

Area Called 'Rat's Nest'

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"We went into the area on foot and systematically and methodically destroyed everything that would be of use to the Viet Cong," said Maj. Richard Brunkhow, operations officer of the 3rd Brigade's 39th Infantry.

The units blew up 800 bunkers, confiscated 1400 pounds of rice, uncovered three weapons caches and, according to Major Brunkhow, ran every VC in that area out.

"They'll be back, but for the time being the 'Rat's Nest' is clear," he said.

Other operations have been conducted in the "Rat's Nest," but they were directed at killing the enemy. Indeed, it is a battalion joke that any time a unit feels like a fight all it has to do is go to the "Rat's Nest."

This time two companies of the battalion, plus a task force from the Army Republic of Vietnam Infantry and armored cavalry, went in with demolitions

intent on staying until the area was cleared.

It took four days and entailed sweeping and resweeping many of the areas. But when the troops came in, Major Brunkhow could say, "We have effectively denied the area to the enemy for some time to come."

Figures for the operation included four enemy killed, six weapons seized along with 500 rounds of small arms ammunition, and about 20 pounds of miscellaneous equipment captured.

Sp5 Puts Out Fire In Bunker

PHU LOI, (1st AVN-10)—The shouted words "fire in the bunker" sent Sp5 Robert C. Buttke, 184th Aviation Company, on the run to the bunker where the company had a quantity of 2.75-inch marking rockets stored.

Buttke extinguished the fire and saved both nearby personnel and the aircraft on which they were working.

The fire started when a local Vietnamese construction crew had left behind a smoldering pile of scrap lumber and paper. Downwash from a passing helicopter blew a large piece of burning paper into the bunker. Only the observant eye and quick thinking of Buttke saved the company from a costly fire and possible explosion.

Hamper Recovery

AN KHE, (1st CAV-10) — Three men of the 1st Cavalry Division recently braved enemy sniper fire and successfully rigged a downed helicopter for recovery.

The three men, led by WO John Sandidge of the 15th Transportation Battalion, had been dropped by helicopter next to the downed craft which was on a sandy riverbank. As the helicopter took off, enemy fire crashed in on the men from snipers hidden in the nearby jungle.

For 30 minutes the crew crouched behind the battered helicopter, returning fire, piling up sand for protection, and attempting to rig the chopper for removal.

Aerial rocket artillery (ARA) helicopters arrived and the sniper fire subsided long enough for Sandidge to race in front of the downed craft and finish the rigging task.

A group of Marines, hearing the fire, appeared on the opposite river bank and motioned the men to cross. As the ARA ship made a sweeping pass, the three men ran across 100 feet of open river bank and splashed across the water.

Sandidge pin-pointed the enemy positions and they were silenced by artillery and Air Force strikes.

The downed chopper was later successfully removed.

25th Inf Kills 45 Viet Cong In Coastal Battle Near Duc Pho

DUC PHO, (25th INF-10)—In the first seven hours of Task Force Oregon the 3rd Brigade Task Force, 25th Infantry Division killed 45 Viet Cong in a battle on the coast near here.

Thirty VC were killed by the 1st Battalion, 35th Infantry automatic weapons fire and 15 more were killed by artillery fire thrown into the area.

Five U.S. soldiers were wounded, none seriously.

The Bronco Brigade, after completing Operation Pershing south of Bong Son and after

participating in the final two days of Operation Lelune, closed in on the Duc Pho area by air and sea to begin "Oregon."

The brigade's sea assault was the first of Task Force Oregon. The assault started a sea resupply route from Qui Nhon to Duc Pho.

Earlier, the 2nd Battalion, 35th Infantry was the first element of the 25th Division to battle VC in Duc Pho District, killing 43.



Members of the lead element of 5th group pathfinders load up prior to a Forces — Civilian Irregular Defense achute assault at Bunard Drop Zone

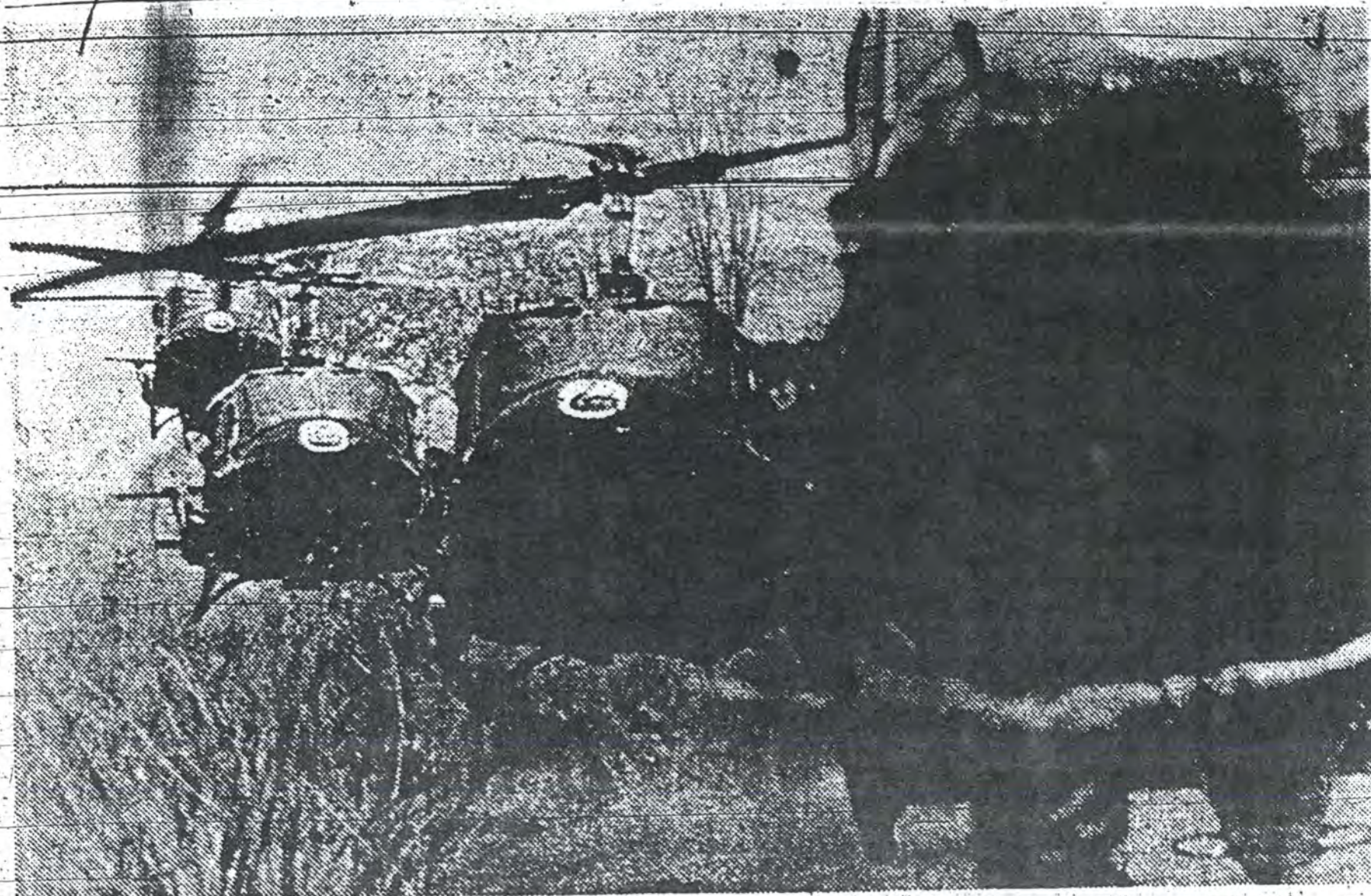
Sp4 Ronald L. Lazarus, 5th SFG-10)

MAY 16, 1967
LE BRONCO TO FELD NAME

look at Chuck Carlock's Book Cover on hard bound Firebirds

May 6, 1967

THE ARMY REPORTER



COMIN' IN—Heliborne assault elements of a combined Special Forces-Civilian Irregular Defense Group task force arrive to reinforce elements already on the ground at Bunard Drop Zone.

(Photo by SFC M.L. Crigger, 5th SFG-10)

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COMIN' IN—Heliborne assault elements of a combined Special Forces and regular Defense Group task force arrive to reinforce elements already on the ground at Bunard Drop Zone. (Photo by SFC M.L. Crigger, 5th SFG-10)

SF, CIDG Assault Area, Build Camp

NHA TRANG, (5th SFG-10)—During the early pre-dawn hours of a recent day, members of Operation Harvest Moon from Special Forces bases scattered throughout Vietnam were going through last minute checks of equipment, personnel and rigging of parachutes.

At 8 a.m. all members of the force departing from the Special Forces camp at Nha Trang were strapped in, the planes lined up waiting for take-off.

The weather was hazy, thick and extremely hot at Bunard Drop Zone, approximately 65 miles northeast of Saigon. At 9:45 a.m., a Special Forces pathfinder unit parachuted into the drop zone and began laying the panels for the first U.S. Army Special Forces airborne combat assault.

At 10 a.m. U.S. Air Force C-123 aircraft began the mass parachute jump, dropping the Spe-

cial Forces advisors and members of the Civilian Irregular Defense Group (CIDG). Within minutes, the sky over the drop zone was spotted with parachutes. There was no sniper fire directed at the jumpers, but several aircraft reported sniper fire during and immediately following the jump.

The last jumper was on the ground at 10:14 a.m. The drop zone and helicopter landing zones were secured at 11:20 a.m. with prearranged heliborne assault elements arriving at 11:30 a.m. Within 15 minutes, the last heliborne elements had arrived and the helicopters had again taken to the air while other helicopters hovered overhead furnishing air observation, cover and support.

The final objective of the operation was to secure the area selected to construct a new U.S. Army Special Forces 'Fighting Camp' at the drop zone. Work is now underway on construction of Camp Bunard. The design stresses the principles of defense with emphasis on mutual support and defense in depth. The layout of the camp is such that it can be defended by one-quarter of the assigned contingent, thereby freeing the remaining personnel for operations.

Support Unit Lands Tanks

QUI NHON, (1st LOG-10)—The 1st Logistical Command's Qui Nhon Support Command made its first small boat landing of tanks at Bong Son 55 miles from here.

The command's 1098th Light Boat Company, commanded by 1st Lt. Louis D. Bishop, hauled 16 M-48 tanks, two armored personnel carriers (APCs) and a recovery vehicle from here to Bong Son. The voyage took eight and one-half hours.

The 900 tons of cargo was moved by sea because land routes were either insecure or impassable.

The 1098th's landing craft medium (LCM) brought a tank platoon from Company A, 1st Battalion, 69th Armor, 25th Infantry Division to the site of Operation Pershing.

Police Reunite Dad, Son

LONG BINH, (18th MP-10)—A soldier stationed near Bien Hoa and his merchant marine father were reunited recently with the help of the 300th Military Police Company.

Fred Drawert, a merchant marine on the SS Velma Lykes, knew his son, Sp4 Arthur Drawert, was stationed somewhere in the Saigon area. When his ship docked at the Saigon Port he decided to try to locate his son.

Drawert went to the Saigon Port military police desk hoping to get some help. The MPs on duty did more than just help.

Desk Sergeant Paul T. Ditulio found young Drawert's unit was located at Bien Hoa. He dispatched a patrol to take the soldier's father to Long Binh. From there arrangements were made to transport him to his son's unit, where the men met after several months separation.

is used by military intelligence officials in planning tactical operations and artillery missions.

The Big Red One is the only infantry division in Vietnam which has an organic Aerial Surveillance and Target Acquisition (ASTA) platoon.

Commanded by Maj. Cecil C. Lile, ASTA has two OV-1B and two OV-1C Mohawks which fly 220 miles per hour and land on a rough strip of ground 1500 feet long.

The OV-1B models are equipped with cameras and Side-Looking Airborne Radar (SLAR). Infrared detectors and cameras are carried on the OV-1C models.

When flying a SLAR mission the radar surveys the terrain on both sides of the plane, compiling a record of the terrain in the area. This side-looking capability enables a plane to fly along friendly lines to scout enemy territory without having to fly over it.

When the mission is over, the aviator reports for debriefing while technicians remove film canisters from the cameras and radar systems. The films are taken to a small fleet of vans where they are developed and processed by Company personnel.

One of the vans is devoted to the operations of the division's 1st Military Intelligence Detachment, Imagery Interpretation Section, headed by Capt. James E. Moore. Specialists in this section study the films

9th Inf Gunships Kill 9 VC

RACH KIEN, (9th INF-10)—Nine enemy were killed and one man detained in a joint effort by 9th Infantry Division troops and helicopter gunships recently in an operation one mile east of here.

The 2nd Platoon of Company B, 3rd Battalion, 39th Infantry conducting a reconnaissance mission spotted four enemy soldiers walking on a distant dike.

They opened fire on them when they were about 700 meters away and then called for assistance from the 9th Aviation Battalion's helicopter gunships.

One of the men on the dike was killed and another detained. Eight other enemy soldiers in the area were killed by fire from the gunships.

Found on the detainee, who claimed to be a mail carrier, was a company roster and the equivalent of the U.S. Army's personnel records file.

In other action during the same operation one enemy M-1 rifle was captured and 45 bunkers were destroyed.



POISED AND READY—Two infantrymen from the 2nd Infantry Division look over their machinegun at an area of suspected Viet Cong activity. (Photo by SFC M.L. Crigger, 5th SFG-10)

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May 6, 1967

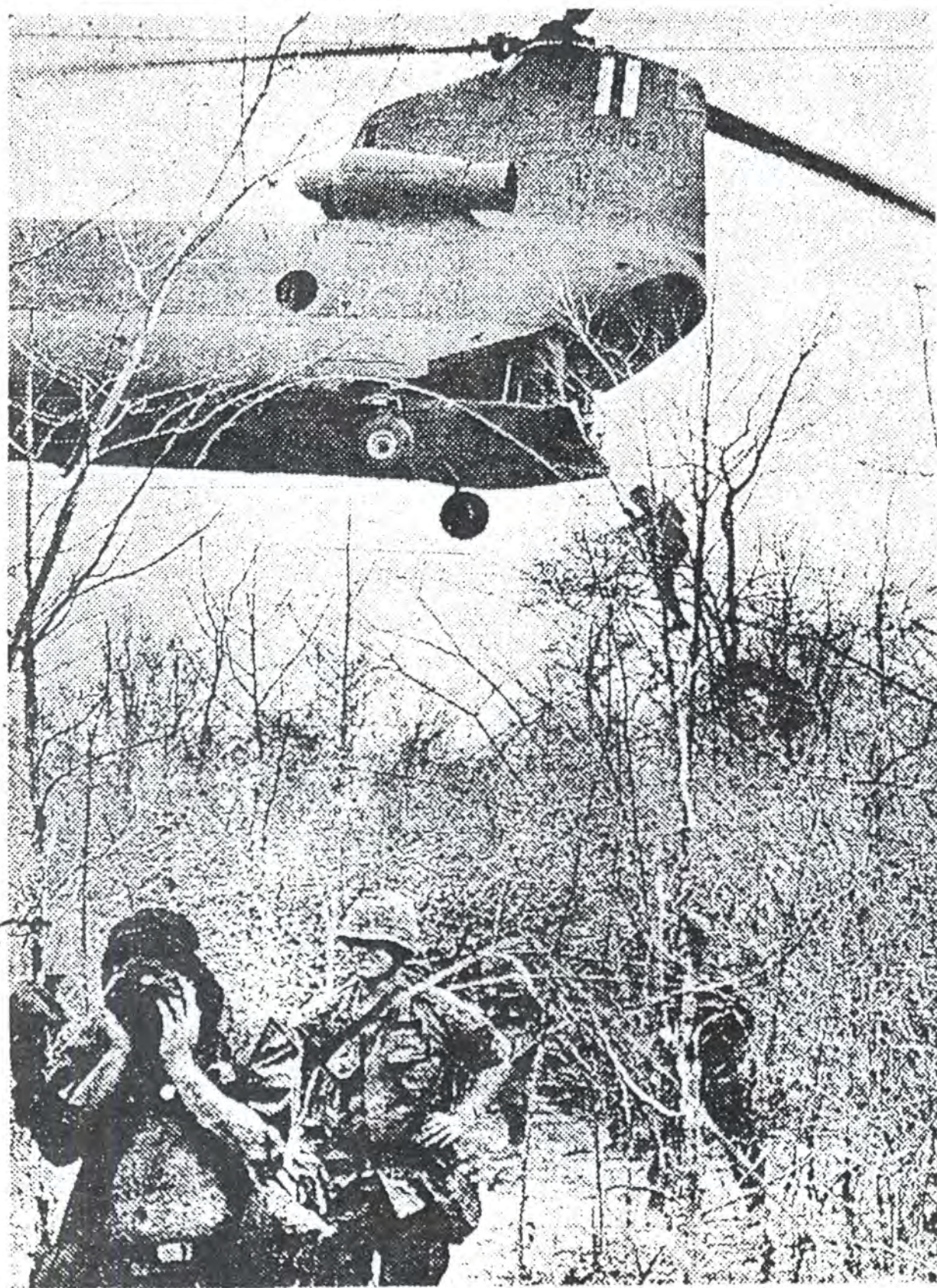
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PARDON MY DUST—An infantryman from the 1st In-
fantry Division covers his face against the dust being
stirred up by the hovering helicopter. The soldier in the
tree is attempting to aid the unloading of cargo. The tall
trees prohibited the chopper from landing. (Photo by AP)

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Actions At Landing Zone Earn DSC For Aviator

TAN SON NHUT, (USARV-10)

A warrant officer aviator who successfully led the defense of a landing zone after his ship had been downed by enemy fire has been awarded the Distinguished Service Cross for his actions.

Jack E. Grimmer was at the controls of a helicopter ferrying Vietnamese troops into an unsecured landing zone near Vi Thanh on Feb. 15, when hostile fire forced his aircraft down. Jumping from his helicopter, Grimmer noticed that the lead chopper in the formation had crashed a scant 50 meters from the enemy positions. The aviator rushed through a hail of enemy bullets and exploding mortar rounds to aid the crew of the downed chopper.

After rescuing all those alive, Grimmer grabbed a machinegun from a dead Vietnamese soldier and began directing suppressive fire toward the enemy. Grimmer ran from position to position, shouting words of encouragement and directing the defense of the landing zone. Through his efforts, the defense was coordinated to a point that

a relief force was able to land.

Once the enemy positions had been partially silenced, Grimmer raced back to the downed lead chopper and pulled the dead pilot from the wreckage.

After being evacuated to the staging area, Grimmer volunteered to fly back to the landing zone to supervise rigging and recovery of the downed choppers. Although the hostile sniper fire was still heavy, Grimmer continued to orbit the landing

zone through the afternoon and into the night until the mission had been accomplished.

Supply Camp Raided

MUI DAT, (9th INF-10)

Discovery of a regimental-sized Viet Cong supply camp containing tons of weapons and 270,000 rounds of small arms ammunition was made recently by a 9th Infantry Division platoon in Operation Portsea near Vung Tau.

The 1st Brigade unit found the cache five miles southeast of Na Binh Gia while on a search and clear patrol.

Platoon leader Lt. Randal R. Jackson, 3rd Platoon, Company A, 2nd Battalion, 3rd Infantry said the weapons hidden in a bunker and tunnel complex could supply a VC regiment for about four months, "with some pretty good fire flights thrown in."

Jackson estimated the enemy had abandoned their camp a day or two before it was found. He said air strikes had hit close to the area in days preceding its discovery.

Sergeant Thomas Baines, Sp4 Michael Reed, and PFC Kenison Holmes were the first to discover the complex, which covered an area of about 750 by 550 yards.

A barbed wire fence and punji-stake traps surrounded part of the complex, which had a defensive perimeter of bunkers connected by narrow tunnels and trenches.

Many weapons were lifted from a tunnel 12 feet underground. Recovery teams could work only a few minutes at a time before the stale, choking air in the tunnels forced them to come to the surface.

At the end of the second day, the search of the area was completed. Most of the enemy weapons were flown to 1st Brigade headquarters. The ammo was destroyed.

Included in the cache besides the small arms ammunition were 4724 mortar and 57mm recoilless rifle rounds, 3120 pounds of explosives, 400 hand grenades, 100 anti-tank rifle

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imbedded in Route 19 about 9 miles east of here, exploded recently under a Vietnamese Lambretta. Seven of the eight Vietnamese aboard were killed and eighth was taken to a Pleiku hospital with a severe head injury.

Six of the seven passengers were residents of Thanh Giao. Also riding from Pleiku to Thanh Giao was a member of a Vietnamese Army unit. The eighth victim was the driver.

Five of the dead were men and two were women. Seriously injured was a woman resident of Thanh Giao. Among those killed was a 15-year old boy.

The little three-wheel hicle struck the mine at 10 a.m. while passing an American convoy.

Witnesses to the incident the vehicle was hurled meters off the road by the explosion. They bodies of the victims were in a wide area around the twisted wreckage.

The crater caused by was about two feet deep about three feet wide. of the area found the dirt left by the VC mine. Hardness of the soil the mine had been planted a week prior to the

10 Cong Slain By Gunships

TAN SON, (1st AVN-10)—Ten Viet Cong were killed and their automatic weapons position destroyed by U.S. Army helicopter gunships recently seven miles north of Qui Nhon.

For several days prior to the action, resupply helicopters of the 174th Assault Helicopter Company had been fired upon by automatic weapons as they flew rations and ammunition into outposts of the Republic of Korea (ROK) Capital Infantry Division. Armed helicopters sent to the scene each time could find no enemy.

A decision was made to try to ambush the ambush. Three volunteers, Maj. Bennard R. Cobb, SSgt. Herman J. Grey, and Sgt. Dexter Frisby, all of the 174th, were selected.

They were dropped into the area with rations, weapons, and binoculars. Two days later their vigil was rewarded.

They spotted a Viet Cong patrol getting ready to ambush that day's resupply run. Cobb immediately radioed the company and armed helicopters were sent to positions just out of the VC's sight.

Once in position, the armed choppers told the resupply helicopter to begin its run into the nearby outpost.

True to form, the enemy began firing as soon as they spotted the lone ship. But before they could hide, the gunships, guided by Cobb, cut them down.



AIRMOBILE ASSAULT—Two members of the 1st Cavalry Division's Com 5th Battalion, 7th Cavalry jump from an assault helicopter in a landing zone Bong Son Plain during Operation Pershing. (Photo by Sp4 John Hyer, 13th S)

VC 'Over Our Own Bunker But Three Men Inside Hold

PHUOC VINH, (1st INF-10)—"The Viet Cong were running all around us, even over our own bunker," said Sp4 Paul Wilson, as he described his part in the battle of Ap Gu in War Zone C.

The actions of Wilson and his two companions during the battle were said to have been instrumental in the defense of their unit, the 1st Infantry Division's 1st Battalion, 26th Infantry during an assault by the 271st Regiment, a unit of the 9th Viet Cong Division. The enemy death toll was placed at 589 for the battle.

"By these three men holding their position, we were able to concentrate our air and artillery fire on a small channel where the enemy had broken through our line," Capt. George Joulwan, battalion operations officer, explained.

Wilson and two other men, PFC Nister Rivera and Sp4 James Stiffler, found themselves virtually alone in the center of the VC drive. The bunkers to the right and left of them had been knocked out and the men pulled back. These three men, however, were unable to pull

back because of the heavy fire around their position.

In the early morning haze they could see the black-clad enemy darting near their position. Rivera fired a volley at them when a blinding flash from an exploding grenade sent him reeling backward. He was unharmd but his weapon was torn apart by the shrapnel.

Wilson was firing his gun through the rear of the bunker when a VC running toward a grenade in one hand and a rifle in the other, hit him down with one.

Then the machinegun Stiffler dived out of the bunker to the enemy W

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25th Inf Aids ARVN

CU CHI, (25th INF-10) — A frantic call for help came into the 25th Infantry Division operation center at 2 a.m. An Army of the Republic of Vietnam (ARVN) outpost in the village of Phuoc Hiep a few miles north of here was under attack.

Just 37 minutes after the division received the call, B Troop, 3rd Squadron, 4th Cavalry was on its way to the rescue.

As the first platoon, commanded by Lt. George Rogers, arrived at the besieged outpost, an estimated battalion size enemy force was at the perimeter wire. The Viet Cong broke contact immediately at the sound of the approaching

armored cavalry.

The first platoon fleeing VC to the southeast and third platoon rounded the village.

SSgt. Glen Pike and an on-duty platoon soon engaged elements of force. Pike's track was an anti-tank round destroyed. All the rescued from the captured.

Five wounded evacuated by helicopter. No American killed.

In the morning enemy were found.