

Vietnam communique

Oct 16-Oct 22

Americal kills 136 in I Corps

Americal Div

Americal Division soldiers reported 136 enemy soldiers killed in heavy action during the week.

Heaviest concentration was centered in the southern portion of the I Corps Tactical Zone where soldiers from the 3rd Battalion, 1st Inf., 11th Light Infantry Brigade and supporting gunship crews reported 23 VC killed in one day's action. Infantrymen from the 198th Light Infantry Brigade accounted for 18 VC killed in several contacts in the Wheeler/Wallowa area.

Elements of the 11th Light Infantry Brigade's 3rd Battalion, 1st Inf., also uncovered a cache containing 7,000 pounds of rice.

In one day's major action gunship crews of the 14th Combat Aviation Battalion's 174th Assault Helicopter Co., flying in support of the 11th, killed 5 VC six miles south of Duc Pho.

While operating in the Operation Burlington Trail area, infantrymen from the 198th Light Infantry Brigade reported 15 VC killed in addition to finding a cache containing 125 grenades, 3,100 AK47 rounds and eight RPG rounds in a tunnel complex northwest of Tam Ky.

In another day's action, Americal forces killed 11 VC, detained seven suspects, and captured 2,250 pounds of rice in widely scattered action in the southern portion of the I Corps Tactical Zone.

The 1st Squadron, 1st Armored Cav. reported five VC killed by artillery fire from the 3rd Bn., 16th Artillery while firing in support of B Troop in the Burlington Trail area.

In action one day, the crew of the 11th Brigade's command and control helicopter, commanded by Col. John W. Bondalson, engaged and killed five Viet Cong in an area six miles south of Duc Pho.

The 198th Light Infantry Brigade accounted for 10 enemy killed in widely scattered incidents while the 196th Light Infantry Brigade accounted for five killed.

1st Avn Bde

1st Aviation Brigade helicopter crews reported 86 enemy killed in light fighting during the week.

Gunship crews from the 164th Combat Aviation Group reported killing 13 Viet Cong, destroying 43 fortifications and sinking 34 sampans as they operated in the Mekong Delta one day.

Crews from the 121st Assault Helicopter Co., 13th Combat Aviation Bn. reported killing one VC, sinking 20 sampans and destroying seven structures while supporting the 21st ARVN Infantry Division southeast of Vi Thanh.

Cobra gunships of the 235th Armed Helicopter Co., 307th Combat Aviation Bn. reported the heaviest contact one day as being seven VC dead, sank 15 sampans and destroyed 18 fortifications in action centered near Vi Thanh.

While operating in the southern section of the I Corps Tactical Zone, the 14th Combat Aviation Bn.'s 174th Assault Helicopter Co. has been credited with more than 30 killed in scattered action.

In another action in the southern demilitarized zone, a bird-dog aircraft from the 220th Reconnaissance Airplane Co., 212th Combat Aviation Bn., came under automatic weapons fire as it circled over a bunker complex. Artillery fire was called in resulting in the destruction of four of the occupied bunkers, damage to a concrete bunker, several secondary fires and two large secondary explosions.

1st Cav Div

1st Cavalry Division soldiers again experienced rain, cold weather and muddy terrain throughout their area of operations. In light action, the troopers turned up several small caches.

A Hoi Chanh led elements of the 2nd Bn., 8th Cav. uncovered a cache of explosives hidden in concrete blocks one mile south of Quang Tri City. The Hoi Chanh said the explosives were to be used to knock out bridges in the area.

Operating north of Quang Tri City,

elements of the 2nd Bn., 8th Cav. uncovered 5,100 pounds of rice while a unit from the 1st Bn., 5th Cav. found 84 82mm mortar rounds nine miles southeast of the city.

One morning an element of the 5th Bn., 7th Cav. found two bodies while searching an area seven miles west of Camp Evans.

An enemy hut-bunker complex was discovered by an element of the 1st Bn., 5th Cav. 10 miles west of Camp Evans.

1st Inf Div

Elements of the 1st Infantry's 1st Bn., 18th Inf. sweeping an area six miles east of Saigon uncovered an enemy bunker complex. Upon searching the complex the troopers discovered three SKS rifles, one submachine gun and 11 bolt-action rifles.

4th Inf Div

A patrol from the 4th Infantry Division's 1st Brigade discovered an enemy bunker complex containing 200 bunkers 15 miles west of Dak To one day. Earlier the same day, cavalrymen from the 1st Squadron, 10th Armored Cav. found a cache containing 600 pounds of rice 11 miles northeast of Ban Me Thuot. The rice was evacuated for distribution to local residents.

Soldiers from the 4th Infantry Division's 1st Bn., 22nd Inf. found the body of one NVA soldier killed by artillery three miles southwest of Duc Lap. He was found lying in a heavily cratered area wearing a green uniform and web gear.

9th Inf Div

Ninth Infantry Division soldiers killed 59 enemy soldiers in a two-day operation with a total of 120 of the enemy killed during the week.

In a two-day operation begun Friday, "Old Reliable" soldiers of the 9th established contact with the enemy and after the action ceased, discovered 59 enemy bodies in addition to 1,087 VC plastic and rubber gas masks and 500 pounds of medical supplies.

Units from the 1st Brigade killed 13 VC in three separate actions around Can Duoc. In action 10 miles northwest of Vinh Long, helicopter crews reported killing 17 VC. The air cavalrymen also detained four suspects. A reconnaissance element from the 1st Infantry Division's 1st Bn., 16th Inf., operating with the 9th, found 600 pounds of rice buried in the mud and hastily abandoned by the VC during that action.

Operating from air-cushion vehicles, tango boats and on foot, infantrymen from the 3rd Bn., 39th Inf. killed two VC and detained eight suspects 10 miles north of Go Cong.

In one day's major action elements of the 3rd Brigade killed 10 VC and detained one suspect 40 miles west of Dong Tam. Action began when an element of the 1st Bn., 16th Inf. while clearing and destroying enemy bunkers in the area, discovered a well camouflaged Viet Cong field hospital. A search of the hastily abandoned area revealed numerous medical supplies.

23rd Arty Gp

A bird dog pilot attached to the 23rd Artillery Group combined a sharp eye with quick reactions in Tay Ninh Province this week as he reported 22 enemy killed and one truck destroyed.

The action began when the pilot, Capt. Johnnie Wilkenson was flying a routine aerial reconnaissance mission around Tay Ninh City. He spotted 45 to 50 enemy soldiers moving down the road. Observing that the enemy started running for cover at the sight of his aircraft, the captain quickly pulled clear to make them think that they had gone undetected. Once clear of the area, he called for artillery.

The first rounds impacted about 300 yards in front of the enemy. Wilkenson headed for a truck that was partially hidden in the woods. He directed the fire to the vehicle, a direct hit sending 15 enemy flying in all directions. When

all artillery fire ceased, Wilkenson flew in to assess the damage.

"I flew in at tree top level and counted 22 enemy bodies," he said. "Of the original 45 to 50 I had seen on the road, I observed only two who were able to escape."

25th Inf Div

Tropic Lightning soldiers of the 25th Infantry Division reported 96 Viet Cong killed in scattered action during the week.

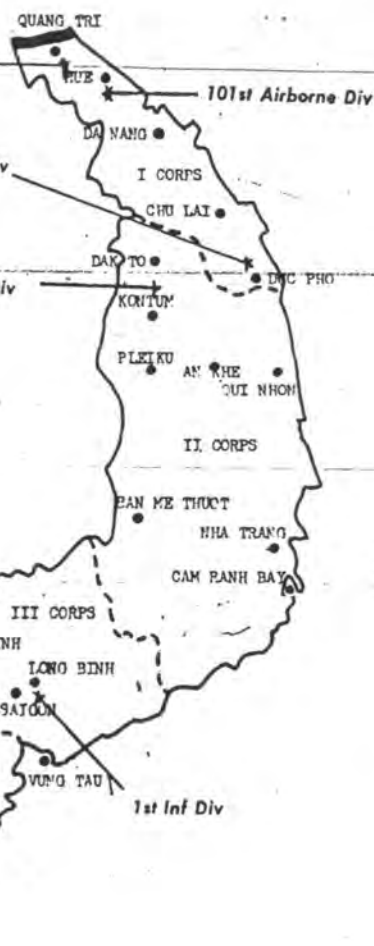
Helicopter crews attached to the 25th Infantry Division killed 13 enemy in two separate engagements 12 and 15 miles southwest of Trang Bang one day.

In one of the largest actions of the week, 20 enemy were reported killed eight miles north of Tay Ninh City. Helicopter pilots from B Troop, 3rd Squadron, 17th Cav. observed several enemy and several huts, tents, bunkers, and fighting positions. The crews engaged the VC and NVA soldiers and also called for artillery and Air Force fighters, who pounded the area. The crews reported killing 20 of the enemy.

In other action, gunship crews supporting a patrol 10 miles southwest of Trang Bang engaged and killed two Viet Cong.

Three suspects rallied to the 2nd Bn., 14th Inf. at their night location seven miles south of Cu Chi one day. The three Hoi Chanh then led the infantrymen to a large weapons and ammunition cache.

One day's action saw Tropic Lightning soldiers uncover bodies of 35 enemy



killed by airstrikes. Co. C, 2nd Bn., 22nd Inf. located the bodies of the enemy soldiers buried in shallow graves seven miles west of the Dau Tieng base camp.

More than 180 members of the VC infrastructure (VCI) have been exposed by the 25th Infantry Division troops since July 1.

VCI exploitation teams from the 2nd Brigade, operating in conjunction with maneuvering infantry battalions, follow up leads provided by Hoi Chanh and friendly civilians, and thereby disrupt supply and communication lines astride principal Viet Cong infiltration routes.

101st Abn Div

In a week of light action paratroopers of the 101st Airborne Division reported killing 20 enemy soldiers.

During a reconnaissance-in-force operation eleven miles south of Hue, Co. B, 1st Bn., 506th Inf. discovered an enemy basecamp composed of several huts and bunkers. A search of the area uncovered 31 individual weapons, nine crew-served weapons, including three mortars and two 75mm recoilless rifles.

199th Inf Bde

Redcatchers of the 199th Light Infantry Brigade found several weapons caches during the week.

In the southern Pineapple Region nine miles north of Tan An two companies from the 9th Infantry Division's 4th Bn., 39th Inf. under the operational control of the 199th, discovered seven AK-47 rifles, 20 Chicoms rifles and small arms ammunition.

1st Cav soldiers uncover 57 tons of rice near DMZ

QUANG TRI, (1st CAV)—In ten days members of the 1st Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division have uncovered more than 57 tons of enemy rice near here.

The rice has since been bagged and transported to Trieu Phong district headquarters, where it will be distributed to needy civilians.

The champion rice hunters, Co. C, 2nd Bn., 8th Cav., found more than 43 tons themselves.

For about a week, the unit had been turning up caches on a daily basis and had accumulated 30,200 pounds of the grain. Then in the next two days, they found 55,040 pounds.

In one instance, Pfc. Frank E. Sinkovich, a radio-telephone operator, began digging a position for the night after the company made a long, tiring march across the sandy, coastal plains, six kilometers northeast of here.

"I dug down about a foot and a half, and I saw some plastic," Sinkovich explained. "It was a rice cache. We got two and a half bags out of it."

The unit was ordered to remain in the area and check for other hidden stores.

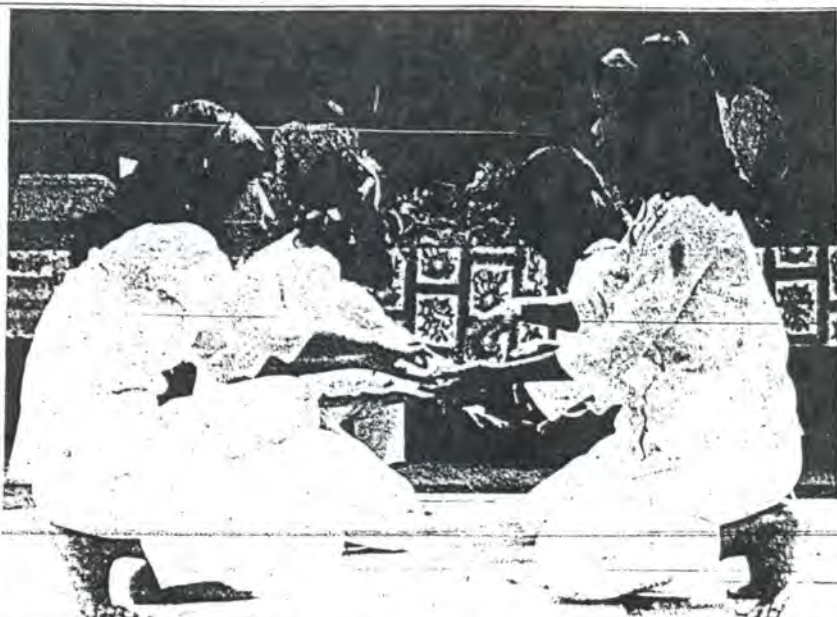
"When we left our night location, we were supposed to go two kilometers to the northwest and then work back towards the CP," Lieutenant Fred Schaffert said, explaining his platoon's assignment for the day. "But before we got 20 meters away, we found five separate caches. It was like that all day; we just kept finding caches everywhere."

Captain Michael Sierra, the company commander, said that there were no visible markers pointing out the caches. The men were finding them by "systematic probing."

"They've become very good at finding the stuff," Sierra said. "It's like a game for the men, and they're really going at it."

As an incentive, the captain set up a competition among the platoons. The one that finds the most in one day gets to send two of its men on a three-day R&R to Da Nang.

While visiting the rice hunters, Major General Truong, 1st ARVN Division commander, remarked that Co. C had found enough rice that day to feed an NVA division for an entire month.



WHILE WAR GOES ON Vietnamese girls still find time to dance. The dance is part of the International Children's Holiday celebration at Gadsden Village.

Reach isolated village

MEDCAPS go airmobile

PHU HUU, (1st INF)—Viet Cong attempts to isolate the village of Phu Huu, 10 miles west of Saigon, have been thwarted by airmobile MEDCAPS con-

ducted by Vietnamese Army personnel and members of the 1st Infantry Division's 2nd Brigade.

The airmobile approach was made necessary by VC damage to bridges along the road from Saigon to Phu Huu. Apparently, the enemy destruction was wrought to disrupt the health conditions, morale and political stability of the village which has a population of approximately 1,000.

The degeneration of village life expected by the Viet Cong has not occurred, and the regular MEDCAP visits have played a major part in enabling the village to retain its identity and stability.

To begin the most recent MEDCAP in the village, a team left Di An early in the morning by Chinook and flew to Phu Huu. Included on the team were three men from the brigade civil affairs section, three members of the 257th Medical Detachment (Dental), five representatives of the 1st Medical Bn., two ARVN noncommissioned officers, an interpreter and an armed propaganda team of seven Hoi Chanhs.

Recording used

When the team arrived at the village, Payne set up a tape recorder and a speaker system which played the Vietnamese national anthem and informed the people that the allied soldiers had come to conduct a MEDCAP. The recording went

on to explain the procedure which should be followed by those desiring treatment.

Working for four hours, two physicians and their assistants treated more than 100 people. Those with serious ailments were separated from the rest and treated first. Then came patients with such troubles as common colds and skin ailments.

Captain Latimer Blount, a dentist, observed that he had fewer patients than on some earlier visits, but he treated about 20 patients.

While treatment was being conducted, a Vietnamese sergeant spoke to a crowd of several hundred explaining "why we want to help you and want you to help us." The members of the armed propaganda team circulated through the crowd asking questions concerning enemy activities.

Food distributed

Some Vietnamese flags and school supplies were left in the village as well as food and clothing which were distributed to the neediest people in the village who had been selected by the village chief.

Major Jose C. Barbosa, 2nd Brigade Civil Affairs Officer summed up what had taken place saying, "As long as we continue to bring these MEDCAPS to villages harassed by the Viet Cong, the settlements will be less likely to be isolated or weakened."

AFVN adapts diary for use on local radio

SAIGON, (AFVN)—Vietnam, as with other wars, will probably be most poignantly remembered because of songs and letters written by men who lived and died in the battles. Among the most moving pieces of literature to come from Vietnam is a diary kept by Army Sgt. David Simons, a 5th Special Forces trooper who was killed in action in January, 1968. The last entry

was made on the day of his death.

The Armed Forces Vietnam Network has adapted this diary—originally published in Army Digest (July 1968)—for radio and called it "Commentary on a Diary."

AFVN will air the program throughout Vietnam at 7:05 p.m., Sunday, Nov. 10.

Four Korean pilots train, fly with 1st Avn company

NINH HOA (1ST AVN)—Four of the pilots flying the Huey slicks at the 48th Assault Helicopter Co. are members of the Republic of Korea Army. These Koreans are student pilots who were assigned to the 48th for live on-the-job training while participating in actual combat missions.

The 11-week course of field flight maneuvers is a follow-up to the 25 hour transition course taken at the 17th Combat Aviation Group headquarters in nearby Nha Trang. The entire program was sponsored by Col. John A. Todd, commander of the 17th Group and Col. Lee, commander of the 11th ROK Aviation Co., to bolster the relatively small amount of Huey pilots in the ROK Army. Sixteen Korean officers in all will be graduated from the extensive flight training course in December.

The 48th was a fitting choice for the OJT portion of the course since it flies in support of the White Horse ROK Infantry Division, whose headquarters compound the 48th shares at Ninh Hoa.

Experienced pilots

Though all the Korean pilots were already flight rated when they arrived in Vietnam, none had flown the Huey before, and some were not helicopter qualified at all. Three of the pilots, Capt. Kim Ki Hwan, Capt. Han Ki Sun and Capt. Choi Hun Yong graduated from flight school together in 1965 as fixed wing pilots. All three have around 1,000 hours logged in fixed wing aircraft as well as previous training in other type helicopters. The fourth pilot,

Lt. Choi Seung Woo is also fixed wing qualified, although he has fewer hours accrued than the others and his first helicopter time was with the 11th ROK Aviation Company here in Vietnam.

According to the 48th's operations officer, Capt. Stephen G. Barati "the purpose of the program is to give the Koreans the opportunity to increase proficiency in all our flying phases. This includes resupply, combat assaults, command and control plus other varied missions." Barati added: "with the completion of the course just ahead they have flown nearly 300 hours each and their increased proficiency is very evident indeed."

All phases taught

The initial transition training in Nha Trang was concerned with the basics of flying a Huey, such as hovering, normal take-offs and landings, maximum performance take-offs, steep approaches, and travel patterns. The two months at the 48th saw the Koreans applying these techniques to regular combat missions. Here they had to learn advanced flight skills such as sling loads, confined area flight, pinnacle maneuvers, internal loads, and many other phases connected with this type of flying.

During their tour with the 48th, their progress was closely monitored by Barati and consultations were held with the aircraft commanders who flew with them. Methods of improvement were found and special problem areas were scrutinized.

The biggest problem involved was the language barrier. Chief Warrant Officer Donald Shorey found, "the key here was just a matter of being patient and taking your time, and explaining things in a simple manner." Shorey added: "they have twice the usual problems: learning to fly and learning to understand the English language at the same time." This system seemed to have worked, for in spite of the language problem, their overwhelming desire to learn developed their skill with amazing results.

Language difference

The language difference has served as an advantage on many missions. The 48th's mission is general support of the Korean 9th Infantry Division and daily the pilots must try to communicate with their Korean allies. Frequently the ROK pilots were a big help in carrying out the missions. The American pilot's reaction to the subsequent saving of time and trouble was that of surprise and delight.

The Koreans participate in nearly all the phases of operation that the 48th flies. This includes combat assaults, during which all four have undergone hostile fire.

The Koreans themselves have expressed their gratitude to the pilots of the 48th for their assistance. As Kim put it: "because of the 48th I am looking with confidence to future missions with the 11th ROK Aviation Co." The four graduates will return to the 11th upon their graduation to take command of their own Huey helicopters.