

# Cav battles fire, destroys 46 reds

BIEN HOA—The 1st Cavalry Division's 2nd Bn., 7th Cav. simultaneously fought a grass fire and an estimated battalion of NVA seven miles northeast of here recently in a four-hour battle that saw 46 enemy soldiers die.

Teaming up with helicopter gunships of C Troop, 1st Squadron, 9th Cav., a company of Skytroopers launched repeated assaults against strong enemy positions to its front and right while nearly a whole platoon battled a wind-whipped brush fire which threatened to engulf it from the left.

Contact began at 1:40 p.m. when the company moved into an area where scout ships had observed considerable enemy activity.

"We had just stopped for resupply when we got the word to move about a half-mile to the northeast," said Capt. George Martindell, company command. Please turn to 'Cav,' page 3

## Fight in paddies ends in VC retreat

GO DAU HA — In nine hours of sharp fighting with an estimated Viet Cong company four miles north of here, the 3rd Squadron, 4th Cav., 25th Infantry Division and supporting RVN marines accounted for 42 enemy dead.

Moving across dry rice paddies and occasional hedgerows, C Troop came to the aid of the RVN marines around noon. They faced a small wooded area with thick underbrush from which the RVN troops had been receiving heavy small arms fire during the morning.

Advancing on the woodland, the troopers encountered intense machinegun fire and rocket-propelled grenades.

"The VC were well concealed in bunkers and spider holes," explained Pfc. Terry Bradley.

The cavalymen backed out and called in artillery and air strikes.

Four times in all they went in, firing all their weapons against pinpointed targets.

Responding to C Troop's call for assistance, first B Troop and then A Troop arrived at the scene of contact.

After positioning themselves on line, the three troops once more assaulted the enemy's defenses. They punched through the first line of bunkers and spider holes and poured their devastating fire into the remaining bunkers.

Around 9:30 p.m., the strength of the enemy's resistance was broken. When Americans regrouped into their night laager position, more air strikes were called in. All during the night flares lit up the area and the troopers remained alerted to any signs of enemy activity. But next morning when they returned to the woodland, they met no resistance. The enemy had retreated during the night.

### Millionth man

## Reliable Sgt wins prize R&R



Staff Sgt. Bill D. Reynolds

DONG TAM—A 9th Infantry Division soldier has been selected by USARV to symbolize the one millionth R&R participant.

Staff Sgt. Bill D. Reynolds, assistant administrative supervisor in the Chief of Staff's office, will meet his wife, Patricia Ann, in Hawaii April 8.

The sergeant and his wife will have one of the busiest R&R's ever. There are so many interviews, dinners and ceremonies planned for the couple that Reynolds' R&R has been extended three days.

Many of the couple's expenses, including their hotel bill, will be paid for them.

Reynolds served as a platoon leader and platoon sergeant with Co. D, 8th Bn., 31st Inf. for 10 and one half months before moving to the Chief of Staff's office. He recently extended his tour for six months. During his regular tour, he did not take an R&R.

Three finalists to select a one millionth R&R soldier went before a board March 19 and Reynolds found out that he won the next morning. "It pretty well shocked the hell out of me," he said.

Reynolds came to Vietnam in Feb., 1968.

He has been awarded the Bronze Star, Air Medal, Army Commendation Medal for valor and two oak leaf clusters, and Expert Infantryman's Badge.



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MOBILITY IS A MUST in the Mekong Delta, and these 9th Infantry Division soldiers are making the most of a sampan they

found. The boat was used by riflemen of Co. B, 5th Bn., 60th Inf. to aid quick crossing of a stream.

## Riverine force, gunships beat Cong attack in Mekong Delta

BEN TRE — Two 9th Infantry Division units were involved in heavy action in the Mekong Delta which accounted for 40 enemy soldiers being killed and a number of weapons and munitions being captured.

A single Mobile Riverine Force (MRF) company from the

division's 4th Bn., 47th Infantry teamed with gunships and artillery to kill 24 Viet Cong three miles north of here.

Action began after dark as Co. A moved to its night position. Two B-40 rockets slammed into a hut near the command post and injured three men. Automatic weapons fire followed the rockets.

As the infantrymen returned fire, radar picked out the enemy positions along a woodland.

Stingray gunships came in and poured fire against the suspected enemy locations.

"We threw grenades when we heard movement and the next morning we found three VC dead in front of our position," Pfc. James A. Walker said.

In other 9th Division action, troops from the 2nd Bn., 60th Inf. teamed up with gunships from the 3rd Squadron, 17th Cav. to kill 16 enemy soldiers, capture 15 AK47s and three pistols, and detained six suspects in scattered action.

A reconnaissance patrol killed one VC and detained three suspects two miles east of Tan Tru.

Elements of Companies B, C and D were inserted into the area near Tan An with Co. D's second platoon running into heaviest action.

As soon as troops got off the choppers, they were pinned down by a large volume of AK-47 fire. An air strike was requested.

Gunships worked over the woodland and the platoon tried to advance but was pinned down again.

Another strike was called, but this time the unit moved in before the choppers had left the area. The NVA were caught in their bunkers.

Eight NVA dead were credited to Co. D and four to the gunships. Three detainees were also

apprehended.

Two more kills were added three miles southeast of Tan Tru from a nighttime operation of Co. B.

## Red One hits hard in marsh

SAIGON — The Viet Cong lost 32 men to the 1st Infantry Division in the marshlands six miles east of here.

Twenty-three enemy were killed, eight detained, and one rallied to elements of the 2nd Bn., 16th Inf. "This was the highest body count we've had in this area for half a year," according to battalion Sgt. Maj. James F. Dudley.

"I was in a chopper when we spotted some suspicious individuals," said Dudley. "Some of them started to run. When they tried to avoid us, we knew we were onto something."

"Elements of the big red one were flown in to set up a U-shaped line formation around the enemy forces hiding in a grove next to a tributary of the Dong Nai River. Infantrymen reconned by fire into the grove. Our elements then pulled back as gunships arrived and made several runs on target."

Subsequent sweeps through the area turned up 23 enemy dead. "It was just like a textbook operation. A classic case of catching the enemy up against a river. We surrounded Charlie and finished him off."



## Vietnam Communique

March 17 to March 23

# Offensive moves into 4th week

The Communists pushed their Post-Tet offensive through a fourth week. In a few cases the enemy took heavy losses in ground assaults against Army fire support bases and night defensive positions. But most of the enemy initiatives were rocket and mortar attacks on U.S. bases with no ground troops committed.

Army units continued to meet the offensive with aggressive action against suspected enemy strongholds on the infiltration routes west and north of Saigon. A combined 1st Infantry Division and 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment operation killed 200 enemy soldiers in three days of sweeps through a forested area northwest of Lai Khe. Soldiers of the 25th Infantry Division cleared out a Communist sanctuary northwest of Cu Chi that had been used to launch mortars and rockets against the division's installations.

The scattered enemy attacks on the infiltration routes included a heavy assault on a 1st Cavalry Division fire support base near Tay Ninh and an attack on a 25th Infantry Division unit's night defensive position near Trang Bang.

As in past weeks scattered contact throughout the Mekong Delta between 9th Infantry Division and enemy units resulted in heavy enemy losses—776 for the week.

## 9th Inf Div

Old Reliabilities of the 9th Infantry Division found good hunting in the Plain of Reeds during the week. On March 18, men of the 2nd Bn., 60th Inf. teamed up with gunships of the 3rd Squadron, 17th Air Cav. to kill 33 enemy soldiers in sampans 16 miles northwest of Tan An. The U.S. soldiers kept "flushing them out and shooting them up," according to one trooper.

The next day, a 5th Bn., 60th Inf. search of the Bo Bo Canal 13 miles northwest of Tan An produced nine 82mm mortar shells, 296 pounds of plastic explosives, 29 cases of TNT and a 75mm recoilless rifle shell.

On March 20, the infantrymen found 40 sunken ammunition sampans on the canal, nine miles northwest of Ben Luc. Checking the area, they uncovered 656 82mm mortar rounds, 66 107mm rockets, 32 75mm recoilless rifle rounds, 400 Chicom grenades, 100 cases of AK-47 rifle rounds and 25,000 loose small arms ammunition.

On March 23, Recono Infantrymen of the 4th Bn., 39th Inf. accounted for 111 Viet Cong in an area around Cao Lanh. The Infantrymen battled an estimated two VC platoons in the early morning, killing 34. In the afternoon, contact was made again and airstrikes and gunships from the 7th Squadron, 1st Air Cav. moved in to help finish off the enemy.

A night defensive position five miles northeast of Ben Tre, manned by men of the 4th Bn., 47th Inf., was assaulted by an enemy force in the early evening of March 22. Gunships and artillery joined the infantrymen's defense and a sweep of the battle area at dawn produced 40 VC bodies.

The previous day, men of the 4th Bn., 39th Inf. boarded 7th Squadron, 1st Air Cav. choppers for a night operation that resulted in 30 VC killed.

Chopper-borne soldiers of the 6th Bn., 31st Inf. teamed up with cannoners of the 1st Bn., 11th Arty. March 17 to kill 24 enemy in one action 12 miles west of Cai Be.

## 25th Inf Div

An enemy sanctuary in an area known as the Citadel, a large patchwork of dry rice paddies intersected about every 500 yards by hedgerows of trees and thorny bushes, was blasted by elements of the 25th Infantry Division.

Soldiers of the 2nd Bde. in night defensive positions March 20 began receiving automatic weapons fire. Heavy artillery bombardments were directed at the enemy in the Citadel for several hours. A dawn sweep revealed 26 enemy bodies.

The action continued the next day as 2nd Bn., 25th Inf. soldiers killed more than 25 enemy in the area, six miles northwest of Trang Bang.

On March 17, division soldiers beat back a fierce enemy attack on a remote night defensive position six miles northeast of Trang Bang. The soldiers' night perimeter defenses were hit by an estimated enemy company and a first light sweep of the area revealed 30 enemy bodies.

Sixteen enemy were killed during abortive attacks on two division night defensive positions March 18. The attacks came against a 3rd Bde. unit eight miles northwest of Cu Chi.

## 11th Cav Regt

Troopers of the 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment lit into the enemy in several contacts during the week near Lai Khe.

The troopers, along with elements of the 1st Infantry Division and supporting elements, smashed into the enemy March 17 in a densely wooded area known as the Weeping Woods, 18 miles northwest of Lai Khe.

The first day's battle lasted several hours as cavalrymen and gunship crews killed 28 enemy and destroyed a rice cache. By the end of the second day, the troopers had pushed the enemy's death toll to 137.

"The troopers conducted themselves in a magnificent and soldierly manner. We found 'em and we killed 'em," said Col. George Patton, commanding officer of the regiment in discussing the March 18 fighting, in which 109 enemy were killed in a massive armored sweep.

By the third day of fighting in the Weeping Woods, the enemy dead amounted to more than 200 and Maj. Gen. Orwin Talbott, 1st Division commanding general, declared, "I'm particularly pleased with the exemplary conduct of the 11th Cavalry and hope that the enemy makes the mistake of trying to stand and fight."

But while the enemy apparently was none too eager for a showdown, the cavalrymen and infantrymen killed another 15 enemy soldiers in the area on March 20 and 12 more on March 23. While searching the area after the March 23 fighting, the cavalrymen uncovered 15,000 pounds of rice.

## Americal Div

Americal Division soldiers encountered generally light and scattered fighting during the week.



A BUDDY'S HELPING HAND is extended to this member of a 2nd Bde. Psychological Operations team on an operation with the 9th Infantry Division's 4th Bn., 47th Inf.

ing during the week.

Men of the 4th Bn., 3rd Inf. fought off a sharp attack against a landing zone 19 miles west-northwest of Tam Ky March 19, killing eight enemy soldiers and detaining one other after fierce hand-to-hand fighting.

On March 20, an Air Force forward air controller (FAC) was flying over an area about seven miles west-northwest of Quang Ngai City when he spotted some 60 VC in the open. The FAC called in artillery fire from the 1st Bn., 14th Arty., which resulted in 15 Viet Cong killed.

In an action March 21, the crew of the command and control helicopter of the 26th Engineer Bn. engaged 12 enemy six miles southeast of Tam Ky and killed eight.

## 1st Cav Div

Skytroopers of the 1st Cavalry Division (Airmobile) also encountered generally light and scattered action over most of their fighting grounds during the week. There were a few exceptions.

About 1:45 a.m. March 17, the night defensive position of an element of the 1st Bn., 7th Cav. in an area nine miles northeast of Bien Hoa was attacked by an estimated two enemy platoons. The Americans answered the call of enemy small arms, automatic weapons and RPG fire with small arms, artillery and aerial rocket artillery, killing 12 of the enemy.

On March 21, an unknown-size NVA force attacked the perimeter of a remote fire support base 17 miles east of Tay Ninh. Although the enemy briefly breached the perimeter, the Skytroopers, supported by artillery, gunships and an Air Force Spooky, repelled the assault in three hours of heavy fighting. Five enemy bodies were found after the attack.

Operating six miles east of Phuoc Vinh March 19, elements of the 5th Bn., 7th Cav. found a bunker complex containing six 120mm shells, 130 82mm shells, 50 60mm shells and 108 82mm fuses.

## 1st Inf Div

Six 122mm rockets were lined up and ready to fire at Saigon, but the quick reactions of three 1st Infantry Division soldiers prevented the rockets from leaving their pads. Eight miles east of Saigon, the soldiers detected movement with radar and starlight scopes from their night defensive position March 19.

They called in a mortar attack on the enemy position and a sweep of the area

later revealed shrapnel holes in two of the warheads. One was knocked off its aiming stake. The rockets were primed and had they been fired, would have impacted around the eastern portion of Saigon.

Big Red One infantrymen joined troops of the 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment during the week in a successful series of operations in the Weeping Woods, less than 20 miles northwest of Lai Khe. More than 200 enemy were killed in the fighting over several days.

## 4th Inf Div

Late March 17, elements of the 2nd Bn., 35th Inf., 4th Infantry Division came in contact with an estimated two platoons of enemy 15 miles south of Kontum. In the battle that followed, with support from artillery and gunship crews, the Ivymen killed 27 NVA soldiers.

That same day, a light observation helicopter of the 7th Squadron, 17th Cav. was flying over an area 21 miles southwest of Dak To when it received small arms fire. The chopper gunners engaged the enemy and reported killing six NVA soldiers.

A few days later, soldiers of the 3rd Bn., 12th Inf. and supporting gunships engaged an unknown-size enemy force 25 miles west of Kontum, killing at least five of the enemy.

A battle of a different nature brought Ivymen to the rescue of Montagnard villagers at Plei Cong Brek. Bubonic plague had broken out and eight villagers died in two days. A division surgeon went to the village and began treating the ill immediately. Serum and medical supplies were flown in and 1,800 villagers were immunized. No further deaths were reported.

## 23rd Arty Gp

Cannoners of the 23rd Artillery Group killed a total of 33 enemy in two days of action March 21 and 22. Twenty-eight VC were killed during two fire missions north of Dau Tieng, while five died when they were spotted seeking cover in a bunker complex south of Tay Ninh.

## 101st Abn Div

A two-day combined cordon operation was ended by paratroopers of the 101st Airborne Division (Airmobile) March 21. It had involved troops of the 2nd Bn., 327th Inf. and elements of the 2nd Bn., 34th ARVN Regiment. The action, near Phu Bai, resulted in 12 enemy killed, 15 suspects detained and 24 individual weapons captured.

Earlier in the week, paratroopers of the 1st Bn., 502nd Inf. and supporting units killed 20 enemy soldiers in operation Kentucky Jumper.

## 3rd Bde, 82nd Abn

Gunjeeps mounted with 106mm recoilless rifles and manned by men of the 3rd Brigade, 82nd Airborne Division sealed off an area seven miles west of Saigon March 17. In several small actions, the troopers killed three enemy and detained three suspects.

## 1st Bde, 5th Inf Div

South of the DMZ March 22, elements of the 1st Brigade, 5th Infantry Division (Mechanized) killed two NVA soldiers as men of the 3rd Squadron, 5th Cav. encountered the enemy near Cam Lo. The fighting began when the NVA fired RPGs at one of the American armored personnel carriers.

## 199th Inf Bde

While searching an area 10 miles southwest of Saigon March 21, men of the 199th Light Infantry Brigade found several VC warnings of booby traps in the area. Proceeding cautiously, they found and destroyed six Chicom pressure-detonated-type mines.