

Vietnam Communique

Oct. 22 to Oct. 28

1st Bde, 5th Inf kills 300

Americal Div

In a week of moderate action Americal Division soldiers reported killing 153 enemy soldiers.

On Oct. 25th infantrymen from the 196th Light Infantry Brigade accounted for 22 enemy and captured 16 individual weapons while operating in the Wheeler-Wallowa area.

On the same day elements of the 198th Light Infantry Brigade killed two VC, detained five suspects and captured 21,500 pounds of rice in scattered contacts in the Operation Burlington Trail area. The rice was found in several locations with the largest cache discovered just south of Chu Lai amounting to eight tons.

The next day soldiers of the 196th Light Infantry Brigade found three rice caches totalling 13,900 pounds in areas west of Tam Ky and southwest of Hoi An. In addition they killed eight VC and captured one individual weapon in scattered contacts.

1st Avn Bde

Helicopter crews of the 1st Aviation Brigade reported killing 42 enemy soldiers and sinking 86 sampans.

On Oct. 25 helicopter gunship crews from the 164th Combat Aviation Group reported killing seven enemy, sinking five sampans and destroying 25 enemy fortifications.

Chopper crews from the 336th Assault Helicopter Co., 13th Combat Aviation Bn. reported killing two VC, sinking four sampans and destroying 13 fortifications

in scattered contacts centered 10 miles northwest of Tra Vinh.

On the same day a helicopter from the 16th Combat Aviation Group's 71st Bn., 14th Combat Aviation Bn. was summoned to an Operation Burlington Trail area to evacuate a rice cache captured by the 198th Light Infantry Brigade. As the helicopter touched down it came under intense enemy fire.

Door gunners returned the fire killing eight VC. The wounded pilot managed to pilot the chopper back to the base.

In an action earlier in the week helicopter crews from the 336th Assault Helicopter Co., 13th Combat Aviation Bn., 164th Combat Aviation Group reported killing 10 VC, sinking 59 sampans and destroying 17 structures while supporting ARVN infantry operations in the area.

1st Cav Div

In a week of scattered light action Skytroopers of the 1st Cavalry Division killed 14 enemy while uncovering several caches of rice.

Elements of the 1st Bn., 12th Cav. operating five miles northeast of Quang Tri City, found 1,000 pounds of paddy rice lying on the ground. The rice was evacuated for redistribution to Vietnamese civilians.

Another rice cache was found by the 2nd Bn., 7th Cav. when they discovered two bunkers eight miles north of Camp Evans. A search of the bunkers revealed 3,500 pounds of paddy rice.

A weapons cache was uncovered by

the 1st Bn., 8th Cav 10 miles south of Quang Tri City. Packed in boxes were 42, 75mm recoilless rifle rounds, 15, 81 mm mortar rounds, seven rocket rounds and two cases of .30-caliber ammunition.

199th Inf Bde

The 199th Light Infantry Brigade found the bodies of 23 enemy soldiers seized five individual weapons and destroyed 20 bunkers in action in the southern "Pineapple Region." Air Force tactical airstrikes were directed into a position 15 miles west of Saigon. Following the airstrikes, elements from the 2nd Bn., 3rd Inf. were inserted. They found the bodies of four enemy in heavy brush, along with five individual weapons.

The infantrymen also destroyed 16 bunkers in the same area. Company A from the 3rd Bn., 7th Inf. engaged two VC during a reconnaissance-in-force mission south of Saigon. One VC was killed.

1st Inf Div

Big Red One soldiers of the 1st Infantry Division killed 124 enemy in moderate action.

On Oct. 27 elements of the 1st Brigade found the bodies of 23 enemy soldiers near a night defensive position 11 miles east of Katum in Ninh Province. That brought the total killed in that area in a two-day period to 103.

4th Inf Div

Ivymen of the 4th Infantry Division encountered light action during the week killing 40 enemy soldiers.

On Oct. 27 4th Division soldiers and supporting gunship crews killed 20 enemy in a contact southwest of Pleiku.

Helicopter gunship crews from Troop C, 7th Squadron, 17th Air Cavalry received small arms fire while flying a reconnaissance mission southwest of Pleiku. An aero-rifle platoon was inserted into the area while elements of the 2nd Bn., 8th Inf. moved into a blocking position. Contact was lost at 6:45 p.m. when the enemy withdrew. A sweep produced 20 NVA bodies and one crew-served and two individual weapons.

The next day while in a night position the 2nd Bn. again came in contact with the enemy. As they received ground probes on their perimeter. An Air Force C-47 Spooky gunship was called to the scene and commenced to rake the area with heavy fire which set off three secondary explosions. Ivymen reported they could hear bodies being dragged from the area.

A sweep the next morning revealed 19 bodies. In addition, 69 field packs, 59 grenades 9 weapons, 600 rounds of small arms ammunition and 70 assorted mortar rounds were located.

1st Bde, 5th Inf

Red Devils of the 1st Brigade, 1st Bn., 61st Inf. reported killing 297 enemy soldiers in two days of fierce fighting.

Continuing an action that began on Oct. 25 the infantrymen reported killing seven NVA while artillery and Air Force tactical airstrikes supporting them accounted for 58 more NVA soldiers.

The area of the contact, a small NVA basecamp consisting of six buildings connected by trenches, contained 2,300 pounds of rice, 100 pounds of medical supplies, 25 rounds of 60mm mortar ammunition and 850 rounds of small arms ammunition.

9th Inf Div

Soldiers of the 9th Infantry Division killed 87 enemy in moderate action.

On Oct. 27 elements of the division's 1st Brigade, supporting gunship crews and Air Force tactical airstrikes accounted for 33 enemy killed.

At noon, elements of the 1st Brigade were air and water-assaulted into an area around the Nha Be River, five miles east of Can Giuoc. Gunship crews from A Troop, 3rd Squadron, 17th Air Cav. made initial contact with an enemy force and killed 15. Elements from the 3rd Bn., 39th Inf., using U.S. Navy armored troop carriers, advanced into

the area while other infantrymen were air-inserted. An Air Force forward air controller directed airstrikes, which were credited with killing three enemy.

Fourteen other enemy were killed by the advancing infantrymen. There were two U.S. soldier wounded in the action.

11th Cav

The 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment's aero-rifle platoon (ARP) killed three VC and captured 11 others during a series of lightning-quick raids east of La Khe yesterday.

Action began when an enemy soldier was captured beside a tunnel complex. The detainee was questioned and revealed the location of other enemy soldiers. The helicopter cavalrymen then took to their choopers and found four VC, one of whom told of more VC hiding in thick brush.

Again the troops boarded their helicopters and surprised 10 VC. As the helicopters landed fighting began. Three VC were killed and seven detained during the brief firefight.

The detainees were believed to be members of an enemy mortar section. The weapons captured in the engagement included two mortars, seven individual weapons including a pistol and numerous munitions.

23rd Arty Gp

Elements of the 23rd Artillery Group killed seven VC and destroyed several enemy emplacements.

Firing from Dau Tieng, Battery A, 1st Bn., 27th Artillery teamed with a forward air controller from the battalion to kill seven VC and destroy one ox-cart. The FAC had observed the VC and the ox-cart they had been using to transport supplies in an area four miles north of Dau Tieng. Circling the area, the FAC warned the artillery in on to the group before they could disperse, killing all seven.

In other action, two batteries from the 2nd Bn., 32nd Artillery fired successful missions. Battery A fired its 175mm guns, destroying an enemy tunnel complex. From Dau Tieng, Battery C fired its eight-inch howitzers onto an enemy bunker complex, destroying it.

25th Inf Div

Soldiers of the 25th Infantry Division killed 79 enemy in a week of moderate fighting.

Helicopter gunship crews and ground forces from the 25th Infantry Division killed 33 enemy, while Air Force airstrikes, in support of the division, accounted for nine more.

Nine miles northwest of Trang Bang gunship crews from C Troop, 3rd Squadron, 17th Air Cavalry observed 16 enemy soldiers. They immediately engaged the enemy while elements of the 4th Bn., 9th Inf. were being airlifted to the location. A firefight followed as the infantrymen landed in the hot landing zone. When contact broke, 11 enemy had been killed. There were no American casualties.

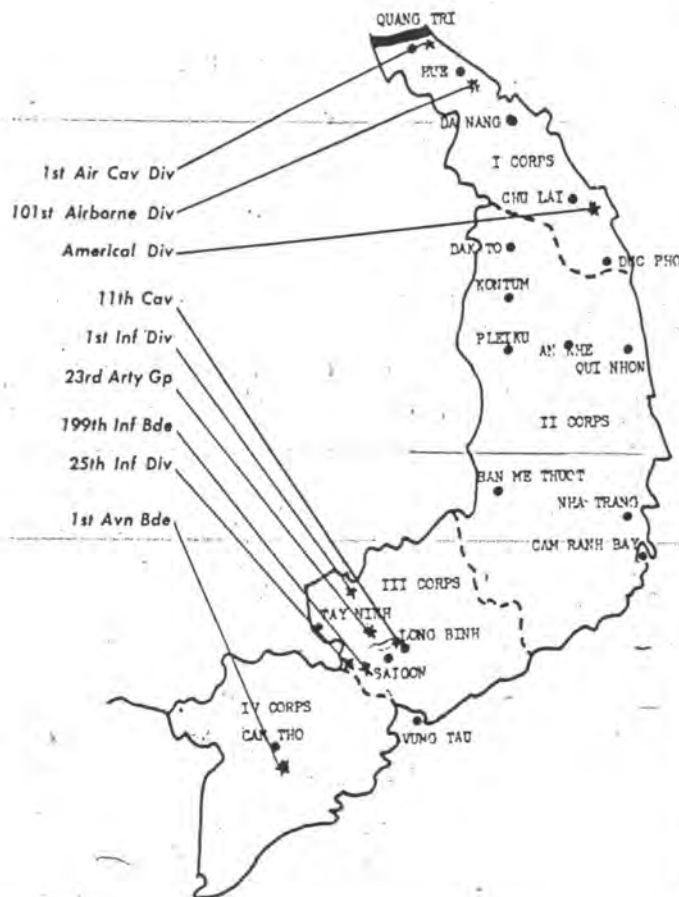
101st Abn Div

Members of the 101st Airborne Division killed 143 enemy soldiers in a week of moderate action.

The paratroopers added 93 enemy to the list of kills in Operation Nevada Eagle. The 3rd Brigade's 1st Bn., 506th Inf. discovered a small enemy base camp 10 miles south of Hue. A search of the area turned up 80 enemy bodies.

In other action, paratroopers of the 2nd Bn., 501st Inf. reacting to a probe of their night position, killed two NVA and captured their weapons 22 miles southeast of Hue. Operating in the same area, another company of the battalion killed one more NVA and captured his weapon.

Other action in the 3rd Brigade's area of operations resulted in the discovery of seven enemy bodies 10 miles southeast of Hue and the capture of one mortar and five individual weapons.



Smokey prevents fire from overcoming GIs

CAMP EAGLE, (101st ABN)—Like his furry-faced, namesake in Yellowstone Park, the 101st Airborne Division's "Smokey" devotes his life to preventing fire.

There is a difference, though. In the rice paddies, jungles and mountains surrounding Hue, "fire" means AK-47s, .50 caliber Chicom machine guns, and 81mm mortars forged in Hanoi.

A few seconds before a division combat assault, if wind conditions permit, a UH-1 helicopter nicknamed "Smokey" swoops in along the landing zone at grasshopper level.

Using a special oil pump attached to the chopper's superheated exhaust, "Smokey" lays down a solid wall of white

smoke between the landing zone and likely enemy gun positions.

Before the smokescreen has a chance to disperse, half a dozen troop-carrying Huey "slicks" deposit enough paratroopers to secure the landing zone for the main landing force.

There is no way to gauge the number of Screaming Eagle lives "Smokey" has saved, but many soldiers have said they feel much safer on combat assaults when the smoke-billowing bird leads the way.

The handful of pilots and crewmen who fly the "Smokey" missions for the 101st Assault Helicopter Bn. have become aviation's equivalent to the infantry pointman.

"If it turns out to be a hot landing zone, we're the first to know about it," says CWO Charles W. Patison.

To lay the best possible smokescreen, "Smokey" pilots must fly slower than usual and as low as possible.

"Other pilots worry about anti-aircraft fire," Patison says. "We have that problem too, but we also watch out for rocket-propelled grenades and water buffalo."

"Smokey is lightly armed, but by no means helpless."

As Patison drops the chopper down to start the smoke run, he gives the word for his door-gunsners to begin "suppressive fire."

Swivelling their turret-mounted machine guns, Spec. 4 James W. Schlipp and Pfc. Ronald C. Ellsworth spray bushes, hedgerows and creek banks to discourage snipers. In the co-pilot's seat, ready to take over in an emergency, WO1 Ronald A. Carl searches the area ahead to spot targets for the gunners.

"Usually we don't get shot at," Patison said. "I think maybe the noise, the wind, the smoke and all those M60 tracers flying around shake 'Charlie' up a bit."



UH-1 HELICOPTER lays down a smokescreen, providing cover for a combat assault by the 101st Airborne Division's Co. C, 2nd

Bn., 506th Abn. Inf. The helicopters fly slower than usual to lay a good smoke screen, making a good target for the enemy.

101st Abn Photo

Patients stay cool

LONG BINH, (USARV)—Patients throughout II, III and IV Corps are enjoying the cool air from 200 new air-conditioning units just acquired by the 44th Medical Brigade.

"It's a tremendous aid to the comfort of the patient and his ability to recover," said Sfc. Joseph F. Crowley, assistant chief wardmaster of the 24th Evacuation Hospital at Long Binh post.

Crowley's hospital was one of many to benefit from a \$30,000 grant Central Welfare Fund grant for the air-conditioners.

The first units went into operating rooms without air-conditioning facilities, and then to recovery rooms and so on down a list of priorities set up by Col. James R. Kenny, S4 of the 44th Medical Brigade.

Lone spectator

Courtmen net one Chieu Hoi

QUANG TRI, (1st Air Cav)—While engaged in a friendly game of basketball recently, three men from Co. B, 8th Engineers Bn. suddenly realized, to their complete sur-

prise, that they had an audience of one.

The lone spectator was 17-year-old Nguyen Thi Cue, formerly a cook for the headquarters section of the 2nd North Viet-

namese Regiment, a member of the 7th Liberation Front.

"Someone had just made a shot and I grabbed the rebound, turned and I guess we all saw her at the same time," recalled Spec. 4 Greg P. Ring.

"She was kneeling down by an old icebox near the mess hall 40 feet from us," he continued.

The slim, shy young girl had made her way into the perimeter of the 2nd Brigade's new home, Landing Zone (LZ) Nancy, 12 miles southeast of here. She was intent on surrendering to the first US forces she encountered.

"I started toward her, but let Ring go first since he has been here longer and I figured he had more experience than me," said Pfc. James A. Heinz, a newcomer in country.

As the trio ran towards the scared girl, they yelled, "Chieu Hoi, Chieu Hoi." When she stood up the engineers realized she had a bag in her hand.

"She might have had a satchel charge or grenade, we didn't know. I almost ran for my rifle," said Ring.

"I think she was as scared as we were," remarked Spec. 4 Jacinto Marrero.

After searching the girl and assuring themselves that she was unarmed, the trio proudly turned their prize over to the military police, and returned to their ball game.

Interrogation of the South Vietnamese miss revealed that she had trudged for 2 days through the hills and jungles of Base Area 101 before reaching the LZ and offered to relate her knowledge of the area and her unit to allied troops.

Capt. John Stockhaus, the engineer company commander, said about the unusual incident, "... the guys really acted cool in the face of possible danger. They reacted quickly and intelligently."

"I really believe what made her pick our particular area was the fact that she could smell the great chow our mess hall was preparing at the time," he concluded.

Wagon-wheel defense is still best protection

TAY NINH, (25th INF)—Their throats were parched from the hot sun beating down, and their eyes burned from the constant exposure to the whirling dust. Slowly and methodically they moved into the large wagon-wheel circle, considered their best method of defense. Quickly the men started to build cover for protection in the event of attack.

A wagon train or a mechanized infantry unit? It could be either, for the defensive tactic has not changed through the years.

Instead of building cover out of boxes and crates as the Indian-fighters of the Old West did, the Vietnam fighters build well-fortified bunkers with timber, sandbags and ammunition boxes.

These men have learned, as did their forefathers, that their defensive positions are held in a balance with their lives. Like the Indians of the Old West, the Viet Cong and NVA forces use the darkness to find their enemy's weaknesses and then strike where he is most vulnerable.

Fire Support Base Rawlins, located three miles east of Tay Ninh city, was chosen as the temporary home of the 4th Bn., 23rd Inf. Its defenses were established similar to the American pioneers' wagon wheel formation.

Unlike the pioneers, however, the 25th Infantry Division troops have far more efficient equipment to work with.

Twice in the past two months, estimated regimental-sized ene-

my units have found Rawlins impregnable. Realizing that the next attack of the base could be by a much larger force, the soldiers have been constantly rebuilding and improving their perimeter defenses.

"Since starting the perimeter at Rawlins, we have used 14,000 sandbags and 4,000 artillery ammunition boxes for the bunkers," said Lt. David Blanchard.

The bunkers that the soldiers build are only a small part of the perimeter defenses. Using 700 rolls of wire, the troops have built two separate fences of concertina wire, each held in place by eight-foot engineering stakes, which make it extremely difficult to move the wire or climb over it.

Using dogs and geese as early warning devices, the frontiersmen usually know when someone is approaching their camp. They scatter trip flares behind, in the midst of, and in front of their concertina wire as an early-warning device. Using this device, the man who is on guard will know someone is probing the perimeter.

"It's impossible to put out too many trip flares," said Spec. 4 Bill Allen, a Co. A Infantryman. "How do you think you would feel if you were sneaking up on an enemy position when bingo, everything lights up like day?"

Although the weapons and methods used by the Tropic Lightning forces are much more sophisticated than those of their forefathers, the same basic principles that the pioneers used to defeat their enemies and defend their lives are employed today.



25th Inf Photo

INFANTRYMAN of the 2nd Bn., 27th Inf., 25th Infantry Division demonstrates to his buddies the proper method of drinking through the new Army gas mask.