

(Copy from C 4/31st Inf. Bn. veteran James B. Simms with the assistance of Mike Crutcher a veteran of E & HHC, 1/5 Cav, 1969-70 1st Cav Div. May 2014.)

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The "CHARGER" (Snoopy cartoon character dressed as WWI fighter pilot)

"AHEAD OF THE REST"

Vol 1, No. 4

CHARGER

May 6, 1969

SAPPERS HIT ROSS-west

LZ ROSS—"They're inside the wire," rasped an excited voice over the radio, but the flash and roar of an explosion and the staccato crackle of AK-47 fire inside the perimeter sounded a far more urgent warning.

Infantrymen and headquarters personnel jumped to a red alert. An NVA sapper squad had penetrated the perimeter wire.

The moon had set at 4:20 in the morning, but above LZ Ross artillery illumination flares floated like Japanese lanterns. The flares bathed this 196th Infantry Brigade fire support base in yellow light and created macabre interlacing shadows as eyes strained to see the lurking enemy.

Intelligence reports had warned that either Ross or one of the observation posts might be a target as the VC/NVA post-TET offensive entered its second week.

Since before midnight, the dogs in Que Son Village 500 meters outside the perimeter had been yapping. Along the bunkerline the men of Co. A, 2nd Bn., 1st Inf., had a premonition that something was going to happen.

Then minutes after moonset something did happen. In the shifting light of the illumination, Specialists Julius Riddle (Brinkely, Ark.) and Luis Cervantes (Snowville, Utah) spotted two figures advancing through the wire and cut them down in a lethal crossfire between two bunkers.

The pair proved to be the tail element of the NVA penetrating squad. Seven sappers were already inside the Americal Division base.

As stuttering exchanges of AK-47 and M-16 fire spread along the east side of the bunkerline, the deafening explosion of an RPG round ripped into the rear of a bunker, tearing out one wall and blasting the interior. Three infantrymen atop the bunker were slightly wounded by the concussion and shrapnel.

From the adjoining bunker, Sp5 William F. Doerr (Iselam, N.J.) peered out through the smoke to see an NVA soldier poised to throw a grenade from the tall

(See ROSS on Back Page)

LZ WEST—The shirtless NVA, their bodies darkened with charcoal for camouflage, crept through the grass up to the rows of concertina wire.

They were well equipped for their mission of death and destruction with rocket propelled grenades (RPG's), satchel charges, Chicom grenades and AK-47 assault rifles.

The platoon of enemy had entered Hiep Duc Valley from the rugged mountains to the west of this 196th Infantry Brigade fire support base.

Reaching the base of Hill 445 around 9 p.m. the NVA rested after an arduous four day journey to attack LZ West, located on the summit.

Now, at 3 a.m. after six hours rest, the sapper platoon had deployed around the perimeter of West and were prepared to give the men of 4th Bn., 31st Inf., a memorable night.

First Lieutenant Paul Bavis of Baltimore, was asleep in the bachelor officer's quarters when the first alert was sounded. Bavis had been designated as the leader of the reaction force of this Americal division installation.

The reaction force was dispatched to a sector of the perimeter that was receiving extensive pressure from the attacking NVA.

Upon arriving in that area, Bavis became immediately concerned that the bunkers might not have enough ammunition to suppress a full scale attack. "I told my men we had to get more ammo to the bunkers in case this thing was really big," said Bavis.

Ignoring a shower of RPG's and Chicom grenades, PFC Gregory Mainous (Dayton, Ohio) raced straight to an ammunition storage bunker. Mainous ran from bunker to bunker distributing extra ammunition to the men.

Returning to his post, Mainous found Bavis and SP4 Gilbert Smith (Wichita Falls, Tex.) staring intently at a wooden latrine located near the helicopter resupply pad. Two NVA sappers were seeking cover behind the latrine.

Periodically, the NVA lobbed Chicom **(See WEST on Back Page)**

POT GRASS LSD THCEditorial

THE "THC" HABIT

Why all the fuss about drugs?

What does it have to do with me?

And besides whose business is it any way, what I think or do about drugs?

These are some of the questions concerning the use and misuse of drugs being asked by the citizens of our nation and of the free world. Don't be misled however, the communist world is also being plagued by an extensive misuse of drugs.

The question of the sudden interest in the misuse of drugs is easy to answer.

In the past several years there has been an increase in the misuse or abuse of beneficial drugs as well as dangerous drugs. The dangerous drugs, of primary interest here, can lead to physical dependence; moreover, certain drugs, such as LSD, STP, and marijuana—the hallucinogens - can damage your mind, and have no known medical benefit whatsoever.

To get a glimpse of why the fuss about drugs, just take a brief look at the effects that one of the hallucinogenic drugs alone might have on the human body and mind.

Marijuana, known also as "pot" or "grass", is the most frequently abused of the hallucinogenic drugs.

Very little is known concerning its long-termed effects, but in its mildest form it does not appear to be physically dangerous. Nevertheless, you can't be certain that it is totally safe, for in its stronger forms, marijuana can cause psychotic reactions in almost everyone.

Marijuana's active ingredient, tetrahydrocannabinol or "THC" is potentially very dangerous, and while given dosage may not have apparent ill effects on another person, that fact is no protection for you.

The use of marijuana is particularly hazardous. While under its influence, concepts of time and space can be radically distorted, and response to an emergency becomes unpredictable. A "pot" [head] at the wheel of an automobile makes it a deadly dangerous weapon to others and a booby trap to himself.

Another important reason for not using "Pot" stems from its being against Federal law to use or possess. The penalties can be as much as 10 years in the penitentiary and a \$20,000 fine for a first offense. Its said, use, or possession is likewise a violation of the Uniform Code of Military Justice, punishable by court-martial with a dishonorable discharge and up to five years in prison as the end result.

Only the individual can decide if he desires to get caught in the drug trap, so take time out to think---Is a few moments of false pleasure worth a lifetime of sorrow? (AFPS)

Graphic Art: POL WE GIVE STAMPS.

Caption: "SIX MORE BOOKS AND I GET MY R&R.", by two soldiers driving up to fill their jeep.

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Lighter graphic art: soldier looking over wall **Side**

MERRY

MARY

MOMENTARILY

LZ BALDY--The next time MAJ James Allison tells his wife, Mary, he loves her during a MARS call, he's going to make sure about one important item---that he's talking to the right Mary.

MAJ Allison, 196th Infantry Brigade Civil Affairs Officer, placed his call through the MARS Station at LZ Baldy on a Sunday morning. The connection was loud and clear---by far the best he's had in three calls home.

The operator told the Americal Division officer from Ocilla, Ga., to go ahead first. "How are you getting along Mary?" asked MAJ Allison. "You just go ahead and tell me how everything is at home," he said ending the initial part of the call.

"Oh, we've been getting along fine," said the feminine voice on the other end, "and I want you to know that I love you and miss you."

MAJ Allison paused for a couple seconds and then blurted out, "I love you and miss you too, but I don't think you're my wife."

When the operator cut into the conversation, MAJ Allison heard the woman say, "Golly, I don't think that's my husband either."

The MARS operator was so embarrassed he had trouble talking clearly. MAJ Allison wasn't sure why he told the woman he loved her and missed her, "but it seemed like the right thing to say at the time---probably made her feel a little better when I set the record straight."

The "other" Mary was still asking questions when the operator told the Infantry Officer he was "sorry" and would replace the call.

Oh yes---MAJ Allison did talk to his Mary and ---- Oh yes---she loved him and missed him too. That's batting two for two anyway you look at it.

"The MARS operator called me back later in the day and said he was sorry and that his face was still red," laughed MAJ Allison.

GRAPHIC Art by SP4 T. AMICK. Looking at three sets of jungle boots from under the soles. Caption: "THESE ALERTS ARE KILLING MY FEET"

aWOL NVA Graphic Art: NVA face from behind bars of a jail.

LZ ROSS- AN AWOL NVA squad leader with help from an Americal Division Infantry Brigade recently found himself with more time on his hands than he bargained for.

The soldier, a member of the 2nd NVA Division located in the mountainous Base Area 116, some 26 miles northwest of Tam Ky, was on a three day pass and had taken it upon himself to extend his leave to 10 days.

He was comfortably lounging in a hootch in the valley below Dragon Base OP when a reconnaissance patrol of the 2nd Bn., 1st Inf., of the 196th Infantry Brigade, led by 1LT David L. Wagner (Colorado Springs, Colo.) surprised him at his rest.

At last report, the embarrassed NVA had given considerable valuable intelligence about his buddies to the 196th intelligence section and was on his way to an extended vacation at a POW camp outside Da Nang.

Stranger in the night GRAPHIC Art. A Vietnamese wearing a conical hat sings into a microphone.

LZ WEST--He didn't sound like Frank Sinatra, but he was a "stranger in the night" and he was singing.

No one knew whether he was a Vietnamese soul singer or a grand old opery serenader from the country rice paddies.

He came groovin down a trail after sundown somewhere outside a day laager position set up by a Charger" platoon from the 196th Infantry Brigade.

The Recon platoon of 4th Bn., 31st Inf., was just getting ready to eat when the strains of a Vietnamese song became louder and louder.

"We dropped our chow and grabbed our weapons," said 1LT John Garrett (Bedford Heights, Ohio). "Then we saw this Vietnamese male walking toward our position, singing real loud and waving a Chieu Hoi leaflet in his hand."

Not one of the "Chargers" could agree on what he was singing, but music to Chieu Hoi by" seemed appropriate. They did agree---a Frank Sinatra he'll never be.

NVA medical clinic

Graphic art: Drawing of NVA hootches with "TET" banner hung between them.

LZ WEST—Several months of futile searching came to an end when a company of "Chargers" from the 196th Infantry Brigade located an NVA hospital, 35 miles northwest of Tam Ky.

The units of 4th Bn., 31st Inf., had made many fruitless searches in the area after receiving persistent intelligence reports about the large enemy complex in Hiep Duc Valley.

Alpha Company, commanded by CPT Stanley F. Yates Jr. (Jonesboro, Tenn.) was acting on the latest of the long series of reports indicating that the hospital was still in operation.

On the second day of their search, the Americal Division unit located the huge medical ward under thick triple canopy jungle near LZ Karen.

"They had some of the best OP's that I've ever seen," said CPT Yates. "One position was located in a tall tree and had a field of vision that extended for 10,000 meter in all directions."

The largest building in the complex was used as a headquarters and operating room. It also had office space for the hospital staff. A building of nearly equal size was probably used as a mess hall-recreation room.

It was decorated with colored streamers and signs for the TET holidays. A large picture of Ho Chi Minh occupied a prominent spot on the wall. The mess hall had tables and chairs to accommodate more than 60 people. A kitchen with five large pots for cooking was located nearby.

There were three buildings used as sleeping quarters for the NVA nurses. Numerous articles of female clothing had been left behind.

A barracks for wounded soldiers had a barber's chair directly outside with freshly cut hair still lying on the ground.

At a rehabilitation center patients were kept busy while they recovered by making crutches and peg legs. A dud 105mm round had been used as a mold for the peg legs.

Over 500 pounds of rice was destroyed in a large rice bin that was discovered. Chicken houses and pig pens indicated that the NVA had been well supplied with eggs and fresh meat.

The entire hospital structure was destroyed by Alpha. As they left the area they captured an NVA soldier who had been the purchasing agent for the hospital. Receipts located in his shirt pocket revealed he had been purchasing food and medical supplies for the hospital.

Arty shoots for

education

LZ BALDY—Regardless of where soldiers of the 196th Infantry Brigade may be located, the Americal Division Education Center is giving them assistance in a different kind of struggle—the battle of furthering or completing their education.

It started when Battalion Executive Officer, Major Milton Miller (Sandusky, Ohio) of the 3rd Bn., 82nd Arty., contacted the education center and requested someone be sent to LZ Baldy to administer achievement, high school general education development (GED) and college comprehensive tests.

Mr. Bernard Kane (New York City) director of the education center, sent PFC Patrick McHarg (Los Angeles) to the "Charger" fire support base. He discovered more than 120 soldiers wanted to be tested.

"We can only test about 15 at a time," said McHarg, "but I will be back in about two weeks for more examining and will continue to do so until everyone is tested."

"Achievement tests are given to persons to find out if they are prepared to take the high school GED test." noted McHarg,

At high school level the test consists of English, social studies, natural science, literature and math. The college test contains English, social studies, science, humanities and math.

A soldier passing all parts of the high school test will receive a diploma. Six units are awarded for each part of the college test that is successfully completed. Most of the high schools and colleges in the United States give credit for the tests.

and sounds

Graphic Art: M102 Howitzer with artillery rounds

Caption: **SHOT OUT**

TIEN PHUOC-When the going gets rough or an enemy position proves too hard to crack without a little preliminary softening up, infantry troops in the field look to their forward observer (FO) to call in a welcome volley of artillery.

Most FO's spend their entire tour in the field with one company, but at least one 196th Infantry Brigade FO considers himself lucky to have spent some time with every company except one in his battalion.

Sergeant Harold Meek (Columbus, Ind.) is serving his second tour in Vietnam with only four months between tours. "You might say I volunteered," he said. "Everyone in Germany was getting orders for Nam. So I decided not to wait."

Meek spent his first year as a grenadier with a 1st Div. Recon., Battalion around Lai Kai. Artillery is something completely new to him. "I'm infantry turned FO," he said. "Before coming back to Nam, I didn't even know how to call in artillery."

He learned quickly enough, however. Soon after joining the "Legionnaires" of the 2nd Bn., 1st Inf., Meek was assigned as FO to Delta Company.

Then Charlie Company's FO got sick, and Meek was picked to take his place. Later, almost the same thing happened with Bravo Company. Each time a shortage of FO's occurred, Meek was selected as the best man to fill the gap, until he had been with every outfit in this Americal Division unit.

"Everyone, that is, but Alpha," he corrected himself. "And I'm waiting now for a chance to work with them to complete the cycle."

Graphic Art: drawing of a soldier staring out from a sandbagged culvert bunker positioned behind concertina wire.

Caption: CP!CP!....CLICK...BEEP.CLICK. "I AM SORRY, THE NUMBER YOU HAVE DIALED IS NO LONGER IN SERVICE."

Graphic Art: drawing of a baseball, football and basketball.

a new ballgame now

LZ ROSS-Seven athletes that once were involved in part of a South Carolina regional sports rivalry, now make up a close knit fighting team with the 196th Infantry Brigade.

The Americal Division soldiers discovered their relationship during a three day respite from the field that all "Charger" companies get once every two months if the tactical situation permits.

Now supporting each other as infantrymen and mortarmen in Charlie and Companies of 2nd Bn., 1st Inf., the group until recently fought against each other for honors on the gridiron, basket ball court and baseball field of their respective high schools back in South Carolina.

Sergeant Leroy B. Leroach (Charleston, S.C.), Specialists Robert Barrett (Aiken, S.C.) and Bennie Boykin (Kingstree, S.C.), SP5 Curtis Jones and PFC Harold Smith (both of Denmark, S.C.) previously knew each other as only names and statistics on rival rosters and faces in opposing lineups.

Amid their three days of beach parties and stand down floor shows they took time to make their relationships more personal.

With so much in common, the new friends still found it impossible to unite on one thing. Just who had the best team back home.

On the way upF TROOP, 17th CAVSTAFF SERGEANT

Lee Kujawa
Cecil Wellman

SERGEANT

William Barnes
Robert Bishop
Howard Collier
Robert Gabreski
Francis Kelly
Robert Ramsey
Steve Sisler
Charles Walters

SPECIALIST 5

Sarkis Batermagian
Arthur Brooks
William Fong
Thomas Holt
George Yearwood

HHC 196th INF BDESTAFF SERGEANT

Jerry Burns
Robert Crawford

SERGEANT

David Cottle
David Fletcher
Barlie Hughes
Richard Klein
Donald Marker
Dennis Willard

SPECIALIST 5

Albert Benaivdz [sic]
David Bolt
Phillip Goad
Clairde Heads
Ronald Harp
Harold Kingcade
Peter Lambert
Mitchell Michail
Charles Wilson

3rd BN., 82nd ARTYFIRST LIEUTENANT

Richard Garza
Henry Gurba
Andrew Tagliaferri

CHIEF WARRANT OFFICER 2

Homer Kendrick

STAFF SERGEANT

Charles Brown

SERGEANT

Donald Atwell
Ruben Bonner
Roger Klink
Billy Morris
Roberto Palacios
Lary Russell
Robert Schumacher

SPECIALIST

David Lefler
George Lensink
Richard Stilker

CORPORAL

Hugh Allen
Norman Bair
Danny Brown
Eugene Cheatham
Daniel Daugherty
Charles Everett
John Flynn
Joe Gasset
Stanley Gore
Stuart Krause
Dennis Kremer
Thomas Lloyds
Tommie Lovett
Richard Lozano
Donald MacDonald
Edmenio Madrid
Paul Marshall
Wirt McIe
Michael Monahan

SPECIALIST 4

Ronald Nowitzke
Donald Pleinis
Larry Roberts
Herschel Roll
Thomas Rasinski
Jake Runyon
Paul Salmonson
Melvin Savoy
Bernard Sirokman
Douglas Strickland
Victor Taipale
Rojelio Vega
James Zawatski

3rd BN., 21st INF.**STAFF SERGEANT**

James Shaha

SERGEANT

Ralph Bibbs
James Christensen

Graphic Art: enlisted showing patches for enlisted ranks from Private to Master Sergeant.

On the way up3/21 CONT'D

Jerry Cravn
 Thomas Crawley
 Roger Gray
 Edward Medrano
 Gregory Robinson
 Alferd Seamen [sic]
 Stanley Smith
 Clint Wilson
 Barry Zeman

SPECIALIST 5

William Filthaaut
 Phillip Scott

SPECIALIST 4

Roger Allen
 Otis Baily
 John Bandych
 Robert Bodnar
 Edwin Brooks
 Harold Brown
 Robert Caldwell
 Willard Carpenter
 Billy Collins
 Jessie Crowder
 Jay Curtis
 Charles Dill
 Thomas Durkin
 Raynando Rernandez
 Gary Fishbach
 Melvin Gale
 Dale Grignon
 Ralph Hernandez
 James Johnson
 James Kaholo
 Harold Ligon

4th BN., 31st INF.STAFF SERGEANT

James Blickensdefer
 Robert Floyd
 Keith Muller
 James Storey
 James Wilcox

SERGEANT

Thomas Anderson
 Denis Appleyard
 Paul Armstrong
 Ronald Barnett
 David Beck
 Robert Berry
 Jerry Campbell
 Arnold Childress
 Mark Crow
 Thomas Cummings
 Albert Derinches
 Leo Eineker
 Randall Geackler
 Bobby Heyward
 Nathan Holmes
 Lonnie Hopkins
 Vernon Hoyle
 Hansford Huff
 Byron Jackson
 James Jackson
 Willie Johnson
 Thomas Koch
 Larry Kyle
 Homero Lopez [sic]
 Harvey Maddox
 Thomas Moffitt
 William Phillips
 Terry Prasher
 Charles Rawles
 Acey Robinson
 Jose Rodriguez
 James Ross
 Chuck Rowan
 Dennis Sopher
 Billie Stokes
 Larry Thompson

SPECIALIST 5

Charles Besold
 Gerald Dunham
 Rick Hasen
 Miguel Grozoco
 James Senise
 David Vanoordt
 George Williford

2nd BN., 1st INF.STAFF SERGEANT

Roy Anderson
 Larry Dover
 Eddie Edward
 Stephen Foster [?]
 Roy Preinauer [?]
 James Harris
 Dennis Loebe [?]
 Richard Keil

SERGEANT

Clark Boyer
 Bernard Blau
 Douglas Chappell
 Aaron Chipman
 Jimmie Clark
 Jimmie Clifton
 Robert DeLong
 Victor Delirec
 Jessie Earl
 George Postman
 Jack Batherly
 Melvin Fish
 Samuel Gains
 Lewis Garnes
 David Grider
 Jackie Green
 Lance Hilken
 Terry Jennings
 Raymond Johnson
 Stephen Kratz
 Charles Leidner
 Jerry Lotz
 Willie Lyons
 James McVay
 Clinton Morris
 Johnny Morris
 Keith Myers
 Richard Pfeister
 Larry Phillips
 James Robertson
 Thomas Schrozlman
 George Suttong
 Gary Waller
 William Walton

Graphic art: Example of a highway overpass.

Caption: "YOU'D BE SURPRISED AHT THOSE ENGINEERES CAN DO THESE DAYS."

Sign caption: DEE Le Pass Next Right.

Your future your decision stay army

Starting with this issue of the "Charger", we will be writing a monthly column in which we will discuss reenlistment opportunities and provide information that might be useful to you in planning your Army career.

Just because we plan to cover many areas of interest to you in this section doesn't mean that we are closing our doors to personal visits and questions. Quite the contrary. We hope that this column will stimulate additional thinking and additional visits to our office. We are in the S1 building. Drop in to see us or call Baldy-17.

Thought that we would use this first column to discuss Vietnam. As we all know, there is a job to be done here and experienced men are needed. However, a tour in Vietnam also offers golden opportunities that will benefit you from financial and career standpoints.

For example, have you ever given any thought as to how much additional money you can make and save while in Vietnam?

First off, all pay and allowances for enlisted men are tax-free. Just add your withholding taxes to your take-home pay and you can see how much additional money you will have.

That's just a start. Add the extras. Depending upon your rank you will receive an additional \$8 to \$22.50 a month foreign duty pay. That's tax free.

Hostile-fire pay will add another \$65 a month to your paycheck again tax-free.

What other benefits does the man in Vietnam get?

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, Singapore, Australia and Hawaii. You may also go on a three day R&R within Vietnam.

When your one-year tour of duty is over in Vietnam, 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 reenlist 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 through E-6. In Vietnam it is open to everyone regardless of grade.

The Oversea Area-of-Choice option is another reenlistment opportunity open to enlisted men in Vietnam. It is available to men in grad E-6 or below without regard to number of years service completed.

A third option for which the Vietnam-based enlisted man is eligible is the drill sergeant reenlistment program. It offers a stabilized tour of 18-months at a stateside training center of the man's choice. Qualified NCO's and Specialists in grades E-4 through E-7 can reenlist 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-6 to E-6 without regard to time in grade or service. Eligibility lists for this fast promotion opportunity are made up from these drill sergeants with four months of outstanding performance.

We have additional information on the subject and we will be delighted to discuss it with you.

Hope this column has been helpful to you. For complete details as how to obtain information about other options see your career counselor today - Don't wait. Call Baldy 17 or 69 now. Secure your future. Stay Army.

All questions concerning reenlistment should be directed to the nearest counselor. Call Baldy 17/69 to the career counselor. Call Baldy 17/69 or drop

by the Brigade S1.

Charger Combat

Artwork. Drawing of C.I.B.

FREDERICK HILL TOTALS MARCH 18, 1969 - April 26, 1969		
	April totals	OPERATION TOTALS
VC KILLED	124	195
NVA KILLED	64	143
IND. WEAPONS CAPT.	36	79
CREW-SERVED	3	7
TONS OF RICE CAPT.	38.753 (T)	45.778 (T)

TIEN PHUOC TRIANGLE (Graphic art: drawing of mountains in background)

LZ ROSS-Elements of the 196th Infantry Brigade are poised for a sweep through a mountainous triangle in the Central Lowlands, a focus of intense fighting since the opening days of the enemy post-Tet offensive, in an effort to drive the NVA from a well-entrenched and fortified stronghold.

Fighting unseasonable rains generated by a squall over the South China Sea and harassing sniper fire, the 2nd Bn., 1st Inf., was airlifted into the mountain plateau around Tien Phuoc, 10 miles southwest of Tam Ky to become the final piece in the move against the 3rd NVA Division.

By Mid afternoon of the second day, three infantry companies of 2/1st were in position east of Tien Phuoc, supported by two mortar platoons and a field battalion command post.

Elsewhere in the Americal Division triangle elements of the 3rd Bn., 21st Inf., and the 1st Bn., 46th Inf., supported by artillery from 3rd Bn., 82nd Arty., were poised for a three-pronged push through the enemy positions.

Intelligence reports placed three battalions of the 3rd NVA Division well-entrenched, fortified concrete bunkers on mountain slopes throughout the area. Advance parties and aerial reconnaissance disclosed enemy rocket and mortar positions in the mountains east and west of Tien Phuoc.

Heated fighting by the 3/21 last week in the plateau northeast of the city results in heavy casualties.

Tien Phuoc has been the target of one of the most intense NVA attacks of the NVA/VC post-TET offensive. In the opening week of the offensive, NVA soldiers overran a Popular Forces (PF) outpost two miles north of the city and held it for three days against air strikes and PF counterattacks. Five US MACV advisors were wounded in the fighting to retake the outpost.

NVA soldiers marched into and controlled one of the outlying Tien Phuoc hamlets for several days. At the same time the CIDG camp 400 meters west of Tien Phuoc came under heavy mortar fire, and the grass airfield at the edge of the city was controlled by NVA .50 caliber machine guns.

At LZ Professional, five miles southeast, soldiers of the 1st Bn., 52nd Inf., suffered heavy casualties during a week of intensive mortar barrages.

Elements of 3/21 during search and clear patrols earlier this week reported finding 40 graves containing 152 NVA bodies.

GI fills

lethal prescription (Graphic art drawing of a grenade with a document that might be a doctor's prescription form.)

LZ ROSS- The NVA doctor prescribed Chicom grenade as a death remedy for a persistent "Charger" from the 196th Infantry Brigade recently, but the GI gave "doc" back a little of his own medicine.

During the closing days of Operation Fayette Canyon, a patrol of Co. C, 2nd Bn., 1st Inf., on a search and clear mission, was moving up a mountain slope in NVA-infested Base Area 116, 25 miles northwest of Tam Ky. Intelligence reports indicated a heavy concentration of NVA on the mountain top.

The patrol had run out of trail and pointman SP4 Douglas Chappell (Wampom, Penn.) was casting about for a new route of advance when he spotted an NVA at the crest of the ridge above him. Chappell engaged the man with his M-16, wounding him. The NVA disappeared into the tangle of brush and rocks.

Cautiously, ears cocked for the slightest sound, the Americal Division soldier inched forward through the brush followed by the rest of the patrol. A faint blood trail glistened on the sandy soil.

Suddenly there was a rustle in the brush and a smoking Chicom grenade bounced at the pointman's feet exploding *hardly* a meter away. Chappell was only scratched by the faulty grenade, but his quarry was not so fortunate as the GI took him under fire again with his M-16.

A search of the body produced documents showing the enemy soldier had been an NVA doctor with overdue orders to report to a new unit in another area. He had

waited a couple days to[o] long to help out his new medical unit.

election upset (Graphic art: drawing of ballot box)

LZ WEST-The VC campaign was going in high gear. The officers and the candidates were listed on the ballot and election day was approaching.

Then a company of "Chargers" from the 196th Infantry Brigade stepped into the act and proved that politics can be a difficult road even for the most knowledgeable campaign manager.

While operating on a search and clear mission 32 miles northwest of Tam Ky, Bravo Company of 4th Bn., 31st Inf., was moving over the crest of a knoll when they observed the NVA disappearing into some heavy brush below them.

The Americal division infantrymen opened fire and wounded both of the fleeing enemy. Then a soldier and tracker dog from the 48th Scout Dog Platoon following the wounded pair into the thick jungle growth. Platoon Sergeant Joe Albert (New Orleans) glanced ahead and detected a slight figure crouching behind a bush taking a direct aim on the unsuspecting dog handler.

With a single sweeping motion Albert spun around and sent a deadly spray of M-16 fire in the direction of the enemy instantly killing him.

A search of the enemy revealed that he was an NVA officer whose mission was to coordinate an election for the local VC operating in the Hiep Duc Area.

In his possession were VC ballots listing the offices and the candidates, along with election voting instruction.

cord leads to hoard (Graphic art: drawing of a cord)

LZ CENTER-Following a long line of detonating cord they had found in a clearing, a platoon of "Chargers" from the 196th Infantry Brigade uncovered a well concealed enemy weapons cache recently, 12 miles west of Tam Ky.

A platoon from Co. C, 3rd Bn., 31st Inf., was conducting search and clear mission when SGT Dave Olenick (Weirton, W.Va.) observed an unusual looking clearing in the midst of the triple canopy jungle 50 meters away.

Olenick and PFC Joe Eiliff (Paso Robles, Calif.) decided to search the clearing. Finding some detonating cord, the two men followed it to a large boulder behind the boulder the two Americal Division infantrymen discovered the cache that featured 10 automatic weapons.

When notified of the find 2LT Randall Hain (San Jose, Calif.) moved his platoon into the area of the cache and set up security while finishing a search of the area. The search flushed out two VC who were trying to escape the area.

The "Chargers" engaged the enemy killing one and wounding the other. The VC weapons that were found included some of American, Russian, French and British origin.

An American mortar tube, complete with base plate and two sights, along with a U.S. caliber .30 machine gun and 2,000 rounds of assorted small arms ammunition were also found.

Surprise!

(Graphic art: Punching glove pops out of a jack-in-the box flooring a VC.)

LZ WEST-The enemy sprang a couple surprises on a company of "Chargers" from the 196th Infantry Brigade, but ended up being fooled themselves.

Action began at dusk, 36 miles northwest of Tam Ky, when a Kit Carson Scout attached to Co. C, 4th Bn., 31st Inf., detected four VC attempting to evade at a distance of 400 meters.

First Lieutenant Jerry Joney (Bishopville, S.C.) and several of his men pursued the fleeing enemy. As the Americal division infantrymen approached a thickly foliated area, SSG Eran Gutierrez (Kingsville, Texas) was confronted with a VC who popped up from a bush with AK-47 rifle pointed right at him.

Gutierrez quickly turned the tables by killing the VC with one burst from his M-16. In addition to the AK-47 Charlie Company recovered documents that indicated the enemy was a local VC guerilla leader.

Shifting their attention to the remaining VC, the "Chargers" cautiously approached a hedgerow. Suddenly, SGT Tim Peterson (Toledo, Ohio) fired a salvo of bullets at the feet of SGT Jack Straayer (Grand Rapids, Mich.).

The startled Straayer looked down and saw a dead enemy soldier lying in a spider hole right at his feet. Peterson had seen the SKS rifle muzzle inching out of the ground just in time to save Straayer's life. Just then a third VC bolted from the bushes attempting to evade. He was brought down by a burst of M-16 fire.

Later that evening on a cordon and search operations in a small hamlet, Charlie Company killed one VC and captured another. The "Charger" unit also captured an AK-50 rifle, several 82mm mortar rounds, two Chicom grenades and several magazines of AK-47

ammunition.

medieval pow camp (Graphic art: drawing of leg irons)

LZ WEST-Elements of the 196th Infantry Brigade uncovered a large bamboo enclosed prisoner of war camp where captured Vietnamese Popular Forces had been shackled in a manner reminiscent of Puritanic New England.

The prison was located in dense jungle 36 miles northwest of Tam Ky. Acting on intelligence reports of a prison for PF's captured by enemy forces, Alpha Company of 4th Bn., 31st Inf., moved into the area and received a heavy volume of AK-47 fire.

Five VC were detected evading toward an adjacent ridgeline. Impending darkness prevented the "Chargers" from pursuing the fleeing enemy.

Early the next morning, the Americal Division unit moved into the suspected area and located the sprawling POW camp. The prisoners compound was a large bamboo building. It was approximately 20 feet by 35 feet with walls fashioned from poles in a manner resembling bars of a cage.

The prisoners had been kept secured at night by placing their ankles in notches that had been cut at regular intervals in a long bamboo pole. Another flat piece of wood was placed over the prisoners ankles to hold them in place.

Three barracks and a kitchen indicated that a large number of VC/NVA had been in control of the camp. "The VC had been in there for years because the weather had discolored some of the bamboo poles in the buildings until they were almost black," said 1SG Herold Winger (Laverne, Minn.).

NVA

KIA

LZ ROSS-One company of the 196th Infantry Brigade isn't sure whether to credit a recent NVA killed in action to one of its own infantrymen or to the slain enemy himself.

Delta Company of 2nd Bn., 1st Inf., was completing an arduous four-kilometer march down the rugged side of Hill 845, 25 miles northwest of Tam Ky, and were pushing themselves in an attempt to link up with their sister Charlie Company by early afternoon. The trail was rough, the day hot and muggy and the Americal Division outfit was pretty tired.

Just short of the Charlie Company perimeter, point man, Thomas M. Yoho (Minneapolis, Minn.) noticed a figure standing the brush off the trail. "At first I thought it was a GI, and I was so tired I didn't notice the difference for a moment," said Yoho. Then he realized the man was wearing an NVA uniform.

Yoho and Vietnamese interpreter SGT Chu shouted for the man to come out from his position, but he turned and ran. Shedding their packs, Yoho and Chu crashed into the brush after him.

Spreading out into a small clearing in the jungle a moment later, Yoho through his man had escaped. Then he saw him hiding, lying prone under a fallen tree. The sergeant waved his M-16 in the NVA's face and ordered him out.

Slowly the man stood up and turned to face Yoho. Then he apparently panicked and grabbed for the pin of a grenade he held in his hand. Yoho fired, hitting him in the chest, but in the echo of his shot he heard the grenade pin pop. The sergeant jumped for cover, and the NVA crumpled over the top of the grenade, absorbing its full blast.

An examination after short moments later was unable to confirm just which had been the fatal blow, Yoho's shot or the NVA's own grenade.

Comic drawing: A lieutenant is peering into a Viet Cong tunnel. Below is a tunnel rat in the tunnel is face to face with an elf with a tunnel car over-filled with bright gold. The tunnel Rat tells his lieutenant, "SIR! HE SAID IF I DIDN'T LEAVE HE WAS GOING TO TURN ME INTO A FROG."

medical facilities open

at que son

LZ ROSS-With an assist from the 196th Infantry Brigade, the people at Que Son refugee village are providing themselves with some of the facilities and services which help to make community life attractive.

The 26,000-member community is presently enjoying the services of new civilian and military dispensaries and a 100-family refugee housing complex.

These projects for the village, which is located 20 miles northwest of Tam Ky, are the direct result of combined efforts of district leaders and "Legionnaires" of 2nd Bn., 1st Inf.

The two dispensaries were recently dedicated in ceremonies attended by local Vietnamese officials and representatives of the battalion. Together the buildings present a total of 26 beds or the medical needs of the village. the housing unit, which will provide temporary shelter to refugee families until they can build new homes for themselves, was a thriving community with dozens of shouting children playing among the buildings a week after it opened.

Both the dispensaries and the housing units were self-help projects. The 2/1 Civil Affairs Section provided the necessary building materials, according to battalion S-5, 1LT Edward R. Suits (Palatine Bridge, N.Y.), but the actual work came from the people themselves, many of them refugees from VC-controlled regions.

For the military dispensary, the Civil Affairs Section of this Americal division unit came up with hard-to-get lumber, tin, paint and screens. PF medics added the muscle, sweat and skill to complete their new 14-bed facility.

It is now being manned by eight PF medics and a Que Son District MACFV medical adviser.

To finance materials for the civilian dispensary, discarded artillery ammunition boxes which in many cases would have been thrown away in the battalion disposal pits were auctioned to the villagers.

The colorful new green and white building on the Que Son main street is an expansion of an older dispensary and replaces the dirt-floored shed previously used as an out-patient clinic. The new wing provides a five-bed ward, clinic, office space and quarters for an on-duty nurse. Total capacity now is ten beds, and another addition will be built soon for additional space.

To insure that the quality of medical care in the village is in keeping with the new quarters, ten Vietnamese nurses receive on the job training twice a week during MEDCAP's conducted by LT Kirk Hilliard (Pheasantville, N.J.) the battalion surgeon.

"Que Son now enjoys what is probably one of the best medical programs for a town of its size in all Vietnam," said Suits.

m-79 apPlause nva psyop

Graphic Art: A megaphone and other materials that appears partially destroyed.

LZ ROSS-An element of the 196th Infantry Brigade was surprised recently when an NVA PSYOP team began broadcasting to them from a concealed position some 300 meters from their night laager. Delta Company of the 2nd Bn., 1st Inf., commanded by 1LT James R. Sanders (Arvada, Colo.) was providing security along Provincial Highway 535, twenty miles northwest of Tam Ky, when the enemy propaganda team interrupted their evening reverie.

In broken English, the broadcasters began by reprimanding their amused audience from the Americal division saying they were "number ten for killing babysans" and that they would be wise to "Chieu Hoi to the NVA." Switching then to Vietnamese, the noisy message urged the company's supporting PF/RF elements to "desert, congregate and overthrow the GI's."

All the enemy PSYOP operators got for their efforts was a hearty horse laugh and a hail of recon fire.

The next evening, a platoon of PF's from Que Son refugee camp reported contact with five VC, possibly a PSYOP team and apparently drunk with pre-holiday spirits. The enemy quintet was shouting in Vietnamese "go home for TET" and "clear out of the area for TET."

The PF's were just as amused as their GI counterparts and peppered the entertainers

with M-79 rounds.

downed observer spends

night with NvA

Graphic Art: Drawing of a Bird Dog airplane over Vietnam Central Highlands.

LZ BALDY- Lt. John McFadden's job as an aerial observer is to detect enemy ground activity, but the sharp crack of .50-caliber bullets ripping into the fixed wing aircraft indicated the enemy had reversed the process.

In the ensuing 30-hour period, McFadden scrambled along in a nightmarish evasion that combined the elements of luck and ingenuity.

The 27-year-old first lieutenant climbed into the little Bird Dog and was glad to see his pilot was the same one that took him on his first flight some 40 missions ago. It was to be the pilot's last flight. The small plane arched into Antenna Valley through Deo Le pass and headed south down the twisting Son Thu Bong River, approximately 10 miles south of An Hoi.

The course of the stream was familiar to both McFadden and his pilot. McFadden had followed the enemy supply route on other reconnaissance flights for the 196th Infantry Bde in the Americal Division area of operation.

Gliding along 100 feet above the water and using the river as a guide, the two men had spotted nothing unusual. Suddenly the snap of 35 to 40 rounds from a .50-caliber machine gun broke the silence. McFadden knew at least the first burst had hit the plane.

When the Bird Dog began losing altitude, McFadden figured the pilot had been hit and managed to radio a couple of May Day calls for help before the aircraft crashed. The calls went unheard.

The plane crashed in the water 10 to 15 seconds after being hit. The cabin portion was submerged in the water along with the wing that was near the sandy bank of the stream.

"I got tossed around a bit, but just got scratched a little," said McFadden.

"Finally, I crawled out of the right rear window. I surfaced for air then went underneath the plane to check out the condition of the pilot."

Going under the wing that was partially exposed he discovered the pilot was dead. "When I surfaced for air underneath the wing I heard two or three enemy talking. A couple of them jumped to the wing from the bank. I stayed motionless as they walked above me and then left about 10 minutes later," said McFadden.

Evidently feeling sure that all occupants of the small craft were dead, the enemy soldiers voices became weaker and weaker as they walked away.

"When I thought they were gone I crawled out of the water and up on the bank," said the lieutenant. "I quickly surveyed the area and spotted two about 75 meters away on the bank of the river. It was approximately the same area we had received the machine gun fire from."

McFadden fired his .45-caliber pistol at them and raced off in the opposite direction from the enemy. The enemy disappeared. "I figured they were going to get some more people or report what had happened."

McFadden moved off to the east in the high elephant grass. The surrounding rice paddy area had a few small hootches, but the lieutenant never saw any people in the vicinity. "The people may have scattered when they saw the plane was going to crash," he said.

Moving slowly through the eight-foot-high elephant grass, McFadden looked at this watch and realized several hours of daylight remained. Suddenly he heard them coming. From the sound of their voices. McFadden estimated there
(Continued on Page 15).

downed observer spends

night with NVA

Graphic Art: Drawing of a Bird Dog airplane over Vietnam Central Highlands.

were six to eight enemy coming towards him in two-separate elements.

McFadden waited until later in the afternoon then moved back further into the thick elephant grass. "I couldn't see too well, but in mid-afternoon I heard and spotted several aircrafts flying overhead - I figured they were probably looking for me, but I didn't want to give my position away."

Next morning the aerial observer pushed on through the vegetation until he found a plateau of elephant grass with a large boulder sticking out conspicuously.

"Every time a plane would fly over, I'd jump on the rock and start waving," said McFadden. In the early afternoon a Bird Dog spotted the lieutenant waving his arms. In the next five to ten minutes there were five planes in the area.

Lt. Col. Robert B. Longino, of the 4th Bn., 31st Inf. arrived in his command and control helicopter to pick up McFadden.

"The first thing he asked me as I boarded the chopper was "Why didn't I shave?" laughed the relieved aerial observer.

"I'VE GOT ONE ON MY BACK"

LZ WEST-A soldier from the 196th Infantry Brigade just barely came out on top recently in a fierce night time life and death struggle with two NVA sappers at this mountainous fire support base.

Sergeant Steve Martin from Co. C, 4th Bn., 31st Inf., was stationed on the bunkerline when LZ West came under attack by an estimated platoon size force of NVA.

The NVA were attempting to infiltrate the perimeter at various points with the ultimate goal of destroying strategic targets with satchel charges and rocket propelled grenades.

Martin's bunker was hit by a Chicom grenade which exploded, but did little more than jolt the Americal Division soldiers inside. Rushing from his position, Martin proceeded along the dark bunkerline to check on the other members of his squad.

As he made his way through the pitch black night a figure jumped on top of him. The young Californian and a powerful NVA soldier were locked in hand to hand combat.

SP4 Larry Tabor (Pulaski, Va.) emerged from a nearby bunker at this time. "The first think I heard was SGT Martin yelling, "Tabor, "I've got one on my back," said Tabor. "When I got there, SGT Martin was struggling with the NVA on the ground. Another NVA had come up behind Martin and was stabbing him with a knife in the neck and shoulder.

"I shot the guy with the knife and then Martin rolled off the other NVA and I shot him too," said Tabor.

The enemy were apparently trying to reach a battery of 155mm howitzers and an ammunition storage point which were located directly behind the sector of the perimeter defended by Martins' squad. A total of eight NVA were killed during the course of the action and one was captured.

An AK-50 rifle, two RPG launchers with numerous rounds, satchel charges and Chicom grenades were discovered.

Several blood trails were found leading away from the perimeter, indicating that a number of the enemy had been wounded in a futile attempt to penetrate the perimeter. Apparently they fled from the intense American weapons fire.

TIEN PHUOC

BITTER CAMPAIGN

Graphic Art: Drawing of soldier kneeling to fire from behind a tropical tree.

LZ ROSS-In intensive day-long fighting which continued late into the night, elements of the 196th Infantry Brigade hammered at heavily fortified NVA positions recently in the mountains 10 miles southwest of Tam Ky.

The battle saw repeated clashes between the Americal Division infantrymen and troops of the 3rd NVA Division entrenched in well-camouflaged, concrete bunkers. At one point, enemy elements used flashing red strobe lights in an unsuccessful attempt to confuse night medevac helicopter extractions.

The action was the latest phase of fighting around the beleaguered village of Tien Phuoc, scene of a see-saw struggle since the opening week of the post-Tet offensive when NVA units overran and controlled a Popular Forces (PF) outpost and an outlying hamlet of the village.

Elements of the 3rd Bn., 21st Inf., and 1st Bn., 52nd Inf., saw extensive fighting in the area the previous week. A CIDG camp at Tien Phuoc had been under daily mortar attack, and for a time, NVA machine gun fire controlled the village airstrip.

Intelligence indicated three battalions of the 3rd NVA Div., in strongly fortified positions in the mountains to the east of the village. Aerial photo reconnaissance reported enemy rocket and mortar positions around the village, and anti-aircraft fire was being encountered from a half-dozen locations.

"Legionnaires" of the 2nd Bn., 1st Inf., were airlifted into the mountain plateau early in the week to join the other elements in pushing a counter-offensive deep into the enemy stronghold. Three Infantry companies took to the mountains while headquarters personnel and mortar platoons fortified a field CP in the Tien Phuoc District Headquarters building.

Heavy contact began early on the third day when Alpha Company came under intense automatic weapons fire moving out from their night laager. Within minutes all three companies were in contact. Gunships and artillery missions pounded enemy targets throughout the day.

With the objective of taking Hill 187 to establish a new mortar position and field command post, Delta Company, under the command of 1LT James R. Sanders (Arvada, Colo.) fought through fortified NVA bunkers to attain the summit in late afternoon. Enemy troops showed their displeasure with a steady barrage of mortar and recoilless rifle fire into the hilltop position.

Friendly casualties mounted as Alpha and Charlie Companies found themselves surrounded and unable to move. Five helicopters took hits during medevac and resupply flights into the battle.

At noon, the command and control ship of 2/1 battalion commander, LTC Sinclair L. Melner (Reno, Nev.) came up under intense automatic weapons fire, while making an attempt to resupply ammunition to the surrounded companies. The crew chief of the ship was wounded and returned to the Tien Phuoc CIDG camp for medical attention.

A second resupply and MEDEVAC attempt in the early afternoon was successful in spite of continued automatic weapons fire.

With night fall, a few moments of confusion resulted when Delta Company, now securely dug in atop Hill 187 turned on a flashing red strobe light to guide in a MEDEVAC chopper. Within a few hundred meters of their position, two other lights began winking in the darkness.

The MEDEVAC pilot quickly determined the correct light, however, and lifted the wounded soldiers out without further difficulty. Artillery was fired on the two bogus signals.

"The NVA around Hill 187 are fighting, from a well-established base with camouflaged, dug-in positions and overhead cover," said LTC Melner after the day's fighting. "They are well trained troops with good equipment, and for the time being they have the advantage of position. We are definitely fighting in their territory."

gimlets low crawl to nva

base camp

Graphic Art: Drawing of jungle foliage.

LZ CENTER- When the trail ended because of thick overhanging jungle growth a platoon of "Chargers" from the 196th Infantry Brigade low crawled themselves into an enemy base camp and plenty of action.

The 2nd platoon of Co. A, 3rd Bn., 21st Inf., was on a search and clear operation, 11 miles northwest of Tam Ky. The previous day they had evacuated several detainees from a hamlet. After interrogation by the battalion intelligence section, a Vietnamese woman gave the location of an unknown size enemy force.

The Americal Division unit was now patrolling the probable location---the same area they had made enemy contact the day before.

Blue Ghost gunships from F Troop, 8th Cav., assisted them by rocketing the location before the platoon moved into the vicinity.

"The "Charger" platoon filed down the trail that was flanked with triple canopy jungle vegetation. When they could to no further because of the heavy growth the men began searching for a way to continue.

The point element discovered a narrow path which was so overgrown with jungle vegetation that the men had to low crawl. After crawling 50 meters, point man SP4 Terry Green (Springfield, VA.) heard what he thought was running water.

Moving forward a small distance Green came to the source of the noise--- a large water falls. Next to the stream was an enemy base camp. The camp was extremely well camouflaged and was ringed with fighting positions and lookout posts.

As Green looked over the apparently abandoned enemy positions, he spotted movement in some bushes near a tunnel. A short burst of M-16 fire brought down a VC who was attempting to escape.

While reloading his weapon two more VC, their weapons drawn, came rushing towards Green. Platoon leader, 1LT Laurence McNamara (Fairfax, Va.) spotted the enemy--wheeled his M-16 around and killed them before they got to Green.

"This sent them scrambling everywhere," said Green. As they approached a tunnel a couple of infantrymen heard a noise above the enemy position, threw a few grenades on top and killed two more VC.

A separate element of the platoon, in the meantime, was sent to follow the course of the stream. They ran into three VC trying to escape. Two of the enemy were killed by a salvo of M-16 fire. The remaining VC was captured and brought back to the rest of the platoon.

Lieutenant McNamara was searching for enemy positions when he found a large tunnel complex. "I was reaching down and pulling out a VC when I saw he had a grenade with the pin pulled," said McNamara. "I shoved him back in the hole and hollered 'grenade'," said 1LT McNamara.

The blast of the grenade in the tunnel killed three more of the enemy. After a thorough search of the camp the lead element of the platoon began crawling back down the same path that had led them to the base camp.

Suddenly, the sound of quick movement in the jungle in front of the platoon was stopped with a quick reconnaissance by fire. Checking the area the "Charger" element discovered a dead VC medic.

Documents found in the dead medic's shirt pocket listed the VC who were active in the area by name.

After the "Charger" unit's visit eleven names could be scratched off the active list.

Graphic Art: cartoon showing a winding road among a base area with four trucks that have run off the road. Caption: "OH OH, THEY OILED THE ROAD AGAIN."

Graphic Art: drawings of different Army medals.

awardsF TROOP 17TH CAVBRONZE STAR

SGT John Berbarido
 SGT Larry Sanders
 SGT James Daly
 SGT Joseph Schaffer
 SP5 Lee Kujawa

ARMY COMMENDATION MEDAL

SP5 James Green
 SP4 Joseph Maldonado
 SP4 Arnold Goffey
 SP4 Robert Snow
 SP4 Tommy Smith
 SP4 Gerald Skipton
 SP4 Michael Beohner
 SP4 David Hackly

3rd BN., 82nd ARTY.SILVER STAR

LTC Edward Peloquin

BRONZE STAR

1LT Dean Crosby
 1LT Richard Garza
 SSG Carl Berry
 SP6 Alexander Katten
 SP6 Edward Saito
 SP5 Bert Barton
 SP5 William Shoch

AIR MEDAL

CPT Kenneth Taylor
 1LT John Oliver
 MSG William Beamer
 MSG Joseph Thompson

ARMY COMMENDATION MEDAL"V"

SGT Harold Meek

ARMY COMMENDATION MEDAL

SFC Joseph Jones
 SSG Johnny Porter
 SGT Issac Chambers
 SGT Larry Govine
 SGT Alfred Smith
 SP5 Frank Guerra
 SP5 Frank Henson
 SP5 Jess Seymore
 SP5 Dennis Sondergaard
 SP5 Bruce Wallace
 CPL Robert Heaney
 CPL Terry Jones

SP4 Charles Arrington
 SP4 Floyd Beard
 SP4 Paul Brown
 SP4 Vernell Butler
 SP4 Dwight Gaylor
 SP4 Roy Cone
 SP4 James Duncan
 SP4 Ronald Green
 SP4 Charles Lampasso
 SP4 Jerome Nelson
 SP4 Antonio Nunez
 SP4 Edward Seiner
 SP4 Eddie Snipes
 SP4 Kenneth Wham
 PFC Davis Hall
 PFC Louis Keleman

PURPLE HEART

CPT Foster Jenkins
 MSG William Beamer
 MSG Joseph Thompson
 SGT Robert Semanisin
 SGT Robert White
 SP5 Lawrence Kundinger
 SP5 James Moss
 SP5 James Chellin
 SP4 Vincent Donini
 SP4 Craig Green
 PFC Melvin Armstrong
 PFC Richard Thomas

3rd BN., 21st INF.BRONZE STAR

SFC Ernest Vert
 SSG Ronald Folker
 SSG Ronald Frances
 SSG Albert Shultz
 SGT Robert Ashworth
 SGT Ned Klaus
 SGT John Nonemaker
 SGT James Pierce
 SGT Sandy Sykes
 SP4 James Berry
 SP5 Ignacio Escandon
 SP5 Bernard Lomax

ARMY COMMENDATION MEDAL

SGT Jay Dimond
 SGT James Cozzolino
 SGT Paul Gerson
 SGT Waddell King
 SGT Fred Hanses

SGT Jack Smith
 SP5 Paul C??mer
 SP5 William Hiltaut
 SP5 Tommy Hathcox
 SP5 Terry Preslar
 SP5 James Vidmar
 SP4 Michael Bradshaw
 SP4 Jerry Jennings
 SP4 Gerald Moore
 SP5 Jerome Minnich
 SP4 Tommy Wilson
 SP5 Douglas Wolcott

PURPLE HEART

SSGT Paul Mena
 SGT Frank Nultari
 SGT Kenneth Taft
 SP4 Jonny Ashley
 SP4 John Bullman
 SP4 Jerry Conover
 SP4 Herman Crayton
 SP4 Homer Hager
 SP4 Frank Ivarra
 SP4 Ray Heace
 SP4 Robert Orr
 PFC John Hill
 PFC Shawn Johnson
 PFC Leon King
 PFC Robert McDonald
 PFC Daniel Meers
 PFC Bennett Miller
 PFC Robert Santiago
 PFC Gary Scheider

4th BN., 31st Inf.BRONZE STAR

SP4 Paul Pannell

ARMY COMMENDATION MEDAL

SGT Ronald Moran
 SP4 John Vitek
 PFC Michael Fogarile

PURPLE HEART

SGT Robert Garten
 SP4 William Jackson
 SP4 Mike Rooney
 SP4 Thomas Saemmer
 SP4 James Williams
 SP4 John Woodson
 SP4 Fred Cardaropoli
 PFC Steve Wilson

Graphic Art: View from behind of soldiers in position to advance into mountains.

Infantry

artillery

air strikes

pound enemy at tien phuoc

LZ CENTER- with the aid of damaging artillery and thundering air strikes, a "Charger" battalion of the 196th Infantry Brigade killed 234 enemy and captured 39 weapons in 21 days of heavy action in the rugged mountains surrounding the besieged Tien Phuoc CIDG Camp.

Repeatedly assaulting well fortified NVA positions in the wake of intensive weapons fire, all four rifle companies of 3rd Bn., 21st Inf., cleared out a large enemy stronghold area, 10 to 14 miles southwest of Tam Ky.

The infantry battalion was supported by the quick reacting artillery units from 3rd Bn., 82nd Arty of the 196th Brigade and 1st Bn., 14th Arty., working for the 198th Brigade.

"Flying Red Horsemen" of 3/82 had Bravo Battery located atop LZ East directly north of the Tien Phuoc controlled fire zone (CFZ) and Delta Battery positioned on LZ Young to the northeast.

Charlie Battery of 1/14 completed the semicircle of artillery protection from LZ Professional, far to the southeast.

In 21 days these three artillery units blasted the enemy units with 29,286 rounds of exploding projectiles and accounted for 40 structures destroyed, 63 secondary explosions and 96 enemy killed.

Streaking "Hell Born" A-4 Jets from Marine Air Group (MAG-12) and Phantom F-4 bombers from MAG-13 (Love Bugs) flew 62 missions. The jets expended 400,000 pounds of high explosive bombs, 84,000 20mm rounds and 500 rounds of 2.75 rockets.

The large bombers dropped their heavy arsenal several times extremely close to the American infantry units because of well positioned enemy bunkers and the gravity of the friendly tactical situation.

During the opening week of the enemy post-TET offensive, NVA units overran and controlled a Popular Forces (PF) outpost and an outlying hamlet of Tien Phuoc village.

Every day the CIDG camp was subjected to rocket and mortar attacks and NVA machine guns controlled the air strip at times.

"Gimlets" of 3/21 were called into the area in an attempt to relieve the intense enemy pressure and assumed the mission of clearing the outlying infested NVA terrain.

"Our part in the operation consisted of two phases," said MAJ Robert Douglas (El Paso, Texas), the battalion operations officer. "The first part lasted one week when 3/21 made several contacts with the 7th and 8th battalions from the 31st NVA Regiment which were operating in platoon and company size elements.

"Phase two was characterized by scattered resistance as small groups of NVA tried to escape the area."

The first day of the operation, two companies of 3/21 came into heavy contact. Delta, commanded by CPT Stephen Sendobry (Wallingford, Conn.), set up a day patrol base on a small hill 6,000 meters directly northeast of the CIDG camp air strip.

Suddenly, the Americal Division unit began receiving mortar rounds from two different directions. Along with exploding incoming rounds, Delta's position was peppered by a substantial amount of sniper fire from a thickly vegetated knoll to their front.

Delta had two men seriously wounded and 196th Brigade Commander, COL Frederick J. Kroesen, (Burlington, N.J.) had his command and control helicopter land for an immediate dustoff.

"While the two men were lifted into the chopper, enemy mortars pounded all around the ship. Brigade CSM, Walter L. Jones (Bowling Green, Ky.) was knocked

out of the helicopter by the concussion (Continued on page 20)

Graphic Art: Two artillery pieces ready to fire with sandbags surrounding them and mountains in the background.

3/82 arty blast enemy with 29,286 rd' s

of an impacting round.

The extraction of the wounded was completed so quickly the CSM Jones never got back on the helicopter and spent the rest of the night assisting the beseiged company.

COL Kroesen received shrapnel wounds in his right thigh from one of the exploding rounds. While the ship was getting ready to leave the ground.

[Historian note by Les Hines: This incident occurred March 7, 1969. The helicopter was from my 1st Platoon of A/123rd Combat Aviation Battalion. The aircraft commander, Mr. Russ Jones was severely wounded, evacuated to a hospital in Japan, and never again flew for the Army. The crewchief, a friend named Wolf lived in my hootch, was wounded and returned to duty after 3-4 months in a hospital at Cam Ranh Bay. Mr. Reid was the peter pilot. Mr. Reid and the door gunner came out much better as they were on the side away from the blast. The door gunner usually assigned to this mission with Wolf was Selby Callahan who was on an R&R. I did not get the correct name of the door gunner recorded in my diary entry made over 40 years ago. I was told that the Col. had been wounded in the buttocks; but the story reported a wound in the thigh.]

SP4 Alfred Seaman (Youngstown, Ohio) had grabbed an M-60 machinegun and raced behind a large boulder to return a heavy volume of fire at the well concealed NVA force.

For several hours—during the course of many emergency dustoff operations, Seamen continued blazing away with his weapon. The young specialist took charge of the unit after the platoon sergeant and platoon leader were wounded during the fire fight.

Casualties kept mounting, but artillery and air strikes pounded away relentlessly and began to soften up the enemy positions.

Delta, meanwhile, was gathering their wounded for the ensuing MEDEVAC operations. Two hours later, in the late afternoon, the artillery and air strikes ceased. The infantry unit began receiving deafening M-79 and automatic weapons fire again.

While everyone was caring for the wounded or returning enemy fire, CPT Sendobry and 1LT Bruce Draudt (Columbus, Ohio) began unloading critically needed ammunition from resupply ships under intense enemy opposition.

As darkness began settling around the "Gimlet" company, mortars again plummeted upon them. The men used steel pots and machetes to dig protecting fox holes.

"I never thought it would be possible to dig so fast with what little we had," said SGT Dan Estes (Parnell, Mo.). "Everybody knew our situation was desperate, but we also knew the enemy was getting the hell beat out of them by artillery and air strikes."

Delta continued getting mortared during four days of tedious patrolling. A reconnaissance platoon added strength to their depleted forces.

More than 3,000 meters to the southwest of Delta's location, Bravo led by CPT Arthur Ballin (San Bernadino, Calif.), encountered heavy contact with a large unknown size NVA unit that lasted five days.

Patrolling the base area of Hill 269 Bravo began finding enemy packs and one trail leading into a hootch area. As they approached the small housing structures, the point element spotted two NVA running into holes on the side of the hill.

The NVA began heaving Chicom grenades at the 3/21 company and were and were promptly silenced by return M-16 fire and M-26 grenades.

Suddenly, vicious crossfire from Ak-47 rifles ripped across the company. Immediately, Bravo took cover. Three men, wounded during the ambush, were pulled to safety.

"Gimlet" Commander, LTC John Brandenburg (Portales, N.M.) was flying in his "charlie-charlie" and was notified by radio of the injured men.

His pilot guided the ship in a sweep of the area that brought a hail of bullets from the enemy, but no hits. On a second attempt the bird landed and the three wounded were loaded aboard.

An RPG round landed in front of the chopper, sending large pieces of shrapnel tearing through the bottom front of the ship.

The helicopter made a successful dustoff in spite of the intense NVA fire power. Bravo moved to the cover of a small knoll in mid-afternoon and called (Continued on Page 21)

Graphic Art: Two A4 Skyhawks flying with mountains in the background.

62 MISSIONS BY Marine jets

deliver 400,000 lbs of bombs

in air strikes, artillery and Blue Ghost gunships from F Trp., 8th Cav.

That night, Bravo laagered on the knoll. The enemy remained silent throughout the darkness. The next morning Bravo moved to the top of Hill 269 and surprisingly encountered no resistance.

On this same morning, Alpha Company led by CPT Thomas Ruffing, (Pittsburg) began an eight day sweep into the area where Bravo had just departed. It appeared the heaviest concentration of NVA were located in this vicinity.

They encountered occasional pockets of resistance on the patrol. Because of scattered enemy weapons, packs and equipment that Alpha found on the sweep from the base of Hill 269, there was a strong possibility the enemy was retreating from the quickly pursuing "Gimlet" company.

On the seventh day of Alpha's sweep, numerous blood trails were found leading off into dense undergrowth. Scuff marks on the ground indicated bodies had probably been dragged away.

"We were in an unpopulated lowland area," said CPT Ruffing, "and in a two-day period we found 40 graves that contained 152 enemy bodies."

The dead enemy soldiers had been killed by artillery, air strikes and small arms fire during the first seven day of fighting.

"The freshly dug graves were camouflaged with secondary jungle growth—they probably had intentions on coming back," said CPT Ruffing.

Alpha killed six NVA, captured 16 packs containing weapons and found seven AK-47 rifles, one carbine, one shotgun, one M-16 rifle, eight 60mm mortar rounds with charges and hundreds of small arms rounds.

All four of the "Gimlet" companies found large bunker complexes. Bravo assaulted and destroyed 15 bunker positions on a patrol up Hill 269.

When they received heavy small arms fire from a large NVA force, Bravo pulled back and called for artillery, mortars and air strikes.

After the smoke cleared from the air strikes, the last of the enemy resistance was knocked out by small arms. A total of 14 NVA were killed. A further search of the area uncovered two M-79's, two AK-47's, two AK-44's, one SKS assault rifle and a large number of RPG rounds and small arms ammo.

Well dug in positions were designed to hold off an attacking force from any direction. "I found it very hard to believe that several of the bunkers were reinforced with concrete," said Ballin.

Charlie Company led by CPT William Dousbach (Madison, N.Y.) found a company size enemy bunker complex.

The discovery came after the infantry unit had come into heavy contact on the fourth day of the Tien Phuoc operation. The NVA were shooting from several positions on the crest of a hill.

"Our small arms fire didn't seem to have too much of a neutralizing effect on the enemy. When the strikes were completed, Charlie encountered no more resistance as they climbed to the top of the hill.

There they found bunkers with firing ports on three sides. Thick vegetation provided well concealed positions for the enemy.

As the operation approached a close, several large sweeps were made.

"Contact was light during the final days of the operation," said LTJ Brandenburg. "We were now dealing with a completely disorganized enemy and found only scattered pockets of resistance.

Graphic Art: Two humorous cartoons.

A large moving truck with "Allied Movers" on the side is parked behind a 2/1 Inf. sign. A frazzled soldier stares strangely ahead. (Cartoon credit to Amick)

Caption: Here we go again

Two soldiers taking a break in the jungle are unaware of a group of Vietnamese carrying a tank past them on a nearby trail. A group of NVA are under each track of the tank lifting the tank over their head. An absurdly impossible task. (Cartoon credit to Amick)

Caption: "I' ll never understand how they get all this heavy equipment down from the north".

Graphic Art: Vietnamese and Americans working together to build housing.

Caption: Pacification.

1 JAN 69	TO	26 April 69
BROADCAST HOURS		233
MEDCAPS		36
PATIENTS TREATED		4669
REFUGEES RELOCATED		2631

SOMETHING FROM NOTHING

LZ ROSS—Turning the refuse of a trash dump into a veritable gold mine would seem to be a tale from the pages of a child's book.

An industrious Vietnamese village of 26,000 refugees and an element of the 196th Infantry Brigade, however, are proving it can be done.

With their own brand of Yankee ingenuity and the help of Legionnaires" of 2nd Bn., 1st Inf., the people of Que Son refugee village, located 20 miles northwest of Tam Ky, are indeed producing something from nothing. The something is 30,000 piasters a month for the village's refugee aid fund. The nothing is the trash generated by this Americal Division fire support base.

The battalion refuse, including a considerable number of broken wooden artillery ammunition boxes, other scrap lumber and various items of potential use to the refugees, was previously disposed of at the FSB dump or carried off by a few villagers with specific permission. But, Que Son District Chief CPT Nguyen Cong Chinh saw in the dump an opportunity to benefit both the people of this village and the American base. He got the go-ahead for his project from Battalion Commander, LTC Sinclair L. Melner (Reno, Nev.).

Trash pickup on LZ Ross was put up for contracted bids to Que Son civilians. Terms of the contract called for a daily trash collection along the Ross bunkerline, supervised by US personnel, and auctioning of the collected refuse in Que Son. Money paid by the contractor for the pickup privilege would go into a special refugee aid fund.

The new system proved satisfactory to everyone concerned. In one stroke, the battalion solved its trash disposal problems, the villagers gained a new source of building materials, several refugees found employment as collectors on the trash truck and a fast-growing fund for refugee aid was established. The winning bid was 30,000 piasters a month.

A meeting at Que Son District Headquarters attended by CPT Chinh, village elders, representatives of 2/1 and MACV advisors resulted in the formation of the "Helping Refugee People Committee," charged with the supervision of the new 20,000 piaster fund.

At the initial meeting, the committee set up a table of compensatory benefit payments to refugee war victims. In the words of the committee PF secretary, "The amount of money for aid to the refugee people is 1,000 piasters in the event of a family death, 500 piasters for a wounded person, 1,000 piasters for a totally burned house and 500 piasters for a partially burned living quarters."

In addition to these compensary payments, the committee will from time to time designate other projects to utilize the almost \$300 a month generated by the trash at LZ Ross. A recent check showed there was almost \$1,200 in the fund treasury for the refugee aid programs. "That's really making something out of nothing," said MAJ Terry e. Rowe (Quincy, Calif.) the battalion operations officer.

VC scavengers scattered

Graphic Art: M79 40mm round, artillery charge, artillery casing.

LZ ROSS—With their supply lines seriously severed by bombing, illness, and desertion, the VC and NVA are policing up after Americal Division field companies in an effort to implement their own depleted supplies.

an element of the 196th Infantry Brigade was recently impressed with the persistence of a VC scrounging team. Delta Company of 2nd Bn., 1st Inf., had hacked its way up the thickly vegetated jungle slope of a mountain in Antenna Valley, 25 miles northwest of Tam Ky.

There was no trail and the hard trek was slow and tiresome. At the end of the day Delta established a night laager near the summit.

Moving with the first light of dawn the next morning, the company had not moved five minutes from their night perimeter when they looked back and saw a squad of VC policing up after them.

There was nothing left behind for them to take, but as one infantryman commented, "You sure have to give them credit for trying."

"I don't know how they got there," said SP5 Paul Wolfson (Brooklyn, N.Y.) but they sure made it snappy."

A squad of the "Legionnaire" company slipped back along the trail and broke up the enemy scavenger hunt with a few well placed M-79 rounds.

Vietnamese Orphan

adopts 30 uncles

LZ ROSS- The early Vietnamese morning was already bright and oppressive with heat as a MEDEVAC chopper set down at a 196th Infantry Brigade fire support base and dispatched a small, brown figure sporting a white plaster legcase and a pair of crutches. Fourteen-year old Vo Duong, or "Muggsy" as his buddies of the 2nd Bn., 1st Inf., call him, was home for Tet.

The Infantry takes care of its own, Muggsy can tell you. The Vietnamese youngster was back again after three months at the 95th Evacuation Hospital at Da Nang where US Army doctors preformed a series of operations on a twisted leg. Muggsy's buddies from 2/1 sponsored the effort which will soon enable him to walk normally again.

A representative of the battalion picked him up for the short ride back to Que Son refugee village, 20 miles northwest of Tam Ky in the Americal Division area of operation. Muggsy was visibly as eager to get back to his village as any GI is to return home.

Muggsy joined the 3rd platoon of Bravo Company last September after he led them to Viet Cong booby traps during their road sweeps along Provincial Highway 535 outside Ross. His mother lived in nearby Que Son, and his father had been killed by the VC.

"You might say he sort of adopted us," said 1LT Alvin W. Nelson (Portland, Ore.) third platoon leader at the time Muggsy came into the unit.

He was an eager kid, skinny and awkward hobbling about on the toes of a crippled right foot. He warmed quickly to the attention of the "Legionnaires," and followed the platoon in its movements up and down the road, humping his own pack, sleeping in night laagers and eating C-rations given him by his new guardians.

Bravo Company in turn put him to work as an honorary Kit Carson Scout. Muggsy went along on patrols, helped question Vietnamese and made himself a welcomed addition in the platoon by fetching water and administering massages to footweary infantrymen.

"Even with that game foot, he could keep up with a patrol in the roughest terrain," said 1LT Nelson. "He used to carry more C-rations than any GI would hump."

"We really didn't know much about his family," said SP4 Joseph Carilisi (Whitestone, N.Y.) a rifleman with Bravo, "but after a while, you could figure he had at least 30 uncles right there in the third platoon.

Muggsy proved his worth to the platoon in other ways, displaying a cool head under fire. On the morning of September 19th, SGT Chester Black (Bakersfield, Calif.) was dozing in his poncho leant-to when the platoon was hit by an NVA probe. Black woke to the crack of Ak-57 rounds overhead and scrambled for a fox-hole. when he looked up, Muggsy was in the hole beside him offering Black the pot and rifle he had forgotten.

The third platoon absorbed the brunt of the attack, stopping it short of their perimeter. In the wake of the withdrawing NVA, they found the body of one slain enemy and an AK-47 assault weapon.

Bravo was back on bunkerline at Ross a week later when Battalion Commander, LTC Robert "Buck" Nelson heard of the company's Vietnamese mascot and decided to do something about him. In recognition of Muggsy's courage and support of the GI's, LTC Nelson wrapped the boy in one of his own shirts with the oak leaf insignia and sent him off to Da Nang to have his foot cared for.

PSG William Jack (Elizabethtown, Ky.) accompanied him to the 95th Evac and returned periodically to visit and report his progress. In the hospital, Muggsy was having the time of his life. "The guys in the ward loved him," said Jack, "But he was just a little put out when the doctors took away his cigarettes."

Home again now, Muggsy has time to rest up from his adventures before returning to Da Nang in mid-March when the cast will be cutoff and he will regain the use of his crippled foot.

A few days after returning home, Muggsy was back to the FSB. In a small ceremony at the 2/1 BTOC, LTC Sinclair L. Melner (Reno, Nev.) the present battalion commander, presented the boy with the traditional Tet gift of new money in a brightly printed red envelope. In this case, 3,000 piasters contributed by the battalion. The two exchanged smart salutes.

Then, grinning broadly, Muggsy took off at a fast lope on his crutches toward the bunkerline and a reunion with his old buddies of the third platoon.

GI

SELF-Taught linguist

LZ ROSS- The Vietnamese sergeant just couldn't figure it out. He had asked for an interpreter to help deploy his Popular Forces (PF) platoon about the mountaintop Observation Post (OP), but the tall soldier approaching him now was obviously just another American GI.

The soldier walked over to the milling PF's, flashed a friendly smile and began talking. A giggle of delight ran through the crowd of Vietnamese and 30 smiles flashed back. This GI was speaking their language.

Interpreter SP5 James Riley (Baltimore, Md.) of the 7th PSOP Battalion was on OP Cobra Base, 20 miles northwest of Tam Ky, with a PSYOP loudspeaker team composed of one other American and three Vietnamese to begin a series of dawn-to-dark broadcasts from the three OP's in the area.

Watching double takes on Vietnamese faces when he speaks to them in their own language is nothing new to Riley. When he talks to Vietnamese on the telephone, he has a hard time convincing them that he is not Vietnamese himself. Vietnamese interpreters working with Riley say he speaks the language very well and with a Saigon accent at that.

The surprising thing is that Riley has had practically no formal training in his adopted language. He is almost completely self-taught.

Before being assigned last January as an assistant interpreter with a PSYOPS team attached to the 196th Infantry Brigade, Riley spent 18 months as a supply clerk with USAICCV (US Army Inventory Control Center-Vietnam) in Saigon. During that time he had plenty of exposure to the language from Vietnamese clerks and laborers working around him.

"When I first came in country," said Riley, "I used to listen to the Vietnamese talking among themselves and wonder if any sense could possibly be made of what they were saying so fast. I decided I'd like to learn to speak like that."

With his supply duties over for the day, Riley found himself with a lot of free time on his hands in the evenings. He signed up for an evening eight-week Vietnamese study class at the local USO. Of the 12 GI's who started the course, only Riley finished. After that, it was all personal application studying and taking advantage of every opportunity to use and improve what he had already learned.

"All it takes is a little determination," he said.

Jim, or "Chin"---it means "bird" as his Vietnamese friends call him, figures it took him about six months to reach an acceptable level of expression and another three to read and write the language. He still prefers the spoken tongue.

After eight months in country, the lanky specialist took up a part-time job teaching English to Vietnamese children at the Men Thanh Gia Orphanage outside Saigon, a task which many language students with much more formal training and experience would have shied away from. It proved to be a mutually educational experience for both the children and their teacher.

Despite a year-and-a-half of study his co-workers' high evaluation of his ability, Riley admits that he still has a lot to learn. "When Vietnamese speak to me," he said, "I understand pretty well. But when they speak among themselves, it becomes more difficult. I have to eavesdrop very closely."

For the American speaker, the Vietnamese tones are most difficult. Riley's major problem with the language is dialect. He speaks mostly the Saigon variant and has a good acquaintance with the northern. He is quickly making up for a lack of contact with the central dialect through his work with this Americal Division unit.

Whatever the difficulty though, the Vietnamese reaction is always one of pleased surprise to find someone interested enough to learn their language so well.

Riley derives great satisfaction from working with one of the three loudspeaker and two movie PSYOP teams. As an interpreter, I feel I'm doing more for the cause than before, although every job is important. I think this will contribute more to ending the war."

thousands return home

GRAPHIC ART: Two Vietnamese refugees returning to Hiep Duc. One carrying heavy load on a pole balanced on his back and another riding a bicycle with a large load carried over the rear tire.

LZ WEST-Hundreds of refugees are returning to the valley site of their former homes in one of the largest and most significant pacification efforts ever conducted in the I Corps Tactical Zone.

After an absence of nearly four years, the Hiep Duc District Government is again located on home soil. In 1965 government officials of Vietnam (GVN) were forced to evacuate the area in the wake of devastating terrorist attacks by VC/NVA forces.

Gradually most of the districts 7,000 inhabitants were safely relocated in refugee centers at Tam Ky and Nui Loc Son. The district government was forced to flee to Tam Ky as well. Now, through the combined efforts of the 196th Infantry Brigade and Military Assistance Command Vietnam (MACV), the Hiep Duc Government has returned to its rightful home, some 35 miles northwest of Tam Ky.

The restoration of the district headquarters and the re-establishment of the GVN influence in Hiep Duc in the middle of a highly publicized enemy offensive campaign is an emphatic demonstration of growing confidence among Vietnamese officials and among the people resettling the area," said COL Frederick J. Kroesen Jr., (Burlington, N.J.) 196th brigade commander.

"The new settlers and officials have been welcomed gratefully by the populous, those Vietnamese who have eked out a bare subsistence under Viet Cong harassment for the past few years," he said. "Hundreds have already joined in to help in the construction efforts and have asked to be allowed to live in the new hamlets as they are developed."

Serving as the district chief is 1LT Nguyen Duc Vinh (ARVN). Vinh assumed command of LZ Karen from LTC Robert B. Longino, commanding officer of 4th Bn., 31st Inf. LZ Karen has been the base of operations for the elements of 4/31 that have been pacifying the Hiep Duc area in recent months.

Securing LZ Karen will be Popular and Regional Forces (PF-RF) under the command of Vinh. These forces will also provide security for the large number of refugees that will be returning to Hiep Duc in the coming months.

A five-man Mobile Advisory Team provided by MACV will provide assistance to Vinh in his effort to re-establish GVN control in the district. The advisory unit is headed by CPT Stanley W. Brown, senior advisor for the Hiep Duc projects.

The MACV element will work closely with a liaison team from 4/31 which is headed by SGT Kenneth Herrmann (Buffalo) of the 4/31 Civil Affairs Section. The liaison team has the responsibility of coordinating with the 196th Inf. Bde., MACV and the Government of Vietnam.

Lieutenant Vinh disclosed that the first phase of the project calls for the construction of a district headquarters in the vicinity of Don An village. This headquarters will handle the administrative business of the Hiep Duc District.

A refugee center will be established near the village of My Luu to aid returning Vietnamese. Other projects anticipated in the coming months include road construction, a school and small hospital.

Already, twenty-seven GVN of locals from the villages and hamlets of the district are at LZ Karen to assist with the proposed projects. Officials of MACV estimate that require some eight to 10 months to achieve the desired results.

A large psychological program has been employed in the area according to CPT Winston Gouzoules (Ashland, Mass.) of the Brigade Civil Affairs Section.

"We have been reminding the people of the Hiep Duc Valley of the past and the peaceful existence they had before the enemy came into the area."

Posters showing pictures of a rich market place are being used with the question asked "Do you remember the old Hiep Duc Market?---When were able to get there last?" Placid and tranquil farm scenes are shown with the words, "The GVN will bring peace and prosperity to new residents of Hiep Duc.

Perhaps the most significant result has been the large number of VC in the area who have become ralliers.

As one of them told a Civil Affairs interpreter, "we want to feast again too."

que son undaunted by terrorist attack

GRAPHIC ART: Two Vietnamese refugees viewing their destroyed homes.

LZ ROSS- One small naked Vietnamese child stood amid the smoldering ashes and rubble. Tears were streaming down his face, but not a sound emanated from his thin, chapped lips.

Already in his short life he has had seen other times of death and destruction. The pre-dawn VC terrorist attack had left a scene of tragic pathos before him.

On a side street of Que Son refugee village 20 miles northwest of Tam Ky, stooped elders and half-clad children mourned in unbelieving silence over the bodies of family and friends or ambled aimlessly through the remains of gutted homes. An old man salvaged a broken pot and a piece of roofing tin from the smoldering debris. His wife scooped up a pile of rice from the corner of two charred walls. Over everything, silence hung as heavily as the smell of smoke and burned flesh.

At the crowded village dispensary nearby, Vietnamese and US medical personnel worked feverishly over the wounded while at a temporary morgue in one of the schools, mourners maintained a final vigil over the dead and carpenters prepared the traditional red and yellow coffins. Joss sticks and candles burned a fragrant, flickering memorial. His emotions hidden behind a mask of mute acceptance, a Regional Forces (RF) sergeant knelt and sifted a mound of fine sand to cushion the tiny coffin of his three-month-old daughter.

On the village soccer field, US Army medevac helicopters set down to rush casualties to the 95th Evac Hospital in Da Nang. Cradling the naked body of a young girl in his arms and administering mouth to mouth resuscitation as he ran, a Vietnamese medic broke through the circle of onlookers and raced toward a waiting chopper. As the med3evac ship lifted off, he could still be seen through the doorway bobbing up and down on hands and knees forcing his breath into the lungs of the dying child.

Back in the village, Civil Affairs personnel from 2nd Bn., 1st Inf. of the 196th Infantry Brigade at nearby LZ Ross distributed clothing and almost 32,000 pounds of rice to victims of the raid. The village's refugee aid fund, set up through cooperative efforts of Que Son elders and 2/1, was found to contain \$1,200 for relief projects.

In the two refugee camps hardest hit, blanched faces were opaque with sorrow and disbelief, but there was no desperation, no surrender. The job of picking up the pieces had already begun.

During the pre-dawn hours recently, the Vietnamese community of 26,000 people, was hit in a lightning VC terrorist raid. In the violence which followed, 34 villagers lost their lives, 55 civilians and three RF defenders, were wounded and 86 homes burned to the ground.

Most of the victims, many of them women and children, suffocated in the narrow confines of underground bunkers as terrorists systematically put two blocks of thatched-roof houses to the torch. Others were trapped in the flimsy, burning structures. The survivors, already refugees once from VC-controlled regions, were left homeless.

(Continued on page 29)

que son undaunted**by terrorist attack**

Graphic Art: drawing of a burnt out home.

As the price of their terror, the estimated enemy platoon left 17 VC dead and two AK-47's as they attempted to overrun a hilltop RF fortification north of the village. The attack was possibly planned as a diversion while the refugee homes were being hit. Papers on two of the bodies indicated the raid was carried out by an element of the V-11 Company 105th Main Force VC Regiment according to Que Son District National Police.

Quick action of men at a 2/1 Observation Post called Cobra Base was credited with averting still another major attack against Phu Tho village, five miles east of Que Son on Provincial Highway 535. During the early hours after midnight, Cobra radar spotted significant movement along the ridgeline above the small settlement and called in a barrage of artillery and illumination rounds. Intelligence later confirmed that the action probably averted a major attack.

"Que Son was hit because the village has been an obvious success," said 2/1 Battalion Commander, LTC Sinclair L. Melner (Reno, Nev.). "Only when a pacification program of this type begins to show positive results does it become a primary target for VC reprisals."

In the evaluation of Battalion S2, CPT Robert Netter (Kingston, N.Y.), the VC apparently hoped to break the will of the people and drive them back into the valley where they would be forced to support the VC. "Judging by the way the refugees are already cleaning up and putting the pieces back together though," he said, "the raid only strengthened their resolve to stick it out right where they are."

Cool**LZ**

Graphic Art: Snow is drawn in on the letters of "Cool LZ"

LZ WEST- Not many GI's can say they came to Vietnam and ended up serving in Siberia, but that is exactly what's happening to a company of "Chargers" from the 196th Infantry Brigade.

Siberia is a strategically important new fire support base currently being constructed by co. D, 4th Bn., 31st Inf. The "Polar Bear" Company is being assisted in the project by an element of the 26th Engr. Bn., on Hill 165, located 38 miles northwest of Tam Ky.

The primary function of LZ Siberia will be to provide security for the newly re-established Hiep Duc District Government. Hundreds of refugees are returning to the Hiep Duc District after four years absence. They were forced to evacuate the area in 1965 because of devastating terrorist attacks by VC/NVA forces.

Through the combined efforts of 4/31, the Military Assistance Command Vietnam (MACV) and the Government of Vietnam (GVN), the Hiep Duc Government is back.

"In order to provide adequate security during this re-establishment, LZ Siberia is being constructed on high ground overlooking the entire area," said LTC Robert B. Longino, 4/31 commander.

"In addition, the unit occupying Siberia provides US Forces the opportunity to conduct daily joint operations with RF and PF forces from Hiep Duc District," commented Longino.

The landing zone will have one infantry company from 4/31 and an artillery battery from 3rd Bn., 82nd Arty.

The name Siberia was chosen by Longino because of its great significance in the early history of the "Polar Bears." On August 21, 1918, the 31st Infantry Regiment landed in Vladivostok in south-eastern Russia to defend the Trans-Siberian Railroad against attack from the various military factions that were competing for power in Russia at that time.

The 31st Infantry distinguished itself during the Siberian Campaign and in April of 1920, the American Expeditionary Forces were withdrawn. For its service in Siberia the 31st Infantry Regiment was named the "Polar Bear" Regiment. Within the next ten years

that emblem was adopted as the official regimental crest.

Bullets Graphic Art: drawing of a bullet and a ballot

Ballots

LZ ROSS- Under the protective eye of their own government and the 196th Infantry Brigade, the Vietnamese residents of Que Son District have been conducting elections for their local government positions.

The voting is only the first round of elections for the people of this large refugee village which is located 20 miles northwest of Tam Ky in Quang Nam Province. Many elections will be held throughout South Vietnam in the next few months.

To insure a peaceful election, elements of 2nd Bn., 1st Inf., are operating near the polling locations and are coordinating with ARVN troops to prevent infiltration by enemy forces seeking to disrupt the self governing process.

Preparing for the elections, Bravo Company, commanded by CPT Richard D. Herouz (Watertown, Conn.) moved in to position around the Que Son District headquarters. After two days of providing outer security, the Americal Division unit moved to the western part of the area for search and clear operations.

Bravo was continually harassed with small arms fire and hit and run sniper attacks. No casualties were sustained in the action, but the local VC found themselves short a couple of weapons and many VC suspects were sent to the district headquarters for interrogation and possible relocation.

fast turns

to

feast

LZ WEST- Increased enemy terrorist attacks, coupled with an already acute food shortage had left the people of Hiep Duc Valley starving, but elements of the 196th Infantry Brigade are enabling the Vietnamese to feast again.

The refugees were collected by GVN forces in a recent series of operations in the vicinity of My luu and Son Hiep villages.

For the first time in four years, the group of civilians living in the Hiep Duc District is under the control of GVN protection. Most of the people were astonished to find the GVN had been re-established in the area. They told of VC/NVA terrorism and the atrocities committed in the past several months.

The food famine was made worse by VC raids. The enemy ravaged the villages taking what sparse food was available and leaving the people starving. American elements working in conjunction with the GVN in Hiep Duc are providing food for the refugees until their usually productive rice crop is ready for harvest in two months.

Friendly elements located in Hiep Duc include a Mobile Advisory Team and the Military Assistance Command Vietnam (MACV) and a Civil Affairs liaison team from 4th Bn., 31st Inf.

Food is air-lifted to LZ Karen several times a week-utilizing helicopters provided by the Americal Division's 196th Infantry Brigade and MACV.

First lieutenant Nguyen Duc Vinh (ARVN) chief of the Hiep Duc District, is accompanying his troops on daily operations in the vicinity. He is trying to win support for the GVN and insure that the needs of the refugees are met.

Relocating tall the former inhabitants of the district within the next few months has top priority in Ninh's program. Many of the people are currently located in refugee centers in Tam Ky and Nui Loc Son.

Graphic Art Cartoon by Amick.

A large crowd of smiling excited Vietnamese are heading to a bewildered PSYOPS sergeant who has just arrived to this location. Caption of what the sergeant is thinking: "I WONDER WHAT HE PROMISED THEM THIS TIME."

Graphic Art: A page of four cartoons.

- 1) An armored cavalry track roars into camp with an officer leading a charge by pointing his sabre forward. The whirlwind of the track leaves the 196th CO's jeep hidden in a cloud of dust. From the CO's jeep comes these words Caption: **"IT LOOKS LIKE F TROOP is BACK!"**
- 2) A Chinook is transporting the very large Americal Division Main PX building out to the field.
Caption: **"THIS PX THING IS GETTING OUT OF HAND."**
- 3) A group of men who are strewn about in front a building labeled, "Charger Hilton". Caption. **"THAT'S WHAT I CALL A STANDDOWN!"**
- 4) A Chinook helicopter flies by the HHC MESS Hall. A cook is blowing in the wind horizontally flapping in the Chinook's rotor wash like a flag on a windy day. Caption:
"NOW YOU SEE WHY EVERYTHING WE COOK LOOKS LIKE IT WAS SCRAPED OFF THE WALL."

Col kroesen...

The 196th Infantry Brigade's John Wayne is departing. Leaving his year-long home at LZ Baldy, the rice paddies and rolling mountains of South Vietnam to trod a new terrain in the form of the myriad corridors and offices of the Pentagon. Many men named COL Frederick J. Kroesen "our John Wayne." The analogy is fun, complimentary, and inaccurate. He is the kind of man you consistently look up to—not because of his impressive height— but from sheer respect.

He is the type of commander that made everybody want to push hard together to accomplish a mission and they always did—but for the "old man" and not out of fear. COL Kroesen built his reputation as a great commander that most reputable way possible—by simply performing his duties—not bragging about accomplishments.

He never operated in the flashy manner of a John Wayne, but in the cool, calculated, methodical way of a confident leader.

COL Kroesen's mission contained the utter, stark reality of wounded and dead Americans sprinkled occasionally with an award or present from grateful Vietnamese who knew he made their plight easier and successful. Theatrics is not a part of COL Kroesen. Still the John Wayne comparison exists. A command Sergeant Major used to say, "He will simply always be 'our' John Wayne and I think it's a marvelous image for a 45-year-old man to have in front of a 19-year-old infantryman out there in the bush.

COL Kroesen is a sort of Audie Murphy without movie credits. A Babe Ruth without a stadium full of applause. He is the most valuable player in a league that doesn't keep statistics. A Sampson with a military haircut or a Caesar with no enemies. A man supremely confident of his ideas and the brigade's ability to carry them out.

"He turned many ordinary or average officers into great commanders," said one field grade officer. "He gives battalion commanders more latitude than most brigade leaders would," he continued. "They feel he's placing all his confidence in them by giving general guidelines for operations and letting them fill in the details. He works on the old principle of confidence in yourself is carried on to the subordinate commanders and they in turn pass it on down the chain of command. One brigade commander in the Americal Division said, "Never let a man leave your office without his manhood."

Anyone that entered the BRIGADE COMMANDER OFFICE at LZ Baldy took his manhood in with him and departed with even more. The brigade commander in South Vietnam fights what has become a cliché; the battle in the field and the struggle for pacification. Few commanders have accomplished what COL Kroesen did in his year at the helm of the "Chargers." He fought both wars with a calm fervor. The "Charger" commander saw his infantrymen cut a swath through an area of enemy dominated terrain and increase the size of GVN control to clear the way for gigantic pacification efforts.

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Farewell to a real charger

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Under his command, relations with the Vietnamese officials and civilians reached a new high in rapport and cooperation. COL Kroesen believes there are two methods of keeping esprit de corps and morale high. One is the unit's self-confidence in their ability to accomplish the mission. The second technique is making sure the officers and NCO's are looking after the welfare of their men. He got an inner sense of pride by visiting field units and asking them what outfit they were from. When he heard "from Delta Company, 3/21 sir!" instead of 196th Infantry Brigade or the Americal Division—he knew the small unit pride — that is so necessary—was there.

He stressed that commanders pay close attention to the routine. "Just because the men have clean clothes one day when you visit them in the field doesn't mean they will next week," he would say. "Things won't run well because you sit down and write the perfect plan or SOP and let it go at that."

To watch him forming his fist into a pistol pointer while briefing was one side of our John Wayne. To listen to him discussing with his staff at the dinner table different actors who have played Tarzan in the movies was his other side.

He leaves the "Chargers" and everybody will miss him. At the last commander's conference he said with a sort of subdued pride, "The way this brigade operates 24 hours a day—seven days a week to accomplish the mission, I think it should be called "The Relentless Brigade."

Maybe our John Wayne should be called "The Resplendent Commander." He shone brightly for a year as the Charger commander. It would probably be appropriate to wish him good luck and success in his new job. Somehow that seems unnecessary. No one ever wished John Wayne good luck in the movies—somehow it always ended successfully anyhow.

[Historian Notes by Les Hines: March 7, 1969 Colonel Kroesen's command and control helicopter was hit by a mortar blast performing an emergency medevac in the field. Kroesen, his pilots and crewchief were wounded. I replaced the crewchief on many future missions until Kroesen was relieved by Col. Tackaberry on 16 May 1969. I was amazed by Col. Kroesen. He had a great presence. He was tall, athletic, had great posture and a commanding voice. Some other commanders had this, but he was relentless with his focus and intensity. He personally asked me questions about what I had seen or might have heard that might help him. None of my commanders had ever asked me questions like that. He wanted me to be more than a person who suppressed enemy fire. I was part of his team! Colonel Kroesen later returned to command the Americal Division as a Major general on July 9, 1971. He served until the Division stood down in November 1971. He was in a key position during the North Vietnamese Easter Offensive that began on March 30, 1972. He later served as vice-chief of staff for the US Army. Today non-Americal Division veterans may most likely remember him as the four star who survived an RPG attack on his car when he commanded NATO forces in Europe September 15, 1981; but he will be known among Americal Division veterans for much more!]

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Ross...

grass beyond the perimeter road. Doerr caught the man with a burst from his M-16, spinning him across the road and into the smoldering bunker.

From an unseen position, another sapper flung a Chicom grenade into his bunker and Doerr booted it out the door. The explosion deafened him, but he held his position inside the doorway. Under Doerr's covering fire, medic SP4 James Kaiser (Wichita, Kan.) got the three wounded men to safety in the next bunker.

Believing Doerr to be wounded from the RPG explosion, the machinegunner in an adjacent bunker threw out a hail of protective fire around the neighboring position. Amid the smoke and confusion, Doerr watched and prayed.

"Cease fire. Alpha's sweeping the bunkerline," crackled the radio, and a temporary hush fell over the perimeter. Nerves were keen with tension, as a squad of infantrymen walked cautiously down the perimeter road, eyes probing every shadow.

Moving out from the first bunker, Specialists Jackie Clark (Morganton, N.C.) and Lance Milkene (West, NY.) flushed an NVA hiding in the tall grass inside the road and shot him when he grabbed for a grenade.

At another position, second platoon leader 1LT Allan Ostrow (Santa Ana, Calif.) and SGT Larry Dover (Leoma, Tenn.) covered each other in an advance toward the dark shadows of the dump. Suddenly two sappers appeared out of the darkness, one flinging a grenade at them. Ostrow and Dover hit the ground firing. The grenade was a dud, but the two NVA lay dead in the grass.

Back at his bunker, the ringing in Doerr's head suddenly stopped and he could hear someone shouting, "can you walk?" "Sure I can," he hollered back and ran out to hug medic SP5 Thomas M. McMahan (Lewiston, Maine).

Mop up operations continued as the morning sunlight broke. Two MP's noticed an RPG launcher sticking out from beneath a scrap of plywood in the dump and uncovered a very frightened young NVA prisoner.

In the wake of the pre-dawn attack, one US artilleryman lay dead and three trucks were burning. The entire NVA sapper squad of nine had been killed or captured along with two-AK-47's, two RPG launchers, a dozen rockets and several bags of Chicom grenades.

"Any good sapper squad can penetrate a FSB perimeter. The real test is to stop them once they're in and prevent their escape," said LTC Sinclair L. Melner (Reno, Nev.) 2/1 battalion commander.

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west...

grenades at Bavis's bunker. One grenade completely demolished the doorway of the bunker. "I moved some of my men to positions on top of the bunker and we fired down on the latrine," said Bavis. The NVA died in a hail of fire behind the splintered latrine.

Seconds later a nearby 106mm recoilless rifle position took a direct hit from an RPG round. As 1LT Robert Mocariski (Holyoke, Mass.) ran into the area to help evacuate the wounded he stumbled on a lifeless form lying on the ground. Looking down he saw the grotesque form of a dead NVA soldier.

Mainous helped Mocariski evacuate the wounded. Also instrumental in extracting the wounded from the battered position was PFC Ronald Norfleot (Scappoose, Ore.). Ignoring painful shrapnel wounds he made several trips carrying litters to the aid station, over 200 meters away.

All along this sector of the perimeter there were exploding RPG's and sporadic AK-47 fire adding to the evacuation problems.

A medic, SP5 Bill Leander from Salina, Kansas, was asleep in the aid station when the attack was launched. "I got a call from the Charlie Company CP saying that they had a man who was hurt pretty bad," related Leander.

"I grabbed a litter and took off. I started toward the bunkerline and this was when the AK started popping away at me. I jumped into one bunker and shined my light around. There wasn't anybody in there who was wounded, but I heard some moaning coming from the next bunker. I started over there and the AK opened up again," said Leander. "I could see the dirt spraying up where the bullets were hitting around me."

Upon reaching the source of the moans, the Americal Division medic found a man whose legs had been badly injured when an RPG round had smashed into his bunker.

"He was bleeding pretty bad," explained Leander. "I didn't have a tourniquet so I made one from the draw string of a sandbag."

"There was no way that I could get the man out by myself so I yelled for help." Leander's plea for help was answered by 1LT James Dean (Penn Yan, N.Y.). Dean raced through the sporadic AK fire toward the sound of Leander's voice. Eventually, they got the wounded GI to the aid station where he was given medical attention.

At the end of the fighting eight NVA lay dead around the perimeter and one of the sappers was captured. The Americans suffered no fatalities.