

Allies Disrupt Staging Area

AMERICAL DIV (USA) -- Operating deep in enemy infested country 26 miles southwest of Tam Ky, soldiers of the 196th Infantry Brigade recently joined with Vietnamese forces to disrupt a large staging area.

During a 10-day operation in Hau Duc Valley, the allies killed 53 enemy and detained nine more; seized a 400-bed hospital and captured large stocks of enemy weapons, ammunition and supplies. Perhaps the most

striking result of the operation was the return of 300 Vietnamese refugees to government control.

"Our units had formerly been concerned mainly with heavily-populated rural areas," said Lieutenant Colonel Peter J. Foss of Framingham, Mass., commanding officer, 1st Battalion, 46th Infantry. "This afforded the enemy relative security in their own area of operations, and it was decided to probe the wilderness regions in

Hau Duc Valley, long suspected as a Communist staging area.

Extensive preparations for the mission began weeks earlier, providing for on call medevacs, helicopter gunships, scout dog teams, psychological operations broadcasts and Vietnamese Air Force support.

On the morning of reckoning, the sun's first rays were accompanied by the staccato popping of helicopters transporting infantrymen, mortar squads and artillerymen.

A "sky crane" helicopter was used to transport the huge 105mm howitzers of Battery B, 1st Bn., 14th Arty.

"We set up two firebases," said Major John T. Moore of Chatham, Mass., battalion operations officer. "The first, was to be used as the command post. A more westerly firebase was to be utilized as a deterrent to enemy infiltration.

Action got under way immediately as sightings were made throughout the area.

"We could see right away that the enemy was unprepared for our intrusion," said Captain Jack M. Levitt of Honolulu. "Various enemy elements of different sizes were seen scurrying off with what supplies they could carry."

As the Vietnamese and American troops blanketed the jungle with patrols they were impressed by the extent to which the Communist had built up the area. Extensive bunker complexes, tree house villages and even a "country store" displaying household articles were found freshly deserted.

At the end of the scheduled 10-day mission, all troops and support elements were withdrawn. The enemy kills, captured weapons and refugee ralliers were tallied.

In addition to the enemy killed, the allies had accounted for 96 mortar shells, 11 recoilless rifle rounds, 460 B-40 rockets, 115 antipersonnel mines, 42 rifles, 3,250 pounds of rice and 220 pounds of bread. Two aluminum transport boats and a number of bicycles used for resupply were also discovered.



FIRST IN VIETNAM

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Villagers Rebuild Homes

III MAF-FLC -- During the 1968 Tet offensive NVA regulars marched into Vietnam's old imperial capital of Hue.

In the months that followed U.S. troops, principally Marines, pushed the Communists out of Hue, the survivors fleeing to the surrounding hills. Many buildings in the city were severely damaged and several villages on the outskirts of Hue made uninhabitable as the fighting raged.

Today, the once decimated landscape has taken on a new look with much of the change made possible through the efforts of the Combined Action Program. Previously neglected fields now boast healthy crops, battle-damaged houses are being repaired and the villages resettled.

Headquartered in Hue, Combined Action Company 3-4 (CACO 3-4) operates six combined Action Platoons (CAPs) throughout Hoang Tra District in Thua Thien Province. The CAPs have been instrumental in providing security for the resettlement of the villages. Daily patrols and night ambushes keep all but a few enemy troops out of the area.

Besides providing security, CAP Marines have also initiated several civic action projects. Many roads currently are being repaired by the Leathernecks and raw materials are made available to the Vietnamese for the construction of libraries, schools and medical dispensaries.

Navy corpsmen attached to the CAPs have established a vigorous medical combined action program (MEDCAP) providing daily medical care for needy villagers. Sanitation is stressed with baths given and bars of soap handed out among the Vietnamese.

With security restored, the villagers near Hue have set about the task of rebuilding their war torn homes.



Rough Ride

The crew members of this track from Troop A, 1st Squadron, 1st Cavalry, Americal Division find the going a little tough as their track breeches a hedge during an operation north of Tam Ky with the 196th Infantry Brigade. (USA PHOTO By: Sp4 Herbert Brady)

The Observer Starts 9th Year

MACV -- This issue marks the 9th year of publication for The Observer, the authorized weekly newspaper of the Military Assistance Command, Vietnam (MACV).

The Observer, the first service newspaper in the RVN, was first published by the Military Assistance Advisory Group (MAAG) on May 9, 1962.

The first issue, a four-page photo offset newspaper measuring 9 1/2 x 11 1/2 inches, was printed by Vietnamese facilities in Saigon.

After six issues, The Observer changed its format to a four column, tabloid-size newspaper and began the transition to a multi-service paper.

The format was again changed with issue No. 12, when the four column format was abandoned in favor of the present five columns.

The next change took place in November 1962 when it graduated from four pages to eight pages in order to give more

and better feature coverage to troop activities in the republic.

When MACV assumed all mission responsibilities of MAAG on May 16, 1964, The Observer stayed on and continued to provide coverage of U.S. Forces activities, and eventually expanded to its present 12 pages in November 1965.

With the start of its fifth year, The Observer again took on a new look when the first issue was printed at the Pacific Stars and Stripes plant in Tokyo on May 10, 1967.

Printing the newspaper on letter press with a new type-face resulted in better photo reproduction, a new headline style and permitted the use of color. The "flag" was also changed to depict the MACV shield.

The next milestone came on November 14, 1969, when The Observer became the first newspaper in the Republic of Vietnam to be composed

(printed) on the Magnetic Tape Selectric Composer system.

This new system of "cold-type" composition eliminated the need for using the time consuming "hot-type" process of Linotype production and represented a large reduction in newspaper production costs.

Previously composed at the Pacific Stars and Stripes plant in Tokyo, The Observer is now sent there in its final stage ready for photo-offset reproduction.

The Observer, in addition to the efforts of its regular staff, has been professionally enhanced by unit information offices serving the four Corps Tactical Zones in reporting significant U.S. activities throughout the Republic of Vietnam.

As we embark on the ninth year of publication, we of The Observer staff, in keeping with the highest traditions of military journalism, will continue to fulfill our primary mission... of keeping you informed.

USAF Runs Station

DA NANG (USAF) -- Rising some 3,000 feet above the bay near Da Nang AB, is Monkey Mountain, named and known for the monkeys that inhabit its slopes.

It is also home for U.S. airmen who run one of the hubs of the air war in the RVN.

Members of the 620th Tactical Control Squadron operate a control reporting center responsible for monitoring the air space above Vietnam's five northernmost provinces, identifying and controlling aircraft within it.

First Lieutenant Philip G. Hannigan, an air weapons controller described the center's functions as surveillance, air defense, tactical control and tactical assistance.

U.S. airmen control American tactical and nontactical aircraft, and VNAF members do the same with Vietnamese aircraft. The Army, through its flight coordination center, handles its aircraft not equipped with radar.

Eventually, VNAF personnel will assume full control of these operations. But until then, operations of the Monkey Mountain center and a sister unit in the south remain the primary responsibility of the U.S. Air Force 505th Tactical Control Group based at Tan Son Nhut AB.

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Charlie's Last Pilfered Fish Fry

AMERICAL DIV. (USA) -- "Land clearing" may sound like a peaceful operation of earth leveling and cutting back vegetation for construction purposes. But to the men of Company C, 26th Engineer Battalion working in support of the 11th Infantry Brigade, land clearing is a tactical venture with both offensive and defensive considerations.

SOURCE OF FOOD

The Song Tra Cau River flows east from the mountains to the South China Sea. The river and sea serve both as a source of food and a means of transportation for Vietnamese fishermen.

A shortage of food and the increased reluctance of villagers to contribute to the enemy larder has forced VC and NVA units to do their own fishing. Enemy soldiers have taken to ambushing Vietnamese fishermen as they paddle their way upstream to "Twin Bridges" on Highway One and the awaiting markets. The enemy makes use of the thick

vegetation on each side of the river to conceal their assembly areas and supply trails.

WILL BUILD FISHING VILLAGE

First Lieutenant Craig S. Smoot of Huntington, N.Y., a platoon leader with the company said, "There are plans for construction of a fishing village on the South China Seashore. To insure the security of the village and river transportation, we've been assigned the mission of clearing both banks of the river from Highway One to the sea."

As with most engineer projects there is little face to face contact with the enemy, but his handiwork is much in evidence.

MINES EVERYWHERE

"There are freshly planted mines which have been thrown in front of us," said Staff Sergeant Rodney Drew of Mobile, Ala., a squad leader. "The undergrowth is too dense for mine sweeps so we've taken evasive action by alternating work between the north and south banks. Also, since we are clearing a wide tract on each

side of the river, we work different strips within each tract each day. The VC don't know where we'll be working from day to day.

"Recently, we were working an alternate strip when we heard an explosion to our rear. A cow had strayed into our work site of the day before and had detonated a mine," he added.

Commented Sergeant Dennis Meyer of Huron, S.D., "They don't seem to have enough mines. They dig them up and replant them where they think that we will be working."

MANY PROBLEMS

One of the problems encountered was the congestion caused by dozing trees and underbrush into the river. This was solved by having Specialist 5 Kenneth Folk of Van Wert, Ohio, senior demolitions man, and a crew of engineers use bangalore torpedoes to clear the debris from the river.

Specialist 5 Dennis Smith of

Martinsville, Ill., bulldozer operator, has his problems also. "The first day after we lost a dozer it was kind of scary. It's hot dirty work. I've run into a few trees that were too big for my blade. There are always trees that want to fall the wrong way and come down on your head! Otherwise it has run fairly smoothly. I enjoy it because it is a new experience."

CLEAR MINE FIELDS FIRST

"We've run into VC minefields 400 meters from Highway One on both banks of the river. These areas will have to be cleared before we can continue in that direction. The enemy wants to stop us, which is good enough reason to go on," commented Platoon Sergeant John. H. Turner of Marshall, Tex.

Each day the land clearing goes on. The woodlines are "prepared" by artillery from FSB Liz. and The team heads out with bulldozers and a security element composed of Vietnamese and 1st Battalion, 20th Infantry soldiers to strip land from the hands of the VC and return it to the people.



First Lieutenant Carland L. Robertson of Collins, Mass., a forward air controller attached to Co. C, 5th Special Forces Group, starts his O-2 Super Skymaster on signal from Staff Sergeant Kenneth K. Martin (USAF PHOTO By: AIC Scheuron)

Unseen Eyes Keep Sharp Vigil

DA NANG (USAF) -- It's early morning. An ARVN strike force and a U.S. Army Special Forces advisor patrol a dense mountain jungle. A light observation aircraft flown by a U.S. Air Force forward air controller (FAC) circles overhead.

Suddenly the FAC spots enemy soldiers moving down the hillside below the strike force. He informs the advisor of the enemy's location. The team immediately moves out to make contact.

A firefight is soon under way. As it continues throughout the day, helicopter gunships arrive on the scene to lend support.

When the strike forces are out on an operation, one of the FACs flies constantly overhead, providing the added security of quick retaliation against the enemy from the air. If a CIDG camp is under attack, one of the FACs and one of the radio operators from the 20th TASS team are flown in with portable communications equipment to provide on-site assistance in receiving and directing air support.

"There is a lot of esprit de corps in our work," said Captain Edward J. Gaven, one of the team's FACs. "In my estimation the men with whom we are working are the cream of the crop. They are well trained fighters."

"They have come to rely on us and are very appreciative of the job we are doing for them" concluded Gaven.

The FAC continues to search out enemy positions and mark them for the strike force and gunships. He serves as a miniature command post for coordinating the efforts of the ground forces and air power against the enemy.

It is a typical day for one of the Da Nang AB FACs of the 20th Tactical Air Support Squadron (TASS). A 20th TASS team is assigned to Company C, 5th Special Forces Group in Da Nang. The team flies out of Marble Mountain Airfield in support of the ARVN's 1st Mobile Strike force and CIDG camps. The FACs work through the U.S. Special Forces advisors attached to the CIDG camps in the five northernmost provinces of the RVN.

"We're the middle men, the link between ground and air forces. We keep the strike force and CIDG camps advised of available support and how to request it. We perform visual reconnaissance in their areas of operation, help them select targets and LZs, fly cover for medical evacuation and resupply missions and, of course, direct tactical fighter support," said Lieutenant Colonel Dudley L. Mizor of Colorado Springs, Colo., air liaison officer at the Da Nang headquarters of Company C, 5th Special Forces Group.

RF/PF Active Throughout Republic

The following information is provided by the Press and Information Office, General Political Warfare Department, Republic of Vietnam Armed Forces, Saigon.

REGIONAL AND POPULAR FORCES (RF/PF)

In clashes throughout the RVN, RF/PF soldiers killed 378 enemy. In addition, 28 suspected enemy were detained, 14 crew-served weapons and an assortment of individual weapons were captured.

The most significant battle took place when the enemy shelled An Thanh outpost near the Cambodian border. The outpost is manned by a single company of RF soldiers.

Reinforced by another RF company and supported by artillery and tactical air strikes, 96 of the enemy were killed during the attack.

II CORPS

In an operation west of Go Dau Ha, ARVN infantry and armored cavalry units killed 378 enemy soldiers. Friendly forces also detained 37 enemy suspects, captured seven 240mm rocket launchers, five 240mm and five 107mm rockets.

216 enemy soldiers were killed and 76 suspected enemy detained. Four crew-served weapons were captured.

5TH INFANTRY DIVISION

A returnee led elements of the 5th Infantry Division to two enemy caches while on a search mission near Tri Tam. The caches contained 26 crew-served and 14 individual weapons, seven 107mm rocket launchers and a quantity of 57mm recoilless rifle ammunition.

In later action, an element of the division was attacked by an estimated company of enemy soldiers west of Bo Duc. Fifteen enemy were killed.

7TH INFANTRY DIVISION

Over a period of three months, elements of the 7th Infantry Division killed 1,077 enemy soldiers. The operation took place in the Mekong Delta. Involved in the operation were three infantry regiments, one Marine brigade and two 105mm and 155mm Howitzer batteries.



Oriental River Is Scene Of The Tango

25th INF DIV (USA) -- The "Tango" is making life somewhat easier for the men of the 2nd Battalion, 14th Infantry.

A small, ungainly Navy troop carrier similar to the landing ship, tank (LST), the Tango has proven its worth in recent operations along the Oriental River. Now operated by the RVN Navy, the heavily armed boats are used to transport men to and from thickly vegetated areas along the river.

When the Tangos reach their objective along the river bank,

they are beached and the men disembark from the front ramp or jump off the sides. As long as there is five feet of water at the stern of the boat, there is no danger of it going aground.

Company B recently conducted a four-day operation along the Oriental that terminated when they were picked up by the T-Boats. Before they could reach the river they had to walk through two miles of swamp in water that often reached up to their chins. Needless to say the boats were a welcome sight.

Of Cash

CHU LAI (USA) -- The Disbursing Office here is a busy place, especially on pay days.

Serving Marine Aircraft Group 13, as well as local Combined Action Groups and Force Logistic Command units, the Disbursing Office pays an average of more than \$500 thousand to Chu Lai Marines every two weeks.



Novice fire-fighters from the Gia Dinh Fire Department coolly confront their first blaze. This is one of the many practical exercises faced by the former policemen in their week-long orientation at Long Binh. (USA PHOTO By: 1st LT Pete Ginder)

Heat Is On Former MPs

II FFV (USA) -- A program has been sponsored by Mr. David McKillop, senior advisor of Gia Dinh Province, to equip Gia Dinh with a fire department.

Three firetrucks have been acquired from the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). Fifteen former National Policemen are now completing the final stages of training in fire-fighting techniques at the Long Binh Fire Department.

Responsibility for formulating the training program has fallen on Staff Sergeant Thomas E. Fink of Tacoma, Wash., operations NCO of the 1st Platoon, 2nd Civil Affairs Company. Fink describes himself as "basically an MP" but says he welcomed the switch to advisory status.

The individuals chosen to man Gia Dinh's three new firetrucks are specially selected National Policemen who are residents of the area. The week-long orientation at Long Binh comes on the heels of two weeks practice with the Saigon Fire Department. Fink is hopeful that experience coupled with some "on the job training" will enable the Gia Dinh Fire Department to officially become operational in the near future.

"As it stands now fire calls have to be answered by either the Tan Son Nhut or MACV Fire Departments. This leads to a longer wait for equipment to arrive and homes are lost as a result," said Fink.

Chosen to oversee the seven

days of training is Mr. H. M. Cha, a Korean native who has had 12 years civilian experience as a fireman. He is currently assigned to Long Binh as the assistant firechief. Cha feels that the policemen-turned-firemen are proving to be apt pupils. "Once they have made a mistake they don't repeat it," he said.

The course is evenly divided between classroom work and practical application. One of the principal teaching aids on post is a gasoline filled pit which, when ignited, accurately simulates conditions encountered when fighting a major blaze. After the new firemen feel more comfortable in their jobs they will train additional members of the department on their own.

According to Fink, that day should come "real soon."

Peace In A Land Of Strife

Priest Sees Dream Fulfilled

1st MARINE DIV. (USMC) -- Father Peter Le-Nhu-Hao is the director of a refugee center in Duey Xuyen District, approximately 17 miles southeast of Da Nang. The center is his own project. It took six long years of wearisome labor to see his dream come true.

The center is home for hundreds of displaced persons whose lives have been disrupted by war. Home for hundreds of orphaned Vietnamese children. A place of peace and quiet for those seeking to escape war and

destruction.

Previously Father Hao served seven years in the Vietnamese Army as a major before taking his seminary training in Saigon and arriving at the Tra-Kieu Parish. Today there are 4,661 men, women and children under his care.

Daily he makes the rounds of his compound, directing and supervising its operation. His duties include organizing a sewing school for young women, securing scholarships for needy school children, and finding employment for thousands of

jobless men. He has set up maternity wards, dispensaries, five separate schools for the children and two centers for incoming refugees.

"One day peace will come to the land. People will return to their cities, villages and hamlets. They will reconstruct their homes, replant their fields of rice and rebuild their lives.

"But until then my task is endless. It is the responsibility of providing them with a refuge from the holocaust of war," concluded Father Hao.

His Green Thumb Keeps 'em Busy

DA NANG (USAF) -- Air Force Chaplain (Captain) Earl V. DeBlieux of Pittsfield, Mass., has put into operation a program which will be both educational and enjoyable for the children of the Star of the Sea Nursery and Orphanage located near the Da Nang Air Base.

KEEP THEM BUSY

"We've got to give them something to do, something to keep them busy when we're not there," he said. He considered leather working and model airplanes. But these were limited in scope. Only a few children at a time could work with the items, and once completed, the children were idle again.

The chaplain decided on gardening. Caring for a vegetable garden would keep the boys busy, teach something useful and give a sense of accomplishment.

OBTAINED MATERIALS

DeBlieux obtained seeds and concentrated plant food from friends in California. Upon arrival of the gardening supplies, he and the orphans proceeded to prepare a garden plot and plant the seed.

DeBlieux was assisted by Sergeant Mark T. Lesko of Milwaukee, a

member of the 366th Security Police Squadron.

EXPANDS OPERATION

The first effort was so successful the chaplain requested more seeds and plant food from the States. So his friends sent more. Later, a Girl Scout troop in Pacific Grove, Calif., sent seeds and sewing supplies for the girls of the orphanage.

Sister Mary Angela, head of the orphanage, had more land cleared so that DeBlieux could expand his project.

Now his "farm" is growing lettuce, radishes, green beans, cucumbers, green peas, carrots, tomatoes and sweet corn.

WATERING PROBLEM

"Watering is a problem," said DeBlieux. "There is no running water near the garden and the boys must carry pails of water from a nearby pool. Because of the dry climate this time of year, the garden must be watered every day."

What the chaplain did not say is that he and Lesko do a good share of watering themselves during their visits to the orphanage. "With everything growing so well, it has all been well worth the effort," commented DeBlieux.

Help For Phu Loc

III MAF-FLC (DA NANG) --

The Civil Affairs Office of Force Logistic Command (FLC) Supply Battalion is always ready to lend a helping hand to local Vietnamese hamlets.

Phu Loc No. 6, though 23 miles away, proved to be no exception when the Leathernecks received word that the temporary refugee center needed urgent assistance because normal relief had not yet arrived.

A hasty collection from the Marines and Vietnamese workers in the section yielded \$140 for the emergency purchase of rice. The civic action team visited the hamlet several times and, even though help had come, made plans to provide additional supply support on their own time.



Chaplain (Captain) Earl V. DeBlieux, senior chaplain at Da Nang AB, right, teaches orphans at the Star of the Sea Orphanage and Nursery that weeding and watering are two very important aspects of gardening. (USAF PHOTO By: Sgt. Michael H. Enos)

A Happy Birthday VC Style

4th INF. DIV. (USA) -- It was his 21st birthday. And it may have been the luckiest day in the life of Private First Class Robert L. White of Minneapolis, an assistant team leader with a Ranger team of Company K, 75th Infantry.

White was walking point up the ridge of a barren hill near LZ Hard Times. The team was moving toward a treeline to set up a night position. There had been no enemy activity. "Suddenly I had a feeling. I can't explain it. It was weird. I just felt something was wrong," said White.

White halted the team and they sat down to listen. Staff Sergeant David Bristol of Fruita, Colo., continued, "No sooner had we gotten down than we heard movement. It wasn't loud--just like the safeties clicking on weapons and rustling noises. I called for artillery to keep the enemy down so we could get to a better position."

As the artillery shells started landing on the suspected enemy positions, the enemy began sniping at the team. Said White, "We returned fire and pretty soon a heavy firefight was in progress."

"The firefight lasted for five or ten minutes," said Bristol. "When it slowed down we moved down the hill and took up positions in a bomb crater."

As the team huddled in the bomb crater, "Gambler" gunships from Company B of the 4th Aviation Battalion went to work on the enemy. "At first they had some trouble identifying us," said Bristol. "The bad guys were popping smoke at the same time we were. Unfortunately for them they popped a different color than we did."

As soon as positive identification of the team had been made the gunships worked out on the enemy position.

When the first pair of gunships had finished their runs, a slick went in to extract the team.

"That pilot sure made it a happy birthday for me," joked White. "Those pilots have a lot of guts."

The extraction was completed without further incident.



In the case of the young lady above, it doesn't really matter what rating system you use; she'll score high on any of them.

In the Army, rating systems can be very important. One of the most important is the EER, or enlisted efficiency reporting system.

A new EER, like the OER for officers, will come into use for career soldiers on July 1. The change involves a completely new form and built-in benefits for the soldier.

One of the more significant changes is that enlisted personnel, including those in Southeast Asia, will be evaluated more than once a year. When their records are studied for such events as promotion, proficiency pay or other important reasons, officers will have a more effective means of measuring the individual's overall efficiency.

Other features of the new system, which will effect those with three or more years of active service, include provisions for the rater to make unscored recommendations for the career development of the individual rated. The report forms will be completed by the rater and reviewer and the requirement for an endorser has been eliminated.

Money Transfers Become Easier

MACV - The use of personal checks is now authorized to transfer funds between category "A" personnel in the Republic of Vietnam, providing the check is prepared utilizing a limited negotiability dual payee statement.

This means that a check can be written from one category "A" individual to another if the check is made payable jointly to a military banking facility or U.S. Government instrumentality and the individual.

An example of this sort of check would read: Pay to the order of: Chase Manhattan

Bank, Long Binh, for payment to John Doe.

The category "A" personnel affected are active duty U.S. military and direct hire U.S. citizen civilian employees of the U.S. Government, its agencies and instrumentalities excluding MSTs shipboard personnel.

This change in policy is designed to provide a legal method of transferring personal funds other than by cash. It became necessary due to the recent implementation of the mandatory mailing of bank drafts and money orders to addresses outside the Republic of Vietnam.

Re-up Drop Fought With Pay And Benefits

WASHINGTON (AFPS) - Proficiency pay and the variable reenlistment bonus are here to stay, according to Secretary of Defense Melvin R. Laird.

At a joint session of the Senate Armed Services Committee on Defense Appropriations, Secretary Laird said, "Even with...salary reforms...there will still be a need for continuation of special incentives - such as proficiency pay, the variable reenlistment bonus and physician's continuation pay."

The secretary said retention continues to be a "serious

problem," particularly "in certain critical skill areas." The Fiscal Year (FY) 1971 budget includes \$340 million for these purposes, compared with \$300 million in FY 1970.

Outlining the department's retention problems, Secretary Laird said only 15.1 per cent of eligible first term regular enlisted men reenlisted in FY 1969, compared with 20.1 per cent in FY 1968. The statistics have shown a steady decline since FY 1966.

Secretary Laird also said that there had been a serious decline in the reenlistment rate of career enlisted personnel, and that the rate of reenlistment for career personnel had dropped to 77.9

per cent in FY 1969. This is the lowest rate since FY 1960.

Overall officer retention also continues to drop, particularly in critical categories. Physicians, lawyers and certain categories of pilots are hardest hit, according to Secretary Laird.

The secretary emphasized that retention problem is not a matter of compensation alone. He said additional career incentives are needed. Among those included in the FY 1971 budget are: reasonable sharing in the risks of combat; quality education in overseas dependent schools; adequate housing for all personnel without discrimination; and quality medical care with efficiency.

Editor's Corner

Security Demands...

MACV - Security is something most of us desire. Men work for it, women marry for it, and children need it to grow up.

Here in Vietnam security is at a premium. Nowhere are we *absolutely* safe from the determined bullet or the waiting bomb. We are, however, relatively secure in a great many areas of the Republic of Vietnam.

These areas are normally those in which there is no immediate danger of an enemy ground attack. It is, of course, up to the commander to determine whether or not his installation can be considered relatively secure, but most of us have access to clubs, USO's, or other areas where we don't have to carry our weapons.

Sound obvious? It should be, but....

During the first nine months of FY 1970 alone, there were 85 deaths and 707 injuries involving American soldiers as a result of accidental discharge of weapons. This represents the single largest cause of accidental death and injury for servicemen in Vietnam.

This is a needless loss of life. Many of these accidents could have been avoided if the men involved had followed the common sense safety practices established for their own rear areas.

What are "common sense" safety practices? Just as in civilian life, they involve not carrying a round in the chamber and keeping the weapon on "safe" at all times, but in the military safety means going a little further.

Because there are so many weapons around, it is essential that every weapon and all ammunition be accounted for at all times.

In practice, this means that you won't normally be allowed to carry your weapon in a "relatively" secure area. Only those immediately responsible for installation defense will normally be armed. This practice is designed to protect you from injury due to the accidental discharge of a weapon.

After accomplishing our mission, our first goal as American servicemen is self-defense. And that means defending ourselves from accidents as well as from the enemy.

Postal Tips For Military

ARTILLERY REVIEW - American servicemen in Vietnam receive the best mail service ever offered to any fighting men in history, including free mail service. Here are a few facts about mail that all servicemen in Vietnam should be aware of to continue to receive excellent service.

All letters sent to the United States should have the word "FREE" handwritten in the space where a stamp would normally be placed. On letters sent to other nations, the space should be left blank so the postal service can put its own stamps on the letter.

When mailing packages, they should be wrapped in brown paper, taped securely, and tied with string. Wrapping paper and string should be available in each unit's supply room.

Every package sent out of Vietnam, regardless of value, must have a completely filled-out customs tag tied to it. Each item in the package must be listed on the customs tag.

When mailing packages there are several methods available, each having its own advantages.

SAM, or Space Available Mail, always goes by air as room is

available on regular mail flights. SAM is the cheapest way to send packages, but it has a weight limit of 5 pounds.

PAL, or Parcel Air Lift, has a weight limit of 30 pounds and a size limit of 60 inches by depth and girth. PAL usually takes only 7 to 10 days compared to 10 to 14 for SAM.

Air Mail is the fastest, but also the most expensive.

Fourth class mail should be used for big items. It is relatively cheap but has the lowest priority. It sometimes goes by air.

Books can be shipped using a special book rate which is cheaper than fourth class, but has the same priority.

Registered letters and packages go for the regular air mail price plus 80 cents. The receiver of the package must sign for the letter or parcel and the sender gets back the signed receipt.

Insured mail is charged by the value of the contents and can be used on any type of mail. One thing to remember is that the post office doesn't recognize sentimental value, so only the open market value counts on the value the item can be insured for.

The OBSERVER

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Ivymen receive flowered leis from Vietnamese Air Force women before boarding the "freedom bird" that will carry them home after four years of Vietnam combat service.

STORY By: Sp4 Tom Hodsdon, USA - PHOTO By: PFC Fred Drew, USA

3rd Brigade Ends Tour

4TH INF DIV (USA) - The wings of the huge aircraft dipped as it sat on the concrete apron like a gigantic bird.

At planeside, amidst fluttering flags, the sound of band music and words of its leaders, the 4th Infantry Division bid farewell to the Third Brigade.

The flags were those of the 4th Division color guard and the farewell words were spoken by Lieutenant General Arthur S. Collins, commanding general of the 1st Field Force, Vietnam and ex-4th Division commander, along with Major General Glenn D. Walker, the Division's present commanding general.

After a brief ceremony,

the 4th Division band, followed by the Vietnamese II Corps band, struck up "Auld Lang Syne" and the homeward-bound infantrymen marched through a cordon consisting of the bands, a group of Vietnamese Air Force women, a company of cadets from the Highland Junior Military Academy and honor guards from the 4th Infantry Division and II Corps Tactical Zone.

Although the big Air Force jet may have lacked some of the luxuries of a commercial airliner, more than one envious set of eyes followed it as it roared down the runway at Pleiku - closing another chapter in the history of the Famous Fighting Fourth.

Big Switch For LSTs

NAVFORV - The Republic of Vietnam's yellow and red banner waves over two tank landing ships (LSTs) in San Diego's South Bay. The ships were recently acquired from the U.S. Navy.

Commodore Tran Van Chon, the Republic's chief of naval operations, accepted on behalf of his government the USS Bulloch County (LST-509) and the USS Jerome County (LST-848) at the U.S. Naval Station.

The ships, renamed the VNS Qui Nhon (HQ-504) and the VNS Nha Trang (HQ-505) after Vietnamese cities, were transferred under the U.S. Navy's Accelerated Turnover of

Assets to the Vietnamese Navy (ACTOV) program.

The Vietnamese crews, 14 officers and 206 enlisted personnel, which received the ships are commanded by Lieutenant Commanders Phan Phi Phung (VNS Qui Nhon) and Le Thuan Phong (VNS Nha Trang). They relieved U.S. Naval Officers Lieutenant Commander Jon D. Shewchuck of Downers Grove, Ill. (USS Jerome County) and Lieutenant Thomas C. Davis Jr., of Short Hills, N.J. (USS Bulloch County).

Among the dignitaries attending the turnover ceremony were Vice Admiral W.P. Bringle, Commander, Naval Air Forces, Pacific; Rear Admiral J.W. Williams Jr., Commander,

Eleventh Naval District; Rear Admiral E. M. Rosenberg, Commander, Amphibious Group Three; and Captain C.F. Rauch, Senior Naval Advisor, Commander Naval Forces, Vietnam. The Honorable Frank E. Curran, Mayor of San Diego, also attended.

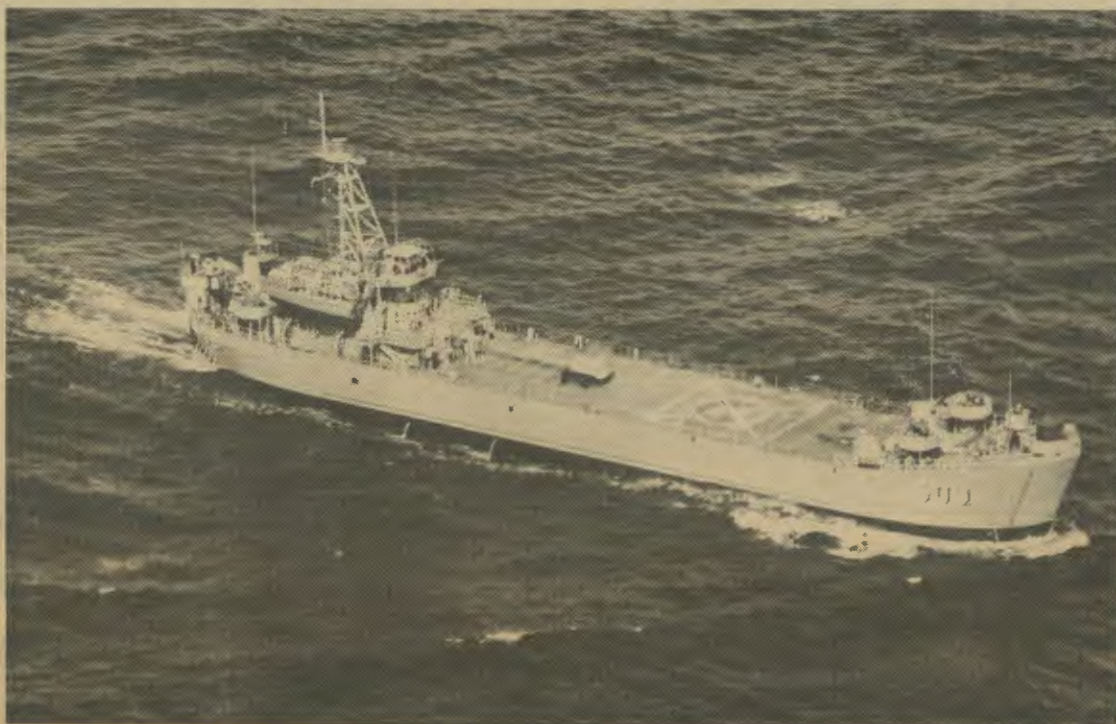
The Vietnamese Navymen, who arrived in San Diego in early March, began training in some 20 courses of the naval station's Fleet Training and Amphibious School in preparation for the turnover.

Most of their instruction was in the fields of engineering, damage control and weapons. They will remain in the San Diego area for an additional six weeks of training.

STORY By: JOC Glenn H. Briggs, USN - PHOTOS By: PH3 Rex Rude, USN



Boatswain Mates Thiet Bui Van (left) and Cong Nguyen Minh (right) receive emergency steering instructions from Boatswain Mate Juan A. Thomas during training aboard a vehicle and personnel landing craft at the Amphibious School.



The USS Bulloch County now the VNS Qui Nhon together with her sister ship the USS Jerome County were transferred to the VNN in recent ceremonies at San Diego.



Despite their heavy training schedule, Engineman Phuong Phan The (left) and Seaman Son Trinh The (right) found time to do a little sightseeing at Disneyland.



Checking The Crop

With the help of the United States, through the USAID program, the government of the Republic of Vietnam is making a major effort to increase and modernize its agricultural system. All phases of agricultural production – land cultivation and reform, grain marketing and production, protein foods--are being emphasized. Perhaps the most spectacular, however, is the production of "miracle rice," which yields more than twice as much grain per acre as local varieties of rice. (USA PHOTO)



Now This Won't Hurt A Bit!

A healthy population is a joint goal of the RVN's Ministry of Health and USAID. U.S. financed or operated medical programs, through USAID, are training medical and dental personnel. A National Plague Control Program, initiated by the Vietnamese Ministry of Health with USAID support and supplies, equipment and training of personnel, has significantly reduced the incidence of plague in the Republic of Vietnam. (USMC PHOTO)

To Build



STORY By: SP



Pay Close Attention...

The education of the children of the Republic of Vietnam, assisted by USAID with classroom construction money and a textbook program, is only one example of the U.S. concern for the long-range post-war development of Vietnam. In 1969, a primary goal of USAID was to help in planning for post-war industrial development. Plans are being made to reconstruct the country's industrial sector, to help solve the balance of payments problem and to produce levels of post-war activity which would employ the country's rapidly growing labor force. (JUSPAO PHOTO)



Building Up

Rural Development – extending the services of Vietnam and the advantages of technology to the people of Vietnam, an assist from USAID. Engineers have improved irrigation works, and hospital renovations and USAID advisors are providing the government with improvements in government and management.

A Nation

MACV -- The Vietnam program of the Agency for International Development (USAID) represents an unprecedented effort to relieve human suffering and achieve "nation building" goals in the midst of war.

USAID representatives are working with the people and the government of Vietnam at all levels in efforts to maintain a stable economy, introduce progress to the rural areas, improve public services, expand economic opportunity, accelerate the achievement of social justice and relieve wartime dislocations.

The USAID program in Vietnam may be divided into four principal tasks:

1. Maintaining economic stability and controlling inflation.

2. Assisting in the Rural Development program to provide security and development in the rural areas and win the support of the people for their government.

3. Alleviating the economic and social consequences of military operations.

4. Expanding the economy in secure areas and preparing for longterm and postwar social and economic development.

USAID has been providing economic aid and advice to the republic over a period of 18 years. Although small compared to U.S. military expenditures, American economic aid has changed and is changing for the better the everyday living of the people of Vietnam.

SP5 F. J. Robinson



It's Best To Give Up a Bad Cause

The Chieu Hoi program, which receives commodity assistance from USAID, directly attacks the Republic of Vietnam's problems on the military as well as social level. The program was established in 1963 to encourage the enemy to desert the insurgency and rally to the GVN. A major objective of the program is the reorientation of the political thinking of the ralliers and their reintegration into the social, political and economic life of the nation. (USAF PHOTO)



Up The Villages

services of the government of the Republic of Vietnam to the country's rural areas -- is also receiving USAID assistance. They have implemented electrical and water systems, as among other projects. In other areas of activity, USAID provides technical assistance and administrative expertise in planning and development. (USA PHOTO)



Feeding Those Made Hungry By War

In a war in which almost every combat action can leave men, women and children homeless, caring for refugees can become a difficult task. USAID helps the effort with food for the hungry and other assistance. During 1969, the refugee caseload was reduced from a peak of 1.5 million in February to slightly over 300,000 by the end of the year. (JUSPAO PHOTO)

VNN Dams Flow Of Infiltrators



A U.S. boat follows a VNN boat on a high speed run around a sharp bend where several PCFs were abushed recently.

**Story and Photo
By:
JOC Ed Copeland USN**

Yabuta junks, with the traditional "Eye of the Dragon" on their bows, await repairs at the VNN maintenance facility at An Thoi. Superstition says the "eye" keeps evil spirits away.



U.S. NAVAL FORCES VN -- One of the first Vietnamese units to receive fast patrol craft (PCF) more than a year ago under the Accelerated Turnover of Assets to the Vietnamese program (ACTOV) has proved that the Vietnamese sailor can fully measure up to his U.S. counterpart.

"I don't believe the sailors in this outfit need take a back seat to any navy in the world," said Lieutenant Commander Richard W. Holly of Arlington, Mass., senior U.S. Naval advisor to the Vietnamese Navy's Fourth Coastal Flotilla.

"In fact, operationally speaking, I would rate them every bit as good as U.S. sailors."

Home based at An Thoi on Phu Quoc Island 25 miles off the west coast of Vietnam, the unit's 15 PCFs currently team with 25 U.S. PCFs and 100 Yabuta junks to patrol over 10,000 square miles of coastline, rivers and canals.

The Vietnamese Navy (VNN) boats operate with U.S. PCFs and a variety of other craft along the Giang Thanh River.

Aggressive patrolling has made it increasingly difficult for the enemy to get men and supplies across the river.

Twelve U.S. Navymen of Advisory Team 159 ride the VNN patrol boats. The boats patrol assigned sections of the river, stopping and searching all sampans for false identification papers and contraband.

Holly gives the advisors credit for the increased combat capabilities of Flotilla Four. But the price was high. Of three Bronze Stars awarded to advisors, two were posthumous. The advisor's main job on patrol is communications with aircraft and other units operating in the area. But during firefights, he mans an M-60 machine gun or an M-79 grenade launcher.

The VC bring all their cunning to bear when attacking the boats. One weapon they frequently use is a huge directional mine made from half a 55-gallon oil drum crammed with C-4 plastic explosive and an assortment of nuts, bolts, nails, scrap metal, rocks and anything else that can kill or maim.

These command detonated mines are placed at strategic

points along the river bank, usually at one of the many sharp bends.

The enemy's favorite weapon against the PCF is the B-40 rocket. A common tactic is to mount the rockets in the bow of a sampan concealed in one of the many small canals along the river. Wires are attached (often as long as 300 meters) and he fires the rockets from the relative safety of a bunker far from the ambush site.

Boats on night waterborne guardposts sometimes encounter mines attached to driftwood that goes up and down the river with the changing tide. River sailors firing at floating objects near their boats often receive an unexpected shower as the driftwood explodes in a geyser of muddy water.

Advisors agree that in spite of the fierce attacks against the boats, the Vietnamese sailor has proven he is more than a match for the enemy.

Perhaps Holly best summed it up when he said, "I will always be proud to say I served with the Vietnamese Navy's Fourth Coastal Flotilla. In my book, this unit is tops."

A Vietnamese gunner keeps a wary eye on the river bank as his boat speeds up river on patrol.



The end of a long patrol! Advisors relax after a 12-hour patrol as their PCF heads back to the safety of the base.



Waiting For A Ride

A machine gunner from Company A, 1st Battalion, 501st Infantry waits for a UH-1H helicopter to land at FSB Bullet. The 101st Airborne Division (Airmobile) company was moved from the base to a field location during a recent operation in the mountainous jungles about 15 miles west of Hue. (USA PHOTO By: 1st Lt R. Ivan Pinnel)

US/ARVN Artillery Combine Firepower

9TH INF DIV (USA) -- One of the top priority programs under way in the 2nd Battalion, 4th Field Artillery is the "Dong Tien" program. Aimed at turning over the artillery's role in Long An Province to the 253rd ARVN Artillery Battalion, the program fully uses the combined firepower of the two battalions in the interim.

"Dong Tien" means pulling together and, although the program is supervised by the headquarters of the two battalions, the heart of the program lies at artillery battery level. Firing units from the 2/4 and the 253rd are spread throughout the province.

In many cases, the ARVN and U.S. batteries are situated near each other. As a result, U.S. and ARVN officers and NCOs make informal visits with their allied counterparts. These visits promote a close working relationship.

An example of this grassroots level teamwork is found at Ben Luc where howitzers of Battery A, 2/4 are located in an ARVN

basecamp along with a platoon from the 253rd.

There, the two batteries are literally pulling together, firing missions which are controlled in a Fire Direction Center (FDC) from which both operate. Often the two units fire side by side on the same mission.

Captain Robert D. Besecker, Dong Tien project officer for the 2/4, notes that at Ben Luc, "Both our battalion and the 253rd have been called upon to fire time on target (TOT) missions together."

Through "Dong Tien," a number of artillery techniques have been exchanged and are being employed by both

battalions. Now, both units employ the same internal communications system in their batteries, use the same type of double check system of determining firing data in the FDC, and accomplish accurate firing with the same method of ammunition segregation. The "Dong Tien" program also promotes coordinated fire planning between units to insure maximum artillery effectiveness in the province.

What is the future of the Dong Tien program? Besecker foresees continued success. "The program will continue to work, he says, because of eagerness on both sides to exchange ideas."

Unit Puts New Teeth In Dental Program

USA SPT CMD (CAM RANH BAY) -- A startling statistic to most people is that more man-hours are lost in Vietnam through illness and disease than through battlefield injuries.

One widely prevalent and often neglected disease is dental decay. It can be treated by drilling, filling and pulling, but the best solution, says Captain Mark V. Barren of the 934th Medical Detachment, is preventive dentistry.

As part of the preventive dentistry program, a fluoride toothpaste was introduced into Vietnam in September 1968. The paste, which costs the government 16 cents a tube, is credited with sharply reducing the time its users spend in the dentist's chair.

"We are very proud of our accomplishments," remarked Barren, who is preventive

dentistry officer for the 934th. "We have treated approximately 300,000 troops and we now attain 100 per cent troop participation. Our program involves the application of this fluoride paste by all incoming personnel passing through the 22nd Replacement Battalion, and all the people returning from R&R and leave.

On a typical day approximately 500 soldiers assemble outside the Preventive Dental Clinic at the 22nd Replacement Battalion. Upon entering the clinic and taking their place in front of a long sink, they are provided with toothpaste and brush and made aware of the importance of preventive dentistry.

As the men brush, hygienists walk among them and correct any bad brushing habits. Each man is given a dental care kit as he leaves.

Folk 'Cures' Still Popular

Some Prefer Witches' Cup

III MAF-FLC (DA NANG) -- Teaching first aid and sanitation to Vietnamese villagers is valuable experience for anyone. But for Lance Corporal William A. Brown III, this experience could have long reaching results -- he hopes to become a doctor when he is discharged.

Brown, a rifleman with a Combined Action Platoon (CAP), has ample opportunity to instruct the Vietnamese in the practice of hygiene and sanitation. His CAP, composed of 12 Marines, 1 U.S. Navy hospital corpsman and 23 PF soldiers, has daily contact with

the villagers at Dong Ha.

"My father is a doctor, and my mother is a nurse," the 19-year-old Leatherneck said. "I guess you could say their careers had some bearing on my decision.

"Conditions have improved quite a lot since we've been here," commented Brown. "The people are starting to use toothpaste and soap regularly now. I think that if the parents keep themselves clean, the children will do likewise."

Even though the Marines try to teach the villagers minor first aid practices, many people fall

back into the practice of witchcraft.

"The people have always used witchcraft to cure their ails in the past, and tend to rely on them as a sure-fire way to get rid of their problems," Brown explained.

"They use anything from tree leaves to buffalo manure. It's pretty discouraging to see them doing the witchcraft bit after we've been teaching them modern practices.

Despite all the setbacks, conditions have been improving. "I'd estimate that personal hygiene has improved 50 per cent since we've been here. They should continue to get better as the people learn the reasons for keeping clean."

Before entering the Marine Corps in March 1969, Brown had gained some medical experience while working in a New Orleans hospital. He watched several operations and decided upon his career right then.

"When I get back, I'll have a lot of work to do," the strapping 6-foot-1 rifleman remarked. "I'd like to go into private practice. I plan to go to Louisiana State University for my schooling."

199th Light Infantry Brigade Helps Inoculate 1,500 Children

DINH QUAN (USA) -- More than 1,500 children in Dinh Quan District are being immunized against polio and cholera due to the combined efforts of the 4th Battalion, 12th Infantry, 199th Light Infantry Brigade and the Long Khanh Hospital here.

"Warrior" battalion surgeon, Captain (Dr.) Franklin Banker, has been teaming up with Mr. Duong Thanh, Long Khanh Hospital health chief, for the project.

"Mr. Thanh takes complete charge of the immunizations," explained Banker recently.

"Our job in the program is

mainly to secure vaccine."

For the first series of inoculations, Thanh contacted schools in villages throughout the district and set up an immunization schedule. He also gave all the children their cholera shots himself.

A male nurse from the hospital accompanied Thanh on the visits to assist in administering the oral polio vaccine.

"Warrior" medics accompanied the immunization team to the schools to help out where needed.

Similar visits were made to each school in the area.

'I Still Can't Believe I Actually Did It'

173RD ABN BDE (USA) -- "I'm no obstetrician, but at the time there wasn't much else I could do."

So says Specialist 4 James E. Pope of Gastonia, N.C., who recently was called upon to do something beyond the call of duty -- deliver a baby!

The medic from Company C, 1st Battalion, 503rd Infantry, was passing through the village of Thanh Thuy in Binh Dinh Province when a boy ran up to him yelling, "Mama-san have baby-san, mama-san have baby-san! You come, You come!"

"I followed the boy to see if I could help," recalled the medic. "When I got to the mother, she was already in labor. There were two midwives watching. Luckily, there was a national policeman with us who acted as an interpreter," said Pope.

Pope spent several anxious moments trying to remember what he had learned about childbirth at Fort Sam Houston Army Hospital during his medical training.

"I really didn't do much, I scrubbed up and just kind of helped the little tyke out. The

mother got right up and started walking around as I washed her baby.

"The baby was in good shape and loudly showed off his lungs," commented Pope.

"They all thanked me and I felt good about the whole affair, but looking back, I still can't believe that I actually did it."



YIPE! POWDERED NOODLES -- A worker in a Chieu Hoi hamlet "noodle factory" pours liquid drained from mashed rice into a sack where it will harden. The resulting cylindrical block will later be strained into noodles. On a good day, the factory, built with materials contributed by the Civil Affairs Section of Force Logistic Command's Supply Battalion, can turn out 25 gallons of noodles.

(USMC PHOTO By: Cpl Al Wiegand)



**BUNKER
BUNNY
SEZ,**

"Any one in their right mind wouldn't walk right up and stand in front of a firing squad just out of curiosity would they? You bet they wouldn't. But in the same token that's about as foolish as picking up a captured enemy weapon and seeing if it will fire. Let's face it, the same danger is there, and that's the chance of getting killed. Analyses of damaged enemy weapons have revealed that possible defective metallurgy in many cases leads to fatigue cracks in the firing surfaces, causing the weapons to explode. Also, ammunition is sometimes faulty, causing excessive chamber pressure or premature detonation. So why take a chance with a weapon "Charlie" didn't get you with the first time; don't give him a second chance."

(PHOTO COURTESY OF 20TH CENTURY-FOX)

Blondie

by Chic Young



Peanuts

By Charles M. Schulz



NUMBAH 10 PUZZLE!



Most servicemen are security conscious, but too often the consequences of compromising security are ignored. For example, discussing classified information by telephone in the Republic of Vietnam could have serious repercussions - an innocent slip of the tongue could be fatal. A good bet: when you're on the phone, remember that Charlie may be listening. But for now, can you find 10 subtle differences in these drawings?



SOLUTION: 1) Window missing behind shoulder. 2) Seam missing on shoulder. 3) Shimmer mark missing from desk top. 4) "D" added to telephone sign. 5) Wall socket vents missing. 6) Phone mouthpiece missing. 7) Nose shortened. 8) Shape of head altered. 9) Corner of building behind phone hand missing. 10) Crossbar missing from telephone pole.

'Rack'em Up' 'Move'em Out'

U.S.A. SPT CMD (QUI NHON) -- Rack'em up, wash'em off, move'em out. That may seem like a weird twist to a cattle punching song but it's the spirit of the 86th Maintenance Battalion's "car wash."

The function of the Cha Rang facility is to clean retrograde equipment bound for refurbishing, according to Captain Jeffery Wetjen of Tucson, Ariz., operations officer for the 86th's materiel section. The equipment is sent to either Okinawa, Taiwan, Japan or CONUS for further use in the Army system.

Equipped with six water pumps, the wash facility consists of four wash racks fashioned from steel grating and perforated steel platforms. The racks are capable of servicing four vehicles at a time -- ranging from light two-wheeled trailers to heavy trucks.

Two high pressure water blasters are used at the first two

stops in the process. Pumping water from a nearby river, the blasters put out 5,500 pounds of water pressure per square inch. The final phase of the wash is handled by four low pressure cleaners with a water pressure of 60 to 100 pounds.

Operated by six local nationals and five U.S. soldiers during the day, the car wash stays open around the clock. Night crews usually consist of six soldiers and an NCOIC.

"The wash was built in early January to hasten the flow of salvageable equipment to repair facilities," commented Wetjen. He also noted that a 24,000 gallon storage tank will soon be installed at the car wash to increase the racks' effectiveness.

After the cleaning job is finished in Cha Rang the equipment is sent to Qui Nhon's port for shipment. There the retrograde equipment receives a final rinse to clean off the last 15 miles of Vietnamese dust before leaving country.



Wearing rubber slicker pants, this soldier uses a low pressure water hose to blast sand and dirt from retrograde equipment bound for repair in the U.S. (USA PHOTO By: PFC Jake C. Krauskopf)

2/22nd Provides Everlasting Light

25TH INF DIV (USA) -- The famous author and poet Rudyard Kipling, once wrote a novel about men in war called, "The Light That Failed."

For the 2nd Battalion (Mechanized), 22nd Infantry's night patrols however, "High Angel Hell" provides "The Light That's Never Failed."

High Angel Hell is a 4.2 inch heavy mortar platoon in Headquarters Company of the "Triple Deuce" responsible for supporting night operations with illumination. It is divided into three sections which work both in Cu Chi and in the field.

"A team is on call round the clock," said Specialist 5 Bob Cummings, a squad leader from Troy, Mont. "During the night the men sleep by their mortars so that within seconds 'lum' can be placed anywhere its needed."

Though providing illumination is its primary

function, High Angel Hell also fires high explosive rounds when necessary.

The mortar section in Cu Chi is currently constructing new gun positions and an FDC. To insure the accuracy of each gun, a cement base has been laid to prevent base plate movement when firing. The fire direction center contains radios, maps, and plotting charts to calculate adjustments of the mortar tubes.

The job of High Angel Hell never ceases. When not firing, the team members are busy inspecting and cleaning tubes and radio systems while making sure they have enough ammo on hand at all times.

"Without quick illumination our patrols wouldn't be nearly as effective as they are in blocking the enemy," remarked Private First Class Dennis Le Blanc, Company B machine gunner from Sacramento, Calif. "It's always there when we need it."

"It Was A Good Fight"

Enemy Attack Foiled

1ST CAV DIV (USA) -- "It was a good fight. I'll tell you that," remarked Lieutenant Colonel Edward Trobaugh, commander of the 2nd Battalion, 7th Cavalry.

The colonel was referring to the enemy ground attack on FSB Atkinson in War Zone C which was beaten back recently after 66 enemy were killed.

Company B and the battalion headquarters, along with the 2nd Battalion, 19th Artillery, had again given the enemy another taste of U.S. firepower as an attack by an NVA force was repulsed. The FSB which the enemy chose for his attack was just three days old. Nestled in a small clearing in heavy jungle, it posed a threat to enemy activities in the area.

"It was just before 10 p.m. when the first round hit," stated Private First Class Frank Rippey. "They just started pouring it in for I don't how long. It was at least an hour," recalled the Pathfinder.

Vietnam servicemen from the EL Paso, Tex., area who are interested in receiving a weekly hometown newsletter should contact: The Hometown News, P.O. Box 1072, El Paso, Tex. 79999. The free newsletter is mailed each Wednesday.

The enemy hit the base with 107mm rockets, 82mm mortar, 60mm mortar, 57mm recoilless rifle and B-40 rocket fire in the initial preparation.

"We had heard some movement on the perimeter and started using our M-79 grenade launchers," stated Trobaugh. When the enemy force reacted with small arms fire the FSB defenders immediately returned it.

The enemy had prepared well for the assault. Besides the large number of rocket artillery pieces

positioned around the base, four .51 caliber anti-aircraft machine guns had been emplaced to disrupt aerial support.

Ships from Company A, 229th Assault Helicopter Battalion repeatedly braved enemy anti-aircraft fire and the exploding mortar rounds to deliver ammunition and other supplies.

Overhead aerial rocket artillery from Battery A, 2nd Battalion, 20th Artillery and skytroopers from Troop A, 1st Squadron, 9th Cavalry, took the enemy under fire with their cobra gunships.

The battle for the firebase was over at 2:30 in the morning. The defenders could count seven bodies outside the perimeter. No one knew how many there were in the jungle until a morning sweep was organized.

The successful defense resulted in 55 NVA soldiers killed in the immediate vicinity of the fire base. Eleven more of the enemy were killed while trying to flee the scene of the contact. Three enemy were detained. One 107mm rocket launcher, one 60mm mortar, four machine guns and over 20 individual weapons were captured.



Mobile Fire Power

A General Sheridan tank of Troop A, 1st Squadron, 1st Cavalry, Americal Division moves out on a search operation north of Tam Ky in support of the 196th Infantry Brigade.

(USA PHOTO By: Sp4 Herbert Brady)

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