2772NP610729

FIRST IN VIETNAM

The OBSERVER

Vol. 9, No. 9 | Saigon, Vietnam | July 3, 1970

Spirit Of '76

"I swear before the altar of God, eternal hostility to every form of tyranny over the mind of man."
Thomas Jefferson

Front Page Art By: Mr. Diung Tsaf Tuoc

Open Road Ahead

Darn It!

With Co C, 1st Marine Regt, LCpl B. G. Leherz rests in his improvised hammock during search and clear operations of Charley Ridge, southwest of Da Nang. (USMC PHOTO By: CPL R. D. Bell)

25TH INF DIV -- To reach Cambodia, 25th Infantry Division soldiers had to conquer route 22. It is the only road from Tay Ninh to Thien Ngon in War Zone C -- a queezy thirty kilometers of uncertainty.

It is a slow, dusty, churning ride where brush and trees seem too close, where men have good cause to fear mines.

War Zone C formerly was occupied by elements of the 1st Air Cavalry Division. Supplies could be flown in for operations then.

But the 25th Division, with fewer organic air vehicles, must depend upon support units for air resupply. The critical items can be carried by Air Force C-130s. Very critical supplies can go by Chinook. But most items must travel by road convoy.

The convoys must go up Route 22.

"The complication is we only have one road. The enemy knows there is only one road. Sweeping and security then become much more important," said Lieutenant Colonel Ralph Salucci, 1st Brigade executive officer.

"We have to secure our life-line in order to operate in our area of operations."

"The road net in the area is practically non-existent," he said. "Some east-west routes exist, but only highway 22 runs north and south."

Upon moving into the area, the 65th Engineers upgraded the narrow, winding dirt road and swept the road clear of mines.

"You need infantry and armor to secure a road sweeping operation," Salucci pointed out. "It's a laborious, difficult task to open the road. Once you open the road you have to outpost it so anything you want to move on the road can get through without being ambushed.

"We're going to have the double problem of beating the road to death with heavy traffic."

Armored units recently made a run along the road and established the unit's control over the area. Route 22 is now open.

Sidetracked On The Way Home

1ST CAV DIV -- The fuel gauges read empty but smoke from campfires in the distance signaled enemy activity. A hunter-killer team of Troop C, 1st Squadron, 9th Cavalry, moved in to investigate before heading home to Phuoc Vinh.

The move paid off. The team found a hillside NVA complex southeast of Duc Phong in Phuoc Long Province. The complex was situated on the Da Dang River.

According to WO1 Richard Gragert of Rock Falls, Ill., the NVA soldiers "were sitting in the open field. It looked like they were eating chow."

Gragert and his Cobra teammate went after the enemy.

"We were out trying to destroy weapons lying on the ground," Gragert said. "I spotted an NVA soldier hiding behind a tree, so I gave chase. He ran directly into my line of fire."

The hunter-killer crews were credited with 10 enemy kills. Two other enemy soldiers were killed by members of the 2nd Battalion, 20th Artillery (ARA).

An air strike was called in just before dark and destroyed much of the bunker complex.

"They had a city out there," Gragert said. "There were World War II type bunkers built into the hillsides. There was no telling how many of them were there. They've probably been living there for months."

The next day Gragert went back for another look.

"The air strikes destroyed the bunkers, dwellings and some of the tunnels. All the bodies and weapons were gone," he said. "It looked like they all packed up and left."

Marines Call For Chow

1ST MARINE DIV -- Marine Second Lieutenant Curtis L. Lowe of Fort Pierce, Fla., stood in the doorway of the Vietnamese hut. He looked quickly around, then opened fire with his M-16 rifle.

Three enemy soldiers were killed outright. Three more literally ran through the straw walls of the hut. They were cut down by other Marines waiting outside.

Lowe and his patrol, an element of Company G, 2nd Battalion, 7th Marines, first spotted a group of several enemy soldiers, crossing a rice paddy and entering one of the huts two days before the encounter.

"We waited to see just what they were up to," said Lowe. "Then we went in on the third day and searched two of the huts before we found anybody."

Nine persons were in the third hut. Two were sleeping and the rest were preparing to "chow down" on a meal of boiled rice. Three of the enemy were detained.

Just as surprising as the unexpected number of enemy was the find of supplies in the well-camouflaged building. The cache included 15 sandbags of new "work" clothes, new street clothes, ten new nylon hammocks, an enemy automatic weapon and an American semi-automatic rifle, and an enemy paymaster's roster.

But the most interesting part of the find were two medical kits, complete with surgical gear and antibiotics.

"Some of the surgical instruments still bore familiar names of American manufacturers," said Lowe.

With Bayonet And Bravado

Sp4 Bags Seven VC

AMERICAL DIV -- Tipped off by a Vietnamese boy, a six-foot-eight U.S. soldier armed only with a bayonet recently detained seven armed VC guerrillas during a rice hauling operation on the "Gaza Strip".

While transporting rice from a large enemy cache, a Chinook received heavy sniper fire. Captain Edward J. Mullen of Youngstown, Ohio, commanding officer from Company C, 1st Bn., 20th Inf. directed the first and second platoons to search a dense mangrove swamp where the shots came from. Shark gunships of the 174th Aviation Company prepped the area with rocket and minigun fire before the advance.

Specialist 4 Jimmie L. Dubose of Pachuta, Miss., heralded as "the tallest point man in the RVN," inched his huge frame through the thick vegetation and found a small hamlet. Immediately an eight-year-old boy began pointing at a fortified bomb shelter whispering "VC". Dubose called to Specialist 4 Elwood Vincent of Sulphur, La., for assistance before checking the bunker.

With bayonet in hand, Dubose crawled into the bunker and retrieved a trembling VC.

Dubose continued to search the area, finding four 100-pound bags of rice. He sensed trouble and his young Vietnamese friend began pointing frantically at another bunker.

When he bent down to peer into the bunker Dubose found himself face to face with an enemy soldier. The VC refused to surrender, forcing Dubose and Specialist 4 David Sowell of Sioux Falls, S.D., to toss two grenades into the hole.

Brandishing his bayonet once more, Dubose squeezed into the bunker. There he was confronted with the surprise of his life! Inside were six armed VC soldiers who had been protected from the blasts by a grenade sump.

With as much bravado as he could muster, he pushed the enemy from their hiding place and into the surprised arms of his squad waiting outside the bunker. "It only took a few shoves and pokes from my bayonet to pursuade the VC to leave," said Dubose.

Finding and detaining enemy soldiers is nothing new to Dubose. So far during his seven months in the RVN he has personally detained six other VC for a total of 13.

Lots Of Curd

A tank holding some 1,400 gallons of skim milk is used in the manufacture of cottage cheese. The milk is combined with starter and rennet, and then allowed to sit for about 12 hours until the curd is formed. (USAF PHOTO)

5th Div Uncovers Medicine

The following information is provided by the Press and Information Office, General Political Warfare Department, RVNAF, Saigon, for the period of 14-20 June.

5TH INFANTRY DIVISION

A battalion of the 5th Infantry Division recently discovered a cache of enemy medical supplies while on a search mission in the Snoul Forest in Cambodia. The infantrymen captured 248 cases of medical supplies, weighing approximately four tons.

7TH INFANTRY DIVISION

Elements of the 7th Infantry Division made contact with the enemy several times during operations in Dinh Tuong and Kien Hoa Provinces (IV Corps). Supported by artillery and tactical air strikes, ARVN forces killed 79 enemy soldiers and captured four crew-served weapons.

Forty enemy soldiers were killed in an engagement northwest of Cai Be in IV Corps.

Textiles Are Big Business

II FFV -- The RVN's textile industry is growing at a slow but steady pace. Raw materials must still be imported, and the demand for finished goods and fabrics has not yet been met. But the industry is relatively new, and needs only time to develop.

"The industry is progressing steadily and is beginning to satisfy the minimum fabric needs of the domestic market," said Bui Thanh, chief of the textile branch of the Vietnamese Industrial Development Center.

"But many finished materials, especially suiting fabrics, must still be imported," he added.

Except for a few steel mills and a naval shipyard, the RVN has no heavy industry. Of its light industries, the one affecting the people's lives most is textiles. The people must have clothes or uniforms to wear, blankets, towels, bags, fish nets and other textile products.

Textiles in the RVN have mushroomed from nothing a dozen years ago to an industry that now turns out 65 per cent of the cotton yarn requirements plus a variety of basic products for the domestic market.

The textile industry also produces a variety of other products including cotton and rayon fabrics, synthetics, knitted wear, blankets and towels. There are more than 30 large mills with automatic spinning, weaving and knitting machinery. These account for about 75 per cent of all production.

The textile manufacturing industry first came to the RVN after the Geneva agreement which divided the nation. A 7,500-spindle spinning plant in North Vietnam, where there was a small industry at the time, was dismantled and brought by anticommunist refugees to the Saigon district of Khanh Hoi in 1955. The plant was reassembled and put back into operation by 1958. Today this pioneer plant is part of a successful four-plant GVN operation.

A Belly Full Of Rice

25TH INF DIV -- The 3rd Squadron, 4th Cavalry recently collected almost 400 tons of rice in operations inside Cambodia.

For days, they struggled to remove this rice from the heavily wooded area – only to have it brought right back to them.

Using Chinooks, track transports and in some cases the interior of their troop carriers, the Americans fought to get the rice back to Tay Ninh. From there it was to be redistributed to needy Vietnamese families before the monsoons began.

Consequently, the men were pretty much fed up with rice.

As one Cavalryman, Private First Class Robert A. Bear of San Diego, said, "I hope I never see another ounce of rice after this thing is over."

Well, Bear's worst dreams came true!

On one of the last days of the rice removal operation, the men rushed over to their field expedient mess hall to eat a hot lunch which had just been delivered from Tay Ninh. To their unbelieving eyes they saw two brimming mermite cans full of steaming – white rice – just as planned on the Army Master Menu in Washington, months ago.

That's That

First Lieutenant Verne P. Seehausen (left) of Crown Point, Ind., a platoon leader with Co C, 2/12th Inf, 25th Inf Div, looks on as one of his men demolishes an enemy bunker near Cu Chi with Claymore mines.

(USA PHOTO By: SP4 Jim Williams)

Keep The Line Open

Captain Hung and his men inspect track blown up with TNT by VC the night before.

Securing A Rail Link

18TH INF DIV (ARVN) -- While American railroaders are pondering the fate of the passenger train, the 32nd Railroad Security Company operating out of the Long Khanh station at Cuan Loc is worried about the enemy blowing its diesel engine off the tracks with a command detonated mine.

TO NIGHT AMBUSH POSITIONS

"The enemy knows we use the train to transport our men to night ambush positions," said Captain Nguyen Ba Hung, 32nd Security Company commander, "so he tries his best to harass our operations."

Upon receiving orders from the 1st Battalion headquarters in Saigon, Hung piles his men on the train. They move by rail to the pre-selected night position somewhere along the 25 mile stretch between Xuan Loc and Bau Ca in Long Khanh Province.

SLOW TRIP

The trip through the jungle area is slow. Security units walk in front of the train to spot enemy mines.

"Ninety per cent of my men are school-trained in demolition," said Hung. "In every platoon there is one man who has received advanced training to become a demolition expert."

ARMORED BOX CARS

The ARVN soldiers travel in steel-plated armored box cars and are equipped with M-16 rifles, M-60 machine guns, M-79 grenade launchers and 60mm mortars.

The $15 million diesel engine pushes an elongated flatcar ahead of it in case contact is made with a mine.

MINE DANGERS

"Unless my men spot a command detonated mine ahead of time," Hung said, "the enemy will let the flatcar pass and detonate the mine when the engine comes over it."

To prevent the enemy from gaining such a threshold, Hung sends flank elements out on either side of his mine detecting squad.

TRACK OFTEN DESTROYED

"Sometimes the enemy will sneak in and blow up the track at night," Hung continued. "Then we have to summon repair crews from Saigon and provide security for them while they fix the track.

"During the past three years, three of our engines have been hit. In each incident, the engine was repairable. We have been very lucky," Hung concluded.

ARVNAF Chief Nurses attend graduation exercises upon completion of the first phase of a pilot program in personnel supervision and administration. The nurses will be assigned to various hospitals in the Saigon area for OJT, which is the final phase of the program.

(USA PHOTO By: Sp5 Don Ellzey)

In Addition To Giving Shots...

MACV -- Changing bandages, giving shots, taking temperatures, shuffling pillows or giving words of encouragement. Long hours, sleepless nights, tension and strain. Such is the lot of an army nurse.

But these are not the only requirements of a nurse, especially a Chief Nurse. An intergral part of a Chief Nurse's responsibilities involve personnel supervision and management.

Keeping a hospital running smoothly requires patience, knowledge and a knack for organization. The vast amount of administrative work is astounding. Add to that the proper supervision of a staff which may number into the hundreds and one can easily see that much professional training is necessary.

The ARVNAF Nurse Corps was organized on January 1, 1970. Chief Nurses were sent to all ARVN Hospitals throughout the RVN to supervise operations. The ARVNAF nurses were under the supervision of American advisors.

Recognizing the need for professional training in management and administration, a pilot course, geared especially to problems encountered by the Chief Nurses during their daily routine, was established. A class schedule was set up. Along with their counterpart advisors, Chief Nurses from all four Corps Tactical Zones came to Saigon to participate in a month-long training program.

The first phase of training is concerned with classwork. Through a series of lectures and practical exercises, class discussion and critique, the nurses learn the mechanics of management and supervision.

Upon completion of two weeks of classroom work, the pupils are assigned to one of the hospitals in the Saigon area for OJT. Here they are exposed to actual administration problems which they are required to solve. After two weeks of OJT, it is back to the CTZ hospitals to put what they have learned to use.

Plans are in effect for four training programs of this type. Besides the ARVNAF Chief Nurses, programs are being designed for operating supervisors, intensive care and recovery supervisors and in-service education coordinators. Each course lasts one month and is divided into classroom work and OJT.

This program is merely one of many which attempt to provide the RVN with highly trained technicians for immediate and future needs.

Everyone Helps In A Critical Situation

101ST ABN DIV -- Company B, 2nd Battalion, 501st Infantry was recenty engaged in an intense fire fight with an unknown size enemy force. There was no time to load magazines during the battle.

In the rear, at Camp Hochmuth, 25 volunteers gathered to load 3,000 magazines of M-16 ammunition for the hard pressed troops. The volunteers came from every section of the battalion. They knew what had to be done and left little doubt they could do the job.

During the next two hours nothing was as important to the "rear echelon" soldiers as loading the next magazine – as if the next was the margin by which a life would be saved.

The close teamwork between the infantryman in the field and the soldier in the rear resulted in a successful operation. Company B inflicted a number of casualties on the enemy force.

'BROTHERS' ALL?

You see it just about every day. A couple of "brothers" pass each other on the street and exchange greetings...by way of the outstretched fist of the Black Power salute.

Or maybe it's the intricate fraternal handshake that catches your eye. Or the "slave bracelet", or the Afro haircut.

If you're black yourself, these things may seem as normal as guard duty. They're the "now" things of black awareness, of black pride. They have a lot of significance for you, and they symbolize many things to you.

But if you're not black – or aren't "in" on what these things mean – the situation isn't so simple. Depending upon the individual, a white's reactions to the black power salute can vary from mild curiosity to open hostility. Likewise, the handshake may get an amused reaction, while the "slave bracelet" can draw simple puzzlement.

What's really at stake here? One might view it as a lack of understanding...the white serviceman's not knowing his black counterpart very well. But couldn't it also be seen as a *mutual* mis-understanding, a breakdown in two-way communication?

Maybe, just maybe, what we all need is a more frank exchange of our ideas, fears, problems, and views. If we've been isolated from that other fellow of another color, why not break out of the cocoon?

Strike up a conversation. Just shoot the bull for awhile. And be cool...no need to get uptight if you keep the conversation light.

You'd be surprised how much we all have in common. Naturally there's the service right off; it's a hallowed tradition to air pet gripes. Moreover, the same *basic* problems of life confront us all when it comes to needing a roof over our head, feeding our family, getting an education, and finding a job.

The point is, we ought to emphasize our *likenesses*, our mutual interests, and – especially – the importance of communicating with each other. Who knows? We might just end up expanding the term "brother" to take in all brothers. **(MACV)**

Don't Spoil It

Reports have been coming in from colleges and universities back home that some servicemen granted early outs to attend school are failing to enroll. This is a dangerous practice, for it can backfire badly on those who take advantage of the opportunity while not really intending to enroll or planning on making only a token enrollment.

Where substantial envidence of fraudulent intent exists, commanders have been instructed to send fully-documented correspondence concerning each case to the Promotion, Separation, and Transition Division, ODCSPER. When warranted, the Department of the Army is empowered to take the following actions:

...revocation of discharge/release from the service, making the individual liable to appropriate administrative or disciplinary action – including courts-martial for fraudulent separation.

...referral of the case to the Justice Department for possible legal action in the civilian courts system.

...elimination for misconduct for those in a Reserve status.

In addition to all of this, common sense tells us that widespread abuse of a program like this might put it in jeopardy for those sincerely interested in furthering their education. Think it over, and don't make a selfish decision that can hurt both you and someone else. **(APL)**

credibilis

"Before I can let ya go in, I gotta see your I.D. card, your ration card, your MACV card, your pass, and that new copy of 'Playboy' ya got hidden in yore shirt...."

Read, Think, And Compare The Times . . .

Read the following description. Think about it, and then try to guess what country it describes...you may be in for a surprise.

"The country is torn by insurgency. It has a young, inexperienced, and poorly-equipped army with ill-trained officers and but little leadership.

Desertion is so common that it's almost popular, and civilians serve in a paramilitary capacity. Foreign advisors train and organize the army, but they are unliked by a common soldier who thinks them conceited, overbearing, too military, and too foreign. For his part, the foreign advisor views the domestic soldier as stupid, provincial, illiterate, and militarily inept.

Military supplies must be provided by a foreign power, which is one reason the war is unpopular. Civilians are commonly apathetic, and some even support the enemy. They live under terror, with many homes burned and women and babies not spared.

Guerilla warfare predominates, and a general is made president. The central government lacks popular support, and there are many splinter parties. A substantial block of foreign and domestic opinion is unhappy and wants peace at any price."

Sound like a certain Southeast Asian nation in the 1960's? Guess again. Would you believe that's how one man described the condition of the United States of America during the period 1776-1790? **(1st MI BN-ARS)**

4th Is More

The Fourth of July is the most patriotic of all American holidays, symbolizing as it does the savor of independence after a hard-fought revolution by a vigorous young republic.

But did you know that the Fourth has much additional significance beyond being Independence Day? On that day in 1826, for instance, two of the Founding Fathers passed away: John Adams and Thomas Jefferson. That date fell just fifty years after the Declaration of Independence had been adopted.

On July 4, 1850, official ceremonies celebrated the laying of the cornerstone of the Washington Monument in Washington, D.C. Thirty-three years to the day later, France presented the Statue of Liberty to the United States as a tribute to its role in fostering liberty.

Then, in 1919, our Allies in World War I honored the United States with a gigantic celebration...sort of a birthday party for our country. And on July 4, 1946, America formally recognized the independence of the Philippines.

So you can see that the Fourth has become an auspicious date for us, with the basic meaning of Independence Day being made even more significant in the years since 1776. (AFOI)

FIRST IN VIETNAM

The OBSERVER

COMUSMACV . . . . . **Gen. C.W. Abrams, USA**
Information Officer . . . . . **Col. J.F.H. Cutrona, USA**

* * * * *

OIC . . . . . **Capt. C.F. Burke, USA**
Editor . . . . . **SFC R.R. Thomas, USA**
Asst. Editor . . . . . **TSgt. A.C. Stromwall, USAF**
Staff Writer . . . . . **Sp5 D.E. Ellzey, USA**
Staff Writer . . . . . **Sp5 H.J. Campbell Jr., USA**
Staff Writer . . . . . **PFC Edward J. Cielesz, USA**
Staff Writer . . . . . **PFC R. M. Volkmer, USA**
Composing . . . . . **SSgt. C.M.L. Brisebois, USA**

The OBSERVER is an authorized newspaper published weekly by the Command Information Division, Office of Information, Military Assistance Command, Vietnam, for United States Forces in Vietnam. Opinions expressed here do not necessarily reflect policies or positions of the Department of Defense or any of the Armed Forces. The OBSERVER, printed offset at Pacific Stars and Stripes in Tokyo, uses material from the American Forces Press Service and other Department of Defense agencies. Direct mail to: Editor, The OBSERVER, Hq MACV, (MACOI-C), APO 96222. The OBSERVER has a circulation of 80,000.

UNDERSTANDING THE VIETNAMESE

Origins Shrouded In Antiquity

Within the country, a number of minority groups coexist which have added much to its cultural and historical accomplishments. In this article, and in sequels to it, we will briefly trace the backgrounds of the different Vietnamese peoples, attempting to better understand them.

The Vietnamese people are a mixture of many cultures and nationalities, and they have a variety of distinguishing characteristics which set them apart from their Asiatic neighbors.

The origins of the Vietnamese are shrouded by the mists of antiquity, making it very difficult to establish their ethnic and geographic beginnings. Scholars have determined, however, that they are a meld of several civilizations.

The first of these existed nearly 5,000 years ago in Southern China; originating in the Yangtze Valley, this earliest of the Vietnamese peoples moved south over a period of many years. They were very warlike, and enroute they defeated and absorbed portions of the Cham and Khmer Empires.

Later, the fertile crescent of Southeast Asia found its strategic position becoming what has been called a "crossroads of peoples and civilizations." What happened was that a cultural fusion of native and foreign elements took place. Peoples from the Near East, Southeast Europe, and the Greco-Roman Orient passed through – and occasionally settled – as long ago as the time of Christ, leaving their mark upon what would one day be called Vietnam.

Although a casual visitor to the country might conclude that the Vietnamese are ethnically more or less Chinese, this is not at all true. From the year 190 A.D. to 1417, the indigenous Cham people lived under their own Champa Empire, only being assimilated by the conquering Chinese at that late date.

While the Vietnamese deny that the Chinese cultural influence upon them is absolute, neither do they wish to minimize its importance to them. Along with the Buddhist philosophy brought by the Hindus and the Christian thought contributed by the Europeans, they look to the impact of Confucianism and Taoism, rendered by the Chinese, as an essential element of their heritage.

Today the descendants of this early Vietnamese fusion comprise some 85 per cent of the country's population. The remainder consists mainly of Chinese, Indian, Pakistani, Cambodian, and Montagnard minority groups. Week by week, we will be taking a closer look at each of these segments of Vietnamese culture, seeking out their backgrounds and accomplishments. Next week: The Lowlanders. **(7AF CAN)**

Medical examination is held in the village of Long Thanh.

Buddhists of Phat Buu Tu in Gia Dinh District, Saigon, get instruction in the Thai language from a Thai signal officer.

Royal Thai Forces Assist In Pacification Program

Performance by the Royal Thai Forces Band entertains the children of Hoi Duc Anh Orphanage in Saigon.

Since they first came to Vietnam in 1964, Royal Thai Forces have engaged in combat operations and also assisted the government the Republic of South Vietnam's pacification program.

Thai contributions to pacification seek to improve living standards in war-torn areas, to upgrade health, sanitation and education standards, and to motivitate popular support for the GVN. Responsibility for the programs lies with Lieutenant General Chaveng Youngchareon, Thai Forces Commanding General, who coordinates Civic Actions with GVN ministries and the Republic of Vietnam Armed Forces (RVNAF).

The Thai Panther Division, an Army unit, located at Bear Cat in Bien Hoa Province, has a busy on-the-job training schedule for Regional Forces (RF) and Popular Forces (PF), militia type troops from nearby villages and hamlets. The Panthers also provide regular medical care to villagers, help with road and bridge building, improve schools and support orphanages. Since July 1969 Panther MEDCAP teams have treated over 30,000 patients and troops have devoted 20,000 man hours to construction projects costing six million piasters.

Thai Forces provide similar medical and dental care in the Saigon metropolitan area. They have also made many improvements in orphanages, schools and playgrounds throughout the capital. Thai officers and chaplains conduct language classes and give other instruction at numerous Buddhist centers, bolstering a religion common to both Thailand and Vietnam.

According to General Youngchareon, the Thai troops feel that security of their homeland depends in part on that of South Vietnam, which makes the Thai Force's missions and goals in Vietnam important.

Story & Photos: Mr. Richard H. Beveridge

Captured rice, taken from Viet Cong stores, is distributed to needy villagers by Thai troops.

School aid, consisting of much needed writing materials, is passed out by a Thai "Panther Division" trooper at the hamlet school in Long Thanh village.

At a Chieu Hoi center in Phuoc Tuy, former Viet Cong who have pledged their allegiance to the government of the RVN learn the skills of a tailor before starting their new lives as Hoi Chanh.

Life And Death In Vietnam

South of Saigon, dusk settled over the delta province of Long An as the nine members of a Viet Cong guerilla squad met to discuss their future. Squatting in a clump of brush near Phuoc Khanh Hamlet, they slowly cleaned their weapons as they discussed the alternatives open to them. Their choices seemed as stark as life and death.

The squad had been supported and supplied by the 520th VC Main Force Battalion, but for several weeks there had been no contact with that headquarters. Now the squad learned that the main force units were withdrawing from Can Duoc and the surrounding districts because of heavy pressure from ARVN units in the area. The men were being deserted.

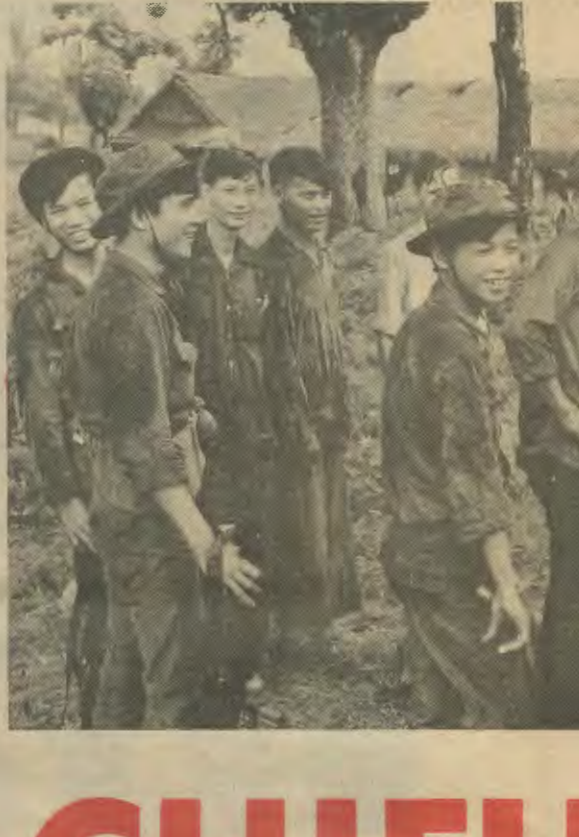
With food, supplies, ammunition and orders no longer arriving through VC battalion channels, and with government troops seemingly on patrol everywhere, pessimism and a sense of futility possessed the squad.

Inspiration for decisive action suddenly came to the guerillas, quite literally from the darkening sky. Red tracers and hot lead poured into the brush from a helicopter gunship overhead. The pilot, making his last sweep of the day, had spotted the half-hidden men and realized from their clothing and weapons that they were not "friendlies."

The squad scrambled for cover, but while they escaped injury, the last vestige of their morale was shattered. As soon as they reassembled they resolved to turn themselves in, to rally to the government's side under the Chieu Hoi program.

Not all Chieu Hoi returnees come to the GVN in the same manner as this squad did, but this is a classic example of the Chieu Hoi Program at work.

STORY AND PHOTOS By: VFS



CHIEU

Men make mistakes -- it is only natural. In war, m
correcting them. In one respect, the war in the Repu
losers finish looking up at growing grass.

But in a very important respect, war in Vietnam
winning or dying -- Chieu Hoi.

Chieu Hoi, or "Open Arms" as the program is trans
to return the Viet Cong or NVA soldier to the governr

Since 1963, when the Chieu Hoi program was
advantage of the opportunity to leave their undergro
of 18 main force Viet Cong divisions.

By giving the communist soldier, guerilla or politi
shadow life in the insurgency, the Chieu Hoi progr
from war's life and death dilemma to the enemy sol
communist spy on communinsts in an effort to slow
Republic's military, social and economic resources
provides an important source of intelligence informati

What induces the enemy to turn to the Governme
are disillusionment, the fear and hardships of guerilla
victory.

"As for my motives," one Chieu Hoi returnee (Hoi
ones are these; First, my despair with communis
leadership.... Third, I do not like to see the prolongati

A Viet Cong may turn himself in at any governme
safe-conduct passes that shower from planes by the
weapons he brings in, later redeemable in cash.

After a military intelligence debriefing on or near
to one of the 52 Chieu Hoi centers located throughou
centers that together have received as many as 4,000

At the center, the Hoi Chanh is registered, attend
the way of life in Vietnam's noncommunist society, a

Most centers have vocational training projects in
literacy courses for both the Hoi Chanh and his depen

Those Hoi Chanh who elect to stay at the center be
more advanced courses in vocational training, such as
driving.

Each receives a government grant for clothing, a sp
a departure gift when he is ready to leave the center.

At the Bien Hoa Chieu Hoi Center, former Viet Cong receive training in the repair of automotive engines to better prepare them for their new lives.

The life of a Hoi Chanh who rallies to the government's side is not all orientation lectures and job training. At the Dinh Tuong Chieu Hoi Center, these former Viet Cong play a Vietnamese pinball machine.

In November, 1969, these men were Viet Cong militia in a district near Tam Ky that had been under communist rule since 1946. The next month, re-armed and re-outfitted, they were fighting for the Saigon government. More than 200 of them, under their own leaders, came over to the government's side under the Chieu Hoi amnesty program.

Nineteen-year-old Tran Thi Ho Le, during the time she was the leader of a VC 82mm mortar squad in the Mekong Delta, directed more that 1,000 mortar rounds against South Vietnamese and allied troops. She is shown at the Long An Chieu Hoi Center after she rallied to the GVN.

U HOI!

var, mistakes can kill a man before he has any chance of Republic of Vietnam is no different from others – the

etnam is different. The enemy has a third alternative to

s translated into English, is an amnesty program designed overnment fold and the mainstream of RVN life.
was launched, some 144,000 communists have taken derground existence. This is equivalent to the manpower

political cadre an alternative to his increasingly difficult program has provided a humanitarian avenue of escape ny soldier. It has also weakened enemy morale by making o slow the swelling tide of defections. It strengthens the urces by the infusion of new manpower and skills, and ormation.

ernment of the RVN? The most commonly given reasons uerilla life, homesickness and loss of faith in a communist

(Hoi Chanh) said, "I think there are many, but the main mmunism.... Second, my personal differences with the ongation of a fratricidal war."
ernment post according to simple procedures described in the millions every month. He is given a receipt for any

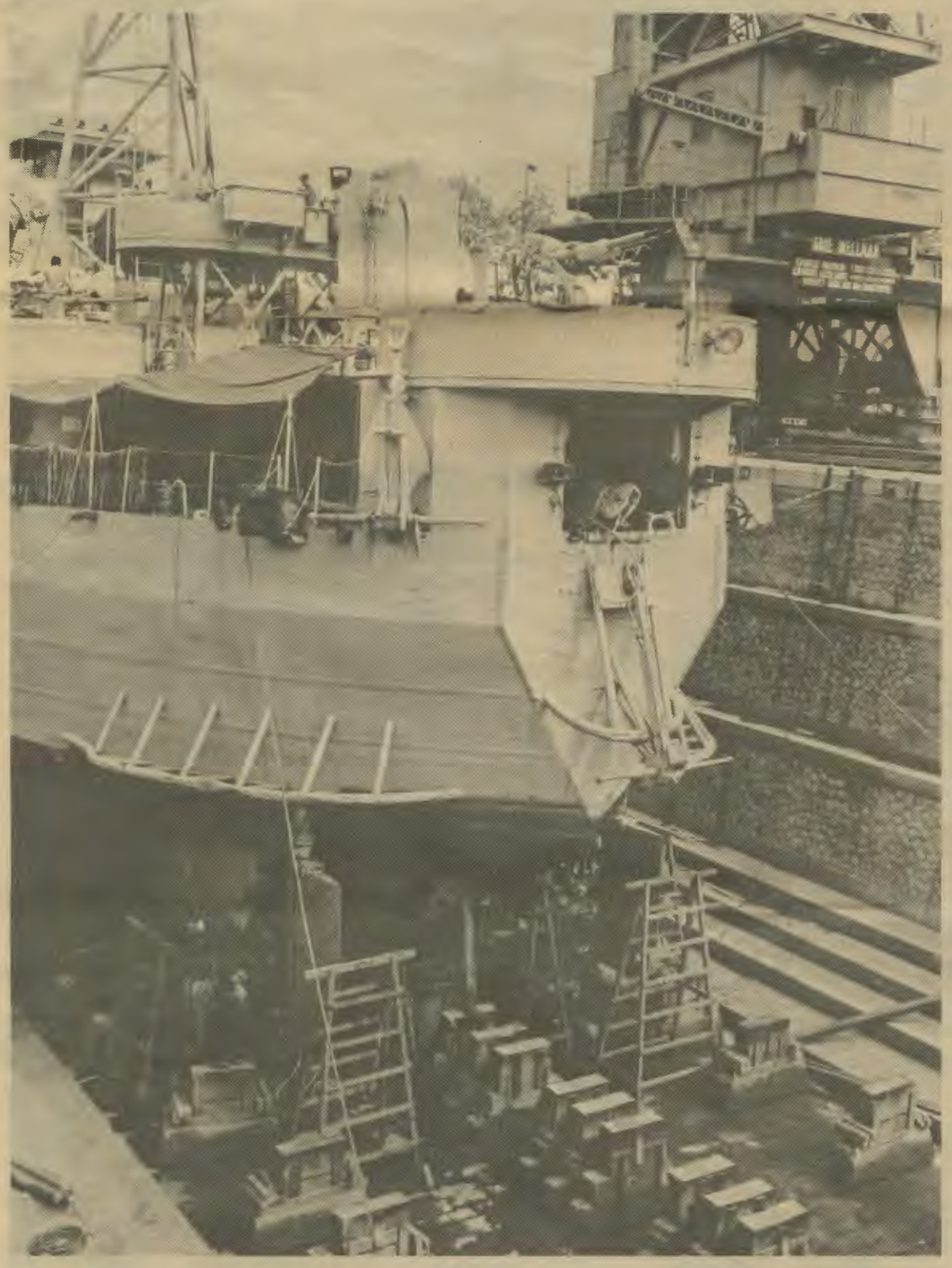
near the site of his surrender, the new Hoi Chanh is sent oughout the country. These are reorientation and training ,000 newcomers in recent months.
ttends lectures on military and political realities and on ety, and is reunited with his family if possible.
cts in agricultural and construction skills. Several have dependents, and some have elementary schools.
nter beyond the normal orientation period may enroll for uch as automotive mechanics, tailoring, carpentry or auto

g, a spending allowance during the orientation period and nter. Then he is on his own.

A psychological warfare expert tapes the reasons for quitting the Viet Cong given by this 12-year-old communist guerilla (right). He was among a squad of 12 which returned to the government's side through the Chieu Hoi program.

Workers at Saigon shipyard put the finishing touches on a 200-ton steel barge.

A Vietnamese girl operates a seam welder used in the fabrication of gas cylinders.



An LST gets a complete overhaul at the Vietnamese Navy shipyard in Saigon. The yard can handle any vessel up to 160 meters in length and 20 meters in beam.

Shipyards - Big Industry

The Republic of Vietnam's biggest industrial complex is the Vietnamese Navy shipyard in Saigon. It is the only real heavy industry, aside from a young but growing steel industry, and it is the nation's largest training school.

Supplying much of industry's skilled labor pool, it is destined to play an important role in post-war development, not only in the creation of a viable heavy industry, but in the expansion of light industry – an inevitable phenomenon, already getting under way, that will require thousands of skilled workmen.

There are six privately owned commercial shipyards in the Saigon area. The largest one is capable of building steel craft up to 300 tons. However, construction of new vessels is a relatively minor activity in all yards, with repair and maintenance being most important.

The shops dotting the sprawling yard can overhaul marine diesel engines at the rate of one a day, perform all types of hull work in drydock, rewind electric motors and repair shipboard electronic equipment.

Shipyard success can be seen for the Republic of Vietnam through the constantly expanding training programs now being effectively used.

A worker applies finishing touches to the chicken wire and reinforcing rod framework for a ferro-cement craft.

Story And Photos By VPS

'SUPER' RICES SPUR DELTA

By 1st Lt Thomas Hargrove

Vietnamese government officials call the new rice varieties "Than. Nong." U.S. advisors usually refer to them as types IR-8 and IR-5. And all over the world people are reading of the new "Miracle Rice" that is doubling, tripling, and even quadrupling yields in rice-hungry Southeast Asia.

The local farmer in South Vietnam's fertile Mekong Delta has another name for it, though. He calls it "Honda rice" because planting the new strain instead of local varieties gives the higher yields he needs to buy a new motorbike for the family.

And therein lies the full significance of the new high-yield varieties develope at the International Rice Research Institute (IRRI) of Los Banos, Philippines. The IR rice is expected to transform Vietnam from a rice deficit nation to a rice surplus nation in a few short years. Moreover, It's looked upon as a change agent...an influence that will rapidly push this developing nation toward modernization, giving many farmers a ticket to 20th Century progress.

Motorbikes

While a new motorbike may seem insignificant at first, remember that it means improved transportation and communication – which in turn create a desire for other modern conveniences. And not too many years ago, an American farmer used the profits from his first bumper crop to purchase a shiny new Model T....

Of course other factors must also be given credit for modernizing Vietnam's agriculture besides the new rices and improved transportation.

Among them are increased security in the countryside; a growing sense of national unity; availability of such agricultural necessities as fertilizers, insecticides and farm credit; increased mechanization; water pumps for irrigation and locks and dams on the canals to prevent salt water intrusion from the ocean.

Like anything new, the improved rices create as many problems as they solve, and bring a host of new challanges to their users. For example, farming practices must be updated to keep pace with modern technology.

"Sure, IR-8 creates a lot of new problems," says Arthur Britton, USAID agricultural advisor to Kien Hoa Province in the Mekong Delta. "But they are new and different problems and challenges, and meeting and solving them opens the way to a completely new way of life for these farmers."

Lifestyle

To illustrate his point, Britton cites the case of Huynh Van Huong, a farmer just outside the provincial capital of Ben Tre. This man's entire lifestyle -- and that of his neighbors -- was dramatically altered by the introduction of IR-8.

Mr. Huong has two and a half acres of rice land. In September of 1968, Britton and local Vietnamese agricultural specialists persuaded him to plant half of his land with the new miracle rice as a demonstration project. At the same time, they convinced Nguyen Van Lang just across the road to plant an equal area of land with the new rice. Britton provided seed and fertilizer, and let them use his power tiller for the first crop. More importantly, he and the local agricultural cadre also gave a little "push" now and then, some encouragement along the way, and a great deal of technical know-how.

Huynh Van Huong, a farmer who lives just outside the Kien Hoa Province capital, Ben Tre, was among the earliest adopters of the new miracle rice. Through sale of his rice surplus, he has been able to provide his family with a coveted motorbike, buy himself a power tiller, and make many improvements in his methods of farming. He's very proud of his new rice drier (pictured above), one of the first fifty of its type to be constructed in the Mekong Delta. (U.S. Army Photo by 1st Lt Thomas Hargrove)

"As soon as the first crop was harvested," recalls Britton, "both farmers immediately put in a second crop. And they had good reason. Local rice varieties normally yield about one-and-a-half metric tons (2,200 pounds) from a planting area the size of theirs, whereas the new IR-8 gave between four and five tons."

Moreover, the new type has a growing season of only 125-130 days, while local varieties take 180-190 days to mature. This allows at least two crops per year to be grown, instead of the usual single crop.

"When the second crop was harvested," continues Britton, Mr. Huong returned my old power tiller, took his money into town, and bought a brand new one. "Mr. Britton, your tiller is too slow,' he said. Soon after, his neighbor also bought a new power tiller, and both started on their third crop."

Today, 19 months after the first IR-8 demonstration in that area, both farmers have power tillers, rice driers, and other agricultural improvements in addition to the inevitable motorbike that comes with increased prosperity. Mr. Lang has also purchased a small rice mill, and is building a new home.

Their fourth crop in 19 months is maturing, and both farmers will have produced five crops by the end of two years instead of the two lower-yielding crops they would have produced with local varieties.

They are using their increased income to diversify production, and try new crops and animals. Practically every farmer in the area has now followed the lead of these two "early innovators" and is planting the new rices.

Enthusiasm

Perhaps the most significant point of all came to light when the IRRI recently developed and released a new, improved miracle rice, IR-20. Many farmers eagerly asked to try it, in contrast to the hesitancy which faced the earlier improved strains. "Change" is no longer a frightening word to these people now...they actually greet it enthusiastically.

Leatherneck Bridges

A Marine from the 7th Engr Bn, 1st Marine Div, welds a bridge beam 13 miles southwest of Da Nang, Vietnam. This and similar structures throughout the country are being built to replace old French bridges which are no longer usable.

(U.S. Marine Corps Photo by LCPL R.L. Heflin)

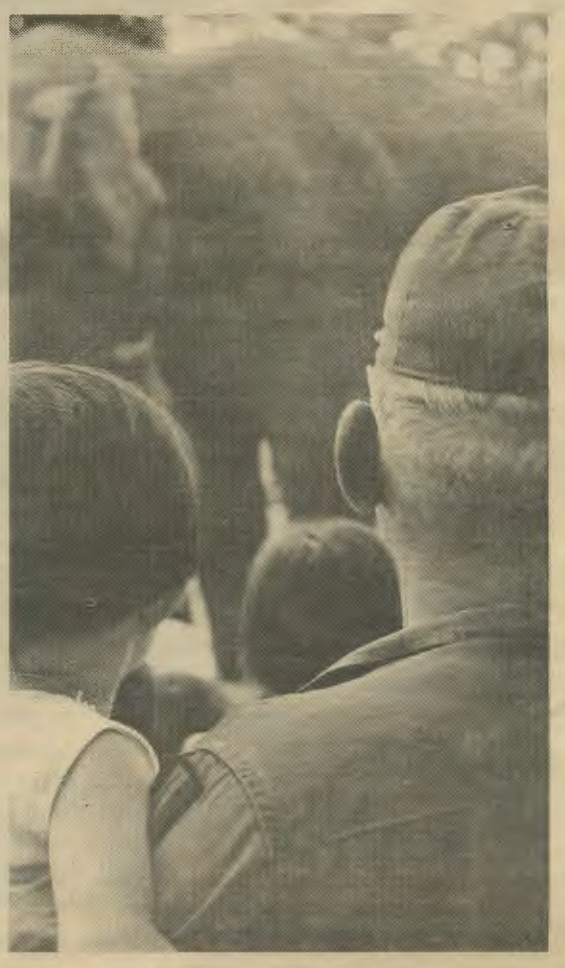
Tykes, GIs Parade Zoo

(USAHAC) Chaplain (Major) Glenn L. Myers recently discovered his "fountain of youth" in Saigon. Assisted by two Catholic nuns and fifteen soldiers, he gathered together some 65 Vietnamese children from St. Elizabeth's Orphanage and set out for an afternoon at the city zoo.

Enjoying the facilities of one of the outstanding zoos in this part of the world, the children and their American friends began the tour with stops at the zebra, monkey, and elephant sections of the animal paradise. Later there were merry-go-round rides, bright yellow and blue balloons, and refreshments.

A little girl piloted a mini-car around a concrete track -- the colonel pushing her vehicle having just as good a time as she -- while a group of GI's found out the hard way that the airplane ride was not their bag. But *everywhere*, the kids loved it and had a ball.

Afterward, three buses took the entire expedition back to the MACV Annex Chapel. With a treat of cake and ice cream to top off the day, the orphans headed home with memories of their happy time at the zoo and their new-found American friends.



Chaplain (Major) Glenn L. Myers, who organized the Saigon Zoo outing for the 65 children from St. Elizabeth's orphanage, is deputy chaplain for U.S. Army Headquarters Area Command. Fifteen enlisted men, representing the Army, Navy, and Air Force, volunteered to help conduct the trip.

(U.S. Army Photo by Sp5 D.C. Stokstad)

BUNKER BUNNY SEZ,

"Happy Independence Day! Personal involvement has always been important in preserving the traditions that have helped make America great. Let's face it, a man who has a vested interest in something is more likely to be concerned about matters affecting his investment. That's why buying U.S. Savings Bonds make real sense. By putting part of your savings to work for America, you can provide some of the economic strength it takes to run our great country. And, you'll be helping yourself at the same time, because Bonds give you interest and security. It's a great way to get involved. So, why not join the "Bond Wagon" and start the 4th off with a BANG."

(PHOTO COURTESY OF 20TH CENTURY-FOX)

'Photo Quiz'

As the saying goes, "some things aren't always what they appear to be." And this is just one of the dangers associated with the drug abuser. Drug abuse doesn't make sense, and any person with common sense knows that. Used improperly, drugs can bring harm to the user and those who must rely on him. In the military, a drug abuser is a threat to the life and morale of his comrades. So play it straight and keep a clear head. In the meantime, see if you can focus in on the photos and figure out what they represent.

A

B

C

D

(A) Snowstorm? No, just a couple of firemen dressed in asbestos gear making their way through the foam used to douse the flames of a practice fire at Da Nang. (B) Secret weapon? Not really, but an artillery piece it is. The photographer captured the entire length of a 105mm howitzer from the muzzle break on the end of the tube to the towing ring. (C) Extraction - Two troopers are hoisted from the jungle floor by a hovering helicopter during operations near Hue. (D) This serpentine tangle isn't another obstacle course for harried trainees. What you see are carefully rolled and overhauled armored tracks used by the 62nd Engineer Bn. To replace those damaged by enemy mines or RPGs.

Beetle Bailey — **By Mort Walker**

25th Div Has Become Expert

25TH INF DIV -- The Commanding Officer of the 4th Battalion, 23rd Infantry's Company C, First Lieutenant Robert Schmidt, is thinking about having a special medal made for every member of his company.

The medal, he said, would feature a brown burlap bag bracketed by two rice stalks.

The reason for the medal? The company has become a rice-finding expert.

In recent Cambodian operations near the village of Ph Khley and Py Take, about three and one half miles from Memot and two miles from the Vietnam border, Company C found over 100 tons of rice.

Some of the caches were spotted from the air by helicopters, but most were simply found during routine search operations.

Many of the caches were concealed in heavy vegetation, making both ground and aerial observation difficult. The average cache found consisted of one hundred 250-pound bags, neatly stacked in makeshift storage huts. The huts were usually built three of four feet above ground. Many of them draped with long ponchos.

Always located in base camp areas which included bunkers, hootches, and sleeping and eating quarters, most of the caches were found within 50 yards of each other.

For the Infantrymen, finding the rice was only the first step. It also had to be removed from the original site. That meant back-breaking work loading the 250-pound rice bags on APCs, which then hauled it to a nearby night defensive perimeter so that it could be airlifted to a Vietnamese redistribution point, or given to nearby villagers.

Company C has had a real problem finding enough APCs to haul all the rice they've found. Only three such vehicles are available, making several round trips from the cache site to the NDP necessary.

The men naturally are pretty much fed up with rice. Many of them claim they will never eat rice again.

First Lieutenant Jerry Saxs, of St. Louis, summed up a general feeling when he remarked, "We can't even go into a woodline without finding rice."

This rice cache was found by the 4/23 Inf, 25th Inf Div "Tomahawks", near the village of Ph Khle, about two miles inside Cambodia. (USA PHOTO By: Sgt. Mile Keyster)

Weeks Bluffs Enemy

101ST ABN DIV -- "It's empty but he doesn't know it!" was the thought that raced through Specialist 4 James E. Weeks' mind as he stood with an empty weapon, face to face with a startled, armed VC.

It was a bluff -- but it worked.

Weeks, a rifleman from Company E, 3rd Battalion, 187th Infantry, is a member of the Rakkasan Eagle Flight Platoon, which makes frequent flights to intercept enemy units moving in the area.

The Screaming Eagles were working in an area about 19 miles northwest of Hue shortly before dark when smoke was spotted rising from a wooded area known to contain no friendly elements.

The Rakkasans landed near the suspected enemy position and immediately started a sweep of the area. Within minutes they made contact with an estimated squad-size enemy force.

"I heard firing to my right. I looked and saw a VC running down a trail straight at me. I used up my magazine firing at him," said Weeks, from Elko Nevada. "As I went for another magazine and started to turn, I came face to face with another VC ten meters to my left. He started to raise his rifle and I knew I coundn't possibly reload my weapon in time so I just pointed it at him and screamed 'Chieu Hoi.' Was I ever surprised and happy when he did."

Weeks quickly reloaded his weapon and took the detainee back to the rear area.

LOH Takes "15 Hits"

AMERICAL DIV -- **One would think that the sheer weight of 15 pounds of lead would be enough to bring down a "Primo" Light Observation Helicopter (LOH), but an Americal Division aircraft recently showed its fiber when heavy enemy ground fire failed to sway the LOH from its mission.**

Chief Warrant Officer Glenn Aurelius of Miami, Fla., was flying a screening mission for a combat assault by soldiers of the 4th ARVN Regiment five miles northwest of Duc Pho, when the incident occurred.

"The combat assault was putting down to the south of our location as we were checking out a wooded area," said Aurelius.

Specialist Five Harold A. Woolsey of Rockport, Ind., a door gunner, spotted a bunker and an armed NVA soldier in a blue uniform hiding in a shadow below.

Woolsey engaged and killed the shadowed figure with his M-60. The remaining enemy soldiers returned a heavy barrage of small arms fire. Some fifteen rounds struck the LOH, knocking out the radio.

Undaunted the LOH continued its mission for one and one-half hours. "With smoke grenades and hand signals, we directed the ARVN from their landing zone into the enemy bunker area," said Aurelius. The maneuver resulted in four enemy killed and four others captured.

"A LOH can take a lot of hits and still fly. They're built small but are rugged," reported Staff Sergeant Richard N. Yackell of Dearborne. Mich., "Primo" maintenance supervisor.

Clearance Is Slow 'But We're Fast'

196TH INF BDE -- Sometimes an artilleryman's nemesis in Vietnam is clearance. In a recent fire mission, however, waiting a half hour for clearance to fire did not hamper the shooting of Battery A, 3rd Battalion, 82nd Artillery at all. When the Americal Division gunners were given the signal to fire, they were credited with killing 25 soldiers of an estimated VC company.

Late in the afternoon a Vietnamese Popular Forces platoon from Thang Binh, working in the flat, open rice paddies 13 miles north of Tam Ky, observed a company of VC on the move.

The Americal advisor immediately called a fire mission. However, a number of friendly elements in the area necessitated a delay for clearance, which left the Hawk Hill gunners waiting in anticipation.

As it turned out, the delay did nothing to hamper the effectiveness of the big guns.

"The clearance may have been slow," said Second Lieutenant Robert Thomas of Sunnyvale, Calif., fire direction officer, "but we're fast."

The first rounds crashed in sending the surviving enemy into chaotic flight. The artillerymen continued to pound the area.

"The forward observer out there was good," Thomas said. "After one correction we fired three repeats; after that two more corrections and the job was done."

After the mission had been completed, the Popular Forces platoon swept through the area, finding the 25 VC that had been killed, four AK-47 rifles and one 82MM mortar tube.

Tiger Kill

Sergeant Michael L. Larkins of Toronto, Ohio, (left) and Lieutenant Lou E. Daugherty of Cortland, Ohio, display a 300-pound tiger that Larkins killed when the animal charged his position during an operation 17 miles northwest of Da Nang. The Marines are members of Company E, 1st Recon Bn, 1st Marine Div. (USMC PHOTO By: Sgt. C.H. Gardner III)

Mail THE OBSERVER Home

★ (Does not meet requirements for "free" mail.)

From:

_____

_____

_____

Place Stamp Here

(12 cents 1st class)

(20 cents Airmail)

TO: _____

_____

_____