

1st Cav Unit Receives Presidential Citation

WASHINGTON — The 229th ASH Bn, 1st Cav Div, and attached units have been awarded the Presidential Unit Citation for extraordinary heroism from April 5 through July 7, 1972.

Attached units cited were HHC; Det 1, HHC (April 5-June 15); Cos A, B, and D; Trp F, 9th Cav; Btry F, 79th Aerial FA, and 362nd Avn Co.

They were honored for supporting Vietnamese defenders of An Loc and Loc Ninh during the North Vietnamese "Nguyen Hue" offensive.

The citation noted the 229th overcame problems caused by new enemy weapons. For the first time in Military Region III, there were Soviet-manufactured armor, 23mm and 37mm

antiaircraft artillery and the Strella missile. Battalion personnel received more than 1700 awards for acts of individual and collective heroism and achievement.

Elements of the battalion flew more than 13,000 sorties, transported more than 16,000 persons, fired more than five million rounds of ordnance and delivered more than 200 tons of logistical supplies to support the Vietnam defenders.

Their efforts resulted in "the virtual destruction of four North Vietnamese army divisions and three of the enemy's army regiments," the citation said.

Angry Allies

Newsweek

Although South Vietnamese forces broke the Communist siege of An Loc more than two weeks ago, a tiny band of North Vietnamese troops has doggedly clung to its stranglehold on Route 13, the only overland route into the city. Determined not to let the ARVN savor its victory, some 100 Communist soldiers, dug into well-fortified bunkers, have kept the entire ARVN 21st Division pinned down. And when the Saigon command ordered units of the fresh 25th Division into the fray last week, they too began taking heavy casualties.

The inability of the ARVN units to dislodge the NVA holdouts on Route 13 has frustrated and dismayed their American advisers. Meantime, the risks posed by heavy North Vietnamese ground fire in the An Loc area has sparked open hostility between American and South Vietnamese helicopter pilots. Because the ARVN pilots have a reputation for panicking under fire, Saigon's ground commanders have called on U.S. airmen to fly difficult support missions. "Look at them sitting down there doing nothing," said one U.S. airman, pointing to a group of ARVN chopper pilots. "We're taking fire and they're sleeping."