

# Enemy post-Tet offensive blunted; Americal, 173rd close six operations

## Paratroopers, Miracles kill 2,776 enemy

LONG BINH — The Americal Division and the 173rd Airborne Brigade recently completed six combat operations which totalled 2,776 enemy killed.

The three 173rd Airborne Brigade operations, Cochise Green, Bolling and Walker, took place along Vietnam's north-central coast and resulted in 1,916 NVA and VC killed.

The Americal Division's three operations, Vernon Lake II, Fayette Canyon and Hardin Falls, totalled 860 enemy killed.

The 173rd paratroopers covered three primary areas in their operations: around An Khe (Operation Walker), the coastal mountains west of Tuy Hoa (Operation Bolling) and heavily populated Binh Dinh Province (Operation Cochise Green).

Cochise Green, which began March 30, 1968, featured reconnaissance-in-force operations against the 22nd NVA Regiment, the 3rd NVA Division and local Viet Cong forces. In 10 months, the brigade accounted for 929 enemy dead, 2,062 detainees, 122.1 tons of rice and numerous documents captured.

The operation was highlighted by heavy contact by the Korean 1st Bn., 50th Inf. during May, accounting for 329 enemy killed, a combined sweep-and-clear operation with the 40th ARVN Regiment during September which ended with over 300 confirmed Viet Cong killed or apprehended, and the largest money cache of the war, \$150,000 in greenbacks, found in July.

During the operation, the brigade secured coastal highway QL 1 and territory from Qui Nhon to the southern border of I Corps conducted extensive pacification programs.

In Operation Bolling, which began in September, 1967, elements of the brigade killed 715 enemy and apprehended 2,488 suspects.

Operation Walker, with the purpose of providing security for Highway QL 19 between the port of Qui Nhon and the central highlands, resulted in 272 enemy killed since January, 1968.

The oldest of the Americal Division's three operations, Vernon Lake II, began Nov. 2, 1968, and was conducted by the 3rd Bn., 1st Inf. and 4th Bn., 21st Inf. It covered the region southwest of Quang Ngai City, an operational area of the 3rd NVA Division. In the operation, the 11th Light Infantry Brigade forces killed 435 enemy, of whom 132 were NVA soldiers and 303 VC. In addition, the soldiers detained 18 suspects and received two Ho Chi Hanhs. U.S. forces destroyed 81 NVA base camps and captured munitions and equipment including 140 individual and five crew-served weapons, 121 tons of rice, 1,253 mixed 60mm and 82mm mortar rounds, 196 rockets and 964 NVA uniforms.

Operation Fayette Canyon was initiated Dec. 15, 1968, after approximately 1,600 NVA were reported on Hill 953, 25 miles

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A VC BOOBY TRAP injured this innocent Vietnamese youth while he was fishing around a mudhole. 199th Light Infantry Brigade medics provide treatment.

## Most in two years

# 1,005 rally in one week

SAIGON — Despite the Communists' post-Tet offensive, a near record 1,005 Vietnamese rallied to the Government of Vietnam under the Chieu Hoi (Open Arms) program during the week ending March 1, Chieu Hoi officials reported.

This was the largest number of returnees to rally in a single week since the week ending March 25, 1967, when 1,187 rallied.

The IV Corps Tactical Zone broke all records with 781 returnees. This figure is the highest for any corps area since the program began in 1963. An Xuyen province in IV CTZ alone produced 201 returnees.

So far this year, the Ministry of Chieu Hoi has counted 5,679 returnees compared with 3,055 for

the same period in 1968.

Officials reported a significant increase in the number of weapons brought in but the exact count has not been completed.

A breakdown of the 1,005 returnees showed that 666 of them were enemy soldiers, 293 were political figures and 46 were in other categories.

Chieu Hoi officials were encouraged by the sharp upsurge in returnees, pointing out that the numbers rallying to the government slumped during the pre-Tet and Tet holiday period.

The 1,005 returnees pushed to 99,059 the total number of Vietnamese who have rallied to the Government of Vietnam since the program began in 1963.

## Enemy advance spotted

LONG BINH — The razor sharp night vision of a perimeter guard spotted a developing Communist attack on the huge Long Binh military complex shortly before 3 a.m., Feb. 23.

Spec. 4 Thomas Baker, an administrative clerk at headquarters, U.S. Army Vietnam, was a member of the defense force manning the bunkers that night.

All eyes were trained in the open area beyond the perimeter, but only Baker saw movement. He spotted three figures creeping toward the positions about 250 yards away.

"I told the commander," said Baker, "and everybody looked. But I was the only one who could see them. A flare was fired, but still no one saw them. I asked for permission to fire, and I fired a tracer from my M14. Then they saw."

Then the battle began. Many hours later, the enemy force was destroyed and a total of 132 enemy bodies were counted.

## Allies repulse enemy attacks In all 4 corps

LONG BINH — American Soldiers engaged large groups of enemy troops throughout the week as the number of NVA and VC soldiers killed by Army units during the enemy's post-Tet offensive neared 3,000.

The enemy launched rocket and mortar attacks and some ground assaults against scattered Allied installations, but these attacks had slackened by the end of the week.

Heavy action on Feb. 23 was followed the next day by a relative lull. Enemy mortar attacks hit several landing zones of the 1st Cavalry Division, but there was virtually no damage. Soldiers of the 25th Infantry Division found 27 more NVA bodies during searches of the previous day's battlefields.

Cannoneers of Btry. C, 1st Bn., 27th Arty, scattered their 155mm howitzer fire throughout the area between Long Binh and Bien Hoa, the scene of much action during the offensive. Fifteen VC were reported killed, three bunkers destroyed and 10 secondary explosions set off.

Soldiers of the 25th Infantry Division and supporting elements repelled early morning attacks on three division installations Feb. 25. The enemy lost 122 soldiers in these and other actions, bringing the division's total of enemy killed during the offensive to 431.

Two division fire support bases, one three miles southwest of Go Dau Ha and the other five miles southeast of Dau Tieng, were attacked, as was the 3rd Bde. basecamp at Dau Tieng.

At the fire support base near Go Dau Ha, 100 enemy were detected 500 yards southwest of the perimeter at 12:20 a.m. and 20 82mm mortar rounds exploded northwest of the perimeter close to 1 a.m. Enemy RPG and machine gun fire began to hit the northwest side of the perimeter, and 10 enemy were observed on that side of the perimeter coming through the wire. Infantrymen of the 2nd Bn., 27th Inf., supported by artillerymen of the 2nd Bn., 77th Arty. from inside the base, returned the fire aided by gunships and a flare-ship. The attack subsided shortly before dawn. In a sweep of the battlefield the infantrymen found the bodies of 78 NVA soldiers.

The division continued to encounter heavy action the next day, Feb. 26, when the enemy launched a three-prong assault on the division's base camp at Cu Chi. Just after 4 a.m., soldiers from an NVA sapper battalion infiltrated the base perimeter, but the defenders, supported by helicopter gunships, artillery, and "Spooky" gunships, repelled the enemy. At the same time, sporadic fighting broke out on the opposite side of the base camp, with the enemy sending in rockets and mortars for about two hours. Thirty-one enemy died in the attacks; damage to the base camp was moderate.

The same day, a recon patrol

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## Feb. 24 to March 2

### 1st Cav Div

On Feb. 26, the cannoners killed 12 enemy soldiers in three scattered fire missions in the northern III Corps Tactical Zone. The actions took place around Tay Ninh.



# Shot down, observer evades enemy

**CHU LAI** — Lt. John McFadden's job as an aerial observer is to detect enemy ground activity, but the sharp crack of .50-caliber bullets ripping into the fixed wing aircraft indicated the enemy had reversed the process.

In the ensuing 30-hour period, McFadden scrambled along in a nightmarish evasion that combined the elements of luck and ingenuity.

The 27-year-old first lieutenant climbed into the little Bird Dog and was glad to see his pilot was the same one that took him on his first flight some 40 missions ago. It was to be the pilot's last flight. The small plane arched into Antenna Valley through Deo Le pass and headed south down the twisting Son Thu Bong River, approximately 10 miles south of An Hoa.

The course of the stream was familiar to both McFadden and his pilot. McFadden had followed the enemy supply route on other reconnaissance flights for the 19th Infantry Bde. in the Americal Division area of operation.

Gliding along 100 feet above the water and using the river as a guide, the two men had spotted nothing unusual. Sud-

denly the snap of 35 to 40 rounds from a .50-caliber machine gun broke the silence. McFadden knew at least the first burst had hit the plane.

When the Bird Dog began losing altitude, McFadden figured the pilot had been hit and managed to radio a couple of May Day calls for help before the aircraft crashed. The calls went unheard.

The plane crashed in the water 10 to 15 seconds after being hit. The cabin portion was submerged in the water along with the wing that was near the sandy bank of the stream.

"I got tossed around a bit, but just got scratched a little," said McFadden. "Finally, I crawled out of the right rear window. I surfaced for air then went underneath the plane to check out the condition of the pilot."

Going under the wing that was partially exposed he discovered the pilot was dead. "When I surfaced for air underneath the wing I heard two or three enemy talking. A couple of them jumped on to the wing from the bank. I stayed motionless as they walked above me and then left about 10 minutes later," said McFadden.

Evidently feeling sure that all occupants of the small craft were dead, the enemy soldiers voices became weaker and weaker as they walked away.

"When I thought they were gone I crawled out of the water and up on the bank," said the lieutenant. "I quickly surveyed the area and spotted two — about 75 meters away on the bank of the river. It was approximately the same area we had received the machine gun fire from."

McFadden fired his .45-caliber pistol at them and raced off in the opposite direction from the enemy. The enemy disappeared. "I figured they were going to get some more people or report what had happened."

McFadden moved off to the east in the high elephant grass. The surrounding rice paddy area had a few small hootches, but the lieutenant never saw any people in the vicinity. "The people may have scattered when they saw the plane was going to crash," he said.

Moving slowly through the eight-foot-high elephant grass, McFadden looked at his watch and realized several hours of daylight remained. Suddenly he heard

them coming. From the sound of their voices, McFadden estimated there were six to eight enemy coming towards him in two separate elements.

McFadden waited until later in the afternoon then moved back further into the thick elephant grass. "I couldn't see too well, but in midafternoon I heard and spotted several aircrafts flying overhead — I figured they were probably looking for me, but I didn't want to give my position away."

Next morning the aerial observer pushed on through the vegetation until he found a plateau of elephant grass with a large boulder sticking out conspicuously.

"Everytime a plane would fly over, I'd jump on the rock and start waving," said McFadden. In the early afternoon a Bird Dog spotted the lieutenant waving his arms. In the next five to ten minutes there were five planes in the area.

Lt. Col. Robert B. Longino, of the 4th Bn., 31st Inf., arrived in his command and control helicopter to pick up McFadden.

"The first thing he asked me as I boarded the chopper was 'Why didn't I shave?'" laughed the relieved aerial observer.

## Fight-and-build project launched

**BONG SON** — The 173rd Airborne Brigade has launched its most ambitious civic action project of its four year stay in Vietnam — a project that will eventually house 600 families of ARVN soldiers in three self-supporting communities.

"This is more than a civic action project, however," said Maj. Ronald A. Lawrence, brigade Civic Action Officer. "It's a fellowship project, soldier to soldier, where our soldiers are going to the assistance of their allies to help their families."

As Lawrence explained it, "The Sky Soldiers initiated the project when they heard that troops of the 22nd ARVN Division were having problems finding quarters for their families."

22nd ARVN Division troops and 173rd Airborne Brigade paratroopers have been fighting together along South Vietnam's north central coast for nearly a year.

Once the need for housing had been determined, the two parties got together and decided what was required to solve the problem.

"The two groups have worked together so long," continued Lawrence, "it didn't take much talking to find the necessary solutions. It's really something when you think about it, fighting together and then building together."

Up until now, the 22nd Division basecamps have been located in areas where adequate housing is both scarce and expensive.

"They have been forced to live in substandard housing," said Lawrence, "and this is what the brigade is seeking to overcome."

Assistance provided by the brigade is primarily in the form of commodity support and technical assistance. All the labor is from ARVN soldiers with the exception of some engineering support from the 19th Engineer Bn. and the 173rd Engineers who

have helped with ground leveling and surveying.

The brigade has also helped set up factories so the ARVN's can manufacture concrete blocks. A sawmill to process uncut timber is also being built.

The planned houses, built of concrete with tin roofs, will include three rooms plus kitchen and water closet, with each project becoming a separate hamlet complete with school, dispensary and community center.

Two brick-laying ceremonies attended by Brig. Gen. John W. Barnes, commanding general, 173rd Airborne Brigade and Brig. Gen. Nguyen Van Hieu, commanding general, 22nd ARVN Division, have already commenced two of the projects near here and Phu My. The third will be constructed near Tuy Hoa.

"Our soldiers who have been working with the project seem really enthusiastic about it," noted Lawrence. "I think they recognize the need and the value, and after fighting with these soldiers they seem especially willing to put forth a big effort. It really confirms the relationship among our soldiers."

## Choppers, artillery, tac air combine to kill 50 enemy

**LONG BINH** — Artillery, tactical airstrikes and "firefly" helicopters from the 1st Aviation Brigade teamed up to kill a reported 50 enemy a little over a mile from here. In addition 14 secondary explosions were observed.

Helicopters from the 334th Aerial Weapons Co. equipped with bright spotlights acted as forward observers and air controllers for Bien Hoa based artillery and tactical aircraft.

The action was initiated by a long range patrol which made contact with the enemy at 3 p.m. After the patrol was extracted artillery units began to pound the area with their 155mm howitzers, and did not cease the shelling until the 334th

firefly team came on the scene at 9 p.m. They were diverted from a routine mission of observation along the Dong Nai River.

Immediately after entering the area to observe the effects of the artillery the team saw numerous VC crouching behind scrub brush and quickly killed 20 of them. For 3 1/2 hours the team stayed on station direction, observing the effects of tactical airstrikes and their own strikes on the enemy's positions.

The final results of the attack credited the 334th with 27 VC killed and the other 23 VC dead to the combined efforts of the artillery and Air Force.



USARV Photo

**THE ONE-MILLIONTH** person to process through the 90th Replacement Bn., Staff Sgt. John Burnett, gets a kiss from Miss Bobby Keith as he disembarks the plane at Bien Hoa. Spec. 5 Len Archdeacon waits patiently to interview him.

## MPs kill Viet Cong skindiver

**VUNG RO BAY** — The explosive laden body of a Viet Cong diver, clad in a scuba-type diving suit with mouthpiece and long, stiff plastic tubes attached for undetected underwater breathing, was recovered in the bay here, by MPs from the 218th MP Co. and men from the 458th Transportation Co. The VC apparently had been killed by concussion grenades dropped in the Vung Ro harbor by MPs on a harbor security mission.

MPs regularly toss concussion grenades into the water during patrol activities in the bay when VC diver activity is suspected.

A helicopter on routine patrol above Vung Ro spotted a floating object in the water off the shore of Echo Beach in this small, natural harbor 150 miles north of Saigon.

A river patrol boat (PBR) approached Echo Beach and spotted the body, floating face down, with a box the size of a C-ration case floating next to it.

Sgt. Jack Teatsworth, one of the MPs on the PBR, stripped down and plunged into the bay in an effort to swim close to the floating body and suspected explosives without endangering the other men on the PBR. His efforts were rewarded by the discovery of a Russian made, floating sea mine.

The mine had been concealed by the floating box, which was magnetically attached to the mine and contained 75 pounds of TNT-type explosive, all attached to the diver by means of a tightly secured rope of short length. Sgt. Teatsworth separated the body from the explosive package by cutting the rope.

Then, the body and the floating bomb were lassoed and towed near the PBR docking facility, where an explosive ordnance disposal team from Phu Hiep disarmed the mine and destroyed it.



## Awards and decorations

# Pilot cited twice for valor

**BAN ME THUOT** — A young warrant officer who took the lead in two daring air operations within 72 hours was awarded the Distinguished Service Cross and the Distinguished Flying Cross.

In addition, 22-year-old WO Gilbert N. Terry of the 155th Assault Helicopter Co., 10th Combat Aviation Bn., earned a Purple Heart.

The action came last August during the struggle to save the city of Duc Lac. Terry was wounded in the first mission which began in the early morning hours of Aug. 23, 1968. He had volunteered to replace a weary commander who had been flying all the previous night.

As Terry's aircraft neared the besieged city, the lead ship developed transmitter trouble; so he assumed the task of coordinating control with the forward air controller and ground troops.

He began his gun runs, penetrating the entrenched enemy, his own craft attracting enemy fire in return.

"On the second pass," Terry recalled, "I observed heavy fire originating from some buildings in a small village near the woodland. I requested and received permission to engage these targets."

Three rockets found their mark, but the run cost the officer's ship more damage. The engine's oil pressure gauge dropped.

"The ship was in extremely bad shape and the rotor continued to bleed off," Terry said. "I flared and tried for a tail first impact to cushion the rather fast sink rate we were experiencing."

After the chopper came to a

halt, the officer managed to crawl out of the tangle and free the pilot. Together, they carried the crew chief, wounded in the leg, to the MACV compound, under a barrage of automatic weapons fire and mortars.

When they reached the post, they learned of a serious shortage of ammunition.

"There was a large supply of mini-gun ammo still on the aircraft," Terry said, "so I elected to go out with two people from the compound to recover it."

The enemy fire had not ebbed, nor had the impacting mortars, but he went anyway. Moments later, he returned with the badly-needed resupply.

His sense of duty had blurred all thoughts of personal safety. Upon his return, he realized that a bullet had found its mark. Though in pain, he spurred medical attention until he saw that his crew chief had been treated.

For this action, he was presented the Distinguished Service Cross and the Purple Heart by Gen. Creighton Abrams, MACV commander.

Less than three days later, he was to play the starring role in another thriller.

The place and setting had not changed, but in this scene, Terry was the pilot.

Despite thick enemy fire, he repeatedly hit his targets until his ammunition was spent.

Through a blanket of fire, he flew his ship to a downed chopper whose pilot had been seriously wounded. He landed, picked up the man, and lifted off — all the while under hail of bullets.

The exposure to enemy fire had to have its effect sooner or later, and shortly, the aircraft's commander was suddenly wounded.

Terry quickly grabbed the controls and recovered the ship. Taking complete command, he skillfully flew the damaged aircraft away from further danger.

Enroute to the airfield, he contacted the medics on the ground and arranged for ambulances to get his wounded passengers when he touched down.

In another recent ceremony, Maj. Gen. Robert R. Willeams, commander of the 1st Aviation Brigade, awarded Terry the Distinguished Flying Cross for his actions during the second engagement.



RECEIVING a Distinguished Service Cross from Gen. Creighton W. Abrams is WO Gilbert N. Terry of the 1st Aviation Brigade.

## Medic earns DSC braving enemy fire

**FIRE SUPPORT BASE PATTON** — A 25th Infantry Division medic received the nation's second highest award for valor in a ceremony here recently.

Spec. 5 Ronald J. Soppe, 1st Bn., 5th Inf., was presented the award by Gen. Creighton W. Abrams, commander of all U.S. forces in Vietnam.

Soppe was cited for extraordinary heroism while serving as a medic with the mechanized unit in the Ben Cu rubber plantation on Sept. 11, 1968.

Soppe's unit was attacked at their night laager by an estimated enemy battalion. He maneuvered from position to position to aid wounded comrades in the

midst of the rocket, machine gun and small arms attack.

During the battle one armored personnel carrier was hit and set on fire. Soppe ran to the track and extinguished the blaze.

While trying to reach one wounded soldier, Soppe received frag wounds in the arm.

Although wounded, Soppe reached the man and then despite his condition continued to aid six others.

After the battle subsided, the courageous medic stayed to help evacuate the wounded and continued to refuse evacuation until the threat of a second attack was over.

from the desk of



## Shortimer Sam

Dear Shortimer Sam, I'm presently working as the battalion mail clerk for the 2nd Bn., 27th Inf. and I would like your opinion on this question. Do you think that personnel leaving Vietnam should advise their correspondents to cancel all mail sent to them two weeks prior to their DEROS? I think it would eliminate the necessity of forwarding so much mail. Spec. 4 E.L., 2nd Bn., 27th Inf.

Well, what I think you really want is a free plug to help cut down your work load. Of course I agree with you. I know many times guys forget to tell people they are leaving and mail arrives at their old duty station and then must be forwarded to them. If they are on leave and have listed their next duty station as a forwarding address they might not get their mail for 30 days. Oh yes, all you shortimers be sure to have your newspapers cancelled. There is no sense in loading down your mail clerk with a bunch of the "Timbukto Gazette" if you are home reading it daily. So get with it gang. Let your correspondents know well in advance of DEROS when you are leaving. I wish I knew when I was leaving so I could tell everyone!!

Dear Shortimer Sam, What I would like to know is, if you extend for two months to get a five-month early out, can you accept a drop that will put you over the 150-day mark when you reach Oakland. Spec. 4 L & M, B Troop, 2nd Squadron, 1st Cav., 4th Infantry Division.

No, no, no! You must reach Oakland with 150 days or less to serve.

Dear Sam, I'm in the 1st Log. What I would like to know is if it is proper to wear the USARV patch on the right shoulder after one has been in Vietnam more than 10 months? I understand this is the patch worn after returning to duty back in the world. Spec. 5 R.S., 28th Signal Co.

Either you are pulling Sammy's leg or you are really confused. While in Vietnam you wear your unit patch on your left shoulder. If you have previously served in another unit here you may wear that patch on your right shoulder. When you return to the U.S. you will wear your 1st Log patch on your right shoulder. You do not wear the USARV patch unless you are assigned to USARV. You are not!

Dear Shortimer Sam, I DEROS May 11 but to ETS I have to extend until June 30. What is the last possible day I can extend? Spec. 4 C.C., Co. B, USAD, Qui Nhon.

Technically you extend up until the time your flight takes off. But if you think they are going to make it a six-month early out you are kidding yourself. I would recommend that you extend at least 30 days before your normal DEROS so that your unit does not get a replacement in making you excess baggage. Actually you should extend as soon as you know you are going to, as to prevent orders from being cut for you on a Stateside assignment.

Dear Shortimer Sam, USARV Memo 670-1 says that the sleeves of the tropical combat uniform will be neatly rolled above the elbows. No provisions are made for night-time wear. All the announcements on radio and TV and common sense say roll down sleeves at night. Many people have been reprimanded for having sleeves rolled down. What's the story? Spec. 4 J.P., USARV.

Well now! There are memorandums and there are regulations. USARV Regulation 670-5 gives general guidelines for the whole command, saying that sleeves can be rolled up except where mosquitos are prevalent. Then the local commander may opt to have sleeves rolled down. USARV Memorandum 670-1 establishes the policy for those working at headquarters USARV, saying: wear your sleeves rolled up. So, to be correct, you wear 'em rolled up at headquarters USARV, and check to see what your company says about 'em when you're in the company area. Even the mosquitos get confused over this one!

Dear Sam, I have been told by one of our company clerks that I cannot extend a second time unless I extend for at least 90 days. Is this true? I need to extend only 20 days to ETS. Also would it be possible for me to ETS 20 days earlier than the 150-day early-out to return to college? Spec. 5 F.G., 128th Signal Co.

Your company clerk is right on the ball. Second extensions must be for a minimum of 90 days. And as for a 170-day early-out for college—neevah happen. The largest early-out for college is 90 days.

Dear Sam, Here is my problem: I am a US with 64 days left in Nam. When I hit Oakland I will have 84 days left before ETS. So I should be discharged. Right? Well then how come I got alert orders for Ft. Ord? My company clerk said that they would catch the mistake in Oakland. But I don't like the idea of waiting until I hit the coast to fix things up. Spec. 4 J.W., 36th Engineer Bn.

Walk briskly, don't run, to your personnel section today. And with green star flares and yellow and purple smoke bring this to their attention right now.

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

## Rifleman, tunnel rat honored

**LAI KHE** — A 1st Infantry Division rifleman and tunnel rat teamed up recently to repel a Viet Cong force. Both men were awarded medals for their actions.

While guarding four comrades searching an enemy tunnel for possible documents or a weapons cache, Spec. 4 Curt Williams came under heavy rifle fire from Viet Cong hiding in the jungle nearby.

A rifleman with Co. A, 1st Bn., 16th Inf., he was assigned to guard the tunnel rats. Although wounded, Williams continued to lay down a base of fire to keep the Viet Cong from entering the tunnel.

In the tunnel Spec. 4 Troy Tapley, one of four tunnel rats from Co. C, 1st Engineer Bn., raced to the tunnel entrance. Armed with only a pistol, he was able to keep the enemy clear of the area until reinforcements could arrive.

For their efforts, Maj. Gen. Orwin C. Talbott, 1st Infantry Division commander, presented the Silver Star Medal to Williams and Bronze Star Medal for valor to Tapley. The awards were made during formal ceremonies at Co. C, 1st Engineer Bn. here.



# Hoi Chanh helps 1st Inf find big VC cache

DI AN — With a little help from a disoriented Hoi Chanh, a 1st Infantry Division battalion raided and destroyed a major Viet Cong supply depot.

Operating on the Hoi Chanh's information, the 2nd Bn., 16th Inf. uncovered several caches including 238 RPG rounds, 40 ChiCom grenades and enough hospital supplies to treat 100 enemy. The discovery was made in the Anson district, a few miles west of here.

The Hoi Chanh rallied to the 1st Bn., 18th Inf. during a previous mission in the swampy An-

son area. He claimed to know the position of an elaborate aid station and other caches and offered to lead troops there.

"We took him up in the command in control helicopter to recon the area," reported Col. J.T. Carley, 2nd Bde's commander. "It was his first helicopter ride and he was understandably apprehensive. He was lost! We circled and crossed the area a few times so he could recognize some positions. We took photographs and planned the operation."

The rallier went in with Co. D, but did not lead it to anything.

Instead, Co. C uncovered eight four-man bunkers near a corner of the landing zone. While two platoons set demolitions in the solidly built wood and mud bunkers, another platoon secured a large house where they found hot coals in the fireplace and dishes stacked to dry.

"Some of my men found scattered medical supplies around the building," said 1Lt. Thomas E. Leap Jr., platoon leader. "My Kit Carson Scout started digging holes in the floor and soon found a large urn packed with supplies."

Among the medical supplies found were 25 bottles of dry penicillin, 12 quarts of glucose, three bottles of morphine, doctors' operating smocks, intravenous tubes, 400 gauze bandages, surgical soap, sulphur pills, assorted syringes, needles, sheets and towels.

"I knew when they found the supplies, and later when our Kit Carson Scout dug up a radio, there had to be more in the area," said Staff Sgt. Julian R. Anderson, a 1st Platoon squad leader.

The next day, Anderson start-

ed searching the foundation of a destroyed pagoda. In one hole, he and Pfc. Ronald R. Crawford found a four-foot snake and two RPG rounds. The second hole produced 228 RPG rounds, while eight more RPG rounds were discovered in a third hole by Pfc. Johnnie Saucido.

The RPG rounds were uncovered 100 yards from the medical cache near a small canal running into the Saigon River. Most of the caches was discovered within 200 yards of the same area. In the canal, Charlie Company found five 20-foot sampans.

## Surgeons save Siamese twins

VUNG TAU — Twin Vietnamese girls, joined at birth at the abdominal cavity, have a good chance of leading normal lives, thanks to a 44th Medical Brigade surgical team.

The twins, were surgically separated at the 36th Evacuation Hospital here recently about 30 hours after they were born. Both were reported in satisfactory condition after the hour-and-a-half operation.

A 20-year-old woman had given birth to the twins at the Tay Ninh Provincial Hospital. After their delivery by a Vietnamese midwife, they were examined by a volunteer U.S. physician, Dr. Reverdy Jones, who arranged their transfer to the 36th Evacuation Hospital by an Air Force medical evacuation plane. There, the twins were operated on by Lt. Col. Vincent R. De Angelis and Capt. John R. Ibach.

According to Ibach, the girls were joined from the lower breastbone to the navel. Besides sharing a common abdominal cavity, they also partially shared a liver, although each had her own intestinal tract, gall bladder and bile ducts.

Available records indicate that there have been 117 cases of Siamese twins documented in Vietnam. Thirty-six of these cases reportedly survived and developed, while of 17 sets of twins who were surgically separated, there were 25 survivors. It is believed that this was the first known survival of twins in Vietnam with a common liver who were operated on at birth.

## Flying PX fine in 4th

HIGHLANDER HEIGHTS — A 2½-ton truck in the 4th Infantry Division travels hundreds of miles over rugged mountain terrain every day but it never shows the mileage on its instruments.

The truck, assigned to the Camp Enari Post Exchange, spends most of its time flying through the air slung below a Chinook helicopter. It visits Ivy firebases with items for infantrymen who don't get a chance to use PX facilities.

Upon arrival at any firebase, the four-man crew boards the truck and sets up a display of goods ranging from cameras, film and watches to shaving gear and other essentials usually not available in forward areas.



A UNIVERSAL REACTION to shots— efforts during a 25th Infantry Division OUCH!—Meets Spec. 5 Keith Caylor's MEDCAP.

## Put bite on Charlie

# River rats call it quits

CHU LAI — "That's it," the MP said as the boat glided slowly into the beach. "Yeah, our last trip," agreed the infantryman, reaching back to turn off the powerful outboard motor. The River Rats had finished work.

At both River North (the Truong Giang) and River South (the Song Tra Bong), the mouths of large rivers near here, the patrols of the Americal Division's 198th Light Infantry

Bde. MP platoon recently beached their boats for the last time. The MPs and their infantryman boat drivers were getting out of the river patrol business.

The River Rats began checking the rivers in September 1967, when the brigade arrived in Vietnam. Now the job has been turned over to U.S. Marines.

"The river patrols were designed to deny the enemy access to inland waterways and prevent him from transporting weapons, supplies and men," explained Sfc. Robert A. Wiles, operations sergeant.

The patrols of two boats each operated 24 hours a day in all types of weather, stopping sampans, checking the Vietnamese aboard for proper identification and searching for contraband. On a typical day, they stopped and searched 41 boats and checked out more than 180 people. In one three-month period, they confiscated more than 3,000 pounds of rice, 1,000 pounds of salt, ponchos, poncho liners, cartons of C-rations, cigarettes and \$1,380 MPC that would have gotten to the Viet Cong or onto the black market.

Riding along with the MPs and infantrymen were Vietnamese National Police and Popular Forces members.

It has been a dangerous job but the patrols carried a lot of fire power. Each 16-foot "Boston Whaler" had a mounted M-60 machinegun, an M-79 grenade launcher, two M-72 light antitank weapons, hand grenades and the crewmen's individual M-16 rifles. They also had support from Army artillery and 81mm mortars from Navy Swift boats.



THESE TWO Vietnamese schoolboys couldn't wait to try out their new ammo boxes-turned-desks provided by men of the 9th Infantry Division.

## Inf ingenuity turns ammo boxes into desks

TAN AN—Unserviceable ammunition boxes became desks for school children in the Thu Thua District recently, courtesy of a resourceful 9th Infantry Division unit.

The civil affairs section of the 2nd Bn., 4th Arty. supplied 20 desks to two schools in the district and were hard at work making more desks.

Battalion commander Lt. Col. Robert P. Dirnmeyer came up with the idea after talking with the U.S. military adviser to the district and learning of the need for school desks. Dirnmeyer knew that he had the boxes and put his civil affairs section to work immediately.

Two and a half boxes were needed for each desk, which is large enough for two Vietnamese children. The desks come complete with a bench and a place to store school supplies.

"These desks are made completely out of scrap material," according to Lt. John B. La Due III, battalion civil affairs officer. "This type of project is very good because it helps the Vietnamese while costing us nothing," he added.

The model for the prefabricated desks was made by Staff Sgt. John Alfieri and Spec. 5 Wayne M. Furr. "The sergeant major told us to come up with something, so we went to work and had the first one made in 45 minutes," Alfieri said.

It took the two enlisted men a day to cut parts for the 20 desks. They numbered each part to correspond with plans drawn by Specialist James E. Pabin, who was an architect before entering the Army. The plans were in English and Vietnamese and explained exactly how to assemble the precut parts.

The artillerymen delivered the desks to the schools and stayed to advise the local people who assembled them. "The people would rather do the work themselves," La Due said. "I am sure they will sand and paint them and they will be as good as any desks anywhere."