



Vol 3 No. 47

TROPIC LIGHTNING NEWS

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ARVN Gets Bronze Star

DAU TIENG - Major General Ellis W. Williamson, 25th Infantry Division commanding general, has presented the Bronze Star for Valor to a Vietnamese soldier for his role in defense of a beleaguered outpost.

The award was presented to Platoon Sergeant Hen Ho Van of the 47th Popular Forces Platoon, in a ceremony at Tri Tam district headquarters in Dau Tieng village.

The presentation was witnessed by civic and governmental officials of the Dau Tieng area, by officers of the Tropic Lightning division's 3d Brigade, and by school children.

The Bronze Star citation praised Van for his role in leading Popular Forces troopers as they warded off an enemy attack against Outpost 68, a mile south of Dau Tieng.

On October 20, an enemy force attacked the outpost shortly before midnight, using 61mm and 82mm mortars, RPG rocket grenades, machine guns and rifle fire. The PFs repulsed the one-hour attack which found the enemy at the edge of the outpost, killing six.

During the attack, Van was directing small arms and mortar fire in defense of the 10-man position, and personally detonating claymore mines while firing M-79 grenades and a machine gun. Meanwhile, he assisted in distributing ammunition and caring for two men who were wounded.

At the ceremony, Major General Williamson took the occasion to tell the visiting civilians of the goals of U.S. forces in aiding the Vietnamese.

"Almost 200 years ago my own nation was in trouble," he told the villagers. "Then other nations came to the help of the United States."

He compared this to American participation in Vietnam.

"When we go home to our families and loved ones, we seek to take nothing except your friendship and good wishes," he added.

The general's remarks were interpreted for the civilians and members of Van's platoon by Major Nguyen Ngoc Chau, Tri Tam district chief.

Command Sergeant Major Frank J. Bennett, 25th Infantry Division sergeant major, and Command Sergeant

Major Howard A. Brosseau, 3d Brigade sergeant major, congratulated Van on behalf of the Tropic Lightning's noncommissioned officers and enlisted men.

Quick Huey Crew Doubles Up, Rescues Stranded Jet Pilots

By SP4 Jim Brayer

CU CHI - The crew of a UH1D Huey helicopter rescued two grounded Air Force aviators only 15 minutes after their RB57 photo reconnaissance plane crashed 15 miles east of Dau Tieng.

It took about 25 minutes from the time their distress signal was received until they reached Cu Chi's 12th Evacuation Hospital.

First Lieutenant John H. Webb, commander of the rescue chopper, and. Warrant Officer Jeffrey M. O'Hara, pilot, are assigned to Company A Little Bears, 25th Aviation Battalion.

Air Force Major James W. Johnston, pilot of the unarmed recon aircraft later said that one of its two engines developed trouble, and the plane went out of control. "It went into a starboard roll and was inverted when we ejected from the craft," he said.

He and his navigator, Major Philip N. Walker, managed to radio a distress signal before bailing out at 5,000 feet. They had been on a photo mission for Detachment 1 of the 460th Tactical Reconnaissance Wing.

Johnston stated that they parachuted to the ground uninjured about 2,000 meters from the wreckage of their aircraft.

When they touched ground, both heard small arms and automatic weapons fire from what seemed to be two enemy troops. Johnston, some 200 or 300 meters from Walker, landed in waist-deep water in a rice paddy. He sloshed his way through about six more paddies, trying to get away from the bright red and white chute.

Noticing an O-1 Bird Dog light scout plane circling the area, Johnston tried to raise radio contact, but his portable radio refused to function. Finally he was able to signal the scout plane with a mirror, a part of his survival kit.

Walker had landed in the river, but when he heard the gunfire, he untangled himself from the parachute straps and slid to the edge of a thicket.

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DESTROYING INFILTRATION ROUTES - Rome Plows from the 168th Engineer Battalion strip away the concealing jungle as Bobcats from the 1st Battalion (Mechanized), 5th Infantry provide security near Dau Tieng. **(PHOTO BY SP4 DON MOSSEAU)**

***Water Buffalo Gets A Little Mad
Dragons Get 'One-Ton Body Count'***

CU CHI - A sweep operation near Duc Hoa netted Company C, 2d Battalion, 14th Infantry Golden Dragons an enormous body count - nearly one ton's worth.

While part of the company cordoned and searched a small village hidden in a wooded area, a security element set up in surrounding rice paddies to guard the flanks.

Suddenly a huge form burst from the wood line and charged the flankers. A crazed water buffalo, apparently spooked by the searchers, bore down on Private First Class Ken Tadlock, a squad leader with Charlie Company.

"He put his head down and ran right down the dike at me," stated Tadlock of Auburn, Calif. Because of the danger of hitting one of his buddies in the village, Tadlock hesitated to fire at the rapidly approaching beast. "I couldn't shoot at him until he was about 10 feet away, and then he reared up and I shot him eight times in the belly," he said.

As he fired at the huge animal, Tadlock fell backward off the dike to try and avoid being crushed by its lunge.

"We thought for sure the buffalo had him," stated Specialist 4 Dave Shelton of Orangevale, Calif., a startled observer of the incident. "I saw Ken and the bull go down at the same time, and it looked like the bull landed on top of him," Shelton continued.

Fortunately Tadlock's shots were effective and his leap sufficient. He emerged from the rice paddy only two feet from where the dead animal lay.

Wolfhounds Pepper VC

CU CHI - It hadn't been a half an hour since the men of Company C, 2nd Battalion, 27th Infantry, had moved their position to a ridge overlooking a laterite pit when they spotted an estimated 40 enemy soldiers moving on a course paralleling theirs.

Opening up with all organic weapons, the Wolfhounds repelled the constant probing of the enemy soldiers.

A search of the area the following day revealed blood trails. Captured was one complete 60mm mortar, one 82mm mortar bipod, assorted web gear and documents.

DANGEROUSLY CLOSE - Staff Sergeant Lonnie Jackson of Philadelphia, Pa., points out superficial damage done to his 1st Battalion (Mechanized), 5th Infantry armored personnel carrier by RPG fragments. Jackson is framed by a RPG screen which has proven to be valuable protection. (PHOTO BY SP4 DON MOSSEAU)



Decorated

Bronze Star

SGT Roberto Del Valle, B Btry, 7th Bn, 11th Arty
SP4 Anthony J. Gahala, HHC, 3d Bn, 22d Inf

SFC Billy M. Trull, HHB, 2d Bn, 77th Arty
SP4 John M. Alphonse, HHC, 4th Bn, 9th Inf

SP5 Curtis E. Gardner, 25th Admin Co
 SP4 Maurice B. Habron, Co B, 4th Bn, (Mech), 23d Inf
 SSG Marvin D. Harris, A Btry, 2d Bn, 77th Arty
 SP5 Candido Hinojos, 25th Admin Co
 SP5 Walter P. Hladko, B Btry, 7th Bn, 11th Arty
 SSG Jack G. Hollars, B Btry, 3d Bn, 13th Arty
 SP5 Williams S. Janssen, HHB, 25th Inf Div Arty
 SP5 James A. Jondreau, HHD, 125th Sig Bn
 SGT Clark R. Latshaw, Jr., B Btry, 3d Bn, 13th Arty
 SGT Claude E. Lee, Co A, 125th Sig Bn
 SP6 Billy W. Little, HHC, 3d Bn, 22d Inf
 SSG Norbert E. Mayer, HHC, 25th Sup & Trans Bn
 SP5 Peter A. Mitchell, Co B, 25th Sup & Trans Bn
 SP5 Rodney A. Norman, 25th Admin Co
 SGT Reginald G. Saddler, B Stry, 3d Bn, 13th Arty
 SGT Lonnie D. Snipes, HHC, 65th Engr Bn
 SP6 Willie E. Singleton, HHB, 2d Bn, 77th Arty
 SGT Joe E. Sparks, HHC, 3d Bn, 22d Inf
 SSG Charles D. Staples, A Btry, 2d Sri, 77th Arty
 CPT Rudrick E. Boucher, Co D, 25th Med Bn
 CPT Carl N. Gilbert, HHC, 1st Bn (Mech), 5th Inf
 CPT Donald F. Magness, HHC, 25th Sup & Trans Bn
 1LT Peter C. Mary, HHC, 3d Bde
 1LT Benjamin S. Downer, B Btry, 2d Bn, 77th Arty
 1LT Harold E. Pitts, 25th Admin Co
 1LT Dean F. Walker, Co B, 3d Bn, 22d Inf
 WO4 Wayne R. Alexander, Co B, 25th Avn Bn
 PSG Troy L. Gurganious, Ltng Cmbt Ldrs Crse

SP4 Robert J. Ordy, Co C, 1st Bn (Mech), 5th Inf
 SP4 Donald J. Wheeler, Co A, 4th Bn (Mech), 23d Inf
 MAJ Phil C. Anderson, HHC
 CPT Harold D. Dye, Co A, 25th Avn Bn
 CPT Gordon R. Lam, Co A, 4th Bn (Mech), 23d Inf
 1LT Bartley G. Mauch, HHC, 65th Engr Bn
 1LT Cliff H. Hansen, Co A, 2d Bn, 12th Inf
 SFC Elmer Brashear, HHC, 3d Bn, 22d Inf
 SSG John E. Burros, Co A, 125th Sig Bn
 SGT Wayne E. Clark, Co A, 2d Bn, 12th Inf
 SFC Walter Crutchfield, HHC, 2d Bn, 14th Inf
 SGT Errol W. Davis, Co A, 1st Bn (Mech), 5th Inf
 SP4 Henry J. Eldridge, Co D, 2d Bn, 27th Inf
 SSG Earl W. Fleming, HHC, 2d Bn, 34th Armor
 SP5 Keith A. Hase, HHB, 25th Div Arty
 SGT Henry Lapidus, Co D, 2d Bn, 14th Inf
 SGT Theodore F. Lawlor, Co A, 2d Bn, 27th Inf
 SP4 Jerry A. Liucci, Co A, 2d Bn, 27th Inf
 SP4 Jimmy L. Martin, Co A, 2d Bn, 27th Inf
 CPT Edwin A. Noyes, HQ & Co A, 25th Med Bn
 SP4 Herter E. Porter, Co A, 2d Bn, 27th Inf
 SP4 Richard A. Patterson, 25th Admin Co
 MSG Kenneth E. G. Perry, HHC, 25th Inf Div
 SGT Kermit C. Brooks, A Btry, 2d Bn, 77th Arty
 SGT John C. Bordley, HHB, 2d Bn, 77th Arty
 SP4 Denny J. Brown, Co A, 25th Sup & Trans Bn
 SSG Robert Clayton, B Trp, 3d Sqdn, 4th Cav

President Signs Justice Act; New Law To Protect Soldiers

President Lyndon B. Johnson has signed into law the Military Justice Act of 1968, which is designed to insure that military personnel are afforded the same protection as civilian persons who are accused of federal offenses.

Also, the new law is intended to bring the procedures for trials by special and general courtsmartial more closely parallel to current procedures in U.S. district courts.

The legislation, which had the concurrence of the Office of the Secretary of Defense, makes far-reaching changes in military law and trial procedures.

Part of the law went into effect when the President signed the act in late October. The remaining provisions, which will have a great influence on commanders and all other military personnel, will become effective on Aug. 1, 1969.

The portions of the law now in effect pertain to appellate review of court-martial cases. Two major changes are included:

- The time in which the accused can petition for a new trial is extended from one year to two years, including summary and special court-martial cases.
- The Judge Advocate General is given new powers to modify, or set aside, illegal convictions by summary or special courts martial.

Before the remaining provisions of the law can be implemented, the President must issue an executive order changing the Manual for Courts Martial.

A revised Manual for Courts Martial, reflecting changes in military law over the past 17 years, will be used by the Armed Forces beginning Jan. 1, 1969. This manual will be revised further by the President's executive order, which will be drafted with the assistance of the military services.

Among the major changes in the Manual for Courts Martial required, or permitted, by the law are the following:

The accused will be afforded the opportunity to be defended by a legally qualified counsel at special courts martial unless the commander certifies that such counsel cannot be obtained.

- Trial in special and general courts martial may be held by a military judge alone if the accused so requests and the request is approved by the military judge.
- Pretrial and post-trial sessions of courts martial may be held by the military judge without the presence of the court members for the purpose of deciding procedural questions.
- Convening authorities are giving discretionary authority to defer the service of sentences to confinement pending appellate review. (This parallels the civilian practice of an individual being freed on bail pending appeal of a sentence.)
- An accused may object to trial by summary court martial even if he has refused punishment under Article 15 of the Uniform Code of Military Justice. (ANF)

New Regs Permit R&R In Okinawa

Beginning in October, anyone with a family residing in Okinawa is eligible to take his or her out of country R&R in Okinawa. This R&R counts just as if taken under the MACV program.

Two seats per week will be made available, and persons interested should submit a letter application through command channels to MACV.

The unit R&R coordinator will verify eligibility dates and presence of family in Okinawa. All the flights will originate from Da Nang. Personnel will be required to report to the R&R processing center at Da Nang not later than 1030 hours on the flight date.

Units should release their personnel three days in advance in order to meet this reporting time.

For details, consult USARV regulation 28-5, and 25th Division regulation 28-10.

Tropic Lightning

Combat Honor Roll

Added to the Tropic Lightning Combat Honor Roll this week is Specialist 4 James E. Beverett of Company C, 3d Battalion, 22d Infantry who well displayed the spirit of the American fighting man.

Beverett distinguished himself by heroic actions on 17 September 1968 while serving as a machine gunner with Company C, 3d Battalion, 22d Infantry in the Republic of Vietnam. While on a road clearing operation, Company C came under an intense hostile attack, sustaining several casualties.

Fearlessly, Beverett exposed himself to a heavy volume of fire as he moved forward, placing effective suppressive fire on the insurgents, allowing his comrades to evacuate the wounded to safety.

As he was withdrawing from the area of contact, he noticed a severely wounded soldier who had not been extracted with other friendly casualties. With complete disregard for his own safety, Beverett exposed himself to the withering enemy fire as he attempted to carry his fallen comrade to safety.

Realizing that he could not reach safety unless he received supporting fire, he readjusted the wounded soldier on his back, picked up his M-60 machine gun and began placing highly effective suppressive fire on the enemy as he evacuated the wounded soldier to safety.

His valorous actions contributed immeasurably to the success of the mission. Beverett's personal bravery, aggressiveness and devotion to duty are in keeping with the highest traditions of the military service and reflect great credit upon himself, his unit, the 25th Infantry Division and the United States Army.



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WAITING - A Tropic Lightning platoon RTO and Command group of Company D, 2d Battalion, 12th Infantry, stop briefly in a concealed position while artillery and air strikes pound the enemy during fighting north of Cu Chi. (PHOTO BY SP4 CHARLES HAUGHEY)

Mess Job All Work

CU CHI - Cooking for 25th Infantry Division troops isn't quite the "gravy" job it's made out to be.

It is often said being a cook must be great duty - especially in Vietnam. Cooks stay inside the perimeter all day and always seem to have ice for a cold soda. But, cooks for the 4th Battalion (Mechanized), 23rd Infantry, seem to take a different attitude toward their job.

They have to roll out of the sack at least two hours before most of their comrades to prepare breakfast for their regular Tomahawk "customers."

Before the stoves are even cool or the breakfast pots and pans are washed, Staff Sergeant Roger Schmidt of Santa Anna, Calif., is already thinking of the evening meal. How to prepare 150 pounds of potatoes, 40 pounds of carrots, a few hundred rolls, and 200 pounds of meat are some of the daily challenges he must ponder.

Schmidt and his cooks have problems in the kitchen their home teachers probably never thought about.

For instance, in Schmidt's kitchen he has one homemade grill and four stoves to work with. He says four stoves aren't enough, while they're being used to cook meat, vegetables and gravy are waiting to be heated.

Flies and ants don't limit their activities to harassing the men in the field. Cooks are also bothered by the little

demons, having to keep them out of the food even though the tiny creatures don't eat much.

There always seems to be a little dog from one of the platoons looking for a handout. And what about the "gentle" northwest breeze? Or should one call it a wind? At any rate, rain and dust float along with the air current to further harass the cooks.

After braving the problems of each meal in the kitchen, cooks shout "come and get it," and stand back, making way for the onrush of hungry Tropic Lightning soldiers.

Air Slot Switch

A change in AFVN programming has switched the radio presentation "Lightning 25" from Saturday at 1:30 p.m. to Sunday at 12:45 p.m. Program length remains 15 minutes.

The Tropic Lightning radio show, hosted by Specialist 4 Joe Moore, features men and units of the division.

Golden Dragon Hunt Pays Off

CU CHI - Acting on information given by a Hoi Chanh, Golden Dragon soldiers from the 2d Battalion, 14th Infantry, uncovered a sizable cache of enemy weapons less than 150 meters from the battalion's night location.

The 2d Brigade soldiers found more than 270 RPG rounds, 35 rocket and mortar rounds and other enemy munitions.

According to First Lieutenant Jim Collison, battalion intelligence officer, the Tropic Lightning troopers began digging in the area where the Hoi Chanh said 12 RPG-2 rounds were buried. "We began digging and found not 12 but 44 RPG-7 rounds," said Collinson.

"We dug around a little more and found 44 more RPG-7s and 96 RPG-2s. We extended over to another area and found another 88 RPG-7 rounds," the Annapolis, Md., officer continued.

After the initial cache was uncovered, Specialist 4 James F. Carter, a squad leader from Baltimore, Md., using a metal probing rod, discovered what proved to be a cache of six 107mm rockets and 29 120mm mortars.

Two boxes of Chinese Communist TNT and approximately 900 meters of electrical wire were also uncovered.

The enemy weapons were buried in a cemetery less than 150 meters from the First Brigade unit's night location.

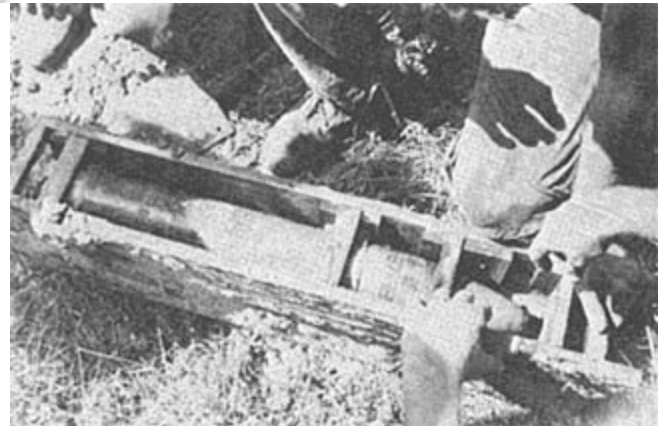
After the cache was uncovered, General Ralph E. Haines, Jr., commander-in-chief, U.S. Army, Pacific; Major General Ellis W. Williamson, 25th Division commanding general; and Brigade Commander Colonel Eugene Lynch visited the site. Lieutenant Colonel William J. Cummings, commander of the Golden Dragon battalion met them.

The cache was found on Cummings' first day in the field, after taking command of the battalion the day before.



BURIED MUNITIONS - Second Brigade soldiers from the 2d Battalion, 14th Infantry, dig in a deserted cemetery where they uncovered more than 300 RPG, mortar and rocket rounds.

BIG CACHE - Golden Dragon soldiers inspect a Chinese Communist 107mm rocket. The 2d Brigade soldiers uncovered the enemy weapon less than 150 meters from their night location. (PHOTOS BY SP4 FRANK HEINY)



General Lauds 3d Bde For Saigon's Defense

DAU TIENG - Capping four months of duty in defense of Tan Son Nhut airbase, men of the 3d Brigade boarded C-130 Hercules transports and returned to their home base at Dau Tieng.

During these four months, the Tropic Lightning soldiers continued to weaken the enemy's fighting potential, destroying numerous bunkers, capturing almost two score of the hard core Viet Cong infrastructure, and turning up some impressive weapons finds.

In a farewell ceremony upon departure from Tan Son Nhut, Colonel Lewis J. Ashley, commander of the brigade, drew praise from Brigadier General Emil P. Eschenburg, Deputy Commanding General of the Capital Military Assistance Command.

"During your brigade's service in defense of Saigon and Tan Son Nhut, the enemy failed to fire a single rocket or mortar into the city or airbase from your area of operations," the general noted. The area was formerly notorious as the enemy rocket belt.

After arriving in the Tan Son Nhut area late in May, the brigade made many innovations and developed new techniques as the infantrymen operated against the VC in a different environment and faced the threat of urban fighting in defense of Saigon.

The brigade's mechanized force, the 2d Battalion (Mech), 22d Infantry, found itself going airmobile, leaving its tracks behind in a sweep through the rice paddies.

Night time raids under the code name Snatch seized enemy suspects lurking in sleeping villages.

Contacts during the period left more than 300 enemy dead, while 907 persons were detained. Thirty-seven hard core members of the enemy shadow government were captured.

COLONEL LEWIS J. ASHLEY (right) is welcomed back to Dau Tieng base camp by Lieutenant Colonel Dan J. Mizell, deputy brigade commander. Colonel Ashley, commander of the 3d Brigade, returned the brigade to the camp 45 miles northwest of Saigon on completion of a four-month mission in defense of Tan Son Nhut Air Base. (PHOTO BY SP5 BILL SLUIS)



Army Boasts 'Air Armada'

The Army's aviation force is now second largest in the Armed Services. A summary of major forces in a report on the 1969 DOD Appropriation bill show the Active Army aircraft inventory is projected to contain approximately 11,500 aircraft on June 30, 1969, compared with approximately 10,500 in June 1968.

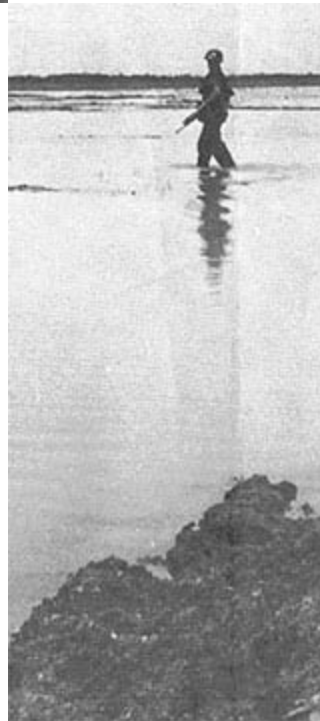
The bill provides for 1,304 aircraft, including large quantities of utility, observation and armed helicopters, plus the first production quantities of the sophisticated AH-56A CHEYENNE armed helicopter to be used for direct support of ground forces.

Memories Remain As Monsoon Season Ends



IT'S WET GOING - Wolfhounds from Company B, 2d Battalion, 27th Infantry, cross a canal while on a reconnaissance-in-force mission. (PHOTO BY SP4 ROBERT O'HARE)

WHAT IT'S ALL ABOUT - Private First Class Alvin P. Harrison of Springville, Ala., a new rifleman with Company D, 2d Battalion, 27th Infantry Wolfhounds, found out what the infantry is all about . . . long hours-wet and lonely. (PHOTO BY SP4 BILL CLEVENGER)





WET CROSSING - Captain Charles L. Holt of Garland, Tex., commander of Company B, 2d Battalion, 27th Infantry, crosses a stream during operations near Cu Chi. (PHOTO BY SP4 ROBERT O'HARE)

RUSTY FIND - A rusted rifle is pulled from a small water hole near Duc Hoa by Huymh Van Kom, a Kit Carson Scout with the 2d Battalion, 14th Infantry. The discovery was made during a sweep of the area by the Golden Dragons. (PHOTO BY PFC E. R. JAMES)



HOW WET IT WAS - A scenic view is caught by the camera, but the men of the 2d Battalion, 27th Infantry Wolfhounds can only tell you how wet it was. (PHOTO BY SP4 BILL CLEVINGER)

DON'T LET THE RAIN COME DOWN - Staff Sergeant Kerry Mathews of Vero Beach, Fla., directs traffic on rain-flooded Highway One, north of Trang Bang. The 65th Engineer Battalion sergeant's efforts were too late for the Esso truck that hit a submerged culvert and overturned. (PHOTO BY SP4 DAVID C. MERCER)



PORT ARMS - Waist deep in a canal eight miles northwest of Saigon, an infantryman of the 1st Battalion, 27th Infantry Wolfhounds pushes his way through the murky depths. The Wolfhounds were sweeping an area near the strategic Hoc Man bridge. (PHOTO BY SP4 HECTOR NADAL)

To Charlie - With Love



BLUES FOR CHARLIE - Mortarmen of the heavy mortar platoon, 2d Battalion (Mechanized), 22nd Infantry, hangs a 4.2 mortar round in preparation to fire (left). At the right, the round blasts out of the tube on its way to the enemy. Usually in a fire-support role, the mortar unit has, on occasion, fought on line with the infantry. (PHOTO BY SGT ROBERT ROSSOW)



CU CHI - The mechanized 4.2-inch heavy-mortar platoon and the three 81mm-mortar platoons of the 2d Battalion (Mechanized), 22d Infantry, give the unit's mailed fist a powerful punch.

The tubes of these four platoons have thundered from the Cambodian border of War Zone C to the outskirts of Saigon pouring thousands of rounds on the enemy.

The Triple Deuce's mortars have participated in every one of the battalion's engagements, and have often provided the knockout punch. With the motto "Anytime, Anywhere", they have frequently served the needs of sister units in the 25th Infantry Division, as well as other Allied forces.

Not content solely with the role of combat support the mortarmen have fought on the line with their sister infantry platoons when needed.

The keystone of the battalion's integral indirect fire support is the heavy-mortar platoon, which consists of the fire direction center (FDC) and four 4.2-inch mortar squads, each mounted in specially adapted armored personnel carriers.

From the FDC, Sergeant First Class George O'Brian of Columbus, Ga., directs the operation of the platoon. In addition to the platoon leader, the FDC is staffed by a platoon sergeant, a Chief Computer and two computers. At the FDC raw information is converted into firing data and fed to the squads.

Each of the four mortar squads is organized with a squad leader, gunner, assistant gunner, and two ammunition bearers, one of whom doubles as the APC driver.

The three Deuce line companies each have indirect fire support in 81mm mortar platoons, organized along lines similar to the heavy mortar platoon.

When the mortars roll into a position, they first lay in the guns. Azimuths are plotted with the aiming circle. After the tube is laid, the gunner directs the other members of the squad as they set out aiming stakes, and the gun is ready for action.

Upon receipt of a fire mission, the FDC alerts the squads and passes down the computed firing data to the gunners. They place it on the weapons, while the ammunition bearers set the firing charges and fuzes on the ammunition, and pass ammo up to the assistant gunner.

Perimeter Defense - Then, Now

TAY NINH - Their throats were parched from the hot sun beating down, and their eyes burned from the constant exposure to the whirling dust. Slowly and methodically they moved into the large wagon-wheel circle, considered their best method of defense. Quickly the men start to build cover for protection in the event of attack.

A wagon train or a mechanized infantry unit? It could be either for the defensive tactic has not changed through the years.

Instead of building cover out of boxes and crates as the Indian-fighters of the Old West did, the Vietnam fighters build well-fortified bunkers with timber, sandbags, ammunition boxes and more efficient equipment.

These men have learned, as did their forefathers, that their defensive positions are held in a balance with their lives. Like the Indians of the Old West, the Viet Cong and NVA forces use the darkness to find their enemy's weaknesses and then strike where he is most vulnerable.

Fire Support Base Rawlins, located two-and-one-half miles east of Tay Ninh city, was chosen as the temporary home of the 4th Battalion (Mechanized), 23rd Infantry Tomahawks. Its defenses were established similar to the American pioneers' wagon-wheel formation.

Twice in the past two months estimated regimental-sized enemy units have found Rawlins impregnable. Realizing that the next attack of the base could be by a much larger force, the Tomahawks have been constantly rebuilding and improving their perimeter defenses.

"Since starting the perimeter at Rawlins, we have used 14,000 sandbags and 4,000 artillery ammunition boxes for the bunkers," said First Lieutenant David Blanchard of Trenton, N.J.

"Building the bunkers in the hot sun is hard work," stated Specialist 4 Henry Botelho of San Francisco, Calif., a member of Company A, "but, when we're all crouched inside listening to incoming rounds, we don't mind all the work spent."

The bunkers the Tomahawks build are only a small part of the perimeter defenses. Using 700 rolls of wire, the troops have built two separate fences of concertina wire, each held in place by eight-foot engineering stakes, which make it extremely difficult to move the wire or climb over it.

National Colors Suit Kids To A T-Shirt

DAU TIENG - Thanks to a new program sponsored by the 3d Brigade youngsters in Dau Tieng, 45 miles northwest of Saigon, are "showing the flag".

The 3d Brigade civic action section, along with its psychological operations (PSYOPs) team, is outfitting the village kids in T-shirts of red and gold - patterned after the Vietnamese flag.

The PSYOPs team from the 6th PSYOPs Battalion enters the village every day, playing music and broadcasting messages encouraging the support of the people for the Vietnamese government. With them the PSYOPs team brings the flamboyant T-shirts as well as baseball caps, also done in the red, and gold theme.

On the shirt is inscribed the slogan, "The government of the Republic of Vietnam helps us all," in Vietnamese.

Colonel Lewis J. Ashley of Alexandria, Va., Commander of the 3d Brigade is a strong believer in the civic action program. "This facet of our civic actions program has attracted considerable interest among the Vietnamese," said Ashley. "It serves to remind the people of their government's continuing concern for them."

The colonel added, "With this effort, the number of South Vietnamese flag bearers is increasing."

First Lieutenant Raymond J. Calore of Wilkes-Barre, Pa., who heads the PSYOPs team, is enthusiastic about the impact of the program on the youngsters, and, importantly, on their parents.

THE WEATHER'S FINE - Pausing a moment in the safety of a bunker, Private First Class James Strickland of the Manchus, catches up on some 4th Battalion, 9th Infantry, letter writing. (Photo by PPC H. J. Tschirner)



The Cu Chi Resort Opens

Story, Photos By SP4 Richard Patterson

CU CHI - One of the most exclusive hotels in the III Corps area was opened at Cu Chi recently by the Division's Support Command (DISCOM). The main criterion for staying at the 'Cu Chi Hilton' is being a battle-weary trooper and member of a unit that has not been in base camp for several months.

The Hilton, scenically located at the edge of a small rubber plantation, is an idyllic location for a stand-down area. It is within easy walking distance of the Cu Chi main post exchange, a large swimming pool and, the Ilikai East Service Club. The spacious living area accommodates company-sized units for the stand-down.

As soon as a unit arrives the men are blitzed with all the facilities and services lacking in the field.

The combat veterans line up at a supply building where they shed their worn fatigues and old boots for a new issue.

In the same building a 'contact team' goes over the finance and personnel files of the men. Pay problems can be straightened out on the spot; dog tags can be stamped; and money orders may be purchased. A barber, dentist and armorer are also available.

The first evening at the Cu Chi Hilton is devoted to recreation. A steak barbecue starts about 6 p.m.

The evening's entertainment is provided by a band, and whenever possible a visiting USO show is presented on the Hilton's portable stage.

The stand-down site was little more than a dilapidated company area until DISCOM began cleaning it up and making major renovations.

Major Raymond Long, Jr., officer in charge of the Cu Chi Hilton, explained that the majority of the work involved making the place livable again. This included cutting the knee-high grass, installing sinks and shower facilities and reopening the mess hall.

Three days after the project began the first unit arrived, and since that day the "resort" has been in constant use.

According to Long, "Two or three units arrive each week and stand down for 48 hours. We expect to stand down all maneuver companies approximately every 45 days," he continued.

The primary mission is to improve combat effectiveness, and the results have been overwhelming.

"It is also a tremendous moral booster," stated Long.

The entire project has been such a success that a second stand-down area, the 'Holiday Inn,' is rapidly being

constructed at the Tay Ninh base camp.



NEW BOOTS - Two soldiers of the 4th Battalion, 9th Infantry walk barefoot along a walkway after receiving new jungle boots at the supply room.

PEACE AND QUIET - A relaxing game of dominoes is played by Infantrymen of B Company, 4th Battalion, 9th Infantry. The men had been in the field three months and returned to Cu Chi Base camp for a two-day rest.



ENTERTAINMENT - A Vietnamese band and singing group perform on the portable stage for relaxing Manchus at the Cu Chi Hilton.

REAL STEAK - One barbecue steak coming up to an infantryman at the Cu Chi Hilton's first-night cookout.



LIVE MUSIC - The 25th Division band plays 'A Taste Of Honey' on the portable stage provided by special services. The stage is specially designed to provide acoustics comparable to an amphitheater.

25th S&T MEDCAP Program Going Strong

CU CHI - When the TET Counteroffensive ended in April, the 25th Supply and Transportation Battalion doubled their efforts to conduct complete, effective MEDCAPs that were not one-time, piece-meal affairs.

Working with a medical team from the 25th Medical Battalion at Cu Chi, 25th S&T has treated more than 6,800 patients in the past five months.

Careful records are kept on each patient and a medical history is compiled on Vietnamese nationals who come to the MEDCAP station in their village. With these records available to the team, they can provide specialized treatment.

According to First Lieutenant Thomas vonBoetticher, civic actions officer for S&T, this personalized service fosters a greater trust in the MEDCAP and better relations between Vietnamese and American soldiers.

During August dental care was added to the MEDCAP. The dental team, also from the 25th Medical Battalion, is capable of pulling teeth, diagnosing gum diseases and treating them.

Through the efforts of the Division Support Command 25th S&T is often able to provide the MEDCAP with something extra. In recent weeks more than 16,000 pounds of surplus food has been distributed.

Lieutenant vonBoetticher, of Port Washington, N.Y., described a recent MEDCAP that "had something else to offer."

"One of the men participating in the MEDCAP wrote home and explained the entire operation to his family. His sister started a drive with the Lutheran church of Wayne, Mich., to collect children's clothes and toys," vonBoetticher said.

"We received about 14 boxes of toys, and miscellaneous clothing. As a matter of fact we also received three snowsuits," he chuckled.

The gifts were distributed at the next MEDCAP and the results were as predicted. Whenever kids and toys are brought together there are always smiles and happiness.

EAGER HANDS - First Lieutenant Thomas von Boetticher gives clothing to local Vietnamese children during 25th S&T MEDCAP near Tan Thong village.



WAITING FOR MOTHER - A little boy scrutinizes a toy tank while he and his sister wait for their mother to come out of the MEDCAP station. (PHOTOS BY SP4 RICHARD PATTERSON)

DIVARTY Joins In Annual Festival

CU CHI - Hundreds of youngsters beamed approval of Division Artillery's participation in the Vietnamese Middle Autumn Festival Children's Day (Tet Nhi-Dong) at the Trung Lap compound.

The festival, celebrated annually in Vietnam, uses the backdrop of Chinese lanterns and is held in the eighth month of the lunar year.

More than 500 children from the village of Trung Lap and the surrounding area spent the day singing and playing prior to the formal ceremonies hosted by the 41st ARVN Ranger Center commander, Major Truong Van Oanh.

Lieutenant Colonel Paul Donovan of Tewksbury, Mass., commander of the 3rd Battalion, 13th Artillery, (The Clan), represented DIVARTY commander, Colonel Lucius G. Hill, Jr., and 25th Division commander, Major General Ellis W. Williamson, at the festivities.

Other Tropic Lightning guests included the men of Battery A, 3d Battalion, 13th Artillery, and their commander, Captain Clifford A. Crittsinger of Buffalo, N.Y. Battery A has sponsored numerous civic-action projects in the Trung Lap area.

Following introductory remarks by the assistant ranger commander, Captain Nguyen Koy, the entire group enjoyed an open-air meal prepared by the mess section of the ARVN Rangers. Candies and other presents provided by DIVARTY units were given to every youngster.

Brigadier General Long Cited For Skillful Role

CU CHI - Brigadier General Glen C. Long, assistant 25th Division commander, was awarded the Vietnamese Cross of Gallantry with Palm by Major General Du Quoc Dong, commander of the Vietnamese 1st Airborne Division.

General Long was cited for his skillful and professional role in coordinating American and Vietnamese forces in battles between September 11 and 22 in Tay Ninh City.

During the fighting against the 5th and 9th Viet Cong Divisions, General Long disregarding heavy enemy anti-aircraft fire, used his helicopter to command and maneuver American units.

By making several low passes over the heavy fighting, General Long established positions preventing the enemy's escape, and units of the Army of the Republic of Vietnam were able to inflict heavy casualties on the enemy.

CITED BY VIETNAMESE -
Major General Du Quoc Dong
presents the Cross of Gallantry
with Palm to Brigadier
General Glen C. Long,
assistant 25th Division
commander.



Huey Crew

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Meanwhile, Webb and his crew were flying a routine general support mission from Tay Ninh to southeast of Dau Tieng. They had five passengers with them. "Our ship was almost at gross weight," Webb explained.

Suddenly, at 11:30 a.m., they received a distress signal from an aircraft in trouble.

Within ten minutes after the call, Webb and his Huey were in the rescue area. He saw the Bird Dog circling around overhead, and took his chopper in low. The commander spotted the brightly colored parachute on the rice paddy where Johnston landed and saw a nearby smoke signal.

Knowing that his Huey wouldn't hover over the water with the size load he had aboard, Webb took his five passengers to a nearby dry clearing, where they disembarked and set up a perimeter.

When they went in to rescue the Air Force pilot, he said he wasn't hurt and that Walker was nearby, toward the thick tree line.

Johnston piled in with his equipment, and they proceeded to pick up Walker. Later, Johnston described the rescue as working like "clockwork."

After the five other passengers were again aboard, Webb guided his craft to the scene of the crash, planning to set up a perimeter around the wreckage.

"All we saw was a hole that resembled a B-52 bomb crater. The plane was demolished and litter was strewn all around the area."

Feeling it safe to leave the wreckage, Webb and his crew returned to Cu Chi with their Air Force comrades.

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