

Vietnam Communique

Nov 18-Nov 24

1st Avn kills 402 enemy

1st Avn Bde

Gunners from the 1st Aviation Brigade killed 402 enemy in support of Free World Forces and ARVN units during the week.

Chopper crews from the 13th Combat Aviation Bn., 175th and 336th Assault Helicopter Co. flew in support of the 9th Infantry Division (ARVN) operations. In a series of four strikes Nov. 18, centered five miles east-southeast of Cai Lay, the crews reported killing 13 enemy.

Cobra gunships from the 235th Armed Helicopter Co. operated along the coast in southern Bac Lieu Province. In several contacts, the chopper crews reported killing seven enemy, sinking seven sampans and destroying 63 structures.

Crews from A Troop, 7th Squadron, 1st Air Cavalry flew several sorties 25 miles northeast of Rach Gia. The crews reported killing five VC and sinking four sampans during the day.

C Troop crews from the same squadron operated around Tan An. In three strikes centered 18 miles west of Tan An, they reported killing seven VC and sinking nine sampans.

Americal Div

Americal Division soldiers killed 221 during a week which saw heavy contact with the enemy.

On Nov. 22, Jungle Warriors of the 11th Light Infantry Brigade accounted for 25 enemy killed in scattered contacts. 13 VC and three NVA soldiers in actions near Chu Lai and Tien Phuoc.

Another day of increased action saw Americal forces kill 33 Viet Cong and 14 NVA soldiers in action throughout the southern portion of the I Corps Tactical Zone. The same day in a series of contacts in the Tam Ky-Hoi An area, soldiers of the 196th Light Infantry Brigade killed 16 VC and nine NVA soldiers, action taking place on Nov. 23.

Americal Division forces killed 33 enemy and found the bodies of 15 others Nov. 21 as they operated throughout the southern I Corps Tactical Zone. In addition, 20 enemy were confirmed to have been killed the same day when a company of the 196th Infantrymen tangled with an estimated NVA battalion in fortified positions south of An Hoa.

1st Cav Div

Skytroopers of the 1st Air Cavalry Division reported killing 61 enemy in scattered action during the week.

On Nov. 23 the Skytroopers killed 30 enemy in a series of scattered incidents. An element from the 1st Battalion, 8th Cavalry was in operations 15 miles northeast of Tay Ninh City when they engaged sniper fire from an estimated NVA company. The troopers called in artillery, airstrikes and aerial rocket artillery which forced the NVA company to break into a ragged retreat, leaving behind 12 dead. Action the same day saw nine NVA soldiers killed by gunship crews near Quan Loi in three separate clashes.

Another day's action saw eight enemy killed and the discovery of 17 other bodies

in scattered incidents near Tay Ninh. Earlier the same day, Nov. 24, elements from the 1st Squadron, 9th Air Cavalry engaged the enemy 10 miles northwest of the city. They received heavy automatic weapons fire, prompting them to call in Air Force airstrikes on the enemy positions which resulted in four enemy killed.

1st Inf Div

Soldiers of the 1st Infantry Division killed 26 enemy in a week of light contact.

The troopers from the 1st Infantry Division killed 12 NVA soldiers while finding the bodies of six Nov. 20. Early in the morning the 2nd Bn., 28th Inf. began receiving mortar rounds. As the infantry unit fired counter mortar missions, soldiers guarding the perimeter spotted 30 enemy soldiers outside the perimeter. Several of the enemy began infiltrating through the wire. The infantrymen engaged the enemy troops with small arms and hand grenades. A short while later, they again spotted 50 to 100 NVA soldiers moving through the marshy, wooded area surrounding their position. Gunships and artillery were called in to support the infantrymen. At daylight, a sweep produced 12 bodies, 10 AK-47 rifles, 3 light machineguns, 1 carbine and 1 9mm rifle.

4th Inf Div

Four U.S. installations in the 4th Infantry Division's area of operations came under indirect fire attacks Nov. 18. At midnight, Engineer Hill, three miles west of Pleiku, was hit by approximately five rounds of 82mm mortar fire. At the same time, Camp Holloway, east of the city and the home of the 42nd Combat Aviation Battalion, received less than five rounds of unknown type fire. Two hours later a nearby U.S. artillery position received less than five rounds of 82mm mortar fire. In all cases, damage and casualties were light.

1st Bde, 5th Inf

The 5th Infantry Division's 1st Bn., 11th Inf. killed two enemy during a sweep operation four miles south of Quang Tri City Nov. 22. They also captured one PPS submachinegun and one Chicom pistol. Elements from the 1st Bn., 81st Inf. found the body of one NVA soldier 8½ miles south of Quang Tri.

5th S F Gp

Fifth Special Forces soldiers reported killing 38 VC and the capture of 20 VC suspects during the week.

The soldiers raided a VC platoon size basecamp Nov. 20 at Dong Tre in Phu Yen Province killing 20.

November 22 a CIDG camp strikeforce combined with National Police in a cordon and search operation at Dong Tre capturing 20 VC suspects.

9th Inf Div

Elements of the 9th Infantry Division killed 227 enemy soldiers in a week of heavy fighting.

On Nov. 24 Infantry and air cavalry units of the 9th Division, supported by Air Force tactical airstrikes, killed 68 Viet Cong in contacts throughout their area of operations. In the largest encounter, 49 enemy were killed during fighting west of Cat Lai.

Two days earlier, 9th Division soldiers and supporting gunship crews reported killing 44 VC in scattered action.

Another major operation saw 'Old Reliable' soldiers of the 9th Division, along with gunship crews and Australian tactical aircraft kill 58 enemy on Nov. 23. Other division infantrymen accounted for 13 others in scattered actions.

Soldiers from the 3rd Brigade's 5th Battalion, 60th Infantry engaged the enemy nine miles east of Tan An, reportedly killing 13 with support from gunship crews from the 3rd Squadron, 17th Air Cavalry.

An ambush the same night north of Dong Tam netted troops from the 4th Battalion, 47th Infantry nine VC killed. Gunship crews operating throughout the brigade's area also killed one more VC.

25th Inf Div

The 25th Infantry Division killed 83 enemy in a week where heavy contact was made on Nov. 24.

The troopers and supporting gunship crews from the 12th Combat Aviation Group reported killing 65 enemy in a contact Nov. 24.

Fifty-four NVA regulars were reported killed by gunship crews from the 11th Combat Aviation Bn., 173rd Assault Helicopter Co., flying in support of the 25th. The action began early in the morning when elements from the 3rd Bn., 27th Inf. discovered a trail running east and west through triple-canopied jungle northwest of Tay Ninh City. The trail showed signs of recent heavy use. In an effort to seal up any enemy traveling the trail, one battalion element was airlifted to an area 15 miles northwest of Tay Ninh City. As the choppers from the 173rd approached the forward landing zone, they began receiving small arms fire, automatic weapons fire and antiaircraft fire. The enemy fire was coming from a treeline. All at once 200 enemy ran out of the tree line. And the gunners made repeated passes over the open area killing 54.

3rd Bde, 82nd Abn Div

Paratroopers from the 3rd Brigade, 82nd Airborne Division continued reconnaissance missions in outlying areas surrounding Saigon. In action Nov. 17 elements from the 1st Bn., 508th Inf. destroyed 24 bunkers and spiderholes in an area centered eight miles south of Saigon. In other action that day, elements of the 2nd Bn., 505th Inf., while on a recon mission seven miles northwest of Saigon, engaged an estimated enemy squad with unknown results. While patrolling an area eight miles south of Saigon Nov. 22, an element from the division's 1st Bn., 508th Inf. discovered a 34-bunker enemy-base camp. A search of the area revealed one 60mm mortar base plate, two grenades, an anti-personnel mine and miscellaneous small arms ammunition and maintenance equipment. The complex was destroyed.

101st Abn Div

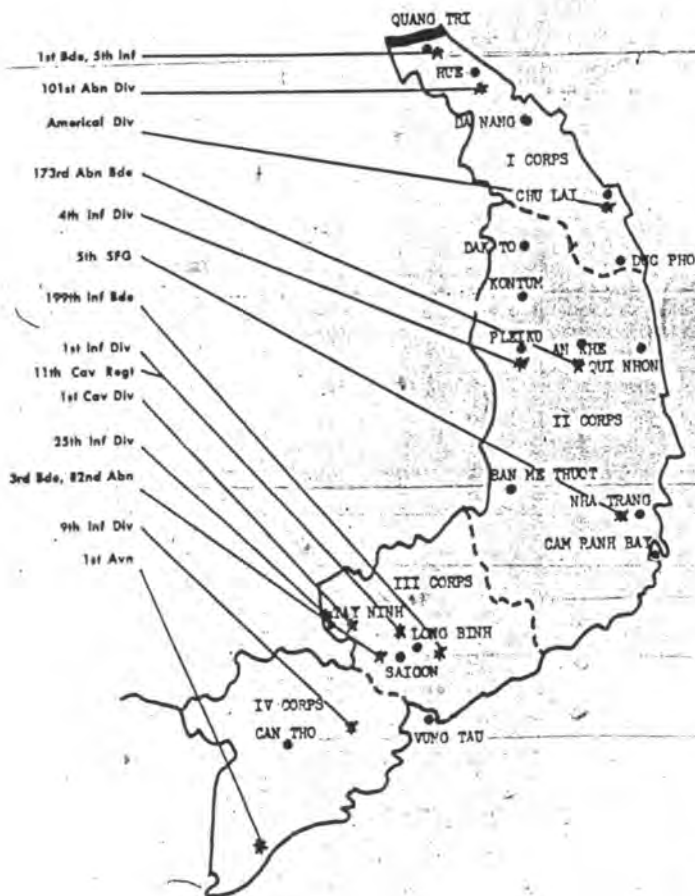
Screaming Eagles of the 101st Airborne Division killed eight enemy on Nov. 21 and in a combined forces operation with ARVN troops, found the bodies of 55 others killed in previous action. In a combined forces operation with soldiers from the 1st Bn., 3rd Regiment, 1st Infantry Division (ARVN), paratroopers of the 2nd Bn., 501st Inf. combed an area 14 miles south of Hue. During the day ARVN troops discovered a mass grave with the bodies of 30 enemy soldiers and a bunker complex with the bodies of another 25 enemy. They were all thought to have been killed by ARVN forces and airborne artillery. Paratroopers working with the ARVN troops uncovered two caches containing 17 individual and seven crew-served weapons. In addition, the troopers killed one enemy during a series of light contacts.

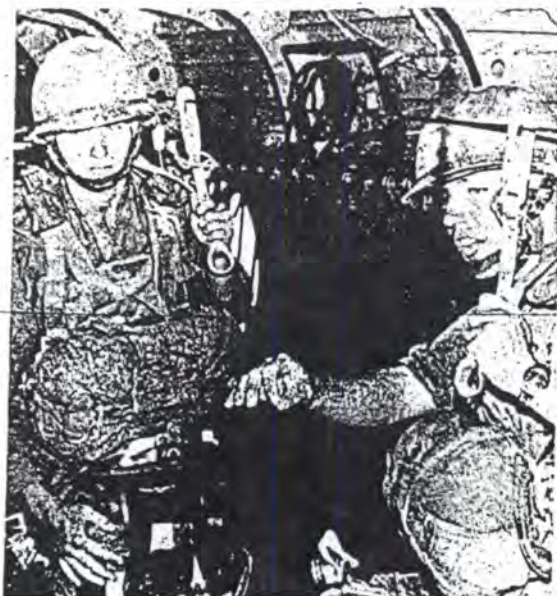
173rd Abn Bde

Paratroopers of the 173rd Airborne Brigade discovered three large enemy base camp areas within the last two days. One of the camps, with 75 bunkers and 60 huts, still had warm ashes in the cooking pit. Two 60mm mortar rounds and one 75mm recoilless rifle round were found in the area. Another of the camps yielded 4,000 rounds of .30-caliber BAR ammunition, 86 7.62mm rounds, two RPG rounds and one RLG launcher.

199th Inf Bde

Redcatchers from the 199th Light Infantry Brigade's 4th Bn., 12th Inf., working in direct support of the 1st Australian Task Force, discovered five sizeable caches in an area 17 miles south of Xuan Loc. Thursday the troops found two caches containing 1,900 handgrenades, 98 mixed mortar rounds, one 75mm recoilless rifle, 55 pounds of TNT, four RPG rounds plus numerous equipment, food, and assorted tools. In addition, the troops discovered a large concrete command bunker containing chairs, a table and a stove.





NEAR TO JUMP TIME, Sgt. James A. Louther shouts "A-Okay" as Sgt. John J. Nelson prepares to leave the aircraft during a 173rd Airborne Division training jump near An Khe.

173rd Abn Photo

Hoi Chanh leads hunt

VC pop out of pot

CAN GIUOC, (9th Inf) — A Hoi Chanh who recently rallied to the government led 9th Infantry Division soldiers to various enemy weapons and equipment and six suspects, two of which popped out of a pottery urn.

In the early morning, Co. A, 3rd Bn., 39th Inf. was airlifted to a position where the former Viet Cong claimed there was an arms cache.

The soldiers found a large pottery urn buried in the ground with a cement covering on it. After they had pulled the top off with a rope, two Vietnamese climbed out with their hands raised. Two AK-47 rifles were taken from the vase.

"The Hoi Chanh pointed out another place about 15 yards away," Sgt. George E. Kiesel said. "We went over there and found six B-40 rocket launchers,

two ChiCom grenades, four charges, three sets of web gear, two AK-47s and about 200 rounds of ammunition lying on the ground and covered with bushes."

In the afternoon, the helicopters returned two platoons and took 1st platoon to check out another area mentioned by the Hoi Chanh.

VC frightened

"On this operation, we were going to look over an area where some VC were supposed to be hiding," Kiesel said. "We were dropped near some nipa palm, and I guess the VC unit got scared because they started firing wildly."

"Soon they ran out toward us and the 1st squad killed one, who later proved to be a platoon leader."

The squad detained two others as suspects.

"I was walking flank through a paddy when I came on one of the VC suspects lying on the ground trying to camouflage himself," said Spec. 4 Larry D. Boyson. "I pointed my weapon at him and hollered for him to Chieu Hoi. He raised his hands and I pulled him up and searched the area, but didn't find anything."

Detain two

Second Squad also detained two Vietnamese.

"They were hiding down in the paddies, and we didn't think they had any weapons," said Kiesel. "We pulled up one and I stepped over the dike for the other one."

"He did have an AK-47, but I guess he was more scared than I was because when I yelled at him he didn't move. So I grabbed his weapon and got him up."

Making a wider sweep later, the infantrymen found the body of a VC who had been killed by gunship fire.

Men outrace dogs, board rescue chopper in storm

By Spec. Adrian Acevedo
BONG SON, (173rd Abn) — A helicopter pilot recently braved typhoon winds and rain to make a dramatic rescue of a 173rd Airborne Brigade Long-Range Patrol being tracked with dogs by a North Vietnamese platoon.

Team F of the 74th Infantry Detachment (LRP) had been searching for three reported NVA basecamps in the northern An Lo Valley, an enemy stronghold 20 miles north of Bong Son, when they detected enemy movement to their rear.

"We set up in a hasty ambush," said Sgt. Peter G. Mossman, leader of the six-man combined American-Vietnamese team. "My rear security man killed their point man and two others fled. We searched the body, captured a Chinese bolt-action rifle and moved out about 150 meters."

"We stopped and again heard movement behind us, talking,

and dogs barking," continued said Mossman. "They must have been trying to track us with dogs. We couldn't get anyone on the radio, so we tried to break contact by moving as fast as possible."

No helicopters

During the next three hours, the NVA force kept closing with the team. The paratroopers however finally made radio contact with elements of the Americal Division and told them their situation. The Americal passed the word on to the 173rd. But, the team was told, no helicopters could fly in the typhoon which had been building up for a week. The team had to continue on their escape and evasion course.

Meanwhile, the decision was made to send four helicopters from the 61st Assault Helicopter Co. anyway, in case the weather let up. A team ship piloted by WO Sam M. Kyle, a command and control ship piloted by WO Dany Pennington and two gunships were sent to the rescue.

The units were notified and headed for the closest suitable pick-up zone about 500 meters away while the weather and visibility got progressively worse.

Breathing down necks

"When we got to the pick-up zone, the NVA were practically breathing down our necks," in

"They couldn't see us though because the visibility was down to about 25 meters. We couldn't see the choppers either, but we could hear them, so we just kept signalling with a strobe light and just hoped."

Pennington reconned the area but couldn't locate the team, so he moved out to make room for Kyle. By this time, the team had made contact with the choppers, and were told that the gunships were leaving because the ceiling was so low they couldn't bring suppressive ground fire.

"I made the decision to stay and try to get them out," said Kyle, "because I'd sure hate to be in their position and have the choppers leave me. I figured this was their only chance because the weather probably wouldn't clear up for a couple of days, so I just kept circling lower and lower until I finally spotted their light."

Beautiful ship

"I thought all the choppers had left," recalled Mossman, "so I was really shocked when I saw that beautiful ship loom up suddenly out of the rain. It took about two seconds for us to pile onto the helicopter in spite of the trees, clumps of bushes, eight-foot elephant grass as it tried to keep steady and the bouncing of the



9th Inf Photo

TAKING AIM with a Communist AK-47 rifle is one 9th Infantry Division soldier while another hastily assembles a weapon. The two men were taking part in a combat obstacle course contest held at Tan Tru.



A new kind of family R&R is in the works. A group in Texas is organizing a special one-time-only charter flight to Japan. If dependents of servicemen sign up quickly, they can fly to Tokyo from El Paso, Tex. on March 10 and return March 25 all for \$425. Sign up by writing Mrs. L.A. Arneson, 5109 Marcellus, El Paso, Tex. 79924, and enclosing half the fare. Mrs. Arneson's husband is Lt. Col. L. A. Arneson, 9th Medical Laboratory, APO 96307. The money will be refunded if the flight is cancelled for any reason by the airlines or the flight chairman. For a \$5 fee the reservation can be cancelled before Jan. 1. Write Mrs. Arneson for other rules and information on special fare insurance.

A Viet Cong guerilla was recently caught playing Tarzan, and lost his pants in the ensuing excitement. The bizarre incident took place in the Suoi Ca Mountains along South Vietnam's north central coast as paratroopers of the 173rd Airborne Brigade were moving along a jungle trail. "It happened so fast," Sgt. John H. Moorman said, "the guy caught us completely by surprise." The enemy soldier, dressed in black pajamas, suddenly came swinging out of the trees hanging onto a jungle vine, then dropped to the ground about ten meters to their front and took off running. Firing in the escaping VC's direction, the paratroopers saw him tumble down a ravine. After searching the area, the infantrymen found a rifle and a pair of black pajama bottoms.

Boasting about rank and how fast it can be obtained has always been a favorite pastime of Army personnel, but few can hold a candle to SSgt. Terry J. Gibson of the 196th Infantry Brigade. Ranking second in a class of over 200 at the Non-Commissioned Officers Academy he was promoted to the grade of E-6 in only eight short months.