

Dec. 23-Dec. 28

The second cache was found by elements from 2nd Bn., 3rd Inf. 15 miles west-southwest of Saigon. It contained 62 mortar rounds, four AK-47 rifles, eight Chicom grenades and a small quantity of other munitions.

Need plus idea equals bingo!

Combat aids developed

CU CHI — When the need and a feasible idea come together, things really start to happen. In Vietnam, the result is production of field expedients.

Several recent projects in the Tropic Lightning Division's 2nd Bde. indicate significant advances for the fighting man.

Lt. Col. Vincent Oddi, new commanding officer of the 2nd Bn., 27th Inf. Wolfhounds, proposed an idea while serving as 2nd Brigade executive officer, that could make illumination of the battlefield an easy task.

The device is a simple 24 volt battery-powered headlamp that gives surprising illumination.

The refinement problems fell into the hands of Maj. Paul Sposito and his staff at the Brigade Commo Office. Their initial efforts produced a couple of workable but unsatisfactory

prototypes before the success.

"This system is capable of giving immediate light especially suited for perimeter defense," said Sposito, "and it can be moved over 50 meters away from the man who controls it by means of a cable and a switch."

Because battalion commanders, who make use of the brigade's light observation helicopters (LOH), have asked for greater communications capabilities with both ground troops and higher headquarters, the commo staff has also developed a new antenna system for the LOH.

The artillery liaison and the commander have two additional nets now available through the addition of three RPC 77 sectional antennas along the skirts of the aircraft.

The commander now has the

ARC 54 AM and FM unit in the front of the aircraft plus the two in the rear—a new high in communications.

Four aircraft capable of a half dozen distinct missions mark the new capability of the 2nd Brigade aviation.

Those missions: rocket ship, minigun ship, people sniffer, Psyops speaker ship and leaflet drop, command and control ship and emergency resupply and passenger ship.

Maj. Charles Addicott, brigade aviation officer, has, with the assistance of his three pilots and enlisted personnel, formed the unit to provide the maximum effectiveness for a large number of operational control battalions.

Lt. Curt Pradelt, brigade officer, and NCOIC Sfc. Antonio Ruclas, have produced in the past three months two systems to reach the Vietnamese civilians with the allied story.

One is a small, compact backpack with a 500 meter minimum range.

The system, weighing approximately 30 pounds is the first of its kind to be contained in a single unit. Battery life is anticipated to be over 100 hours.

Pradelt has also put together a speaker unit to be carried by the LOH which provides mass coverage from the air in combination with leaflet drops.

(25th Inf)



CONNECTION IS MADE of two of the three PRC 77 antennas recently devised for battalion command and control ships.



THE COVER OF DARKNESS is easily withheld from the enemy by the use of this night lighting device developed by the brigade commo section. Maj. Paul Sposito,

signal officer, holds switch to earlier model at right, as Spec. 4 Douglas Baird connects the unit currently being tested.



FIRST OF ITS KIND is a portable speaker unit developed by Lt. Curt Pradelt and Sfc. Antonio Ruclas with support of the brigade signal and civic action staffs, having a range of better than 500 meters.



FOUR SHIPS capable of performing a half dozen missions constitute the 2nd Brigade aviation crew. The ships perform reconnaissance, 2.75-inch rocket, loud speaker and minigun missions. They are also capable of command, control, resupply and passenger missions. The Tropic Lightning fleet is the first in Vietnam with such a wide range of capabilities.

Chopper support cited

Psywarriors aid pilot

BIEN HOA — "We need a rope to get this pilot out of here," heard helicopter pilots working on a psyop mission. The radio call continued, "The way the plane crashed the wings have the pilot pinned inside. He's slumped over and we've got to get him out of there soon!"

The message was sent by a rescue team working at the crash site of a O-1 Birdog, forward observer plane in Phuoc Long Province. Monitoring the radio traffic was a UH-1D helicopter crew of the 195th Assault Helicopter Company conducting aerial psyop missions with a 6th Psyop Bn. field team.

WO Cornelle, the chopper pilot, radioed the rescue team that they were in the immediate area and had a rope aboard. "Maybe we'll be able to help," he said.

The team radioed back their location in the heavily VC infested area and the chopper altered its course from its planned mission and sped to the call for help. During the 10-minute flight to the downed Birdog, Staff Sgt. Ray Fowler, psyop team leader, and the chopper door gunner began rigging the 250-foot rope to be

used in the rescue. Psy-warrior Spec. 4 Dennis Leach manned the chopper's M60 machine gun as the two prepared for the rescue.

Hovering above the downed plane Fowler worked from the chopper skids feeding the rope to ground crews below.

"We tried pulling the wings off to enable the men on the ground to get the trapped pilot out, but that didn't work, so we next attached the rope to the cockpit bar and created an opening for the rescue team," Fowler explained.

In the midst of a VC light arms attack, the wounded pilot was then med-evac'd by the rescue team.

"This is one of the many unplanned missions our chopper teams run into during the course of a normal duty day," pointed out Co. B 1st Sgt. David K.H. Lee.

The psyop heliborne field team operating out of the Bien Hoa headquarters averages six-hours of flight time each day. A minimum of two-hours of loudspeaker broadcasts are logged each day.

"The helicopter fills several

vital roles in our field operation at the 6th Bn.," said Lee. "We use it for quick reaction psyop missions, planned missions, delivery of psyop supplies to line units and liaison with psyop personnel located throughout III Corps. We support U.S., ARVN, and other Allied units."

He added, "Probably the most outstanding attribute is the increased versatility in all of our PSYOP missions which is afforded by the Huey."

In carrying out its missions in the entire area of III Corps, the psyop helicopter may cover several provinces each day. Recent missions have been concentrated near the Cambodian border. According to Lee current emphasis has been placed on night psyop delivery and the UH-1D has again proven it merit.

The recently acquired helicopter began its duties in an exciting atmosphere with the 6th when it took three .50-caliber rounds on its second mission. Bn. Sgt. Maj. Stanley Chromi who was working with the chopper team that day commented, "When the average person thinks of psyop he frequently thinks of leisurely dropping leaflets. Our chopper missions have been anything but leisure. From the very first our chopper team has seen action on virtually every mission."

Earlier in November the chopper came across a tank that had been demolished by a land mine. Its badly burned driver was medevaced by the chopper crew and psyop personnel — Spec. 5 Clarence Spawr and Spec. 4 James Axelrod.

Lee concluded, "The chopper has given our psyop support capabilities a tremendous boost. We've used it everyday since it's been assigned to support our operations. Several railers have been directly credited to our aerial psyop team's efforts." (6th Psyops)



EVIDENCE OF LUCKY escape is held by Pfc. Gary D. Fiumara. The 4th Bn., 9th Inf. soldier was hit in the midsection by nine bullets. All nine hit the magazines, while the 25th Division rifleman emerged unscathed.

Cong, NVA force 'evidence' of title

CHU LAI — In recent weeks the enemy has given the 39th Combat Engineer Bn. ample opportunity to live up to the combat in its title.

After a relatively quiet period, broken only by occasional sniper rounds, both local VC units and NVA regulars unleashed their forces in a sudden burst of activity against the 39th.

The first major move was an early morning attack on LZ Snoopy, base camp of the 39th's Co. C.

Mortar rounds began striking the area during pre-dawn hours, as enemy forces of an undetermined size moved against the compound, coming from north-northeast in the helipad area.

The action swung around to include the southeast corner on Co. C's perimeter, neighboring on the nearby ARVN unit, which also was under attack.

In this area two bunkers set up a deadly crossfire against the attackers, accounting for nine VC kills.

Capt. Torrence M. Wilson, the commanding officer, called for gunships and flareships to open up on the VC.

By dawn the enemy had retreated, leaving 14 men dead and two captured. Co. C suffered only light casualties.

While still recuperating from this attack, the 3rd Platoon of the 603th Light Engr. Co., attached to Co. C, was ambushed on the way to a work site a few days later.

An estimated enemy force of platoon size fired on the engineers from 50 to 100 meters east of the road.

Lt. L. E. Erdmann, the platoon leader, deployed his force, directed a large volume of firepower, and called for gunships, APCs, and artillery.

After the artillery placed rounds within 75 meters of the road, the gunships went into action.

As activity from the east began to die down, small arms rounds came in from the west. Artillery and APC fire was immediately directed on those enemy positions.

To complete the action, a Montagnard company swept the area.

In all, nine VC were captured and 14 killed in this encounter.

Twelve hours later, LZ Snoopy received 20 mortar rounds, as if to let Co. C know that Charlie was still around.

During the same period, Co. B encountered an increasing number of enemy road mines in its daily minesweeps.

In all the line companies at least one or two sniper incidents have been reported with each minesweep. Friendly losses, however, have been confined to light wounds.

Co. B also received a large amount of ordnance turned in through the VIP program during this period. (Americal)

Oil drums reveal enemy rifle cache

CAMP FRENZELL JONES — "We had been probing rice paddy dikes most of the morning. We were using metal rods and found five or six empty 55-gallon oil drums, so we knew that caches had been planted in the area," said Staff Sgt. James Humphrey commenting on the recent sweep by Co. A, 3rd Bn., 7th Inf., 199th Light Infantry Brigade.

Pfc. John Aleshire said, "When I hit something, I got one of the ARVN soldiers who were with us and we dug up a 55-gallon oil drum with 11 AK-47s in it." The oil drum was buried three inches deep in the side of a rice paddy dike. The drum had been laid on its side with a small hole cut out of it. Boards had been laid over the hole and covered with a layer of dirt.

"The AK-47s were packed in grease when we found them. They looked like they had been in the barrel for some time, but seemed to still be in pretty good condition," added Aleshire.

(199th Inf)

Fake, real ambush thwart by convoy

OASIS—NVA forces set up straw dummies armed with wooden rifles to ambush a 4th Division engineer convoy, then sprang a real trap when the convoy came back.

But the live ambushers were no more effective than the straw men.

"We were convoying a bulldozer and a couple of earthmovers down to Plei Me," explained Lt. Charles W. Friend, a platoon leader with Co. D of the 4th Engineer Bn.

"We were the first Americans on that road in six months, and we saw signs of the enemy all along the way."

Sweeping the road for mines, the engineers met a novel kind of harassment by the NVA — fake ambushes.

Half-hidden in the bushes along the road were straw dummies dressed in scraps of uniforms, poking wooden rifles out at the engineers. "From a distance it's a pretty scary thing," Friend admitted.

But it wasn't until the small engineer convoy started back up the highway from Plei Me that it met real trouble. Halfway to the Oasis, the woodland 75 meters to the east erupted with heavy NVA fire. The convoy came to a fast halt.

Two truckloads of armed men jumped to the ground and began blazing back at the enemy. Tanks at the front and rear of the convoy peeled off and swept toward the woodland, catching the NVA in a crossfire of machine-gun and 90mm cannon fire.

Suddenly the convoy began receiving fire from the other side of the road. Returning fire from behind their trucks, the engineers swiftly silenced this attack also. "The people on the ground were pretty much on their own," stated Friend. "They did a beautiful job."

Helicopter gunships were on station a short time later, raking the enemy positions. Between passes by the gunships, the tanks moved in again and pumped more rounds into the woods. (4th Inf)

Ripped strap holds, crane flies home

PHU HIEP ARMY AIRFIELD — As great an innovation as the CH-54 Flying Crane cargo helicopter is it has some hard moments. A 17th Combat Aviation

Group Flying Crane was carrying a much needed load of twenty-foot-long steel "I" beams to Camp Holloway Pleiku when, suddenly, it seemed one of the straps might break, which could severely damage the aircraft and injure its crew.

As the crane neared the end of its 80 mile jaunt, aircraft commander CWO Weldon C. Cooke received an excited call from his crew engineer, Spec. 5 Reed Turner, "Sir, the right support strap is ripping!"

"Stay on the emergency release switch, and, if the strap breaks, try and punch it off in time." With only five miles to go, Cooke decided to go on. Turner watched the strap. Though the load hadn't moved, the strap's frayed edges flapped in the wind, and the few remaining miles seemed exceptionally long.

Finally, the crane reached Camp Holloway, set down, and released the precarious load. The strap held as Cooke felt certain it would. (1st Avn)

Two-wheelers serve purpose

Rat Patrol rides again

TAY NINH—Two small motorcycles, formerly owned by the Viet Cong, have been put to good use by elements of the 1st Bde., 25th Infantry Division. Roads are now swept for mines more quickly than ever before.

The cycles are currently being used to detect enemy road mines, booby traps and trip wires. By using them, the 25th Infantry Division is saving valuable time in sweeping and clearing the roads. During the mon-

soon season, the old, time-consuming method of using a sweep team on foot was necessary. During the dry season, however, they provide an opportunity to work faster.

The motorcycles' new role in Vietnam has been used for about a month.

Maj. Gen. Ellis W. Williamson, commanding general, 25th Infantry Division, came up with the idea and passed it along to Col. Robert L. Fair, commanding officer of the 1st Brigade for implementation. The 4th Bn., 23rd Inf. was the unit selected to try the cycles on road sweeps.

Currently only the two captured cycles are being used for the road sweeps, but six more bikes have been ordered through military supply channels and are being shipped from Japan.

With the motorcycle roaring down the road in front of the armored personnel carriers, few mines, booby traps and trip wires will go undetected.

Use of them has cut the time required to clear the road considerably. Co. B, 4th Bn., 23rd Inf., now sweeps the road in one hour. Instead of the three required by the old method.

The driver of the motorcycle is an infantryman with prior experience in riding them. His attire consists of a helmet, flak jacket and an M-16 rifle. When a suspicious object is found the driver dismounts and signals for the demolition team, which scrutinizes the situation and takes the necessary action.

When asked how he felt about driving one of the cycles Pfc. Dennis Hill said, "There is no problem in handling the motorcycle, especially now in the dry season. This method of sweeping the road is much easier and faster. I'm able to cover the same area with the same amount of accuracy in one third the time it used to take."

(25th Inf)



25th Inf Photo

NEW METHOD of detecting mines was recently introduced by members of the 25th Infantry Division. The use of two former VC owned motorcycles has proved that visual rather than electronic observation is better during Vietnam's dry season.

Flight towers add insurance for pilots

LONG BINH—Twenty new flight control towers have appeared throughout Vietnam in the past year to assure pilots they are being controlled by "the finest communications equipment Army Aviation has ever owned."

Maj. William M. Johnson, assistant avionics officer, USARV Aviation Section, describes the joint U.S. Army—Federal Aviation Administration project in that way. The new towers will provide the most modern control equipment for the more than 4,000 Army aircraft now flying in Vietnam.

"There's hardly any comparison at all with the old system," said Spec. 4 James D. Fossey, tower operator at the Long Binh tower. "Working in the old tower compared to this was like working in a jeep."

"Here we have better visibility and we can hear better, because the radios are no longer with us in the tower," Fossey said.

"The program began in November 1967," Johnson said. "The requirement was to provide adequate and safe control for aircraft operating in and out of our high density airfields."

The towers went up in a two step process. "Local engineers poured the concrete pads and built the tower structure," Johnson said.

"The Federal Aviation Administration came with installation teams to install the electronic equipment," he said. "The equipment was put together at the FAA depot in Oklahoma City."

"Fifty GIs finished the avionics (aviation electronics) equipment repair course at Ft. Gordon and went to the FAA depot for seven additional weeks of work with the new systems. They are now over here operating that same equipment," Johnson said.

Each new tower, including equipment and construction, cost \$400,000, Johnson said. "Seven systems came complete with control tower cabs. CH-47 helicopters lifted the entire system and put it on top of the platform."

In other cases the construction team built the cab on top of the tower and the equipment was lifted up piece by piece to be installed inside.

Each of the systems can communicate with any kind of aircraft operating in Vietnam. Tower operators have their choice of five UHF channels, four FM, three VHF, two high frequency single side band channels, a low frequency beacon monitor and a multi-channel tape recorder.

The tower operator depends on good radio communications throughout the complicated sequence of events that get a plane on or off the ground. During a landing, Johnson explained, the pilot first contacts the tower. The tower gives him landing instructions, telling him the direction of approach, the wind speed and direction, and how to enter the traffic pattern. The pilot enters the pattern. Then, finally, the pilot must receive clearance from the tower before he can land.

It is a delicate process, and the new tower system has "vastly improved the safe operations and control of aircraft," Johnson said. A high density airfield usually averages 45,000 takeoffs and landings a month, with three enlisted controllers on duty to handle the traffic.

During the intricate installation phase, the highly-skilled FAA teams—as many as three six-man teams were in Vietnam at one time—put together the avionics equipment and gave it the necessary operational tests. Maj. Gen. Robert R. Williams, USARV aviation officer and commanding general of the 1st Aviation Brigade, commended the FAA for its outstanding contribution to the Army Aviation effort.

With the construction complete, Weaver said, the FAA will leave "two people to provide technical support for the towers." (USARV)

Aviators stunned, find 'friendly' UFO

CHU LAI—Except for a suspected sighting of a flying saucer, an American chopper flight would have been one of those routine hops.

WO Joseph E. Clark, a pilot with the division's 123rd Aviation Bn. had turned the controls of his UH-1B (Huey) over to his co-pilot, WO Roger

Loomis, shortly after departing Da Nang.

"We were flying over the ocean that morning and had just buzzed past the battleship New Jersey, about five miles south of Hoi An, when I spotted the thing out of the corner of my eye," Clark said, half smiling.

There, in front of the chopper, and at about half its altitude of 1600 feet, was the strangest aircraft the aviator had ever seen.

Without further delay Clark, fighting an impulse to make a 180 degree turn, took control of the helicopter to seek out the unknown.

"As we watched, the UFO flew under the chopper. I did my best to keep close without risking a collision, but every time I approached it would move away and change course. After about twenty minutes of playing with the 'saucer' I decided to report my sighting for further guidance."

With some reluctance, the 11 month Vietnam veteran radioed the artillery warning net (Sav-A-Plane) located at division headquarters at Chu Lai.

As he had feared, the net came alive with the chorles of disbelieving pilots monitoring the unlikely conversation.

"Okay, UFO! Whaddya got up there, anyway? I suppose you've seen little green men!"

Advised to refrain from further action with what was likely to be a monitoring craft from the New Jersey, the beleaguered pilot turned his craft south and headed for Chu Lai. Naval officials with the Naval Support Activity Detachment (NSAD) at Chu Lai later confirmed the UFO was probably a "DASH" (Drone Anti Submarine Helicopter) radio-controlled from a destroyer providing security for the big battleship. (America)

MPs give kids refund on grenades, ammo

QUANG TRI—As the Military Police jeep rattled to a halt near a lake south of Quang Tri, several Vietnamese kids began chattering and pointing to a spot at the water's edge.

In the small gully was a pile of enemy hand grenades, which the children had found while swimming in the shallow lake. The Military Police turned them over to the 517th Military Intelligence Detachment and the kids were rewarded with pay for finding the grenades.

Now, three weeks later, the

jeep still rattles to a halt in the same spot nearly every day as the youngsters find more grenades and artillery rounds in and around the lake only a quarter of a mile from the perimeter of a forward base camp of the 1st Infantry Brigade.

"The kids have turned in more than 200 grenades and several artillery rounds so far," Pfc. William C. Lofholm said. "One of them walks up to the base camp to get us to come and pick them up when they get a pile collected."

(5th Inf)

Blondie

by Chic Young





THE MINI-SKIRT was designed for the likes of Brigitte Bardot. The barefoot Miss Bardot here waits to begin a scene from a recent movie "Two Weeks in September." Paramount Pictures Corp. Photo

Americal hits VC.

CHU LAI. — Americal Division soldiers of the 1st Bn., 52nd Inf., supported by airstrikes and helicopter gunships, killed 18 enemy soldiers recently in a day-long series of skirmishes near Tam Ky.

Co. B, led by Capt. Larry D. Allgood was on a sweep in an area west of Tam Ky when they made contact with an unknown size enemy force shortly before noon.

The 198th Brigade soldiers got the enemy pinned down and began to maneuver for better positions while calling on the gunships for fire support.

"We were on a hill where we could observe the whole area," said Allgood. "We called on artillery and gunships and just kept pounding them."

Jets were also called into the fray in the central highlands area. When the enemy tried to break off contact and flee the area the Americal soldiers pressed the conflict. Several items of enemy equipment were captured, including three rifles, a Viet Cong flag, VC newspapers and propaganda documents, medical supplies, and a number of Chu Lai grenades.

The infantrymen also detained seven Viet Cong suspects.

"The outstanding support we got from the gunships and the airstrikes really made the difference in the battle," Allgood said. Nine of the 18 kills were credited to gunships and airstrikes, with the other nine killed by the company's riflemen. (Americal)

9th troops find enemy hospital

TAN THU. — An enemy hospital containing seven wounded soldiers was discovered by elements of the 9th Infantry Division's Co. A, 2nd Bn., 60th Inf., and a Vietnamese reconnaissance unit during a sweep in Long An Province.

With the troops acting as a blocking force, the Vietnamese Unit swept toward the suspected hut and came under fire from two VC in a bunker.

After overcoming the two enemy, later classified as medics, a search of the hospital uncovered two male and one female wounded VC. Combining the area further, the Vietnamese Unit located two North Vietnamese Army officers and two medics attempting to hide under nipa-palm leaves.

"It was a very sophisticated set-up," said Capt. Floyd Cleveland, company commander. "We found five, five-gallon cans with bandages, medical instruments and some food supplies."

"We were told that this is a hospital for the entire district," he added. "And these medics were the only two they had. We really put the hurt on them." (9th Inf)

No TV listing

As of ARMY REPORTER press time, the AFVN television schedule was not available.

The schedule will be in the usual location next week. (USARV)