



Vol 4 No. 10

TROPIC LIGHTNING NEWS

March 10, 1969

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NVA Try Daring Dau Tieng Siege, All-Night Battle Rids Base Of Foe

DAU TIENG - Lifting an all-night siege of Dau Tieng base camp, infantrymen, cooks, clerks and other support soldiers of the 3d Brigade killed 73 enemy who had overrun portions of the installation. There were 14 detainees.

By the time a red alert was called, shortly after midnight, portions of the camp's perimeter had already been overrun. For more than eight hours North Vietnamese Army soldiers held a rubber forest near the south end of the camp and a part of the camp near the east end of the Dau Tieng air strip.

At the height of the fighting, when the enemy flanked brigade headquarters from two sides, Major General Ellis W. Williamson, 25th Infantry Division commanding general, flew his helicopter into Dau Tieng personally and led the counterattacks that drove off the enemy.

Colonel Louis J. Sehelter, Jr., brigade commander, of Columbus, Ga., said, "The troops performed magnificently. In every respect they did the job that had to be done."

The North Vietnamese troops, attacking in a force of two battalions, hit the base camp from four sides, storming the perimeter at two points and also entering by way of a tunnel. They surrounded portions of the bunker line and trapped a number of Tropic Lightning soldiers behind the lines. During the attack hundreds of rounds of rockets, mortars, and RPG's struck the base camp.

Some of the heaviest fighting centered around an area of French buildings and swimming pools just south of brigade headquarters. The NVA mounted a machinegun on the porch of the base library while a group of five infantrymen huddled inside with rifles trained on the doors.

All night long the NVA kept a force of combat engineers and infantrymen pinned down in ditches alongside a road in front of the old house belonging to the Michelin family of French rubber planters.

At dawn, a group of enemy snipers had holed up inside the Michelin house and were laying down fire into

areas controlled by the military police and brigade headquarters.

Special Forces troops and a 40mm duster leveled portions of the second floor of the house killing some of the snipers.

Meanwhile armored personnel carriers of the 2d Battalion (Mechanized), 22d Infantry, and Wolfhounds of the 1st Battalion, 27th Infantry, along with an assortment of support personnel, blasted the main enemy force away from the area near the swimming pools. Four dead NVA lay in a road beside the officers' pool when the fighting stopped.

The enemy retreated past the post exchange and into the woods near the base camp communications center of the 587th Signal Company's White Platoon. Heavy fighting drove this force of NVA toward the perimeter.

Meanwhile other Triple Deuce armored personnel carriers drove the enemy off the east end of the air strip, but not before several spotter planes and a helicopter had been damaged with satchel charges.

With the coming of daylight and the driving out of enemy main forces, there remained the job of cleaning out snipers from many of the base camp's trees. This job took almost until noon. Shortly after one p.m., a group of eight soldiers was found hiding inside a culvert near the (Continued on Back Page)



IT'S AS EASY AS ONE, TWO, THREE - Members of the 3d Battalion, 22d Infantry wait to be picked up by Crusader slicks of the 187th Assault Helicopter Company northwest of Tay Ninh. (PHOTO BY SP4 DAVE DEMAURO)

FSB Diamond Thwarts Fierce Attack

By 1LT J. N. Black

CU CHI - While North Vietnamese forces took more than 100 U.S. bases under fire the 2d Brigade Fire Support Base Diamond blatantly challenged the enemy only three clicks from the Cambodian border, tempting the Reds to strike.

At approximately two a.m. the 2d Battalion, 27th Infantry soldiers received initial small arms and mortar fire from positions along the Cambodian border. With rapid reactions, the U.S. troops called in supporting artillery and gunships to blast the enemy.

However the hard-hitting NVA attack came swiftly and vigorously from the south forcing the Americans into last ditch efforts. The ruthless advances of the estimated two regiments made normal reactionary procedures impossible and only close defensive artillery fires could rout the persistent NVA.

During the 10-hour battle the small U.S. base put out maximum fire power. Air strikes and artillery forced the NVA into the killing zone.

By the afternoon of Feb. 23, the Americans had tallied some 109 enemy bodies and later sweeps uncovered another eighteen. Weapons captured included 12 AK-47's, seven RPG launchers and 53 rounds, two pistols, three 60mm mortars complete and 15 rounds, four 82mm mortar rounds, a quarter pound of enemy documents and assorted small arms and munitions.

During the next 24 hours the 2d Brigade Wolfhounds stood prepared but unchallenged by the inscrutable enemy. Yet on the early morning of the 25th the 9th Division NVA made a fast but futile second assault on

Diamond.

Again, rockets and mortars rained in on U.S. positions announcing the attack, but staunchly prepared Tropic Lightning soldiers defended the base, killing 78 enemy with a possible 50 more, taking two wounded prisoners and capturing an arsenal of weapons.

The Tropic Lightning victory was credited to three main factors. The first factor was the hard fighting, platoon-sized ambush patrols which were located in the path of the oncoming attacks. A second factor was the skilled infantrymen and artillerymen who defended the perimeter. The last factor was the truly devastating fire laid down by Tropic Lightning artillery, gunships, and tactical air strikes.

The ambush patrols kept the enemy off balance, as he initiated the early morning attack. As the fighting erupted an ambush patrol south of the Fire Brigade base found itself surrounded by a large enemy force. Artillery was called in surrounding Wolfhounds with a wall of flying shrapnel. The persistent enemy continued his march to the small base despite the heavy artillery.

Platoon Sergeant Gonzales A. Marquez, Columbus, Ga., said, "I shot my M-16 into the chest of an enemy soldier and pulled the trigger."

The ambush patrol, now fighting for its life, was forced to fight its way through masses of well-armed enemy.

An ambush patrol to the north found itself on the flank of a massive NVA force. They directed artillery into the enemy and knocked out two mortar positions, disorganizing the planned attack.

The North Vietnamese force attacked Diamond's wire under (Continued on Back Page)

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Decorated

MAJ Frederick H. Bornemen, HHC, 2d Bn, 27th Inf
 CPT Harry L. Ikner, Co C, 2d Bn, 27th Inf
 CPT John H. Goodrich, HHC, 2d Bn, 14th Inf
 CPT Luis Ortiz, A Btry, 3d Bn, 13th Arty
 CPT Jack Zeagler, HHC, 1st Bn, 8th Arty
 1LT Gregory W. Gross, A Co, 3d Bn, 22d Inf
 1LT John M. Johnson, A Btry, 3d Bn, 13th Arty
 1LT John D. Peterson, A Trp, 3d Sqdn, 4th Cav
 1LT James A. Valentine, A Btry, 3d Bn, 13th Arty
 1LT Paul W. Green Jr., A Btry, 7th Bn, 11th Arty
 1LT Richard H. Booth, HHC, 3d Bn, 22d Inf
 1LT John A. Weldon, Co A, 2d Bn, 22d Inf
 1LT Jerry D. Pruitt, HHC, 2d Bn, 12th Inf
 SFC Andrew E. Hughes, A Btry, 3d Bn, 13th Arty
 SFC Kenneth H. Mueller, Co B, 4th Bn, 23d Inf
 SFC Kenneth H. Strocsher, B Co, 1st Bn, 5th Inf
 SFC William Yingling, A Trp, 3d Sqdn, 4th Cav
 SFC Therman L. Lowery, D Btry, 3d Bn, 13th Arty
 SFC Jimmy L. Hill, D Btry, 3d Bn, 13th Arty
 SSG Lawson Walker, C Co, 1st Bn, 5th Inf
 SSG James R. Harvey, A Btry, 3d Bn, 13th Arty
 SSG Layton K. Pfost, A Trp, 3d Sqdn, 4th Cav
 SSG Edward Rutledge, Co C, 3d Bn, 22d Inf
 SSG Harold Taylor, A Btry, 3d Bn, 13th Arty
 SGT Robert A. Adams, Co B, 4th Bn, 23d Inf
 SGT Danny F. Justice, Co D, 4th Bn, 9th Inf
 SGT Robert Clark, Co D, 3d Bn, 22d Inf
 SGT Robert M. Cosgrove, B Co, 2d Bn, 12th Inf
 SGT John E. Reeves, B Co, 2d Bn, 12th Inf
 SGT Ernest McComus, Co C, 3d Bn, 22d Inf
 SGT George Hatfield, Co D, 3d Bn, 22d Inf
 SGT William McCullough, HHC, 3d Bn, 22d Inf
 SGT Darrell Wallace, B Trp, 3d Sqdn, 4th Cav

SP5 Donald B. Lemmen, B Co, 65th Engr Bn
 SP4 Michael Hanna, B Co, 2d Bn, 12th Inf
 SP4 Gary B. Robertson, C Co, 1st Bn, 5th Inf
 SP4 Ronald L. Osowski, B Co, 2d Bn, 12th Inf
 SP4 Michael A. Minko, C Co, 4th Bn, 9th Inf
 SP4 David Bolling, C Btry, 7th Bn, 11th Arty
 SP4 Jon J. Teschner, D Co, 1st Bn, 5th Inf
 SP4 Thomas E. Ladner, D Btry, 3d Bn, 13th Arty
 SP4 Paul Rogers, HHC, 3d Bn, 22d Inf
 SP4 Denis Marc-Aurele, A Co, 1st Bn, 5th Inf
 SP4 Fredric Moffit, D Co, 3d Bn, 22d Inf
 SP4 John Collins, A Co, 2d Bn, 12th Inf
 SP4 Douglas Blood, B Co, 1st Bn, 5th Inf
 SP4 Virgil Malone, A Co, 3d Bn, 22d Inf
 SP4 Ronald Boyd, A Trp, 3d Sqdn, 4th Cav
 SP4 Minter Garvin, A Trp, 3d Sqdn, 4th Cav
 SP4 Steven Bailey, A Co, 1st Bn, 5th Inf
 SP4 Larry Wilson, A Trp, 3d Sqdn, 4th Cav
 SP4 Jimmy Miller, HHC, 3d Bn, 22d Inf
 SP4 James Jones, Co C, 3d Bn, 22d Inf
 SP4 John Pock, HHC, 4th Bn, 9th Inf
 SP4 Fred Graham, Co C, 3d Bn, 22d Inf
 SP4 Henry R. Erber, A Trp, 3d Sqdn, 4th Cav
 SP4 Edward J. Finerty, HHC, 2d Bn, 27th Inf
 SP4 David Chedester, Co D, 3d Bn, 22d Inf
 SP4 Robert T. Dunn, Co D, 3d Bn, 22d Inf
 SP4 William P. Quoss, Co B, 4th Bn, 23d Inf
 PFC Johnny Foust, D Co, 3d Bn, 22d Inf
 PFC Phillip L. Peieffer, HHC, 2d Bn, 12th Inf
 PFC Arcadio J. Torres, A Co, 2d Bn, 27th Inf
 PFC Edwin A. Miller, C Co, 4th Bn, 9th Inf
 PFC Robert M. Hoover, HHC, 2d Bn, 12th Inf
 PFC Everet Chreene, D Co, 1st Bn, 5th Inf

SGT Donald Rogers, Co D, 3d Bn, 22d Inf
SGT Roland Zengel, Co D, 3d Bn, 22d Inf
SGT William C. Smith, Co B, 1st Bn, 5th Inf

PFC Larry Steele, HHC, 1st Bn, 5th Inf
PFC Johnnie Bruno, HHC, 3d Bn, 22d Inf
PFC John Murphy, A Co, 1st Bn, 5th Inf

Uncle Gives Opportunities And Bennies During Your Viet Tour

Everyone knows there is a job to be done in Vietnam. Your career counselor would also like to make you aware of the benefits and opportunities available to you during your tour here. For example, have you ever given any thought about how much additional money you make and save while in Vietnam?

First off, all pay and allowances for enlisted men are tax-free. All of the withholding taxes taken from your pay in the States are a part of your month's pay in Vietnam.

That's just a start. Add the extras. Depending upon your rank, you receive an additional \$8 to \$22.50 a month foreign duty pay. That's tax-free. Hostile-fire pay means another \$65 a month, again tax-free.

Well, there is free postage and up to seven days of R&R for every 12 months of service. For this R&R, the Army flies you free of charge to such locations as Hong Kong, Bangkok, Tokyo, Singapore, Australia and Hawaii. You may also go on a three-day pass within Vietnam.

When your one-year tour of duty is over, and if you decide to extend in the country for an additional six months, you will be given 30 days of non-chargeable leave, including free round-trip transportation to almost any point in the free world that you select.

For the man who does not want to extend his tour in Vietnam, there are other opportunities. Toward the end of a Vietnam tour, any enlisted person, regardless of pay grade, may re-enlist for the CONUS Station-of-Choice option. This assures a one-year stabilized tour at the stateside station you choose. It is normally open only to enlisted men in grades E-1 to E-6. In Vietnam it is open to everyone regardless of grade.

The Oversea Area-of-Choice option is another re-enlistment opportunity open to enlisted men in Vietnam. It is available to men in grade E-5 or below with less than seven years active federal service. It is also offered to those in grade E-6 who have less than four years service for pay purposes. It is ideal for the family man.

A third option for which the enlisted man is eligible is the drill sergeant re-enlistment program. It offers a stabilized tour of 18 months at a stateside training center of the man's choice. Qualified NCOs and Specialists in grades E4 through E-7 can re-enlist for this duty while in Vietnam or any other unaccompanied short-tour area.

A big advantage of the drill sergeant program is that a man can be promoted from E-5 to E-6 without regard to time in grade or service. Eligibility lists for this fast promotion opportunity are made up from those drill sergeants with four months of outstanding performance.

So, as you see, a tour in Vietnam offers both financial and career advantages. Your career counselor has all of the details about this and other career opportunities. He welcomes your visits.

In Cu Chi, you can find your career counselor in building T3586. Or just call Cu Chi 5234. If you have questions, don't hesitate. Find out today.

OGS Recruit Required To Take Three

On March 1, 1969, there were changes in the rules governing the active duty obligation for enlisted men selected for OCS. College option applicants and inductees who volunteer for the program must enlist for a three-year period upon being chosen for OCS.

Soldiers who enlisted for less than three years must extend a minimum of 12 months. However, college option enlistees who entered the Army prior to March 1, 1969, will continue with their previously stated active-duty obligations.

Members of a Reserve component on active duty must agree to complete a minimum of three years total active federal military service.

Individuals on a three year enlistment who have less than six months remaining on their current term of service must extend a sufficient period of time to enable them to complete OCS training. The same rule applies for members of the Regular Army and Reserve components who have over three years active federal military service but insufficient time left to finish OCS.

Total time spent in service for those commissioned from OCS will not be affected since graduates will continue

to serve two years active duty as commissioned officers.

Those desiring more information are encouraged to see their career counselor.

Solve Dollar Woes: Army Savings Plan

For many years past the United States of America has had, and still has an unfavorable international balance of payments. This has caused great concern not only to our government, but also to international financial circles and foreign governments.

Our international commitments, including the stationing of military units in oversea areas are contributing to this unfavorable situation. We in the military, and our dependents spend U.S. dollars in foreign local economies, thus putting a strain on the gold reserves of our government.

One important method of reducing gold flow is to curtail individual spending on the local economy by withdrawing as many dollars from circulation as possible. Here are some of the ways you can participate and help yourself out in the long run too:

Buy U.S. Savings Bonds. The interest is higher than ever.

Use the military banking facilities in Vietnam. They pay 5 per cent interest on checking accounts if the balance does not fall under \$100.

Sign Up for the Uniform Services Savings Deposit Program. You do this by depositing cash with your finance officer, or authorizing a certain amount to be withheld from your pay each month.

Check with your finance officer soon. You can help yourself and your government.

TROPIC LIGHTNING

Combat Honor Roll

Added to the Tropic Lightning honor roll this week is Specialist 4 Ronald C. Carey of Company B, 2d Battalion, 12th Infantry.

On the night of January 7, Company B came under heavy attack at its night laager. Carey could not effectively engage the enemy from his location, and ran through a bullet-swept area to a hedgerow. Reaching the more advantageous position, Carey began to place deadly fire on the insurgents until his machine gun was rendered inoperable. He then secured an M-16 rifle and returned to the perimeter of the night laager where he continued to place effective fire on the aggressors.

After his ammunition was expended, he once again exposed himself to heavy fire. He then resumed his accurate fire on the enemy, this time with an M-79 grenade launcher.

Specialist Carey's personal bravery, aggressiveness and devotion were of immeasurable aid to his unit as it turned back the hostile attack.



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Your Enemy Is A Formidable Foe

"They came to my house and told my mother that I had been chosen to be one of them. They wanted me to become a soldier. My mother pleaded that I was too young. The North Vietnamese soldier said, 'He is old enough. The draft age is 15 to 40.'"

This is how 15-year-old Nguyen Van Qui became one of the enemy you face. He was taken to a training camp in North Vietnam where he was trained for six days before starting the trek to the south along the Ho Chi Minh Trail.

In his first battle Qui's position was hit by heavy artillery fire. Qui threw down his weapon and ran. He ran until he was brought down by small arms fire. He never fired his weapon.

Although many of the enemy are, like Qui, throwing down their arms, not all of them are so easily discouraged. The enemy you face is typically tough, ingenious, and elusive - a formidable foe. He, like all soldiers, has his strong points and his weaknesses.

WHO IS HE?

The enemy soldier may be a regular NVA, a regular Viet Cong soldier or a part-time guerrilla. He is used to hard work and can live without difficulty on as little as two pounds of rice a day. He has received intensive political indoctrination and until he sees otherwise, he is fighting to liberate the South Vietnamese people from 'U.S. aggression'.

HOW IS HE TRAINED?

The best trained are NVA regulars. They receive about 30 days of basic training, although this period may have been shortened, due to recent manpower shortages caused by heavy casualties in the South.

The NVA recruit's training usually includes about 15 hours of instruction on a basic North Vietnamese weapon. Viet Cong recruits undergo similar training when possible. However, many VC receive only theory in classes and get practice in actual battles.

Most of the older officers commanding NVA and some VC units are veterans of the French-Indochina war. The younger officers have been chosen from civilian ranks on the basis of family standing or educational achievement. All officers attend a military academy where they are taught tactics, principles of guerrilla warfare, and fundamentals of weapons and leadership.

HOW IS HE ORGANIZED?

In accordance with Communist doctrine, the military is controlled by the political structure. At the highest level, the NVA military is answerable to the Vietnamese Communist Party. Viet Cong activities are controlled by the National Liberation Front, which is a mere screen for the Vietnamese Communist Party.

Enemy military forces in South Vietnam are of three types: main force, local force and irregulars. There are two types of main force units: NVA units, recruited in North Vietnam, and Viet Cong units, recruited from the local South Vietnamese population.

These main force units are organized into divisions and regiments, and operate throughout large areas of South Vietnam. The largest independent local force unit is the battalion. These local forces usually operate within their own province or district. Smaller independent units, from independent companies to independent platoons and squads, operate in even smaller areas.

The remainder of the enemy's personnel are known as 'irregulars'. These are the full or part-time guerrillas who may or may not be uniformed, and whose operations are confined to extremely limited areas.

HOW IS HE EQUIPPED AND SUPPLIED?

Once he is in South Vietnam, the enemy must rely on a complex logistical system which has many primitive elements - dirt roads, trails, cache sites and depots.

Arms, ammunition and equipment are transported by rail, water and road from North Vietnam to the Ho Chi Minh Trail and from there into South Vietnam. Food is obtained from local South Vietnamese or from Cambodia.

Whenever possible, VC forces live off the land. In some areas they have been known to grow their own food. Hidden 'factories' produce some crude weapons, explosives and other items.

WHY DOES HE FIGHT?

The enemy has a number of reasons for fighting. Some honestly believe the Communist propaganda which they hear every day from their unit political officer. The NVA regular frequently serves primarily because it is



considered a social disgrace to refuse to bear arms. The Viet Cong is more affected by these threats, and serves out of fear. Viet Cong officers and NCO's have been known to summarily execute those who did not 'stay on line'.

STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

The enemy's strength stems largely from effective unconventional tactics, discipline and intimate knowledge of the terrain. Masters at living off the land, the enemy is able to hide among the people, in the jungle or in the rural landscape.

His ability to withstand hardships and his patient attitude toward life are also assets. A major weakness is that he is losing increasing numbers of skilled and dedicated soldiers, and replacements are hard to find. Another weakness is that many of the rank and file soldiers are essentially captives recruited and involuntarily held in the armed forces.

Prodigal M-79 Home At Last

By 1LT Mack D. Gooding

TAY NINH - You've heard of lost sheep returning to the fold, but how about an M-79 grenade launcher returning to its company after being lost and in enemy hands for nine months?

When the 4th Battalion, 9th Infantry, Manchus recently smashed a North Vietnamese attack on their Mole City patrol base, 16 miles southeast of Tay Ninh, one of the enemy weapons Charlie Company recovered was an M-79.

Checking the weapon's serial number through battalion records revealed it was the same M-79 Charlie Company had lost in a March ambush near Hoc Mon, 30 miles southeast of Mole City.

The M-79 was welcomed back by the Manchus with open cleaning kits, and is now back in action, pointing the right way.



RARE SIGHT - This Tropic Lightning soldier pauses for a moment to contemplate a relatively unusual vision. Rarely during the dry season in Vietnam does a trooper in the 25th's area of operations come across a flowing stream, but this is proof that even nature doesn't get the word, sometimes.

VC Victim Returns - Walking

CU CHI - It was a combination of surprise and pleasure for Tropic Lightning 2d Brigade staffers when Tran Van Bao returned from Saigon's National Rehabilitation Center able to walk on his new artificial leg.

Despite weeks of planning and careful coordination with families, agencies, and military channels, the first complete success was, nonetheless, a welcome surprise.

And with that success, the project got an approving nod for more such operations that will see dozens of handicapped Vietnamese in Hau Nghia Province receiving new limbs.

Soon the second group of four will be taken to the Rehabilitation Center for prosthetic consultation. The first group reported to the center March. These first eight, in addition to Tran Van Bao, come from three districts in Hau Nghia and have disabilities including amputated arms and legs caused by VC mines and artillery fire.

The importance of this project is two-fold: First, it accomplishes a portion of the MACV mission by aiding the people of Vietnam; and second, it demonstrates concern of the allies for individuals.

Without the cooperation of the Saigon Center, a Vietnam project of the World Rehabilitation Fund, Inc., the project would have been difficult, if not impossible.

The Project headquarters headed by Robert B. Wildon, carries on in the humanitarian tradition established several years ago by founding chairmen Bernard Baruch, Herbert Hoover, and Harry Truman. With funds from international support groups and donations, the Saigon center treats hundreds of patients free of charge each month.

While at the center, Tran Van Bao, a 12-year-old villager, was given an artificial hand and leg and three weeks of therapy and training in their use. When the boy returned home he became a new person, a participant instead of a spectator and a contributing member of his family.

The eight Vietnamese now going through the Center range from a 45-year-old mother who lost an arm in 1967 artillery fire to another eight-year-old boy who lost his left leg in a Viet Cong mine blast.

The 2d Brigade Civic Action Office supports the drive to aid the unfortunate victims of war, along with many other endeavors, under the guidance of Major Billy W. May, Bayou La Batre, Ala.

"We've had outstanding cooperation from the people at the Rehabilitation Center," said Major May. "They were very willing and eager to help. With eight people to get appointments for, I thought it might take two or three months but in fact it took only five days."

"This will probably do more to win the support of the people for the government of Vietnam than any other project we've taken part in," continued Major May. "It's one of the best humanitarian projects we've had."

And for at least a score of Vietnamese civilians, there's now a hope that was perhaps never there before.



CLEAN BILL OF HEALTH - Back in Dau Tieng after an 18,000 mile round trip to Houston, Tex., for heart surgery, Nguyen Tan Hoang, 16, (center) looks at health records which declare he will be able to lead a normal life. Holding his medical records is Major Robert B. Perez of Niagara Falls, N.Y., commander of Bravo Company, 25th Medical Battalion. At right is First Lieutenant Larry C. Pitts of Greenville, S.C., who greeted the lad when his plane arrived in Saigon.

Wolfhounds Uncover VC-NVA Base Camp Near Dau Tieng

DAU TIENG - Tropic Lightning infantrymen discovered a base camp stretching almost half a mile which could house as much as an enemy regimental-size force near Dau Tieng. The base camp included classrooms, an aid station, mess halls and an area reserved for rest and recuperation.

The camp was discovered by Wolfhounds of Bravo Company, 1st Battalion, 27th Infantry, in dense vegetation three miles northwest of the 3d Brigade base camp at Dau Tieng.

A day earlier, the company, commanded by Captain Frederick Wong of Honolulu, Hawaii, had found numerous bunkers and fighting positions in two battalion-sized camps nearby. The Wolfhounds were following up B-52 air strikes in an effort to catch the enemy while he was stunned and unable to rest.

The infantrymen walked into the enemy headquarters shortly before lunchtime and found steaming rice and pots and pans full of warm food. It was obvious that the enemy had beat a hasty retreat only minutes earlier.

Blood-stained bandages in the medical aid station inside the camp showed that enemy medics had been patching up their wounded during the morning.

The Wolfhounds searched the entire complex but failed to find anyone. Then engineers of Delta Company, 65th Engineer Battalion went to work destroying a dozen giant bunkers, each 25 feet long, as well as 29 fighting positions and a network of tunnels. Among items unearthed in the camp were rifles with loaded magazines, three RPG rounds and several hundred rounds of small arms ammunition.

The mess hall, which had three stoves and a smoke-dissipating system, included pots, pans, bottles and various utensils. The classroom was filled with picnic tables.

"This is quite a setup," said Wong. "Counting what we found yesterday, I would estimate that this complex could be used to support an enemy regiment or larger. "A lot of enemy soldiers are going to be upset when they find out that the Wolfhounds have eliminated this setup."



WOLFHOUSES of Bravo Company, 1st Battalion, 27th Infantry proceed with caution through dense jungles near Dau Tieng. They were air-lifted into the area following a B-52 strike in the hope of catching the enemy stunned and off guard. The 3d Brigade soldiers discovered a huge enemy base camp complete with mess halls, briefing rooms and a command complex.

TOUGH NUT TO CRACK - Four layers of logs give this enemy bunker strong overhead protection. It was just one of many bunkers the Wolfhounds found three miles north of Dau Tieng.



Lucky Lad Travels To States, Gets A New lease On life

By SP5 Bill Sluis

DAU TIENG - Three months ago he was virtually a cripple, his skin showing a bluish cast and his life functions weakening as the result of a severe heart disorder.

Today he plays stick-ball with other teenagers from Dau Tieng village and faces the prospect of a healthy, normal life.

"It doesn't hurt anymore when I run," said Nguyen Tan Hoang.

The remarkable transformation of the youth's heart is the result of an 18,000 mile round trip to Houston, Tex., where he received a new mitral valve under the expert hands of world famous heart surgeon Dr. Michael DeBakey.

The plastic valve makes a slight clicking sound when heard through a stethoscope, but otherwise Hoang (pronounced HWONG) is exactly like other 16-year-olds in Dau Tieng, 45 miles northwest of Saigon.

The odyssey of the boy's trip halfway around the world to find a new life was made possible by the combined efforts of Tropic Lightning doctors and medics at Dau Tieng, and by Air Force and civilian personnel, in Saigon and the United States.

According to Major Robert B. Perez of Niagara Falls, N.Y., the delicate operation was "a 100 per cent success." The youth's recovery from surgery was remarkably rapid.

The only after-effect of Hoang's condition is the need for a mild drug which acts as a heart stimulant, said Perez, commander of Bravo Company, 25th Medical Battalion.

Plans for the boy's trip to Houston began after his condition was called to the attention of Captain Bruce Greenfield of San Francisco during a medical civic action program. Greenfield is now assigned to Oakland Army Terminal, Calif.

After Greenfield and Captain Richard Brunswick of Philadelphia (now at Martin Army Hospital, Ft. Benning, Ga.) wrote to Dr. DeBakey describing the youth's symptoms, the Houston surgeon offered to perform the needed operation. It remained only for the Air Force to provide the boy with a free lift, thanks to the efforts of Lieutenant Colonel Richard N. Broughton of Tampa, Fla., in charge of civic action at Tan Son Nhut airbase outside Saigon.

For Hoang, who never before in his life had been more than 50-miles from home, the trip to the United States aboard a C-141 'Starlifter' was filled with excitement. He was the darling of nurses at the hospital, who admired his courage and good spirits. They presented him with a radio, suitcase and wallet and brought him ice cream during his weeks of recovery.

Before leaving Houston, he got to see the Astrodome and stayed with two American families overnight.

On his return to Vietnam, he stopped off in Colorado and saw his first snow. "I made snowballs and threw them at one of the men from the plane," Hoang said with a smile.

When he arrived in Saigon, he was greeted by First Lieutenant Larry C. Pitts of Greenville S.C., who returned him to the base camp of the 3d Brigade.

Now living at home with his parents, three brothers and a sister, Hoang still stops by almost daily to enable Perez to check his pulse and administer his medicine. Friends among the medics, who raised more than \$700 for the youth's expenses, now invite him to participate in their daily volleyball battles in the company area. Before his operation the boy sometimes watched from the sidelines.

"Before the operation the boy really had nothing to look forward to," said Perez. "It was only a matter of time until his weak heart would have affected his lungs, leading to his death."

Now the only shadow across Hoang's life is the continuation of the war around his home town, which is the first major settlement south of War Zone C. "His operation was the result of the generosity of many people here in Vietnam and in United States," said Perez. "I'm glad that my men and I were able to play a role in bringing about such a wonderful medical victory."

A DOG'S LIFE - Bingo, a tracker dog from the 66th Infantry Platoon (combat trackers) takes a short break after a mission to relax in the sun. The 2d Brigade pooch's handler is Sergeant Don Heath of Cody, Wyo. (PHOTO BY 1LT MICHAEL LINN)



'Fastest Pawn In East' Chalks Chess Victories

TAY NINH - You can't really blame them if his opponents are starting to call First Lieutenant Albert E. Fontenot, Jr., of the 4th Battalion, 9th Infantry Manchus "the fastest pawn in the East."

Fontenot, a medical operations assistant, has been in Vietnam since November 27. During that time he's compiled a chess won-lost record of 117-1, which would be outstanding in anything except Russian roulette.

His only loss came against Staff Sergeant Robert M. Lynch, the Manchus' administrative supervisor. Fontenot, the battalion's medical operations assistant, explains the loss this way:

"It was pretty late when we started to play - which was usually the case - and by the time we got to his particular game, it was 2 or 3 a.m. I made one bad move, and Lynch took advantage of it. That was all she wrote for the game.

Fontenot said he inherited his interest in chess from his father.

"When I was little there were always chess sets around our house, so I used to play with them as if they were toy soldiers," he recalls. "I learned how all the pieces moved by the time I was eight, but I didn't get at all serious about the game until I was a senior in high school though."

While he contends that he's still not really a good player, Fontenot is still a marked man among his beknighted Manchu chess opponents.

Fontenot is a graduate of Chicago's Roosevelt University. His wife, Beverly, lives at 3748 W. Cermak Rd., Chicago.

Tomahawks Pull Guard Protecting Rome Plows

TAY NINH - Smashing and leveling dense jungle, ripping and breaking tall, stout trees, and clearing everything in their way are 23 giant Rome plows from the 65th Engineers.

The Rome plow land-clearing operation is taking place 14 miles southeast of Tay Ninh City. The objective: isolate the rubber trees to keep the enemy from using the plantation as a hideaway.

While the engineers level the earth, Company A, 4th Battalion (Mechanized), 23d Infantry, watches for the enemy to harass the engineers.

In the past, enemy soldiers have used the approaches to the big rubber for storing supplies and concealing the

movements of troops in and out of the plantation. The 12-day operation will eliminate this, making detection a matter of visual reconnaissance.

"Land clearing operations have proven their worth in Vietnam; they keep the enemy on the move," said Captain Marion Cowan, of Clyde, Kans., operations officer. "Our last land clearing operation, 18 miles southeast of Tay Ninh City, lasted 15 days. We plowed through the area, even though we were sniped at most of the time," commented Cowan.

"The Tomahawks are standing guard this time, just in case. If the enemy tries anything we'll be ready for them," said 1st Lieutenant William Bradley, a native of Lexington, Ky.

"Charlie fears our Rome plows as much as our weapons. Nothing gets in our way; if we come to an obstacle that's too big or too tough, we'll team up on it until we've conquered it," said Rome plow operator, Specialist 4 Hiroshi Baba, of Waipahu, Hawaii.

The combination of Tomahawks and Engineers working together has proved invaluable. It's a tough combo to beat.



CURIOUS CHILDREN watch Specialist 4 William Reams of Monterey, Calif., a medic with 2d Battalion, 14th Infantry, use a portable X-ray machine at My Han compound near Duc Hoa. Captain Richard Tessler, of Miami, battalion surgeon, oversees the operation. (PHOTO BY SP4 E.R. JAMES)

Dusters Disrupt Plan Of Viet Cong Squad

DAU TIENG - By dim moonlight, a Viet Cong squad stepped from the edge of a woodline in the Michelin Rubber Plantation. Across a large clearing they could see the glimmer of perimeter lights surrounding Dau Tieng base camp.

Suddenly a wall of fire came toward them as tracers whizzed overhead. Shrapnel impacted around them as projectiles exploded in the trees overhead. Their plans disrupted, the enemy squad ran into the woods in disarray.

The dusters - M42 - A1 tank chassis mounting twin 40mm cannons - are used in many defensive roles. They are operated by Bravo Battery, 5th Battalion, 2d Artillery, a II Field Force unit in support of the 3d Brigade.

Designed primarily for anti-aircraft defense, the dusters have been called upon in other defensive roles including convoy protection.

"We've fired about 2,000 rounds in the past two months " said Specialist 4 Howard Doyle of Las Animas, Colo.

The light artillery was used to good advantage recently when an estimated North Vietnamese battalion attempted to ambush a convoy rounding a turn into the Ben Cui rubber plantation 45 miles northwest of Saigon.

Firing in close support of Bravo Company, 2d Battalion (Mechanized) 22d Infantry 'Triple Deuce,' the dusters blasted away many of the enemy positions on both sides of the road.

When the dust of the battle had cleared, 73 enemy were dead.

The duster's massive firepower is made more deadly by its highly explosive projectile, which produces flak when used against enemy aircraft.

Division Doctor Begins X-ray Program To Rid Viets Of TB

CU CHI - A new field in MEDCAP (medical civic action program) capabilities has been opened because of the efforts and resourcefulness of a 25th Infantry Division doctor.

Captain Richard Tessler, of Miami, surgeon for the 2d Battalion, 14th Infantry, became concerned with the amount of tuberculosis among the Vietnamese people and decided to do something about it. After some investigation, he procured from the 25th Medical Battalion a portable X-ray machine that weighs less than 40 pounds and is easily carried in two containers. It can be operated in the field by the power generated by a jeep.

In a makeshift dark room of three tarpaulins, Specialist 4 William Reams of Monterey, Calif. expertly assists the doctor in changing the exposed film. Reams, a medic with the Golden Dragons, has received special instruction in developing X-ray plates and uses the facilities at the 25th Med.

"The results have been startling," stated Tessler. "Of those X-rayed, including children, 20 to 50 were infected by pulmonary TB."

"Once these people have been identified an intensive drug therapy is begun that will last two years. "This is a Vietnamese project and the people will receive their medication from the government," stated the captain. "We are merely initiating and overseeing the program."

Twiggyish Pen Pal Signs Out '20-18-20'

By PFC Ralph Novak

TAY NINH - Sergeant First Class Walter S. Barefoot, has started writing to a young lady in the U.S., but his wife won't mind: the girl is an eighth-grader who signs her letters, "Your loving Twiggy, 20-18-20."

Barefoot, Four Oaks, NC. who's NCOIC of personnel actions for the 4th Battalion, 9th Infantry is an inveterate letter-writer, and has pen pals, mostly school children, all over the U.S. But even he admits that the letter he received recently from Enid Edwards of Galveston, Tex., was extraordinary.

First she addressed the letter to PFC Walter S. Barefoot, causing no end of laughter among Barefoot's co-workers at Manchu headquarters. Then, after putting Barefoot's complete military address both on the envelope and inside the letter, she got into content:

"Dear PFC Walter S. Barefoot R.A. 53154657,

"Hi! My name is Enid Edwards and I'm here to say Hi! How 'bout that? Well, I am in the eighth grade at Weis Junior High and loving school! I am kinda tall, very skinny with short blond hair and blue eyes. I wear braces - yuk! Well, some kids call me Twiggy, probably because it's a heck of a lot easier than Enid."

"You soldiers must get awfully lonely out there, but there are plenty of people back here lonely without you. I often think about you, and I'm grateful to you. Well now, how did you like the election turnouts?

"Our school has the worst football team in Texas. We've lost all our games!

"I play flute in the band, so I have to go to the games. I am a majorette and my legs freeze at the games because of those ridiculous short-shorts!

"Your loving Twiggy, 20-18-20 (signed) Enid Edwards."

Wolfhounds In Firefight

CU CHI - A Second Brigade ambush patrol engaged six NVA soldiers, killing one, and capturing his weapon and web gear.

"We spotted six NVA coming across a marsh toward our position," said Specialist 4 John Quintrell, San Diego, Calif., after the action. "We first blew our claymores on them and opened up on them with everything we had."

The resulting firefight lasted half an hour, during which gunships pounded the enemy who had advanced within 15 meters of the Wolfhounds ambush site.

A search of the area after the contact had broken revealed one NVA body, one AK-50 and one set of NVA web gear.



DEMO MEN PREPARE charges to blow a VC bunker. They are Privates First Class Michael T. Empel, Southgate, Mich., (2d from left) and Jim Hopkins, Cincinnati, (right) from C Company, 65th Engineers. The 'demo duo' is being helped by Privates First Class Joseph Leggett, Tampa, Fla., (left) and Reginald Williams, Richmond, Va. The latter two are from 2d Battalion, 27th Infantry Wolfhounds. **(PHOTO BY SP4 KARL KARLGARRD)**

Like Light

TAY NINH - Specialist 4 Lloyd H. Gray added new meaning to the 4th Battalion, 9th Infantry Manchus' motto, "Keep Up the Fire," when he didn't have a flashlight to explore a tunnel.

Gray discovered fresh diggings that tipped off the Manchus to an abandoned enemy camp, and was given the honor of exploring the first tunnel. With no flashlight handy, Gray borrowed a trick from old ghost movies by wrapping a piece of cloth around a stick, soaking it with insect repellent and setting it afire.

The makeshift torch lasted long enough for Gray to crawl about 100 feet through a winding tunnel 15 feet underground. When the torch began to sputter, he backed out, bringing with him a can of personal articles and an enemy hand grenade, but no enemy tunnel rats.

"That was the first time I'd ever gone into one of those tunnels, and when I came out, I was sweating all over," Gray recalled. "It wasn't hot down there, either."

UP, UP AND AWAY
 - A Chinook from the 269th Aviation Battalion carries this 50-foot watch tower with ease from Ba Bep Bridge to Fire Support Base Crockett, to assist the 2d Battalion, 34th Armor. **(PHOTO BY SP4 DOUG ELLIOTT)**



CHECKING IT OUT - Sergeant First Class John H. Warwick, Maxton, N.C., probes into soft soil while Specialist 4 John Schenk, a medic from Wallworth, N.Y., watches. Both men are from the 2d Battalion, 27th Infantry.

Manchus, 3/4 Cav Turn Back Attacking Enemy At Phuoc Luu

CU CHI - Moving from the safety of the Cambodian border, an estimated reinforced enemy company occupied sections of Phuoc Luu, a village eight miles west of Trang Bang. As soon as the local Popular Forces noticed the arrival of the VC unit, they called for support from the 25th Division.

Elements of the 3d Squadron, 4th Cavalry, moved quickly on the morning of January 25 to establish a defensive position near the village. They received sporadic fire from enemy positions.

By noon on the 25th the men of the 3/4 Cav were joined by the 4th Battalion, 9th Infantry. The Manchus had moved out of Fire Support Base Sedgwick on 15 minutes notice. Since there had been hostile fire from the hamlet, a psychological operations chopper broadcast the message to the villagers that they should vacate the area. It was later learned that each resident who left the dangerous area did so under the threat of death from the VC terrorists.

Many refugees ignored the Communist threats and arrived in Go Dau Ha on the afternoon of the 25th. Most of the residents of Phuoc Luu managed to escape in time, but some were not so lucky, as the enemy went on a murdering and burning rampage.

While Tropic Lightning soldiers worked to establish a secure defensive position, D Troop of the Cav moved cautiously into the hamlet. But as the horsemen approached, Charlie decided the setting wasn't safe. The Cav soldiers were greeted by the smoldering fires set by the retreating enemy. D Troop remained inside the village at the PF compound ready for the return of the terrorists.

Everyone seemed sure that the scene of the action to come was not going to be Phuoc Luu, but the defensive position nearby. Six Chinook helicopter sorties brought in steel plating, sand bags, concertina wire and two 105mm howitzers as the Cav troopers and the Manchus continued digging and building after the sun had left them. By midnight the 25th Division soldiers were entrenched in fighting positions with overhead cover, mechanized tracks and two artillery pieces. The wait began.

They didn't have to wait long. Fast work paid dividends. At 1:00 a.m., January 26, the VC let loose.

Private First Class Michael W. Tanner of La Habra, Calif., a radio-telephone operator for Charlie Company of the Manchus remembered it this way: "I finished digging my bunker about 12:30 a.m. and had maybe half an hour's sleep before the stuff started coming in. They were throwing everything you could think of at us."

Captain Ramon T. Pulliam of Chatanooga, Tenn., commander of C Company, shifted his 90mm recoilless rifle team to knock out the enemy forces zeroing in on the Cav tracks. Nearly 100 recoilless rifle rounds were fired during the battle.

Gunships added firepower as they hit the enemy repeatedly, and flares stole the night from Charlie. The battle raged for two hours before the battered VC decided they had had enough.

A sweep of the area the next day turned up 15 dead enemy three AK-47 assault rifles, 35 Chicom hand grenades, 26 mixed B-40 and B-41 rifle grenades and a light machinegun. One suspect was detained. A platoon from C Company Manchus swept through the village and joined D Troop of the Cav, but there was no action to be found there. Charlie had long since departed. The men returned to their night laager to secure the area.

In Go Dau Ha, where the villagers from Phuoc Luu had relocated, a medical civic action team supplied food and shelter for the refugees. A division civic action team was also sent to Phuoc Luu to assess the damage of the village and undertake plans for future aid.

Siege . . .

(Continued From Page 1)

east end of the runway and were detained. During the long night there were many instances of individual heroism.

"As the fighting became savage we had to commit our reaction forces into the hottest areas," said Captain Joseph Heeney of Fords, N.Y., assistant brigade operations officer. "We formed small reaction forces from cooks, clerks mechanics engineers, and military policemen. It's amazing how such an amalgam of units that are trained primarily for other jobs were able to function so well."

Meanwhile helicopter gunships and an AC-47 dragonship provided illumination and additional fire power to infantrymen on the ground.

The fighting was the heaviest in and around the base camp in the three years that American infantrymen have used it as a jumping-off point for large-scale operations near War Zone C.

Sergeant First Class Preston Rowser, Detroit, Mich., moved to a position during the attack where he could see the advancing enemy, knocking back any who dared advance.

Grenadier Specialist 4 Bruce Brauman, Baltimore, Maryland, located a bunker held by the NVA soldiers and

poured fire on the enemy.

A final, powerful punch was provided by Tropic Lightning artillery and gunships. The big guns pounded the advancing enemy throughout the assault.

Fighting got so close at one time that according to artilleryman Specialist 4 John Jasinski, St. Paul, Minn., "When I turned around and saw them on top of our protective berm, we traversed the gun on them and started firing point blank. It was just like a firefight but we were using 105's."

Helicopter gunships poured walls of lead on the enemy making low level passes in the midst of enemy fire. Air strikes brought their powerful bombs up to the perimeter forcing the enemy to retreat.

Combined body count for the two nights of action approached upwards of two hundred NVA soldiers and delivered serious damage to a prime enemy division.

Legs, Pilots Trade Roles

CU CHI - There is an Army-Air Force exchange program in Vietnam that allows young officers to become acquainted with the other branch.

Air Force First Lieutenant Robert Deardorff, an A37 pilot with the 604th Special Operations Squadron, 3d Tactical Fighter Wing at Bien Hoa, recently spent two days with Tropic Lightning 2d Brigade troops while an Army counterpart, First Lieutenant Dennis Gnas, of the 2d Battalion, 12th Infantry, flew with the Air Force.

"This is a good chance for us to see the Army at ground level," commented Deardorff, "and gain a little more understanding of the feelings of the troops. As pilots, our first concern is support of ground forces."

Deardorff spent two days with the 2d Battalion, 12th Infantry at the Fire Brigade's Fire Support Base Pershing, northwest of Cu Chi, seeing the troops in action and attending an operations briefing.

Gnas of Hamtramck, Mich., on the other hand, went aloft with the flyboys from the Bien Hoa-based wing in an Air Force A37.

"I have to admit I was a little apprehensive at first," said the Army officer, "But it was exhilarating and interesting to see just what is involved in putting in an air strike. I'm glad we've got them up there," he concluded.

Officials who coordinate the program hope to increase the appreciation and cooperation of our armed services by such exchanges.

CRP Shocks Enemy

DAU TIENG - Four members of an enemy mortar crew died as their own mortars were turned against them after they fired on a Tropic Lightning patrol in the Michelin Rubber Plantation.

Members of the Combined Reconnaissance Patrol (CRP) of the 1st Battalion, 27th Infantry Wolfhounds were fired on two miles east of Dau Tieng.

They were enroute to reinforce a Provincial Reconnaissance Unit (PRU) of the Army of the Republic of Vietnam. The PRU soldiers had just finished a firefight in which they killed two enemy. As the first mortar struck First Lieutenant Patrick Smith of Madera, Calif., CRP leader, could see that the fire was coming from behind an old hootch near the plantation hospital.

"They were only 100 meters away, so I asked for volunteers to smoke them out " said Smith.

While Smith called for artillery and air strikes, three members of the patrol crept up behind the hootch. They were Specialists 4 Carl Hathaway of New Canton, Ohio, Gary Simpson of Baltimore, and E.J. Mitchell of Biloxi, Miss.

They were covered by other CRP infantrymen including Sergeant John Mikita of Chicago, Specialist 4 Robert J. Unser of Morrisonville, Ill., and Private First Class Wilken Walker of Des Moines, Iowa.

The Wolfhounds came around the hootch to confront the surprised enemy. When the CRP soldiers opened fire, the enemy scattered. Three of those who were killed wore North Vietnamese Army camouflaged fatigues while the fourth was clad in black pajamas.

Meanwhile the PRU soldiers grabbed the enemy's 60mm mortar tube and seven rounds and began firing in the direction the enemy crew had fled. The captured mortar tube, three remaining rounds and several captured documents were taken to the 3d Brigade base camp at Dau Tieng.

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the cover of a barrage of mortar and rocket rounds. The enemy's attack was so devastating that for a short time the southern portion of the perimeter was so covered with smoke, dirt and debris that the area was neutralized.

Sergeant First Class Preston Rowser of Detroit, moved to a position during the attack where he could see the advancing enemy, knocking back any who dared advance.

A final, powerful punch was provided by Tropic Lightning artillery and gunships. Big guns pounded the advancing enemy throughout the assault.

Fighting got so close at one time that according to artilleryman Specialist 4 John Jasinski, St. Paul, Minn., "when I turned around and saw them on top of our protective berm, we traversed the gun on them and started firing point blank. It was just like a firefight but we were using 105s."

Combined body count for the two nights of action by the Tropic Lightning soldiers was over 200. Serious damage has been done to a prime enemy division.

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