

# Rangers Crack Down on NVA



## REDCATCHER!

199th Light Infantry Brigade

Vol. 1, Nr. 21

October 1, 1969

### C Battery Keeps NVA On Move

By SP4 Frank Segreto

FSB NANCY—A total of 38 NVA were killed by artillery barrages during a six day period beginning Aug 26, by Charlie Btry, 2nd Bn, 40th Arty.

Combining support operations with ground troops and aerial surveillance missions, Charlie Btry netted a total of six NVA killed on Aug 26.

An NVA unit vandalizing a downed light observation helicopter (LOH) was the target for Charlie Btry.

#### NVA Stealing

"The NVA were trying to steal the mini-guns and radios," explained First Lieutenant Andrew Schindt, 23, of Pensacola, Fla., senior fire direction officer of the battery.

"We fired into the area and killed six," he continued, "and luckily we didn't hit the LOH."

The next day, Aug. 27, while on a sweeping operation approximately 15 miles northeast of Xuan Loc, elements of the 18th ARVN Div which has been working with 199th in the jungles, came into heavy enemy fire.

#### Aid Barrage

Artillery assistance was called for and with the aid of aerial surveillance adjusting its fire, 20 NVA were killed by Charlie Battery's barrage.

(Cont'd on page 8)

### 2/3 Ambushes Clip Enemy Patrols

By SP4 Larry Woody

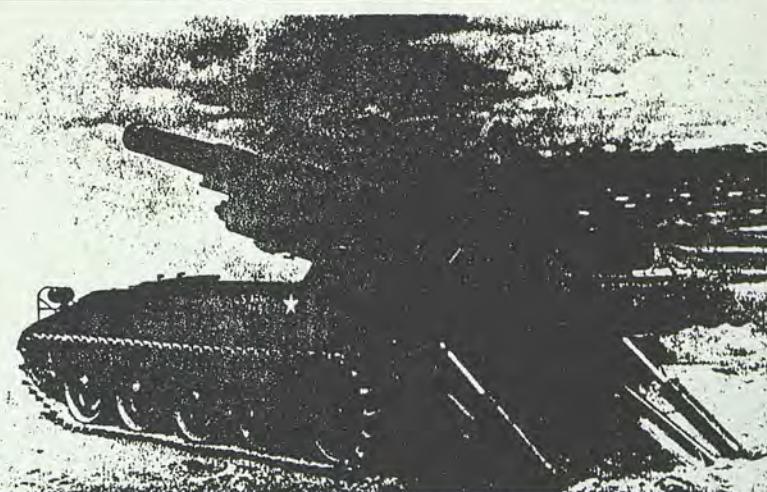
FSB BLACKHORSE—Am-bush patrols of the 2nd Battalion, 3rd Infantry, killed four enemy, captured one weapon and miscellaneous gear, and discovered multiple heavy blood trails, in two recent back-to-back night ambushes.

The "Old Guardsman" were working in the Xuan Loc District area 50 miles northeast of Saigon when both contacts were made.

#### Alert Rifleman

Squad maneuvering and an alert rifleman accounted for three Viet Cong kills by Echo Recon Company Aug 31, in an area approximately 5 miles east of Xuan Loc. The "Old Guard" platoon had just finished its routine pre-briefing and the separate squads were preparing to move out.

(Cont'd on page 8)



FIRING IN SUPPORT of the 199th, these eight-inch howitzers from the 7th Bn, 8th Arty help the Brigade destroy a large enemy base camp 20 miles northeast of Xuan Loc. (Photo by SP4 Jerry Reach.)

### Base Camp Destroyed

## Eight-Inch Arty Supports 199th

By SP4 Bruce Bolinger

XUAN LOC—Two self-propelled eight-inch howitzers from Bravo Btry, 7th Bn, 8th Arty raced up highway 20 to fire support base "Keener."

Their mission was to reinforce the 199th's 2nd Bn, 40th Arty as bunker busters.

A large enemy base camp, estimated to have been of battalion size, was discovered along the Dong Nai River 20 miles northeast of here. The 2nd Bn, 40th Arty support was requested to destroy the heavily fortified bunker complex.

The 2nd Bn, 40th Arty requested the 7th Bn, 8th Arty to add the additional fire power of their eight-inch guns to the bunker busting mission and Captain Dennis Meredith from Venetia, Calif., commander of Bravo Btry responded.

#### Fire Power

Starting early on the morning of Aug 23, Meredith's two self-propelled eight-inch howitzers left their base camp here to travel the 15 miles to fire support base "Keener" for the three-day fire mission.

Meredith, commenting on his latest artillery raid, said, "We've done this sort of support work before and we're pretty used to it by now. We planned for a three-day mission and were prepared to fire a total of 400 rounds into the enemy bunker complex."

#### Good Job

Second Lieutenant John McKeithen, from Powell, Wyoming, fire direction control officer of

the bunker busters noted, "The 'Redcatcher' Tactical Operation Center (TOC) cleared all of our fire missions for us and from reports received from our spotter aircraft, we seem to be doing a good job on that base camp."

"We set up and began firing late in the afternoon of the 23rd," he continued. "By 2 p.m. of the 24th we had received reports of at least four secondary explosions."

Under direction from the 2nd Bn, 40th Arty TOC, Bravo Btry, 7th Bn, 8th Arty's two guns fired 200-pound concrete piercing and high explosive projectiles on 62 separate targets

in 80 fire mission.

Results could not properly be assessed by the spotter aircraft because of the triple canopy jungle concealing the large bunker complex along the Dong Nai River. The spotter did confirm 18 bunkers, and 17 fighting positions destroyed with 4 secondary explosions.

#### Storage Area

The spotter aircraft located what appeared to be a large fuel and ammo storage area 9 miles north of Xuan Loc and only 14 miles from the 5th Bn, 12th Infantry's fire support base "Libby." Calling in the eight-inchers, the spotter noted 4 large secondary explosions.

### Like Bike?

## Free Wheels Now at BMB

How would you like to tool around BMB on a sporty new bike? The admiration of your friends and the ogles of any female of the species in the area. All this can be yours!

Special Services at BMB has four (count 'em) new bicycles for use on post. All you have to do is go on down to Special Services and tell them that you want a set of wheels and you are off and pedaling. There is no cost to you, unless you damage the bike. There are more bikes on order so there will be plenty to go around.



FREE BICYCLES are offered by special services for those who want to stay slim and trim or for those who just want to get from here to there faster. (Photo by SP4 Richard Blair.)

By PFC John Sweet

FSB LIBBY—In a dramatic display of fire power, US aircraft enabled a 75th Infantry Ranger unit of the 199th Light Infantry Brigade to escape without a scratch during a blistering three-hour battle in which 14 enemy were killed.

The combination Air Force-Army air strikes were credited with 10 kills. The Bravo team of Company M Rangers, 7th Spt Bn had three kills during the Aug. 27 clash with an estimated platoon of NVA soldiers about 9 miles north of here along the Dong Nai River.

Sergeant David Reeser and his long-range recon patrol had stopped for a rest during the second day of their mission when they discovered they were in an apparently unoccupied enemy base camp.

"We saw at least 12 bunkers all around us," Reeser said. "We didn't stick around."

#### Up a Tree

After moving out about 300 meters, Reeser sent Specialist Four Lou Garland up a tree to check for a marking round. Garland didn't have much time to check.

He jumped out of the tree and came running toward us," continued Reeser. "He had spotted about 20 NVA coming right at us."

Bravo team hastily emplaced a Claymore and moved into cover. They had just crammed into a small cubby-hole when the enemy appeared, and they detonated the Claymores.

#### All Around Us

"While I was calling in air support, Garland made a direct hit with his M-79," Reeser recalled. "When another came out to retrieve the body, I got him. But they were still all around us."

F-100 fighter jets and OV-10 Broncos carrying the Forward Air Controllers arrived quickly and the jets began saturating the area with 500-pound bombs.

"The Broncos came in real low and the NVA started shooting at them with their AK's," Reeser added.

#### Gunsights Help Out

With his smoke grenades gone, Reeser signaled the Cobra Gunships with an orange panel. After starting to rejoin his team, Specialist Four J. R. Arell killed an NVA running out of the brush towards him.

A Light Observation Helicopter dropped a case of M-16 ammo to fill the team's empty magazines. The gunships provided the Rangers a 360 degree circle of fire.

Altogether, Reeser estimated 10 aircraft participated in the life-saving mission. "Those planes and choppers were the most beautiful sight I've ever seen," concluded Reeser.

#### Across the River

While Bravo team was fighting on one side of the river, Delta team led by Sergeant Michael Wood was acting as a radio relay team on the other. Delta team's senior scout, Specialist Four Bob Yowell, killed one of two NVA coming up the river bank. The other escaped back to the river.

## If I'm not guilty, should I accept an Article 15?

Yes.

II Field Force Vietnam Regulation 27-2, Paragraph 3c, states: "The consent to procedure under Article 15 is not an admission of guilt, but merely allows the commander to proceed with Article 15 action rather than prefer court-martial charges."

All to often a soldier will refuse an offered Article 15 and demand trial by court-martial thinking this is the only way he can prove his innocence. This is wrong...and dangerous.

It's wrong because he can sign the Article 15 and "submit matters in defense." His commander must consider these matters, and if they are valid, he must dismiss the Article 15.

It's dangerous because some so called "defenses" are not defenses at all. "I was drunk at the time," or "I didn't know about that regulation" are not necessarily defenses that would hold up in court-martial. When a man loses a court-martial, he loses considerably more than he would if he had lost an Article 15.

The maximum punishment under a company grade Article 15 is forfeiture of seven days pay, reduction to the next inferior pay grade, restriction for 14 days, and extra duty for 14 days. Both restriction and extra duty may be imposed together, but they must run concurrently. However, personnel in pay grades E-5 and above cannot be reduced by company grade Article 15. The maximum punishment under a Field grade Article 15 is forfeiture of one-half of one month's pay for two months, reduction to the lowest pay grade for E-4 and below, reduction of one pay grade for E-5, E-6, and E-7, and/or restriction for 60 days and extra duty for 45 days. But again, if restriction and extra duty are imposed together, they must run concurrently and for not more than 45 days total. A reprimand, admonishment and correctional custody under certain circumstances, may be imposed under Article 15, UCMJ.

In comparison, a special court-martial may order confinement at hard labor for six months, forfeiture of two-thirds pay for six months and reduction to the lowest pay grade regardless of presently held rank.

Therefore, the soldier who insists upon his "day in court" is

running the risk of a conviction by special court-martial, a permanent federal court conviction, and whatever punishment the court sees fit to impose. It's an awesome risk, especially when it's not necessary.

It's valuable to remember that when you sign an Article 15, you are merely submitting yourself to your company or battalion commander's judgement on your guilt or innocence and the degree of your punishment if you are found guilty.

You still have the right to appeal to the next higher command. In the event of an appeal, the superior authority can either dismiss the Article 15 or lessen the punishment. The punishment cannot be increased. You have the right to legal assistance from the Staff Judge Advocate's office at any time.

So, if you are ever confronted with an offer of an Article 15 and before you mount a white charger to prove your innocence by insisting on a court-martial, check with your legal assistance officer. He just might point out your saddle cinch isn't tied.

### NEW POLICY FOR ENLISTMENT OF FORMER MEMBERS

A recently approved DA policy change now allows former Army members discharged in grades E6 and below to enlist under AR 601-210 without loss of pay grade within 30 months of separation. Previously, only a 90 day "grace" period existed and that was further restricted to E8s and below with less than four years service for pay.

## Money Orders Lose Fee

After Sept 15, servicemen in Vietnam will be able to send postal money orders to the US without paying the usual fee.

The no-fee money orders will be sold to military personnel at Armed Forces post offices in Vietnam and on ships operating in this combat theater.

Servicemen and their dependents will be charged a flat 15-cent fee at other overseas military post offices, except for those in Alaska, Hawaii, Guam and Puerto Rico.

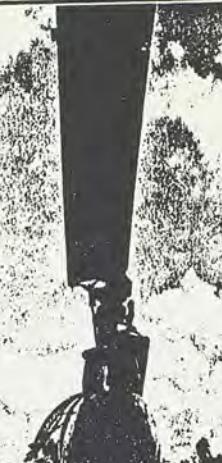
The existing domestic money order fees will continue for servicemen stationed in the 50 states, Puerto Rico and Guam.

Also unaffected by the new regulations are international money order fees which range from 45 to 75 cents.

Money order fees in regular civilian post offices are not affected by this change.



"I didn't tell him. I thought everyone knows you mix water with 'Lerp' ration!"



## Spread the Word

Today's word is... "weaselword." You will not find it in the dictionary but any good Army communications man can tell you what it means. It is a way of saying something so the other person will not think you are saying what they think it is. For example, how many of your girl friends have asked, "Do you love me?" and you have said, "You know how I feel about you."

For over two thousand years,

men have tried to find words in the Bible to give authority to their own ideas and interpretations. For instance, one proud scholar said that according to the Bible the world was four thousand four years old. Taking the third Chapter of Luke, which mentions the genealogy of Jesus, he had allowed so many years for each generation from Adam to Christ. He didn't realize that Hebrew text indicated "descendant of" rather than the literal "son of".

Take the statement that in order to belong to the church you must "good". This implies that Church people are good, and others are bad. What did Jesus say about this? He said to a young man who had addressed Him as "Good Teacher", "Why do you call me good? No one is good but God."

The church needs your testimony! Only real people with their feet on the ground, who have turned to God through Jesus Christ, who know they are sinners and yet find his power working in them for good; only such people can witness to our world today. Not sad-faced, straight-laced, puritans, but regular guys. Most folks seem to think a Christian has to give up everything but breathing. They are wrong! Jesus came to make them free to enjoy life. It is up to people like you to show the world what Christian joy means.

## Many Offices Give Help

Did you ever have a pressing problem that you couldn't solve yourself? Where did you go for help? With whom did you speak?

Many soldiers just don't know what to do when they run into this sort of situation. Some go to the wrong officer for help; others turn to agencies outside the Army. In many cases, just not knowing where to turn for help can delay the solution of the problem—or worse—result in the soldier getting the wrong information.

Virtually every problem should first be taken to your company commander. If he cannot provide you an answer or solve your problem, he will direct you to the proper authorities.

Every problem has its appropriate source of resolution within the military establishment. There is the Staff Judge Advocate, the personnel officer, the chaplain, the finance officer, the chaplain, the

Mines and boobytraps can kill, so be alert—stay alive. If possible, don't be in too much of a hurry. Never take anything for granted; it might look harmless, but it might be a killer. Evidence of old camouflage may indicate mines and boobytraps. Always look for trip wires.

Never bunch up and become a good target for command detonated mines. Only the enemy's imagination limits his use of mines and boobytraps.

Your M-16A1 rifle has a screw in the rubber butt plate, and the head of the screw has a hole in it. Ever notice?

In addition to these and other specialized agencies, there is the Inspector General Complaints System. The basic purpose of the system is to correct injustices affecting individuals and to eliminate conditions determined to be detrimental to the efficiency or reputation of the Army.

Remember that you and your dependents will save time and have your problems resolved more expeditiously by contacting the proper personnel or agency.

### FACTS ABOUT THE ARMY

Did you know that: The Army's Rangers date back to pre-Revolutionary War days? They were organized by Major Robert Rogers in 1756. There are 14 Ranger companies in the Army today—12 of which are in Vietnam. Their parent regiment is the 75th Infantry

## Medic Enlistees Gain High Rank

A new enlistment option allows persons entering the Army with civilian acquired skills to be appointed to grade E4 or E5, dependent upon level of proficiency, after successful completion of basic combat training and advanced individual training in MOS 91A, Medical Corpsman. Additionally, dental hygienists, senior medical laboratory specialists and clinical specialists will be considered for E5 after two years service.

More information is available from local Army recruiters.

VRE is not able to render any assistance with problems encountered with the Pacific Mail Order System.



## REDCATCHER!

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## Awards and Decorations

The awards presented the men of the 199th Infantry Brigade are justly earned and are a small reward for the outstanding job done. The men have shown great devotion to the Brigade and to their comrades in their units. The men's actions reflect credit upon themselves, the 199th Infantry Brigade and the United States Army.

### Bronze Star Medal (Valor)

SP4 Robert L. Manning-D, 2/3; PFC Robert J. Sullivan-D, 2/3; SSG James H. Henry-D, 2/3; PFC Thomas Jiannino-D, 2/3; PSG Jesse L. Lawtum-D-2/3; SP4 Harry Miller-B, 4/12; PFC Thomas Jones-B, 4/12; SP4 Kenneth Reppart-D, 4/12; LT Lynn J. Mason-D, 2/3; 1LT Frank N. Vavrin-D, 2/3; SP4 James Wiemkin-A, 3/7; SP4 Benny Hawkins-B, 4/12; SP4 David Banks-B, 4/12; PFC Frederick C. Harrison-D, 2/3; PFC Anthony B. Morese-A, 3/7; PFC Richard A. Wiegert-D, 2/3; CPT John E. Perkins-A, 4/12; PFC Gerald A. Hager-E, 3/7; PFC Michael F. Wellman-E, 3/7; CPT Gregory Beskaj-HHC, 2/3; CPT James McGinnis-C, 2/3; PFC David Harding-B, 4/12; 1LT Michael L. Lanning-C, 2/3; SGT Elroy K. Itt-C 2/3; PFC Jon Genens-HHC, 5/12; SGT Stephen Shaner-B, 4/12; PFC Jose A. Carrion-B, 4/12; SP4 Donnie A. Gray-A, 3/7; CPT Bernard M. Pietrosilli-D, 2/3.

### Army Commendation Medal (Valor)

SGT R. E. Morrow-C, 3/7; SP4 Ronald L. Arscheene-E, 4/12; SP4 William J. Cope-D, 4/12; SSG Vernon M. Rowell-C, 3/7; PFC Wayne A. Gayton-C, 3/7; SGT Douglas M. Jolman-D, 2/3; SP4 Thomas E. Roach-D, 2/3; PFC Larry A. Harkleroad-D, 2/3; PFC David J. Karwoski-D, 2/3; SP4 Louis V. Pietrocci-D, 2/3; CPT Dale V. Lloyd-B, 4/12; SP4 Stephan Goldman-D, 2/3; PFC Richard C. Nafziger-D, 2/3; PFC Gregory J. McGill-D, 2/3; PFC John D. Oxner-D, 2/3; SP4 Thomas H. Hanes-D, 2/3; SP4 James H. Russell-D, 2/3; PFC Anthony L. Petote-D, 2/3; PVT Willie Bryant-D, 2/3; SP4 Harold F. Hough-D, 2/3; PFC Larry H. Morford-C, 2/3; SP4 James N. Clayton-C, 2/3; SP4 Charles J. Huckle-C, 2/3; SP4 Phillip Pecoracco-C, 2/3; PFC Russell D. Worek-C, 2/3; SP4 James E. Heffernan-C, 2/3; SP4 Charles D. Rutan-A, 3/7; SSG Eugene Elias-D, 4/12; PFC Dennis E. Katzenmaier-C, 3/7; PFC James R. Titus-D, 3/7; SP4 Roger G. DeForest-C, 2/3; PFC James A. Simons-C, 2/3; PFC Leon O. Steffen-C, 2/3; PFC Michael Jones-C, 2/3; SP4 Ben Estep-C, 2/3; SP4 Gerald A. Drenth-C, 2/3.

### Purple Heart

1LT Dennis J. Grimmer-A, 7/Sup; CPT Michael L. Lipe-HSB, 2/40; SGT Donald Byrd-D, 5/12; SP4 Michael S. Cheek-B, 4/12; CPT Donald R. Mannis-D, 5/12; 2LT Charles M. Black-B, 4/12; PFC Paul T. White-B, 4/12; PFC Gary L. Lav-B, 4/12; SP4 Gregory Boile-B, 4/12; PFC David A. Spencer-D, 5/12; PFC Dorsey S. Bass-HHC, 2/3; PFC Phillip Schieber-D, 5/12; SGT Curtis G. McClendon-A, 5/12; SP6 George Holloway-HHC, 4/12; SP4 James C. Brown-B, 2/3; SP4 James F. Spener-B, 2/3; SP4 Benny R. Kitchens-B, 2/3; SP4 Dwight D. Smith-B, 2/3; PFC Kenneth L. Hozian-B, 2/3; PFC Randolph J. Dalton-B, 2/3; PFC William C. Bowen-B, 2/3.

## Comanches' Take Five

By SP4 Frank Segreto

CAMP FRENZEL-JONES—Beverages, steaks, hot showers, parties, music, sleep, and everything else that's fun crammed into three days? Think it can be done?

"Comanche" Co., 4th Bn, 12th Inf has proved that it can. In for a three-day stand down, the "Comanches" made the most of it.

Soda and beer and plenty of music were part of "Comanche" Co's activities during the three-day period.

The schedule also found movies, drinks, steaks and plenty of time for the solo fliers to break away from the crowd and head for the club, snack bar, or a quiet rack.

"It's been nearly six months since our last stand down," said Captain George T. Dials, 24,

of Drexel Hill, Pa., "Comanche" Co. commanding officer.

"The men really deserve this rest," he continued, "because even though they may spend a few days at a fire base, they don't get a chance to rest. They are either pulling bunker guard all night or working all day, and sometimes both."

Some of the added attractions on "Comanche" Co's activity list were: the swimming pool reserved for prescribed periods during the three-day stand down, special stock available at the PX, and a trip to Long Binh's steam bath and famous "Loon Foon" Chinese restaurant.

Special facilities were set up for those with financial, personal or medical problems.

"If I didn't know better I would think it was carnival time around here," said Sergeant Major Jerry Thompson of San Antonio, Tex., 4th Bn, 12th Infantry's sergeant major.



AS EVENING FALLS, there is a moment of rest before the night guard begins its vigil at a fire support base. (Photo by SP4 Bob Collins.)



## In the Field



## Brigade Summary

Aug 23:

"Warriors" from a 5th Bn, 12th Inf recon unit operating 10 miles west of Xuan Loc found an enemy base camp consisting of 12 bunkers and uncovered a cache containing 48 B-40 rounds, 56 1/4-pound blocks of explosives, 106 82 mm rounds, 1 20 pound claymore, 40 B-40 boosters, 34 cans of 82 mm cannisters filled with primers, 5,000 AK-47 rounds, 13 grenades, 3 122mm rockets and 1 typewriter.

In the same area, Delta Co, 5th Bn, 12th Inf found another small base camp of 15 bunkers, three SKS rifles, six 82mm mortar rounds, one rifle grenade launcher and three mess areas.

Soldiers from Delta Co, 4th Bn, 12th Inf, 23 miles northeast of Xuan Loc, held one detainee after a brief contact and recovered one SKS rifle.

Charlie Co, 3rd Bn, 7th Inf, on a mission 9 miles south of Saigon, found one AK-47 as they searched a nipa-palm line.

Three enemy were killed by gunships in support of Bravo Co, 3rd Bn, 7th Inf 8 miles south of Saigon.

Aug 24:

Further search by "Warriors" of the 5th Bn, 12th Inf turned up 1 SKS rifle, 4 AK-47 rifles, 19 RPG rounds, 1 107mm rocket, 2 land mines, 25 82mm mortar rounds, three 20-pound claymores and 400 rounds of AK-47 ammunition.

Delta Co, 4th Bn, 12th Inf, while operating 23 miles northeast of Xuan Loc, killed 5 enemy soldiers in two encounters and recovered three AK-47 rifles and one 9mm pistol.

One Viet Cong was killed as a result of an ambush by Bravo Co, 3rd Bn, 7th Inf 9 miles south of Saigon.

Aug 25:

The 5th Bn, 12th Inf, searching further in and around the cache site, uncovered an additional 52 82mm mortar rounds and 30 60mm rounds.

While Delta Co, 4th Bn, 12th Inf was operating 23 miles northeast of Xuan Loc, one enemy rallied to the government of the Republic of Vietnam under the Chieu Hoi Program.

Aug 26:

Further search of the large bunker complex by Bravo Co, 5th Bn, 12th Inf uncovered 2 SKS rifles, 300 SKS rounds, 3 122mm rocket, 2 RPG rounds, and 100 rounds of AK-47 ammunition.

While operating 23 miles northeast of Xuan Loc, Delta Co, 4th Bn, 12th Inf engaged an enemy patrol with small arms and automatic weapons fire resulting in four enemy killed and three AK-47 rifles and one RPG launcher and round recovered.

Aug 27:

A recon element of the 5th Bn, 12th Inf added 150 pounds of explosives and 50 pounds of powder to the cache total of the last 5 days.

Bravo Co spotted 2 enemy soldiers who passed within 50 meters of their position. The "Warriors" engaged with small arms fire killing both of the enemy and recovered one AK-47.

They also found 5 enemy graves and 1,000 rounds of AK-47 ammunition.

A patrol from Company M Rangers, 75th Inf operating near the Dong Nai River 18 miles north of Xuan Loc spotted two enemy soldiers. Engaging with small arms fire, the Rangers received return fire from an unknown size enemy force but accounted for two enemy killed and recovered two AK-47 rifles.

Three Viet Cong were killed by supporting gunships on an airmobile operation by Bravo Co, 3rd Bn, 7th Inf 11 miles south of Saigon.

Aug 28:

One enemy was killed and one AK-47 was captured by a Delta Co 3rd Bn, 7th Inf am-

bush 9 miles south of Saigon.

Two patrols from Company M Rangers, 75th Inf working 17 miles north of Xuan Loc killed three enemy soldiers in two separate contacts. A "Hunter-Killer" team flying in support of the Rangers engaged and killed two more enemy soldiers.

A 5th Bn, 12th Inf recon unit operating 9 miles northwest of Xuan Loc engaged an estimated 15 enemy, killing one. Bravo Co, in the same area, engaged and killed one enemy soldier carrying two RPG rounds.

Bravo Co, 4th Bn, 12th Inf held one detainee 20 miles northeast of Xuan Loc.

Sept 1:

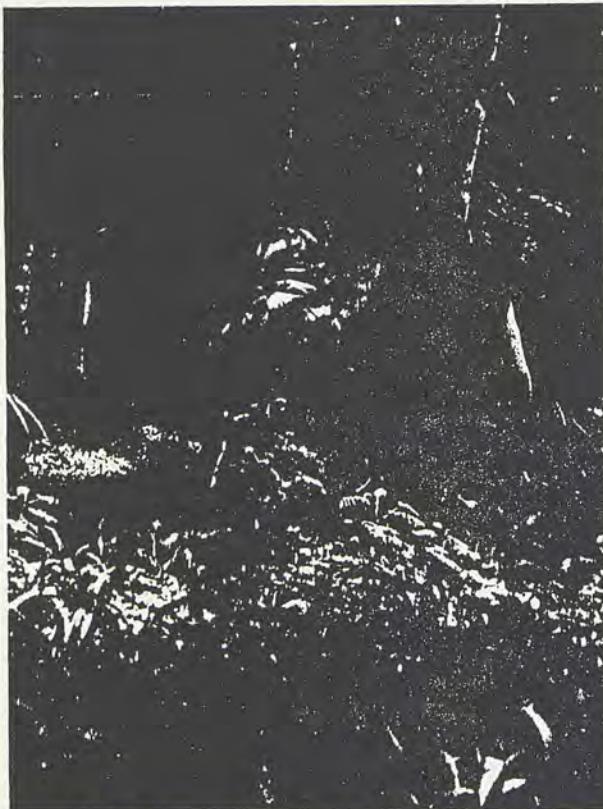
Charlie Co, 2nd Bn, 3rd Inf, while operating 11 miles southwest of Xuan Loc sighted and killed one enemy soldier and recovered one AK-47.

"Warriors" from a 4th Bn, 12th Inf recon unit spotted two enemy moving down a trail 17 miles northeast of Xuan Loc. They engaged with small arms fire killing one and recovering one AK-47.

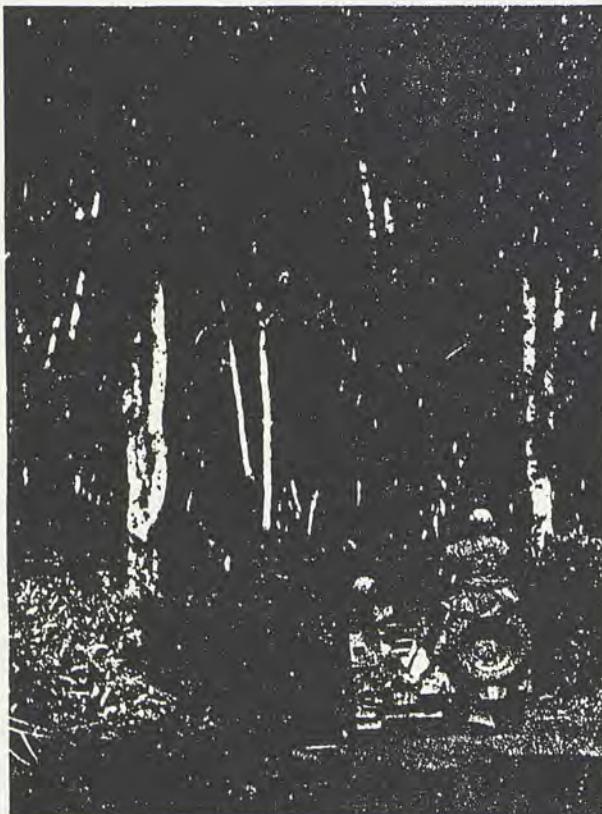
"Warriors" from the 4th Bn, 12th Inf working 24 miles northeast of Xuan Loc killed four enemy soldiers. The recon element sighted an estimated 30 enemy soldiers and engaged with artillery and a "Hunter-Killer" team in support, killing one. A Bravo Co ambush patrol engaged five enemy with small arms and automatic weapons fire killing three and recovering one AK-47.

Men from Bravo Co, 5th Bn, 12th Inf, operating 12 miles

(Cont'd on page 8)



MEN FROM the "Rat" jeep check a "Tu Dia" sign used as a warning for nearby booby traps.



THE MEN frequently race through the thick rubber tree plantations searching for the enemy in his hiding places.

## 'Rat Patrol' Engaged Fast-Moving Recon

By SP4 Larry Woody

**FSB**      **BLACKHORSE**—The vehicle raced along the narrow clay road, a cloud of reddish dust behind it. The jeep careened wildly to avoid some gully-washes and rocks, and traveled right through others. On it sat—or rather, clung—its three occupants: a driver, an RTO, and a machine guner. Each seemed to ignore the relentless, bruising bouncing, as he grimly

concentrated on his own task. Behind the lead jeep scrambled a second, identical in every detail—traveling at the same frenzied speed, maneuvering through and around the same obstacles. The Rat Patrol was in action!

Styled after the popular television series, the 199th Light Infantry Brigade's 2nd Bn, 3rd Inf's Rat Patrol differs from the fictionalized version only in two respects. First, the "Old Guards'" Rats utilize an M-60 machine gun mounted in the back of their jeep, instead of their counterpart's 50-caliber gun. And, unlike the tube's heroes, these Rats have no script to follow assuring that each mission ends successfully.

The Rat Patrol was conceived in early August, utilizing six volunteers from the battalion's reconnaissance element. "This group was chosen to contribute

the men since one of the primary duties of the Rats was to be recon missions," explained Sergeant Albert Miller of Sanberniair, Cal., current leader of the Patrol.

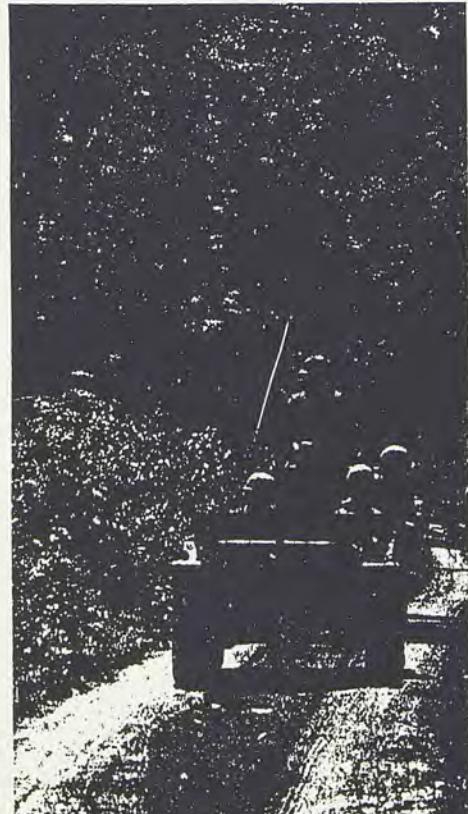
"In addition to reconnaissance, the Patrol also provides escort security for battalion convoys, and participates in sweeping operations when practical," Miller continued.

The Rat Patrol effectively utilized three elements: speed, maneuverability, and firepower. Concerning the latter, Specialist Four Alvin Burr of Otisco, Indiana, one of the Rats' gunners,

explained. "We carry several thousand rounds per gun. With a 300-400-round starter belt, you can weaken a VC's morale mighty fast!"

"It's difficult shooting from the back of a jeep when we're bouncing along" admitted Private First Class Charles Furgerson, commander of the second jeep's gun. "The best way to put the rounds where you want 'em is to start spraying the general area, then walk the fire to the target."

Equal in importance to the gunners' job is that of the drivers. "I used to race cycles back home" said Private First Class Randy Morse, of Dallas, Texas, "and learned quite a bit



NARROW TRACKS under the thick jungle caused frequent routes used by the "Rat Patrol."

# gages in on

otos by SP4 Robert Collins

about handling speed on bad roads and curves and stuff—but still, these roads get pretty rough when they're wet and muddy."

Specialist Four Gonzalez operates the second jeep. "Sure, it's sort of dangerous" the 21-year-old native of Chicago admits, "but aren't a lot of jobs over here dangerous? Long as I'm here, I'd rather be doing something I like—and I like driving for the Patrol."

Completing the Patrol is Specialist Four Jose Rivera of Puerto Rico, RTO for the Rats.

The Rats must present a strange sight to the enemy, barreling down dirt roads and trails and tearing across open fields; and a recent mission indicates the sight may be more than just "strange".

"We were patrolling an old road that wound around in a wooded area" recalled SGT Miller, "when we saw movement up ahead, through the trees. It turned out to be four VC watching us."

Soon after the Rats started in their direction, however, the enemy "threw down their weapons and gear," Miller recalled, "and then they headed toward Cambodia at a double-time. The way they lit out, they probably made it, too!"



CONSTANT communications and unfaltering watchfulness enable the men to react quickly and positively and are key factors in the success of the "Rat Patrol."



BEFORE MOVING OUT, the men check their weapons, ammunition and communications equipment, then take a brief rest.

le canopy are fre-

# Brigade's Units Move: Lightly, Swiftly, Accurately

## 'Warriors' Gain New Home

By SP4 Frank Segreto

FSB NANCY—"Warriors" of the 4th Bn, 12th Inf, have moved to their new home at fire support base (FSB) "Nancy."

The 4th Bn, 12th Inf, commanded by Lieutenant Colonel Robert Clark, of Alamo, Ga., made the move from FSB "Joy" in three days without interrupting the battalion's operations.

The entire operation was airmobile. Lumber, metal, culverts and any other usable material were loaded into nets, then Chinooks and Flying Cranes airlifted them out. The men and their equipment were the last to go.

"Joy" was completely dismantled and the area was leveled and stripped. Only a few sand bags and scraps of wire were evidence that "Joy" had ever existed.

FSB "Nancy" is located approximately 15 miles northwest of "Joy". It sits atop a hill bordered by jungle overlooking the village of Dinh-Quan, the district capitol.

The position on top of the hill provides good observation of the surrounding area. The security for the base is supplied by the "Warriors" of the 4th Bn, 12th Inf, with artillery support provided by Charley Btry, 2nd Bn, 40th Arty.

The construction of the new base was the work of the 87th Engineering Co. Large perimeter bunkers and artillery positions as well as roads and large command posts were all built quickly and efficiently by the engineers.

The "Warriors" had much work to do when they arrived at "Nancy." The bunkers, which are larger than those at "Joy" give the "Warriors" more leg room, but they were harder to cover with sand bags. Filling sand bags to fortify the bunkers, plus making sleeping quarters and fighting positions occupied much of the "Warriors" time.

Then there were the familiar details and KP. The "Warriors" were grateful for the new mess hall as it provided welcome relief from "C" rations.

## 3/7 Reunites With Brigade

By PFC John Smith

FSB MACE—In early September, the Cottonbalers packed their gear and left the paddies south of Saigon to move north and rejoin the rest of the Brigade in the jungles.

As a result of the move, fire support base (FSB) Mace was constructed 12 miles northeast of Xuan Loc at the base of Signal Mountain. The base camp is an old ARVN compound that is being rebuilt by the Brigade's 87th Engineer Co.

Upon leaving, the Cottonbalers stopped at the Brigade's Main Base for a three-day stand down. During this time the men cleaned their gear, received jungle training and relaxed while enjoying three floor shows and the usual company barbecues.

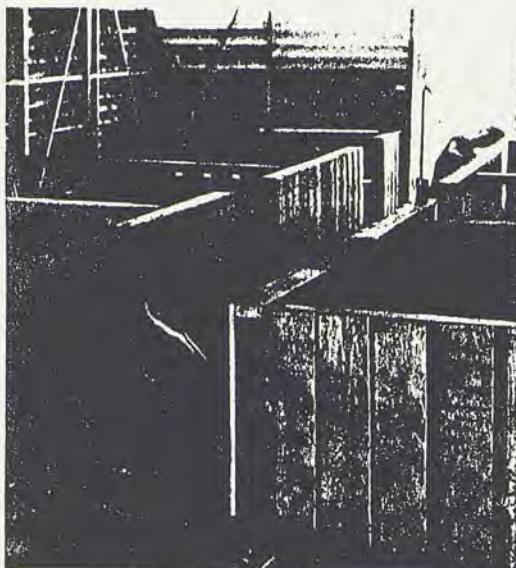
When asked about the new area of operations, Lieutenant Colonel John Cramer stated, "It looks like the type of area that will provide us with the opportunity to make continued progress against the enemy. I hope that we will be able to continue with the same success we had at 'Madeline.'"



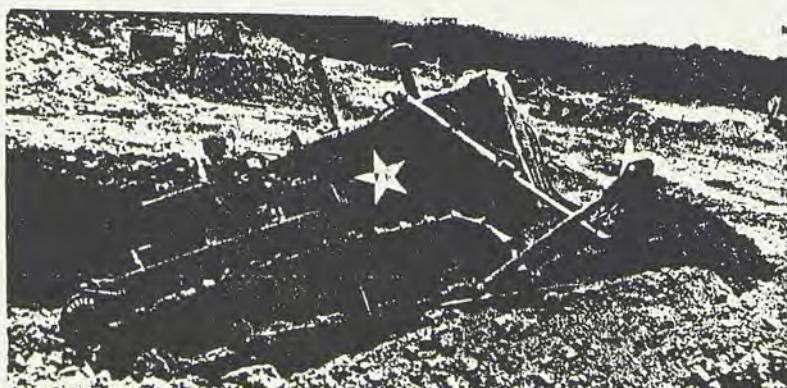
A CHINOOK moves away from "Joy" carrying a load of equipment to the 4th Bn, 12th Inf's new fire support base "Nancy." (Photo by SP4 Robert Collins.)



MUSCLE POWER is a large ingredient used in getting the Brigade's new forward headquarters at Xuan Loc ready for use. (Photo by SSG Thomas Sines.)



MANY BUILDINGS needed modifications at the Brigade's new forward headquarters before they were ready to be occupied. (Photo by SSG Thomas Sines.)



HEAVY EQUIPMENT is used to carve out the positions for the many bunkers being built at a new fire support base. (Photo by SP4 Jerry Reach.)

## Brigade HQ Moves Again

By SP4 Bruce Bolinger

XUAN LOC—The recent move from Blackhorse to the new forward headquarters compound at Xuan Loc is an effective demonstration of the 199th's ability to co-ordinate and move its entire forward base of operations to a new area on short notice.

Being the only light, separate, and self-supporting infantry Brigade operating in Vietnam, the 199th has the advantages of mobility and flexibility.

The move to Xuan Loc was set for Aug 27, and for several days before, the "Redcatcher" forward headquarters sections packed and prepared to move out.

By Aug 28, the move was completed except for a few minor details. Office space and living quarters were assigned several days before the move got under way.

Several of the buildings proved too small to afford ample working room but by Aug 31, everyone was settled in and the Brigade's forward area was conducting business as usual.

Necessary repairs and modifications on some of the buildings were made by the Brigade's 87th Engineer Co with help from a few of the sections.

The 313th Signal Co had one of the largest tasks in moving because it was necessary to maintain communications in both areas throughout the move.

The signalmen replaced the old maze of cables at Xuan Loc with new ones, installed new perimeter lights and insured the Brigade's Tactical Operations Center never lost contact with the forward infantry units at any time during the move. All communications remained active during the changeover.

Second Lieutenant Andrew Duskie, of Concord, N. C., the Brigade's psychological operations officer, had a unique problem during the move. He had to find transportation for 28,000 cans of peanut brittle.

"We distribute it to children in the villages," Duskie said, "and our biggest problem was finding room enough to store it."

## 'Warriors' Zero In On NVA

FSB LYNN—Eleven NVA were killed during a continuing series of contacts over a five-day period beginning Aug. 22 by "Warriors" of Delta Co., 4th Bn., 12th Inf.

While conducting a sweeping operation approximately 15 miles northeast of Xuan Loc, an element of Delta Co. engaged an estimated squad of NVA. "The element set an ambush along a suspected enemy trail," explained Captain Joseph Ploeder of Security, Colo. Delta Co. commanding officer.

"The ambush spotted the suspected point man of the enemy squad just as he spotted the ambush," Ploeder continued. "The ambush then engaged the point man as he tried to escape. While pursuing the enemy in an attempt to thwart his escape, contact with the remaining enemy squad developed."

The "Warriors" continued the fight by pouring a heavy volume of M-60, M-79 and small arms fire upon the enemy.

A search of the area, after the enemy fled his position, produced three NVA bodies.

While operating in the same vicinity two days later on Aug. 24, the "Warriors" of Delta Co. spotted an enemy squad moving through the jungle. They opened up on the unsuspecting enemy with M-60, M-79 and small arms fire.

As the "Warriors" maneuvered against the enemy's position, they began to receive sniper fire to their flanks. Forming a crescent pattern around the enemy, the "Warriors" dislodged—the NVA from their location.

A check of the area, after the enemy evacuated the position, turned up four bodies, two SKS rifles, one AK-47 and one 9mm automatic pistol.

Working in the same general area on Aug. 26, an additional element of Delta Co. sprang an early morning ambush on an estimated squad of NVA.

"We split into two ambushes along a trail," explained First Lieutenant Michael Jones, a Delta Co. platoon leader from San Francisco.

An enemy movement was spotted approximately 200 meters to Delta's front, Jones moved one of the ambush elements forward while the other remained behind in support.

"As soon as the element advanced within close firing range of the enemy they began to open fire," Jones continued.

In an attempt to sandwich the enemy by maneuvering one unit to his rear, contact with two NVA on the enemy's flank developed.

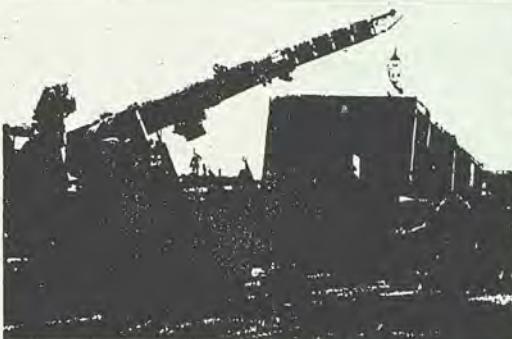
"They were hiding behind a tree stump, one holding an RPG and the other an AK-47," Private First Class William Yadeska, 22, of Albertson, N.Y. recalled.

"Moving to the enemy's left flank, PFC Yadeska opened up on the two enemy soldiers before they got a round off," said Jones.

The "Warriors," after circling to the enemy's rear, began to close in on two sides. "As the enemy attempted to escape, we dropped two more NVA in the small arms exchange," explained Private First Class Limon Turner, 22, of Mt. Olive, N.C.

Investigation of the area following the fire fight turned up four NVA bodies, three AK-47s, and one rocket grenade launcher.

A number of Army and joint service organizations/agencies require that enlisted personnel have special qualifications for assignment.



A VERSATILE INSTRUMENT, the crane, is used in many lifting applications where muscle power is needed. (Photo by SP4 Robert Collins.)

## Cranes Handle Big Jobs

CAMP FREZNELL-JONES—Whether it's replacing a power pack on an APC, rescuing an injured driver from the twisted remains of his vehicle or pulling a Brahma bull from a well, the wrecker operator in Vietnam stands on call to serve 24 hours a day.

"It takes a very unique type of individual to be a good wrecker operator," said Chief Warrant Officer Raymond Barrick of Longview, Tex., who runs the Service and Evacuation Section for the 7th Spt Bn.

"He must be mechanically minded, and have a basic knowledge of mathematics, so he can compute weight lifting of loads," Barrick said.

Such an individual is Specialist Four Clyde Schronce, 21, of Newton, N.C., who is Barrick's wrecker operator. Schronce has operated from the "Pineapple" region south of Saigon, to fire support base "Blackhorse," 50 miles north of Saigon.

"When I was at Blackhorse," Schronce recalled, "we received a call from the 2nd Bn., 3rd Inf., that a brahma bull was stuck in a 20-foot well on nearby plantation."

"We had its Vietnamese owner put a sling around its head and front feet and we hoisted it out," Schronce continued. "The bull just laid there for a couple of minutes and then jumped up as good new. The owner sure was happy."

Schroen once received a call for a welding job at fire support base "Joy." The only way to get in or out of the area is by air.

"I loaded my welding equipment on a Chinook to go to 'Joy' and returned in a Huey," he related.

Barrick labels the wrecker operator's job as "extremely hazardous."

"The roads and trails upon which they travel day or night could possibly contain mines or be an ambush site," Barrick said. "The enemy tries its best to get a wrecker because of its high cost and the fact it is hard to replace."

Most brigades have from three to six five-ton wreckers capable of lifting from 6,700 pounds depending upon the extension of the boom.

The five-ton wrecker contains features not normally found on a similar type civilian vehicle. Among these is a retractable boom which will extend and retract besides elevate and lower.

Its turntable upon which the boom is located is capable of turning 270 degrees. The special bar for towing military vehicles can also be adapted for civilian vehicles.

"When I get back to the world, I'd like to become a crane operator," Schronce said. "I've picked up a lot of experience over here driving my wrecker. It's a good job."

## 'Warriors' Take First Again

CAMP FRENZELL-JONES—The Brigade's award for the highest reenlistment rate, since its initiation in February, has been completely dominated by the "Warriors" of the 4th Bn., 12th Inf.

The 4th Bn. has won the plaque five months out of the last six.

"But we kept it in the family the month we lost," explained Sergeant First Class James Smith Jr. of Tacoma, Wash., unit reenlistment NCO.

The month of March, the plaque went to the 5th Bn., 12th Inf., also the "Warriors."

Smith, upon request, travels to each of the companies within the battalion to answer questions and distribute information brochures. "The men can't always come to me, so I go to them," he said.

The award is presented on the basis of the highest percent of persons interviewed who actually re-up.

February and April, the plaque was awarded to Smith by Brigadier General Frederick E. Davison, former commanding officer of the 199th.

May, June, and July, the plaque was presented by SFC Charles W. Wilson, Brigade Career Counselor.

Did you know that — The West Point Class of 1973, which entered the U.S. Military Academy on 1 July 1969, is the largest in history? Enrollment is 1,439 of which 131 came from the enlisted ranks.

## Infantrymen Wage War With Jungle Assailants

FSB BLACK HORSE—The PRC-25 radio-transmitter squawked and screeched, obliterating the opening words of the radio operator's transmission, but enough was discernible to get the message across: "... giant snake (screech)... blocking trail (squawk)... repeat instructions (screech)..."

Captain Robert Balderson, commander of Alpha Co., 2nd Bn., 3rd Inf., listened to this message radioed to his command post from the point element, during a recent sweep through a jungle area southeast of Xuan Loc.

"Can't you get him outta the way?" the CO radioed back.

"Not without shooting," came the reply. "It's a (squawk) big snake, and the (screech) doesn't seem to have any intention of moving!"

"Negative on the shooting," ordered Balderson, "Victor Charlie are thicker'n (squawk) around here. Break. Go around it! Out!"

Snakes, from bamboo vipers to boa constrictors, are only part of the problem fauna encountered by the infantrymen as they hack their way through the virtually impregnable tangle of their jungle operational area. One never knows what's going to pop up next, and life's never dull.

For instance, there's the night Delta company was literally overrun by a roving band of wild pigs. "We'd set up in a night ambush," recounted specialist Four Tom Hanes of Crandon, Wis. "It was a typical rainy, pitch-black night. Around midnight we heard something rustle in the brush to our front" Hanes continued.

"Suddenly, a horde of wild pigs burst into the midst of the

perimeter, grunting and squealing. "They were probably as startled as we were," Hanes grinned. "One ran right up to me, stared me in the eye, then scampered away."

No one had trouble staying awake for the rest of the night, though, after the pork patrol invasion.

"Bees!" austere stated Alpha Co. squad leader Sergeant Tom Garrett of Salem, Va., when asked to opine on his personal jungle nemesis. "They come from nowhere," he elaborated, "and always seem to single me out!"

Akin to bees and wasps, and every bit as potent, are the red ants which hang squirming in great, ochre gobs overhead, waiting for an unwary GI to happen along and dislodge them.

"They're terrible," lamented a member of Echo Recon platoon. "They drop on your shirt and get into your pants, and boots and—and everywhere!" A hurried, uninhibited disrobing is involved in getting the ants off.

"After you've picked 'em all off, and put your clothes and gear back on, you always discover one last hard-core ant that you missed," the aphid-afflicted infantryman reflected sadly. "And he does his darnedest to avenge all his buddies that got 'KIA-ed'!"

Probably the most detested of all the jungle's troublesome inhabitants is the loathsome leach.

"You can feel 'em latching onto you as you wade along in a stream," says Delta Co. squad leader Sergeant Fred Hassler of Crossville, Tenn. "but you can't do anything about it 'till you get across and find a place to hold up for a few minutes."

Through Infantry ingenuity and field expediency, two principal means of "de-leeching" have been devised. (Simply pulling them off often leaves portions of the suction mouth imbedded in the flesh and can create serious infection.)

The first method calls for liquid insect repellent, squirted liberally over the leech to make him loose his hold. The other utilizes a lighted cigarette to discourage the parasite.

All told, the bugs and snakes and other assorted jungle denizens seem to have a grudge against the infantrymen who've invaded their domain. But the soldiers just scratch and slap and swat and make discreet detours as they continue to work, undaunted, in their pestiferous AO.



MISS DEANNA LUND of ABC-TV's "Land of the Giants."

## C, 2/40 Keep NVA Moving

(Cont'd from page 1)

The night of Aug. 29 found Charlie Btry again assisting elements of the 18th ARVN Div in the same general vicinity.

An ARVN ambush spotted movement. Opening up with small arms fire and calling in fire from Charlie Battery's big guns netted a total of six NVA killed. Charlie Btry was credited with all six kills.

### Three Bunkers Hit

One anti-aircraft gun was knocked out, and three enemy bunkers were destroyed by Charlie Battery's guns. Aerial surveillance spotted three NVA bodies in the debris.

The following morning, after reports from aerial surveillance of hootches and bunkers housing NVA units, 60 high explosive rounds were dropped into an area 25 miles northeast of Xuan Loc.

That afternoon, movement in the same area was sighted again by the spotter aircrafts.

This time Charlie Btry let loose with 150 high explosive rounds into the enemy's midst.

### Fresh Graves

Numerous fresh graves and blood trails, with three NVA bodies, were found later by elements of the 18th ARVN Div sweeping the area.



MEN OF "Comanche" Co, 4th Bn, 12th Inf move into the jungle during an operation northwest of Fire support base "Joy" (Photo by SP4 Jerry Reach.)

## 3rd Bde, 9th Div Commander Gives Thanks to 'Cottonbalers'

By PFC John Smith

SSB MADELEINE—Colonel Dale Crittenden, 3rd Bde, 9th Infantry Division commander presented a plaque and gave a farewell speech to the "Cottonbalers" on Aug 29.

The ceremony took place the day before the "Cottonbalers" left the Delta to be reunited with the rest of the 199th in the jungles.

In his speech, COL Crittenden stated, "During the three months you have been working with us, you have made much progress in the pacification of Long An Province. Also, you are to be commended on your outstanding performance in the war effort while in the Delta."

"Having worked together for this length of time, I have come to know you quite well and feel as if you are a member of the 3rd Brigade.

"I hope that upon your return to the 199th, that you continue to enjoy the same success you have here.

At this time Lieutenant Colonel John W. Cramer, "Cottonbaler" commander, received a plaque from COL Crittenden for services rendered while working with the 3rd Bde.

### Heard Voices

Watts was on guard at 10 p.m. when he heard voices along the track. "Right away, I realized we'd guessed wrong," he said. "They were returning from the village, instead of going into it, as we'd expected; so all our claymores were planted wrong."

The little band of enemy moved down the track, then halted exactly between the two segments of the ambush patrol.

### Wire Across Tracks

"We had a piece of commo wire leading across the track, connecting the two positions, so that we could alert each other if we saw anything," Watts recounted. "But the VC were all around the wire, so I couldn't pull on the wire without giving us away."

Watts alerted his assistant gunner, Specialist Four Alfred Allred of Myton, Utah, and the two whispered their strategy. Since the claymores were facing down the track in the wrong direction, they decided the only thing to do was to let the VC pass on by the exit, and get them on the exit.

Minutes later, the enemy squad moved on. Allred slipped the safety off his claymore detonator, and when the VC reached the appropriate angle, snapped the firing device down.

The mine exploded belching fire and shrapnel, and simultaneously Watts began ripping off deadly bursts with his machine gun. The rest of the squad awoke.

Next morning, there was one dead VC and his rifle and ruck sack on the track. "Watts stated," and blood trails leading off in all directions.

### Abandoned Area

The "Old Guardsmen" then moved out for the third time and discovered that, finally, the VC had abandoned the area. "We found one more body," Sasser stated, "and came across several heavy blood trails and drag trails, where bodies had been hauled away."

Two nights later, Alpha company killed one enemy and captured an AK-47 rifle and a ruck sack of assorted enemy gear in an ambush sprung about one-half mile from Xuan Loc village.

## Brigade Summary

(Cont'd from page 3)

northwest of Xuan Loc, found a small cache containing 14 82mm rounds and 100 4-1/2 volt batteries. In this same area, Delta Co, while checking out a small camp, engaged and killed one enemy soldier and recovered one 9mm pistol.

An ambush patrol from Alpha Co, 2nd Bn, 3rd Inf set up 5 miles west of Xuan Loc engaged four enemy soldiers, killing one.

Sept 3:

"Warriors" from Bravo Co, 5th Bn, 12th Inf engaged an estimated five enemy at short range while operating 10 miles northwest of Xuan Loc, killing three. Bravo Co later engaged one more enemy soldier who dropped his AK-47 and fled.

A night ambush patrol by Charlie Co, 4th Bn, 12th Inf, 18 miles northeast of Xuan Loc, traded fire with two enemy soldiers killing one and recovering one AK-47.

Sept 4:

A combat team from Company M Rangers, 75th Inf called artillery and gunships into an area 30 miles northeast of Xuan Loc where an estimated 30 enemy were cutting trees. The team entered the area after the bombardment, killed

three enemy soldiers and recovered three AK-47 rifles.

Sept 5:

"Old Guardsmen" from Bravo Co, 2nd Bn, 3rd Inf while moving through a jungle and rubber plantation 13 miles west of Xuan Loc were attacked by an estimated company size enemy unit. The enemy engaged the "Old Guardsmen" with claymores and snipers. The contact lasted for more than five hours with the enemy force securely dug in. Delta Co and the Recon platoon reinforced Bravo Co as the enemy tried to turn the flank with small arms, automatic weapons, and RPG fire. The attempt failed and one more enemy soldier was killed by Bravo Co.

"Warriors" from the 5th Bn, 12th Inf operating 10 miles north of Xuan Loc found two 15-pound Chinese claymores hidden in trees surrounding an estimated company size base camp. There were 36 bunkers in 6 complexes estimated to have housed 150 to 200 personnel.

Delta Co, 4th Bn, 12th Inf operating 16 miles northeast of Xuan Loc engaged four enemy at 25 meters, killing two.

Twelve miles north of Xuan Loc, Bravo Co 5th Bn, 12th Inf killed one enemy soldier at 25 meters with claymore and small arms fire.

Sept 6:

Company M Rangers, 75th Inf made contact with an unknown size enemy force 20 miles northeast of Xuan Loc, killing one. "Warriors" from Bravo Co, 4th Bn, 12th Inf engaged an estimated enemy company in a base camp 23 miles northeast of Xuan Loc, killing one enemy. In the same area a recon element of 4th Bn, 12th Inf engaged and killed one enemy soldier coming down a trail and recovered one AK-47.

Sept 7:

Delta Co, 4th Bn, 12th Inf, working 16 miles northeast of Xuan Loc, received heavy enemy fire from an unknown size enemy force in a bunker complex. The "Warriors" called for artillery and air strikes. Four secondary explosions resulted from within the complex.

Sept 8:

Delta Co, 2nd Bn, 3rd Inf destroyed 30 more bunkers in the area 13 miles west of Xuan Loc.



ARMORED CAVALRY ASSAULT VEHICLES move through a small village while on an operation near Xuan Loc. (Photo by SP4 Robert Collins.)

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