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TROPIC LIGHTNING NEWS

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Vietnamese III Corps Commander Awards Gallantry Cross To Division

CU CHI On Tuesday, January 28, 1969, Lieutenant General Do Cao Tri, Vietnamese commander of the III Corps Tactical Zone, presented the Vietnamese Cross of Gallantry with Palm to the men of the 25th Infantry Division. Tropic Lightning commander, Major General Ellis W. Williamson, accepted the award on behalf of the men of the 25th.

The Cross is a tribute to the men who served with the Lightning Division between December, 1965, to August, 1968. Their efforts on the battlefield and the intense civic action programs were cited as major contributions to the preservation of freedom in the Republic of Vietnam.

Generals Tri and Williamson trooped the line while a formation of division aircraft flew overhead. The citation was read in Vietnamese and English. While General Williamson held the division colors, General Tri attached the Cross of Gallantry streamer to the guidon.

After the streamer was attached to the division colors, General Tri addressed the men of the 25th:

"Your sacrifices, your dedication to duty and your sense of responsibility have helped safeguard freedom and democracy in this part of the world."

General Williamson then spoke. The commander of the 25th paid tribute to Major General F. K. Mearns who commanded the division for a "major portion of the time for which it is being cited."

General Williamson likened the struggle in Vietnam to the United States fight for freedom during the American Revolution. Soldiers came from over the sea to help us win and maintain our own freedom," he said. "So, in effect, we are repaying a debt to history."

To point out that the Army of the Republic of Vietnam and its allies are winning the struggle, General Williamson concluded his remarks by issuing a challenge to "any Viet Cong, any North Vietnamese unit

anywhere in South Vietnam to conduct a public ceremony such as this."

Present at the ceremony were Lieutenant General Walter T. Kerwin, CG of II Field Force; Lieutenant General Frank T. Mildren, Deputy CG USARV; Major General Mearns; Brigadier General Donald D. Dunlop, former assistant division commander for maneuver; Brigadier General Glen C. Long, Jr., former assistant division commander for maneuver and Brigadier General Carleton Preer, Jr., assistant division commander for maneuver.

Brigadier General Edwin F. Black was commander of the troops. Battalions in the division were represented at the award ceremony, held in Cu Chi base camp's Lightning Bowl, by their commanders.

Tropic Lightning aircraft, armor and artillery were on display at the ceremony. Featured in the aircraft display was the new Bronco (OVIO) Light observation airplane. The Sheridan tank, the latest armor piece in Vietnam, was also on display.



REVIEWING TROOPS -

Lieutenant General Do Cao Tri, Vietnamese commander of the III Corps Tactical Zone, is escorted by Brigadier General Edwin F. Black, the assistant division commander for support. Major General Ellis W. Williamson, 25th Division commanding general rides in the following vehicle.

Triple Deuce, Arty Blast VC Ambushers

By SP4 John Caldwell

DAU TIENG - An estimated reinforced enemy battalion attempted ambushes on two convoys five and nine miles of Dau Tieng on Jan. 14. This marked the second and third ambushes in less than a month.

Once again, mechanized infantrymen of the 2d Battalion (Mechanized), 22d Infantry were on the scene in moments. The Battalion supported by artillery fire, gunships and air strikes, killed 122 enemy soldiers in the abortive ambushes.

The convoy from Cu Chi to the Tropic Lightning's 3d Brigade base camp 45 miles northwest of Saigon had just split off from the Tay Ninh convoy. It was traveling along Route 239 near the Ben Cui Rubber Plantation. The enemy's ambush site was less than a mile from the spot where 73 enemy died in December, also in an abortive ambush attempt.

"I guess Charlie doesn't learn too fast. Each time he tries this we come out way on top," said Staff Sergeant William Kunkel of Alpha Company, Triple Deuce, from Chicago.

As enemy RPG rocket grenades and small arms fire flew everywhere, Alpha Company roared up aboard their armored personnel carriers, spewing .50 caliber machinegun fire onto the enemy positions.

The company made three assaults, inflicting heavy casualties on the fleeing enemy.

Captain David Crocker of Old Mystic, Conn., Alpha commander, praised the swift reactions of his company and of a Triple Deuce Combined Reconnaissance Patrol, who hurried up to reinforce.

"Your men were here so fast that they must have come by air," a grateful trucker told Crocker.

Crocker's command track was hit and caught fire, but no one was hurt. His radio operator, Specialist 4 Gordon C. Olson of Portland, Ore., stayed with the disabled vehicle and kept up communications as the rest of the infantrymen fought on.

Olson successfully called in three dustoff helicopters to evacuate wounded. He also directed Air Force jets and eight strikes by Cobra helicopter gunships to within 50 meters of friendly lines.

"He did a whale of a job," said Crocker.

Meanwhile division artillery (Continued on Back Page)

EVERY WEEK IS SAFETY WEEK in the 25th Infantry Division. Enough emphasis cannot be placed on such things as weapons safety, good driving habits, proper handling of tools, alertness and keen awareness of the dangers that may exist as we perform our jobs each day. Always remember - **THINK SAFETY!**

GENERAL TRI - presents the Vietnamese Cross Of Gallantry To Gen. Williamson. (PHOTO BY SP5 LARRY WEIST)



Decorated

BRONZE STAR (HEROISM)

MAJ Gerard Delvin, HHC, 3d Bn, 22d Inf
 1LT Gary W. Barnes, A Trp, 3d Sqdn, 4th Cav
 1LT James Carper, HHC, 3d Bn, 22d Inf
 SGM Robert Adams, HHC, 3d Bn, 22d Inf
 SSG Adam M Flores, B Btry, 7th Bn, 11th Arty
 SSG Joseph LeCount, HHC, 3d Bn, 22d Inf
 SGT David Guider, Co A, 1st Bn, 5th Inf

SP4 Charles W. Ellis, Co C, 4th Bn, 23d Inf
 SP4 Robert Misevich, HHC, 2d Bn, 22d Inf
 SP4 Marvin E. Branch, Co C, 4th Bn, 23d Inf
 SP4 Gale J. Nash, Co A, 1st Bn, 5th Inf
 SP4 Daniel W. Datzko, Co A, 1st Bn, 5th Inf
 SP4 Robert Misevich, HHC, 2d Bn, 22d Inf
 SP4 Vasco R. McDonald, Co A, 4th Bn, 9th Inf

SP4 George A. Sharp, 25th MP Co
 SP4 Lawrence R. Demaria, 25th MP Co
 SP4 Carl R. Duncan, Jr, 25th MP Co
 SP4 Henry H. Bernshausen, 25th MP Co
 SP4 David Chedester, HHC, 3d Bn, 22d Inf
 CPL Jimmie D. Dodson, B Trp, 3d Sqdn, 4th Cav
 PFC Leroy Hatcher, C Btry, 7th Bn, 11th Arty
 PFC David Duhe, Co A, 1st Bn, 5th Inf
 PFC Charles Sheldon, Co B, 3d Bn, 22d Inf
 PFC William V. Anello, B Btry, 7th Bn, 11th Arty
 PFC Tapelci Pusi, Co B, 3d Bn, 22d Inf
 PFC Rufus Small, Co A, 1st Bn, 5th Inf
 PFC Gayle G. Schumacher, Co C, 4th Bn, 23d Inf
 SP4 Tommy Sandoval, Co C, 4th Bn, 23d Inf
 SP4 Curtis C Fommsbee, Co B, 4th Bn, 9th Inf
 SP4 Jon J Teschner, Co B, 1st Bn, 5th Inf
 SP4 Charles Flannery, Co B, 1st Bn, 5th Inf
 SP4 Douglas K Elias, Co A, 2d Bn, 14th Inf
 SP4 James Scott, Co B, 3d Bn, 22d Inf
 SP4 Paul M. Bogosian, HHC, 1st Bn, 5th Inf
 SP4 Leroy J. Taylor, Co D, 4th Bn, 9th Inf
 SP4 Kenneth R. Nichols, Co C, 4th Bn, 23d Inf
 SP4 Jack W. Ruley, Co A, 1st Bn, 5th Inf
 SP4 Frank Sposato Jr, Co B, 4th Bn, 9th Inf
 SP4 Daniel D. Motozzi, Co A, 2d Bn, 34th Armor
 SP4 Engle Smith, Co C, 4th Bn, 23d Inf
 SP4 Charles L. Wagner, Co A, 4th Bn, 9th Inf

PFC Dennis L. Wade, Co C, 4th Bn, 23d Inf
 PFC Ronald L. Hayes, Co B, 2d Bn, 14th Inf
 PFC Dale Nowakowski, Co B, 3d Bn, 22d Inf
 PFC James H. Tyson, Co B, 1st Bn, 5th Inf
 PFC Leonard R. Summerhill, Co C, 4th Bn, 23d Inf
 PFC Timothy M. Gresh, Co C, 4th Bn, 23d Inf
 PFC Edward Grochola, Jr, Co C, 4th Bn, 23d Inf
 SP4 Richard Woodall, C Co, 4th Bn, 9th Inf
 SP4 Robert Timko, D Co, 2d Bn, 14th Inf
 PFC Sherrell Shelton, B Co, 1st Bn, 27th Inf
 PFC Wayne Smith, A Co, 1st Bn, 27th Inf
 PFC William Haney, A Co, 1st Bn, 27th Inf
 PFC Robert Gilbertson, B Co, 1st Bn, 27th Inf
 PFC Donald Getty, B Co, 1st Bn, 27th Inf
 PFC Robert Jodal, B Co, 1st Bn, 27th Inf
 PFC Roger Adams, C Co, 4th Bn, 23d Inf
 PFC Richard Molina, A Co, 2d Bn, 22d Inf
 PFC Peter Hernandez, A Co, 1st Bn, 27th Inf
 PFC Gary Battles, A Co, 2d Bn, 22d Inf
 PFC Ronald Latkovic, B Co, 25th S&T Bn
 PFC Leland Price, A Co, 2d Bn, 22d Inf
 PFC Alvin Stewart, D Co, 65th Engr Bn
 PFC Paul Benoit, HHC, 4th Bn, 23d Inf
 PFC Bobby Myers, A Co, 2d Bn, 27th Inf
 PFC Ferendo Garza, D Co, 2d Bn, 27th Inf
 PFC Jesse Bowlson, A Co, 1st Bn, 5th Inf
 PFC John Mondragon, A Co, 1st Bn, 5th Inf

Know Income Tax Regulations While You Serve In Vietnam

U.S. Armed Forces personnel in Vietnam and other individuals, such as Red Cross workers, Department of the Army civilians, industrial technicians, and accredited correspondents who support the Armed Forces, have an automatic extension of time to file their federal income tax returns. Such individuals are given up to 180 days after they return from the combat zone to file.

If an individual is hospitalized outside the US as a result of an injury incurred in the combat zone (even though the hospitalization is not in the combat zone), the return is due 180 days after release from the hospital.

These extensions apply to the filing of joint returns by a member and his spouse, but do not apply to the spouse if she chooses to file a separate return. To be eligible for the extension, individuals must be in the combat zone before the ordinary date for filing 1968 returns, which, of course, is 15 April 1969.

It is important that a statement showing the inclusive dates of combat zone active service, or continuous hospitalization outside the US as a result of a combat zone injury, be attached to postponed returns when filed and to any delinquency notices being returned by reason of the postponements.

For example: "I served on active duty as a member of the Armed Forces of the US in the Vietnam Combat Zone from (date, month, year) until (date, month, year). The postponed due date for filing this return as authorized by virtue of section 7508 of the Internal Revenue Code is (date, month, year)."

If you are due a refund on your 1968 taxes, it is to your benefit to file your return as soon as possible after you receive your 1968 W-2 Form. In this way, your refund could be earning interest in a savings account after receipt.

All compensation received by warrant officers and enlisted men for active service in Vietnam and adjacent waters is exempt from federal income tax and need not be reported.

Personnel hospitalized at any place outside the US as a result of wounds, disease, or injury incurred in Vietnam or its adjacent waters are also entitled to the exclusions. Commissioned officers are entitled to tax exemption only on the first \$500 of each month's pay.

The exclusions apply for the entire month during any portion of which the individual served in Vietnam, even if it is only a fraction of a day. The block entitled "Wages paid subject to withholding in 1968" of your W-2

Form normally show wages after the above exclusions have been figured. You should contact the Finance Officer if the W-2 is wrong.

An item of concern to many - any interest you receive as a result of money held in the Uniform Servicemen's Savings Deposit Program (10 per cent interest program) is not taxable until the year of actual receipt. Usually, this is after you have returned to CONUS.

Treat People Like People

If you are in a field unit, always try to remember that a good deal of the time you may be on somebody's private property, and possibly doing it some harm.

If the man who owns the rice paddy you are in doesn't seem particularly happy to see you there, try to picture how an Iowa farmer would feel, seeing your company marching through his corn field.

As much as possible, try to respect the property and possessions of others. Remember that everything you see in the field doesn't belong to you. It probably belongs to a man whose living depends on how much rice he can produce and either use for himself or market.

You're walking on what he makes his living with - the rice growing under your boot.

Marijuana Turns Your Pals Into Deadliest Of Enemies

You are one soldier among 500,000 in Vietnam. You share many of the same daily problems as the man in the Delta and as the man in the Highlands. You face the same conditions and you are concerned with the same thing - getting home after a tour in Vietnam.

Marijuana can change a lot of your plans for you.

Little is known about the long-term effects of marijuana use. In its mildest form marijuana does not appear to be physically dangerous. However, the effects of marijuana, caused by chemical ingredients called tetra-hydro-cannabinols (THC), vary with the individual.

A given dosage of THC may have no apparent ill effects on one person but may have pronounced effects on another. You cannot be certain that even a mild form or dose of marijuana is totally safe for you.

The possession, use or sale of marijuana is a violation of the Uniform Code of Military Justice and is punishable by courts-martial and up to five years in prison.

Administratively, the U. S. government may also impose and collect a tax of \$100 for each ounce or fraction of an ounce possessed.

Any man with common sense knows that used properly, drugs contribute to life. Used improperly, they 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 to the morale of his comrades.

As likeable an individual as he may be, in a combat zone he is truly more your enemy than your friend. Back in the States, he will be a drag on his friends, his family and his community."

It is very difficult to admire such a man. It would be tragic to become one.

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Probing Warriors Detain Nine Uncover Cong Mortar Pits

CU CHI - Warriors from the 2d Brigade's 2d Battalion, 12th Infantry, while sweeping northwest of Cu Chi near Trang Bang detained nine armed suspects during two days of operations.

"We were moving through a dense hedgerow area when the company commander spotted a piece of strangely high ground," said Delta Company RTO Specialist 4 Dennis L. Rusch of Lake Park, Iowa.

Platoon Sergeant Ronald Dusch, Colorado Springs, Colo. moved in quickly and began probing with a bayonet. In the center of the bamboo thicket his probe struck home. "I found a small buried trap door," said Dusch. "I eased it open and two hands popped up," he added.

He guessed that more than one enemy must be hiding in the dark underground room. An ARVN interpreter was called to shout into the hole. "We have found you. Come out now. We are going to throw hand grenades into the hole," he shouted.

"That got some action," commented Delta's CO Captain Paul F. Allen, Orlando, Fla. "They couldn't get out fast enough," he added.

With the enemy soldiers extracted, a search of their hiding place turned up a Chicom pistol, two AK-47 assault rifles and an AK-50 machine gun.

The following day, while searching another area of dense bamboo hedgerows, lead elements of the Fire Brigade's 2d Battalion, 12th Infantry, rifle company discovered two carefully camouflaged enemy mortar pits.

"As soon as we got all-around security established, we began a thorough search of the jungle around the pits," said Allen.

"For the second time in two days Dusch found a hole full of VC," said First Lieutenant Jim Johnson, Ashland, Ky., who detained six enemy plus a Communist-made hand gun and several photos and documents that made the day a success.

"Basically, we're learning how Charlie lives and operates in this area and how he hides himself and his equipment. My people are observant and they are finding these things, and I'm sure we'll find more," said Allen.



TROPIC LIGHTNING soldiers of Company C, 4th Battalion (Mechanized) 23d Infantry, cautiously check out a VC bunker complex. Fresh food was found throughout the complex. (PHOTO BY SP4 ROGER WELT)

Regular PFC Misses His Date With Destiny

Whether it was fate, destiny or just plain luck is not known. But it is known that Private First Class Robert Vialpondo of Rocky Ford, Colo. missed a date with death.

While on a reconnaissance-in-force mission northwest of Tay Ninh, the 3d Battalion, 22d Infantry, came under intense small arms, automatic weapons and RPG fire. Vialpondo returned fire with his M-60 machinegun.

"Suddenly there was a tremendous explosion and my head jerked violently. My ears were ringing, and I was left dazed but recovered quickly and continued firing," said Vialpondo. Flying shrapnel from an enemy RPG had penetrated his steel pot, ripping the side out of it. One inch closer would have meant certain death.

Many Vietnam veterans have hair-raising stories to tell on their return from the Nam. But Vialpondo doesn't have to say a word. He can just hold up his shattered headgear for all to see and sit back to watch the expressions of his audience.

CLOSE CALL - Tropic Lightning soldier Private First Class Robert Vialpondo of Rocky Ford, Colo., displays his torn steel pot which he was wearing when it was hit by shrapnel from an enemy RPG. (PHOTO BY SP4 DAVE DEMAURO)



Dreadnought MEDCAPs Fighting Their Own War

CU CHI - Few people think of a MEDCAP (medical civic action program) team as a fighting unit. Tropic

Lightning soldiers, however, fight a war against disease that plagues the people of a war-torn nation.

The 2d Battalion, 34th Armor's civic action section with the aid of battalion surgeon, Captain Herbert C. Pratt, of Santa Fe, Calif., conducts MEDCAPs five afternoons a week.

According to Pratt, "the villagers were at first cautious about the MEDCAPs. After repeated visits to the villages, they gained confidence in us and our efforts were rewarded with the people coming to us.

"First came the children and then the adults.

"Once we are established in a village we generally treat about 75 patients in an afternoon; often it is more than one hundred."

The majority of the medical aid teams' treatment concerns diseases of the skin, respiratory disorders and intestinal infections. There are however a number of cases of tuberculosis, malaria and parasitic diseases.

According to Pratt, MEDCAP effectiveness is limited by the lack of medical laboratory facilities and the lack of patient follow-up. But the co-operation with the provincial hospitals helps in the case of necessary long-term medical aid and care.

Another phase of the MEDCAP program is the instruction of the villagers in methods of disease prevention and the improvement of their health facilities.

Individual soldiers in the field often help improve health standards of the people. The men of the 2d Battalion, 34th Armor are a good example of the help the GI can give. They have been collecting all the extra soap, toothpaste and toilet articles they can at Fire Support Base Crockett and surrounding areas for distribution by their ARVN counterparts to the Vietnamese children in local schools.

This not only aids relations between the U.W. and ARVN forces, but also promotes the work of the MEDCAP team.

As Sergeant First Class Billie Brown, Campbellsville, Ky., said, "Better conditions for the Vietnamese will take a large prop out from under the enemy's propaganda."

Is the plan working?

"I feel," said Pratt, "that the MEDCAP program is a valuable adjunct to the war effort. We have reached a time in which military might alone is not the answer to bring the war to a reasonably acceptable end.

"It is for this reason that an increasing amount of time and effort is now being directed toward such projects as the MEDCAP program in an attempt to create a feeling of goodwill and confidence between the Vietnamese people and the U.S. forces," the doctor continued.

Tomahawks Use Scout Dogs

TAY NINH - While on a recent sweep ten miles east of Tay Ninh City, Specialist Doningo Conlu, of Dededo village, Guam, and his dog, Blackie, both members of the 46th Scout Dog Platoon, discovered a base camp bunker complex.

The dog alerted toward the complex which was well concealed, about ten meters off the main trail. The enemy had not used this base camp in some time, but the dog was still able to alert on the position.

The 4th Battalion (Mechanized), 23d Infantry, is using the services of the 46th Scout Dog Platoon while conducting sweeps throughout the Tay Ninh area. The canine will not only alert on the enemy, but on any area that has been occupied or visited by the foe.

Through the rice paddies, dense jungle, and the foliage that covers much of the Mech's operation area trudge the alert scout dog, Blackie, and his handler Conlu.

Blackie and Conlu are specially trained in their unique role. Months of strict training and working together have formed this successful combination.

Conlu is pleased with the results he gets from Blackie. "All those long hours of training and working together pay off when we locate finds such as this one," said Conlu at the scene of the hidden encampment.



SCOUT DOG AT WORK - The 4th Battalion (Mechanized), 23d Infantry is using the services of the 46th Scout Dog Platoon. Pictured is Specialist 4 Doningo Conlu, of Dededo Village, Guam, and his dog, Blackie. In the background is the fabled mountain, Nui Ba Den. (PHOTO by SP4 ROGER WELT)

Slick Angels Bring Cheer

CU CHI - During the past holidays familiar refrains of Christmas songs and carols drew curious gazes from the jungles and rice paddies near Cu Chi.

Helicopters usually used for psychological operations against the enemy traded recorded pleas for Chieu Hoi for tapes of popular Christmas music and holiday greetings.

Circling over fire support bases and night laagers in the 2d Brigade area of operations, the music, marred only by the throbs of the Huey's rotors made the holiday season a bit brighter, prompting 'thumbs-up' signals from the infantrymen on the ground. The 'slicks' were often greeted by displays of red and green flares.

"It is good to see a machine of war responded to with smiles and quiet appreciation," said Specialist 4 Douglas A. McLouth of Shelby, Mich., from the 2d Brigade's Fire Support Base Pershing, near Cu Chi.



LRP TEAM LEADER First Lieutenant Arthur Tomascheck gets the okay from a scout team checking for possible enemy ambushes. The LRP team is part of the 50th Infantry.

LRP's Mission: Seek Enemy

CU CHI - A group of perspiring men walk onto Delta Troop flight line, their faces, blackened like show boat minstrels. On their backs they carry all of the food and water they will need for several days and nights plus enough ammunition to stand off an enemy force five times their size.

Some of the packs weigh more than 80 pounds.

The scene is not unusual to the helicopter mechanics working on the flight line. It is repeated often.

These are Long Range Patrols (LRPs) of F Company, 50th Infantry, commanded by Captain Raymond L. Lawson, of Muskogee, Okla. The unit is attached to the 3d Squadron, 4th Cavalry.

Their mission is a tough and daring one, but not an unusual one. The men pit their ability to fight and survive against the enemy in his own backyard.

This team is led by First Lieutenant Arthur Tomascheck, of Allentown, Pa. His qualifications: three years of Special Forces training.

The assistant team leader is Staff Sergeant Richard Reader, of New Castle, Pa. His qualifications: 16 months as an LRP team member. A soldier who knows how to fight, Reader became a staff sergeant when he was 19 years old.

Next in line lumbers Specialist 4 Daniel Nate, of Woodbury, N.J. He doesn't move with jungle cat quickness of Tomascheck and Reader but walks with powerful strides. His qualifications: 18 months as a Special Forces engineer.

And so it goes on down the line to the last member of the team. Most of them are airborne qualified and graduates of the in-country recon school.

These men have a tough and dangerous job. They struggle with their loads to climb aboard the waiting slicks. No one is laughing. No one is joking around. Even the most experienced admits to a few butterflies.

The LRPs all agree; waiting to jump from the insertion ship is the hardest part of the mission.

Once on the ground no one will dare to utter an unnecessary word for the duration of the mission. The slightest sound, even a cough or clearing of a throat can betray their presence and give away their position to the enemy.

They are silent as they snake their way through the high brush. Even big Nate moves through with hardly a sound. All instructions are given by hand signs. No one dares smoke a cigarette.

The click of a lighter could be heard for many meters and the smoke could be seen and smelled even farther.

Once in position, with claymores set, the long wait begins. The LRPs are so well concealed that many times VC and NVA soldiers pass them only a few feet away and do not detect them.

The role of the Long Range Patrol is twofold. First, they are the eyes and the ears of the Tropic Lightning Division. Recon teams observe enemy activity.

Secondly, they harass the enemy, ambushing Charlie's patrols in his own backyard. Delta Troop of the Cav also plays an important role with the LRPs.

The Cav's gunships are also ready to help out and pursue any distress call from the team within ten minutes.

Story, Photos By SP5 Jerrel Jarvis



GRENADIER Specialist 4 Tim Roicbathan, tense and ready to fire at any sign of the enemy advancing toward the Tropic Lightning soldiers' well-concealed position. He is a valuable security agent with the LRP.

STRINGING CLAYMORES - Sergeant Thomas Besser cautiously moves about to string claymore mines around his position. Once in position, the LRPs sit silently, constantly on the alert for the enemy.



ON THE HORN - Staff Sergeant Richard E. Reader establishes radio contact with choppers as Specialist 4 Lester Rhodes keeps a watch before moving to the pickup zone.

REPORTING - Sergeant Thomas B. Besser pokes his head out of a tunnel to give a situation report to First Lieutenant Arthur J. Tomascheck, LRP team leader.



WOUNDED HUEY - Within minutes an airlifted 25th Division rigging team scrambles over the crippled helicopter, preparing it for pickup-up by Chinook.



Chopper Abandons Eagle Flight Chinook Tows to Camp Garage

CU CHI - Some of the men of Alpha Company, 2d Battalion, 12th Infantry, were delayed recently during an Eagle Flight mission.

The Huey helicopter carrying the Tropic Lightning soldiers experienced a rare turbine malfunction and was forced to leave the ten-ship formation and set down in an available clearing.

Pilot of the chopper, Warrant Officer Lance L. Blair of San Francisco, experienced a loss of power. Since his craft was fully loaded he had to find a place to land quickly.

The chopper was brought down gently by Blair in a clearing near Fire Support Base Pershing north of Cu Chi.

Air Mission Commander Captain James Cunningham of Chico, Calif., said that gunships were inserted in the area to give cover while a Chinook carried the injured Huey back to Cu Chi base camp.

"Recovery operations were underway before the ship touched down," he stated. Cunningham added, "Blair did a great job landing the chopper under hazardous conditions."

**Story, Photos By SP4 Charles
Haughey**

A **TROPIC LIGHTNING** infantryman from the Fire Brigade's 2d Battalion, 12th Infantry (above) watches as Smokey provides concealment for the downed chopper. Rice straw (below left) flies as a rigger secures the harnessed Huey. Draped with straw (below right) the pilotless craft is 'towed' to a Cu Chi 'garage' for an overhaul.



A Brother Replaces A Brother Same Unit, Same Company

TAY NINH - "Hello brother."

That was part of the conversation between Sergeant Bill R. Roberts and Private First Class Charles A. Roberts at Company A, 4th Battalion (Mechanized), 23d Infantry.

Charles just arrived at the 25th Division and was assigned to his brother's unit just a few days before Bill left the Army to return to their home town of Gilbert, W. Va.

The young rifleman was very startled when he discovered his new assignment. "Was I surprised when I learned that I was going to replace my brother in Vietnam," commented the new Roberts.

Taking this opportunity to catch up on the latest news from home, the older Roberts spent his last few days in country with his brother discussing the home front.

"This is a very rare occurrence in Vietnam," said Sergeant First Class Daniel W. Ward, of Coral Gables, Fla. Ward who is the personnel section non-commissioned officer for the 4th of the 23d said that as long as he has been in Vietnam he has never seen or heard of a coincidence such as this. "The odds of getting the same assignment as a friend, let alone a brother, are very slim," added Ward.



HELLO, BROTHER - Sergeant Bill R. Roberts (right) greets his brother Private First Class Charles A. Roberts upon his arrival at Company A, 4th Battalion, (Mechanized) 23d Infantry. The sergeant had only a few days to chat with his brother before leaving the Army to return to his hometown of Gilbert, W. Va. (PHOTO BY SP4 ROGER WELT)

Bob Hope Heaps Praise On All Who Serve Here

Editor's note - the following story, written by Bob Hope, upon his arrival in Bangkok, Thailand, summarizes his views on Vietnam and some of the experiences he had on this most recent stage tour.

By Bob Hope

BANGKOK: Last night our blacked-out choppers lifted off the pads at Cu Chi, Vietnam, and we saw the jungle fires burning not more than a half-mile away and heard the bombardment of artillery. It struck me that within hours we'd be starting back to the world, but that the 15,000 or so youngsters of the 25th Infantry Division, for whom we'd just played, would be remaining in that steaming insect-infested jungle to fight a vicious elusive enemy.

I thought of some of the young guys we'd met. The River Rats of Dong Tam, the Dust-Offs at Cu Chi, the Jolly Greens and the Sandys at Nakhon Panom, Thailand and the Marines at Da Nang and Chu Lai, the fighter pilots on the USS Hancock, the gunners on the New Jersey and the hundreds of kids in the hospitals for whom the war is over.

They all lay their lives on the line every day. You can't ask for more. I don't care how many times you've seen the war on television or read about it in your newspapers. You can't have any idea of what it's really all about until you've felt the heat, tasted the dust or sloshed through the mud and sensed the menace behind every clump of trees or innocent-looking jungle foliage.

These are the facts of life for 500,000 of our finest young men in this the most frustrating of all wars. I can tell you that they're all meeting this challenge with fantastic courage, resourcefulness and good humor. While at the Paris peace talks they bicker endlessly about the shape of the table, the guys in Vietnam are preoccupied with the more practical problems. Whether the harmless-looking shack they're about to enter is booby-trapped, whether the mosquito that just bit them carries malaria, whether they will survive the day.

As one GI put it, "every morning when I get up I feel I'm ahead." Right there under these conditions why is it that moral is so high?

Our project officer Colonel "Red" Beasley, explained it this way. "These young men believe in what they're doing." He said, "they know that they're providing protection for fellow human beings who are being subjected

to the grossest Communist techniques of persuasion and terror. Like many of us, although they don't completely comprehend the political and economic complexities involved in this conflict, they feel instinctively that what they are doing is humane and right. To that, I say, 'Amen'."

I would just like to add that these are the men who truly represent the non-generation in contrast to the over-publicized, noisy dissenters and rioters in our colleges and out. They manifest the strength, the humanity and the clear-thinking that our country will need in the future. I can assure the parents that we can put our trust in this generation of Americans.

Even to the old hands, this has been a memorable tour. For the youngsters, the Goldiggers and the Honeys, limited to ages 18 to 22, it has not only been a real education but an experience in giving. They spent every minute off stage at every base, talking, joking, sympathizing with every serviceman within reach.

Between them and the soldiers there was a perfect understanding, perhaps more than that, a kind of love. The kids really came of age.

This was a tough trip. The flu bug felled many from writers to stagehands to performers, but despite illness, fatigue and traveling under the most arduous conditions, every show went on right on schedule. We just couldn't disappoint them and the enthusiasm and the gratitude with which we were received made it all worthwhile.

At every show, a kind of affection from the audience was reciprocated from the stage. It was the sort of audience-performer empathy you don't find on television or in theatres or nightclubs anywhere in the states. It was show-business at its finest.



OBSERVING ARTILLERY - A 2d Battalion, 27th Infantry RTO watches artillery pound enemy positions near the 2d Brigade's Fire Support Base Reed. (PHOTO BY SP4 R. B. WILLIAMS)

Clan Fires 500,000th

CU CHI - The 500,000th round fired by the 3d Battalion, 13th Artillery recently sped down the tube bringing its awesome thunder home to the enemy.

The round was fired by a D Battery 8-inch howitzer at ceremonies near Tay Ninh and represented the nearly 58 million pounds of steel and explosives delivered against the enemy by the medium-heavy artillery battalion.

Since deployment from the shores of Hawaii in April of 1966 The Clan has been involved in some of the heaviest fighting in the Division's area. Possessing the long-range howitzers of the division, The Clan has also unleashed its tremendous firepower in close-in fighting, at times leveling its howitzers to repel the on-charging enemy.

During the ceremonies, Major General Ellis W. Williamson, division commander, urged the men of The Clan to continue their fine fire support for the Tropic Lightning Division.



EARTH MOVER - Specialist 4 Leonard F. Cuprise of Degerton, Wisc, assigned to the 588th Engineer Battalion operates a D-7 bulldozer, clearing brush and forming berms at Tropic Lightning's Fire Support Base Stoneman, 15 miles southeast of Tay Ninh Base Camp.

Mobility Key For Manchus, Arty

TAY NINH - "The Infantry's ability to keep after the enemy is a vital factor in the success of ground operations throughout the Republic of Vietnam. Mobility, whether on water, land or in the air is the greatest single advantage we have over the enemy," stated Lieutenant Colonel Leo L. Wilson, commander of the 4th Battalion, 9th Infantry.

Mobility was the key when First Support Base Austin, 22 miles southeast of Tay Ninh base camp, was leveled and Fire Support Base Stoneman seven miles away was established.

Time was important. More than 100 tons of materials had to be moved. On the morning of the move, hours before dawn the Delta Company Manchus and B Battery, 3d Battalion, 13th Artillery, were busy readying their gear, taking in wire, emptying sandbags, and stacking equipment.

With the first light of morning these materials were loaded on more than 40 two-and-one-half ton trucks for the big move. Timbers, steel plating engineer stakes, every piece of Army equipment down to the last sandbag was loaded on the trucks to be hauled to the new camp.

Meanwhile, bulldozers, road plows and men from Alpha Company, 65th Engineer Battalion, and Headquarters Company of the 588th Engineer Battalion worked at both sites clearing brush and forming berms at Fire Support Base Stoneman, as well as filling trenches and leveling the site at FSB Austin.

By ten o'clock, with the area secured and several fortified positions nearing completion, five self-propelled 155mm Howitzers from B Battery, 3d Battalion, 13th Artillery, came grinding into their positions. The positions had been selected that morning by the 7th Battalion, 11th Artillery, executive officer Major Gerald D. Curbow of Hollister, Mo., and 4th Battalion, 9th Infantry, battalion commander Lieutenant Colonel Leo L. Wilson of Salina Kans.

During the entire day, the operation continued like clockwork. That evening Fire Support Base Stoneman was all but complete. All personnel had overhead cover; six strands of concertina wire had been laid and reinforced with engineer stakes. An interlocking trench system had been dug connecting fighting positions and bunkers around the perimeter. Most important to the hungry infantry and artillery men were the two mess halls that had been put into operation. Hot chow was ready to be served.

Story, Photos By SP4 H. J. Tschirner



RECHECK - Fourth Battalion, 9th Infantry company commander Lieutenant Colonel Leo L. Wilson of Salina, Kans. (standing), 7th Battalion, 11th Artillery executive officer Major Gerald D. Curbow of Hollister, Mo. (left) and Manchu Company D commander Captain Roosevelt Ludd of Columbus, Ga., make a final check of their plans for the construction of the new base.

RUMBLING IN - A self-propelled 155mm Howitzer from B Battery, 3d Battalion, 13th Artillery grinds into position at Tropic Lightning's new fire base Stoneman.



HE DIGS IT - Private First Class Robert J. Kalainwell of Clarksville, Iowa, works diligently to complete his fighting position and bunker.

LAYING IN #5 GUN - A self-propelled Howitzer has been moved into position. Staff Sergeant Ronald G. Bargre of Lawton, Okla., and Sergeant Charles J. Tucker of Forrester, Iowa, both assigned to D Battery, 3d Battalion, 13th Artillery, use an aiming circle to get each howitzer set on the proper direction.



Medal Of Honor Awarded To 25th Division Platoon Leader

A U.S. Army infantry platoon leader has been awarded the Medal of Honor posthumously for giving his life to shield two wounded soldiers from an exploding grenade.

The medal recognized the heroism of First Lieutenant Stephen E. Karopczyc, who became the 41st Army member to receive the nation's highest combat award for service in Vietnam.

Secretary of the Army Stanly R. Resor presented the award to Lieutenant Karopczyc's parents, Mr. and Mrs. Edward J. Karopczyc of Bethpage, N.Y. in a ceremony at the Pentagon.

Karopczyc was leading the 3d Platoon, A Company, 2d Battalion, 35th Infantry, during a flanking maneuver against an enemy force on March 12, 1967.

Although severely wounded, he directed the operations of his platoon during several hours of heavy fighting. When a grenade was hurled close to Karopczyc and two other wounded men, the officer left his protected position to cover the grenade with a steel helmet and protect the other men.

The grenade exploded, driving fragments into Karopczyc's legs, but his action prevented further injury to the other men. He succumbed to his multiple wounds two hours later.

At the Medal of Honor ceremony, Secretary Resor said, "The hard fighting in Vietnam has taught us again the wonderful qualities of the young American soldier - his sheer courage, his deep dedication to his fellow men and his high sense of duty.

"But even in this honored company, Lieutenant Karopczyc stands out. Few can appreciate or comprehend the inner spirit which inspired him. We do not ever in our lifetime face such a test of demonstrating our complete and total devotion to our friends. Lieutenant Karopczyc faced this test and was not found wanting." (ANF)



Triple Deuce....

(Continued From Page 1)

opening up from Fire Support Bases Rawlins, Stoneman and Wood and from Dau Tieng base camp began pounding the enemy positions. Almost 2,500 rounds pocked the ambush site and its approaches.

Joining in the fusillade were Alpha and Bravo Batteries, 1st Battalion, 27th Artillery, Bravo Battery, 2d Battalion, 13th Artillery; Charlie Battery, 2d Battalion, 32d Artillery, and Alpha Battery, 2d Battalion, 77th Artillery.

Lieutenant Colonel Vernon Lewis of Marshall, Tex., commander of the Up Tight 2d of the 77th Artillery, was flying overhead in a light observation helicopter and coordinating fire from the five batteries.

"I moved Alpha Battery out of Fire Support Base Wood and into a position several miles up the road, giving us more punch in the area," noted Lewis. He praised the accuracy of all the fire support.

Lewis also spotted a force of about 30 enemy racing toward a woodline and directed gunships onto the spot.

Meanwhile Air Force F100 Supersabre jets flashed overhead dropping bombs on the enemy, guided by Major William I. Holland of Raleigh N.C., forward air controller with the 3d Brigade.

The ambush attempt ended in a shambles as 115 enemy lay dead near the site. The Dau Tieng convoy moved on to its destination. But the enemy was not yet through.

From a second hideout in the Cau Khoi Rubber Plantation, another ambush opened up on a convoy returning to Cu Chi from Tay Ninh.

This enemy force was estimated as one rifle company plus elements of a company of heavy weapons, mainly .51 caliber machineguns.

Earlier in the day, Bravo Company of the Triple Deuce received small arms fire in the area but escorted the northbound convoy through without incident.

On the return to Cu Chi, however, the enemy opened up with rifles, machineguns and RPG rocket grenades. Armored personnel carriers of Bravo and Charlie Companies of the Triple Deuce charged into the battle, disrupting the enemy ambush and killing seven.

As the remaining enemy fled about 30 raced across a clearing to the south. They were spotted by the command and control helicopter of Colonel Louis J. Schelter Jr., 3d Brigade commander, from Columbus, Ga.

"The door gunners, the brigade commander and myself opened up with everything we had," related Command Sergeant Major Howard Brosseau of Highlands Falls, N.Y. "We were shooting with about as much firepower as a gunship."

The colonel fired more than 1,000 rounds from his CAR-15 personal weapon as those aboard the ship blasted away.

Several of the enemy fell in their tracks as the chopper, under direction of Warrant Officer 1 Gunther Siedler of Torrington, Wyo., the aircraft commander, maneuvered down at the enemy force.

"The whole crew and especially Mr. Siedler did a magnificent job," commented Brosseau.

Witnesses on the ground said that those aboard the colonel's ship probably kept four trucks from being overrun as an enemy force advanced.

Captain Jon Swift of Plattsburg, N.Y., another Tropic Lightning forward air controller brought five flights of F-100s, A37s and F46s onto enemy positions.

Because of darkness, they were unable to make a complete sweep of the Cau Khoi battleground.

Cav Kills 20 Enemy, Finds Ammunition, Rice And Bikes

DAU TIENG - In a week of heavy contact with the enemy elements recently, the 3d Squadron, 4th Cavalry killed 20 enemy and detained two suspects.

The Cav destroyed a number of bunkers and tunnel complexes and captured over 45,000 pounds of rice plus several AK-47s, RPG launchers, assorted hand grenades and mines. Bravo Troop also found themselves the new possessors of 17 bicycles.

The action took place west of the Saigon River, between the Ho Bo and Boi Loi Woods, about 10 miles south of Dau Tieng during an operation nicknamed Toadstool.

In one day alone, Bravo Troop destroyed 207 enemy bunkers. Some of them had walls four feet thick and were reinforced with sandbags and steel plating. Some women's clothing was found in one bunker.

During one day of heavy action which six NVA were killed, the Cav troopers uncovered a field hospital consisting of five bunkers.

Inside was an operating table, bottles of penicillin and bandages. Dried blood on the ground indicated that it had been used recently. Off to one side were bunkers apparently used as nurse's quarters.

The horsemen destroyed a command bunker with tunnels leading to fighting positions. Nearby they located a cache containing 11,000 pounds of salt and 1200 pairs of white plastic sandals. Several bicycles were found outside tunnels, beside rice caches and other such places. Some of them were run over by the tanks.

And what is to be done with these bicycles now? Command Sergeant Major Wilbur Duggins of the three-quarter Cav, plans to have them painted red and white, the colors of the Cav, and let his troopers use them when they are in from the field and want to go to the PX, the Service Club or when they are out-processing and need transportation.

After all, a cavalryman never walks. He rides.



Division Man In VN Holds County Office

By 1Lt. Mack D. Gooding

TAY NINH - Captain Shigeto Murayama of Kahului, Maui, Hawaii was elected county treasurer of Kahului, but he is finishing his term of office while serving as the assistant intelligence officer of the 1st Brigade.

Murayama, who campaigned under the nickname Mustard held his office when he was called to active duty with the 29th Brigade last May.

The deputy treasurer of Kahului has taken over the duties of treasurer. Murayama's term expired in December.

Asked if the job will still be waiting for him when he returns from Vietnam, the captain explained, "Not in the true sense of the word, since the voters decided to establish a charter form of government that combines the treasurer's office and several other offices into one Department of Finance, with the director of finance appointed by the mayor.

"However, before I came to Vietnam I learned that mayor elect Elmer F. Cravalho had appointed me finance director."

Murayama explained that he could have been deferred from coming to Vietnam since he was an elected official.

"However, I've been in the Reserve program for 20 years, and during that time the Army has spent a lot of money to send me to various schools, and I felt it was my obligation to give the Army some return for its money."

Thanks to
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