

Vietnam Communique

Americal Div

In a week of scattered contacts the Americal Division took a heavy toll on the enemy, killing 197.

Troopers of the 1st Squadron, 1st Cavalry, supported by gunship crews from F Troop, 8th Cavalry, killed 68 enemy during action in Operation Burlington Trail. Friendly casualties were five wounded.

Contact was first made after day-break nine miles northwest of Tam Ky and continued into the night.

Ground troops were credited with 41 enemy killed, while gunship crews from the 8th Cavalry unit reported another 20 enemy killed. Airstrikes called in to support the cavalrymen resulted in seven enemy killed and 15 bunkers destroyed. The soldiers also captured a variety of weapons.

A long range patrol made contact with an enemy force 25 miles north of Duc Pho and killed three of the enemy while waiting for a helicopter to extract them from the area.

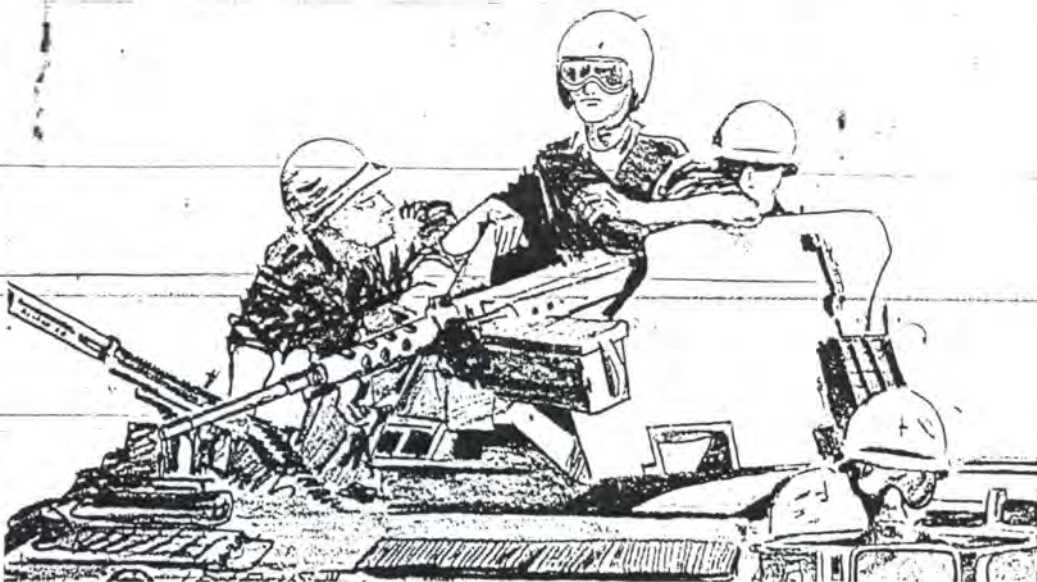
Soldiers operating near Duc Pho killed two enemy and found the body of one VC killed in previous action.

1st Avn Bde

The 1st Aviation Brigade killed 303 enemy during a week of heavy fighting, flying support for ground units.

Helicopter gunship crews of the 175th Assault Helicopter Company, 13th Combat Aviation Battalion and 235th Armed Helicopter Company, 307th Combat Aviation Battalion supported elements of the 7th ARVN Division in a reconnaissance mission six miles northwest of Vinh Long. Flying close overhead fire support, the 175th reported killing 15 VC while the 235th reported six more enemy killed.

The ARVN infantrymen later swept the area and confirmed the kills for the chopper gunners. In addition, the 175th reported killing 33 enemy, bringing the total to 54. They also sank 10 sampans and destroyed 16 structures.



1st Air Cav Div

Soldiers of the 1st Air Cavalry Division killed 30 during a week of light contact with enemy forces.

Chopper crews of the 1st Squadron, 9th Air Cavalry were conducting a reconnaissance mission 10 miles northeast of Quang Tri when one of the crewmen spotted movement in a rice paddy. The pilots dropped down for a closer look.

After several low-level passes, three NVA were spotted running into a bunker. The door gunners engaged the enemy

with rockets and reported killing 10 NVA soldiers. A short time later, an enemy soldier was observed trying to evade the helicopters. The gunners engaged him and reportedly killed him.

1st Inf Div

Members of the 1st Infantry Division killed 19 enemy in a week of light contact.

While sweeping a densely wooded area six miles east of Loc Ninh, soldiers of the 1st Battalion, 26th Infantry discovered an abandoned hut. After cutting through the trees in the area, the infantrymen found more than 30 tons of rice in 200-pound bags.

The infantrymen continued to sweep the area and discovered two bunkers. Inside the bunkers were 500 gallons of cooking oil, 600 pounds of assorted foodstuffs and 600 pounds of powdered food. In several other locations nearby, the soldiers found more than 40 more tons of polished rice.

The 70 tons of rice discovered yesterday would feed a 1,500-man enemy regiment for almost two months. The total rice found in a three-day period was in excess of 150 tons.

4th Inf Div

The 4th Infantry Division killed 30 enemy soldiers during the week.

Elements of the 4th Infantry Division's 1st Squadron, 10th Cavalry and 7th Squadron, 17th Air Cavalry made contact with an enemy force south of Ban Me Thout.

The cavalrymen were moving along a road through heavy jungle when they began receiving small arms and rocket fire from an estimated company. The soldiers called in gunships, artillery and airstrikes and the enemy was forced to withdraw.

The 4th Division troopers pursued the NVA troops, catching them again in a bunker complex which contained 40 bunkers, many of them booby trapped. Once again the enemy force withdrew and contact was lost.

Seventeen enemy were killed in the action. A search of the bunker complex and the area of the first contact resulted in the discovery of two recoilless rifles, two rocket launchers, two carbines and an assortment of ammunition.

9th Inf Div

Soldiers of the 9th Infantry Division experienced a week of moderate fighting killing 71 enemy.

The major contact occurred when the 1st Brigade encountered the enemy 18 miles southwest of Saigon. The soldiers used seven companies to seal off the wooded area where the enemy had been

surrounded. By nightfall the soldiers had killed 19 of the enemy.

More than 1,500 rounds of artillery pounded the area during the night and four airstrikes were called in as the infantrymen sealing the area took cover behind rice paddy dikes.

A group of VC tried to break through the seal by using a captured ARVN soldier as a shield and to detonate any mines that the soldiers might have set out. The 9th Div. soldiers spotted the ARVN soldier and let him walk past Claymore mines they had set up.

After he had passed the mines the soldiers detonated the Claymores. Several enemy were killed and the rest retreated. The ARVN soldier knocked down by the backblast was only slightly injured.

The next morning a sweep of the area revealed an additional 13 bodies bringing the total body count to 32.

25th Inf Div

The 25th Infantry Division experienced a week of light fighting, killing 20 enemy.

Troopers of the 3rd Squadron, 4th Cavalry and 3rd Battalion, 22nd Infantry were sweeping an area along the Saigon river 13 miles north of Saigon when they received enemy rocket and automatic weapons fire. The soldiers returned the fire and a brief firefight ensued. After the enemy withdrew, a sweep was made which revealed two enemy bodies. Two suspects were detained for questioning.

An estimated 20-man VC force opened fire on an element of the 2nd battalion, 506th Infantry, a 3rd Brigade, 101st Air Cavalry Division unit under the control of the 25th Division, which was operating a mile north of Trang Bang. The cavalrymen returned the fire with rifles, machineguns and grenade launchers and called in artillery for additional firepower. Four enemy were killed in the action.

101st Air Cav Div

An allied operation on the coastal plains developed into a significant contact as troopers from the 1st Battalion, 502nd Infantry combined with Popular Force troops from Quang Dien District in a cordon operation around the village of Thon Bao La, seven miles north of Hue.

The soldiers trapped the enemy force, estimated to be a platoon-sized element, in a village. They took up blocking positions to the south of the village, as the Popular Force soldiers and other 101st units completed the cordon. The allied force killed 15 VC, and captured several weapons and detained three suspects. One Hoi Chanh rallied to the allied troops.



Natives' "Rain Come Soon" Insufficient for Forecasters

CAMP ENARI, (4th INF-10) — To a soldier drenched by a sudden tropical downpour, Vietnam's weather is one of the mysteries that make life miserable.

To the Air Force weathermen who predicted that same downpour a day earlier, there is no mystery at all.

Every day at Hensel Field the atmosphere gets a 24-hour checkup from weathermen who take its temperature, probe it with radar, measure its cloud heights, sample its moisture content, clock its velocity.

More data comes in by phone from outlying Special Forces stations, by computer, by teletype, by high-flying satellites that eyeball cloud formations. Weather is a world-wide enterprise, and even the Soviets contribute their share of data.

Information Totaled

This array of information is added up at Hensel Field in the map-and-chart-lined offices of Operating Location 4 (OL-4), a sub-station of the Air Force's 5th Weather Squadron. What the weather information adds up, the men are eager to point out, can make a big difference to a combat operation. Artillery strikes, airlifts, even ground patrols—all depend on accurate knowledge of how the weather will behave.

"When soldiers are dug in close to the enemy and a bomb strike is called in, an error of one knot in wind velocity can mean 12 feet off target on the ground. Ten knots error is 120 feet. Sometimes that's cutting things pretty close," says Captain Curtis D. Smith.

But Captain Smith and Technical Sergeant Joseph Abramav agree that the forecasts for the 4th Division have been remarkably accurate despite a large area of responsibility and difficult terrain.

"The Delta has the same type of climate all over," Smith points out. "But we have some of the lowest elevations to some of the highest in Vietnam, and our weather picture is more complicated."

Information Traded

Information gathered by OL-4 is traded with other stations throughout Southeast Asia. The overall-weather view that results is used to coordinate air movements in every part of the war zone.

The weathermen are always on the lookout for ways to make their service even better. The two-man combat weather teams that work at each of the brigades are now getting new \$14,000 mobile weather vans loaded with sophisticated equipment. These teams are also getting UHF radios so that pilots may soon be able to pick up local weather reports directly from the weather vans.

Of course, fancy equipment isn't always the answer. The weathermen have even been questioning Montagnard tribes to find out if the villagers have any traditional wisdom about the weather that the Air Force could use.

"But all we've gotten so far," Smith concedes, "is, 'rain come soon.'"



Two 4th Infantry Division soldiers take cover behind rocks as they prepare to return fire on a sniper.

(4th INF PHOTO)

Salvage Promotes Savings

LONG BINH, (1st LOG-10) — Throughout the III and IV Corps tactical zones the word is, "Don't throw that part away." Why not? Because the Quality Control Team (QT) wants to see if it is really beyond repair.

The QT is a two-man roving "watchdog" team that visits scrap yards and shipping points at Long Binh and Newport, searching for savable parts and equipment that can be repaired in-country. In this way, shipping costs to and from the United States can be cut and time lost in transit can be eliminated.

During May, the first month of operation, the team estimates it salvaged \$37,000 worth of supplies ranging from two-way radios and multifuel engines to jeep parts.

Another area in which the QT has been effective is checking CONEX containers headed for the States containing retrograde equipment. By comparing the destination stamped on the container against the destination indicated on the waybill, errors have been found and corrected, resulting in additional savings.

Returnees Undergo Retraining Process

DI AN, (1st INF-10) — When VC soldiers appear waving Chieu Hoi leaflets or crying "Chieu Hoi, Chieu Hoi," they are taking the first step in a rehabilitation process which strives to make them valuable citizens of South Vietnam.

So far this year, nearly 200 Viet Cong have surrendered of their own free will through the Chieu Hoi program of the 1st Infantry Division's 2nd Brigade.

These men are reeducated and indoctrinated under the guidance of Captain Jose C. Barbosa, brigade civil affairs officer, so that they can take their places as citizens of South Vietnam.

The first thing that Captain Barbosa and his crew do with each Hoi Chanh returnee is ask about conditions in his unit, the names of some of his comrades and why he decided to come over to the government side.

Rooster's Crow Aids Airborne's Ambush

BONG SON, (173rd ABN-10) — With the help of a brown and white rooster, paratroopers of the 173rd Airborne Brigade recently pulled off a highly successful ambush 25 miles north of Qui Nhon.

The incident occurred before dawn while elements of Company B, 1st Battalion, 69th Armor and E Troop, 17th Cavalry lay in wait near an abandoned coastal village.

When the rooster began crowing, Captain Richard G. Williams set out after it. While in pursuit, the captain spotted three enemy running across a rice paddy and called for help. Two of the enemy were killed and the other detained.

Documents captured tentatively identified one of the dead enemy as a high-ranking North Vietnamese Army official while

the detainee was identified as an NVA captain.

The ambush had been set up a day earlier on information gained from a Viet Cong suspect.

Sergeant Ronald Redmond caught a glimpse of the suspect hiding in a hedgerow near the abandoned village.

A tank commander, Redmond gave chase in his tank and apprehended the suspect who was wearing a Viet Cong uniform and carrying an M1 Rifle.

The detainee told of how several NVA would stay in the village at night, and when they heard tanks or aircraft, slip out of the village and into a tunnel complex next to a deserted railway station closely.

The following morning, the two 173rd units set up an ambush between the village and the station, as the tanks pulled into one end of the village, the cavalrymen scooped up the fleeing suspects.

Stronghold Destroyed

DRAGON MOUNTAIN, (1st AVN-10) — The sighting of 1,000 feet of trenches by an Aerial Scout team from the 7th Squadron, 17th Air Cavalry Regiment led to the disclosure of a freshly constructed enemy stronghold.

The North Vietnamese Army stronghold was found wedged in the rugged mountainous terrain approximately 30 miles northwest of Dak To in the Central Highlands.

Enemy troop movement was detected along the trails leading to bunkers, anti-aircraft guns and huts.

The inspection tour of the NVA's construction site was received by a large quantity of automatic and anti-aircraft weapons fire. The cavalry gunships and light observation helicopters returned the fire with mini-guns, grenades and rockets.

Three barrages of Air Force tactical air strikes and artillery fire silenced the ground fire.



Two soldiers from the 101st Air Cavalry Division's 1st Brigade crawl forward to flank the enemy during a firefight near Hue. The battle was part of the 101st Div.'s Operation Nevada Eagle.

(101st AIRCAV PHOTO)