



With eye's on the bush and weapons at the ready, Alpha Company 2nd Bn, 5th Cav moves out on patrol. The 1st Air Cavalrymen were operating near NVA infiltration routes north of Tay Ninh.

(USA Photo By SP4 Bob Borchester)



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1st Air Cavalry Division

April 15, 1970

## Heavy Ground Fighting

# 2/8 Blasts Enemy

By SP4 Jerry Norton

PHUOC VINH -- First Air Cavalry Division ground units clashed repeatedly with the enemy from March 22 through March 28, killing 175 Communists. Other Cav elements brought the enemy toll for the week to 343.

A hard-fought, seven-hour battle left 88 enemy dead in the thick jungle 22 miles north-northwest of Tay Ninh on Mar. 26. Charlie Company, 2nd Bn, 8th Cav was on a ground reconnaissance at 11:45 a.m. when its point element encountered enemy entrenched in bunkers.

"Our 3rd Platoon leader cut down several NVA as they scrambled out of their bunkers to fire B-40s," said Capt. George J. Hobson, Charlie Company

commander. "We moved into a triangle with a platoon on each flank and a third toward the rear protecting the CP."

The battle raged in the thick undergrowth throughout the afternoon, as the Skytroopers held their ground against enemy small arms, automatic weapons and B-40s. Aerial Rocket Artillery, Air Force jets and tube artillery pounded NVA positions in support of the embattled Cav men.

At 5:30 p.m. a relief column broke through the surrounding jungle. Sheridans and ACAVs from Alpha Troop, 1st Sqdn, 11th ACR, accompanied by Alpha Company, 2nd of the 8th, came in on line and wheeled into position to blast the enemy with .50 caliber machineguns and twin M-60s. Contact was lost at 7 p.m.

Two days later another Cav unit tangled with enemy in bunkers. Alpha Company, 1st Bn, 12th Cav, searching an enemy basecamp near the Cambodian border 24 miles north-northeast of Song Be

From 1 to 2 p.m. a deadly two-way traffic of fire crossed the river. The enemy used small arms, machineguns and B-40 rockets. Tube artillery rounds, Air Force bombs and Blue Max

rockets punched through the NVA positions as Alpha maintained a constant fire with M-16s and M-60s.

When the battle ended tube artillery had killed 22 NVA, air strikes 12, Alpha Company 7 and ARA 3.

The week's other major firefight left 17 NVA dead in northern Phuoc Long Province on March 22. The battle erupted when Alpha Company, 1st Bn, 8th Cav spotted and engaged eight to ten enemy at 12:04 p.m.

The Skytroopers were on a ground reconnaissance when they observed several NVA on a trail through the heavily-jungled foothills nine miles southeast of Bu Gia Map.

As the Cav cut down the enemy with M-16s and M-60s, NVA snipers in trees fired back with small arms. Aerial Rocket Artillery and Air Force jets bolstered the Skytroopers. In half an hour contact broke and the enemy retreated, leaving behind 10 NVA killed by Alpha Company. ~~Enemy was killed by the 1st of the enemy deaths were inflicted in one engagement by a 227th Assault Helicopter Battalion Huey. The INFANT~~ (Continued on Page 8.)

## 55 Ton Cache

# Rice Goes To Villagers

By PFC David Charlton

QUAN LOI -- South Vietnamese villagers now have 55 more tons of rice due to the combined efforts of the ARVN and 1st Air Cav Division.

The cache was uncovered north of Fire Support Base Granite on March 19 by a platoon from Delta Company, 1st Bn, 5th Cav, while working with Bravo, 1st of the 5th, Bravo, 2nd of the 5th, and a company from ARVN 3rd of the 9th.

"We had split off from the Delta company platoon and were in different areas adjacent to the first one. We knew there was rice in the area when we ran into four NVA carriers on heavy duty bicycles carrying 150 pound bags of rice down a trail," Capt. T.C. Loomis, Bravo, 1st of the 5th commander, said.

"So we turned back down the trail and retraced our steps. That's when we got a call from Delta. They had made contact and found the first bags of rice. As the platoons swung around to aid them they found some rice 1500 meters from the original find."

"It was like a snow storm, in the middle of the jungle," Spec. 4 Jim Ivey, pointman for Bravo Company, 1st of 5th said. "The rice had been stacked in the open and camouflaged with leaves and vines."

According to Loomis, "We hauled the 21, 220 pound bags, plus another 22 bags in the vicinity, along with those found by Delta into an improvised LZ and called in Chinooks to carry the bags to Granite."

"The biggest problem," said Loomis, "was in providing security for the whole area while

we were gathering the rice. An eighteen inch wide trail that had been recently cut had fresh tracks, and we knew NVA were in the area."

About 71 bags, under light jungle canopy were found the first day. Approximately 10,800 pounds were found the second day. Along with the 17,565 pounds found the fourth day were 29 bicycles, 19 bicycle tires, a complete bicycle repair shop, 228, pounds of salt, 5 NVA uniforms and 2 rafts and several hundred feet of nylon rope. The final 65,000 pounds of rice making the grand total 55 tons was found by Bravo, 2nd of the 5th.

According to Loomis, the ARVN unit inserted to the north, across the Song Be River

provided the security, and also found part of the rice cache.

"Carrying the bags got to be a problem, with two men per 220 pound bag," observed Staff Sgt. Glen Weindel, Bravo Company, 1st of the 5th. "The bags started breaking open and soon guys were grabbing everything from duffle bags to improvised thatched stretchers to carry the rice the 200 meters to the LZ."

The rice, according to Loomis, is being distributed to An Loc, Loc Ninh, Bu Doc and other smaller hamlets in the vicinity.

With the discovery of the gigantic 126 ton cache near Katum and the 11 ton cache north of Song Be the enemy has suffered a significant dent in its supply line while unintentionally feeding the villages in the 1st Cav's AO.

## Montagnard Children Meet Donald Duck

By SSg Ronald Renouf

QUAN LOI -- It was movie night at the Vietnamese village of Soc Mon Loi and for dozens of Montagnard children a face-to-face meeting with Donald Duck.

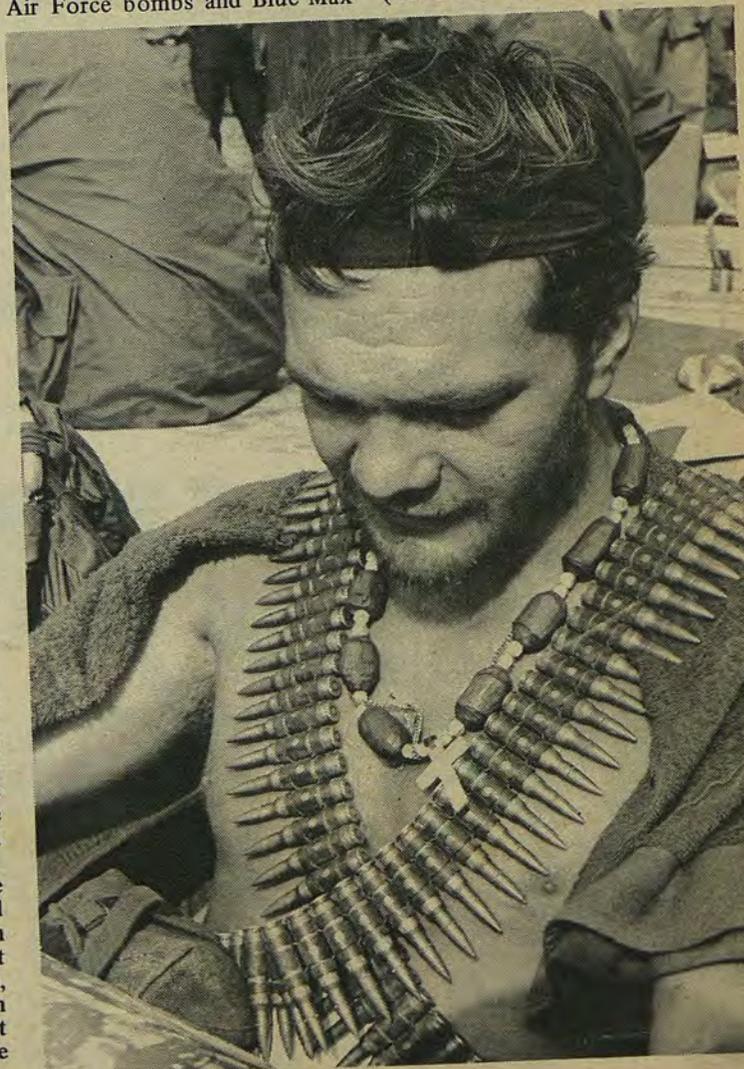
For the majority of the over 800 people in the hamlet, it was the first time they had ever seen a movie. The motion pictures were an instant hit, and tiny kids crowded around the projectionist to ask when the "magic light" was coming back.

Before the added treat of the movies, a team of medics from the 1st Battalion, 5th Cavalry treated nearly 200 villagers for a variety of ailments from intestinal disorders to infections, sprained ankles and skin rashes.

Tuesdays are becoming a festival day in the village with the medics arriving and handing out candy, fresh fruit and items of clothing, then treating the aches and pains of everyone from tots to white-bearded grandfathers.

"Several of these people should be in a hospital," said Capt. Samuel R. Short, battalion Civil Affairs officer. "They just don't want to leave their homes, however, and we are limited in the amount of medical aid that we can provide. We treat all the people the best we can."

An added bonus for the village children was a playground set built by the Civil Affairs staff and given to the village, including four swings and two seesaws.



Spec. 4 Mike Hoffman checks out a magazine article while waiting for 1st Air Cav helicopters to arrive for the next combat assault into hostile territory. Delta Company, 2nd Bn, 12th Cav, was operating 90 miles north of Saigon. (USA Photo By SP4 Bill Ahrbeck)

### Inspects For Contraband

# Fluoroscope Eyeballs Mail

By SP4 Jay Grossman

BIEN HOA - Neither strikes nor monsoons nor incoming nor heat of day will stay the mail from its appointed destination. But a fluoroscope may stop an AK-47 or marijuana from reaching the United States.

The central Army Post Office of the 1st Air Cavalry at Bien Hoa handles the mail for the 22,000 Skytroopers of the division. The APO moves some half a million pounds of mail from the US each month, and sends an additional 75 to 90,000 pounds back to the world; these figures are doubled for the holiday season of November and December.

In addition to these normal mail functions, the APO is responsible for the sales of money orders and stamps, as

well as inspections for contraband items.

"The problem of contraband is growing," said division postal officer Capt. Leo Sullivan. "Right now, we do pull spot checks on packages. We compare the size and weight of the package with the contents listed on the customs tag. If there is an obvious discrepancy, I am authorized to open the package."

There are three points where packages are examined before they are delivered to the addressee: Bien Hoa APO, which will soon employ a mine detector to spot metal objects, and the Saigon and San Francisco Army Mail Facilities, where packages are fluoroscoped. Material most often found are weapons, explosives and government

property.

In one instance, a case of fragmentation grenades was stopped in San Francisco.

"In many cases, the man sending the material may not realize it's contraband," said Sullivan. "Items like jungle fatigues, poncho liners, and, of course, weapons and explosives are forbidden, both for the safety of the postal personnel and the potential danger of their use in the states."

Souvenirs including knives and cross-bows are permitted to be mailed if they are safely packed.

After the contraband item is removed, the package is forwarded to the addressee with a note explaining what has been removed. The prohibited material is turned over to the military police or the CID with the name of the sender.

According to a USARV regulation activated in March, a sender must present his identification card when he is mailing a package. This dissuades the sender from using a phony name or return address.

Despite the growing problem of inspections, the Bien Hoa APO is a smooth-running operation. "We feel the Cav gets excellent postal service," said Sullivan. "Even with the tremendous volume we handle there is never a back-log of mail here."

Each day from dawn til dusk two 5-ton rigs and two 2½-ton trucks shuttle back and forth between Saigon and Bien Hoa. Major Cav basecamps by the next morning.

While the APO processes the mail within 24 hours of its arrival in country, some delays are unavoidable. These usually occur, however, in the U.S. Adverse weather conditions, holidays and weekend interruptions of service, and, of course, postal strikes, all slow up mail delivery.



Enjoying the simple pleasures of the outdoors - a cold shower at mid day - Capt. Robert Lenz at 1st Air Cav's FSB Westphal really knows how to rub it in. Lenz is the S-3 Air officer of the 2nd Bn, 8th Cav. (USA Photo By SP4 James McCabe)

## ... For God And Country

By Chaplain (Capt.) Joel L. Miles Sr.  
8th Engr Bn

It was only one week before I was to leave for Vietnam. My two small sons, aged 4-5, were asked what they thought of their father's leaving. Their reply was simply, "all daddies have to go to Vietnam." For almost three years they had seen families pack and leave our neighborhood because the man of the house had been assigned to

promoted to a major. My brother's five-year old daughter demanded to know why her uncle had to go to Vietnam? For some reason my brother didn't feel adequate to answer the question so in his first letter he put the question to me, "why are you in Vietnam?"

I think I can answer this question best by explaining why I became a chaplain. Shortly after college I spent two years in the army as an enlisted man. This was a good experience for me and is good for every young man. This experience attracted me to the Army Chaplaincy. After three years of seminary training and two and a half years in the ministry, I decided to become a chaplain.

The chaplaincy is a vital ministry to the young men of our nation, especially away from home in a totally different environment. The men need inspiration, guidance and understanding. They need a boost, especially, when the chips are down. They need a friend, a big brother, who has the time and patience to listen and share their personal problems and burdens.

My purpose, indeed my mission, in Vietnam is to seek to provide our young men the extra boost they need when the chips are down, listen with sympathetic understanding to individual concerns and offer counsel and whatever spiritual influence needed.

God is as real in this period of mankind's existence as at any other period. He is as real in this country as in any other place in the world. Therefore, let us say together with the psalmist who wrote: "Let everything that has breath, praise the Lord!" As the theme of this article indicates; I am here, "For God and Country."

## MARS Call Is Good Buy

TAY NINH - One of the biggest bargains in Vietnam is the MARS phone call home. It doesn't cost you a cent while the folks get to hear you at normal stateside rates.

The call is relayed from

Vietnam to MARS operators in the states, usually on the west coast. Working with the telephone operators a collect call is then placed either station to station (\$1 for three minutes) or person to person.

"We seldom run into any problems in getting our calls through. The main problem is when there's no one home," said Spec 4 Donald Boss, operator for the Tay Ninh MARS station. "Most people worry about the cost not realizing that the charge for the call is from where the connection is made in the U.S."

"The only real complaint we have is that not enough people are making use of MARS," Boss

said. "We're having a hard time getting people to come in."

Open from 6 a.m. til noon on the even days of the week, the Tay Ninh MARS station places an average of 30 calls a day, which is approximately half of the station's capability.

"Ninety five per cent of the time we get real good reception even though the calls are across some 10,000 miles of ocean," Boss said. "At times it's like standing next door."

Although there's nothing quite like voice to voice contact, messages can now also be sent to the U.S. by MARS grams, which are similar to telegrams. There is no charge for the message.



Illustration By SP4 Glenn Thompson



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## A Hard Long Year

# Lost Sole Reflects On Nam

By SP4 Barry Bjornson

It was a long hard year. I'm worn out.

One year ago, as our airplane landed in Bien Hoa, I was filled with fear and apprehension of the unknown that lay ahead. I was wet with sweat. As I stepped out onto the ramp the heat and humid smell of the air hit me full in the face. Looking over to my right I saw that my partner felt the same.

I'll never forget those first months in the field. While I was at the First Team Academy in Bien Hoa I learned a little of

what was ahead; but until I got out there in the mud and jungle, I didn't really know what to expect.

During those months, as throughout the year, my partner and I were inseparable. We stayed close to keep each other out of trouble, and together we did our best to see that our mutual best friend stayed safe.

I remember our first firefight as if it happened yesterday. We were walking through that dense bamboo that is so common in Cav Country. I hated it. The going was so slow, I thought we'd never get anywhere. When

the fight started I threw myself to the ground. My partner and I lay there, trying to keep out of the way of the flying fragments of death. Our buddy was really scared, but he returned fire, as was his duty.

The Quan Loi mud was the low point of my tour. I'll never forget how bad it was; we were so dirty I didn't think I could ever get clean again. Right then I knew I'd never be the same as I was before. It was miserable.

As I look back, I'm really glad I was assigned to the 1st Cav. I loved riding in those helicopters. The landings were sometimes hard to take, jumping off the skids with all that weight on my back.

And now, as I stand here in Bien Hoa looking at that beautiful freedom bird, I am seeing my buddy leave for home after 365 days of the closest of friendships. I know how much he wants to get home to that girl of his that has been waiting so long. I'm really happy for him. I wish I could have gone along.

What is to become of me now? My partner was lost somewhere, my buddy is on his way home and I'm afraid the Army has no more use for my services. Serving in Vietnam has been the greatest part of my life - what else am I good for? I sure would like to go back to the field, after a good, long rest. But here I am, nothing but a lonely, tired old jungle boot. It was a long year.

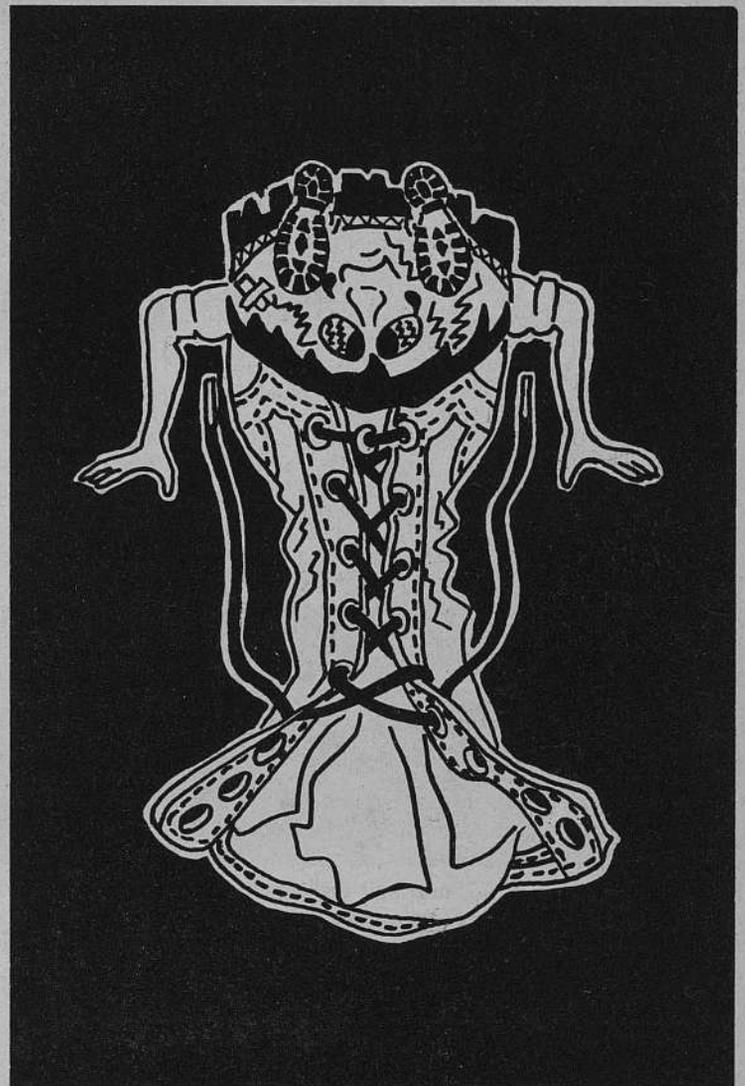


Illustration By SP4 Ted Fairbanks

## Helicopters Scramble For Emergency CA

By SP4 Ron Wright

FSB Buttons, Vietnam - Seconds after a burst of ground-to-air fire downed a 1st Air Cav Div resupply helicopter, help was on the way from every direction.

The company being resupplied tried to reach the downed craft 150 meters away but were pinned down by a hail of small arms and automatic weapons fire.

Col. Edward Meyers, 2nd Brigade Commander, ordered all available helicopters to scramble for an emergency insertion of troops into the contact area.

Pilots who were on less important missions scrubbed them and headed to Buttons where a strange combination of helicopters used for logistics purposes, chemical reconnaissance and command and control plus gunships from

three different battalions were assembled into two six-ship lifts for the combat assault.

At Buttons the birds were refueled, the pilots briefed while infantrymen at two distant firebases readied for the assault.

"Speed was imperative and cooperation was the key to the mission's success," said Maj. Robert Saunders, senior pilot in the mission. "It came off without a hitch."

In an hour the reinforcement were on the ground, advancing toward the enemy's rear. Trapped, the enemy lost six men attempting to flee. The survivors of the crash were rescued.

Back in the air, the pilots of separated to return to pending missions that would be a little late. They didn't mind working overtime. It had been a satisfying afternoon.

## Supplying Rations For Cav Is Extensive Operation

By SP4 Jay Grossman

BIEN HOA - With 22,000 mouths to feed, scattered over an area larger than Connecticut, ration distribution in the 1st Air Cav is quite a task.

The man in charge of distributing rations is 1st Lt. Ramon Morales, the division Class I officer. Under his supervision some 15 tons of food is moved from the 15th

Supply and Service Bn, to the four major division base camps and Bien Hoa Army Base three times a week.

Supplies to Phuoc Vinh, Quan Loi and Tay Ninh are moved by truck convoy. FSB Buttons, the forward rear of the 2nd Brigade is supplied by air.

Rations are divided into three categories, Class A, which require refrigeration, Class B,

canned goods, and C rations and LRRP meals. On an average issue day a shipment to Song Be might include six tons of Class A rations, five and a half tons Class B, as well as 8,000 C ration meals and an equal number of LRRP's.

After being palletted at night, the food is shipped on C-130's, Caribous and in conexes carried by Chinook helicopters.

The tri-weekly shipments to Song Be, as well as the other basecamps, are estimated by comparing the base head count against the volume of back-logged rations stored at the facility. "When we see how much is on hand we can substitute items which may be in greater demand," said the Class I officer.

Once the rations have been delivered individual mess halls draw their shares from the Class I point at the basecamp. From there the food is broken down for use in the rear and for units in the field.

There are emergencies which challenge the logistical resources of the Class I facility. Last Thanksgiving 1,000 infantrymen were brought close to 2nd Brigade fire bases, necessitating a rush movement of rations. By Christmas the Class I people had the experience to move extra food with a minimum of trouble.

On another occasion the C-130's used for Song Be flights were cancelled. Relying on a two-day backlog stored at Buttons, food supplies were uninterrupted until a Chinook was secured from the division transportation office.

"I can't remember an instance of troops in the bush having to go without food because of emergency," said Morales

## Kids Really Swing With Cav Playset

By SP4 Bill Rufty

LOC NINH, - A 1st Cav jungle gym in the jungle has won the hearts of dozens of Vietnamese children in this rubber town.

Remembering how much fun American children have with a few simple playground toys, members of the Civil Affairs office of the 1st Battalion, 5th Cavalry have built a playground set for the school playground in Loc Ninh.

"I just casually mentioned the idea to some of the guys one day," said Captain Samuel Short, Civil Affairs officer for the battalion, "and when I returned one evening after an operation, there in front of my hootch were seesaws and swings all built and painted."

The equipment had been built out of materials on hand and tested for durability by the men in the office.

"School wasn't in session when we arrived," said Sergeant John Rohman, one of the volunteers who went along to help set it up. "But the yard was overflowing with kids just a

couple of minutes after we started work.

"When we set up a teeter tooter," he said, "the children couldn't imagine what it was for. So we put two little ones on it and rocked the board up and down. Once they caught on, there was a long line on each side waiting for their turn."

Captain Short estimated that 100 children turned out for the installing of the playground equipment. The project was such a success that the battalion is planning to build similar equipment for many of the area's schools.

"What is a school yard without swings and jungle gyms to play on?" Capt. Short asked. "There was that big, empty yard and all those bright little eyes just staring with nothing to do. The fellows wanted to make a playground like they remembered back home."

One of the Skytroopers said, "When we left there were kids laughing and playing all over the place. And an elderly gentleman shuffled up, smiled a big grin and nearly shook my hand off."



A swarm of birds swoop down to extract a 1st Air Cav Div company operating north of Tay Ninh. Getting troops in and out of isolated areas quickly is the mark of the airmobile division. (USA Photo By SP4 Bob Borchester)

# Arty Convoy Treads Water Moving To New Firebase

By Lt. Brian Phipps

**FSB BUTTONS** - Like a wagon train, the convoy wound its way along the road kicking up huge clouds of dust. Then they circled up in the traditional defensive position.

The result was a new 1st Air Cavalry fire support base establishing a heavy artillery position closer to NVA haunts.

Because the ponderous 8 inch and 175 mm weapons of the 6th Bn, 27th Artillery are too heavy to be moved by Cav helicopters, when the decision came down to move the unit the only way to do it was by convoy.

After reconning the area, Capt. Richard Estes, commander of Bravo Company, 8th Engineers and Lt. Col. Thomas Jones, commander of 1st Bn, 77th Artillery decided to use a tracked vehicle convoy to establish the new firebase northwest of Buttons, journeying through the treacherous jungles across often-mined roads, streams and rivers.

Two companies of Regional Forces and one company from the ARVN Airborne secured the roadway and checked for mines. Leading the way was a combat engineer vehicle smoothing obstacles along the little-used road and finding a suitable ford across the rocky Song Be River.

On other deeper streams, an Amored Vehicle Launch Bridge was swung off its resting place atop a track to provide a portable bridge for the vehicles. The 40 foot span operates hydraulically off a tank chassis and folds back up when all the vehicles and its carrier have crossed it.

When one of the big self-propelled guns broke a fan belt another part of the convoy, the tank retriever, moved into action and towed in the track.

With the combined strength of the artillery, engineers and RF and ARVN guards, the convoy reached the site of the new base and were set up early in the afternoon, ready to fire.



The 1st Cav convoy of 175mm and eight-inch guns, ford the Song Be River as they move deep into suspected NVA territory near the Cambodian border. The artillery pieces from the 6th Bn, 27th Arty, were too heavy to be lifted by 1st Cav helicopters but the overland move was executed with few delays and resulted in an instant 1st Cav Heavy Artillery firebase.



It's not a tank but the eight-inch nitzer, most accurate long range weapon the Army owns, is quite versatile when it comes to traversing rapidly flowing streams and rugged jungle trails. The heavy artillery from the 6th Bn, 27th Arty, was moved from Buttons to a new 1st Cav firebase in a matter of hours.



Kicking up huge clouds of dust, the 1st Cav convoy of 175mm and eight-inch guns of the 6th Bn, 27th Arty, move through an isolated village enroute to their new firebase deep in the treacherous jungles northwest of Song Be.

US Photos By SP4 James McCabe



The Amored Vehicle Launch Bridge swings into action from its resting place atop the track. The 40-foot portable bridge was used in crossing deeper streams that the convoy was unable to ford.



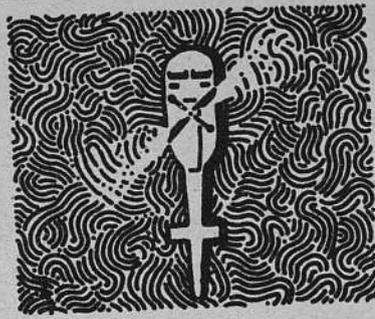
Equipped with twin 40mm cannons, the Duster inches its way into the Song Be River. Rivers proved no obstacle for the tracked convoy as the self propelled guns tread water in their journey to their new firebase.



Treading water, this 175mm gun follows careful directions in crossing swift flowing Song Be River enroute to new base of operations deep in suspected NVA territory.



Dancer Suzanne Charny knows all the moves as she does her thing. As most Skytroopers will agree it's "what's up front that counts," but it's the sum of the parts that makes a whole. Miss Charny toured Vietnam with the Bob Hope show in December 1969. (Photo courtesy of NBC-TV)



# ROTOR WASH

## RF, PF Troops Decorated

QUAN LOI -- Seven Popular Forces and Regional Forces troopers were given Army Commendation medals by Colonel Joseph Kingston, 1st Air Cav 3rd Brigade commander in ceremonies held in An Loc, the District headquarters of Binh Long province.

Sgt. Le Van Due, Corporal Dahn Dam and PFC Le Van Tuan of the Regional Forces and squad leader Ngo Van Chi, Pham Van Tinh, Dien Ke and Dieu Hit of the Popular Forces received the medals for the conduct of three successful ambushes in the An Loc area.

In the actions, at Minh Duc, Nui Gio and Soc Gon, five NVA were killed and three AK-47s and one AK-54 were captured. MACV representatives served as advisers to the Vietnamese forces.

Adding to the pomp and ceremony of the occasion were a highly trained Honor Guard and Vietnamese Army Band.

During the presentation of the medals Col. Kingston said, "Their valorous actions speak well for their training, their unit and their district. I find it a distinct honor to have comrades in arms such as these here today."

## Bus Service In Operation

PHUOC VINH -- A bus service is now in operation on Camp Gorvad providing transportation for any U. S. personnel on the base. Operating every 30 minutes between the hours of 8 a. m. and 6 p. m. daily, the buses service both the northern and southern half of the post, picking up passengers at designated bus stops.

Personnel using the busses are ask to observe the following rules:

Clear all weapons before boarding the bus.

Personnel must be in the complete proper uniform.

No smoking allowed. No alcohol or other stuffs will be consumed on the bus.

## Tax Forms Now Available

Those personnel desiring to file their 1969 Federal Income Tax while serving in the Republic of Vietnam are advised that necessary forms are available through the S-1 of the three Brigades or from the Office of the Staff Judge Advocate, Camp Gorvad, building 7789.

Attention is invited to the fact, however, that the normal deadline for filing by April 15, does not apply to service personnel serving in the Republic of Vietnam. A waiver of 180 days has been granted, meaning that you have 180 days from the date of departure from Vietnam before you will incur any liability for delinquency in filing such return.

## Flight Engr. Sets Record

BEAR CAT -- Maj. Glen L. Chamberlain, company commander of Company B, 228th Assault Support Helicopter Bn, promoted Spec. 5 Glen L. Chamberlain to Specialist 6 for a record he set in total flying hours for the month of March.

Chamberlain, a flight engineer in Chinook Longhorn 087, flew 205 hours and 30 minutes in the first 27 days of March besting the previous record of 173 hours in 30 days.

## Enemy 51's Delay Airlift

TAY NINH -- After four days of steady fighting, Charlie Company, 2nd Bn, 8th Cav was ready for extraction back to a firebase but the enemy had other ideas. As the lift helicopters swooped in to pick up the 1st Air Cavalrymen the enemy opened up with .51 caliber machinegun and small arms fire.

The Cavalrymen called in Blue Max Aerial Rocket Artillery (ARA) support.

"I escorted the third bird into the LZ and as he set down the fourth bird was already on its way in," said Captain Steven F. Roemer. "Just as the third bird started to lift out Charlie let

both birds have it. As soon as the birds cleared the treeline, I rolled in hot."

"Two other ARA birds strafed the enemy positions then provided cover when one of the lift helicopters went down. The crew was rescued.

The enemy silenced, extraction began again but the lift ships drew another volley of automatic weapons fire. "We went straight for the muzzle flashes and tracers this time," said Roemer. "It took some doing to quiet that gun."

At daybreak 10 dead NVA were found. The .51 caliber machinegun was destroyed.

### FIRST TEAM SCHOLARSHIPS

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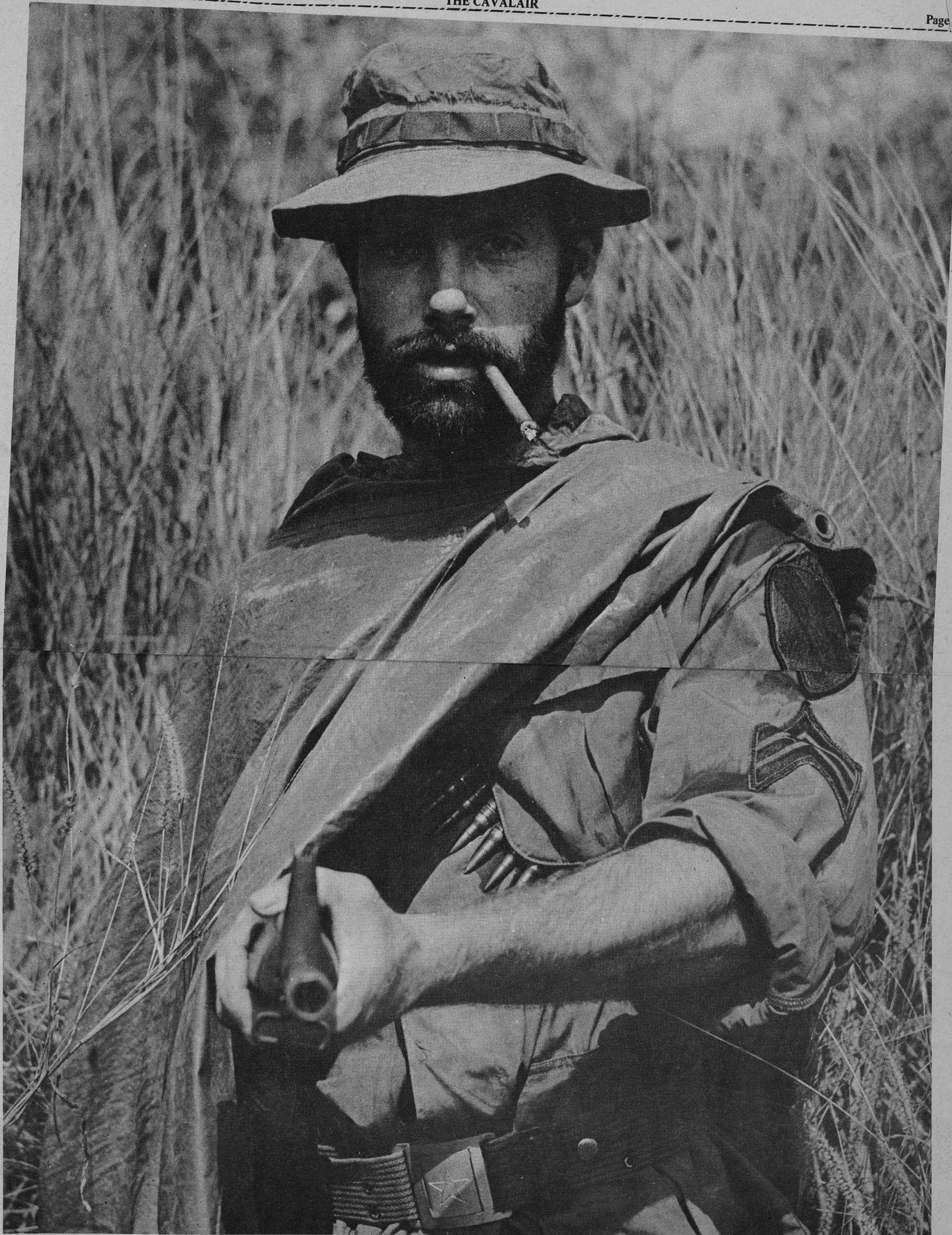
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### For A Few Dollars More...

"You too can have your copy of the FIRST TEAM history book sent anywhere in the world," says Sgt. James Lackey of Company E, 2nd Bn, 8th Cav. Unfortunately, due to increased production costs, life members of the 1st Cavalry Division Association will not be able to purchase the book at the \$1 discount previously advertised. For additional information see coupon on adjoining page. (USA Photo by SP4 Len Fallscheer)



Beginning construction of a new village, this former VC sympathizer begins a new start in life. One of 400 villagers to rally in the 1st Cav's 2nd Brigade area during recent months, he is finding life under the Government of South Vietnam much more prosperous than under VC rule.  
(USA Photo By SP4 James McCabe)

## Air Cav Helicopters Aid ARVN Troopers

**FSB BUTTONS** - When the ARVN forces ask for air support, the 1st Air Cavalry makes sure it's there almost immediately.

"We can always expect action when the ARVNs call us in," said 1st Lt. Thomas Harmon, "and we try to help them out as much as possible." Harmon pilots a Light Observation Helicopter (LOH) for a Charlie Troop, 1st Squadron, 9th Cavalry hunter-killer team.

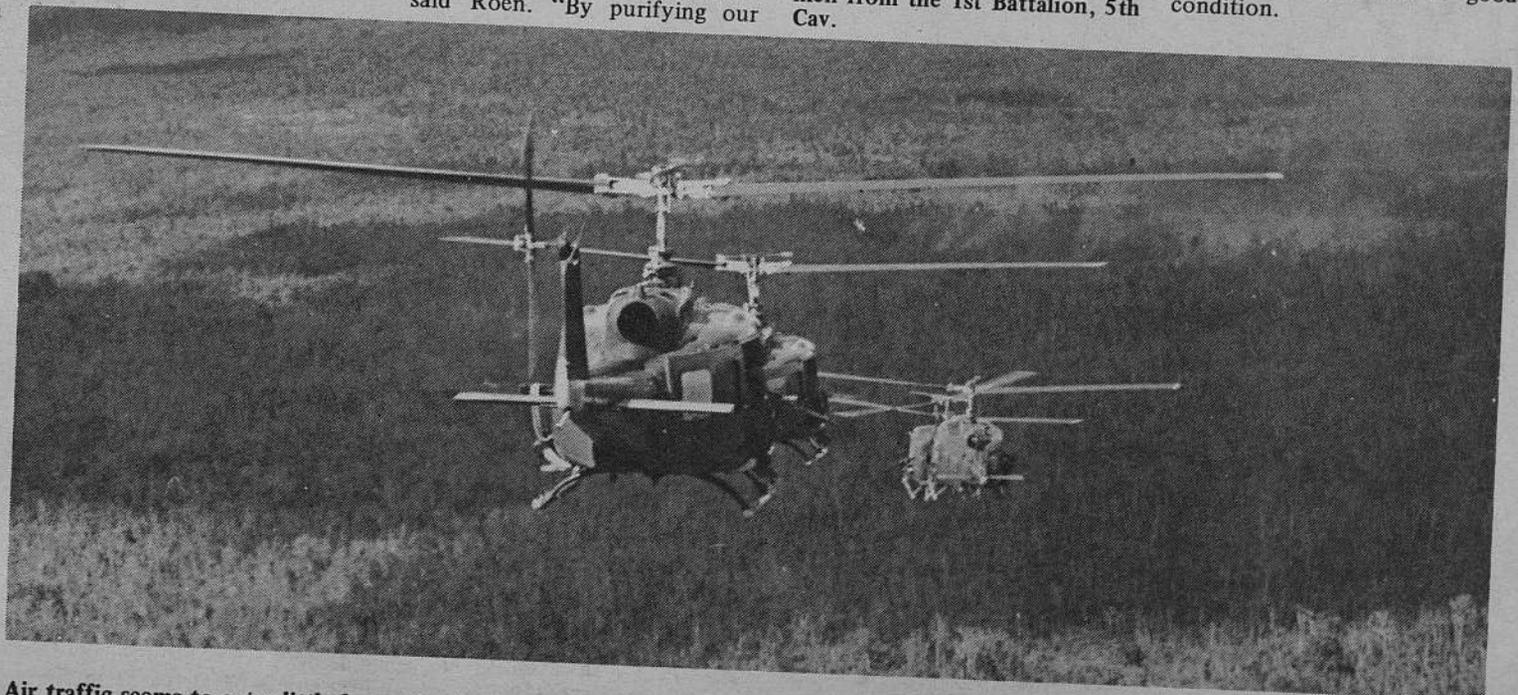
ARVN troops called in the team recently and Harmon arrived to find the company surrounded by the enemy. "As we approached the area we found chickens, bunkers and footprints and finally began to take sniper fire from the trees."

Below, Harmon could see the enemy in two separate positions around the friendly troops and popped purple smokes to pinpoint their position for the Cobra. "In order to be sure of the friendly position we radioed for them to pop smoke as well, but, as luck would have it, they also popped purple smoke and Max had to abort his run when he saw those three purple smokes boiling up from the ground," Harmon said.

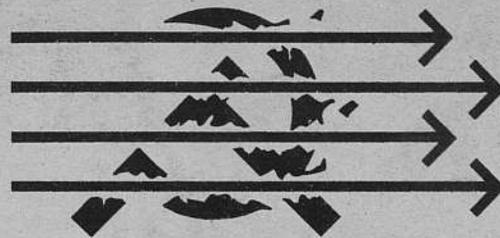
"The second time through we were going to avoid any such mishap and we dropped grenades on the enemy positions," said Harmon. Spec. 4 Patrick Bogan,

the gunner on the LOH, stepped out onto the skids as they passed over the enemy positions and dropped the grenades. The Cobra rolled in and killed ten NVA.

As they pulled out, the ARVNs had broken through the ring of NVA and had the situation well in hand.



Air traffic seems to get a little heavy during this 1st Air Cav Div combat assault north of Tay Ninh. The helicopters were transporting Bravo Company, 2nd Bn, 7th Cav to a designated landing zone in the jungle below.  
(USA Photo by SP4 Bob B...)



## ACTION OF THE WEEK

### Week of 15-21 March

**TAY NINH** - A futile charge against the infantry platoon of Alpha Troop, 1st Sqdn, 9th Cav, brought death to an NVA .30 caliber machinegunner and precipitated an hour and one-half battle that killed 39 NVA on March 19.

The Alpha Troop Blues were on a ground reconnaissance in the "Dog's Head" region of Tay Ninh Province, where the border with Cambodia looks like the profile of a canine face. At 12:17 p.m. the platoon passed an NVA training area that included bamboo models of American tanks, then the Skytroopers headed north on a yard-wide trail.

"We came across three or four NVA, one with a .30 caliber machinegun. He charged us, firing, and our '60 gunner let him have it. The enemy pulled back and we moved on," said 1st Lt. Jack Hugel, the platoon leader.

Further up the trail 20 miles northwest of Tay Ninh City, the platoon came face-to-face with an NVA about to fire an RPG. A squad leader cut down the NVA before he could launch his missile. As the Blues began to clear an enemy bunker complex sniper fire came whipping through the bamboo. Automatic

A quick reaction force from Bravo Company, 2nd Bn, 8th Cav was dropped into the jungle to reinforce the Blues. Fire from a sniper temporarily prevented the units from linking, until the

Blues blasted the NVA from his perch in a tree.

The two units set up a defensive perimeter around some abandoned enemy bunkers, all the while exchanging bursts of fire with the NVA. Then the Skytroopers started toward a pick up zone.

"As we moved out," said Hugel, "we saw four or five bad guys trying to set up an ambush with a .30 caliber. We opened up and got five of them." The Cav units again established a perimeter as M-16s, AK-47s and machineguns played a deadly jungle concert.

At one point NVA recovered smoke grenades dropped for the Skytroopers by helicopters. The NVA popped the smoke to confuse the Cav birds, but the ground forces told the crews what had happened and rocket salvos from Cobras abruptly ended the enemy sabotage efforts.

At 1:45 p.m. the enemy broke contact and retreated, with Cav helicopter and artillery fire harassing them as they faded into the jungle. Throughout the battle Alpha Troop Light Fire Teams, Aerial Rocket Artillery from the 2nd Bn, 20th Arty (ARA), tube artillery and air strikes maintained a curtain of fire and steel around the friendly troops.

The deadly combination of maximum fire support resulted in 23 NVA killed by the Blues and Bravo Company in addition to the earlier enemy killed. Of the total 13 NVA were killed by helicopter, four by ARA, and

the remaining six were killed by ground troops. Thirteen AK-47 rifles, one B-40 rocket launcher, and 12 B-40 rockets were captured or destroyed. There were no U.S. casualties.

## 2/8 Blasts NVA Unit

(Continued from Page 4.)  
bird, especially equipped for night action, was patrolling 10 miles west of Loc Ninh at 11:45 p.m. when the crew spotted 30 NVA in low brush.

The group, moving in tight formation, appeared to be a supply unit. The INFANT's miniguns and rockets sprayed the area near the Cambodian border, destroying the NVA and a large number of crates and boxes.

Units of the 1st Bn, 7th Cav continued to extract large quantities of rice from caches near the Song Be River eight miles south-southwest of Bo Duc in Phuoc Long Province. By the end of the week well over 50 tons of rice had been removed from the enemy's reach, enough to feed an NVA 450-man battalion for over five months.

Company B, 1st of the 5th and Bravo, 2nd of the 5th, made the initial rice find on March 17. The rice granules were in 220-pound, unmarked bags, often found exposed on the ground or covered by ponchos.

Most of the rice was backhauled for redistribution. Said Capt. T.C. Loomis, commander of Bravo, 1st of the 5th, "If the NVA hadn't started us in this chuck of jungle as we moved through, we couldn't have checked as closely and found all of this rice."

The latest cache finds have raised the total of rice captured by the Cav this month to over 200 tons.

Alpha Company, 2nd Bn, 12th Cav discovered an arms cache on March 24, in a bunker eight miles north of Song Be. The cache included 49 75mm recoilless rifle rounds, 54 60mm mortar rounds, and 11,340 rounds of AK-47 ammo. All of the ammunition was in good condition.

## Granite Water Point Purifies Own Supply

By SSG Ronald Renouf

**FSB GRANITE** - "Water, water everywhere, and not a drop to drink?" Not so, says PFC Randy T. Roen, the water purification expert at this 1st Air Cav Div firebase.

"Right now, we're putting out about 3,000 potable gallons a day, but we have the capability of nearly twice that amount" said Roen. "By purifying our

own we don't have to rely on someone else shipping it in."

Roen, with a trailer loaded with tanks, filters, pumps, chemicals and its own generator, set up camp on the banks of the winding Song Be River. The water point converts its muddy, impure waters into a cool drink, water for cooking and that refreshing evening shower for men from the 1st Battalion, 5th Cav.