

Vietnam Communique

Nov 12-Nov 17

Americal, 1st Cav kill 729

1st Cav Div

Skytroopers of the 1st Cavalry Division killed 414 enemy soldiers during the week.

On Nov. 14 the cavalrymen, ARVN troops, Air Force airstrikes and artillery fire killed 287 NVA soldiers when an estimated two NVA battalions tried to overrun a landing zone 14 miles east-southeast of Katum.

See related story page 1.

Two days later 56 enemy were killed by the cavalrymen.

In the dense jungle area 26 miles northwest of Tay Ninh, the 1st Brigade's, 1st Bn., 7th Cav. made contact with an estimated company-size force. Within minutes the Cav's aerial rocket artillery (ARA) helicopters were on station and raking the area with 2.75-inch rockets and miniguns. Artillery and tactical airstrikes also supported the troops. After the firefight ended, contact was re-established when the troopers pursued the enemy and action continued until the enemy withdrew. Thirty-six enemy were killed in the action. Twenty others were killed in other action.

Americal Div

The Americal Division killed 315 in a week of heavy fighting in the I Corps area of operation.

In the heaviest action, soldiers of the 198th Light Infantry Brigade killed 48 enemy in several actions Nov. 17. See article, page 1.

Twenty-six VC were killed by artillery fire from the 1st Bn., 14th Artillery when the enemy launched an attack against the Binh Son District Headquarters. Another 10 VC died when they attacked a fire support base seven miles northwest of Chu Lai. The base was defended by soldiers of the 1st Bn., 6th Inf. Twelve more enemy were killed by brigade elements in scattered contacts during the day.

On Nov. 16 a reconnaissance patrol from the 198th Light Infantry Brigade accounted for the major part of the action as they killed 24 enemy. The patrol, which had taken a concealed position in an area seven miles north of Quang Ngai City, observed 15 VC moving down trail. Artillery from Btry. D, 1st Bn., 82nd Artillery answered the patrol call by placing eight inch rounds on the VC killing all 15. A short time later 13 VC moved into the area, and the patrol again called for artillery support from Btry. D. Six enemy were killed in the barrage that followed.

1st Avn Bde

The 1st Aviation Brigade killed 92 en-

emy in support of ARVN troops during the week.

Chopper crews from the 164th Aviation Group reported killing 24 enemy, sinking three sampans and destroying 14 enemy structures in scattered actions in the Mekong Delta Nov. 12.

The heaviest contact came early in the morning when gunships from the 13th Combat Aviation Bn., 175th Assault Helicopter Co. aided in the defense of an ARVN outpost under enemy attack. The outpost, located 16 miles northwest of Phu Vinh, began receiving mortar rounds. The mortar rounds were followed by a ground attack. The gunship crews reported killing 20 enemy while supporting ARVN soldiers in repelling the attack.

1st Inf Div

Soldiers of the 1st Infantry Division killed 89 enemy in a week of moderate contact.

Elements of the 1st Squadron, 11th Armored Cavalry, under the operational control of the 1st Infantry Division, continued to meet enemy resistance southwest of An Loc. The cavalrymen accounted for another 38 NVA killed Nov. 11.

While flying over a rubber tree area one mile southwest of An Loc, an observation plane spotted what appeared to be an active enemy basecamp. The same area had been the scene of heavy fighting for the past three days, with more than 50 enemy soldiers killed. Shortly after the sighting, tanks and armored personnel carriers from B Troop moved into the basecamp area and immediately began receiving RPG and small arms fire. Helicopter gunships, tactical airstrikes and artillery supported the armored unit. During the three hour battle the troopers killed 38 enemy before they broke contact.

4th Inf Div

Members of the 4th Infantry Division made light contact with the enemy during the week.

Several division and Vietnamese military installations came under enemy attack Nov. 13 in Pleiku Province.

Three enemy initiated incidents were reported around Duc Co, 24 miles west of Camp Enari. Just after midnight, elements from the 1st Bn., 38th Inf. in a position four miles south of Duc Co, received 40 rounds of mortar fire followed by a ground attack by an unknown size enemy force. Four NVA soldiers were killed. During the dawn hours the area received more rounds. Artillery and gunships reacted with unknown results.

1st Bde, 5th Inf

While conducting a sweep four miles east of Dong Ha, a unit from the 1st Brigade, 5th Infantry uncovered a small bunker complex. A search of the complex

netted the troopers from the 1st Bn., 61st Inf. three NVA soldiers killed, four individual weapons, one light machine-gun, eight RPG rounds and 350 mine fuses captured.

Another unit checked a bunker pointed out by a detainee. Four enemy jumped out of the bunker throwing grenades and firing small arms. The troopers returned the fire killing two and wounding one.

9th Inf Div

Soldiers from the 9th Infantry Division and supporting gunship crews killed a total of 146 enemy soldiers in a series of actions this week.

An ambush the night of Nov. 14 netted troopers from the 4th Bn., 39th Inf. four sampans sunk and 21 Viet Cong killed. The action took place 12 miles northwest of Cai Lay when the troopers ambushed the water-borne VC. One large secondary explosion occurred when one of the sampans was hit. In action 45 miles southeast of Dong Tam, helicopter gunship crews from D Troop, 3rd Squadron, 17th Armored Cav. killed three VC in light scattered actions.

Troops from the 2nd Brigade's 2nd Bn., 47th Inf. ambushed two sampans of armed VC during the night of Nov. 15 on the Ben Luc River, one mile north of Ben Luc, killing ten. Gunships from the 3rd Squadron, 17th Air Cav., supporting the 3rd Brigade troops during an air-mobile operation, killed nine VC near Can Glouc, 12 miles southeast of Tan An.

11th Cav Regt

Air Cavalry troopers of the 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment reported killing 20 enemy soldiers Nov. 12, 12 miles east of the Blackhorse basecamp, at Long Giao, north of Saigon.

The action began when a reconnaissance patrol from the 18th Inf. Div. (ARVN) encountered an enemy force estimated to be two companies in size. The ARVN unit immediately put in a call for gunship support. Within 30 minutes a light fire team from the regiment had traveled 40 miles to the contact area. The gunship crews reported killing the 20 enemy.

25th Inf Div

The 25th Infantry Division killed 75 enemy during a week of moderate contact.

Tactical Airstrikes, artillery and gunship crews were credited with killing 21 enemy Nov. 13 while supporting 25th Infantry Division troops in scattered actions.

Eight enemy were reported killed by gunships crews from the 3rd Squadron, 17th Air Cav. when they engaged an estimated 30-40 enemy in an open area eight miles south of Trang Bang. Air Force tactical airstrikes also supported the action and reportedly killed two more enemy.

An artillery liaison officer with the 2nd Bn., 22nd Inf. spotted seven enemy in a bunker complex seven miles northeast of Dau Tieng. Airstrikes were called-in on the position, killing all seven enemy.

A reconnaissance element from the 1st Bn., 27th Inf. operating northeast of Dau Tieng, received enemy mortar fire about 10 a.m. Artillery fire from the 2nd Bn., 77th Artillery was called in, causing several secondary explosions. Seven wounded suspects were detailed by the infantrymen and a small amount of munitions and food captured.

3rd Bde, 82nd Abn

While on reconnaissance-in-force missions east and southeast of Cu Chi, troopers from the 3rd Brigade, 82 Airborne Division discovered a 20 tunnel complex and a munitions cache.

Included in the cache were 384 pounds of TNT, 96 pounds of C-4 explosive, 3 bags of an unidentified explosive, 2,250 rounds of small arms ammunition and five RPG rounds.

The tunnel complex was found in the same area. The complex consisted of 20 tunnels varying in length from 12 yard to more than 220 yards. An initial search of the tunnels yielded four grenades and five sets of civilian clothing. Exploration of the complex is continuing.

101st Abn Div

Paratroopers from the 101st Airborne Division killed 43 enemy in a week of moderate contact.

November 11 the action picked up in Operation Nevada Eagle as the soldiers of the 101st killed 23 in scattered actions.

The heaviest action occurred when a new combined forces cordon operation was established at midnight four miles southeast of Phu Bai. As the cordon got underway, paratroopers from the 1st Bn., 327th Inf. killed five VC when they attempted to escape the ring. During the afternoon the soldiers from the 2nd Bn., 502 Inf. searching within the cordon killed five enemy and detained two armed suspects found hiding in a spider-hole.

199th Inf Bde

Gunship crews operating in support of the 199th Light Infantry Brigade reported killing six enemy in two contacts Nov. 11.

Crewmen from the 7th Squadron, 1st Air Cav. killed five VC in an action five miles southwest of Saigon. Four AK-47 rifles were also captured. One more enemy was killed by another cavalry gunship nine miles southwest of Saigon late in the day.

In other action, riflemen from the 3rd Bn., 7th Inf. operating seven miles south of Saigon, destroyed seven bunkers and one punji pit.



1st Cav Photos

MEMBERS of the 1st Cavalry Division are shown during their move from northern I Corps to the central part of III Corps.

Awards and decorations

Unit awards to 101st Abn

CAMP EAGLE, (101st ABN)—General Creighton W. Abrams Jr. affixed three battle streamers representing Presidential, Valorous and Meritorious Unit Citations to the honor-laden banner of the 1st Brigade, 101st Airborne Division in ceremonies here recently.

Abrams, commanding general

of United States Forces, Vietnam was greeted on arrival at Camp Eagle by Maj. Gen. Melvin Zais, commanding general of the 101st. The awards were presented after the review of an honor guard commanded by Col. Harold I. Hayward, commanding officer of the 1st Brigade.

The first battle streamer was for the Presidential Unit Citation, awarded for extraordinary heroism during Operation Hawthorne near Dak To in June 1966.

NVA regiment stopped

The operation, which rendered the 24th North Vietnamese Army Regt. useless as a fighting force was conducted by the 1st Bn., 327th Abn. Inf., and 2nd Bn., 502nd Abn. Inf., with support from the 2nd Bn., 320th Abn. Arty. and elements of A Co., 320th Eng. Bn.

Enemy casualties were estimated at 1,200 as opposed to 48 dead and 237 wounded for the 101st.

The "nomads" of Vietnam earned the Valorous Unit Citation in the Tuy Hoa area. In four major battles from January to March 1966, the paratroopers killed more than 500 Viet Cong and captured 500 suspects.

Airborne standards of administration, maintenance, discipline and morale were factors in the 1st Brigade's Meritorious Unit Commendation.

During the period of the award, July 1965, to October 1966, brigade personnel participated in more than 2,000 civic actions, supplying some 12,000 refugees and providing medical for nearly 37,000 Vietnamese in outlying areas.

1st Bde commended

In presenting the awards, Gen. Abrams commended the men of the 1st Brigade then, now and in the future for their bravery, determination and ability as soldiers.

"The United States has always been a nation that stood for freedom," he said, "and a nation that was willing to fight for that freedom. The 1st Brigade of the 101st Airborne Division has fought for that tradition in Vietnam and is exemplary of the courage and dedication to duty it takes to see it through."

DISTINGUISHED SERVICE CROSS

Spec. 4 Gordon W. Gaskin
Spec. 4 Robert T. Catherman
Spec. 4 Joseph D. Deleo
Capt. Robert L. Helvey
Spec. 4 William Philfer
Pfc. Jerry D. Clayton
Lt. Alex C. Green
Lt. Col. Donald B. Schroeder

SILVER STAR MEDAL

Pfc. Julian W. Penn
Staff Sgt. Manuel Gonzalez
Sfc. Rudolph Nunez
Capt. Joseph F. Trimble
Lt. George A. Budd
Staff Sgt. Donald L. Fielder
Sgt. Walter M. Hetzler
Spec. 5 David J. Ellis
Capt. Allen P. Lesniak
Pfc. Michael W. Gray
Sfc. John E. Roberts
Staff Sgt. Robert A. Skipner

DISTINGUISHED FLYING CROSS

Capt. Herbert J. Spier, Jr.
Maj. Gen. Robert R. Williams
Capt. Kenneth D. Kopke
Capt. James F. Record
Maj. Kenneth E. Buikema
Capt. Melvin R. Gibson

BRONZE STAR FOR VALOR

Pfc. Donald L. Blagg
Staff Sgt. George E. Lockett
Staff Sgt. Jessie R. York
Cpl. Gerald K. Scheppier
Lt. Paul K. Powell
Cpl. Terry H. Northcutt
Lt. Robert J. Aertker, Jr.
Staff Sgt. Robert Middleton
Sgt. Raymond Abbott
Sgt. Phillip P. Nicolosi
Spec. 4 Jerry T. Dean
Spec. 4 James F. Ruhr, Jr.



from the desk of

Shortimer Sam

Q. Dear Sam, I was with a state police department before being inducted. I ETS upon my DEROS from Vietnam and have heard conflicting stories regarding an early drop from the Army—up to 90 days. No one seems to be able to find the regulation on early outs for police department duty. I have been told that I'm eligible because being on the force when I was drafted, also I was told that I'm not eligible because this only is applicable to CONUS. What is the straight scoop on this? Spec. 4 W.B.H., 272 M.P. Co.

A. Looks as if your policing talents will be confined to Vietnam for the whole year as AR 635-200 states that early outs for police department duty is applicable only to CONUS.

Q. Dear Sam, I was in an argument a while back with one of our sergeants. I said that the Medal of Honor was awarded to Charles A. Lindbergh for his solo flight across the Atlantic Ocean. He says that I'm wrong, that it has not been awarded for other than combat. Who is right, the SFC or I? PO2 B.J.W., USN.

A. Give one cheer for the Navy as you are correct! Charles Lindbergh WAS given the Medal of Honor for his flight. This was given by special act of Congress in 1927.

Q. Dear Sam, I've recently received word that my cousin has arrived in Vietnam but I don't know where and would like to locate him? Would you please find him and send me the address? Pfc. S.B., 3/16 Arty.

A. I would really like to locate your cousin and all my friends and relatives at the same time, but mounds of work do not permit me this opportunity. You might drop a line to Commanding Officer Area Postal Directory though, at APO In-Country 96381. It might be a little while before you receive an answer, as they attempt to handle scores of letters such as yours every day.

Q. Dear Sam, I have an E-6 in my battery whose wife is now in Italy. When he left Italy the Army paid his wife's fare to Greece where she was supposed to reside until he completed his Vietnam tour. Due to sickness in her family she had to return to Italy at her own expense. Will the Army pay her way to wherever his next duty assignment is, and if so, will they pay it from Greece which is where they sent her? 1st Sgt. R.G., 101st Abn.

A. If she had travel orders or Department of Army permission of residence, then transportation would be paid by the U.S. Government from Greece. If she did not have this, she will have to sustain the loss.

Q. Dear Sam, I would like the poop on airborne units getting jump pay in Vietnam. Some say yes and some say no. I am airborne qualified but am in a leg unit. Can you give me the correct info? Pfc. A.D.S. 1/35 Inf.

A. Yes, there are some airborne units still getting the monthly \$55 jump pay. In order to collect this, though, you have to be airborne qualified and have to be in an actual airborne unit and not a leg unit.

Q. Dear Sam, recently I submitted a question requesting that you find me a regulation concerning Intra Theater Transfers (ITT) and you quoted the wrong regulation (USARV 611-8). Could you please find me the right one?

A. Oops! Sorry about the typo. USARV Reg. 614-8 deals with Intra Theater Transfers.

Q. Dear Sam, does Public Law 90-245 give each man 30 days additional leave, or just those with over 60 days leave who are coming to Vietnam? Spec. 5 R.D.B., 101st Abn.

A. Public Law 90-245, in brief, states that a member of the armed forces serving on active duty for over 120 days in a hostile fire area may accumulate 90 days leave. However, pay may only be collected for the first 60 days. This extra leave may be taken during the fiscal year following your DEROS as has not been the case previously.

Q. Dear Sam, I have read that men DEROSing from Vietnam who have REFRAD orders under the 150 day early out program must arrive in CONUS with 150 days or less or else they will be reassigned. If a man extended his tour in RVN to take advantage of this early out program and his adjusted DEROS is now Dec. 27, which would put him right at the 150 day maximum, can DA let this man take advantage of a three or four day drop, or even the maximum seven day drop if it would put him home before Christmas. Spec. 4 L.T., 632nd H.E.M. Co.

A. According to DA Unclassified Message 886383, the Christmas early release and leave program message, he may be eligible for the early drop as long as his DEROS is not earlier than Dec 16. To determine your eligibility, see your personnel officer and refer him to USARV message 79875 of Nov 17, which retransmits to him the information in the DA message.

Q. Dear Sam, I would like to know if I can get a 30 day drop on my DEROS. The 30 day drop would still be within the 150 day early out and would allow me to enroll for the Fall semester. Is this possible and what do I have to do to get it? Spec. 4 R.M., 199th Inf.

A. You can get up to 90 days early out for purposes of going back to school providing your ETS and DEROS are the same.

Questions on any subject may be sent to Shortimer Sam in care of The Army Reporter, Hq. USARV, APO 96375. All questions will be given prompt attention and deep thought. Unsigned or anonymous letters will not be answered.

Shortimer Sam

Vietnamese col, Americal GIs share honors

CHU LAI, (AMERICAL)—At Hawk Hill north of Chu Lai the United States recently awarded an Air Medal for valor to a Vietnamese colonel. The Republic of Vietnam, in turn, awarded 38 Crosses of Gallantry to members of the Americal Division.

Brigadier General James V. Galloway, assistant Americal Division commander, presented the Air Medal to Vietnamese Lt. Col. Wang Dinh Thoe, Quang Tin Province Chief.

In part, Thoe's citation read, Lt. Col. Thoe distinguished himself on June 15, 1968 while directing Republic of Vietnam Air Force elements in an operation in conjunction with American forces.

"With disregard for his own safety, Lt. Col. Thoe placed himself almost over the bursting round to effectively direct artillery fire."

After receiving his decoration, Thoe, on behalf of the Republic of Vietnam, presented 13 Gold, seven Silver, and 18 Bronze Crosses of Gallantry to members of the Americal Division

for an action west of Tam Ky in late August.

In that action, elements of the 1st Squadron, 1st Cav., spearheaded a three day battle with two regiments of the 2nd NVA Division.

Other units taking part in the action were companies of the 196th Infantry Brigade, 11th Infantry Brigade, E Troop, 8th Cavalry along with tactical air and artillery support.

At the end of the three day engagement, 473 enemy had been killed.

"I would like to honor Col. Thoe for his outstanding heroism in his position as Province Chief and commander of certain armed forces in Vietnam in the fight against our common enemy, the Communists."

Galloway went on to congratulate the men of the 1st Squadron, 1st Cavalry for their contribution to the fight for freedom in South Vietnam.

"May I wish all of you, may I wish the Vietnamese, our friends and allies, good fortune and victory in the end against the Communists in the cause of freedom," concluded Galloway.

Paratrooper honored

BONG SON, (173rd ABN)—A paratrooper of the 173rd Airborne Brigade has been awarded the Silver Star for exceptional valor against a reinforced Viet Cong Company.

First Sergeant Charles G. Mayhew, was presented the award at LZ English, the forward base camp of the 173d Airborne Brigade. Gen. Ralph E. Haines, Commanding General, United States Army in the Pacific presented the medal during his visit to the brigade.

Mayhew received the award, the Army's third highest for valor, for his actions during a May, 1968, battle while he was assigned to Co. B, 2d Bn., 503d Inf., 173d Airborne Brigade.

Company B was attached by a reinforced company of Viet Cong while on a reconnaissance-in-force mission. Despite an intense hail of fire, Mayhew moved from position to position around Co. B's perimeter directing his men's fire and supplying them with ammunition.

As the barrage of enemy small arms and automatic fire mounted, a paratrooper assault squad got pinned down and surrounded outside Co. B's perimeter. Mayhew counter-acted by repeatedly exposing himself to a heavy volume of incoming

fire, returning fire on enemy positions. His action gave the assault squad enough time to take up better defensive positions.

In addition to the Silver Star, Mayhew, a Korean War veteran, also wears the Bronze Star with "V" device, Purple Heart (second award), and the Army Commendation Medal.

Three papers win awards

LONG BINH, (USARV)—The Engineer Troops Vietnam, I Field Force, and Headquarters, 29th General Support Group were all selected for awards in the 3rd quarter, 1968, USARPAC unit newspaper awards program.

I Field Forces' "Wrap Up" won in the multilith category; "Dateline-29," a product of Headquarters, 29th General Support Group, was tops in mimeograph; and "Castle Courier," newspaper of the Engineer Troops Vietnam won in the letterpress category.

Selection of the winners was based on continuing critiques of unit newspapers conducted by

tating return fire on enemy positions. His action gave the assault squad enough time to take up better defensive positions.



199th INF PHOTO

A SHADY TREE was just too much to pass up for this heavily-laden soldier as he took advantage of a break during a reconnaissance-in-force operation southwest of Saigon with the 199th Light Infantry Brigade.

Enemy continues to rally to allies

CAMP EAGLE, (101st ABN)—Screaming Eagles of the 101st Airborne Division set another Hoi Chanh record in the I Corps Tactical Zone when 251 previous enemy soldiers rallied to the South Vietnam government during October.

This figure bettered the division's September mark of 231 Hoi Chanh and brought the two-month total to 482.

This success has been attributed to incorporation of psychological operations into all phases of Screaming Eagle combat operations.

Back-pack ground speaker teams are assigned to, each battalion and helicopters are provided daily for the psychological operations section, headed by Maj. Charles Kelly.

Helicopter broadcast missions have saved countless lives during cordon operations by convincing trapped enemy soldiers to join the Chieu Hoi program rather than fruitlessly continuing to resist.

"Special Quick Reaction Leaflets" also have added a boost to the psy-ops effort. Adopted by Kelly, the leaflets are produced and dropped soon after a Hoi Chanh rally to Allied forces.

Hoi Chanh who volunteer to make aerial broadcasts are flown quickly over their native areas and appeal to their former comrades in the local language, explaining the advantages of rallying and the good care they are receiving.

All broadcasts and leaflet drops relay accurate information. The messages provide specific details of the military situation and give detailed instructions outlining what the insurgents should do if they wish to join the Chieu Hoi program.

Such information as telling the enemy to hide their weapons, to escape from their leaders at night, or to rally during daylight hours only, to avoid misinterpretation of their motives, is given to the enemy during combat operations.

If the message states there

will be no allied firing for two hours, there is no firing. Each paratrooper is thoroughly briefed by his commander and does not fire his weapon during the specific periods unless his life is in danger. The success of the program lies directly with the individual paratroopers, who, understanding the value of the program have cooperated completely.

According to Kelly, "We give the people the facts and always tell them the truth; if they are surrounded, we tell them. When we are going to let up on artillery fire, we tell them that also; and when we give them their last chance to rally, surrender or get killed, they know we are not kidding."

34 Red rockets located

CAMP RED BALL, (82nd ABN)—During a three day search mission in an area eight miles west-northwest of Saigon Co. C, 1st Bn., 505th Inf., 3rd Brigade, 82nd Airborne Division found a large rocket cache.

Using information gathered from intelligence sources they sent out a reconnaissance team. "We came across a garden, which was half dug up. While probing the soil that was still intact we discovered that below the surface were several metallic objects," said Sgt. William Jones.

The day's finding included 34 complete 122mm rockets, three warheads and one rocket motor. Earlier a cache of mortars and small arms ammo was found in the same area.

Hunter-killer

Choppers paired into teams

PHU LOI, (1st INF)—Teaming a light observation helicopter with a Cobra gunship is like joining a first-rate hunter with a good dog. The effectiveness of both is increased.

This is the opinion of WO William B. Jones, an LOH (light observation helicopter) pilot, with D Troop of the 1st Infantry Division's 1st Squadron, 4th Cav. The pilot belongs to one of the unit's hunter-killer Teams, a pairing of Cobra gunships and Cayuse LOH's, which assist division operations and infantry units.

Primarily concerned with air reconnaissance, the teams gather information for squadron and division intelligence. While

the tiny LOH recon's at treetop level, the accompanying gunship, heavily armed with rockets and miniguns, hovers nearby.

Recently a hunter-killer team initiated a recon mission just west of Quan Loi. The team had been searching for an enemy basecamp in the vicinity of a 1st Bn., 16th Inf. night defensive position. The infantrymen contacted the team by radio, informing the pilots that the intelligence radio net was being jammed by enemy forces to their west. The LOH swooped down to investigate, discovering an enemy basecamp in the vicinity.

After the scout returned for

post-strike reconnaissance, the cobra pilot contacted the infantry commander to inquire if the jamming were still in effect.

"The net is crystal clear," the commander replied.

Not long afterwards at the same basecamp, another incident occurred involving the air rifle platoon (ARPS) when a hunter-killer team, searching for traffic in the vicinity of the basecamp previously pounded by artillery, discovered fresh signs. The scout pilot described the evidence as having been made by a two-or-three man party wearing sandals. The information was relayed to operations where the decision to insert the ARPS was made.

That afternoon the rifle platoon, led by Lt. Sammie L. Coplea, was airlifted to the location. Initiating a sweep of the area, the 22-man force discovered the basecamp. Moving through the center of the camp, the platoon was suddenly hit with a barrage of automatic weapons fire and a claymore mine. The platoon continued to advance as gunships brought in suppressive fire.

Soldiers in Delta get plenty of water

BINH PHUOC, (9th INF)—The Mekong Delta is covered with water. Yet there is a shortage of water here—a shortage of pure, drinkable water, that is.

However, 9th Division soldiers rarely feel this problem. The responsibility of keeping potable water points filled belongs to the 15th Engineer Bn.

A good example of the water systems is that of the 2nd Bn., 47th Infantry here.

Non-potable water for bathing is taken from a nearby rice paddy pond and trucked to the showers.

Drinking water comes from the same source, but it first goes through a long process of purification. Two of the engineers who live here place the water in two large tanks for settling and then add limestone and percloron to it.

The key to the system is the erdulator. Water is pumped from the settling tanks through this small boiler-like machine under pressure where diatomaceous earth works with a filter trap to finally purify the water. Then it is stored in a 1,200-gallon tank from which water trucks and trailers draw the drinkable water.

The battalion also has dug two wells which help provide tired and sweating infantrymen with hot showers. Water is pumped from the wells into a reservoir, and when a unit comes in from the field, a pump and generator are started and the water flows through a pressurized gas-flame water jacket to the four shower nozzles.

A close shave?

QUANG TRI, (5TH INF)—"Ouch! Gosh, I don't think I can do it, Sir!"

"Sure you can, son!"

"Wow, he did it! He really did it."

With these words, the 38th man finished shaving on the same blade. The men, all of the 3rd Platoon, Co. C, 1st Bn., 11th Inf., had moved from one operation to another minus their field gear which would catch up with them in a few hours.

On the request of one of the operations officers to "police themselves up a little," they dug into their supplies but found only one razor and one blade.

The challenge was there. Now the record number is 38 men on one blade all passing the colonel's nod.



82nd ABN PHOTO

A SPARSE HARVEST can be expected by the enemy this season. Paratroopers from Co. C, 1st Bn., 505th Inf., 82nd Airborne

Division uncovered a huge rocket cache in the Saigon area.

Attack

(Continued from page 1)

Bn., 20th Artillery was called in to give quick air support. The Air Force's "Spooky" team arrived to give the Cobra gunships illumination.

At one point, the enemy was able to penetrate the outer wire, only to be cut down by a hail of bullets from above and below.

Artillerymen from Btry. D, 1st Bn., 5th Artillery, lowered their 105mm howitzers and fired nearly 900 rounds point-blank into the charging enemy.

Other artillery units located at nearby LZ's Rita and Jake fired over 1,200 high explosive rounds in support, plus illumination rounds to mark targets for Air Force bombs.

At 6:30 a.m., the NVA broke contact, leaving their wounded

and a large arms cache behind. However, less than three hours later they hit the firebase again, this time with a barrage of 120mm mortar rounds and 107mm rockets.

Within minutes after the first rounds impacted, a helicopter scout team from the 2nd Brigade Scouts was in the air. The scouts located the NVA firing positions and directed artillery fire on them.

Captain Frederick L. Kuhns, U.S. advisor with the ARVN Regiment on LZ Dot, praised the rapid support he received from the 1st Cav. "The support was just fantastic," he said. "We got everything we asked for without hesitation." He also praised the 2nd Brigade Scouts and credited them with knocking the enemy off balance before the attack, thus making them execute it prematurely.

While flying a last light recon of the area, the scout team had spotted a group of NVA hiding in a treeline near the LZ. "We engaged with M60 machinegun fire, killing 15 of them," explained WO William Autin. "We then directed artillery in on the location."

Kuhns said the unit discovered by the scouts may have been a diversionary force that was to hit the LZ while the human wave attack struck from the other side.

Six detainees were taken by the ARVN Regiment, and three NVA soldiers surrendered under the Chieu Hoi program.

Weapons captured included 60 AK-47 assault rifles, 12 B-40 rocket launchers, 25 Bangalore torpedoes, 2 heavy and 7 light machineguns, sixty 82mm mortar rounds and 50 satchel charges.

Ivy crews Fix bridge

BAN ME THUOT, (4th INF)—The old French bridge creaked as the tank started to clatter across.

Suddenly, 65 tons of machinery crashed 30 feet into the river as the span gave way, cutting an important supply link to the 2nd Brigade's forward area in the Central Highlands near Ban Me Thuot.

A special unit received the call to reopen the road — the men of the 509th Engineers' Panel Bridge Co.

"The crew of the tank and the vehicle were alright, but the bridge was beyond repair," Lt. Clifford Burnstein said.

Wait for bridge

While we waited for the bridge to arrive, Burnstein continued, "we began setting up the bridge site, which is the most time consuming part of building this type of span."

Early the next morning, the two platoons left for the river with each one of their 12, five-ton trucks loaded with sections of the pre-fabricated bridge.

Already the men were carrying panels and girders to the building site under the watchful eye of the bridge NCO.

"We join the panels together with pins," Sergeant Jeppesen remarked. "As each section is completed, steel girders are clamped to the panels to hold the two sides together."

The men struggled under the weight of the panels and girders.

Heavy work

"It's real tough," Spec. 4 Daniel Charvin said. "Each panel weighs more than 500 pounds and each girder more than 700 pounds. We'll use 80 panels and 20 girders in this bridge and it all has to be put together by hand."

As each panel was lifted up and pinned into place, the men hurried back for another one. "Lay ho" Jeppesen yelled. The men surrounding the panel got a firm grip on the steel braces.

Trucks provide light

As night fell, headlights from the bridge trucks were turned on to provide illumination and the men continued to work.

The night had turned into early morning before the launching nose reached the other side. It was taken apart and the rest of the span pushed across.



RESUPPLY by chopper is the life line for the troops in the field. In this paddy scene southwest of Saigon, infantrymen of the

199th Infantry Brigade's 2nd Bn., 3rd Inf. unload cases of C-rations.

199th INF PHOTO

Medals of Honor

(Continued from page 1)

1967, Davis distinguished himself while serving as a cannonier with Btry. C, 2nd Bn., 4th Artillery. Around 2 a.m., the base came under heavy mortar attack. Simultaneously, an estimated reinforced Viet Cong battalion launched a fierce ground assault. The VC drove forward until only a river sep-

arated them from the fire support base.

Detecting a nearby enemy position, he seized a machinegun and provided cover fire for his gun crew, as they attempted to bring direct artillery fire on the enemy. Despite his efforts, an enemy recoilless rifle round scored a direct hit upon the artillery piece. The blast hurled the crew from their weapon. He struggled to his feet and returned to the howitzer, which was burning furiously.

"Ignoring repeated warnings to seek cover, he rammed a shell into the gun. Disregarding a withering hail of enemy fire directed against his position, he aimed and fired the howitzer which rolled backward, knocking him violently to the ground," the citation said. Undaunted he returned and fired the weapon four more times even though he was painfully wounded by mortar fire.

"Disregarding his extensive injuries and his inability to swim, he picked up an air mattress and struck out across the deep river to rescue three wounded comrades on the far side. Upon reaching the three wounded men, he stood upright and fired into the dense vegetation to prevent the Viet Cong from advancing," it continued. Later he refused medical attention and joined another howitzer crew which fired at the enemy force until it broke contact and fled.

Specialist Wetzel

Wetzel earned his award while as a door gunner with the 173rd Assault Helicopter Company. He was serving aboard a helicopter which was part of an insertion force trapped in a landing zone by intense and deadly hostile fire.

He was going to the aid of his aircraft commander when he was blown into a rice paddy and critically wounded by two enemy rockets that exploded just inches away from him.

"Although bleeding profusely due to the loss of his left arm and severe wounds in his right arm, chest and left leg, he

staggered back to his original position in his gun-well and took the enemy forces under fire," his citation reads. His machinegun was the only weapon placing effective fire on the enemy at that time.

"Through a resolve that overcame the shock and intolerable pain of his injuries, he remained at his position until he had eliminated the automatic weapons emplacement that had been inflicting heavy casualties on the American troops and preventing them from moving against this strong enemy force," the citation said.

In spite of alternately losing and regaining consciousness, he then aided in the rescue of the aircraft commander.

Captain Taylor

Taylor was cited for his actions on Nov. 9, 1967 while serving as Executive Officer of B Troop, 1st Squadron, 1st Cav. of the Americal Division. His troop was engaged in an attack on a fortified position west of Que Son when it came under intense enemy recoilless rifle, mortar and automatic weapons fire from an enemy strong point located immediately to its front. One armored cavalry assault vehicle was hit immediately and all five crew members were wounded.

"Aware that the stricken vehicle was in grave danger of exploding, he rushed forward and personally extracted the wounded to safety despite the hail of enemy fire and exploding ammunition," his citation reads. A few minutes later he repeated this act when another ACAV was hit. Shortly afterward the vehicle exploded.

As he was returning to his vehicle, a bursting mortar round painfully wounded him. "Yet he valiantly returned to his vehicle to relocate the medical evacuation landing zone to an area closer to the front lines," the citation said. When his vehicle came under fire he engaged the enemy with his own machine gun killing three enemy. Again another vehicle was struck and he rescued the occupants before it exploded.



11th CAV PHOTO

WITH INTENSE concentration a Vietnamese boy gets ready to shoot his marble.