Vietnam communique

October 6-12

Cave yields huge enemy arsenal

One of the largest enemy arms and munitions caches ever found in the 4th Infantry Division area was discovered Oct. 8 in a four-room cave in the mountains 14 miles northeast of An Khe.

The three-level arsenal contained 400 81mm and 400 82mm mortar rounds, 75 rifles (SKS and Mauser bolt-action types), 53,500 rounds of small arms ammunition, five light machine guns, two complete 82mm mortars, an old-style 81mm mortar tube, 100 rifle grenades and 100 B40 rocket rounds. Most of the weapons were brand new, the arms still packed in their original protective coating.

Additionally, 15 old Browning Automatic Rifles, 80 anti-personnel and 20 anti-tank mines, six 75mm recoilless rifle rounds, 2,000 feet of time fuse, and assorted rucksacks and uniforms were removed from the cave which could only be reached by shinnying up a small tree 10 feet to the opening.

The cache was found by a platoon of infantrymen from Co. B, 3rd Bn., 8th Inf. Spec. 4 Felix Hernandez spotted what appeared to be three rifle butts protruding from an opening in a cliff above while moving down a narrow jungle trail flanked by a sheer rock cliff.

3rd Bde, 9th Inf Div

Men of the 5th Bn., 60th Inf., 3rd Brigade, 9th Infantry Division, aboard U.S. Navy patrol boats in the Vam Co Dong River, 14 miles southwest of Saigon, clashed with an undetermined number of NVA regulars on Oct. 11, killing nine.

Two days earlier, gunships of the 3rd Squadron, 17th Cav., supporting elements of the 6th Bn., 31st Inf., killed three VC in operations 22 miles south of Saigon.

Elsewhere, one enemy soldier was killed near the 6th Bn., 31st Infantry's Can Giouc base camp and another was killed by 2nd, 47th Inf., forces five miles south of Tan An.

On Oct. 6, five VC were killed by members of the 2nd Bn., 47th Inf., when they stumbled into the night ambush position the infantrymen had set up five miles southeast of Tan An.

Two days later, six VC were killed by soldiers of the 5th Bn., 60th Inf., in the river banks 15 miles southwest of Saigon.

Later in the week, five VC were ambushed and killed by soldiers of the 5th Bn., 60th Inf., 15 miles southwest of Saigon on the Vam Co Dong River.

Three VC who escaped the ambush were killed by the infantrymen who pursued them in U.S. Navy patrol boats with the aid of artillery and helicopter gunships.

On Oct. 12, gunships of Troop B, 3rd Squadron, 17th Cav., killed four enemy soldiers in the Mekong Delta area while soldiers of the 5th Bn., 60th Inf., killed one enemy soldier 13 miles south of Saigon, forcing an estimated NVA platoon to flee into the jungle.

3rd Bde, 82nd Abn Div

On Oct. 11, a reconnaissance patrol from the 2nd Bn., 505th Inf., 3rd Brigade, 82nd Airborne Division, discovered the bodies of four NVA soldiers killed earlier in the week in the only reported action of the day.

Americal Div

Men of the Americal Division killed 13 enemy soldiers Oct. 10 in light ground fighting in their zone of responsibility. In the largest action of the day, gunships of F Troop, 8th Cav., spotted and engaged five NVA soldiers and one VC in the mountains 11 miles northwest of Tam Ky, killing all six.

The next day, cannoneers from Btry A, 3rd Bn., 82nd Arty., blasted an area three miles northwest of Tam Ky, killing two soldiers hiding in scrub brush as Americal infantrymen killed four more in as many fire fights.

On Oct. 7, soldiers of Co. C, 1st Bn., 52nd Inf., walked unopposed into an enemy base camp 20 miles southwest of Chu Lai containing one large hootch and numerous smaller structures presumed to have been used for sleeping.

Seven carbines, three MAS36 bolt action French-made rifles, one Swedish-made K submachine gun, assorted clothing and medical supplies were found in the complex.

The same day, a gunship from the 128th Aviation Bn., killed a lone enemy soldier walking a jungle trail seven miles west of Quang Ngai City.

On Oct. 12, one VC was killed and another detained as members of the 1st Bn., 6th Inf., ambushed five to six VC soldiers in the mountains 12 miles southwest of Quang Ngai City.

199th Inf Bde

On Oct. 9, Redcatchers of the 199th Light Infantry Brigade killed 10 enemy soldiers in two fire fights northeast of Xuan Loc.

The largest of the two skirmishes occurred in a dense forest 13 miles northeast of Xuan Loc when infantrymen of the 3rd Bn., 7th Inf., supported by artillery, engaged an estimated 12 VC, killing six.

Two miles further northeast, members of Co. C, 3rd Bn., exchanged small arms fire with a small enemy force in a tree-studded area accounting for four additional enemy kills.

The next day, men of Co. B, 5th Bn., 12th Inf., found a small munitions cache, while following the trails of two enemy soldiers. The infantrymen discovered two unoccupied bunkers containing two 60mm mortar rounds, two Chicom hand grenades, a pound of TNT and a small amount of foodstuffs.

11th ACR

On Oct. 12, 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment helicopters led armored personnel carriers from F Troop, 1st Squadron and tanks from H Troop, 2nd Squadron, through double-canopy jungle to a small party of NVA riflemen guarding a stock of enemy munitions.

Five NVA regulars were killed in the short fire fight that followed and eight 60mm mortar rounds, a RPG grenade launcher and an AK47 rifle were captured.

1st Bde, 5th Inf Div

Three NVA regulars were killed Oct. 12 by men of the 1st Bn., 11th Inf., 1st Brigade, 5th Infantry Division (Mechanized) as they stumbled into the Red Devils' perimeter, 17 miles northwest of Quang Tri. The three were killed by claymore mines detonated by the Red devils.

1st Cav Div

On Oct. 10, an aero-rifle platoon of B Troop, 1st Squadron, 9th Air Cav., was inserted into an enemy-infested area 15 miles northwest of Song Be to rescue the crew of a LOH which was downed by enemy fire.

The platoon landed in the area while Cobra and Huey gunships orbited the double canopy jungle, firing suppressive rocket artillery and automatic weapons fire. Air strikes were also called in and 15 NVA soldiers were killed.

The same day a large weapons and munitions cache was found by the men of Co. D, 1st Bn., 8th Cav., 16 miles northwest of Song Be while on a company sweep of the region.

Found concealed in bunkers hidden by triple-canopy jungle were 220 mortar charges, 80 82mm and 120mm mortar rounds, 100 anti-tank mines and 30 Chicom grenades.

On Oct. 12, 14 enemy soldiers were killed by gunships from A Troop, 9th Cav., with the aid of artillery fire and Air Force jets 10 miles northeast of Nui Ba Den.

Another cache was discovered by men of A Troop, 1st Squadron, 9th Air Cav., 21 miles northeast of Tay Ninh City. Included in their find were 250 one-and-a-half pound cans of milk, 65 45-pound cans of fish, three bicycles and seven Chicom grenades.

On Oct. 7, a hunter-killer team from A Troop, 1st Squadron, 9th Air Cav., killed 17 enemy soldiers in four separate minigun and rocket engagements 20 miles northeast of Tay Ninh.

Seven more NVA regulars were killed the same day by another hunter-killer team from A Troop, in an action 10 miles southeast of Katum, while a third hunter-killer from B Troop, 1st Squadron, 9th Air Cav., fought and killed seven enemy soldiers nine miles west of Song Be.

1st Inf Div

On Oct. 11, a Huey gunship with a spotlight and minigun mounted on each side, from A Troop, 1st Aviation Bn., killed three VC shortly after midnight six miles southeast of Dau Tieng.

Three hours later, the specially-equipped Huey, spotted an estimated enemy platoon eight miles southeast of Lai Khe. Four enemy soldiers were killed as the ship opened fire spewing minigun fire down through a cone of light.

Earlier in the week, a Big Red One helicopter gunship killed six enemy soldiers in the woods seven miles southeast of Dau Tieng.

Elsewhere, infantrymen of Co. D, 2nd Bn., 28th Inf., unearthed a small cache of AK47 ammunition in a bunker six miles southeast of Dau Tieng. Also found in the bunker were 100 NVA gas masks.

Eleven enemy soldiers were killed Oct. 12 in a number of isolated fire fights throughout the division's sector of responsibility.

25th Inf Div

On Oct. 12, a 25th Tactical Air Control Party spotted an estimated enemy platoon five miles northwest of Cu Chi. Air strikes were called in and 19 NVA soldiers were killed and seven fortified positions destroyed.

Tropic Lightning soldiers aided by gunships of the 116th Assault Helicopter Co. killed six NVA regulars in two fire fights nine miles northwest of Cu Chi on Oct. 8.

Two days later, a ranger team from Co. F, 75th Inf., supported by helicopter gunships, tangled briefly with an estimated NVA squad in a driving rain two miles northeast of Trang Bang, killing five NVA soldiers before the enemy force fled.

Earlier in the week, a patrol from the 4th Bn., 23rd Inf., with the aid of artillery and Cobra gunships, killed five enemy soldiers four miles northeast of Tay Ninh City.

101st Abn Div

A 101st Airborne Division aero-rifle platoon on a reconnaissance mission less than two miles south of the DMZ clashed with a 10-man NVA force on Oct. 9.

In the short fire fight that followed, six enemy soldiers were killed by men of the 2nd Bn., 17th Air Cav.

Elsewhere, 17th Cav. helicopter gunships assisted by choppers of the 4th Bn., 77th Arty., killed another six enemy soldiers in two air-to-ground actions in the A Shau Valley 20 miles southwest of Hue.

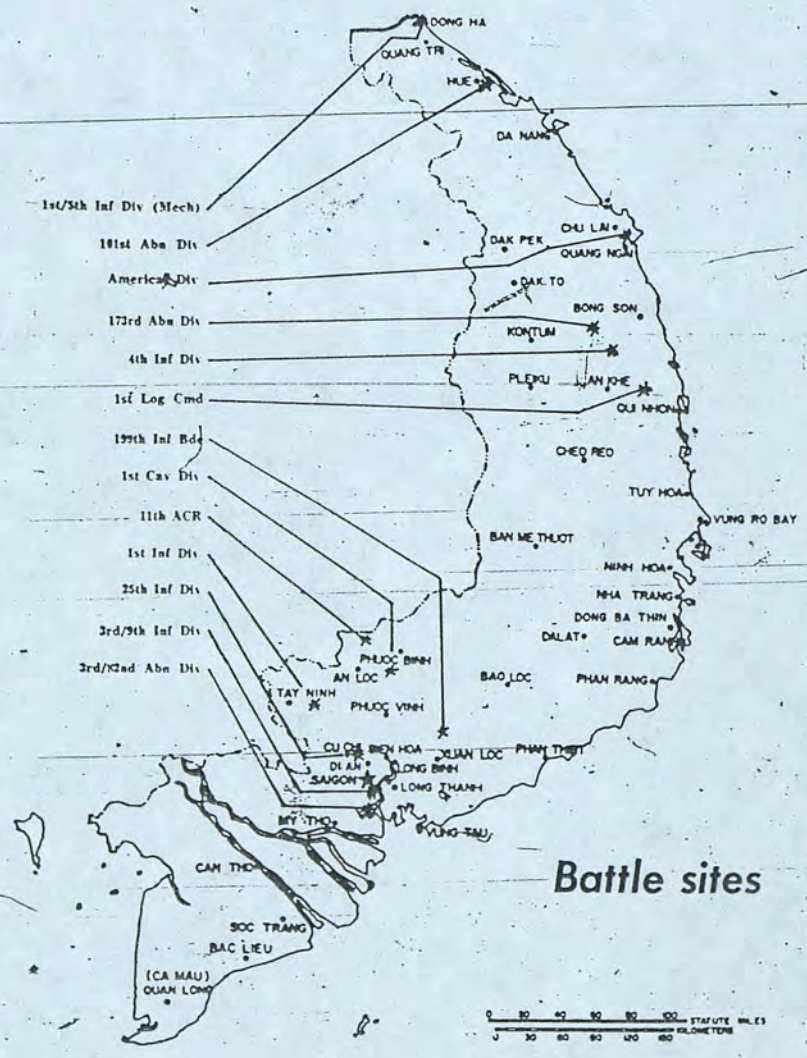
Two days earlier, soldiers of Co. C, 1st Bn., 327th Inf., killed one VC and detained seven others in a fire fight eight miles south of Hue. The VC soldiers had taken refuge from the raging monsoon floods on a roof top when they were spotted by the Screaming Eagles.

Five AK47 rifles, two 9mm Russian pistols, several Chicom grenades, 300 rounds of ammunition and various food and medical supplies were captured.

4th Inf Div

A recon platoon of the 1st Bn., 8th Inf. followed the footprints of two enemy soldiers and discovered the main body of a company-sized NVA force 26 miles northwest of An Khe on Oct. 6.

The recon platoon opened fire, killing five, while the enemy fled without firing a shot. Helicopter gunships pursued the enemy killing 14 additional NVA soldiers.



Battle sites