

11TH INFANTRY BRIGADE



TRIDENT

"JUNGLE WARRIORS"

VOLUME 2 NUMBER 9

DUC PHO, VIETNAM

AUGUST 30, 1968

QUANG NGAI THREAT EASED

3/1 AIDS ARVN DEFENDERS



BRIGADE AREA TENSES

In this week's action in the 11th Infantry Brigade's operational area, the "Jungle Warriors" killed 1 enemy, detained 43 suspects and captured 12 individual weapons.

In action August 22, infantrymen from the "Always First" Battalion killed one Viet Cong in a carrying party, and captured an AK-47 rifle in a small valley seven miles west of LZ Bronco.

Later that day, "Sykes' Regulars" soldiers from Alpha Company uncovered a weapons cache hidden among bushes two miles northeast of Duc Pho. PFC Eugene Stevens found an M-16 rifle with seven magazines, an M-1 carbine with one magazine, several M-1 rifle magazines and several M-79 rounds all waterproofed in plastic. PFC Tommy F. Acosta uncovered a complete NVA uniform and SGT Alfred H. Matheson dug up a claymore mine.

Troops of the "Always First" Battalion were airlifted to an area west of Quang Ngai City August 23 to take part in a U.S. Army, ARVN operation that succeeded in stymieing a threat against the IRAP. (UP Cont on page 3)

A joint U.S. Army, Army of the Republic of Vietnam operation seven miles west of Quang Ngai City recently spoiled enemy plans to attack the province capital during the probable opening phases of the Communist Third Offensive.

Persistent intelligence reports of a large-force enemy unit planning an offensive against Quang Ngai, and subsequent 2nd ARVN Division contact in the area brought four companies of the 11th Brigade's 3rd Battalion, 1st Infantry assaulting into positions just south of the Song Tra Khuc.

After the enemy stronghold was prepped by air strikes and artillery fire, elements of the 3rd Battalion began combat assaults to secure three objectives on the Song Tra Khuc, driving the enemy into the 2nd ARVN Division. (QUANG NGAI Cont on pg 3)

DUC PHO HIT AS NEW VC OFFENSIVE STARTS

As Saigon and the rest of South Vietnam smokes and flames under the new Communist onslaught, so does Duc Pho, located outside the gates of the 11th Brigade's base camp.

Early in the morning of August 23rd, approximately 30 guerrillas and supporters moved on Duc Pho from the south. They met a Popular Forces ambush where they killed one and wounded three civilians.

Shortly after that, the VC arrived at the small hamlet of Pho Da, on the southern edge of Duc Pho. They attacked the hamlet Council House and the Headquarters building across the street, leaving many homes burning and seven civilians dead.

About the same time a VC group armed with various small arms, 3 60mm mortars, 1 82mm mortar and 30 10-lb satchel charges moved in from the north. The mortar tubes were set up and fired three rounds into Bronco. (DUC PHO Cont on page 3)

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COMMAND INFORMATION

(Editor's Note: This is part four of a series on the history of Vietnam. This week's chapter deals with the increasing Communist activity in South Vietnam after the Geneva Accords.

In late 1954 President Eisenhower instituted economic aid for the new country. Thus began active American interest in South Vietnam.

Hanoi presumed that the South would fall under their control by subversion, not armed conquest. But it did not happen. The South Vietnamese government, while being far from stable and prosperous, was nevertheless able to bring an upturn in the political and social conditions of its people. With active American interest, the Diem regime gave to South Vietnam a degree of stability which promised much potential--had the nation been allowed to develop without Hanoi's agents disrupting the society.

Throughout the 1950's, the pressures of terrorism and assassination increased. Well-to-do peasants, school teachers, and low ranking government officials were the favorite targets of attacks. By 1959 the pace of terrorism had accelerated sharply, and recruiting for the Viet Cong was stepped up. Communist propaganda tried to exploit the confusion by stating that the South was falling apart and was unable to protect its people.

On December 20, 1960, the National Liberation Front (NLF) was formed. Its manifest called for the overthrow of the disguised colonial regime of the United States imperialists and the dictatorial Diem puppet administration.

Communist propaganda maintained that the acts of terrorism were demonstrations of popular discontent with Ngo Dinh Diem and his palace regime. It insisted the Viet Cong received its weapons from captured American and French sources. But as the years went on, the true role of the North in the so-called "War of Liberation" became obvious.

Hanoi was determined to militarily conquer the South with classic guerrilla tactics. The plan called for the three-phased warfare outlined in Mao Tse-Tung's early writings. First, the enemy is harassed and weakened by acts of terrorism and guerrilla tactics. Secondly, he is engaged in mobile warfare by units up to battalion size. And finally, in all-out warfare by regular forces, the ultimate victory is won.

Phase one of the battle occurred from 1954 to roughly 1960. During this period the United States first assisted the Diem government with economic aid, and with the ratification of the SEATO Treaty in early 1955, had added advisors to assist the country's military and police forces. U.S. aid between 1954 and 1961 totaled roughly \$1.5 billion. But the inroads of Viet Cong subversion and terror were slowly weakening the country.

By 1960 the guerrilla war had reached the stage of open conventional conflict. The Viet Cong had been reinforced by the entire 325th NVA Division. NEXT WEEK--To the present,

AER--LAST CHANCE TO GIVE

The Army Emergency Relief Fund is the result of Army people caring for and helping others in the Army during their time of need. Payday of this month will be the last opportunity this year to contribute to the AER Fund.

Often when an emergency arises, a soldier is a long way from home. He usually needs money in a hurry, and credit may be difficult to arrange. This is especially true in Vietnam. The Emergency Relief Fund will either loan the money to the man in need on an interest-free basis, or may even give it to him in the form of a grant.

During the past year, soldiers of the Americal Division have drawn on this fund to the tune of \$7,782.00. Contributions so far have only totaled \$1,876.55. If everyone gave \$1, the 11th Brigade could duplicate this effort. This is our last chance to give on payday.

Brigade Commander

Information Officer

TRIDENT OIC

Editor

Staff Reporters: SP5's James Ford and Jay Roberts, SP4 Larky Mollner, PFC Ken Ainslie

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1LT ARTHUR J. DUNN

1LT STEPHEN H. CODD

SP4 DEAN T. POHLAND

Z
(WRAP-UP Cont from page 1)
province capital.

In other action August 23, the 1st of the 20th's C2C ship killed three evading VC and captured a .45 pistol, a Chi-Com grenade and documents in heavy jungle south of Duc Pho. Later, troops of D Company, 19th Engineers were sweeping the road near LZ Liz when they spotted, chased and killed three VC running into the nearby hills.

Defenders of the "Always First" base camp at LZ Liz found four VC bodies on their perimeter plus an AK-47 on the 23rd.

They also detained a VC suspect running from the wire where a satchel charge was found. Two other suspects were apprehended near a mortar position five miles northwest of Duc Pho. The same day, Aero Scouts of the 123rd Aviation Battalion detained a total of six suspects in scattered actions.

Following a mortar attack of 25 81mm and 82mm rounds on Bronco, early in the morning of the 24th, a 174th Aviation Company "Shark" manned by SP4 Gordon L. Knight, killed seven VC at the suspected mortar position north of Duc Pho. Later that morning a 1/20 squad led by SGT Kermit Williams locat-

(WRAP-UP Cont on page 4)

THE PHOTO CORNER

The tropics are well known for extreme heat and humidity. Few people realize the effect these conditions have on cameras, film and other photographic equipment.

Film, especially color film, can be easily ruined from prolonged exposure to intense heat. Ideal temperature for storage is between 40°F and 60°F. At temperatures of over 70°F, damage will result over an extended period of time; the time it takes for film damage to occur proportionate with the increase in temperature.

Color film, if kept more than six months, should be stored at 0°F. When removed from this environment the film must be allowed to thaw and warm to room temperature. It should not be touched until this process is completed.

In Vietnam, of course, this is easier said than done. In most cases these temperatures are impossible to maintain. However, the film should at least be kept in a sealed metal container along with a drying agent (silica gel).

If you are shooting 35mm, refrain from purchasing 36 exposure rolls and use the 20 exposure size. This way the shorter roll can be exposed in a shorter period of time and removed from the camera.

Magazines of any type of exposed film should be stored or shipped for processing in lightly capped cans. Tops should not be screwed down tightly. Film which has been sealed in cans along with a drying agent requires no further attention if it is protected from excessive heat. If possible, film should be wrapped in water-vapor-tight packaging.

Loaded cameras should not be exposed to direct sunlight longer than necessary, and film should not be left in cameras any longer than necessary. Ship film to be processed as soon as possible after exposure.

(EDITOR'S NOTE: Reader's questions on photography which deal with subjects discussed each week will be answered in this column. Inquiries may be addressed to: Editor-TRIDENT, Public Information Office, 11th Inf Bde. NEXT WEEK: Tropical Photography-Cameras.)

QUANG NGAI SIEGE LIFTED

(QUANG NGAI Cont from page 1) blocking force which had deployed along the north bank of the river.

"The ARVN's continually made mobile blocking maneuvers as enemy pull-backs were reported," said CPT Dan Prather, "Always First" liaison officer to the ARVN headquarters.

As 3rd of the 1st companies began their sweep they came under immediate heavy small arms and automatic weapons fire from pockets of enemy resistance which included numerous command detonated mines scattered throughout the well-fortified VC positions.

"We estimated the enemy to be a main-force VC unit with NVA advisors," LTC Henry H. Lowder, commanding officer of the 3rd of the 1st said. "Even after the concentrated air and artillery strikes the enemy were still dug in when we landed."

Several times friendly units encountering this stubborn enemy were forced to withdraw to allow further air and artillery bombardment of the area. Constant movement to catch Charlie off guard was the key to the operation. "The 'War Lord' helicopters of the (QUANG NGAI -- Cont on page 4)

(DUC PHO Cont from page 1) While 11th Brigade soldiers in the base camp scrambled for their bunkers, prompt and accurate anti-mortar fire from the top of Montezuma silenced the enemy tubes.

The remainder of the Viet Cong guerrillas from the north infiltrated a Duc Pho Revolutionary Development area on the western edge of town. The attack resulted in the death of one civilian while two were wounded. The VC rounded up 50 people from the camp and led them off for suspected later use as laborers and carriers.

Then the enemy forces disappeared as quickly as they had come.

"SINK SAMPAN"

(WRAP UP--Cont from page 3)

ed the seven bodies and an 82mm mortar, 3-81mm rounds and one M-2 carbine. The squad leader also killed an NVA soldier near the same site.

Near Quang Ngai the same day, the 3rd of the 1st killed two VC attempting to penetrate their perimeter, and captured a carbine and one homemade grenade. Later, the same 3/1 company killed two evading VC and swept an area after an air strike which uncovered six enemy dead.

Eight miles south of Duc Pho, a "Sykos' Regulars" element picked up a suspect carrying medical supplies, documents, an AK47 cloching kit and two magazines, a Chi-Com grenade and a .30 caliber ammunition belt with 65 rounds.

On Sunday, a 3rd of the 1st company commanded by CPT James O'Herron, made all-day contact with a well-fortified enemy force west of Quang Ngai. Aided by artillery and air strikes, the "Always First" troops killed seven enemy and captured two AK-47's and an M-16.

Earlier that morning, 174th gunships killed five VC in a sampan south of Duc Pho. Then a 1st of the 20th platoon led by 1LT Arthur E. Teole killed three VC further south, while other "Regulars" accounted for two more VC in separate actions around LZ Bronco.

On Monday, National Police Field Forces (NPFF) and 11th Brigade MP's led by SSG Lones W. Marron killed two VC, detained one suspect and captured 1,000 pounds of rice three miles northwest of Duc Pho. Meanwhile, 3/1 troops from B Company discovered two VC killed by air strikes.

"Always First" rifle platoons led by 1LT Vincent Saterino and SSG Raymond Sampier killed two VC in separate actions north of Duc Pho on the 27th. The same day, "Shark" gunships from the 174th destroyed ten fortified structures and two machine gun positions for the 2nd RVN Division near Quang Ngai. That night, CPT Robert L. Hauck's 1st of the 20th soldiers killed two VC in an ambush near LZ Thundor.

Wednesday, PFC Edward Zimmerman of B Co., 1/20 killed a VC when he jumped out of a tree and tried to run. Later, a squad from the same company led by PFC Charles H. Schmell killed two VC as they tried to evade the swooping soldiers.

BRIGADE AWARDS

The 11th Infantry Brigade this week presented the following awards for valor to the persons indicated.

DISTINGUISHED FLYING CROSS:

CW3 Gilbert S. Honda Jr.,

(1st OLC) Primo Avn., Ltd.

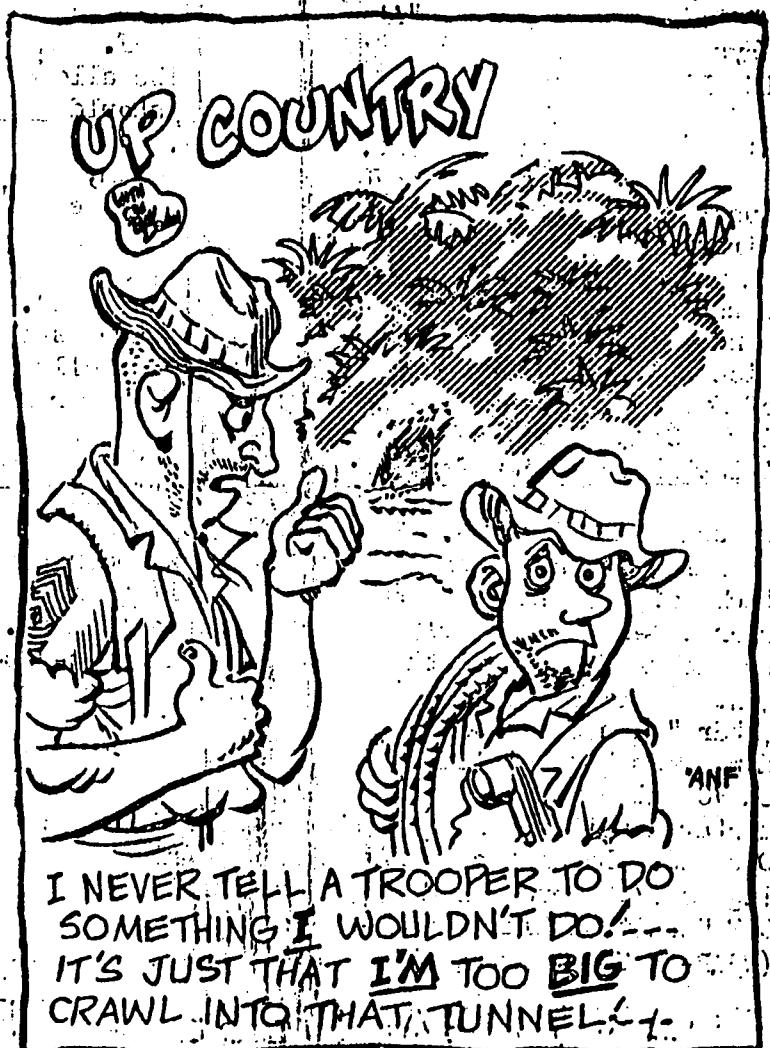
BRONZE STAR MEDAL w/"V":

SFC Donald Jay Merithew,

A-1/20; SP5 Bonifacio F.

Nozales, HHC-1/20; SSG

Henry P. Condon, B-4/21.



PROVINCE CAPITAL HELD

(QUANG NGAI--Cont from page 3)

123rd Aviation Battalion deserves great credit for staying on the hot LZ's, extracting casualties and carrying out the effective repositioning of the elements," LTC Lowder acknowledged.

"As the battalion approached the enemy occupied objectives," related SP5 Wayne Marck, operations NCO at the temporary base camp, "C Company (led by CPT James O'Herron) ran into what appeared to be the enemy command post, and encountered heavy small arms fire and more command detonated mines." The enemy was still firmly entrenched despite the air and artillery strikes. A later sweep of the area uncovered 11 enemy bodies and several items of headquarters material.

The combined allied operation accounted for 402 enemy killed in three days of fighting, resulting in the capture of more than 93 small arms and crew served weapons, many of them automatic assault rifles, in addition to numerous mines, grenades and other explosives. More important, it stifled the enemy threat against Quang Ngai City.