

THE KYSU'

Spring
1970

A publication of Engineer Command Vietnam





JOHN A. B. DILLARD

Major General,

US Army Commanding

No gun is fired—no aircraft flies—no wheel turns—unless engineer effort is expended along the way. There is no battle fought unless an engineer has been there first—is there—or remains there afterward. It takes guts—skill—spirit—and pride to be an engineer.

In Vietnam the engineer has come into his own. He is a soldier first, then an engineer. He is a part of the fighting team. His contributions have been vital to the success of the military effort, but no less so than to the nation-building efforts of a struggling people. With blood, sweat, and tears, he has turned raw sea coasts into bustling harbors—foot trails into all-weather roads—swamps into airfields—jungles into agricultural land. These are the things that win wars and the minds of people and provide a basis for political stability.

The military engineers role in Vietnam is indeed a proud one. His achievements and his victories have enhanced the cherished traditions of the military service and have contributed mightily to the objective of peace with honor. But the job is not yet done.

Today we are spread from the Delta to the DMZ and from the sea coast to the border. We are working around the clock to knit the country together with a vast network of all weather highways. We continue to support our combat elements and those of the Vietnamese.

The challenge ahead is a stern one, for we have yet some 3000 kilometers of road to build and our combat and operational support missions must continue without abatement. These things in themselves are difficult at best, yet in an era of significant redeployments, dwindling material resources, aging equipment, and an enemy who continues to fight, we must achieve more with less.

I am asking that each of us calls upon that reserve strength—the Engineer character—to insure that our comrades who started our work for us will be able to say when we're finished, "Well done." To this end, let us stress constantly the following fundamentals:

1. Good maintenance of our bodies, spirits, and equipment.
2. Attention to the human values which generate respect for one another.
3. Constant vigilance against the presence of the enemy.

THE KYSU'

This issue of KYSU' magazine marks the beginning of its second year of publication. It is also the first issue since the reorganization of the command into the United States Army Engineer Command Vietnam (Provisional).

This reorganization has been geared to the fast changing situation we are experiencing during the current phasedown of U.S. military operations in the Republic of Vietnam. The reorganization has brought about greater command control through one operational headquarters for all non-divisional engineer personnel in Vietnam. The streamlining of certain operations has increased the speed with which decisions can be made, resulting in quicker response to the needs of the units in the field.

The U.S. Army engineer has been present in Vietnam for over four and a half years. The record has been outstanding. We have built in record time, fire bases, roads, bridges, ports, landing zones, airfields, logistical complexes, and entire base camps. We have transformed much of the jungle into open country. All of this work has helped to increase the effectiveness of our combat forces.

SP4 Curtis A. Nelson, Jr.
EDITOR

ON THE COVER: Versatility is the byword for the engineers in Vietnam. Here the artist presents his rendition of some of the varied engineer operations that take place every day in Vietnam.

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A Quarterly Publication Of
Engineer Command Vietnam

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Supplying the large number of troops based in the 11 Corps area is a task that is dependent upon the continued maintenance of Cam Ranh Bay harbor, one of the largest in Vietnam. Specialist Four Frank Webb reports on some of the recent projects of the 497th Engineer Company (Port Construction), the unit responsible for the upkeep of the port facilities.

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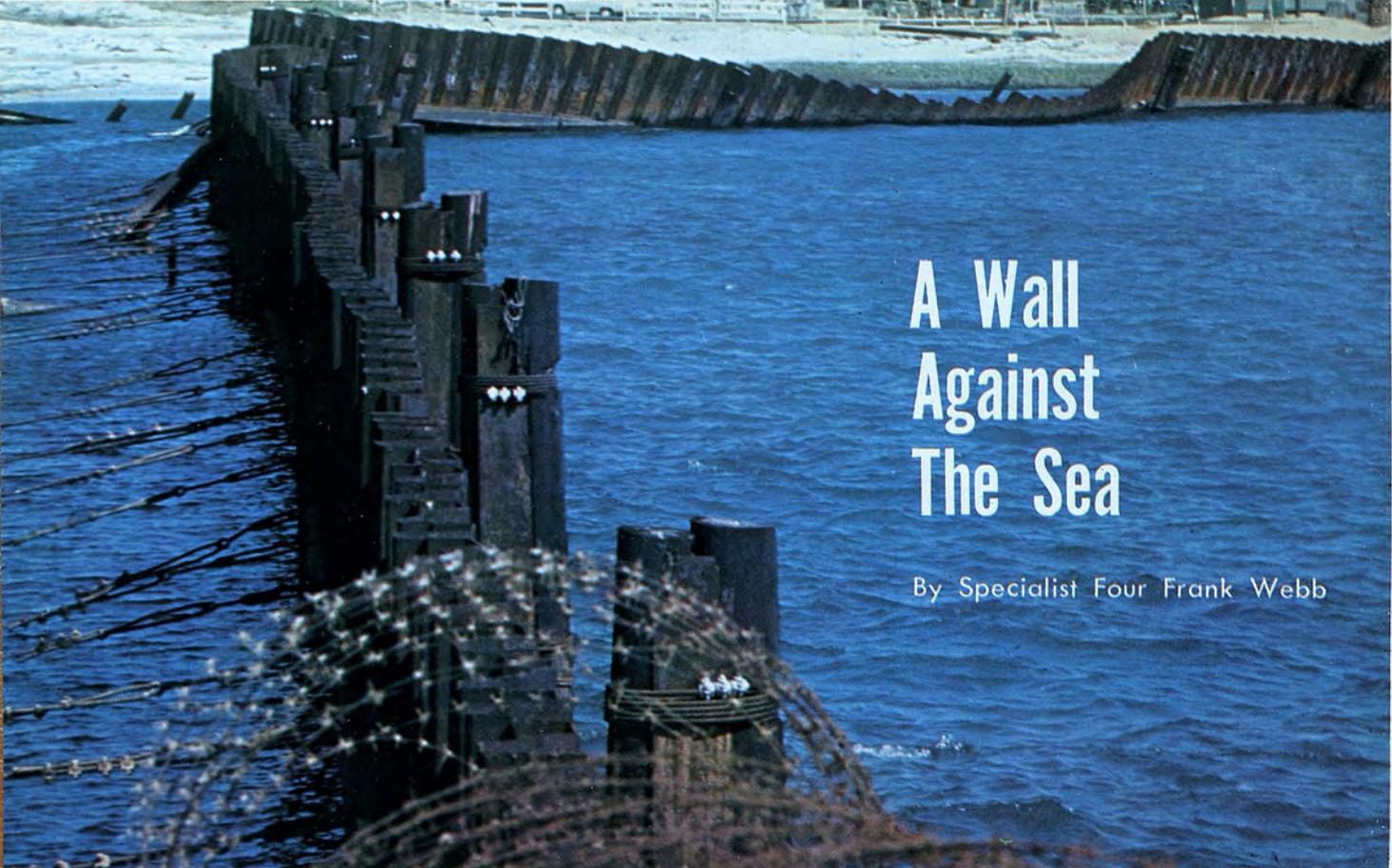
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Specialist Four Lawrence Marchese takes a trip to Qui Nhon to visit the Korean Capital Division Engineers. The Tigermen are proven soldiers, as is evidenced by their skill and determination.

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Land Clearing is the haunting nemesis of the Viet Cong. A successful "LC" operation strips away potential VC camouflage and concealment. A provisional land clearing team has completed the clearing of a major VC staging area located on an island south of Da Nang. First Lieutenant J.P. Donahue has recorded this unique mission.

Major General John A.B. Dillard, Commanding General
Brigadier General Robert M. Tarbox, Deputy USARV
Engineer
Captain Edward D. Florreich, Information Officer
Specialist Four Curtis A. Nelson, Jr., Editor



A Wall Against The Sea

By Specialist Four Frank Webb



Teamwork is required to position the wooden piles, and with a signal from the land crewmen the crane operator lowers the pile into place.

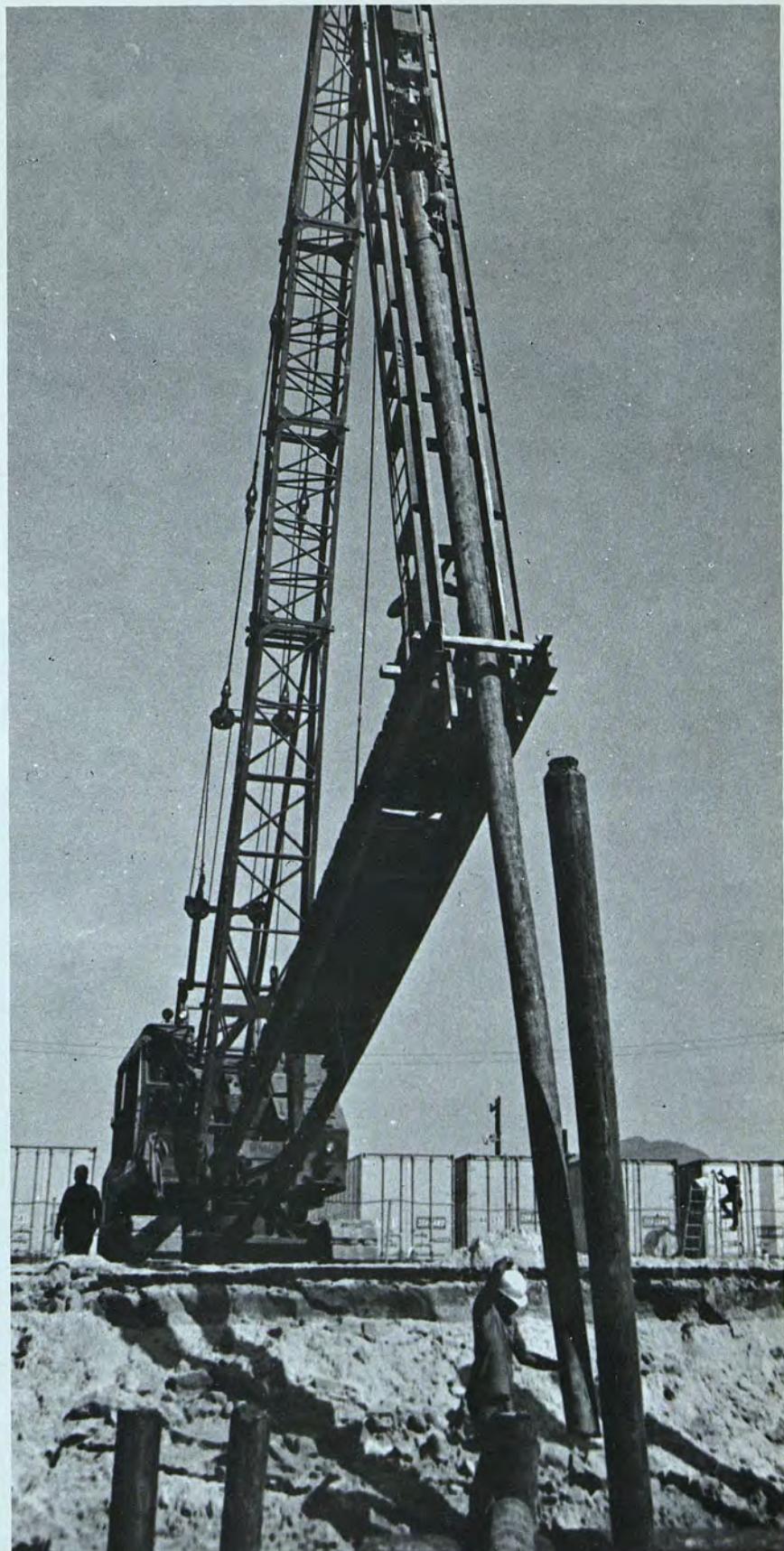
A heavily-laden barge docked with a crunch against the Cam Ranh seawall; its mission—to off-load cargo destined for military installations throughout the II Corps area. The constantly battered wall, four years after being built, had been bent into an accordion shape, the heavy wood bumper system protecting the wall had been chewed to splinters.

Cam Ranh Bay, with its Delong piers and seawall, is one of the most important supply points in Vietnam. It serves an area over one hundred miles in radius. Because the bay provides natural protection from the sea, it has been extensively used as a harbor in the past as well as the present.

The Japanese first used it as a naval base late in the 19th century, and it was subsequently taken over by the Russians and still later by the French during the "colonial period." When the United States began its buildup of troops in Vietnam in 1965, Cam Ranh Bay was a natural selection as a primary port.

The old piers had long before worn out from continuous smashing of barges against them, so a new seawall of steel sheet pile, with a cable covering system, was built in 1966 by the 497th Engineer Company (Port Construction), 18th Engineer Brigade. Implanted along a mile-long section of beach, the wall permitted barges and other shallow water craft to dock for easy off-loading.

These barges, however, continuously battered the heavy sheeting



and eventually bent large sections of the wall. The damaged seawall had slowed down the flow of supplies in and out of the area.

In an effort to restore the collapsing wall and increase the ship loading and unloading capacity of the piers, the 497th Engineer Company was called in to repair and reconstruct the wall. On November 10, 1969, work began on the dilapidated seawall, and by mid-February the project was over three-quarters complete.

The first step in the face-lifting project was to dig out around the old cable-type anchorages and uproot the creosote-soaked poles used originally to secure the system. With the wall freed from its anchoring, hydraulic jacks were used to straighten the failing wall. Once

pulled back into its correct shape, large sections of steel C-pile capping were fitted onto the top and bolted into place to help maintain the wall's alignment.

To secure the straightened wall against wave and barge pounding, a new anchoring system was devised. Wooden piles were driven into the ground on the land side. These piles were set in sections of three—two vertically driven and the center pile driven in at an angle. After completion of pile driving, the wooden poles were cut to the proper height. Prefabricated tie rods were then placed over each center pile and through the seawall waler, the crossbeam which holds the vertical steel sheets straight. The tierods were then bolted to the ocean side of the waler and fast-

ened to the piling with a short piece of I-beam called a "dead man."

The final phase of construction was to cover the anchoring piles and tierods with dirt fill and attach the creosote-soaked wooden bumper system. Bumpers were prefabricated near the job site, then transported to the wall by truck and lifted off by crane onto a barge from which they were bolted to the waler to protect the wall.

Swaying, battering barges will no longer be a threat to the newly strengthened Cam Ranh seawall, and the flow of supplies in and out of the II Corps area will soon be moved swiftly to their destinations unhampered, with the assistance of the 497th Engineer Company (Port Construction) of the 35th Engineer Group. 

A crane operator lowers the walers into position with the aid of a barge worker below.



PHOTO BY SP4 PAUL GRIECO

VIETNAMIZATION OF LAND CLEARING—THE BEGINNING

By Specialist Four Bob Dart

A rock band blasted out a beat as the men of the 501st Engineer Company (Land Clearing) were celebrating the end of a 15-day maintenance standdown with their traditional party. Tomorrow the engineers would load up their equipment and move out on a 45-day operation near the Cambodian border.

This operation would be different. Intermingled with the GIs at the party were Army of the Republic of Vietnam (ARVN) soldiers of the newly formed 318th ARVN Land Clearing Company, who would accompany them on tomorrow's operation to learn the skills of land clearing. Eventually, they will replace the American land clearers in one of the most comprehensive Vietnamization projects yet attempted by U.S. Army engineers.

Captain F.L. Smith, 501st company commander, was urged onto the stage to dance with one of the band's dancers. He was joined by Captain Nguyen Van Tich, the ARVN company commander. The two commanders delighted both the American and Vietnamese engineers, but the party soon broke up. Move-out time was six o'clock the next morning.

Land clearing is exactly what the name implies. Bulldozers, equipped with Rome plows, level the jungle, stripping it of heavy vegetation. The plows line up and march through the jungle, leaving a swath of felled trees in their wake.



A Light Observation Helicopter (LOH) circling overhead directs the lead plow by radio. The other plows follow and create an ever-widening path through the tangle of trees and brush.

The work is dangerous and difficult. The plows lead the way into the jungle, security elements follow behind until actual contact with the enemy is made. Ambushes and boobytraps are frequently encountered. Mahogany trees, stretching over 200 feet skyward, often break into sections when struck by the plows, crashing down on the tractors and disabling the plows.

Clearing the jungle denies the VC their traditional sanctuary. Rome plows frequently uncover enemy bunker complexes and hidden arms caches. The cleared land is freed for cultivation and commerce, thus improving the economy of the region. Lieutenant General Julian J. Ewell, commanding general of II Field Force, described land clearing as the "most powerful tool we have in frustrating and defeating the Communists."

The 62nd Engineer Battalion, 79th Engineer Group, 20th Engineer Brigade, of which the 501st is a member, is the only land clear-



PHOTO BY SP4 BOB DART

The work continued as the ARVN became more proficient at operating the big dozers.

ing battalion in the U.S. Army and operates in the III and IV Corps tactical zones. (There are three separate land clearing companies in the 18th Engineer Brigade, stationed throughout the I and II Corps areas). ARVN engineers will also be trained to replace the men of the 60th and 984th Engineer Companies (Land Clearing), the 62nd's other two units.

The land clearing Vietnamization program began with a retreat ceremony on December 15, 1969, in which 75 members of the 318th ARVN Land Clearing Company were welcomed into the 62nd at Long Binh. For a two week period, the Vietnamese engineers learned the care and maintenance of land clearing equipment from Alpha Company, the 62nd's maintenance element. Other Vietnamese would learn to operate and maintain the ten-ton tractors and trailers used to transport the plows to the job sites.

GIs and ARVN began to work, eat, play and learn together as the

Vietnamese soldiers moved into the 62nd Battalion's area. On January 1, the 501st came in from the field and the ARVN began operational work with the plows.

Most teaching was accomplished by the "Buddy System"—each GI working with and teaching his ARVN counterpart. Daily classes were held for the Vietnamese in the English language to improve communications. In addition, three officers from the ARVN Engineer School, at Phu Cuong, aided with teaching and translating.

"Probably, language was the greatest problem," states Specialist Four Richard H. Bailey of Seattle, Wash., a mechanic with the 501st. "It's pretty hard to teach someone without being able to talk with each other. We used a lot of demonstrating and pantomiming to get the ideas across."

Progress was rapid, however, as the ARVN engineers overcame many difficulties through their enthusiasm and mechanical aptitude. "At first I thought they'd be too

small to handle the big Rome plow parts," explained Specialist Five Earl Ducher of Syracuse, N.Y., a plow operator for the 501st, "But they proved strong enough and were willing to try any job."

But the true test was yet to come. The 318th would go out on an actual land clearing operation with the 501st—the Vietnamese engineers would learn by experience the job of clearing the jungle.

A ceremony at the 62nd Battalion headquarters at Long Binh on January 15, marked the end of classroom training for this first group of ARVN. Brigadier General John A.B. Dillard, commanding general of the U.S. Army Engineer Command Vietnam (Prov), congratulated the Vietnamese and American engineers on their progress and wished them success on the field operation. The ARVN land clearers' field experience would begin the next day, but first there was that party to attend.

Morning, as usual, came too early after the party. Roars from

"The most powerful tool we have for frustrating the enemy."

ten-ton tractor engines announced the convoy's departure well before daylight. Plow operators, both American and Vietnamese, dozed in their cabs as they were carried northward on the flatbed trailers through the wakening countryside. Several of the huge trucks were driven by ARVN engineers, already assuming their role on the land clearing team.

The plows unloaded at a fire

support base near Nui Ba Den mountain north of Tay Ninh. Joined by security elements of the U.S. 11th Armored Cavalry, they pushed into the jungle and cleared an area for their Night Defensive Position (NDP). Darkness engulfed the Vietnamese and American land clearers as they pulled final maintenance checks and sharpened the plow blades—the cut would begin in the morning.

At dawn the plows moved out of the NDP and into the heavy haze that hung over the surrounding jungle. Special seats had been installed in the cabs for the Vietnamese engineers to sit on and observe the GI operators. Later in the program, the GIs would occupy the observers' seats.

"The ARVN's are really getting bounced around in the cabs," said Specialist Four Chuck Green of



PHOTO BY SP4 BOB DART

Akron, Ohio, a plow operator for the 501st, on the third day of the cut, "but they're hanging in and still are enthused about taking over. The observer's seat is pretty uncomfortable when you're banging into trees. The program requires 50/50 participation and effort and the ARVN are really doing their share. It really helps to have someone help you pull maintenance at

the end of the day."

As this article was written in mid-February, this first phase of the training program was just getting underway. The first class has taught both the ARVN and the U.S. engineers that it is possible to teach important skills under combat conditions. The area they were working in was very important to the enemy, and many bunker com-

plexes were uncovered as the work progressed.

The training continues in cabs of Rome plows pushing through the jungles near the Cambodian border.

EDITOR'S NOTE: Next quarter KYSU will visit the 62nd Engineer Battalion again, to see how the Vietnamization has progressed.



The ARVN engineers worked along with their American counterparts in operating the Rome plows.

QUINTON-BUDLONG

THE CONSULTING ENGINEER

By First Lieutenant Doug Noble



The men of the United States Army Corps of Engineers in the Republic of Vietnam are engaged in one of the largest and most complicated construction programs ever encountered in any war. The projects range in size from a small bunker to thousands of kilometers of paved highway. To assist with the design and planning, and to supplement its technical capability, the U.S. Army has contracted the services of a civilian engineer consulting firm.

The civilian consultant firm, Quinton-Budlong, has been involved in supplying the U.S. Army Engineer Command Vietnam (Prov) and its' two engineer brigades with engineering expertise since 1965. The firm is a subsidiary of Planning Research Corporation, a combination of a wide range of consulting firms, providing services to civilian corporations as well as to the U.S. government.

"A gap created by the very nature of the short tour in Vietnam and the lack, in many cases, of years of experience by many engineer soldiers had to be filled," said Gerald S. Strauss, Project Manager for Quinton-Budlong, in assessing his firm's role. "The men in World War II and the Korean War had spent years together in the same unit and worked side by side for the duration of the conflict, but the turnover rate in Vietnam does create a problem; you can't expect an OCS graduate to be an expert on quarries if he has never operated one before. That is one of the reasons why Quinton-Budlong is here

in Vietnam, offering years of advice and experience."

Despite his opinion on the lack of experience, Strauss went on to say, "I had an asphalt plant and a dump truck platoon in Korea and these kids today are so far superior it's amazing! When I get back to the states, I'd like to have employees like these soldiers, and that's not patriotic garbage either."

In Vietnam, the firm is divided into three major departments: Design and Planning, Construction, and Electrical Operations. In the five years it has been here, Quinton-Budlong has been involved in a wide range of engineering projects. There are many that can be cited as characteristic of the company's construction.

When it was discovered that one of the steel bulkheads forming the seawall at Cam Ranh Bay had collapsed, Quinton-Budlong design and planning engineers were asked to come up with a solution to save the remaining seawall. The initial plan involved dredging behind the seawall and using a bulldozer to pull the wall back into position, but due to time and safety considerations, the decision was made to replace the section of wall that had failed.

The Quinton-Budlong design for the wall was followed, however, on the other three sections of seawall that could be straightened. The unit involved in the upgrading of the seawall system was the 497th Engineer Company (Port Construction) under the command of Captain Leroy A. Lincoln of Peoria,

III. CPT Lincoln commented, "One of Quinton-Budlong's greatest contributions comes from their technicians." For this project, the firm had sent Perry C. Brownfield, a welding expert, and Ivan H. Tomlinson, a crane maintenance and pile driving specialist, to assist the 497th in the seawall project.

In another marine project requiring Quinton-Budlong's assistance, engineers needed a system for off-loading petroleum, oil and lubricants (POL) and transporting them to coastal cities throughout Vietnam.

Quinton-Budlong was asked to study the feasibility of two possible solutions. The first recommendation involved building an overland pipeline system up the coast, but was rejected because of the ease with which the enemy could destroy sections of the line. The second proposal, which involved construction of jetties at strategic points along the coast where ships could dock for off-loading, was rejected because of costs.

Quinton-Budlong engineers finally came up with a solution which was accepted by everyone. A submarine pipeline with a POL buoy was installed at Cam Ranh Bay. Ships pull alongside the firmly anchored buoy, pump out their loads, and return to the safety of the ocean.

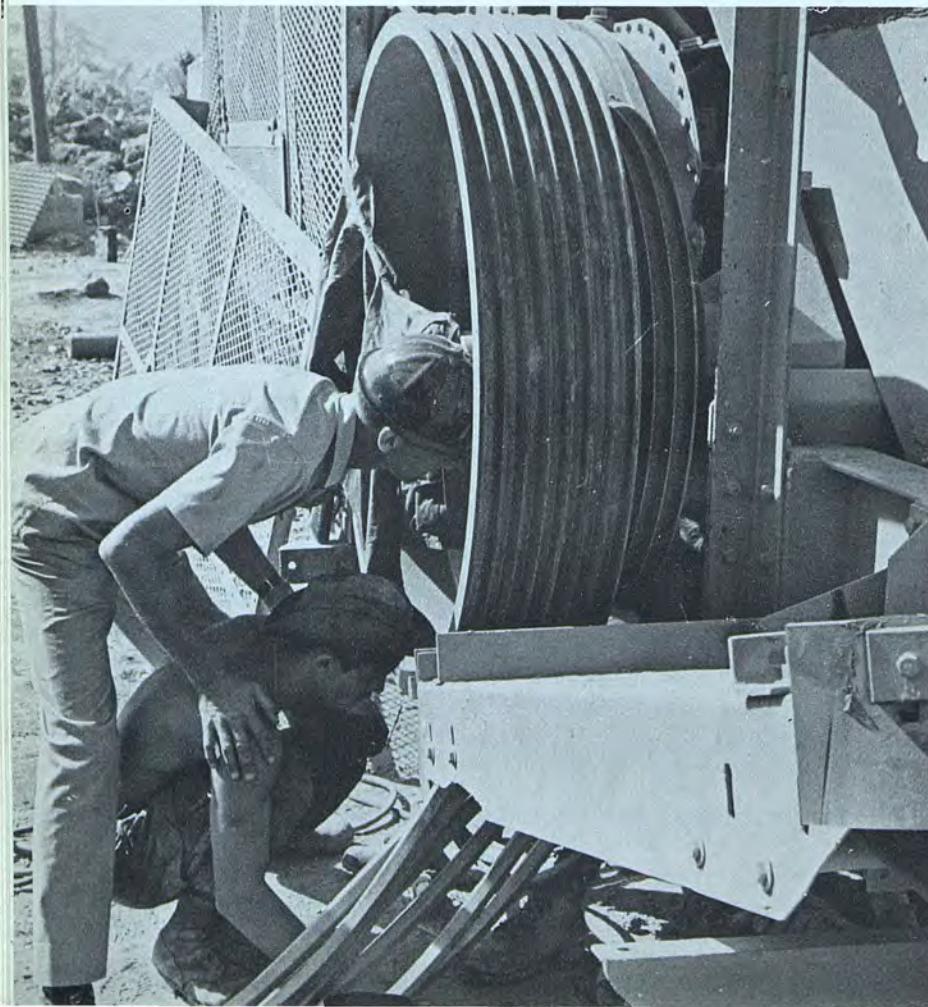
The firm assisted U.S. Army Engineer Command, Vietnam (P) in perhaps the largest electrical design

it has developed in Vietnam involving the modernization of the 40th ARVN Engineer Battalion base depot, the 60th ARVN Signal depot, and the 80th Ordnance rebuild depot. The designed project will supply the ARVN's with up-to-date buildings equipped with adequate power and lighting.

Many U.S. soldiers have had direct contact with Quinton-Budlong's 50 construction equipment maintenance experts in Vietnam. The Construction Division of the consulting firm offers technical assistance and advice on the installation and operation of much of the new commercial equipment obtained with Military Construction Army (MCA) funds to support the Lines of Communication (LOC) highway construction project.

Technicians from Quinton-Budlong often work right alongside the military personnel in repairing and maintaining equipment, at the same time passing on the valuable skills the Army engineers need to keep the equipment functioning. The bulk of the equipment the firm gives advice on is used in quarry operations and asphalt plants, and each expert will handle several installations in one area.

Whether it is Design and Planning, Construction, or the Electrical Operations division doing the work, Quinton-Budlong's 100 employees cover a lot of territory and are dedicated in their support to the U.S. Army engineers in the Republic of Vietnam.



Employees of Quinton-Budlong often help perform the actual repairs on the special equipment, in addition to their job of training and advising the Army engineers in maintenance procedures.

LINES OF COMMUNICATION RESTORATION PROGRAM

By Captain Edward D. Florreich

The largest engineer project ever undertaken by the United States military in a foreign country is the Lines of Communication (LOC) Restoration Program in the Republic of Vietnam. When completed, this project will tie together the major population centers of the country with 4,106 kilometers (3,038 miles) of modern high speed highways.

In addition to the highway system, the program also includes the upgrading of the nation's 1,240 kilometers of railroads, and eventually will encompass the upgrading of numerous airfields.

The formal program has been underway for almost two years though much tactical road construction had been done before that time, and has been the major focal point of the U.S. Army engineer effort. More than 11,000 men of the 26,000 in U.S. Army Engineer Command, Vietnam (Prov), are currently engaged in some aspect of the LOC highway construction.

The U.S. Army is only one of many agencies involved in the program. Developed in 1967, the program was approved jointly by the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), the Vietnamese Ministry of Public Works, the Vietnamese Director General of Highways and the U.S. Military Assistance Command Vietnam (USMACV).

Representatives of these agencies composed the Combined Central Highways and Waterways Committee (CENCOM) which develops the standards and establishes the priorities for all LOC restoration.

Funds for the program are handled by the U.S. Navy's Officer in Charge of Construction (OICC) for the Republic of Vietnam. This agency handles all contractual arrangements with civilian contractors

as well as serving as banker to the U.S. Army and other military forces involved. This function is a part of the U.S. Navy's overall responsibility for Department of Defense engineering activities in Southeast Asia.

The USMACV Construction Directorate maintains overall supervision and coordination of the program between the various U.S. agencies, the Army of the Republic of Vietnam (ARVN) and other Allied forces in the Republic of Vietnam.

Vital War Role

The LOC program plays a vital role in the overall war effort. One of the obvious purposes of the program is to speed the movement of military supplies and increase the flexibility of tactical maneuver. In previous wars, adequate roads were usually in existence or temporary combat roads were constructed solely to expedite troop movements. In Vietnam, the tactics of war are much different and the need for good quality, dependable roads is paramount.

Even more important is the contribution the program has made to pacification efforts. By improving on the ease and safety of travel, contact between the villages and the cities, socially and economically, is being greatly increased.

The program should enable the farmer to transport his produce farther and quicker. The products of the cities will be able to reach markets in smaller villages and rural areas at lower costs, thus raising the standard of living in these areas.

Progress Made

As of February 1, 1970, the

overall goal for the paved highway portion of the LOC program was 4,106 kms. Of this 1,669 kms were considered complete by USMACV, or 40.6 per cent of the program.

The U.S. Army, along with ARVN engineers and engineers of other Allied forces in Vietnam, has the responsibility for the construction of 2,645 kms. Already complete as of February 1 was 756 kms or 28.6 per cent of that goal. The amount of highway scheduled for civilian contract is 1,167 kms, of which 663 kms, or 57.7 per cent, of the projected construction responsibility was complete.

The U.S. Navy Seabees and U.S. Marine Corps engineers are responsible for 294 kms of the total project. Their portion of the program, along with 131 kilometers of civilian contracted construction, stretches from the Bin Son River bridge just below Chu Lai, north to the Demilitarized Zone (DMZ). With 250 kilometers completed, these two services are expected to finish their commitment by early summer.

The figures give little insight into the accomplishments already achieved in the road construction effort. A great portion of the effort to date has been expended to develop resources, such as rock, necessary to build the roads. Also consuming much effort has been the widening and improving of existing roads in preparation for paving and the building of base courses on which to pave new surfaces.

Rock and Asphalt

When U.S. Army engineers first arrived in Vietnam in late 1965, there were only a few rock quarries, developed by the French, in operation. Rock was scarce and critically needed for construction of base camps and tactical roads.

Great emphasis has since been placed on the development of rock quarries and crusher sites.

There are now 18 U.S. Army rock crushing operations throughout the Republic of Vietnam. In addition there are seven major civilian quarries operated by the civilian construction combine of Raymond, Morrison and Knudson-Brown and Root, and J.A. Jones (RMK-BRJ), the principle U.S. civilian contractor in the Republic of Vietnam. Also several sites are operated by the U.S. Navy, U.S. Marine Corps, U.S. Air Force, ARVN engineers and other civilian contractors. At the Vung Tau Quarry, operated by the 92nd Engineer Detachment (Quarry), more than 90,000 tons of rock are produced a month.

Over the past year, U.S. Army statistics show that more than 70,000 tons of rock from all sources are utilized by its engineers in Vietnam every week. In the first weeks of this year, the average was above 150,000 tons per week. Most of this rock is used in land fill, base course construction and asphalt production in support of the LOC program, the rest was used on other engineer projects.

To build roads in the Delta region, it was necessary to develop a system for moving large volumes of rock into the area as rock sources were virtually non-existent. The Delta Rock Program was developed in late 1967 and since early 1968 has kept more than 150,000 tons of rock per month moving by barge to off-loading sites throughout the Delta from quarries at Vung Tau, Thu Duc, Nui Sam and Nui Sap. In excess of 200,000 tons were shipped in January of this year.

Co-located with the crusher operations at most quarries are the asphalt plants which prepare the surfacing material. There are 11 asphalt plants scattered throughout the Republic of Vietnam. All but two are operating in conjunction with quarry operations.

The other asphalt plants are located at sites near paving operations, and rock is trucked there from quarry sites and stockpiled to

be used as needed. One of the plants is located in the Delta at Vinh Long, fed by rock shipped in by barges. In some locations, U.S. Army engineer units get asphalt from plants operated by the U.S. Air Force or by civilian contractors.

Asphalt used in the plants arrives in Vietnam in 55 gallon drums by ship, primarily from Japan, Taiwan, and Thailand. After being off-loaded at ports along the coast, it is trucked to the various operating sites. The troop portion of the program uses 47,000 barrels of asphalt each month and 200,000 bags of cement.

Special Equipment

Perhaps the major innovation in the Lines of Communication program has been the introduction of specialized road building equipment into U.S. Army engineer units to supplement the Table of Organization and Equipment (TO&E).

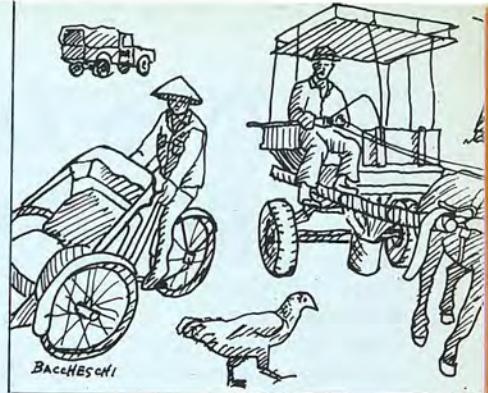
A special purchase of 669 items of equipment was begun in December 1968 using Military Construction Army (MCA) funds. The equipment selected supplements all phases of road construction.

Perhaps the two most important items in the purchase were the eight 250-ton per hour rock crushers and 226 12-cubic yard dump trucks. The crushers are playing a vital role in the production of large volumes of rock, and the trucks have filled the need for a high capacity hauling requirement.

In addition to the crushers, the quarry operations have been supplemented with track drills, 6,000 cubic foot per minute air compressors, ground level rock feeders, and six-cubic yard scoop loaders.

Other road construction items included several types of compaction equipment, soil stabilization plants, asphalt distributors and pavers. Some special purpose items such as D-9 bulldozers, excavators, back hoes and water distributors rounded out the equipment needs.

Part of the contract for the equipment purchase called for a team of 125 technicians who came to Vietnam to provide maintenance



The completion of the LOC Restoration to get to the cities quickly and safely.

for the equipment and to train U.S. Army operators and mechanics in operating and maintaining the equipment.

The famous cartoon character "The Roadrunner" is part of the emblem on the new equipment. The bird is purple and is running on a green circle with the letters MCA-LOC printed on the circle in purple. In addition, all the personnel operating the equipment are given a special operator's license with the emblem printed on it.

Engineering Innovations

The unusual weather conditions and wide variations in terrain and climate, have posed many unique problems for the construction engineer in Vietnam. These problems have spurred the development of new methods of highway construction.

In the Delta, where mud and a shortage of rock threatened to impose a stalemate in the construction of roads capable of supporting heavy traffic, a process known as clay-lime stabilization has been

The paving of Vietnam's roads will raise commercial centers more accessible to the



Paving of Phuoc Vinh Airfield

By Specialist Four Gary Ruse

The pilot of the C-123 announced over the intercom that touch-down would be in 15 minutes and for everyone to brace himself for what was usually a bruising landing on the steel matted Phuoc Vinh airstrip. On the same flight one week later, the pilot gave the same instructions to his passengers but this time the cargo plane landed with just a screech as the tires touched the smooth asphalt and the aircraft coasted to a halt.

The airfield was the same one, but in the short period of a few days the old matting had been taken up and a new surface put down by United States Army engineers.

The field was upgraded at the request of Headquarters, II Field Force Vietnam. In addition to

heavy U.S. Air Force traffic, the 1st Air Cavalry Division's forward air control and aerial observation craft provide a steady stream of lightweight aircraft.

The old steel matted surface had deteriorated under the heavy traffic and had reached the point where it was posing a hazard to the lightweight planes used by the 1st Cav. Even the large C-123 cargo planes of the Air Force were experiencing dangerously rough landings.

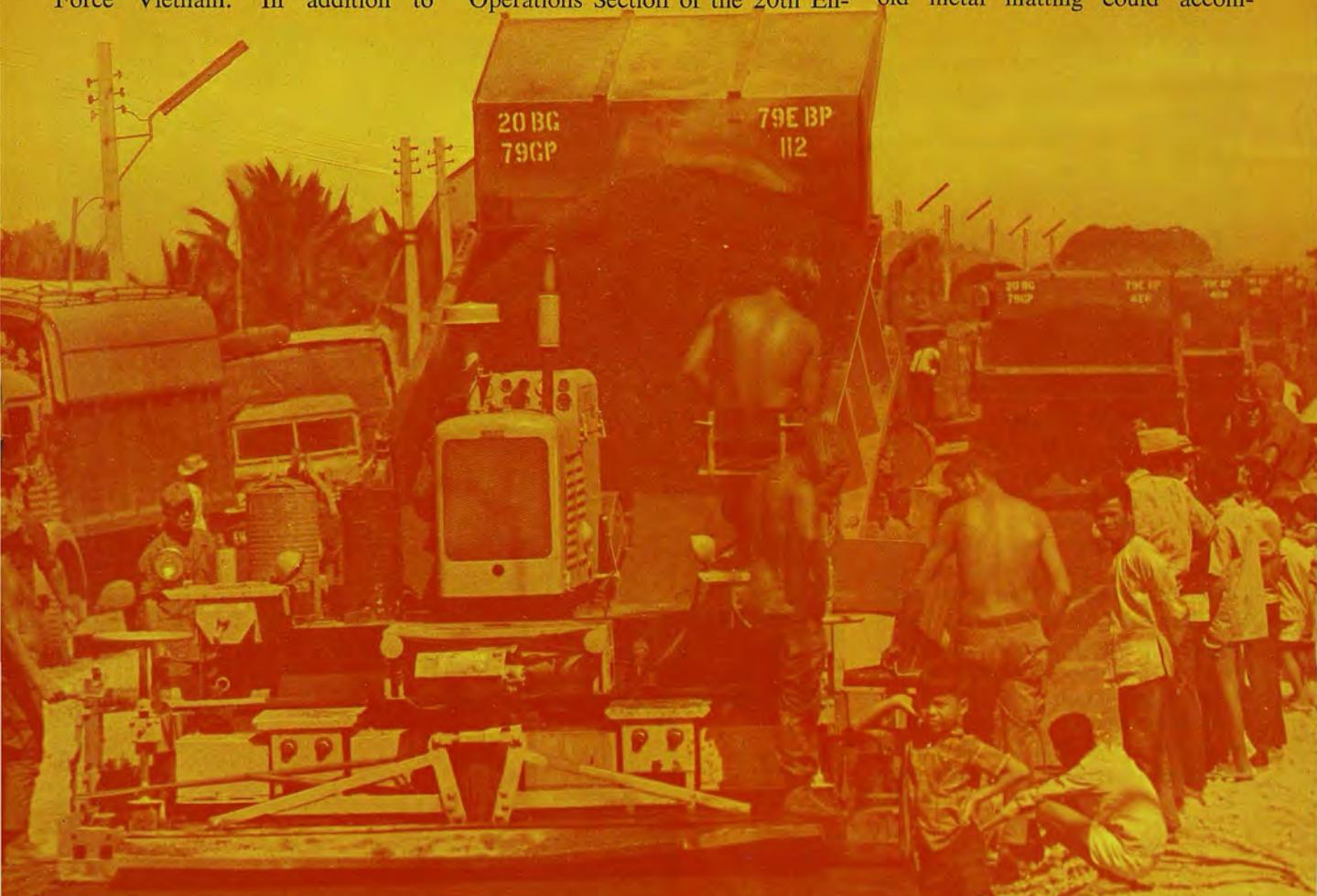
When it was discovered how extensive the work would be in replacing the old matting with new steel matting it was decided to pave the field and upgrade it to the point where the larger Air Force C-130 could use it.

The project was planned by the Operations Section of the 20th En-

gineer Brigade and responsibility for the direction of the project was given to the 31st Engineer Battalion (Cbt) commanded by Lieutenant Colonel Gwynn A. Teague.

Men from virtually every unit in the 79th and 159th Engineer Groups of the 20th Engineer Brigade pooled their efforts in January and again in February to resurface and lengthen the Phuoc Vinh airfield. The mammoth project was split in half because the large amount of air traffic landing and taking off dictated that at least half the airfield be functional at all times.

Originally scheduled for August, the project was advanced because of the high volume of traffic and the need to land larger planes. The old metal matting could accom-



modate only C-123 and smaller aircraft, but by lengthening the runway to 4,400 feet the larger C-130 cargo planes would also be able to land with ease.

The first half of this operation, in January, was an example of highly organized engineer effort in Vietnam.

Once the initial plans were made, the project began by moving a soil-stabilization plant from Tay Ninh to Phuoc Vinh. Once it was reassembled, the engineers were ready to tackle the first half of the massive resurfacing.

Removal of the matting in the first phase of the job, by the 577th Engineer Company of the 31st Engineer Battalion, began January 19, two days ahead of the base course construction. Next, the laterite base was scarified and recompacted. Then the first layer of soil-cement base, consisting of a mixture of eight per cent cement, nine per cent water and the remainder sandy soil, was laid over the entire 2,200 by 60 foot area.

The soil-cement mixture was compacted, and RC 800, an asphalt sealer, was added. A second six inch layer of soil-cement was placed over the runway to complete the preparations.

The next part of the operation was the transporting of approximately 3,200 tons of asphalt mix to the paving site. A total of 143 dump trucks from all five battalions and two separate companies in the 79th Group were assigned to accomplish the task.

The combined output of two 159th Group asphalt plants; one at Phu Loi operated by Company B, 34th Engineer Battalion (Const), and one at Xom Tam, operated by Company C, 92nd Engineer Battalion (Const), was necessary to produce the 3,200 tons of mix. Another plant, located at Resor Quarry and operated by the 103rd Engineer Company, 46th Engineer Battalion (Const), 159th Engineer Group, stood ready in the event trouble developed at one of the other plants.

As some of the dump truck drivers pulled up at Phu Loi to receive their load of asphalt mix, they were

surprised to find Army of the Republic of Vietnam (ARVN) engineers giving directions. The ARVN's of the 5th ARVN Engineer Construction Group at Hoc Mon, were receiving training in asphalt plant operations.

Moving out of the asphalt plants, the convoys, each consisting of 10 asphalt-laden dump trucks, reached Phuoc Vinh after traveling 45 miles from the Phu Loi plant or 65 miles from Xom Tam. Much of the distance was through enemy infested territory, and units from the 1st Air Cavalry Division and 1st Infantry Division provided security for the convoys from Ben Cat to Phuoc Vinh, the most dangerous part of the route.

Road guards were placed at major road intersections, and 18th Military Police Brigade soldiers coordinated traffic control.

Maintenance support during the airfield construction project was divided into two areas—one controlled at Xom Tam and the other at Ben Cat. Radio equipped wreckers were always on call. After the dump trucks dropped their load of asphalt they were driven through a maintenance assembly line, where tires were

checked for pressure and filters cleared of dust. Spare parts were on hand if a problem developed. Maintenance points were established, as was a refreshment stand for the dusty-throated drivers.

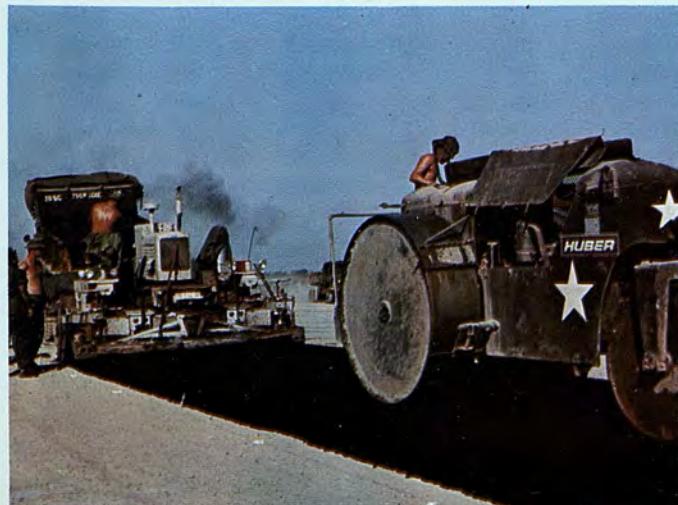
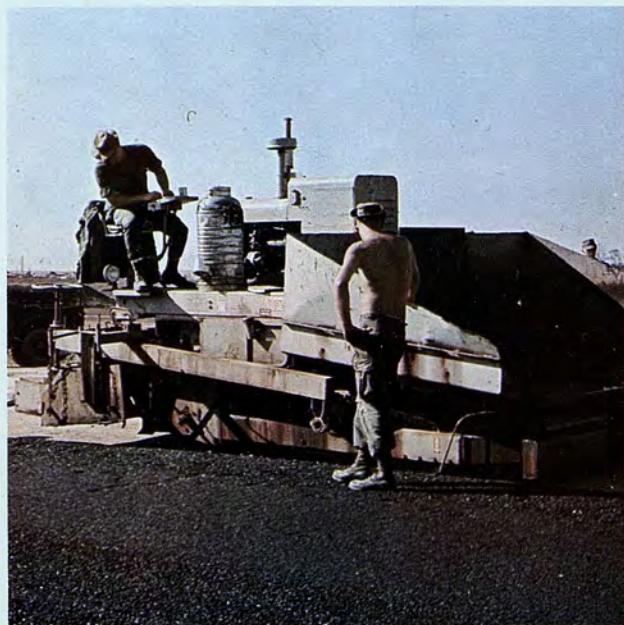
Two asphalt pavers, one from the 554th Engineer Battalion (Const Sup), 79th Group, and another from the 34th Battalion, were used simultaneously to lay down the asphalt mix. Several steel-wheeled and rubber-tired rollers were employed to compact the mix once it was laid.

Transportation to move this equipment to Phuoc Vinh had been provided by the "Rome Runners," men of the 62nd Engineer Battalion (Land Clearing), 79th Group. Company C, of the 31st Engineer Battalion (Cbt), supplied the men to operate the paving trains.

Working with skill and precision, the teamwork of the paving crews and dump truck operators resembled a well-conducted orchestra. The black strip of asphalt inched forward with visible speed. Within two days the asphalt mix was laid, and the surface was ready for use. (P)



Efficient organization was the key factor in success.



The paving of the Phuoc Vinh airfield progressed smoothly from start to finish.

TRIP TO TIGERLAND

By Specialist Four Lawrence T. Marchese

EDITOR'S NOTE: In its continuing series of articles giving recognition to the other engineer forces in Vietnam, the KYSU' magazine, represented by Specialist Lawrence Marchese, visited the Capital Division Engineers of the Army of the Republic of Korea based near Qui Nhon.

Dawn's first rays split the peaks of the emerald green mountains. Mist hangs in the air like a shroud waiting to be lifted by the rise of the sun. In the valley below, securely nestled in the surrounding mountains, rests a military compound.

Inside the barracks of the compound, men awake, dress and prepare for the new day. Fifteen minutes after their first stirrings the men are outside and falling into formation. The troops are called to attention, platoon sergeants report their units' status. A command is given, and the men begin to sing the national anthem of Korea. The engineers of the Republic of Korea's Capital Infantry Division (Tiger Division) begin another day here in Vietnam.

Tiger headquarters is located in gently sloping ROK Valley 10 miles outside the city of Qui Nhon. The view from the mountains that semicircle the valley reveals the compound to be a well manicured patchwork of roads, barracks, offices and soccer fields. The entire compound is tied together by zigzagging defensive berms.

Tiger Division came to Vietnam in 1965 as part of Korea's 50,000 man expeditionary force. Next to the United States and Republic of Vietnam, Korea maintains the largest allied fighting force in Vietnam.

There are four other important



Republic of Korea (ROK) engineer units functioning in Vietnam. The White Horse Divisional Engineer Battalion (Cbt) makes its home at Ninh Hoa. The 103rd and 116th Engineer Battalions (Cbt), both part of the 100th Logistical Command, are located at Nha Trang. The Korean Construction Support Group (White Dove), composed of one engineer battalion with security and logistical elements attached, is located at Di An.

There are approximately 3,400 ROK Army engineers in Vietnam. The area of responsibility (AOR) for the two divisions and the logistical command stretches along the coast from just north of Qui Nhon to Nha Trang in the south. Occasionally, however, a mission will require that the ROK units go as far south as Cam Ranh.

Tiger Division engineers personify their unit's namesake in many ways. Strength, courage, determination and professionalism are characteristic of every mission the

men undertake. No stranger to fighting, the division has distinguished itself in battle both in its own country during the Korean war and in Vietnam.

As combat engineers, the Tigermen perform missions different from those of construction engineers. Working in direct support of the Capital Infantry Division, the Tigermen are responsible for creating expedient roads and bridges, supporting civic action projects, and maintaining perimeter defenses.

Recently, the men of Bravo Company completed work on one of the observation towers that perch atop the mountains cradling what has been nicknamed ROK Valley. The view from the towers affords the Koreans total surveillance of ROK Valley and the surrounding area. The 50-foot towers, fashioned out of telephone poles and timbers, are assembled in the compound area. When assembly is complete, huge CH-54 sky-cranes,



Once the observation tower was completed, an Army CH-54 Sky Crane was called in to lift it into place.

supplied by U.S. forces in the area, air-lift the towers and gingerly emplace them on the mountain top. Protected by a perimeter, each tower is located within communication range of nearby artillery installations. The men of Bravo Company finished their large job in only 15 days.

Shortly after completing the work on the observation tower, Bravo Company began cutting a tactical supply route through the mountains that lay beyond its compound. In just two weeks, the men hacked and slashed a four kilometer road through thick underbrush and trees. "The terrain here in Vietnam is much like that of Korea," one Korean officer commented; "the mountains are tall and beautiful and covered with lush foliage...sometimes it's like being at home."

When completed, the tactical

route will be used to transport supplies to ROK infantry units and Special Forces Troops patrolling the far side of the mountains.

Not all of their effort and energy is devoted to operational projects; much time and material are channeled into civic action. The Koreans realize the importance of winning the friendship and confidence of the Vietnamese people.

For example, the ROKs are building a county office in the village of Phu Tan. The 23 by 60 foot concrete block structure replaces an old ramshackle building formerly used as the county office. The building is modern and includes handcrafted French doors and shutters. Working part-time as their schedule permitted, the men of Bravo Company completed the project in four months.

The ROKs are so involved in civic action that a portion of Char-

lie Company has been assigned the operation of a concrete block factory. Captain Byun, Charlie company commander, commented on the block plant, "We maintain 13 men working six days a week at the block shop. If the men work hard, their output is 400-500 blocks per day. What makes the shop so important is that all the blocks produced here are used for civic action projects."

Competitive by nature, the Koreans enjoy sports. When not working, the ROKs are usually playing their national sport... soccer. Koreans enjoy few things as much as a bone-jarring, lightning-paced soccer match.

The ROKs generally follow an afternoon on the soccer field with a hearty meal. Korean food is highly seasoned and the local staple, kimchi, a type of fermented cabbage, is loaded with garlic. After



The men living in ROK valley are responsible for their own berm construction.



their first Korean meal (and a heaping portion of kimchi), many Americans would fondly remember the traditional combination of meat and potatoes.

Colonel Lee Jong Doo, chief engineer, Republic of Korea Forces Vietnam, commented on the direction the Korean engineer effort will take in the future. He stated, "Until now our engineers have primarily been involved in tactical support of our combat divisions. With the changing trend in the war, we are shifting our efforts to construction projects. Not only are we taking on

more construction projects, but these missions have a larger scope." He went on to point out that Korean engineer forces have been assigned the task of building 11 bridges along LTL-5A and may be responsible for a large portion of the paving on that highway. Korean engineers have already been working on the Capital Beltway around Saigon.

They may eat kimchi instead of hamburger, play soccer in place of baseball, and live in Seoul rather than San Francisco, but Korean or American we have much in com-

mon. It wasn't many years ago that the U.S. Army Engineers were working side by side with the Korean Engineers in much the same manner as they both do with those of the Army of the Republic of Vietnam now. The Koreans have learned the necessary skills and have applied them in their own country. Now they are working alongside the Americans in Vietnam, helping another country in the struggle against Communism.

CEMENT STABILIZATION OF QL-13

By Specialist Five Blanchard De Merchant

The scarcity of natural resources, such as rock, and the need to make maximum use of available equipment, often forces U.S. Army engineers in the Republic of Vietnam to develop more expedient ways of accomplishing their mission.

Such was the situation faced by the 554th Engineer Battalion (Construction), 79th Engineer Group, when in June 1969 it was given the mission to upgrade highway QL-13 from Lai Khe to An Loc, a distance of 50 kilometers.

Initial route reconnaissance along the proposed path of the road was begun that month. The original concept was to construct a laterite subbase with a rock base course. However, the only source of rock available in the vicinity of the project was located at the northern end, near An Loc. To compound the problem, no suitable laterite was found in sufficient quantity anywhere along the route.

During one of the first recons, samples of the on-site material were taken for use in making classification and California Bearing Ratio (CBR) tests. The results of the Atterberg limits test, which measures water and plasticity limits, indicated that the material had an unusually low level of plasticity.

Design CBR tests were run on the same material, and it was determined that the CBR, as compared with a limestone standard, was 24 per cent. In comparison with lateritic material previously used by the 554th Battalion, for subbase construction, the in-place silty sand was twice as strong.

Planning had begun to establish



"Keeping large areas moist in Vietnam during the dry season is practically an impossible task."

a rock quarry at An Loc to provide all the base course rock and asphalt aggregate for the project. It was apparent from the outset that the location of the quarry would require extensive security and logistical support which was not then available. Additionally, a rock crusher would not be available until late in the fall, which meant the initial start of rock production would delay the project.

In light of these difficulties and the results of the soil tests, Lieutenant Colonel E.D.H. Berry, then battalion commander and now at the Command and General Staff College at Fort Leavenworth, suggested additional tests be run on the material to determine if the addition of cement would produce a satisfactory base course. The cement would serve as a bonding agent between the silty sand par-



The work continued on QL-13 as the cement bags were distributed over the roadbed.

ticles, increasing the bearing capability. After many tests using varying per cents of cement, a mix of nine per cent by weight was found to exceed the minimum standard compressive strength of 300 pounds per square inch (psi).

The next step was to design the road structure based on the standards in Highway Research, Record #90, January 1969. It was found, after applying the parameters required for a MACV Class E road and the limitation of base course thickness, that with a minimum allowable base course thickness of six inches, the soil-cement would provide Class A strength. The geometric design for a Class E highway is seven meters of asphaltic concrete surface with one

and one-quarter meter shoulders.

These findings were presented to higher headquarters, pointing out that by using the soil-cement process the requirement for a rock quarry at An Loc would be eliminated. However, using this process, a completely new road would be required running parallel to old QL-13 since traffic could not travel on the base course during the seven day curing process.

The next problem to overcome was determining the exact process to be used in the production of soil cement. The quality of material produced by a stabilization plant had been proven to be good during a previous construction project completed by the battalion. However, the use of such a machine

was rejected because it had to operate from a fixed location with material hauled to and from the plant. All haul capability was required for asphalt, cement and specified stretches of rock. For maximum efficiency, a process that could mix in-place material was required.

Fortunately, in the TO&E of a construction battalion there is an ideal piece of equipment to accomplish this mixing—a rotary tiller.

The procedure currently used in the field has proven reasonably efficient. After construction of the embankment to subbase elevation, a loose lift of eight inches of silty sand from the surrounding area is placed on top. Bags of cement are brought in and systematically laid

out along the width and length of the road to obtain the required nine per cent by weight.

Local Vietnamese civilians are employed to spot, break and dump the bags of cement. Once the cement is dumped, a grader is used to spread it evenly over the surface. To assist the rotary tiller in obtaining a thorough mix, the grader scarifies the area prior to the start of the rotary tiller mixing operation.

After a complete coverage is accomplished by the tiller, a 5,000 gallon water distributor is spotted directly in front of the tiller. Water is added to the mixed soil and cement and immediately churned into the base with the tiller. Checks using the Speedy Moisture Tester are made during the process to insure that the material is within one and one-half per cent of optimum moisture content.

Immediately behind the rotary

tiller is a segmented embankment compactor. Varying the number of passes of the compactor and running a number of density tests, it was found that seven passes would give the required density. The final step of the operation is sealing the material on the surface by compacting with a ten-ton steel wheel roller.

Soil cement, like concrete, requires a moist cure. Keeping large areas moist in Vietnam during the dry season is practically an impossible task. To accomplish the same result with less effort, the completed base course was thoroughly dampened and then coated with an asphalt cutback to seal in the moisture. Traffic was then kept off the area for seven days to allow cure and an increase in strength to occur. After curing, the surface was then paved with two and one-half inches of asphaltic concrete.

Soil cement operations on QL-13 were begun by the 554th Engineer Battalion, now under the command of Lieutenant Colonel James E. Lynch, on 23 December 1969. To date, the soil cement process has proven to be an effective method of meeting subbase specifications.

As the road is completed a drastic reduction of mine incidents is being noticed, largely due to the increased difficulty of hiding mines under a hard surface. Military convoy time is being reduced as each new section is open. A marked increase in civilian traffic has been noted, and more citizens in the An Loc—Chon Thanh area are obtaining vehicle operator permits. The highway, when complete, will provide the people of An Loc and Chon Thanh with a rapid access to the commercial and industrial area of Saigon. (1)





THE CLEARING OF BARRIER ISLAND

By First Lieutenant J. P. Donahue

The dozer operator looked up from his Rome plow controls toward the scream of jets to see a Phantom climb away from the earthshaking explosion it had spawned on the hillside ahead of his land clearing machine.

"That's where we'll be clearing tomorrow," thought Specialist Five John Gamble of Live Oaks, Fla., turning his throttles once more. "If that's really Charlie they're pounding, I hope he takes the hint and leaves before we get there."

Gamble's unit, a provisional land clearing team of U.S. Army and U.S. Marine Corps engineers, had been sweeping across Barrier Island, just 12 miles south of Da Nang for the past two weeks. The action, nicknamed Victory Dragon

by the unit, had been engineered to deny Charlie the cover and concealment which allowed him to use this island as a South China Sea staging center.

The 2nd Battalion, Republic of Korea Marines, had charge of supply and security for all forces working in the operation. After warning nearby communities of the impending clean-up, they made an amphibious landing on the seaward side of Barrier Island and established a base camp. From the camp, the ROK Marines made recon patrols and combat sweeps. The going was slow due to sniper harassment and terrain poisoned with booby traps.

After the engineers and dozers had made their amphibious land-

ing, they quickly made berms for the base camp and began clearing away from the camp in 300 by 300 meter sections.

The D7E dozers equipped with Rome plows kept the semblance of a staggered line as the men cut their swaths. Each succeeding dozer was behind and to the left of the one before it, its blade angled to the right to windrow debris.

Each tree hitting the blade gave the dozer a jolt one way or another, making anyone in the cab feel he was riding a popular amusement park ride—the bumping cars.

Gamble was banging from tree to tree when he spotted his alternate driver, Specialist Four Bill Walters of Clearwater, Fla., waving

to him. Spotting the projectile at Walters' feet, Gamble guided his dozer's tracks to crush within a foot of the unexploded 155 mm artillery shell. On his next sweep, he dropped off an Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) team member who set charges to detonate the dud shell.

On a later sweep Gamble saw a soldier, shirtless, with only a bandolier slung across his shoulder, motioning his dozer out of line with an M-16 rifle. The soldier was First Lieutenant Fred Friesz of Billings, Mont., the U.S. Army platoon leader. He jumped up on the tracks of Gamble's machine and shouted, "We're going to stay 90 minutes longer and finish off the island tonight. The Marines have radioed that they are finished and are on the way to help clear the tip of the island."

1LT Friesz had met early that morning with First Lieutenant Edward Wages, USMC, of Myrtle Beach, S.C., the commander of the land clearing team, to coordinate

the day's schedule with Captain Kim, 2nd Company commander of the 2nd Korean Marine Battalion. CPT Kim was in charge of security for the day. The area of clearing originally agreed on at that time had fallen beneath the dozer blades more rapidly than anticipated.

Fifteen minutes after 1LT Friesz had stopped Gamble's dozer, the Marine Land Clearing Platoon's nine dozers appeared at the top of the ridge, roughly spread out in a line looking like Apaches ready to charge. 1LT Friesz was there to meet them and divided the honor of the final cut with Marine platoon leader First Lieutenant Harry Neil of Delmar, Md.

"Have any trouble today, Fred?"

"No, those ROK's have it all in one bag. Every time you think you've lost them they turn up just over the next rise, where they're setting up emplacements, digging fox-holes or something."

The job was defined and the dozers' operators, both U.S. Ma-

ries and the Army's "Blue Bulls" dove into the task with renewed vigor that came as they sensed the end of a mission. They worked with the confidence in each other that comes from working on several missions together.

Composed of engineers from the headquarters companies of the 9th U.S. Marine Engineer Battalion, 1st Marine Division and the U.S. Army's 39th Engineer Battalion, 45th Engineer Group, the provisional land clearing team has been together since August of 1969 and has participated in three operations including this one.

Its first seaborne operation, nicknamed Gaza Strip by the unit after that well-known strip of land in the Mid-east, was on a larger island. Coming back from that operation, the landing craft carrying the dozers to Chu Lai were caught in a storm that kept them off the coast of My Lai IV for eleven hours.

As the Barrier Island clearing ended, explosions from the final



A dozer rolls out on the dunes wielding a destructive blade (right). End of day maintenance must become second nature to plow operators (above).





PHOTO BY 1LT DONAHUE

demolitions ripped the early evening calm and the EOD team members, along with radiomen and medics, scrambled onto the cages and protective bars of the dozers. Gamble and the other operators put their machines in gear and headed for the ocean. The dozers hit the dunes at the edge of the beach, each one hovering for an instant with its front end skyward before slamming down onto the beach. Spinning around face-backwards to avoid the sand that churns up from the tracks, the team headed south towards base camp along the beach that used to be a staging area for the enemy. Supper was only warmed C-rations, one coke and one beer, but it had the taste of victory. (1)



ENGINEER HISTORIANS

By Specialist Four Mike Krause

America's heritage has been recorded since the founding of this country through the efforts of dedicated, scholarly historians. In this more complex age the need for comprehensive documentation of man's achievements poses a momentous task. Answering this need for the United States Army Corps of Engineers in the Republic of Vietnam is the 26th Military History Detachment.

The long range purpose for the detachment is the preparation of one volume of a ten-volume series covering the Vietnam war. This one volume will be devoted entirely to the accomplishments of the engineers.

The mission of the 26th is to insure that all significant engineer activities of the U.S. Army in Vietnam are recorded fully and accurately and to insure that all historically valuable documents, photographs, and tape recordings originating in or acquired by elements of the Corps of Engineers in Vietnam are identified and preserved for use by commanders, staffs, military researchers and historians.

The strength of the detachment is one officer and one enlisted man. The current commander is Captain Kurt E. Schlotterbeck and he is assisted by Specialist Four Mike Krause.

The most recent major project covered by the 26th was the redeployment of the 70th Engineer Battalion (Cbt), 18th Engineer Brigade, from Camp Jerome, near Ban Me Thuot, to Ft. Lewis, Washington for deactivation. Both members of the detachment spent a week with the 70th recording last minute staff meetings and taking pictures of the disassembling of their base camp. The 26th then traveled to Cam Ranh Bay to witness and document the 70th Battalion's

return to CONUS. The 26th tried to get clearance for travel to the final deactivation ceremonies to be held at Ft. Lewis, but it was felt that the proceeding would be covered well enough by historians at Ft. Lewis.

Two other projects recently completed by the historians are a report on land clearing in the Trapezoid and extensive coverage of the Vung Tau Quarry, operated by the 94th Engineer Detachment (Quarry).

Currently the detachment is working on long-term projects concerning the special equipment purchased with Military Construction Army funding for use in the Lines of Communication Restoration Program and Army of the Republic of Vietnam modernization and training.

Since Captain Schlotterbeck assumed command of the 26th in early September he has visited every U.S. Army engineer unit in Vietnam. He has informed them of the presence of the detachment and has advised them on the importance of preserving accurate and complete historical records so that individual units will not be left out when the engineering history of the Vietnam war is written. These visits have served a dual purpose of assisting units with their records and making them aware that the 26th is available for such assistance whenever needed.

A better understanding of history can be gained if the annals of previous wars are accurate and well written. They could be the key to successful campaigns in the future. The team working in the 26th Military History Detachment at Long Binh realize the significance of what they do and that it could be an invaluable aid to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers at another time in another place.



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