

in by the medical personnel. The Log soldiers also regularly hold medical sick calls in neighboring villages.

ON THE MOVE—Elements of Company C, 2nd Battalion, 14th Infantry Division, move through a suspected Viet Cong stronghold and destroy operation near Nay Ninh. (Photo by Sp4 James Pardue,

Huey Gives Birddog Lift In Routine Day For 335th

NHA TRANG, (1 FEB-10)—The engines of the UH-1B strained as it hovered in an attempt to lift the downed OI-E Birddog from Highway 21 just outside of Ban Me Thuot.

After the second hook-up the chopper ran the small spotter plane down the road and hoisted it free, did a right bank and was on its way back to Dong Ba Thiem airfield just south of here. This was the end of a normal rescue mission for the men of the 335th Transportation Company at Dong Ba Thiem.

But what of the events leading

up to the recovery? A normal day's activity, if there is such a thing here, was interrupted by a call giving the brief details of a downed Birddog "somewhere outside of Ban Me Thuot."

In less than 30 minutes the 335th had three helicopters in the air with Maj. Walter Ratcliff, company commander, flying the lead chopper.

After a 20-minute flight over some of the rugged central highland terrain of South Vietnam, the door gunner of Major Ratcliff's plane spotted the downed craft. All three of the ships circled and landed on an open grassy area directly in front of a Montagnard village.

Amidst the shouts of the ARVN troops who were manning an artillery piece on Highway 21, the men of the 335th went to work. World War II vintage armored cars, manned by Vietnamese troops, provided security along the highway and aided in slowing down convoys that roared through the area.

"I was trying to land on the road to pick up a radio when my left wing tip caught the elephant grass on the side of the road. I tried to throttle out but the plane did a nose-over next to a tree and there I stayed," said the pilot, 1st Lt. Al Cutchin.

With officers and men alike pushing, the plane was put back on the road and rolled into the vicinity of the parked choppers. "The cowling, landing gear, wings and horizontal stabilizers are pretty well banged up," Major Ratcliff said. "But after a cursory inspection I think it can be repaired."

All of the seats of the spotter plane were then removed, along with the radio and any other equipment inside—the cockpit which could be taken out, to lighten the aircraft as much as possible. "We also want to make the plane so much deadweight, so that when we are towing it, it won't tend to fly. You see, it still has a basic aerodynamic design and as soon as we get in the air, it might fly up into the Huey," the major commented.

"We tie down the prop so it

doesn't rotate and then tape and secure all moving parts of the plane such as the rudder, the stabilizers and the doors," he said.

After inspecting the plane to make sure that it was ready, Ratcliff gave the go-ahead. The Birddog was wheeled onto the road and a trapeze-type hook-up was attached to the top of its wings. A member of the 335th stood atop the plane with the hook which was to be attached to the underside of the chopper.

Three men then attached a rope to the tail of the Birddog and stood there waiting to counter the prop wash of the Huey. The chopper made its pass and hovered over the plane and the attachment was made.

Major Ratcliff revved up the engines of the chopper and attempted to lift the plane, but the men of the 335th had done an exceptional job and the plane was exactly "so much deadweight." In fact, the Huey labored in lifting it.

The major signalled to let the small craft roll down the road and after about 50 meters, it was lifted free and on its way back to Dong Ba Thiem for repair.

Wounded Get Fast

AN KHE, (1st CAV-10)—Medical evacuation by helicopter in the 1st Cavalry Division is helping to maintain a low death rate among wounded cavalymen.

Specialist Four Joseph Feeney, a crew chief on one of the 12 UH-1D helicopters of Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 15th Medical Battalion, said, "Within three minutes after a medical evacuation call is received the med-evac ships can be airborne. Less than one percent of all injured soldiers picked up by med-evacs ships are lost."

When the med-evac ship is in base camp, med-evac control receives a call from a clearing company in the field. In minutes the ship is dispatched to where it is needed. When the ship is in the field it receives the call directly from the clearing company and then moves to the area it is needed.

DOD New Svc P

WASHINGTON Defense Department motion a new members of the their simultaneous Vietnam.

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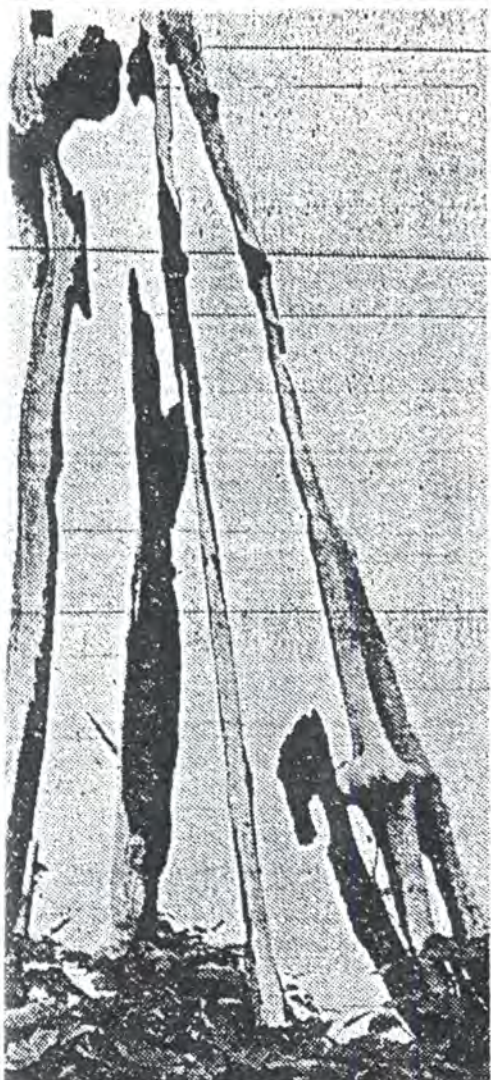
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Feeney said conditions, the receiving medical hospital within 20 call is receive

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vate First Class Henry G. Green, Battalion, 503rd Infantry, 173rd es at an unusual tree formation destroy operation in Long Khanh 4 Berni Zawacki, 173rd ABN-IO)

335th

father, who was captured with as a Viet Cong squad leader, is paratroopers of the 173rd Air-

Berni Zawacki, 173rd ABN-IO)

For 498th

ines" self to the dreaded disease in the process. Actions such as this promoted one combat infantryman to describe succinctly the "dustoff" crews in a simple phrase, "they're the greatest."

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Lai Khe needed a school building when the 173rd arrived here. The present building has dirt floors, thatched walls, and a broken tile roof. The new building will have cement floors, brick walls, and a tile roof. There will be one large classroom and an office-storage room.

The owner of the Lai Khe Rubber Plantation usually hires and pays the teachers but was unable to do so this year because of a lack of money. So the 173rd has collected \$450 to help pay two teachers for the year.

Army has opened the doors of Officer Candidate School (OCS) to men up to 32 years and six months of age at time of enlistment.

Regulations previously required OCS candidates to be at least 18 and not more than 27 years old at time of enlistment.

But now AR 601-226 has been modified to allow, in exceptional cases, a waiver of this maximum age requirement up to 32 years and six months.

The change is detailed in DA Message 776952.

Vietnam Communique

1st Infantry Division — Operation Baton Rouge continues under the 2nd Brigade. One ambush patrol sighted three sampans three miles southwest of Nah Bhe in the Rung Sat Special Zone. One was sunk and the other two were run aground. The two grounded ones were taken under artillery fire. Nine enemy were reported killed, but no friendly casualties reported. Among the things destroyed on battalion-size search and destroy operations were 68 bunkers, 11 sampans, and one base camp. Enemy dead since the operation began Sept. 4 stands at 28 with one captured. Friendly casualties remain light. Operation Bangor by the 2nd Bde. began Sept. 6 in Binh Duong Province, in the Co My jungle west of the Saigon River. Four enemy have been killed and one captured. Friendly casualties and enemy contact are light. The 3rd Bde. in battalion-sized Operation Seaside, discovered a VC base camp seven miles northwest of Lai Khe, following a B52 raid earlier in the day.

173rd Airborne Brigade — Combined with ARVN Rangers and units of the 1st Australian Task Force, the brigade ended Operation Toledo in Phuoc Tuy Province. Enemy figures: 11 killed, 10 captured, 43 suspects detained, 10 crew-served and 44 individual weapons seized. Friendly casualties were light.

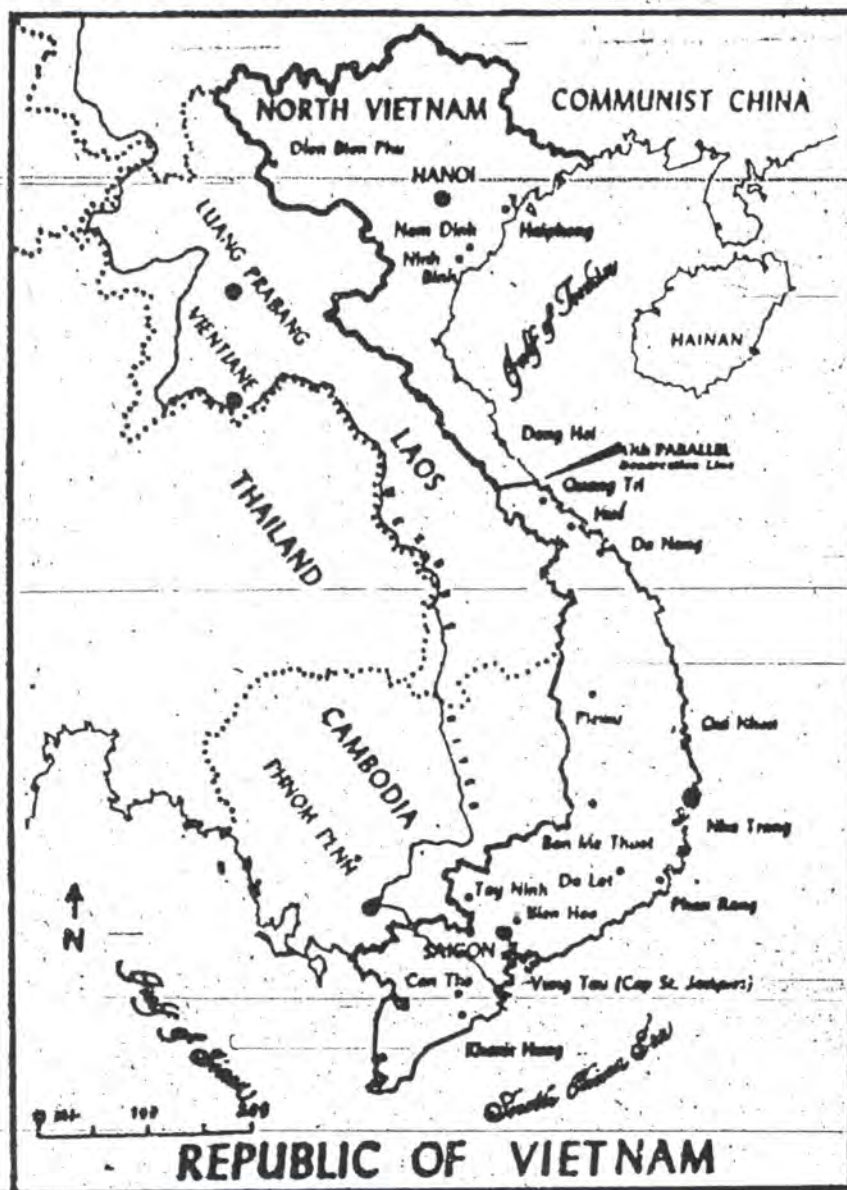
25th Infantry Division — Action was reported light during the week. A UH-1D helicopter was hit by enemy ground fire during a routine mission three miles west of Cu Chi. The damaged aircraft returned to its home base under its own power. One

US was killed and one wounded in the incident.

1st Cavalry Division — The perimeter at the base camp in An Khe came under one probe by an unknown-sized enemy unit.

The cavalrymen fired artillery and sent out a reaction force which reported one enemy killed.

1st Brigade, 101st Airborne Division — No major actions reported.



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