



CLOSE SCRUTINY is applied by Spec. 4 Larry Waite as he checks out one of the tunnels found near Tam Ky by the 101st Airborne Division during Operation Lamar Plain.

More Reliables leave, too

First Guard unit redeploys

LONG BINH — The redeployment of American soldiers got underway with a jump as sizeable units of the 9th Infantry Division departed for the United States on July 8 and again on July 13 and 15.

July 15 also was the day that the first Army National Guard unit to depart the Republic of Vietnam under President Nixon's announced 25,000-man troop redeployment left Bien Hoa Air Force Base for the United States.

Members of the 9th Division's

3rd Bn., 60th Inf. became the first American troops to return under the redeployment program. They left the republic July 8, after being flown by choppers to Tan Son Nhut Air Force Base from division headquarters at Dong Tam.

At planeside ceremonies, the Old Reliables heard farewell remarks from General Creighton W. Abrams, commander of U.S. forces in Vietnam, and Republic of Vietnam President Nguyen Van Thieu. They then boarded C-41 Starlifters for McChord Air

Force Base, Wash., where they were received with further ceremonies highlighted by the presence of General William Westmoreland, Army chief of staff.

Less than a week later, the second contingent of 9th Division soldiers left from Bien Hoa Air Force Base. These were members of the 4th Bn., 47th Inf., part of the 2nd Bde. Mobile Riverine Force.

The third group of Old Reliables to be redeployed left Bien Hoa for Ft. Lewis, Wash., July 15. Included in this group were members of the 3rd Bn., 47th Inf., Headquarters and Headquarters Co. of the 2nd Bde., and the 65th Inf. Platoon, a scout dog unit.

Meanwhile, the first of the Army National Guard units to be returned to the United States left July 15 from Bien Hoa.

The 650th Medical Detachment, stationed at Long Binh, flew to Standiford Field, Louisville, for demobilization at Ft. Campbell, Ky. The unit was then reconstituted in the National Guard at its home station in Birmingham, Ala.

The unit was mobilized in May 1968, and trained at Ft. Campbell before being sent to Vietnam last August 25. The men of the 650th operated dental clinics at Long Binh and Bearcat.

Airborne unit finds abandoned hospital

CAMP PAPE — A hospital complex capable of serving an estimated NVA brigade has been discovered by a platoon of the 101st Airborne Division's 1st Bn., 502nd Abn. Inf., in the mountains southwest of Tam Ky.

The second platoon of Co. D found the complex on a reconnaissance-in-force mission.

The point man, Spec. 4 William H. Walter, saw the hospital's large structures as he approached the top of a hill, and a search revealed 15 buildings on the thickly-wooded hill.

The buildings were new and had been used recently, but most of the medical equipment was gone.

"All we found were beds and litters and sterilizing pots," said Pfc. Loveall Hodges. "Our interpreter translated some documents that said cases of gunshot and shrapnel wounds had been treated in the last week."

The platoon also found pigs, chickens and water buffalo in

the area, along with a messhall and stables.

One of the most interesting things found, according to Walter, was an underground ventilation system. "It carried the smoke from the cooking fires to an escape hole on the other side of the hill."

TAM KY — A daring rescue has retrieved a seriously wounded American infantryman from the hands of the North Vietnamese.

The wounded soldier had been missing from his unit since May 13th when he was reported missing after the battle of Nui Yon Hill. The hill is located three miles southwest of Tam Ky.

A Hoi Chanh tip led the Americal Division soldier's rescuers to where the NVA were holding him—an enemy hospital. The rallier informed soldiers of the 2nd Division of the Army of the Republic of Vietnam

(ARVN) of the hospital and then led the ARVNs on the ground to the hiding place. Meanwhile, helicopters from the 101st Airborne Division, operating under the control of the Americal, moved in overhead.

Inside, Spec. 4 Larry D. Aiken was found in an unconscious condition. After being placed on a make-shift stretcher, he was put aboard a chopper and taken at once to Chu Lai by Maj. Gerry F. Dolan, of Troop B, 2nd Squadron, 17th Cav., 17th Combat Aviation Group.

In Chu Lai he was admitted to the 312th Evacuation Hospital where he was reported

to be seriously ill from an open skull fracture and brain damage.

"This entire maneuver was started by the Quang Tri Province Chief, Col. Hoang Binh Tho, and developed into a combined operation involving Vietnamese, 101st Airborne Division, U.S. Air Force and Americal forces," said Major General Lloyd B. Ramsey, commanding general of the Americal Division.

"It is a fine example of the resourcefulness and initiative of the Vietnamese government and military units in accomplishing a difficult and dangerous mission."



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Enemy on mountain routed

TAY NINH—Enemy soldiers burrowed in caves and trenches on the sides of Nui Ba Den (Black Virgin Mountain) near Tay Ninh found the rugged mountain of little help in fending off determined attacks by American forces.

In a recent two-day battle that raged up and down the mountain, 42 NVA and VC were killed by 25th Infantry Division artillery and light fire teams, 1st Infantry Division soldiers under the operational control of the 25th Division and Air Force jets.

The enemy was identified as elements of the 9th VC Division, which is 75-90 per cent NVA manned.

The action began when Tropic Lightning-controlled soldiers, aided by massive artillery barrages and air strikes, routed elements of the VC division as they tried to assemble at the base of Nui Ba Den, six miles northeast of Tay Ninh.

The entrenched enemy soldiers actually brought about their own destruction by shooting at Air Force F-100s that were making a pre-planned air strike on the mountain. The small

arms fire gave away the location of the enemy division elements and the jets tore into the positions on the rocky mountainside.

As the jets blasted away at the enemy from the sky, 25th Division artillery and light fire teams, along with the 1st Division's 2nd Bn., 2nd Inf., and Tropic Lightning soldiers of the 2nd Bn., 24th Armor, pulled up to the base of the mountain.

When the artillery barrage and air strikes subsided, the enemy attempted to leave their caves and natural bunkers in the hope of getting off Nui Ba Den before they could be caught in a new onslaught from above. But the enemy ran directly into the 1st Division infantrymen, who caught them by surprise.

This action forced the enemy back into the caves, where another round of air strikes and artillery barrages awaited them.

Late in the afternoon of the second day, the shelling stopped and the Big Red One soldiers moved up to sweep the shell-pocked slope. They found the bodies of 10 enemy soldiers killed by small arms fire, bringing the two-day body count on Nui Ba Den to 42.



COOLING THEIR HEELS, these infantrymen of the 1st Bde., 5th Infantry Division (Mechanized), cling to a vehicle track recovery during an operation near Khe Sanh.

Soldier rescued from NVA hospital

Vietnam communique

July 7-13

Joint forces route ambushers

TROPIC Lightning soldiers of the 25th Infantry Division, aided by artillery and gunships from the 25th Aviation Bn., and the 26th Combat Aviation Bn., killed 57 NVA and VC troops July 8, with the bulk of the actions centered near Cu Chi and Tay Ninh.

Later in the week, soldiers from the 25th Division and the 1st Infantry Division in a combined effort with the Air Force, killed 42 NVA regulars along the western slopes of Nui Ba Den (The Black Virgin) Mountain. The action was in Tay Ninh Province, 55 miles north-northwest of Saigon.

Gunships of the 1st Cavalry Division's B Troop, 1st Squadron, 9th Air Cav engaged an unknown number of NVA soldiers in five bunkers 19 miles northwest of Song Be July 10. The gunships killed 17 in the action.

An 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment convoy was ambushed on Route 13, four miles north of An Loc, July 9, but help from American armor, artillery and gunships, and American and ARVN soldiers turned the tables around. By the end of the six-hour battle, 22 Communists were killed.

25th Inf Div

Gunships of the 116th Assault Helicopter Co. working in cooperation with 25th Infantry Division infantrymen from the 2nd Bn., 12th Inf., engaged an estimated NVA platoon four miles northwest of Cu Chi and killed 23 of the enemy soldiers.

On July 9, 25th Infantry Division soldiers killed 17 VC soldiers in action nine and one-half miles northeast of Trang Bang. The infantrymen were helped by gunships, artillery and tactical air strikes.

Soldiers from the 25th Infantry Division killed 10 NVA regulars July 10 four miles northeast of Trang Bang. Infantrymen from Co. D, 2nd Bn., 12th Inf., engaged an undetermined number of NVA soldiers in the action. The Americans called for helicopter gunships and artillery fire, and succeeded in forcing the Communists to withdraw.

Other light fighting July 10 throughout the area of operations raised the enemy death toll for the division to twenty-eight. See related stories, page one.

9th Inf Div

In light and widespread action throughout the Mekong Delta, 9th Infantry Division soldiers killed 20 VC soldiers July 10.

In another day of light and widespread action, division soldiers killed 20 VC soldiers July 11. One significant skirmish took place in the Plain of Reeds, 32 miles west of Saigon, when three companies from the 5th Bn., 60th Inf., 3rd Bde.; gunships from B Troop, 3rd Squadron, 17th Air Cav and artillery were pitted against an estimated VC company.

One of the 9th Infantry Division's companies was air-assaulted onto the plain and were met by a fusillade of small arms fire from a woodline which bordered the LZ. Hours later the VC company withdrew from the area under cover of AK47 rifle and B40 rocket fire after American reinforcements were called in.

1st Cav Div

A 1st Cavalry Division ranger team and a gunship blasted seven NVA soldiers in the largest division battle of July 8, which occurred nine miles southwest of Song Be. Another 10 Communist kills in other action throughout its area of operations brought the division enemy death toll to 17 for the day.

Gunships of the 1st Cavalry Division's B Troop, 1st Squadron, 9th Air Cav engaged an unknown number of NVA soldiers in five bunkers on July 12, 19 miles northwest of Song Be, killing 17. The 1st Cavalry Division accounted for 31 enemy killed in total actions for the day.

Over anxious NVA soldiers triggered an ambush too soon July 13 and paid the 1st Cavalry Division for the mistake with five lives.

A patrol from the 1st Bn., 12th Cav was roaming the jungle 15 miles northeast of Tay Ninh when the roar of Claymore mines and small arms fire sent the Skytroopers diving for the ground.

For 23 minutes, the Americans slowly moved forward with their weapons blazing away at the enemy. Finally overrunning the Communist position, the Americans killed five enemy soldiers without sustaining a fatality.

Another division unit from the same battalion found the bodies of six NVA soldiers killed in a fire fight with the division the day before. Located 25 miles northeast of Lai Khe, the Americans also found 30 bicycles and 2,000 yards of waterproof cloth. Other sporadic action throughout the day resulted in eight more NVA soldiers killed.

Americal Div

Americal Division soldiers, in the second day of joint sweeping operations with elements of the ARVN 2nd Division July 9, uncovered an abandoned battalion-size enemy base camp, 15 miles west of Chu Lai.

The base camp, nestled in heavy underbrush atop a 125-foot cliff, was found by soldiers from Co. B, 1st Bn., 6th Inf.

Two bamboo bridges provided the only access to the camp, which housed an estimated 200 enemy soldiers. Inside the complex were several large hootches, one of which was a 15 by 75-foot three-level structure with an underground bunker.

Another large hootch was determined to be a barracks-type building, divided into cubicles, with three beds each. Dotting the area were a chicken coop and stock pens.

The enemy soldiers appeared to have abandoned the camp three to six days before its discovery by the Americal Division infantrymen.

In light, widespread action throughout

the Americal Division's area of operation July 9, soldiers killed three NVA and 19 VC soldiers and captured eight individual weapons.

1st Inf Div

Big Red One infantrymen killed 10 VC soldiers July 7, while 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment soldiers under operational control of the 1st Infantry Division found the bodies of 13 more VC soldiers seven miles southwest of An Loc.

On July 8, soldiers from Co. A, 1st Bn., 28th Inf., were prowling through the jungle brush four miles southeast of Dau Tieng when an aerial reconnaissance pilot spotted an NVA ambush waiting for them. Reversing the NVA plans, the Americans opened up first, and supported by gunships, killed 10 NVA regulars.

Operating only two miles away the same day, another 1st Infantry Division company operating from Fire Base Gela ran into enemy forces. The Americans killed eight VC soldiers in the brief fight.

In small, isolated actions in the division area of operation on July 10, three VC were killed by Big Red One infantrymen. Late the same day, Communists hit the city of Dau Tieng with 30 rounds of mixed mortar and rocket fire, causing only light damage and casualties.

See related stories, page one.

101st Abn Div

Three companies of the 101st Airborne Division made sporadic contact with an undetermined number of NVA soldiers 31 miles southwest of Hue on July 10, 11 and 12. The American soldiers, aided by artillery and air strikes, killed 16 Communists.



IN THEIR WORKING form, trainer and dog take the point well ahead of a patrol platoon heading out from an LZ. Duke's sense of smell will warn him and his handler of an enemy position long before the enemy can detect the oncoming soldiers.

and found nine weapons in the three days.

Based on a tip called in by a Screaming Eagle helicopter, 101st Airborne Division soldiers from the 506th Airborne Inf. along with ARVN scouts July 13, converged on an enemy bunker complex 21 miles southeast of Hue, finding 65 SKS rifles, 411 rounds of 60mm mortar, 194 fuses from 82mm mortar, 28 rounds of 82mm mortar, 518 primers from 60mm AK47 ammunition, 460 Chinese Communist hand grenades, 114 primers from 82mm mortar 518 primers from 60mm mortar, 509 fuses from 60mm mortar and a 7.62 submachine gun.

4th Inf Div

Elements of the 4th Infantry Division July 7 turned back a VC sapper attack on Fire Base Carol Marie, 24 miles northwest of Chien Reo, killing 11 of the attackers.

The attack began about 1:45 a.m., when Co. D, 3rd Bn., 8th Infantry and Btry. B, 6th Bn., 29th Arty., came under a mixed mortar and recoilless rifle fire barrage. A sapper probe of the north and southeast perimeters followed within minutes, and the Americans responded immediately with small arms, automatic weapons and artillery fire.

The Americans made a sweep of the fire base's perimeter after sunup and found 21 unexploded satchel charges, three Bangalore torpedoes and two RPG grenade boosters. The Americans also found the bodies of 11 VC soldiers.

23rd Arty

Artillery fire from the guns of the 23rd Artillery Group killed 19 NVA soldiers during the three significant fire missions in Tay Ninh Province July 7 and July 9.

Cannoneers of Btry. C, 1st Bn., 27th Arty., bombarded a suspected enemy base camp July 7 about eight miles north of Tay Ninh. A sweep the next day found 10 enemy killed by the artillery.

On July 9, artillery fire by Btry. A, 15th Arty., killed nine enemy troops at two target locations about a mile apart near the foot of Nui Ba Den Mountain.

1st Bde, 5th Inf Div

A 1st Bde., 5th Infantry Division (Mechanized) six-man reconnaissance team on July 7 killed one NVA soldier five miles southwest of Quang Tri with a Claymore mine. The Americans then opened fire on two more NVA soldiers who came up from the underbrush to strip the body of identification and fire-arms. Both enemy soldiers fled through the hail of bullets, but their bodies were discovered nearby a few minutes later.

11th ACR

An 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment convoy was ambushed on Route 13, four miles north of An Loc, July 9, but help from American and Vietnamese reinforcements turned the tables around, and by the end of the six-hour battle, 22 Communists were killed.

The convoy of the 910th Engineer Co. was traveling from Loc Ninh to An Loc when an undetermined number of soldiers from the 7th Division opened up on the trucks with small arms and RPGs. The Americans returned the fire and, in for the fight, holding off the attacking troops until help could arrive.

Soon 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment's Co. H and Co. I tanks, helicopter-borne troops from the 9th Air Cav, 1st Cavalry Division, 1st Cavalry Division helicopter gunships and artillery support, soldiers from the ARVN 9th Regiment, and soldiers from the Civilian Irregular Defense Group all closed in on the enemy.

The next day, soldiers from the 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment, aided by soldiers from the ARVN 9th Regiment stalked the remnants of the shattered NVA force. Tracking between An Loc and Loc Ninh, soldiers from the 2nd Squadron and 3rd Squadron circled to the west of Route 13, while the ARVN troops were dropped in by helicopter to block the NVA escape route.

The Blackhorse and ARVN forces tightened the circle around the Communists and killed eight enemy soldiers. Three other NVA soldiers were detained.



BAMBOO AND DENSE UNDERGROWTH slow search efforts in this NVA base camp area by 3rd Bde. infantrymen of

the 25th Infantry Division. They are looking for bunkers and food caches to add to the 49,000 pounds of rice already found.

NVA assault on LZ fizzles

LZ SAIGON—Soldiers of the 1st Bde., 5th Infantry Division (Mechanized), turned back an attempt by an estimated reinforced company of NVA regulars to overrun this small hilltop outpost nine miles southwest of Khe Sanh.

The Americans killed 40 NVA troops in the early morning action, while losing five wounded, none seriously.

The attack began at 3:45 a.m. when the NVA company started moving toward the LZ from the northeast. Before the attackers were set in their positions, soldiers from the 1st Bn., 61st

Mechanized Inf., 1st Bn., 77th Armor, and 1st Bn., 40th Arty., 108th Artillery Group opened fire on them. A flare plane and Air Force Spooky gunships supported the Americans.

The NVA attackers responded with a heavy barrage of mortar and RPG fire. Then they tried a ground assault.

"They were so close that we lowered the guns at them and let them have it with point—blank fire," said Staff Sgt. Lester T. Mangrum, who directed the fire of the self-propelled 105mm howitzers.

The battle lasted over four hours, and, at one point, some of the Communists made it up the hill and reached the concertina wire surrounding the perimeter.

Rather than blowing the wire, however, the Communists tried to push it forward onto the defenders. The Americans prevented the attackers from crossing the wire with small arms and automatic weapons fire.

About dawn, the enemy fell back down the hill into the thick elephant grass and undergrowth in the valley below the LZ.

The Americans made a sweep of the perimeter and the surrounding hillside after sunrise and found the bodies of the 40 Communists killed in the abortive attack. Littering the area were 600 Chinese Communist hand grenades, 8 RPG launchers, 32 RPG rounds, 25 rifle grenades, 15 60mm mortar rounds, 15 AK47 rifles and one light machine gun.

They also found 17 entrenching tools, 4 protective masks, a flame thrower and a Soviet-made radio.

One suspect was detained by the Americans.

Unit says, 'Chieu Hoi'

VC rally after taking vote

TAN AN—The VC are not known for their democratic tendencies, but one unit took a vote, overruled their leader and rallied to the government of the Republic of Vietnam under the Chieu Hoi program.

The unit from the village of Phuoc Tuy, 16 miles south of Saigon, walked into a Popular Force outpost in Can Duoc District and joined the government side, marking the first time an entire enemy element had given up since the Long An Province accelerated Chieu Hoi program began.

The combined Vietnamese-American program has targeted their appeals at four VC units. Special leaflets had been drawn up to point out the futility of continued resistance throughout the stepped-up PSYOPS campaign.

One of the targeted battalions had been operating in Phuoc Tuy, but intensified allied offensive activities had caused them to leave the area.

"The unit assembled and discussed the possibility of rallying," explained Lt. Col. David L. Horner, an assistant Long An Province advisor in charge of psychological operations. "They had felt the brunt of increased American and government activities. They no longer felt the same enthusiasm. Furthermore, they did not want to be killed."

Crew's last words, 'our engine's quit'

CHU LAI—The pounding of an enemy .50-caliber machine gun turned a routine helicopter flight into a 45-minute gunfighting and trailblazing race for four Americal Division crewmen.

The helicopter from the division's 176th Assault Helicopter Co. was over LZ Gator, about 6 miles south of Chu Lai, when a call was received for a medical evacuation from a nearby infantry unit.

Flying at 2,200 feet over the double and triple-canopy jungles that surround the Song (river) Glong area, the ship abruptly lurched, and a sound all fliers dread echoed in their ears—the thumping of an enemy .50-caliber machine gun.

Immediately the crew chief and the gunner opened up with M60 machineguns aimed in the direction of the enemy gunfire, managing to suppress it for a few valuable seconds.

By dropping to treetop level, Capt. David Grieger, the aircraft commander, tried reducing the enemy's field of fire and gain protection from the trees.

But the chopper continued to take fire from Charlie's .50-caliber. "The caution panel lit up like a Christmas tree," said Grieger. "Then the engine quit. I flared out, reducing our speed to about 40 knots, and the tail boom hit the trees. The tail rotor section broke loose and the main rotor blade flew off. We then fell through the trees, crashing to the ground on our left side."

The chopper crew maintained radio contact with a U.S. Air Force observation plane operating near the area. The last radio message was "engine quit, going down."

The crew escaped from the demolished aircraft with nothing more than minor scratches. But danger still lurked around them.

Grabbing all the necessary equipment while enemy movement erupted in the bushes and grew closer the crew proceeded down a hillside, moving through dense undergrowth to ward the Song Glong riverbed.

Nearly 250 yards and 40 minutes later the crewmen reached the river bank, and spotted the rescue aircraft which was backed up by two assault gunships.

After the crew constructed a make-shift perimeter defense and released a smoke grenade to mark their position, the rescue ships spotted them.

The rescue aircraft set down while enemy small arms fire crackled from the treeline. The crew was extracted just 45 minutes and a long run after the last radio message had been transmitted.

Present incentive trophies

CAM RANH BAY—An announcement of a new unit reenlistment incentive awards program was made here during a meeting of unit reenlistment personnel, according to Lt. Col. R. E. Camp, chief of the USARV Adjutant General Reenlistment Branch.

The program provides for a semi-annual trophy award to the unit with the highest reenlistment percentage for Regular Army first term and Army of the United States (AUS) reenlistments. To be eligible for the award units must also maintain a 90 per cent reenlistment rate for Regular Army career personnel.

The objective of the program is to achieve a reenlistment rate of 5 per cent of assigned enlisted strength for all units in the RA first term and AUS categories.

During the conference, the 110 reenlistment officers and NCOs attending recommended several changes in current reenlistment programs which have been submitted for approval.

Round 3 ends with 'Ike' still winning

LZ IKE—The six men on the listening post, already heavily concealed in thick underbrush and bamboo, crouched still lower as they heard the unusual noise to their front.

Stirring as cautiously as possible, Sgt. Johnny M. White, raised his head and peered into the darkness.

Ahead of him, six NVA soldiers were busy setting up an 82mm mortar position.

As he turned to alert his fellows, the chilling "whoosh" of 107mm rockets sounded overhead before they slammed inside the perimeter of the LZ, a 1st Cavalry Division (Airmobile) fire base 15 miles northeast of Tay Ninh.

It was the beginning of round three in

the fight for the LZ, an isolated piece of real estate in War Zone C, manned by the 2nd Bn., 5th Cav, and long a major impediment to the NVA, blocking their main infiltration and supply route in III Corps.

It was the second time in less than 48 hours and the third time in less than a month that the enemy, in ever increasing numbers, had been thwarted in attempts to overrun the LZ.

In a dawn sweep of the battlefield, 90 enemy bodies were found. Five soldiers were detained.

The incoming fire began at 12:04 a.m., and continued sporadically for an hour. The enemy attacked in force about one in the morning from four directions and ran into

a hail of fire from bunker positions and direct artillery fire.

The listening post, trapped to the northwest of the LZ, was ordered to return to the fire base. The six men soon realized they were caught in a cross-fire between friendly and enemy troops, but continued their flight toward the friendly position.

"We were lucky to get back," said White. "Not one man on the LP got as much as a scratch. It was a miracle."

As a result of this most recent attack on LZ Ike, the enemy lost over 30 rifles, three 51-caliber machineguns, five rocket launchers, over 400 grenades and over 600 recoilless rifle rounds and rockets, as well as 17 bangalore torpedos.

Going home?

LONG BINH—A change in criteria for volunteers to accompany 9th Infantry Division units redeploying to Hawaii has been announced by Hq., USARV.

Under the new criteria, individuals who will have completed a minimum of 10 months service in Vietnam on their current tour on or before Aug. 1, 1969, are eligible to volunteer for assignment to division units being assigned to Hawaii.

Interested personnel should contact their unit commanders or personnel officers as soon as possible. Volunteer applications should be submitted immediately to insure early consideration.

Cobras halt strike as FSB attack fizzles

TAY NINH — When the enemy attacked FB Crook, a small 25th Infantry Division outpost seven miles west of here, they were well prepared. Not only did they have strength in numbers — an estimated NVA regiment — they also brought along more than a score of 51 caliber anti-aircraft guns.

As the battle raged and Huey Cobra gunships from 1st Air Cavalry Division's 2nd Bn., 20th Aerial Rocket Arty., were called in to assist, the enemy soon realized that his weapons were no match for the Cobra's deadly firepower.

"We scrambled at about 2 a.m.," said CWO Albort Hunt. "The NVA had 51 calibers set up all along our route to the fire base. We drew fire all the way out."

Immediately the aviators called for assistance, and continued their flight to the beleaguered FB.

As they arrived over the target area, a battle was raging on all sides of the tiny outpost's perimeter.

"All we could see when we got there were tracers, and they were either going inside the perimeter or coming up at us," said CWO Charles Irvin.

As the first Cobras were unleashing their 2.75 inch rockets on the enemy below, more ships were on the way. Arriving at the scene of contact, the additional birds began receiving a heavy volume of fire.

"We spotted the muzzle flashes and followed them straight to the ground, firing all the way," said WO Ray Martin who was flying a specially equipped attack chopper. "We planted some rockets right on top of them and they just didn't fire any more."

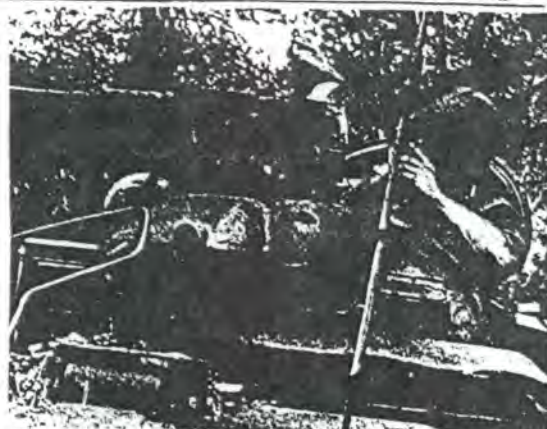
The battle raged on for several more hours, as the Cobras

teamed up with the 25th Infantry Division's artillery and infantrymen to deliver firepower to the enemy.

As first light approached, the enemy began a hasty retreat.

"We were running out of confirmed targets," said WO Harold Mesher, "so we just rode up and down the enemy's trail system, putting out a rain of fire."

"It was a pretty busy night," said WO Warren E. Lowry, "but their weapons were no match for our Cobras."



SLOUCHING BEHIND HIS machine gun to escape the slap of bamboo branches, a tank commander of Co. M, 11th Armored Cav. Reg., directs his vehicle through the heavy underbrush during operations west of An Loc.

Soldier accidentally nabs VC, captures four without a fight

CU CHI — In a day of enemy contact so close to Cu Chi that Air Force phantom jets making

their strike passes thundered through the air directly above the 25th Division base camp, elements of the 1st Bn., 5th Inf. fought a battle full of strange twists, killing 17 VC soldiers and detaining seven suspects.

Early in the day, while sweeping through a heavily booby-trapped area about a mile west of Cu Chi, an ARVN unit working with the infantrymen discovered two VC in a hole. Arresting them without a fight, the Vietnamese soldiers learned that a small VC force was hidden in the immediate vicinity.

After four air strikes hit in the area, the soldiers swept in on foot while their armored personnel carriers provided flank security.

Spec. 4 Steve Stubblefield unknowingly stood on a camouflaged trapdoor over a spider

hole containing four VC. He paused a second to consider where his next step should go, then moved on. He apparently made the tension too much for the occupants of the hole.

As Stubblefield stepped off the trap door, it sprang open. Stubblefield whirled around and found a pair of eyes staring at him. Simultaneously, the underground warriors shouted, "Chieu ho! (I surrender!)"

As if one making his presence known in such a striking manner were not enough, two other men and a woman followed the first out of the hole. The group turned in three AK47 rifles and a supply of ammunition.

During the rest of the day, the soldiers encountered no opposition. The day's activities accounted for 17 enemy killed, seven detainees, six AK47 rifles, one K54 pistol, one .45 caliber pistol, and 13 pounds of enemy documents.

Scout dog scores, tallies 23 rounds

LZ BAYONET — An Americal Division scout dog apparently put a group of VC in their superiors' doghouse recently and helped to find a booty of 23 mortar rounds in the process.

It began when a 90-pound German Shepherd named Dix sensed something strange while he and his handler, Pfc. Roger M. Collins of the 57th Inf. Ptl., were on a night ambush patrol with the 1st Bn., 6th Inf. near here.

"We were heading toward our first check point when the dog started to lead us off to the side," recalled Spec. 4 Rudy Lopez, the patrol leader.

The dog led the squad to the edge of a sand berm where they saw 19 82mm mortar rounds scattered on the ground around two freshly dug holes. An additional four mortar rounds and an assortment of fuses were later found in the holes.

"I guess we interrupted someone digging up these rounds," said Collins.

But the VC unit which was interrupted continued to lurk nearby and it was Dix again who sensed something awry.

"This time he's telling us there are people around," the canine's handler advised the patrol and the men took what cover there was at the base of the berm.

"We were in a bad position to move forward since Charlie was on the high ground and we hardly had any cover," Lopez recalled.

But the men, many of them who normally work as cooks, carpenters and clerks at the battalion basecamp, held their position and the VC moved from the area.

"The dog sure was a big help," Lopez said. "We probably wouldn't have found the mortars without him."

The company commander, Capt. Tom Cameron agreed, "We've been using the dogs for about a week and it's working out very well. I've seen the dogs work before and I'm a firm believer in them."



HELPING TO PADDLE with his legs, the object of this infantryman's thoughts is not how to keep dry, but rather how to keep moving upstream. Although leaking

in spots, this sampan helps these 9th Infantry Division soldiers of the 4th Bn., 47th Inf., on their way up a Mekong Delta stream during an operation.

101st locates huge cache

CAMP PAPE — Enough munitions to equip an entire NVA battalion were uncovered, becoming the largest cache found to date in Operation Lamar Plain.

Pfc. Joseph J. Sinkovich and his dog, Prince, had been sent out from the 101st Airborne Division's 1st Bde., 42nd Inf., to patrol with a recon unit.

Late in the afternoon the German Shepherd began urging his handler onward until a small hootch was spotted hidden among trees 50 yards away.

After checking the hootch for booby traps, the platoon searched it and found 37 122mm rockets. Lt. Clarence E. Donaldson, the platoon leader, decided to search the immediate area.

The platoon moved out. Prince suddenly stopped again. Sinkovich advanced and spotted three more hootches. He heard voices nearby so

Donaldson ordered his men to set up a night defensive position.

The next morning Co. D, 1st Bn., 502nd Abn. Inf., came in to provide security for the area. The recon platoon then moved in on the hootches and searched them.

It was a big cache.

Altogether the platoon found five hootches about 10 by 15 feet in size stuffed to the roof with weapons and ammunition.

The captured munitions included 39 SKS rifles, 72 AK47s, three 60mm mortars, 700 60mm and 485 82mm mortar rounds, 40 recoilless rifle rounds, 254 rocket-propelled grenades, 30 B40 rockets and 23 cases of small arms ammunition.

The NVA had also hidden 17 bicycles in the undergrowth near the hootches.

Later Donaldson told about the cache, and he summed up, "I'd rather count it than dodge it."