emplaced as a blocking force.

The 3rd, 5th and 9th ARVN Airborne Battalions were combat assaulted into Cambodia some six miles to the east of FSB X-Ray.

Pushing north into Cambodia above Katum were the 2nd Bn, 34th Armor and 2nd Bn, 47th Infantry (Mechanized), both under the operational control of the Air Cav.

The main objectives of the big effort were twofold: First, to wipe out NVA rest and resupply areas in addition to cutting supply routes. Second, to find and destroy the Communist headquarters from which the Vietnam War was manipulated. This headquarters is believed to be in the Fish Hook area.

Opening day found air power playing the dominant role in the search as Alpha and Bravo Troops of the Air Cav's 1st Sqdn, 9th Cav, and batteries of the 2nd Bn, 20th Artillery

(ARA), also a Cav unit, probed deep into Cambodia to kill the enemy. Killer Cobras and their sidekicks, the LOH's, accounted for over half of the enemy kills registered in the first two days of the operation.

Enemy kills for the first two days were 562. Ten crew-served weapons were destroyed as were 129 individual weapons.

The most significant ground action of the first two days came on May 1 at 3 p.m., when G and H Troops of the 11th ACR made contact with an unknown-size enemy force nine miles northeast of Katum in Cambodia. The enemy opened up with small arms fire and B-40 rockets. Using its organic tank fire plus artillery, ARA and air strikes, the armored force killed 50 NVA. Two U.S. troops were killed.

Air power dominated May 2 action also. Sixty-six of the NVA fell to helicopters and air strikes, but the pilots had it easy.

"We had so much air power up there that they were waiting turns to shoot at enemy positions," said WO1 Larry Grover a Cobra pilot with Bravo Troop, 1st Sqdn, 9th Cav. "We received lots of small arms fire but no large caliber weapons."

WO1 William Beatty a Cobra pilot with the 2nd Bn, 20th Arty (ARA), noticed enemy activity all day long. "The enemy seems to be everywhere, but we aren't getting much ground to air fire. He's too busy running."

243 NVA Left Dead Prior Toan Thong 43

By PFC Terry Turner

Operation Toan Thong 43 completely dominated the last week of April, but Skytroopers of the Air Cav managed 272 enemy kills before attention was turned to Cambodia. The kill total amounts to 131 more than that of the previous week.

For the month of April, excluding the Cambodian effort,

Skytroopers killed 958 enemy, destroyed 43 crew-served weapons, captured 165 individual weapons, 475,975 rounds of small arms ammunition and 15.5 tons of rice.

In action in the AO during the week, it took Alpha Company, 2nd Bn, 12th Cav, two days to pin the enemy down, but a 50-minute battle on Apr. 28 cost the NVA 24 killed.

Alpha Company ran into an unknown size enemy force at 5:25 p.m. on the 27th, 12 miles northeast of Song Be. The sporadic contact eventually produced an enemy force of company proportions which killed one Skytrooper and wounded another. The contact resumed the following day at 7:55 a.m. This time Alpha Company took its toll. The enemy opened up from the west and southwest with small arms fire and B-40 rockets. The Skytroopers countered with their organic weapons and called in artillery, ARA and air strikes. The troopers captured three AK-47's and three B-40 rounds. Five Americans were wounded.

Air power of Alpha Troop, 1st Sqdn, 9th Cav, spent the entire day of Apr. 27 searching for and destroying the enemy. The effort paid off as 43 NVA died in 13 separate contacts. The biggest battle came northeast of FSB Flasher at 6:05 p.m. Hunter-killer teams spotted a small living complex of bunkers and hootches showing recent use. While reconning the area Alpha birds spotted 18 NVA soldiers in green uniforms, helmets and web gear. Their rocket and machinegun fire killed 11.

Continued to page 8



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May 20, 1970

Giant Military Complex

Skytroops Take 'The City'

By SPC Dave Charlton

FSB TERRY LYNN - Charley Company, 1st Bn, 5th Cav of the 1st Air Cav Div, has moved into a gigantic NVA military complex—apparently a supply depot—concealed under heavy jungle cover four kilometers south of here in Cambodia.

The complex, approximately three kilometers long and one and a half wide, totals more than 300 wooden buildings, complete with all weather bamboo walkways, according to Lt. Col James Anderson, Battalion Commander.

Initial investigation of the cache, first spotted by helicopter pink teams from Bravo Troop, 1st Sqdn, 9th Cav, has turned up 200,000 rounds of AK-47 ammo, 2,000 rounds of .57mm recoilless rifle ammo, 1,000 pounds of explosives, seven 122mm mortar rounds, two cases of Chicom grenades, 20 shovels, 96 batteries, and 200 ruck sacks.

"This is apparently just a beginning of what must be an extremely large supply cache," explained Lt. Col. Anderson.

According to WO James Cyrus, a LOH pilot with Bravo Troop, 1st Sqdn, 9th Cav, the area was discovered during a routine scouting mission.

"We found the building complex almost by accident, 12 kilometers west and 25 north of the Cambodian border. We were looking for something in the area, but didn't see anything at first.

"Then I spotted one hootch well camouflaged. Unless you were at treetop level, it would be almost invisible.

"I just followed the bamboo walks from hootch to hootch, finding street signs, bridges with walk ropes, what looked like a motor pool and a lumber yard," he added.

The 1st Bn of the 5th Cav was inserted the following afternoon to an area four kilometers north of the complex. Charley Company deployed and

commenced its sweep toward the huge military installation.

Refugees moving along Highway 7 near the FSB, here in an attempt to escape the North Vietnamese forces, confirmed the location of the installation and further described it as a supply depot.

By late afternoon the company halted less than a kilometer from the installations perimeter. The following afternoon the troops of Charlie Company, approached the bunkers on the edge of the gigantic base, receiving light AK-47 fire from two of the bunkers. Grenade hurling Skytroopers quickly silenced the enemy, killing four NVA while suffering no casualties.

A check of the first few buildings inside the perimeter turned up the large cache.

Bravo Company from the 1st Bn has been inserted near the complex and moved to join Charlie Company for a combined search of the installation.



BOUND FOR CAMBODIA - Crews of lift birds stand by at Quan Loi airstrip, waiting for their cargo of men from the 3rd ARVN Airborne Brigade and Skytroopers from the 1st Air Cav Div. Moments later the ARVN and Cav Troopers were dropped into Cambodia in an operation designed to smash former enemy sanctuaries. (USA Photo By Sgt Dean Sharpe)

Communism: Free World Challenge

"A specter is haunting Europe - the specter of communism."

These are the opening words of the "Communist Manifesto," a short pamphlet written by Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels in 1848. Very few people paid heed to this initial doctrine of the communist ideology; but today Communism is a major force in the world. It is important that all Americans understand the ideology of Communism and are familiar with the threat it holds for the American way of life.

The "Communist Manifesto" was a brief work, but contained nearly all the main principles of Communism. Later in life Marx was to write about his ideas in much more depth. After Marx died another man, Vladimir I. Lenin, added several important ideas to the Communist

doctrine.

Communist Doctrine

The main points of the Communist doctrine may be summarized as follows:

The course of history is determined by economic forces. In his economic interpretation of history, Marx asserted that economic factors are the decisive ones in human thought and action. He neglected, however, other factors such as religious movements, scientific discoveries, artistic creativity or the impact of great-leaders.

History is a record of class warfare. Marx said that all history is the record of conflict among social classes. Such conflict will end, he argued, only when all private productive property is transferred to public ownership and management.

Government serves as the tool

for the oppression of one class by another. Marx viewed government as a tool of the wealthy for oppressing the poor. Such oppression, he said, will end when the dictatorship of the working class (or "proletariat") over the property owning class is established.

Violence and force are the only means of achieving basic social changes.

These were the basic beliefs of Marx. Later Lenin added a principle which said that the top planners and executors of both Communist revolution at home and Communist conquest abroad must be carefully trained, full-time, professional revolutionists. Lenin felt that the workers lacked the ability to think for themselves and that they should follow the leadership of a small, elite group - the Communist Party.

It is easily seen then, that the Communist doctrine has flaws within itself. On one hand, Marx says that there must be no ruling class, but a government of the workers. In contrast, Lenin says the people are unable to govern themselves, so a small elite group is chosen to govern.

Communism in China

China, long a nation of underdevelopment and lacking a central government, was especially ripe, in 1945, for a Communist revolution. The years of Japanese occupation and fighting left the people defeated, in mind as well as body. The military weakness and economic collapse of the Nationalist government made it easy for Mao Tse-tung to rally his supporters and launch an offensive for control of the country. By 1949 Mao was master of the mainland.

Communism Today

Soviet Communism in the last ten years has mellowed somewhat as its leaders have tried to push for an era of

respectability in the post-Stalin Russia. The Soviets tend to shy away from face-to-face confrontations that serve to heat up the cold war.

Has Communism succeeded in Russia? Yes and no. Politically, yes. Economically, not yet. The Soviets are currently enjoying their best years of agricultural productivity and industrial growth. But this productivity and growth have been long in coming and are still not adequate enough.

A trend toward Western marketing and commercialism is obvious today in some of the larger cities in the country.

Since their takeover in 1949 the Chinese Communist have increased in their militancy. This has led to bad relations with the Western world, and the overly-publicized Sino-Soviet split. China has developed a restless urge to spread

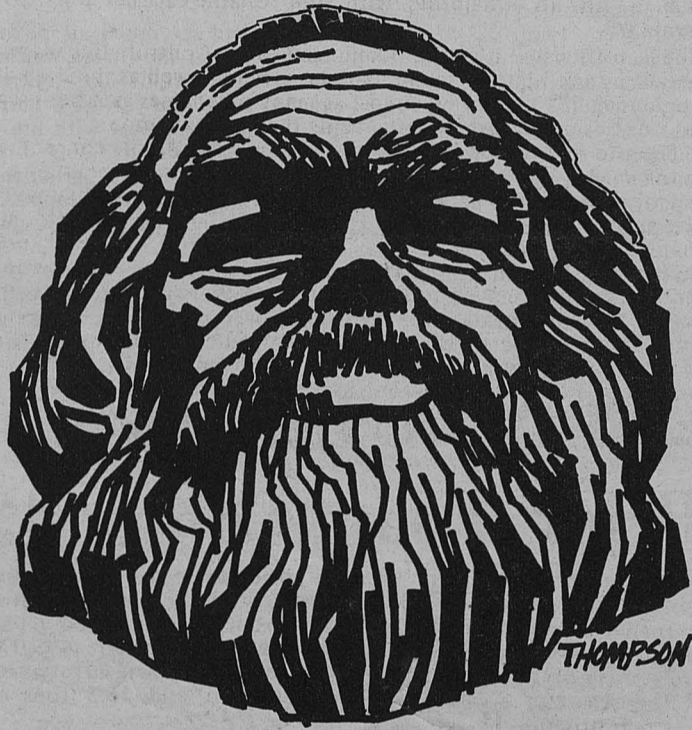
Communism throughout the world, using any means available.

The Chinese influence of Communism is best seen in Southeast Asia, where they have rendered aid to the North Vietnamese and Viet Cong forces now trying to overthrow the South Vietnamese government.

Currently the theory behind the Communist movement in Asia is that through interminable guerrilla war, a weaker force can wear out and finally overcome a stronger one.

Summary

Our way of life, characterized by the competitive spirit, is vastly different from the "all for the state" concept of Communism. We find that way of life objectionable; but we find it more objectionable that the Communists attempt to force their way of life on others.



Sightseeing Bonanza

Bangkok A Top R&R Site

PHUOC VINH - Bangkok, capital city of Thailand, is a tourist's paradise - for sightseeing, shopping and entertainment, there's no place quite like it.

At the R&R Center you will exchange your greenbacks for Thai money, with the rate of exchange being 20 Baht to one American dollar.

Some of the most modern and beautiful hotels in all of Asia may be found in Bangkok. Rates are very reasonable, with a single room costing from \$6 to \$16. You may stay anywhere you choose, but the R&R Center

must be notified where you will be.

After those long months in the field and eating C-rations, the restaurants of Bangkok will be a blessing. They offer some of the best food in the world, and the prices are relatively cheap. At the more expensive restaurants entertainment will be provided, such as classical Thai dancers or bands.

You will be expected to haggle over prices when shopping. Even if the item has a price, start low and meet the salesman about half-way. Silk, teakwood carvings, bronzeware,

ivory and jewelry are all top bargains in this shoppers paradise.

Bangkok and the area surrounding the city offers terrific sightseeing opportunities. You will want to make special note to visit the floating market, the grand palace (where Anna taught the children of the King of Siam), the Temple of the Emerald Buddha and the bridge over the River Kwai. If you're a camera buff, remember to take plenty of film.

After a long day of shopping or figuring f-stops, you'll want to relax - and Bangkok's the place for relaxing. There are clubs and bars galore, with bands playing everything from jazz to hard rock. A few notes of advice: The food in Thai nightclubs is notoriously poor, so eat at a restaurant first. Also, the pretty young thing you're dancing with is going to cost you anywhere from \$2 to \$4 an hour. Club hostesses will sit with you for the cost of their drinks.

You may also call home from Bangkok. Your best bet is to use the soundproof booths at the Thai General Post Office. Charges are \$12 for the first three minutes and \$4 for each additional minute.

... For God And Country

Chaplain (CPT) Dale E. Messersmith

God is my Pointman
Him I will follow
God protects me
When in contact

He provides for me
Food and water
He leads me
To a bathing stream

God directs my path
On the correct azimuth
God shows the way
To PZ and LZ

He protects and shields
Out of His love

He provides and gives
Out of His love

When I hear mortars, rockets,
I will not fear
For God is in this place
God will comfort

God, You are in the AO
The enemy is here too
God, You give us food
Hot chow is coming too

God, You are my Pointman
Lead on!
I follow!



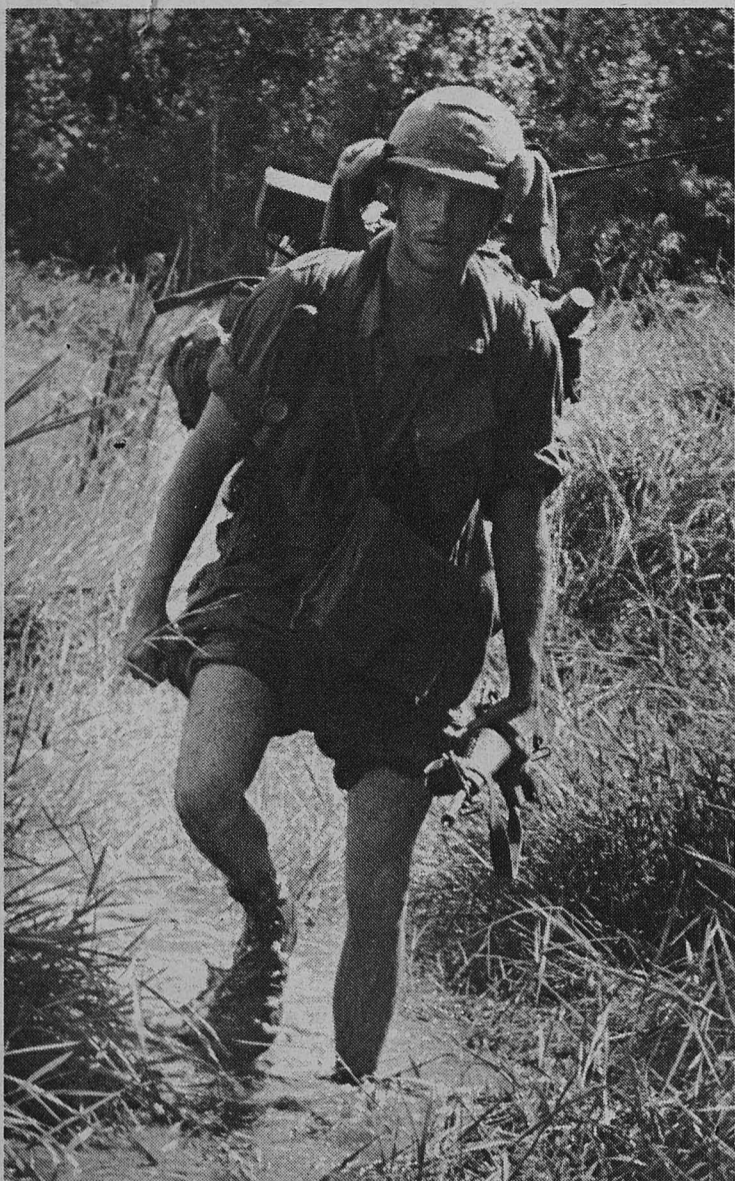
COOL REFRESHER - The water pump at the 1st Air Cav's FSB Ft. Granite has seen years of fighting but apparently suffered little war damage. Built by the French, these 1st Air Cavalrymen attest to the fact that it's in fine working condition. FSB Granite located east of Quan Loi near the Song Be River is built on the site of an old French fort. (USA Photo by SP4 Jerry Rose)



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WADIN' IN THE WATER -- Realizing it's a lost cause trying to keep his feet dry, PFC Tom Langtry, RTO with Bravo Company, 2nd Bn, 5th Cav, at least manages to keep his pants out of the muddy water. The Bronx, New York, Cavalryman was on patrol northeast of Tay Ninh.

(USA Photo by SP5 Bob Borchester)

Quan Loi Station

POL Offers Service With a Smile

PFC David Charlton

QUAN LOI -- Like thousands of gasoline stations back in the world the Quan Loi station has "service with a smile" as its promise "happy motoring" as its aim and 24 hour service.

But that's where the similarity ends. The attendants won't rush out to check the oil and battery and water and wash the windshield. Flat tires are not very much of a worry. Don't ask for green stamps or even a road map.

This is the refueling point for Hueys, LOHs, Cobras, Chinooks and Sky Cranes.

According to Spec. 4 Angelo Imparato member of the 15th SS Bn, the gas comes up from Long Binh by tank trucks in a daily convoy. When the convoys are interrupted or they have a

"down day", it's flown up in C-130 "blivet birds."

"We have four 21,130 gallon tanks and four 10,000 gallon blivet bags," he explained. "We reorder every day, but daily consumption almost never comes near that."

"Also as equipment we have three 350 gallon-per-minute pumps. One is used to 'defuel' trucks which don't have their own pumps. The other two are used in the pumphouse to distribute the fuel to the 12 fuel stations."

Sgt. Larry Lloyd the POL NCOIC, explained that "there are 10 regular pumps for the Cobras, LOHs and Hueys, two for the Chinooks and Sky Cranes."

"Each of the helicopters must get clearance from the Quan Loi tower before he can land.

Almost always one of the crew fills the tanks, except when it's a one man operation, like a LOH, then we give him a hand."

Develop Your Own Photos

TAY NINH -- A picture is worth 1,000 words.

Taking pictures of life in Vietnam is a favorite pastime of many 1st Air Cavalrymen. With the assistance of Special Services, photo labs are springing up throughout Vietnam, and Cav Country is no exception.

The Tay Ninh Photo Lab is used by 900 to 1,500 Skytroopers monthly. Not only does the lab facility enable the soldier to save money by doing his developing himself, but it teaches the individual about photography, a most rewarding hobby.

"Most of the people who come here have no knowledge of photography at first," said Spec. 4 Charles Marcel, the lab instructor, "but within an hour and one-half they are usually able to develop their film and make enlargements from negatives."

The facilities are open for the use of everyone. If you make one trip there and discover the ease of the work, you may find yourself developing a hobby as well as film.

Nixon Speaks to America On The Cambodian Crisis

On the night of April 30 President Nixon spoke to the American people and outlined a combined U.S. - ARVN thrust into Communist sanctuaries in Cambodia. Here are the highlights of that speech.

President Nixon stated that recent enemy activity had placed the American soldier serving in Vietnam in a dangerous position. The NVA has taken much land in Laos and Cambodia, expanding the Vietnam Conflict into the Indo-China Conflict.

"To protect our men who are in Vietnam," he said, "and to guarantee the continued success of our withdrawal and Vietnamization programs, I have concluded the time has come for action."

The President offered three possible solutions for the problem.

"First, we can do nothing. The ultimate result of that course of action is clear....

"Our second option is to provide massive military assistance to Cambodia," continued the President, emphasizing that the Cambodian military would not be able to effectively use the massive aid the U.S. could provide.

"Our third choice is to go to the heart of the trouble. That means cleaning out major North Vietnamese and Viet Cong occupied sanctuaries which serve as bases for attacks on both Cambodia and American and South Vietnamese forces in South Vietnam....

"This is my decision:

"In cooperation with the armed forces of South Vietnam,

attacks are being launched this week to clean out major enemy sanctuaries on the Cambodian-Vietnam border."

The President made it clear that the major role in the Cambodian assaults would be played by the ARVN. However, "Tonight, American and South Vietnamese units will attack the headquarters for the entire Communist military operation in South Vietnam."

Continuing, Mr. Nixon said that the Communists have time and again failed to recognize American attempts to end the war. He warned the Communists, "But if the enemy response to our most conciliatory offers for peaceful negotiations continues to be to increase its attacks and humiliate and defeat us, we shall act accordingly," and thereby left open a variety of possible "next steps" against Hanoi.

3rd Brigade's 'Snoopy' Resembles Flying TOC

QUAN LOI, -- "Snoopy Operations? This is Sgt. Jones. Could I catch a lift to Compton with the Charlie-Charlie tomorrow morning?"

While officially it's the Command and Control Helicopter, supplied by the platoon to the battalions here as well as the Brigade Commander, it's known by almost as many nicknames as it has uses, Chuck-Chuck and Charlie-Charlie being the most common.

"The Old Man's Ship." Under the 1st Cav's Air Mobile concept, is a vital element in assisting a battalion commander in maintaining on the spot coordination between the various units under his command.

Primarily, the Command and Control Helicopter permits the commander to perform visual recon missions of the areas surrounding his unit's elements, maintain close coordination between the various elements in his battalion and to check on possible areas of operation for the future.

When one of his units make contact with an enemy force, the bird also serves as a flying Tactical Operations Center (TOC), giving the commander instant information that he needs to make on the spot tactical decision effecting the outcome of the engagement.

He has the further advantage of being in a position which gives him a complete "Bird's Eye View" from his aircraft, rather than limiting him to one restricted area of operation. The Command and Control bird has often been used by commanders in adjusting artillery strikes in support of his Skytroopers on the ground.

In emergency situations, the Chuck-Chuck ships have been used to fulfill urgent requests for resupply. While each battalion has its own logistics bird supplied by division aviation, a heavy firefight could, and often does, seriously deplete a small unit's ammo supply. Waiting for the log bird could endanger the lives of the men of the unit involved. In such cases the Charlie-Charlie is called upon to serve as a resupply ship.



DIRECTING AIR TRAFFIC -- Guiding an extraction helicopter to a freshly cut landing zone, this 1st Air Cavalryman from Bravo Company 2nd Bn, 12th Cav keeps his rifle at the ready. The unit was operating 100 miles north of Saigon near Song Be.

(USA Photo by SP4 Jim McCabe)

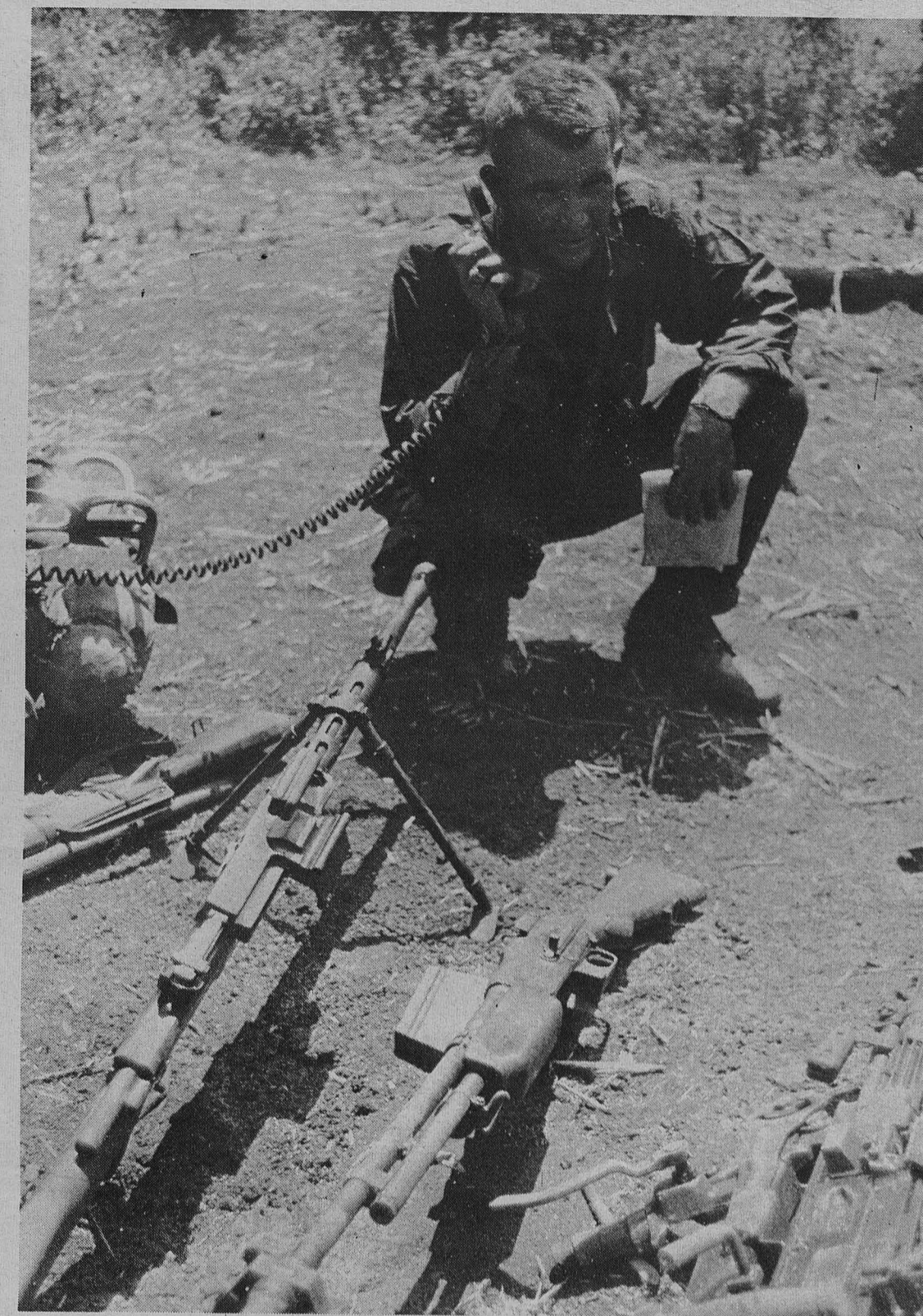
TV Cameramen Needed

Experienced personnel with educational or professional background in Motion Picture photography are needed to fill key staff vacancies in the Division Information Office. Applicants must have training or experience with 16mm Cameras, and preferably background in shooting news, editing, writing and news feature production. Interested personnel please contact the Division Information Office by telephone (Phuoc Vinh 5423 or Skyking 186), or contact Division Information Office by mailing a brief resume to Information Office, 1st Air Cav Div, Incountry, APO SF 96490.

Enemy Cache Found: Captured In Cambodia



Part of one of the many caches discovered during the opening days of Operation Toan Thong 43 by Task Force Shoemaker, this one contained everything from rice and chain saws to typewriters. (Below) Members of the 2nd Bn, 7th Cav, Charlie Company and 2nd Bn, 47 Infantry (Mechanized), load captured medical supplies, chain saws and typewriters onto a truck for transportation to a back-haul site.



USA Photos by SP4 Jim McCabe

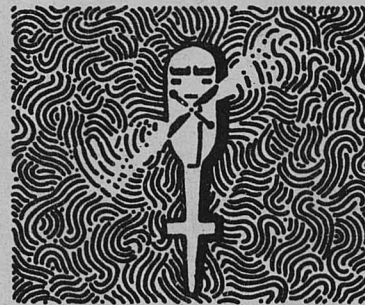
Checking over French medicine used by the NVA are Sgt. Thomas Reiley, Sgt. Lyman Dunnick and PFC Bob Teschkar, all members of the 1st Air Cav's Charlie Company, 2nd Bn, 7th Cavalry. Below, Vietnamese Tiger Scouts examine a North Vietnamese .30 caliber anti-aircraft machinegun captured by the 2nd Bn, 47th Infantry (Mechanized), under the operational control of the 1st Air Cav.

Above, Spec. 4 John Pontius, a member of Charlie Company, 2nd Bn, 7th Cav, surrounded by captured weapons found while on operation during Operation Toan Thong 43, keeps a close ear to the horn. Below, Skytroopers from Charlie Company, pour gasoline supplied by the NVA over the rice and bicycles to be destroyed. The 1st Air Cavalrymen were unable to back-haul much of the captured equipment.





We'd like to introduce Gean Gallagher, a dancer at the Stardust Hotel in Las Vegas. A geology nut, Jean likes to spend her spare time exploring the desert and mountains surrounding the gambling capitol of Nevada. We have to admit, the odds are definitely in her favor.



ROTOR WASH

Hurst Auto Club Opens

Does your mind wander back to the days in the world when you cruised around town in your Mustang or Camaro? Are you an automotive performance nut?

If cars are your bag, why not join the Hurst Armed Forces Club? This organization is open to all members of the Armed Forces on active duty. It costs you nothing, and you receive a monthly newsletter on the latest in racing result and new automotive innovations.

The idea of George Hurst, the man who started the craze in floor-mounted transmission linkages for performance automobiles, the club is presently sponsoring a touring show of several drag racing-equipped Mustangs. This team of high performance cars will soon be appearing in Tan Son Nhut and Da Nang, all at Hurst's expense.

If this club interests you, send your name and address to: Hurst Armed Forces Club 50 West Street Club Warminster, Penn. 18974

National Baby Week Celebrated

TAY NINH -- National Baby Week was Apr. 25 through May 2, and scores of 1st Air Cavalrymen entered their sons and daughters in the Proud Papa Photo Contest at the Tay Ninh Free World Service Club.

The big night was Apr. 27, and the proud fathers returned for the judging.

"The men were really excited," recalled Sara McKay, the contest coordinator. "They kept pacing the floor and asking us when we were going to finish. I could tell that some of them were nervous."

Then came the big moment. "May I have your attention, please?" asked one of the judges. The fathers held their breath while the judges read the names of the winners, each hoping that their son or daughter had won the heart of the judges.

The winners were: Most innocence, Spec. 4 Andrew Nelley; Most Comical, Spec. 4 Gregory Kervin; Most Original, Spec. 4 J.P. Steus; Most Perplexed, Spec. 4 Anthony Wilson; Political Possibilities, PFC Dan Lault; and Sgt Tyrone Beck was the lucky father in the Miscellaneous category.

ARVN OJT in Tay Ninh

TAY NINH -- Members of the 5th ARVN Division are taking on-the-job-training with units of the 1st Air Cavalry.

The men, six officers and 12 NCO's, were briefed in Tay Ninh for two days on such subjects as organization of the brigade, artillery support, methods of fighting in bunker complexes and combat assaults. Then they went to the field.

"The individuals are places with a counterparts in a company from either the 2nd or 5th Bn, 7th Cav. We split them up among several companies to allow more individual attention and lessen any problems in the companies' operations. They learn through observation and participation. The program gives incentive to the ARVN to upgrade their own operations and training," said 1st Lt. Richard Bauer, liaison officer with the 5th Bn, 7th Cav.

Salesmen Selling Cav Items

Your FIRST TEAM SCHOLARSHIPS salesman may pay you a visit during the next week. What has he got to offer?

These salesmen, most of them former infantrymen, are selling souvenirs of the 1st Air Cav. Lighters, watches and key chains are just a few of the many items that are available.

Beside offering a souvenir and often-helpful tool, these men from "trinket control" are doing a service to the 1st Cavalry Division Association's Scholarship Fund.

All the profits from these souvenirs goes to providing educational assistance for the children of Skytroopers killed in action.

Song Be Airstrip Revamped

FSB BUTTONS -- Soon to be completed at Song Be is a new aluminum airstrip. The old petiprime runway is being replaced as it has become unsatisfactory due to the coming of the monsoon season.

This project is being completed by the men of Company D of the 31st Engineer Detachment of the 1st Cavalry Division with headquarters at Phuoc Vinh.

1st Lt. Patrick Cashman officer of on site operations, stated, "this project is expected to take nine days to complete with acceptable weather conditions."

The runway is being built one end at a time so that partial air traffic can be maintained. C-123's and smaller aircraft are able to use half of the runway while the other half is under construction.

Huge NVA Supply Center Located



Two 1st Air Cavalrymen from Charlie Company, 1st Bn, 5th Cav, sort through boxes of enemy supplies uncovered in the huge enemy supply depot inside the Cambodia Border. The enemy cache site has been nicknamed "The City", and is located in the Fishhook region of Cambodia.

Skytroopers of the 1st Air Cavalry Division have uncovered a huge enemy supply depot in the Fishhook region of Cambodia. The complex, nicknamed "The City", has disclosed hundreds of enemy weapons and supplies. First Air Cavalrymen went into the Fishhook region of Cambodia in attempt to uncover enemy sanctuaries and supplies.

USA Photos by SP5 Dean Sharp



Above, Skytroopers from Charlie Company, 1st Bn, 5th Cav sort through a case of new SKS rifles, discovered in a huge enemy supply depot in Cambodia. Sitting amid an array of enemy weapons (right), Capt. Kevin Corceran, company commander, discusses the enemy find on a field radio.



Refugees Being Relocated From Cambodia to RVN

By PFC Dave Charlton

AN LOC - The 1st Air Cavalry is fighting a second war in Cambodia, a war against human suffering. Their primary weapons in this struggle are Chinook helicopters, linguists and liberal amounts of compassion.

Following Psyops (Psychological Operations) broadcasts over much of the area of Cambodia invaded by U.S. troops, Cambodian civilians, frightened by the retreating NVA, began seeking protection from the American forces.

In faded cotton shirts and trousers they came, their most prized possessions carried on their backs. Many of their villages in Memot Province had been destroyed and they had no palce to go.

Eight Chinook helicopters from the Air Cavalry airlifted 548 refugees to the refugee center of Vietnam's Binh Long Province, located in An Loc, near the Cav's 3rd Brigade headquarters at Quan Loi.

Housed in a Montagnard boarding school, the approximately 100 families are being fed, clothed and housed by the Vietnamese Social Welfare Department, operating under the advisory assistance of the Military Assistance Command Civil Operations and Rural Development (MACCORD).

The welfare people are distributing canned foods, vegetables, bread, rice and water.

"The department is working the rubber plantations in the area trying to get the people temporary work, because most of them were former rubber workers," explained John Sylvester, Jr., MACCORD senior advisor to the department.

"After we get them jobs we'll move them out to the empty plantation home as somewhat temporary housing," he added.

Now the people are huddled together in large tents and in the boarding school.

"Initially the problem was one of overcoming their fear," said Sylvester. "They didn't know what was happening and they hadn't had anything to eat or drink for a long time.

We got them to An Loc at 8:00 p.m. We gave them plenty of water to wash in, and they had a hot meal by 10."

The agency overcame the language problem through the use of language experts, known as "Son Thons," who had worked with the Cambodians before.

Gerald Roback, another MACCORD supervisor, explained that "By the time they had eaten the people began to feel at home, spreading out their ponchos and liners. Four rounds of 81mm mortar hit the first night; but the people didn't panic. They hid, and came out when it was over."

By the next day the children were happily splashing around in

the wash basins, gasoline barrels cut to size, and cooking odors filled the air. Clothes hung on nearby bushes.

Family separation was a problem that was handled by the department. "Children and their parents were always kept together whenever humanly possible. But we once ended up with a mother in Tay Ninh and her bottle-fed baby here. We brought her here in a hurry. The man who was feeling the baby went to Tay Ninh and picked the mother up himself," said Roback.

This story does not end here. The Cambodian refugees are being cared for by many of the branches of the Vietnamese government. Health standards are being maintained by the Province hospital and CIDG medics. Entertainment is provided by the Vietnamese Information Service; and the National Police provide security.



The fuel gauges read empty but smoke from campfires in the distance signaled enemy activity and a hunter-killer team of the Charlie Troop, 1st Sqdn, 9th Cav, moved in to investigate before heading home to Phuoc Vinh.

The suspicions paid off as the team found a hillside NVA complex 13 miles southeast of Duc Phong in Phuoc Long Province. The find came at 5:30 p.m. on Apr. 22. The complex was situated on the Da Dang River, carved out of rolling hills which sloped to form a gentle valley where the only open area in the complex was found.

According to WO1 Richard Gragert who came on station as relief for the LOH on the original team, the NVA "were sitting in the open field. It looked like they were eating chow."

Gragert and his Cobra teammate went after the enemy who were caught in the open. "We were out trying to destroy weapons lying on the ground," Gragert said. "I saw an NVA trying to hide behind a tree, so I chased him around and around it. I stopped and he ran right into the fire."

The hunter-killer crews were credited with 10 NVA kills. Two additional NVA were killed by members of the 2nd Bn, 20th Artillery (ARA).

An air strike was called in just before dark and destroyed much of the complex. "They had a city out there," Gragert said. "There were World War II-type bunkers built into the hillsides. There was no telling how many of them were there. They've probably been living there for months."

The next day Gragert went back for another look.

"The air strikes destroyed the bunkers, hootches and some of the tunnels. All the bodies and weapons were gone," he said. "It looked like they all packed up and left."



HEAVY LADEN - Moving through heavy jungle a Skytrooper from Echo Company, 2nd Bn, 5th Cav, holds his M-60 machinegun at the ready anticipating enemy movement. The company was on patrol inside the Cambodian Border. (USA Photo by PFC Ron Russo)

X-Ray Comes Back Enemy Forces Flee

By SP4 Barry Bjornson

FSB X-RAY - Like a specter from the past, the name of X-Ray again is on the minds of 1st Air Cavalrymen.

The first U.S. forces firebase built in Cambodia, X-Ray is the namesake of the first landing zone to receive combat assaulted troops of the FIRST TEAM in Vietnam.

Built by the men of the 2nd Bn, 7th Cav, Fire Support Base (FSB) X-Ray is a vital strategic point in the Allied effort to drive the Communist forces from their Cambodian strongholds.

The original X-Ray, born Nov. 14, 1965, established the Air Cavalry in the Pleiku Campaign of the Central Highlands. President Johnson's deployment of "the airmobile division" to the Republic of Vietnam proved to be a highly effective tactical move, as Skytroopers drove into NVA strongholds in the Pleiku area, pushing the Communists out.

That day, Nov. 14, 1965, will long be remembered by the men of the 1st Bn, 7th Cav, who assaulted into the mountainous terrain. They met the 66th NVA Regiment head on, and were soon joined by the 2nd Bn, 7th Cav, and the 2nd Bn, 5th Cav. For three days the Cavalrymen smashed repeated NVA assaults on the LZ until the enemy finally retreated, leaving behind thousands of dead.

For that action, the division was awarded the Presidential Unit Citation, the first awarding of the citation to an entire division during the Vietnam Conflict.

Again FSB X-Ray is the focal point as Skytroopers open a new campaign aimed at further deterring Communist aggression.



CAMBODIAN FIREBASE - 1st Air Cavalrymen of Charlie Company, 2nd Bn, 5th Cav, lay concertina wire around the perimeter of Fire Support Base X-Ray. X-Ray is the first U.S. firebase built in Cambodia and is the namesake of Landing Zone X-Ray, the Air Cav's first Vietnam LZ, site of fierce fighting in November, 1965. (USA Photo by PFC Ron Russo)

243 NVA Left Dead

Continued from page 1

In other action Charlie Troop, 1st Sqdn, 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment, under operational control of the 5th Bn, 7th Cav, beat back a company size enemy ground probe on FSB Kramer on May 2.

The attack began at 2:31 a.m., with incoming rounds of 57 and 75mm recoilless rifle fire and mixed B-20, B-40 and 107mm rockets. The ground attack followed on the base, which is located 18 miles northwest of Tay Ninh. The enemy was driven back with the assistance of ARA, artillery, mortars, Shadow and flareships. A first light check found 22 enemy killed, nine AK-47's, one destroyed .51 caliber machinegun and three wounded NVA soldiers who were detained. Friendly losses were seven wounded.