

Americal rips NVA in day-long clash

DUC PHO — Americal Division soldiers of the 11th Brigade's 1st Bn., 20th Inf., and two platoons of Armored Personnel Carriers from E Troop, 1st Cav., combined to inflict heavy casualties on an entrenched NVA battalion in a day-long battle, two miles north of Duc Pho.

The soldiers accounted for 29 NVA killed, the capture of 3 AK47s, 1 AKM67, a .30 caliber RPD machinegun, and an 82mm mortar tube, base plate, sights and 15 rounds of ammunition.

Co. C, 1st Bn., 20th Inf., moved from their overnight position and began a sweep, moving from east to west, hoping to clear the area of enemy troops who had been harassing ARVNs and civilians working on a nearby rural development project. The company split into three groups for faster and less conspicuous

movement.

The third platoon, the lead element, swept into an area that an NVA battalion was using for a grouping area. The enemy was entrenched on three sides of the open area and began firing automatic weapons and M79 rounds.

The second platoon pulled back and then tried to flank the NVA's positions from the east but were also pinned down by heavy and accurate fire.

"We were pinned down in a hollowed out area and every time one of us tried to move we were shot at. They were throwing everything at us and if it hadn't been for Jansky (Spec. 4 Raymond Jansky), we might never have gotten out alive," said Spec. 4 Gill Noe.

Jansky took up the story. "There were a couple guys wounded and they needed a dust-off but being pinned down this was looking impossible. I heard the APCs off

to our right about 600 yards away so I crawled away from the others while they laid down a cover of fire."

"Crawling and dodging behind trees I made it to the APCs and directed them to the rest of the men still pinned down," Jansky continued. "The APCs laid down a base of fire which enabled us to get inside and then we evacuated our wounded to a pick-up zone."

To the west Co. D had been inserted by helicopters from the 174th Assault Helicopter Co. to give support to its sister company. Another platoon of E Troop joined with the infantrymen who then began to push east toward the entrenched NVA who were keeping Co. D pinned down.

Staff Sgt. William F. Kelley told of his company's actions. "We left one platoon back with our packs and started our sweep. We received sniper fire the whole

time we were moving so we began tossing grenades into any likely spot an NVA might be hiding."

"When we reached Co. C they were pinned down by NVA firing at them from a trench to the north. As our company and theirs laid down a base of fire, SFC. Robert Eickoff, the other platoon sergeant, and I crawled forward to the trench."

Kelley shot one NVA and saw that others were hiding in holes dug back into the bank of the trench. While he threw grenades into them, Eickoff covered him. It was in this same trench that the 82mm mortar was found, by these two men.

Another company, inserted as a blocking force during the day, joined with Companies C and D in an attempt to cordon the NVA force. Sporadic fighting continued as darkness fell on the blood-stained battlefield.

Viet valor earns 2 nation's top honor

LONG BINH — In recent ceremonies at the White House, the Medal of Honor was presented posthumously to M. Sgt. Charles E. Hosking, Jr., and Spec. 4 Don L. Michael.

Hosking was cited for his actions while serving as company advisor in the III Corps Civilian Irregular Defense Group Reaction Battalion. While he was preparing a Viet Cong suspect for movement to a base camp, the suspect grabbed a grenade from Hosking's belt, armed it, and ran toward the company command group standing nearby. Realizing the suspect's intent, Hosking, with no regard for his own safety, threw the man to the ground and covered his body. The grenade's detonation killed both of them. Hosking's action saved the rest of the command group from death or serious injury.

Michael was cited for his actions while serving with Co. C, 4th Bn., 503rd Inf., 173rd Airborne Brigade. As his squad was moving forward to investigate enemy activity, they encountered several Viet Cong who engaged them with automatic weapons from a concealed bunker. His squad being pinned down, Michael exposed himself and threw two grenades. These having failed, he maneuvered within 20 feet of the bunker and threw two more grenades. Again being unsuccessful, he returned to his squad and secured two more grenades. Again maneuvering on the position, he destroyed it despite heavy artillery fire. He pursued the retreating enemy until he became mortally wounded.

Accepting the award from President Richard Nixon for

Hosking was his eight-year-old son Wesley C. Hosking. Accepting for Michael were his parents, Mr. and Mrs. Roy O. Michael.

Vol. 5, No. 26

U.S. Army, Vietnam

June 30, 1969

Rapid replacement marks movement of 25,000 U.S. GIs

LONG BINH—Plans for the replacement of 25,000 U.S. troops in Vietnam with Vietnamese forces are receiving "rapid and orderly action," according to Adm. John S. McCain Jr., commander-in-chief, Pacific.

McCain made his report to Secretary of Defense Melvin Laird following a three-day session held in Honolulu, Hawaii, by a military and civilian task force charged with working out details for the redeployment of the U.S. troops.

The meetings followed the recent summit conference between President Nixon and South Vietnamese President Nguyen Van Thieu at Midway Island where the announcement was made of the U.S. troop withdrawal and concurrent replacement by ARVN units.

The task force recommended to Laird that an initial contingent of 18,000 troops from the 9th Infantry Division and the Marines' 3rd Division turn their mission over to South Vietnamese units. Acting on the group's recommendations, the Pentagon announced that the first American unit to leave would be a 900-man battalion of the 9th Division. The battalion will be airlifted to the United States before mid-July and will be inactivated.

Destinations for the movement of the troops will be announced later, McCain said.

At the Midway meeting, Nixon had promised that the move would begin within 30 days.

In his joint communique with Thieu, Nixon expressed hope that further troop withdrawals would be possible this year. He said a review of the situation would be made in August and at regular intervals thereafter. He promised that announcements would be made on further replacements as decisions are made.

The President said further troop withdrawals depended on the readiness of South Vietnamese forces to replace the U.S. troops being redeployed, progress of the Paris peace talks and level of enemy activity in the south. Nixon emphasized that no action would be taken which might threaten the safety of U.S. or allied troops.

"No action will be taken which endangers the attainment of our objective, the right of self-determination for the people of South Vietnam," he said.

Nixon said that the initial redeployment had been suggested by Thieu.

Speaking immediately after Nixon, Thieu outlined his government's goal for newsmen.

"It has been the constant purpose of the government of the Republic of Vietnam to shoulder an increasing share in the struggle to defend freedom in Vietnam and to alleviate the burdens nobly assumed by the United States."

"In the past months the strengthening of the Vietnamese armed forces through general mobilization and the rapid progress in pacification and rural development have made it possible for me to inform President Nixon that the armed forces of Vietnam are now able to accept the responsibilities for the replacement of American



"ONE BLOW UPON HIS bugle's horn, were worth a thousand men."—Overlooking A Shau Valley, a bugler from the 101st Airborne Division plays taps at a memorial service for the fallen soldiers of the 2nd Bn., 319th Arty., who were killed in combat assaulting Hill 927.

Vietnam Communique

June 9-15

Gunships rip Reds during week

Communist gunners continued their assault on cities and military bases during the past week, sustaining heavy casualties in the process.

Old Reliabilities of the 9th Infantry Division and supporting gunships killed a high number of the enemy while taking few casualties in action the past week.

Tropic Lightning soldiers of the 25th Infantry Division engaged an undetermined number of Viet Cong in one day's action, with the final outcome listed as 67 of the enemy killed.

Skytroopers of the 1st Cavalry Division were airlifted into a VC bunker complex during one day's action with the ensuing battle yielding 16 enemy dead.

9th Inf Div

A platoon of North Vietnamese Army soldiers were placidly enjoying their evening meal June 12 when they had unexpected U.S. 9th Infantry Division visitors from the sky. The results were a large number of overturned rice bowls and nine NVA dead.

A Ranger team of Co. E, 75th Inf., and supporting helicopter gunships surprised the NVA eight miles southeast of Tan An in the Mekong Delta. "We saw them from a slick around some hootches chowing down," said team leader Lt. Al Zapanta. "It was beautiful. They had their AK-47 rifles all stacked in a pile."

"We caught them completely by surprise when we landed," he said. "There were rice bowls flying through the air. We just sprayed the whole area with fire." The members of Ranger team 18, who spotted the enemy, accounted for six NVA soldiers while gunships of B Troop, 3rd Bn., 17th Air Cav. added three more.

Another Ranger team of Co. E, aided by gunships of the 9th Avn. Bn., killed eight Viet Cong troopers nine miles west of Dong Tam when they landed in a hot Landing Zone.

Ranger Team 22 began taking fire as soon as it was landed into the LZ and returned the fire, killing two VC as gunship crews flying cover overhead killed six more. Before being removed, the Rangers picked up one B40 rocket launcher with two rounds, four Chinese Communist hand grenades and 10 AK47 magazines.

Elsewhere in the division area of operation, Co. D, 3rd Bn., 60th Inf. combined with Cobra gunships of D Troop, 3rd Bn., 5th Air Cav. to kill 12 VC.

25th Inf Div

In actions in the 25th Infantry Division's area of operation June 12, Tropic Lightning troopers killed 67 Viet Cong troops.

The largest engagement of the day occurred eight miles southeast of Phu Khung shortly after 9 a.m. when infantrymen of the 1st Bn., 27th Inf. engaged an undetermined number of enemy who employed 60mm mortar rounds, and small arms fire.

Calling in light fire teams, artillery and air support, the infantrymen silenced the enemy fire. A half-hour later, while conducting a sweep of the area with Companies B and C of the 2nd Battalion, 22nd Inf. they came upon the enemy again and killed 39, while detaining two VC suspects. Two AK47 rifles and one SKS rifle were captured as well as one 60mm and one 82mm mortar.

Tropic Lightning infantrymen from the 2nd Bn., 14th Inf., engaged four Viet Cong in a hedgerow six miles northwest of Cu Chi, killing all four in a brief firefight.

Another company of infantrymen, working a half a mile away engaged a trio of VC in a firefight and killed all three.

In the Ho Bo Woods, seven miles northwest of Cu Chi, a Light Observation Helicopter from the 3rd Squadron, 4th

Cav. received small arms fire from a concealed VC position. The chopper called in airstrikes and a later sweep of the area revealed the bodies of two dead VC.

In other actions throughout the division, 19 more VC were killed, bringing the day's total to 67.

1st Cav Div

Skytroopers of the 1st Cavalry Division locked the North Vietnamese Army in 15 separate contacts June 9 and came out the overwhelming winner — 40 NVA dead to 0 American dead.

Elements of two battalions of Skytroopers dropped in unexpectedly by air-lift on a major NVA bunker complex 15 miles northeast of Tay Ninh in the day's largest battle. The Air Cav. companies then started tightening the ring around the Communists while airstrikes, artillery and gunships raked the ever-closing perimeter. The gunships worked close-in, cutting loose with both rocket and minigun fire.

By dusk when all NVA resistance had collapsed, Skytroopers counted 16 enemy dead and troopers from the 2nd Bn., 5th Cav. found a five-ton cache of rice inside a bunker. Nine troopers were wounded in the action.

4th Inf Div

An attempted North Vietnamese Army ambush of a 4th Infantry Division convoy on Highway QL-14, nine miles north of Pleiku backfired June 11 as infantrymen supported by artillery and gunships killed 37 NVA would-be attackers.

About two hours later, five miles north of the section of highway on which the abortive ambush took place, Co. A, 2nd Bn., 35th Inf. engaged five NVA soldiers. In the brief firefight, the troopers killed one of the enemy soldiers and captured one AK47 rifle and one SKS rifle.

Elements of Co. C, 2nd Bn., 35th Inf., operating in an area 16 miles north of Pleiku, found two fresh graves containing the bodies of five North Vietnamese

Army soldiers, estimated to have been killed three days earlier.

1st Inf Div

After a week of savage fighting, troopers of the 1st Infantry Division experienced a period of relative calm June 12 as they accounted for seven enemy killed and the capture of 11 AK47 rifles, one Rocket Propelled Grenade Launcher, two Chinese Communist 9mm pistols and 100 rounds of rice.

The most significant action involved Co. A, 2nd Bn., 2nd Inf. In that encounter, two miles south of Quan Loi, the Big Red One troopers killed four North Vietnamese Army soldiers in the desolate jungle area. They captured two AK47 rifles, a Chicom 9mm pistol, and an RPG launcher.

In other scattered clashes, the troopers killed three Viet Cong and captured nine AK47 rifles, one RPG launcher, a Chicom 9mm pistol, and 100 pounds of rice.

Americal Div

Things didn't go better with Coke for nine Viet Cong June 9. They were making home-made hand grenades cased in Coca-Cola cans in a hut along the access road between Duc Pho and the Americal Division's Landing Zone Bronco when one of the grenades "cooked off." The explosion touched off the batch of VC goodies, killing five and wounding four more.

Americal MP's raced to the scene and got the wounded to medical attention immediately. The injured grenade-makers later confessed what they had been doing. They admitted that while it was wet, it was wild.

Americal soldiers killed 24 VC and 44 North Vietnamese Army soldiers in 29 separate incidents the same day. In the largest battle, troopers of the 1st Bn., 20th Inf. along with soldiers from E Troop, 1st Cav. and the 11th Light Inf. Bde. killed 18 NVA in a bitter firefight two miles west of Duc Pho.

Action throughout the Americal Divi-

11th ACR

In a day of vicious fighting near the city of An Loc June 9, the 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment teamed up with units of the 1st Infantry Division and supporting fire to kill 36 North Vietnamese Army soldiers in one action.

The day's fighting began when the Blackhorse troopers rushed into an area where 1st Division soldiers were engaged with a stubborn NVA unit east of An Loc. Deploying their Sheridan tanks and Armored Cavalry Assault Vehicles against the well-entrenched NVA force, the cavalrymen soon forced them to withdraw into their jungle position. The enemy left 36 dead behind.

Two days later, the 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment, 1st Infantry Division and soldiers of the Republic of Vietnam killed 10 Viet Cong and captured numerous weapons and munitions.

The largest cache of the day was unearthed by 11th Cav. soldiers under operational control of the Big Red One along with Republic of Vietnam Civilian Irregular Defense Group (CIDG) members one mile south of Loc Ninh. They found 700 pounds of rice, 20 pounds of salt, a 60mm mortar tube, an automatic rifle, a machinegun, three carbines and six SKS rifles.

199th Inf Bde

Two Viet Cong died and one self-confessed VC and seven suspects were detained June 10 by Redcatchers as light action proved to be the order of the day for the 199th Light Infantry Brigade.

The day's only killings took place 10 miles southwest of Saigon when Redcatchers from Co. C, 5th Bn., 12th Inf. engaged the two VC while sweeping the area with an ARVN unit. The sweep also uncovered nine bunkers containing three Chinese Communist grenades, one booby trap kit and a medic supply bag.

While probing the muddy banks of a canal eight miles southwest of Saigon June 12, 199th Light Infantry Brigade troopers unearthed a munitions cache containing almost 11,000 rounds of AK47 ammunition.

Elements of Co. A, 5th Bn., 12th Inf. discovered 10,980 rounds, packed in 15 wooden boxes as they made one of their periodic searches of the canal banks. It was estimated that the ammunition had been buried in the mud from two to three months.

"This is the second largest munitions cache we've found in the same area within the last two weeks," remarked Brigade S-2 Officer Capt. Bernard P. Thomas. Recently, a Hoi Chanh led Redcatchers to a 4,200 round cache of AK47 ammunition.

1st Avn Bde

Cobra gunships of the 361st Avn. Co., 17th Combat Avn. Gp. early June 11 received enemy fire while flying cover for a Medevac helicopter mission at Ben Het, a 1st Field Force fire support base located at an ARVN camp 11 miles west-northwest of Dak To.

Circling over the camp, which was under indirect fire, the gunship pilots used precision flying as they strafed tree lines near Ben Het's southern perimeter. The choppers showed no red warning lights in their cockpits approaching the NVA fire.

Moments before the Medevac landed, two enemy mortar rounds exploded on the helicopter pad. But the slick pilot continued his mission as the Cobra pilots flew between him and the NVA positions, pouring suppressive fire on the enemy gunners.



PROVIDING SECURITY while his unit takes a break is Sfc George Harmon. The 9th Infantry Division soldier is a platoon Sgt. assigned to the 4th Bn., 29th Inf.