

some tobacco, tools and household articles such as dishes and cooking utensils.

Vietnamese civilians they freed from a Viet Cong prison camp
(Photo by Sp4 Oddvar B)

Chinook Forced To Land; Pilot Drops In VC Territory

0022, 1966

AN KHE, (1st CAV-IO)—It was just a routine flight for a Chinook. The mission: carry a couple of passengers and supplies from one 1st Cavalry Division landing zone to another during Operation Thayer.

The chopper winged its way over the mountains and rice paddies south of Bong Son, both rotors slapping at the still air. Suddenly the aircraft warning system signaled danger.

Captain Lawrence B. Moeller quickly noted a transmission failure, and prepared for a precautionary landing in a rice paddy. As the Chinook started its

descent, Moeller notified the liaison officer at home base here of the trouble.

The crew of the Chinook, all members of Company B, 228th Aviation Battalion, scanned the terrain below and decided it did not look friendly.

On board were WO Clarence C. Gabbard, assistant aircraft commander, PFC Thomas Petrocino, crew chief, Sp4 Elmer Schultz, flight engineer, and PFC Terry Walters, door gunner. A major and captain were passengers.

Another Chinook, piloted by CWO Phillip E. Crossan and Capt. Robert W. Parker, intercepted Moeller's radio message and attempted to pinpoint the spot where the chopper would set down.

"We landed in a rice paddy near two villages," Moeller said. "Once on the ground our crew and passengers jumped out to set up a perimeter."

The Chinook crew had barely established a perimeter when it started receiving heavy fire from the rear and right front. Walters and Petrocino repulsed the initial enemy attack with a steady rain of fire from the M60 machineguns they had carried from the chopper. Schultz supplied the gunners with ammunition.

The crew of the second Chinook consisted of Crossan, Capt. Robert W. Parker, co-pilot, PFC Wade D. Bender, crew chief, PFC James W. Key, flight engineer, and PFC Barry J. McAlee, door gunner.

"When Gabbard radioed that they were receiving heavy fire I made up my mind to try and

get them out of there as soon as possible," Crossan said. "I made a low pass over the area and spotted about 40 Viet Cong. I knew I had to get them out of there or their position would be overrun."

Petrocino described his approach this way: "I know for a fact that McAlee shot two of the Viet Cong not more than 20 yards behind me. Key opened fire on the spider holes that were all across the front of our perimeter. I don't know if he (Key) killed anybody—but he pumped bullets in every one of the spider holes."

The two crews were later credited with killing eight enemy.

Crossan landed the aircraft after the enemy fire had been suppressed. "I made my approach to the right front of the downed Chinook and landed as close as possible to minimize their exposure time to enemy fire during the rescue."

"They saved our lives," Moeller said later. "And I believe credit also goes to rapid mobility of the 1st Cavalry Division. Without it, we would have been completely destroyed."

Route One Joyless

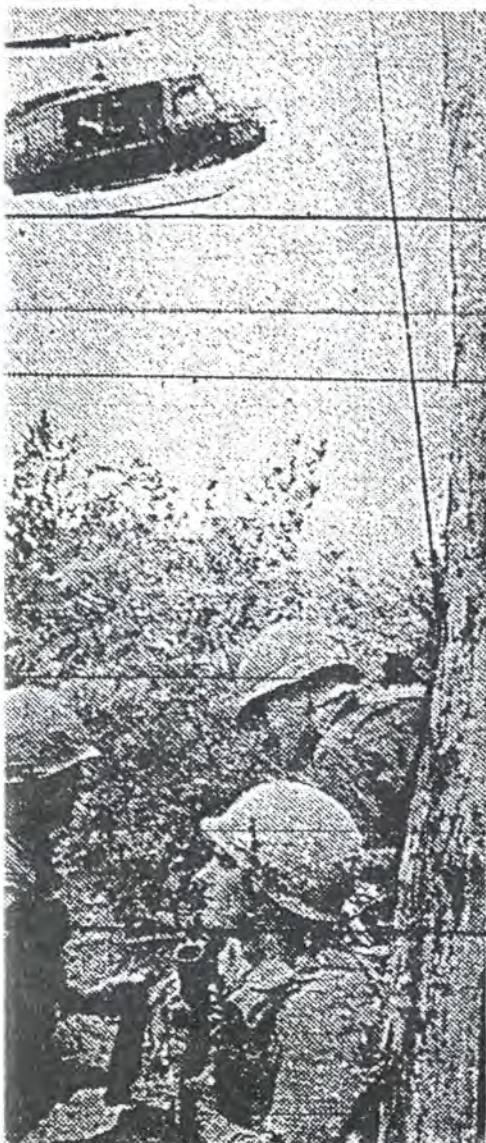
LONG BINH, (1st LOG-IO)—Vietnam's national route One is not a number one highway. In fact, it is often called "the street without joy" by 1st Logistical Command drivers.

On it one of the regular runs the drivers must make is a 200-mile one from here to Tay Ninh. Sp5 William M. Tuttle, who makes the trip twice a week at least, calls it a spine-breaker.

The drivers have to put up with 30 hours of tropical sun, mosquitoes at night, heavy monsoon rains, diesel exhaust fumes, and the Viet Cong snipers.

Cool Tons

NHA TRANG, (1st LOG-IO)—"It's just like a huge freezer compartment of a refrigerator turning out 16,000 ice cubes an hour," the way a soldier de-



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men in the area. When the VC started to return fire, the grenadier started thumping away.

The VC grenades fell all over the clearing as the volley of the firefight increased. Artillery and mortars were called in and laid a deafening barrage into the trees. After the barrage the familiar thumping still rang out across the clearing.

"When those grenades started coming in again it surprised every body. I didn't think it was possible after all that big stuff came

receiving no response, Millette repeated the challenge, still getting no answer. Weighing the chances of going after the North Vietnamese, Millette decided he could outwit him.

Using one man from his squad to provide covering fire, Millette left the perimeter. He went some 75 yards and came upon the man hiding under a log. Result: One captured Regular.

Millette is a squad leader in Company C of the 1st Battalion, 8th Airborne Cavalry.

CU CHI, (25th INF-10) — An ambush patrol from the 25th Infantry Division recently killed three Viet Cong minutes after the VC exploded a claymore mine near the company's position.

The patrol from Company A, 1st Battalion, 27th Infantry was led by Sp4 Gerald Ward. Ward, who had just been discharged from a hospital and was taking charge of an ambush for the first time, led his patrol through the perimeter wire of the battal-

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Vietnam Communique

1st Infantry Division — Operation Baton Rouge was terminated after 33 days activity in the Rung Sat Special Zone. The search and destroy operation accounted for 61 enemy killed, one captured, and 10 individual weapons seized. Friendly casualties were light. There were 147 tactical sorties flown in support. "Little Rock," a search and destroy sweep by a multi-battalion force from the 1st

Brigade and an ARVN task force, ended after three days with four dead enemy. The operation area was in an old plantation 10 miles northeast of Phu Cong in Bien Hoa Province. Six enemy base camps, 300 pounds of rice, and five mines were destroyed. Friendly casualties were light.

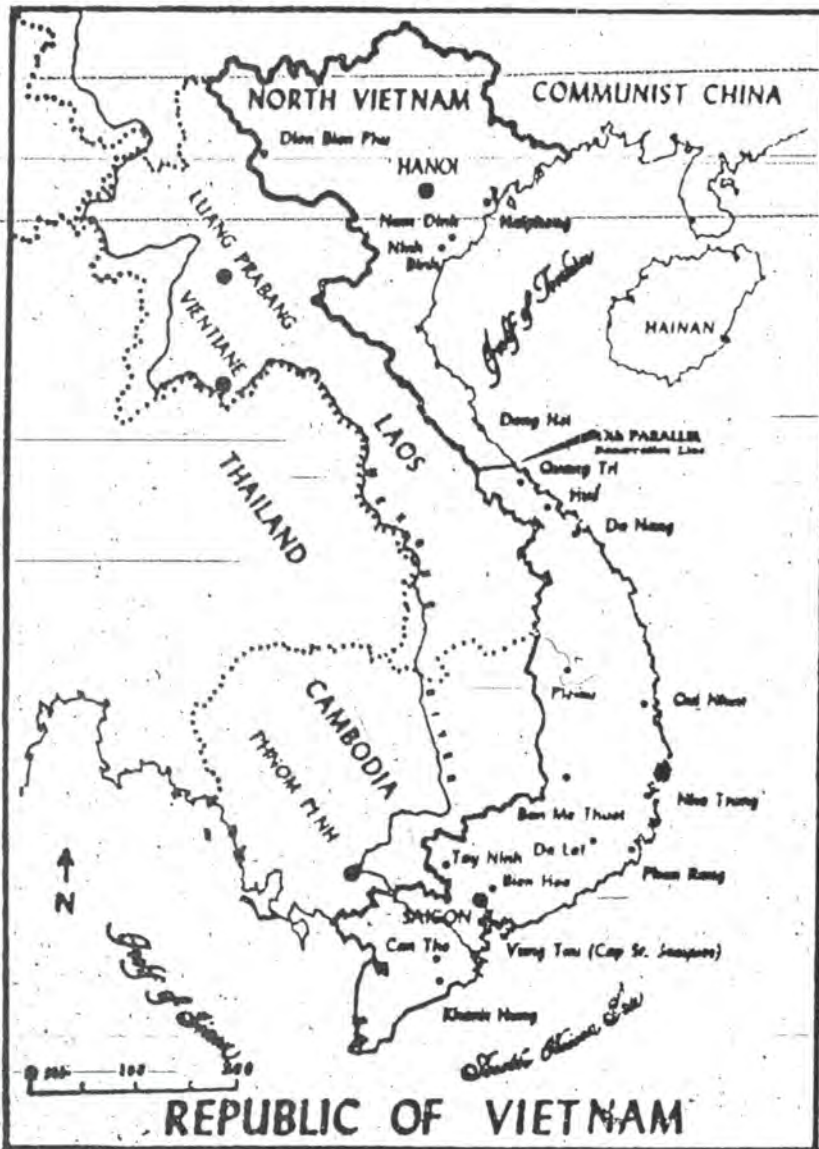
1st Brigade, 101st Airborne — Paratroopers have killed 189 VC as Operation Seward continues.

In one action, 12 enemy boats were sunk on the Cai River, about 17 miles north-northwest of Tuy Hoa. Friendly casualties are light.

1st Cavalry Division — Operation Irving continues with moderate action. One day's scattered action accounted for 45 dead enemy, 31 captured, 60 suspects detained, and five individual weapons seized. A company from the 7th Cavalry burned a hamlet 22 miles north-northwest of Qui Nhon. A secondary explosion occurred during the burning. In one action, helicopter gunships killed three VC in a strike on an estimated platoon-size force in a valley about eight miles south of Bong Son. Casualties in "Irving" are 389 VC dead, 302 captured, 837 suspects detained. Friendly casualties are light.

25th Infantry Division — Infantrymen are carrying on two operations. In "Lanikai," a company supported by armed helicopters operating in the Mekong Delta killed 14 VC and uncovered two 60mm mortars complete base plates, tripods, and sites, five carbines, two submachineguns, and an automatic rifle. Ammunition was also uncovered. Friendly casualties are light. In "Sunset Beach," 70 VC have been killed and 36 captured as friendly casualties remain light. A third operation, "Kamueta," ended with 13 enemy killed, three captured, and 18 suspects detained. Several hundred rounds of ammunition, more than 126 tons of rice, 2500 pounds of salt and 300 pounds of peanuts were taken in the operation. U.S. strike pilots flew 175 sorties in support.

173rd Airborne Brigade — Operation Sioux City has ended. Friendly casualties were light, but enemy casualties were undetermined.



ery agreed to ride "that funny bird without feathers," and the helicopter was on its way.

After the operation and treatment for malaria, he was put in the recovery ward. "Then the real problems began," Reiley said. "Grandfather had no trouble adjusting to the hospital diet, but Kma didn't like the 'water with a funny taste.'" A five-gallon can of water from his village well was taken to him.



a machinegunner of Company ntry Manchu, as he moves into ter being sniped at by Viet Cong Pilhol Plantation just north of amp.
PFC Vern Shible, 25th INF-IO)

some American meals.

"Miracle drugs just won't cure everything," the doctor said. "Sometimes it takes a combination of modern medicine and a large bowl of home cooked rice to get the job done."

Squad Tactic Via Helicopter Works

TUY HOA, (101st ABN-IO)—The importance of the concept of the squad immediate action team, is that one rifle squad, one troop helicopter, and a gunship is capable of gaining quick results when engaging small enemy units.

This was borne out recently when two armed Viet Cong were spotted trying to escape from the path of Company C, 2nd Battalion, 37th Infantry of the 101st Airborne Brigade.

The VC had crossed a river and were heading for a small peninsula on the South China Sea coast. Within minutes after receiving the report, a squad was deployed for a heliborne assault on the fleeing VC. With a gunship hovering, the squad landed and began moving toward the enemy.

The hovering ship spotted the two—VC as they attempted to escape in a sampan. The ship's pilot dove at them and the gunners killed them.

Oct 22, 1966