

# Artillery Surprises Enemy

BAN ME THUOT — Totally unaware of the 4th Division soldiers hidden in their midst, the bewildered enemy suddenly found themselves trapped in a storm of artillery and mortar rounds.

A short range patrol (SRP) team from the 2nd Brigade's 1st Battalion, 12th Infantry, commanded by Lieutenant Colonel Joseph Palastra of Salina, Kan., had moved into the area southwest of here only a short time before the action began.

Captain Bruce Harris of Westburg, N.Y., Company D commander, had instructed the team to set up near the intersection of three jungle trails.

Once settled, the team remained silent.

Finally, four North Vietnamese (NVA) soldiers furtively appeared along one of the intersecting trails.

Apparently convinced they were alone, the enemy point man continued down the trail, passing within 15 meters of the "invisible" Ivymen.

Private First Class Del C. Bibles, Concord, Tenn., team leader, picked up the radio handset and when about to notify his fire base, suddenly stopped.

"The place was crawling with NVA," the team leader said.

Remaining silent, the team counted more than 30 NVA passing them.

The patrol leader picked up his hand set and the radio hissed to life.

"Thirty November victor alpha types moving to the northeast," the PFC whispered.

The Red Warriors still had the enemy in sight when the first artillery round came thundering in on the NVA unit.

With rounds bursting around them, the enemy soldiers scattered in all directions.

An artillery forward observer was now heading for the contact area aboard a light observation helicopter flown by First Lieutenant Steve Wood of Logan, Utah.

The aircraft soon arrived, where it remained for the next two hours, barking instructions to nearby artillery and mortar units.

Eventually the guns fell silent and the small patrol returned to their fire base.



Vol. 2, No. 52

CAMP ENARI, VIETNAM

November 3, 1968

## Captive Escapes From NVA

By SP4 Peter Call

OASIS—For two weeks, Sergeant Buddy Wright of Wellston, Ohio, fought a war all his own—the battle to survive a jungled wilderness and to outwit his captors, North Vietnamese Army regulars.

The young, gangling sergeant is one of few soldiers who has been taken captive by hard-core North Vietnamese, bound, questioned, led into Cambodia, witnessed an enemy base camp — and lived to tell about it.

Sergeant Buddy Wright had been listed as "missing in action" for two weeks. Because of his indomitable will to live, his unflagging attempts to escape he is alive today.

Sergeant Wright's private war began when he was separated from his unit in the heavily-foliated jungle southwest of Duc Lap.

The experienced soldier was providing rear security for Company D, 1st Battalion, 22nd Infantry, because he had a lot of green troops and didn't want to expose them to the perils of a rear guardsman.

Captain Houston Smith halted his company for a break. Young Sergeant Wright watched with an eagle-eye about 100 meters back on the trail.

When the infantryman moved farther up, he soon discovered he had been separated from his company. At first, he believed he just hadn't gone far enough.

Soon he came to a fork in the trail. Finding boot prints leading in one direction, he followed.

After some distance, the boot prints became smaller and soon disappeared. In their place he found the prints of Ho Chi Minh sandals — the kind North Vietnamese regulars wear.

When he realized he might be falling into a trap, the lone soldier began to double back, but before he had gone more than a few feet, a platoon of grim-faced, uniform-clad North Vietnamese soldiers leaped on him, had his weapon, and bound him with heavy, flesh-cutting rope.

Fear gripped Sergeant Buddy Wright. His heart beat quickened. Horror filled his mind. Death flashed before him. For a moment, he couldn't believe what his eyes told him.

(Continued on Pages 4,5)



**BIG BERTHA**—A 175mm gun of the 52nd Group fires in support of 4th Division units near Ban Me Thuot. (USA Photo by 1LT Gary Martin)

## Medal Of Honor Goes To Ivyman

WASHINGTON (ANF) — Platoon Sgt. Elmelindo R. Smith received the Medal of Honor posthumously for his actions while a staff sergeant with an infantry reconnaissance patrol on Feb. 16, 1967.

Secretary of the Army Stanley R. Resor presented the medal to Sergeant Smith's widow, Mrs. Jane N. Smith of Tacoma, Wash., in a ceremony at the Pentagon. It was the 30th Medal of Honor awarded

to an Army member for heroism in Vietnam.

While on patrol, Sergeant Smith's unit, 1st Platoon, C Company, 2d Battalion, 8th Infantry, was suddenly engaged by intense machinegun, mortar and rocket fire.

He braved the deadly fire to position his soldiers along a hastily established defensive perimeter. Although severely wounded, he continued to encourage his men and assist in

the defense. Noticing the enemy massing for an attack, he crawled into the open and fired into the enemy ranks.

"Sergeant Smith perished, never relenting in his determined effort against the enemy," the Medal of Honor citation said. "The valorous acts and heroic leadership of this outstanding soldier inspired those remaining members of his platoon to beat back the enemy assaults."

## Bullets' Hall Of Heritage Recalls Past Heroism

By SP4 David M. Stamps

CAMP ENARI—On Columbus Day, nearly two years after the arrival in Vietnam of the 1st Battalion, 8th Infantry, its men gathered to honor their fallen comrades in the opening of their Hall of Heritage.

Chaplain (Captain) Don Little, battalion chaplain, set the tone for the ceremony in his invocation.

"We are not capable of honoring those men who gave their lives, for by their deeds they have brought the greatest honor upon themselves," the chaplain said.

Major General Charles P. Stone, 4th Division commander, and Lieutenant Colonel William Old, battalion commander, briefly commented followed by a short ribbon-cutting ceremony in which the hall was opened.

The corridor leading into the main room, was bedecked with a blue, cloth-covered board surmounted with rows of small silver plaques pledged to the

men that "their supreme sacrifice will not be forgotten."

In the main room, a giant topographical map showed the respective battalion areas of operation since its arrival at Tuy Hoa in November 1966.

Photographs and captions illustrated scenes of the "Bullet" battalion firebases, patrols, helicopter assaults, extraction, battlegrounds, MEDCAPS — men of the battalion doing their jobs.

Captured weapons mounted on one wall gave mute testimony to enemy contacts. At the opposite end of the room, crossed American and regimental flags framed a huge silver punchbowl engraved with names and actions dating back to the Civil War. Forty-seven battle streamers tasseled above the regimental colors.

The battalion's proud record is one well-known to General Stone who later said of the opening: "The establishment of a Hall of Heritage by the 1st

Battalion of the 8th Infantry is a wonderful way to recognize the exploits of this fine battalion, and to acknowledge the contribution made by those members of the battalion who sacrificed their lives.

"There is no form of compensation, pay or otherwise, that can ever be a satisfying reward for the year that the soldiers of this division spend in Vietnam, nor for the assistance that they provide to the freedom of this country and its people.

"The reward of a soldier must be in the pride he enjoys in being a member of an outstanding fighting team, and in the fact that he has proved by putting his life on the line, his ability to withstand the rigors of combat as a man and soldier," General Stone continued.

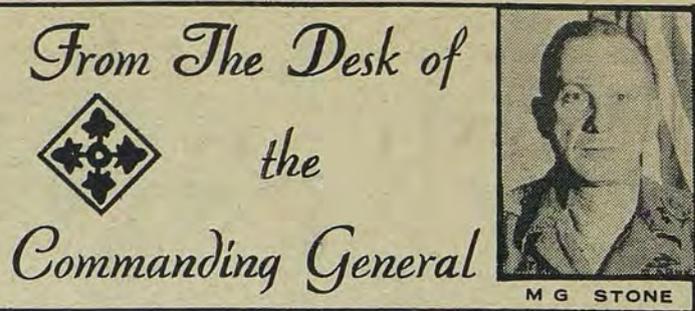
"I was very much impressed with the superb manner in which the Hall of Heritage reflects the great traditions of the



**ROSTER OF VICTORIES** — Battalion Commander, Lieutenant Colonel William Old and Major General Charles P. Stone, 4th Division Commander, examine huge silver punch bowl engraved with 47 battles dating back to the Civil War, fought by the 1st Battalion, 8th Infantry.

(USA Photo by SP5 Bob Christianson)

(Continued On Page 2)



**TAERS**

**T**HE ARMY EQUIPMENT Records System (TAERS) provides commanders at all levels with a valid record of the readiness status of specific items of equipment. The information becomes a permanent factual record pertaining to the equipment's receipt, operation, condition, modification and transfer.

The data for each of these forms is provided by the equipment operator. Since he is the individual who uses and maintains the equipment this is the best source for pertinent information. Based upon the users' evaluations and recommendations modifications are accomplished on Army materiel.

The importance of the operator's role can not be over-emphasized. The information furnished on the TAERS forms is reduced at higher echelons to data on an IBM type card and fed into computers. This information is stored, analyzed, and compared. The Army then is capable of programming for and procuring the repair parts to support worldwide requirements. As the equipment gets older and reports continue to be submitted, contracts are let to civil-replacement equipment. The success of the Army in the future is closely related to the accuracy of information provided by the operator and maintenance personnel. The equipment operator can insure that this division will continue to have the best equipment in the army, when he does his job correctly.

*Charles P. Stone*

**Choppers Come To Rescue**

**Bees Assault MEDCAP Team**

**BAN ME THUOT** — When insecticide failed, they called for a chopper to blow the invaders away.

A medical team from the 2nd Battalion, 35th Infantry, piled into their jeep and rumbled down the road toward a nearby village.

It was a routine assignment, a MEDCAP. The sun shone brightly overhead and everything appeared normal.

As the vehicle rolled down the road, an Ivy medic swatted at the bee buzzing around his head. Nothing unusual, just a bee.

The tiny insect flew away with an indignant buzz and seconds later returned with two friends.

Still unconcerned, the medic batted at the trio.

Glancing at the bee-sieged Ivyman, Dr. (Captain) Daniel Marks of Oak Park, Mich., the battalion surgeon, froze.

Huddled only inches above the man's head a large mass of bees pulsated softly.

"There must have been hun-

dreds of them," Captain Marks recalled.

"Stop batting at those bees," whispered the Captain.

Slowly the driver brought the vehicle to a stop and the Ivy-men slithered out.

Armed with a can of insect spray, the driver approached the vehicle and opened up with a heavy burst.

Instantly, the bees came howling out of formation and the Ivy-men dashed for cover.

As the dust settled, the insects returned to "their" vehicle.

The spray had done nothing to remove the buzzing menace. It had only made them angry.

Captain Marks stared at his invaded jeep for a moment and then made the "command decision."

The Army doctor strolled over to a nearby helicopter, which was waiting to be refueled, and spoke to the pilot.

With a satisfied grin, Captain Marks returned to his men.

The chopper lifted off, hesi-

tated for a moment and then moved directly over the "captured" vehicle.

The chopper's blades churned away, creating a miniature hurricane around the jeep.

Moments later, the bees were gone, literally blown away by the one hundred mile per hour winds created by the aircraft.

The MEDCAP team reclaimed their transportation and headed on their way. There is more than one way to skin a bee.

**COL Gorman Explains Why**

**Air Traffic Poses No Big Problems**

**DAK TO, Vietnam (4th Div IO)** — When "What sort of problems do you encounter in your operation?" was asked Lieutenant Colonel William J. Gorman of Wharton, N.J., he replied immediately, "We don't have any problems at all." And he can say that honestly.

Colonel Gorman is the commanding officer of the 366th Airfield Service Detachment at Dak To, headquarters of the 1st Brigade, 4th Infantry Division. His men control all the air traffic within a five mile radius of that air strip and also the air strip at Old Dak To. During an average month these air fields handle more than 12,000 take-offs and landings, which include planes as large as the C130.

The unit was formed at Fort Benning, Ga. in November, 1967. It was deployed to Vietnam April 4, 1968, and attached to the 58th Aviation Group at Long Binh.

On May 15, 1968 it took over the two air strips at Dak To and since that time has established itself as one of the smoothest running air control detachments in Vietnam.

Among the personnel of the 366th are six tower operators and six members of the ground control approach unit. They work in two-man shifts 24 hours a day.

The tower operators are responsible for clearing aircraft for take-offs and landings. Members of the Ground Control Approach units assist pilots in landing when visibility makes a visual approach hazardous.

By tracking the incoming aircraft on radar and establishing radio communication with the pilot, they are able to inform the pilot of his altitude, his position in relation to the airstrip, and the correctional heading needed to make a safe approach to the air strip. The pilot is then guided until he is underneath the cloud cover and can make a landing without further assistance.

Staff Sergeant Edward F. Peoples of Williamsburg, Va., a section chief with the 366th, states that each member of his

section has graduated from the Air Force school for air controllers at Keesler Air Force Base in Biloxi, Miss. Although there is seldom any trouble at either air strip, they are prepared.

"If you had a thousand different emergencies, no two of them would be the same," he says.

Sergeant Peoples attributes this to the fact that no two pilots are exactly the same, so their reactions would be different, even in an identical situation.

"There is a standard series of messages you should relay in case of an emergency, but in all the emergencies I've handled, there has never been enough time," he stated.

"About all you can do is alert the crash crew and clear the air in the vicinity of the air strip. Naturally we try to help the pilot in any way possible, but we really have to play it by ear."

**Heritage Hall . . .**

(Continued From Page 1)

battalion. The battalion may be proud of its exceptional accomplishments during my tour as division commander.

"In April and May, the 1st Battalion of the 8th Infantry held the south flank in the defense of Plei Kleng and later defended with great heroism, Firebases 15 and 29. I am proud to be the commander of such gallant men," General Stone concluded.

Attending the afternoon ceremony were Brigadier General Robert C. McAlister, assistant division commander; Colonel Warren D. Hodges, chief of staff, and Lieutenant Colonel Earl E. Rumbaugh Jr., 1st Brigade executive officer.

**General's Aide—Avid Traveler**

**CAMP ENARI** — Specialist 4 Philip Taylor of Ontario, Calif., was chosen to serve as enlisted aide to Major General Charles P. Stone, commanding general of the 4th Division.

The 21-year-old helicopter crew chief was honored with the week assignment because of his outstanding attitude, military skills, specialty knowledge, and dedication to duty.

Specialist Taylor, from Troop D, 1st Squadron, 10th Cavalry,

has been in Vietnam only two months, but was chosen from among more than 8,000 men to represent them as General Stone's aide.

An avid traveler, Specialist Taylor has been in every state except Hawaii and plans to visit there in March.

"I want to take my R and R in the islands so I can see my wife, Diana," he smiled. "Of course, visiting my 50th state will just be an added benefit."



(Circulation 8,000)

IVY LEAF, an authorized weekly publication, is published by the INFORMATION OFFICE, 4th Admin. Co., 4th Infantry Division, APO San Francisco 96262, for 4th Division forces and is printed in Tokyo by Pacific Stars and Stripes.

The opinions expressed in this publication are not necessarily those of the Department of Army. This paper uses facilities of Armed Forces Press File and Armed Forces News Bureau to augment local news. Mailing address: IVY LEAF, INFORMATION OFFICE, 4th Admin. Co., 4th Infantry Division, APO U.S. Forces 96262. Telephone: Famous 151 or 159.

Commanding General . . . . . Major General Charles P. Stone  
Information Officer . . . . . Major Donald D. David  
STAFF

Officer-in-Charge . . . . . First Lieutenant Gary G. Martin  
Editor . . . . . SP4 Harry Guy  
News Editor . . . . . SP4 Steve Wilson  
Editorial Assistant . . . . . SP4 Russ Landon



**MOVING UP**—Shortly after contact with enemy forces, Ivymen from the 3rd Battalion, 8th Infantry, search out an area for a night location. (USA Photo by 124th Signal)

## Hairy Extraction Ensues

# LRPs Uncover NVA Bunkers

By SP4 Hans J. Lange

**BAN ME THUOT** — "I'm sending the slick in and you have two seconds to get aboard," Captain Friedrich Rosenberger of New Rochelle, N.Y., radioed to the desperate 2nd Brigade Long Range Patrol (LRP) team.

"There are air strikes coming in to the west of you and Cobra gunships to the east. The slick is coming down the pipe. Be on it," said Captain Rosenberger of Alpha Troop, 7th Squadron, 17th Cavalry.

"We won't miss it!" ex-

claimed Sergeant John Gibson of Hurricane, W.Va., the LRP team leader.

The Ivymen's adventure had started only three hours earlier. They had dropped into a landing zone (LZ) west of the Central Highland city, unknowingly about 700 meters from a North Vietnamese bunker complex.

From the landing zone they stalked through the undergrowth and stumbled onto a compacted, high-speed trail. As they crossed it, two NVA spotted them, but the pair quickly melted back into the thick foliage.

"We tried to call for artillery

when they saw us, but we had no comms," said Sergeant Gibson.

"We decided to make our way back to the LZ," said Specialist 4 Stephen Wallace of Port Lavaca, Tex., "and try to fix the radio to call for extraction."

"As we moved out we saw seven or eight of the enemy blocking our path," he continued. "They saw us and began to fire. We returned the fire and ran for a different LZ."

"We managed to get the new batteries in, called for an extraction ship and then decided to give Charlie a taste of what he was trying to feed us."

"Three came out of the bushes and charged our position," the sergeant recounted. "We killed all three and then took off again."

The call for help flashed to Alpha Troop, 7th Squadron, 17th Cavalry, commanded by Major William P. Glover, Ozark, Ala., and the Ruthless Riders scrambled aboard two Cobra gunships and two Huey slicks.

They tested their guns on the enemy, keeping him pinned down.

An Air Force Forward Air Controll (FAC) plane was also near the harried team. Captain Bradley Van Sant of Davis, Calif., 21st Tactical Air Support Squadron, piloted the craft and soon had a set of fighters on station.

"When I got to their landing zone," Captain Rosenberger said, "Cobras and fighter planes were already making runs on the enemy, keeping them down. I got a fix on the LRP team and told them to get ready for the extraction ship."

Bomb strikes were on one side while Cobras were expending on the other. "I just sent the slick right between them," said Captain Rosenberger.

# Ivy Squad Escapes 2 Pursuing Platoons

By SP4 Larry White

**OASIS** — It was like a game of chase as an estimated two platoons of NVA pursued a squad of Company D, 3rd Battalion, 8th Infantry, men in the thick jungle west of Pleiku.

The only difference was the price the Ivymen would have to pay if caught — their lives.

The squad's mission was to patrol the thick jungle near the company's position. While searching the area, the men came upon a river.

"It was too deep and wide for us to cross," said Specialist 4 Thomas Olson of Ontario, Canada. "So we went down the river looking for a better place."

Once across, they took a break before continuing their patrol. Specialist Olson called a report to Captain Edward Joseph of Columbus, Ga., company commander.

"Quiet, I hear something," whispered Private First Class John Druding of West Mont, N.J.

Immediately, Specialist Olson turned off the radio.

The Ivymen listened and watched closely for enemy movement. Then the squad heard movement on both sides of them. Unable to see anyone due to the thick undergrowth, the Ivymen didn't fire.

Specialist Olson radioed Captain Joseph and whispered the problem to him. Quickly, they were ordered to pull back.

"We had just started moving back," said Private First Class Steve Sullivan of Carlington, Ky., "when I spotted two of the enemy soldiers. We quickly radioed back and confirmed that

the noise was definitely enemy movement."

The squad moved farther back, but were followed by the enemy soldiers. The Ivymen radioed for mortar support.

"Fire mission! Fire mission!" echoed through the firebase.

Quickly Company E aimed its mortar tubes. Lieutenant Colonel Pennel Hickey of Carlisle, Pa., battalion commander, checked to see if the area was clear. As the word came down, the Ivymen fired several rounds.

"As soon as the first round hit," said Private First Class Daniel Herrera of San Antonio, Tex., "we saw three enemy soldiers jump up and look in the direction where the round hit. We could see that one had an AK47 and the other two wore steel helmets and were dressed in uniforms. We knew it had to be an NVA force."

The Ivymen moved farther back, but still the NVA followed. Specialist Olson continued to adjust the mortar rounds on the enemy.

The squad, tired from moving through the thick foliage, rested. The NVA still came. PFC Sullivan spotted one and opened up with an M79 grenade launcher.

Moments later, the Ivymen came under a heavy volume of automatic weapons fire. Heavily outnumbered, the Ivymen pulled back.

"We pulled back even more," said PFC Druding, "as the mortar rounds poured into the NVA position. As we stopped, we noticed the NVA had quit chasing us."

# Skyraider Assures Combat Accuracy

By SP4 Bill Gibbons

**DAK TO**—When compared to modern jets, they seemed too outdated to join the war in Vietnam. But the Air Force A1 Skyraider is now proving itself to be an important part of the air war.

Originally designed for the Navy's aircraft carriers in 1947, the Skyraider was eventually made available to the Air Force. Today it is the only single engine prop fighter in the war.

Capable of carrying up to 8,000 pounds of ordnance, each Skyraider is equipped with four 20mm cannons and packs 976 rounds of 20mm ammunition.

Flying at speeds close to 300 mph, its main advantage is it can fly much slower, being more sure of the enemy position before going in for the kill.

Captain William H. Thompson of Longview, Tex., the Information Officer at Pleiku Air Force Base explains:

"The speed of the jet effects the speed of the ordnance dropped, and the harder it is to be accurate. The Skyraider does not have to contend with this problem. I've seen Skyriders drop bombs right in the doorways of enemy bunkers."

Because of this, the Skyriders can give close combat support to ground troops, drop bombs within 100 meters of friendly troops and strike within 20 meters with their 20mm cannons.

Skyriders were first used to train members of the South Vietnamese Air Force, who now fly these planes on many of the combat sorties in Vietnam.

Skyriders supporting the 4th Division, fly out of the 633rd Special Operations Wing at Pleiku Air Force Base under the command of Colonel George P. Birdsong of Clarksdale, Miss.

Once Lieutenant Colonel James D. Reeves of Bragg, Mo., and Major Win E. DePoorter of Memphis, were returning from a mission when they picked up faint distress signals on their radios. At the time they were 30 miles north of Pleiku over suspected enemy positions.

Both pilots were receiving the signals, but neither could communicate with the sender. Although running low on fuel, they utilized their direction finding instruments and set up a search pattern.

"As we began the search pattern," Colonel Reeves said, "a 4th Division PSYOPS helicopter with loud speakers went by. We radioed the chopper about the problem. He joined our search pattern and broadcast a message over his speakers saying, 'if you read us, give us a signal.'"

"Our search pattern was so tight when the sender popped a smoke grenade, all three pilots were looking right at that spot. We then moved in close enough to establish radio communication."

Major Depoorter continued: "A team of 4th Division Long Range Patrol (LRPS) had been put in for a mission. Their radio had broken down and they were operating with only a hand set. Because enemy were in the area, they requested extraction. Realizing their potential danger, we immediately called for a helicopter with jungle penetrating equipment needed for their extraction."

Although the pilots were running dangerously short of fuel, they were determined to fly cover until the rescue helicopter arrived.

"As we were flying our patterns," Major DePoorter said, "we noticed a Chinook helicopter passing by. We informed the pilot of the situation and he decided to perform the rescue himself. Although he had no extraction equipment, he lowered his hoist and pulled all the men aboard, one at a time."

Even though Colonel Reeves and Major DePoorter minimized their parts in the rescue operation, the LRPS did not. And the Army no longer minimizes the role of the Skyriders.

## 3 Viet Tours Prompt Continuous Promotions

**BAN ME THUOT** — Lieutenant Colonel Joseph Palastra Jr. of Salina, Kan., may well hold the record for promotions received while serving as an officer in Vietnam.

During his three tours in Vietnam, Colonel Palastra, commander of the 4th Infantry Division's 1st Battalion, 12th Infantry, has never held a rank longer than six months in-country before being promoted.

A 1954 graduate of West Point, the "chief" of the Red Warri-

ors first came to Vietnam in 1955.

At this time, Second Lieutenant Palastra helped build the first Vietnamese ranger school.

Six months later, the young officer was still with the ranger school, but now wore a silver bar.

After attending flight school and serving in Okinawa for three years, Captain Palastra began his second Vietnam tour.

His third and present tour in Vietnam began January 30, 1968, when then Major Joseph Pala-

stra joined Company B of the 4th Aviation Battalion.

Still a major, the officer became Assistant Division Aviation Officer.

In June of this year, Lieutenant Colonel Palastra assumed his present rank.

In early July he took command of the Red Warriors.

"I don't know if this is some sort of record," the 37-year old commander said.

"But with five children, the pay raises have come in pretty handy."

# SGT's 2-Week Jungle Trek With Death

(Continued From Page One)

FOR THE MOMENT, the chortling enemy soldiers had other plans for their hostage. Without blindfolding him, they led him—with hands tied behind his back—into a strange part of the jungle, westward.

For two days, Sergeant Wright had no idea where he was going. At the end of the second day, he knew. The North Vietnamese soldiers had led him into their stronghold inside Cambodia.

What the Ohioan witnessed was incredible. He wondered then whether he would ever leave the enemy's well-hidden base camp, carved out of the dense Cambodian jungle. North Vietnamese soldiers seemed to be everywhere, gawking, pointing, laughing.

It was not a new hideaway. Facilities were aged and well-developed. Still, Buddy Wright's thoughts were only of escaping.

## Geneva Convention Card Pushed Away

Sergeant Wright was untied, then searched. He attempted to show his Geneva Convention card, but they only pushed it away. Then the enemy soldiers confiscated his personal effects, and removed his boots and dog tags, making him sit on the ground.

Up to that time, no questions had been asked the young trooper. But when an English-speaking North Vietnamese interrogator arrived, Buddy Wright knew his immediate survival balanced on his ability to out-think, outwit and out-talk his foe.

The interrogator asked about tactics, even Sergeant Wright's unit. Again and again the questioner demanded to know the answers.

Over and over, Buddy Wright retorted: "I don't know! I don't know!"

Finally, the interrogator exploded: "You don't know too much, do you sergeant?"

Tired and weakened, Sergeant Wright looked up, and wryly quipped, "Yah, I'm kind of stupid."

The interrogator stormed out of the room.

## 5 Days Of Questions

During five days of captivity, the sergeant was repeatedly questioned. Each time it ended in much the same way.

When not being questioned, he remained tied. The only time the rope was loosened was when he was given a bowl of hot water and rice to eat.

The nights were long and cold. His hands bound and tied to a pole made it impossible to recline. A guard remained, close by. Every half hour during the night, he would shine his flashlight into the sergeant's face.

A bamboo mat he was tied against proved to be a dead giveaway whenever he writhed painfully to change positions.

"I knew escape was a big chance to take and odds were all against me," the sergeant recounted later. "But I promised myself the first chance I got, I'd take it."

His chance came early on the morning of the fifth day. "The guards must have been getting used to me," Sergeant Wright drawled almost painfully as he retold his ordeal. "They were beginning to relax.

"One, who seemed to be an outcast among the others, saw how uncomfortable I was. He loosened the ropes and gave me a blanket to keep warm."

## Works Hands Free

When the guards had moved back, Buddy Wright worked his hands free under the cover of the blanket. In his movement, the bamboo mat creaked loudly. A guard began to walk over to him. Buddy Wright knew it was his only chance for freedom.

He leaped up and dashed madly out the door. Totally surprised, the guard was briefly stunned. Then he sounded the alarm.

Sergeant Wright never looked back, but could hear a volley of bullets whizzing over his head. Painfully, he groped his way through the strange jungle, ripping his clothes, cutting his bare feet along the way.

Dazed almost out of his mind, mauled by brush and stones, the haggard soldier could not remember when he stopped running. Even as darkness draped the jungle, he stopped only briefly to catch his breath. Blindly, he struggled through brush and bamboo.



SGT BUDDY WRIGHT TELLS HIS STORY.

He never knew—or cared—in which direction he traveled until the sun rose on the sixth morning. Then he knew he was going farther into Cambodia. It was then he changed directions and began his trek toward the sun—the way of hope.

## Doubts About Jungle Safety

Two days, Buddy Wright carved his way through a strange, lonely land. When he became weak from hunger, and pain shot through his body, he began to doubt for the first time that he would ever leave the jungle alive.

His feet were swollen, his hair straggly, his face whiskered, his stomach empty. Still, an ember of hope burned within.

The sergeant, armed only with his knowledge of jungle survival and the will to live, avoided trails. His only food was a small fruit, resembling an unripened bitter peach which he forced himself to eat.

The jungle seemed endless. One night, the lanky escapee spied an enemy patrol only ten meters from him. He hit the ground with so much impact that he was sure he had been heard. But the enemy soldiers passed on, traveling east.

On the eighth day after his escape, Sergeant Wright witnessed his first sign of hope.

## Spots Helicopters And Hope

It came none too soon. The sight of several helicopters flying east told the sergeant he must be near the Vietnamese border.

Buddy Wright's despair turned into happiness. So far as he was concerned, the helicopters were a godsend. Again, he trudged eastward.

After another day of weary struggling through the wilderness, the terrain became more familiar to his eyes. Fresh craters from artillery shells pitted the area. At last, Sergeant Wright was convinced he was inside Vietnam again.

He paralleled a trail that ran eastward, but he was so weakened that it seemed he had to stop every few steps to rest.

When freedom seemed near, his ears picked up the sound of someone walking toward him. He concealed himself in a clump of bushes and watched a Vietnamese soldier walk past him.

Even though the Vietnamese carried an M16 rifle, Sergeant Buddy Wright's nine-day flight from captivity had been too far, too long, to take a life or death chance. He chose to wait.

## Nears South Vietnamese Camp

That night, he spotted camp fires glowing on a hill from where the Vietnamese soldier had come. "I knew they had to be friendly, because the enemy would never dare light a campfire so close to our positions," he said later.

At dawn the next morning, Sergeant Wright waved down the first Vietnamese soldier who came down the trail.

"When he saw me I think he was really scared," Sergeant Wright said as he repeated his incredible story. "I had forgotten what I must have looked like with a heavy beard and torn clothes."

The haggard, famished soldier pointed to his stomach. "Chop, Chop," he moaned. "Chop, chop."

The South Vietnamese soldier took Sergeant Wright's arm and gently placed it around his neck, walking him up the hill. It was his path to freedom.

There a helicopter was called to lift him out of the jungle.

Sergeant Buddy Wright, the infantryman, the captive, the escapee, had fought two battles. The first with the North Vietnamese—the second with the jungle. His will to live had won them both.



"I FOLLOWED THE PATH INTO A TRAP."



"I HIT THE DIRT AND MADE SO MUCH NOISE I THOUGHT THE NVA HEARD ME."



"I WAS GROWING WEAKER. MY HOPE TURNED INTO DESPAIR."



"AT NIGHT, I WAS BOUND TIGHTLY."



"I SAW THIS VIETNAMESE SOLDIER AND I KNEW HE WAS FRIENDLY."

## Morning Quiet Changes In Fast Battling

# Cleansweep III Finds NVA

By SP4 Mike Cobb

CAMP ENARI—Moving down a thickly-wooded jungle trail, the scout dog suddenly alerted. Directly ahead stood four North Vietnamese Army (NVA) regulars.

During "Cleansweep III," the 4th Infantry Division's massive sweep of the Central Highlands surrounding Camp Enari, the division's base camp, Company A, 124th Signal Battalion, found what it was looking for.

Company A, commanded by Captain Jarvis Keel of Richmond, Va., was assigned to sweep an area six miles southwest of Camp Enari.

"Our original plan to truck the men to the assigned area was halted two miles north of the objective," reported Captain Keel. "Consequently we were faced with an added two mile hike."

Dismounting their vehicles, the company of signalmen began what they thought to be a relatively quiet journey.

Suddenly through the jungle thickets, Staff Sergeant Kenneth Taylor of Columbia, S.C., spotted what he thought to be four Montagnards.

"They were wearing the traditional Montagnard garb," noted Sergeant Taylor, "but as they turned, I saw two of them carrying rifles."

"They must have heard us," believed Private First Class Richard Squire of New York, "for they didn't even bother to turn and look at us. They just ran for the bushes."

Sergeant Taylor, point man at the time, charged through the tangled jungle after them.

"We saw the sarge break into a run," said Private First Class John Croteau of Groffstown, N.H. "PFC Squire and I followed close behind."

Though the Ho Chi Minh sandals provided greater speed, the trio would not accept the idea of escape for the enemy. As the four NVA plunged into the twisted vines, the Ivymen let loose with a barrage of M16 fire.

As the remaining soldiers of Company A moved up to the point of contact, Captain Keel organized a sweep to search for the suspected wounded enemy.

The search proved to be more than successful for the Ivy signalmen.

"Sweeping through brush surrounding the suspected enemy position," said Captain Keel, "we found one NVA with a serious head wound."

Upon further investigation, the fighting signalmen found two ruck sacks, utensils containing rice, two knives and civilian and NVA clothing, which the frightened enemy had discarded while fleeing.

As darkness crept over the mountains surrounding Camp Enari, helicopters were called

to airlift the men back to base camp.

With all but a few of his men safely back to base camp, Captain Keel stood in the darkness, patiently awaiting the final chopper.

A gleam of happiness filled the captain's eyes as he heard the distant twirling of most welcomed rotors fast approaching. Suddenly, AK47 fire broke his thoughts of a warm shower and the base camp's security. Sniper fire harassed the incoming chopper, and within seconds, it was again out of sight.

Circling around, the helicopter fast came in from the opposite direction, this time riddling the surrounding jungle with its M60 machine gun fire.

The sniper was silenced, and the remainder of Company A evacuated.

Lieutenant Colonel William I. Rolya, 124th Signal Battalion commander, summed up the feelings of his men by saying, "They feel they are doing a more complete job as a fighting unit, rather than just being

in a support role."

More than 500 meters to the rear of the active Company A, the 278th Signal Company, 43rd Signal Battalion, with First Lieutenant Jerry Loftin commanding, fulfilled its part of Cleansweep III.

Moving up the side of a steep hill, which dropped to a massive gorge, the signalmen were half-way through the sweep.

"About 15 of my men were already making their way down the side of the gorge," reported Lieutenant Loftin, "when I reached the summit of the rise.

"I saw what I thought to be a person moving in the rice paddy to my front. Keeping my visual contact with the unknown being, I called to the man to my rear. Hearing my call, he ran towards the opposite side of the gorge. This is when I saw his rifle and recognized him as an NVA."

"I immediately ordered the men around me to open fire."

The enemy was unharmed by the friendly barrage. He managed to scamper across the gorge and out of sight.

The signalmen cautiously moved across the gorge and started up the opposite side.

"We moved about 100 meters up the hill when we spotted two small huts," Lieutenant Loftin continued.

Upon entering the abandoned hut, the Ivymen found freshly cooked food, a basket of fruit and numerous North Vietnamese propaganda leaflets.

"Upon further investigation, we found several tunnels," Lieutenant Loftin reported.

"It all happened about ten minutes after Company A, 124th Signal Battalion had its contact," noted Lieutenant Loftin. "This leads me to believe our fleeing enemy was one of those who fled the first contact."

In other action in the Central Highlands, two enemy soldiers were reported killed.

Elements of the 1st Squadron, 10th Cavalry met an unknown enemy size force north of Ban Me Thuot, killing one Viet Cong. An AK47 and 9 pack were recovered in the area of contact.

Ivymen from the 1st Battalion, 22nd Infantry found one NVA killed by artillery southwest of Duc Lap.

## Panthers Hurt Enemy's Life

OASIS—Viet Cong guerrillas were quite chagrined with the 2nd Battalion (Mechanized), 8th Infantry's Charlie Company.

It was bad enough Captain John Barrows of Terre Haute, Ind., and his men had stopped the VC in their mortar attack on Pleiku, but when a dozen foxholes were bulldozed in, too, that was insult to injury. Or so, Charlie probably thought.

The attackers were so vexed with the deeds of the mechanized infantrymen, that two days later they moved back to their recoilless rifle positions, redug their old foxholes, and this time, turned their 75mm recoilless rifles on Charlie Company.

When all was done, the VC must have been thoroughly frustrated. Of the five 75mm recoilless rounds fired at Company C, four were duds. The fifth exploded far outside the perimeter to do any harm.

The Panthers haven't seen hide or hair of the recoilless riflemen since.



KING-SIZED BOWL—Near the 4th Division's base camp, a Montagnard turns block of wood into bowl, later to be sold as souvenir. (USA Photo by SP4 William D'Espinosa)

## Pipe Dream Becomes Montagnard Reality

By SP4 William D'Espinosa and PFC Stan Good

CAMP ENARI—In the Central Highlands of Vietnam, the native Montagnard tribes continue life as they have for centuries.

One of the few changes has been their adaptation to trading with 4th Division soldiers.

At the hamlet of Plei Kong Brech, a combined relocation settlement of seven smaller villages near Camp Enari, Montagnard craftsmen such as "Mr. Weep," spend their day working for the improvement of the hamlet's facilities.

Rice bins and cattle pens must be built to accommodate the needs of the entire tribe for food and livestock. When the necessary village labors are finished, "Mr. Weep" and his co-workers return to their huts to begin the work that provides income for their individual families.

Family support takes many forms; jobs are available part-time at Camp Enari, but weather and other demands place limits on the availability of such employment. Thus, the Montagnard's spare time is industriously converted to spending money by turning out numerous artifacts which become the soldiers' prized possessions.

Brass wire bracelets, beaded

necklaces, baskets and cross-bows are commodities produced in Vietnam, but Plei Kong Brech's specialty is the hand-carved native pipes.

The only similarity to be found between two Montagnard pipes is their fabrication. A durable, red wood, often mahogany, becomes the intricately decorated bowl and shank. The shaft leading to the stem is whittled from bamboo, with skillfully applied brass trim, carefully pounded to shape from discarded shell casings. A mouthpiece of rolled aluminium or thin bamboo—provides the finishing touches to an item requiring an average of two days labor.

The uniqueness of each pipe is assured by the number of artisans (about 30 in Plei Kong Brech alone), and the variety of subject matters portrayed.

Elephants and tigers are favorite decorations, but a careful eye will turn up soldiers, helicopters and jeeps as bowl decorations, when, on occasion, the Montagnard artisan draws from the modern influences affecting his age-old way of life.

Regardless of other changes in his way of life, the production of these pipes remains unchanged.

## Personnel Office Outlines Its Plans For Ivy DEROSing

CAMP ENARI—With an average of 40 Ivy Division soldiers leaving Vietnam each day, there are always a few men who, through their own negligence, depart a day or two late.

Don't be one of them.

"The man must be physically present at Central Clearance at 10:00 a.m., two days prior to his DEROS," explained Captain Thomas J. Cawley of Scranton, Pa., personnel management officer. "If he isn't there, we fill the seat with someone scheduled for a day or two later."

Consequently, if you arrive at Central Clearance after 10:00

a.m., your return to the States will be delayed at least one day.

"We process them through Clearance and, except for picking up their plane ticket the next morning, they are ready to go," said Captain Cawley.

"Then, he must report to 4th Replacement at 6:30 a.m. the following morning where his ticket will be issued," he continued. "From there, they are transported to Pleiku Air Base for an afternoon flight to either Cam Ranh Bay or Bien Hoa, depending on the scheduled point of departure."

The next morning he will leave

for home.

October has been a good month for "drops." And, this trend should continue at least through December.

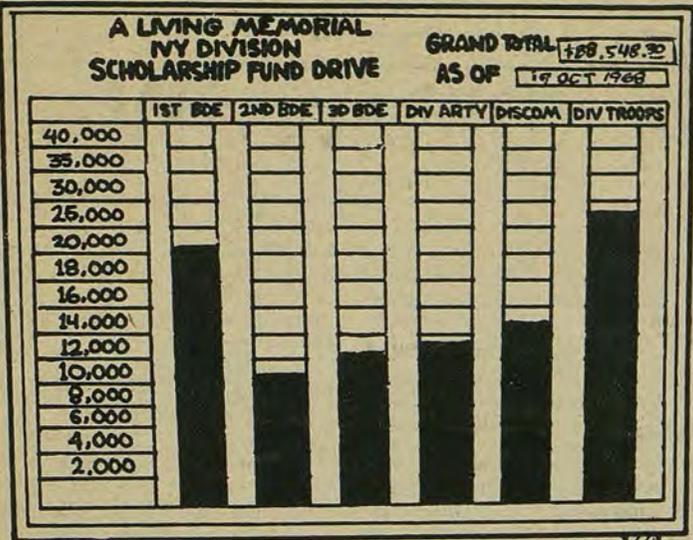
"There is no authorization for scheduling a man on a flight prior to his normal DEROS," explained Captain Cawley. "But, we are allotted a certain number of seats for each month and, if our quota isn't filled for a particular day, we move men up, sometimes as much as seven days."

Because August is "anniversary month" for the Ivy Division's entry into the Vietnam

conflict, there are few "drops" during that time.

"We shipped nearly 2,000 men home in August," said Captain Cawley. "So there were very few drops in the month. The same was true with July and September. Since the number of DEROS personnel has decreased in October, the length and number of early returns has increased."

One thing is certain. If you are processed and present at Central Clearance at 10:00 a.m., two days prior to your DEROS, you will not go home late.



*This Money Talks...  
It says "Thanks"*

**CHART IS UP**—Each week the chart for the Scholarship Fund moves up, making it closer to its goal of \$150,000. With the goal reached the children of Ivy men killed in action in Vietnam will still have a chance for a college education.

## Scholar Fund Nears \$90,000

The 4th Infantry Division Scholarship Fund continues to grow and total contributions have recently hit \$89,654.28 through the middle of October, placing the \$150,000 goal well within reach.

The 3rd Battalion, 12th Infantry, commanded by Lieutenant Colonel Jamie Hendrix continues to pave the way with \$12,000.7 contributed to date.

The 2nd Squadron, 1st Cavalry commanded by Lieutenant Colonel Donald W. Moreau, is still holding down second place with \$5,86.85.

Rounding out the top three is the 124th Signal Battalion, commanded by Lieutenant Colonel William Rolya with \$4,291.60.

The scholarship program which began in April provides the children of Ivy men killed in action with educational funds. The oldest child of a 4th Division soldier who has given his life in combat and awarded the purple heart will receive a \$1,500 college scholarship.

A payday surge in October should push the total past the \$100,000 mark. Have you given your fair share?

## LOH Crew Chief—'No Job Like It'

BAN ME THUOT—"You have to remember this is completely voluntary," said Specialist 4 Joseph G. Hubchenko of Englishtown, N.J., when he told about his job as crew chief on a Loach (LOH-6A).

"No one forces me to fly. I do it because it gives me a feeling of accomplishment, you know, really doing something worthwhile."

Specialist Hubchenko flies with the Shamrocks of Delta Troop, 1st Squadron, 10th Air Cavalry, commanded by Major Jack Glenn of Summerville, Ga.

The Shamrocks fly observation and scouting missions in support of the 4th Division's 2nd Brigade, operating near this Central Highland city.

"There probably isn't another job like it on any kind of chopper," says Specialist Hubchenko, "and I feel the responsibility I have makes me perform 100 percent all the time."

He flies an average of five hours a day, sometimes as often as six days a week.

"I was fortunate," he says "by getting an assignment to the Shamrocks. They have a system of breaking in a new man which makes you feel

right at home. Everybody chips in to correct mistakes and you can't help but make mistakes when you're green. But you soon pick up the fine points and then know you've made the team."

In support of the 2nd Brigade's activities, Delta Troop flies nine Loaches, though all are never in the air at once. When on a scouting mission they travel in pairs—a lead ship and a cover ship.

"The system works well for light observation," says Specialist Hubchenko. "When the lead ship goes in low to check out a suspicious position, the sister ship is always right where you want it, providing cover. If the lead ship receives fire, the second ship moves in quickly and returns the fire. Once we are both out of the immediate area, the gunships take over."

"Often we fly into an area where enemy activity has been reported," Specialist Hubchenko said, "so we know we're apt to draw fire. If we come across recently used trails we'll follow them and try to rout the enemy."

"We'll call in artillery or maybe air strikes if we find

try from Japanese and French colonialism.

He remembers his Communist allies as "very cunning and clever."

But the cooperation came to an abrupt end with victory over the French armies. Lured to a meeting with the Communists in North Vietnam, he was kidnapped, wounded and sentenced to death.

Public opinion kept him alive as a hero, but the colonel spent three years in prison at hard labor before escaping south by sea.

In Saigon, his reputation as a resistance leader won him commander of a regiment engaged in pacification work for President Diem.

In 1959 Colonel Phong began a long period of education in American military schools. Ultimately he saw training in 26 states, ranging from Special

Forces training at Ft. Bragg to work with the Coast Guard, the Texas Border Patrol and the New York City Park Police.

He returned to Vietnam to command Special Forces units in II Corps for five years before taking charge of Darlac Province.

In Darlac, Colonel Phong runs what is essentially a national government in miniature. Agriculture, public welfare, defense, education, taxation, budget planning, communications, health—the province chief oversees them all from his offices in the ancient Montagnard city of Ban Me Thuot.

If a reconstruction program comes down from Saigon, the province chief must tailor it to the people who live in Darlac.

If there is disagreement between Montagnards and Vietnamese, the province chief must negotiate.

If there are refugees to resettle, the province chief must supervise the building of new hamlets.

If American forces plan air strikes or operations in Darlac, the province chief must insure that friendly villages are safe.

If a suspected Viet Cong is detained, the province chief sits on a jury that tries him.

When any of Darlac's four districts needs a new chief, it's the colonel's job to recommend a man—though the final appointment comes from Saigon.

As the local Provost Marshal, he controls the police while an assistant commands Regional Forces who operate against small enemy units in Darlac. And as sector commander, Colonel Phong is responsible for security throughout the province.

But there is more to nation-building than the province chief's dozens of administrative chores. Part of Darlac is still in the hands of NVA and VC forces, and Colonel Phong's job is to take it back hamlet by hamlet.

There is no nonsense about the way he goes about returning a village to the government fold. Once American or ARVN forces have pacified a hamlet, the provincial government moves in and does what it can to aid the people.

A few months later the government then poses a simple question: was life better under the VC?

Raising a man's standard of living is usually a more impressive argument than hours of NVA propaganda.

Once the village is considered loyal, local elections will follow. As far as possible, individual customs and laws are respected.

As a result, the enemy's once-powerful "shadow government" has lost its grip on the province, according to Colonel Phong. The NVA, he says, "are exhausted. I am sure of that. It is a strenuous thing for them to keep always on the go."

### Viet Campaigns

WASHINGTON (ANF)—The Department of the Army has designated two more Vietnam campaigns.

The sixth campaign, from January 30, 1968, through April 1, 1968, will be called "Tet Counteroffensive."

A seventh campaign has been designated beginning April 2, 1968. Its name and termination date will be announced later.

Battle stars for these periods are authorized for wear on the Vietnam Service Ribbon in accordance with Army Regulation 672-5-1.

## Double Trouble



Raquel Welch claims that she'd love to do it, but adds that it is only a rumor that she will join the WACs and be assigned to the 3rd Battalion, 8th Infantry's Firebase Lily. And

NOVEMBER — 1968						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
				1	2	
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30



Dru Hart was the center of attraction for September's Playboys and still is waiting for the right date in November.

## Scene Of Major War Success

# Pathfinders Return To The Ia Drang Valley

By SP4 Joe Perdue

CAMP ENARI—Chu Pong Mountain stands like a giant watch tower keeping an eye on the border between Cambodia and Vietnam, its feet jutting out on a long throw rug to the east known as the Ia Drang Valley.

Military historians will recognize the valley, nestled between South Vietnam's Central Highlands and Cambodia's mountains, as the battleground where American forces scored one of their first major successes of the Vietnamese War, in the fall of 1965.

In less than a month, the valley floor became a graveyard for nearly 1600 NVA regulars who were preparing a massive campaign with Pleiku as their ultimate goal.

With 157 detained enemy soldiers and a solid victory, Americans left the Ia Drang.

After three years, allied troops have returned.

This time, there was a major difference in the makeup of the force airlifted into the area. Only eight United States soldiers — Special Forces advisors — were involved in the 11 day sweep of the valley. The remainder of the large unit was filled with indigenous troops of the Vietnamese military.

As in 1965, the airlift began from Duc Co and the landing zones were the same, several miles west of Plei Me. And, as is nearly always

the case in such an operation, the first man on the ground was a "Pathfinder."

"Our mission was to coordinate the airlift," explained First Lieutenant Donald D. Williamson of Grand Marois, Minn., 4th Division Pathfinder Detachment commander. "We wanted to get them in and out of the LZ as quickly as possible."

But, this was only the end result of three strenuous days of hard work.

It all began at Duc Co when the 4th Aviation Battalion, commanded by Colonel G.F. Powers of Green Gove Springs, Fla., started transporting supplies and equipment to the Civilian Irregular Defense Group for support of the operation.

"We spent two days back there hooking, lifting and moving the necessary materials to take care of the local force while they are in the valley," Lieutenant Williamson said as the UH-LH (Huey) lift ship circled landing zone X-ray.

"Today we have to get the choppers in as quickly as possible. Hopefully, we will find a "cold" LZ down there."

On the ground below, Second Lieutenant Carl W. Parnell of Mt. Pleasant, S.C., and Sergeant Albert S. Richardson of Charlestown, Mass., moved into position, radio in hand, to bring the first lift ships onto the valley floor.

Not far away, Privates First Class Michael Caldwell of Pomona, Calif., and Lynn Duffy of Lus Gatos, Calif., were preparing for an influx of their own at landing zone Yankee.

The pressure was on the seven youthful airborne soldiers.

If the LZ didn't turn "hot," this mission would be a breeze. If it did, everyone—pilots, door gunners and indigenous soldiers would be passing the bid to the Ivy Pathfinders. The airlift would be in their hands.

Lieutenant Parnell and Sergeant Richardson kept low. They had to be seen by the Huey pilots, but there was no reason to be a target for an AK47 which might be pointed their way from the nearby treeline.

Aerial reconnaissance had indicated heavy contact would be forthcoming, as increased enemy activity had been reported along the Ia Drang River which winds its way out of Cambodia.

But, on this day, it was not to be. The enemy was already in another part of the valley or had chosen to move out when the allied airlift was sighted.

As the local force and their American advisors began the operation, the Pathfinders jumped on the last chopper out of the LZ and headed back to Camp Enari, their mission complete.



**BEST MESS**—Major General Charles P. Stone, commanding general of the 4th Division, presents September's Best Mess award to Major Charles A. Spencer (right), commanding officer, and Sergeant First Class William R. Bootman, mess steward, of Company B, 4th Aviation Battalion. (USA Photo by SP4 Lee Fuhrman)

## SFC Bootman Explains Mess

CAMP ENARI, Vietnam (4th Div IO)—Second place wasn't good enough for Company B, 4th Aviation Battalion, commanded by Major Charles A. Spencer.

After finishing second out of more than 40 mess halls in both July and August, Bravo Company's eating facility with Sergeant First Class William R. Bootman in charge, was judged the best mess at Camp Enari for the month of September.

"After coming so close the previous two months, we just put in a little extra effort," explained Sergeant Bootman. "Of course, I have some very conscientious people working with me who have worked awfully hard."

The "Best Mess" award goes to the Division dining hall compiling the highest overall score after being inspected for sanitation, food preparation and administrative procedures.

## VC Sings Very Sad Song

BAN ME THUOT — Two Viet Cong were strolling through the jungle, talking loudly and singing to themselves. Their voices alerted a 4th Division patrol and the VC have not said a word since.

A Short Range Patrol (SRP) team from the 2nd Brigade's 1st Battalion, 12th Infantry, commanded by Lieutenant Colonel Joseph T. Palastra Jr., of Salina, Kan., had spent a quiet night in the jungle near the small Vietnamese hamlet of Duc Lap.

Enemy troops had been reported in the area, and the patrol was sent to investigate.

The first rays of the morning sun were filtering through the dense Central Highland foliage as Private First Class Kenneth D. Comeaux of Rayne, La., stood guard over his sleeping team mates.

After the long cold night, the warm sun was a welcome sight to the Ivy pointman.

The trees had cast menacing shadows in the night. Now they swayed peacefully in the morning breeze.

As the Ivyman scanned the terrain, he detected the faint sound of voices moving toward the team.

Cautiously, PFC Comeaux woke his team leader, Specialist 4 James M. Leonard of Edmond, Okla.

The voices were growing louder.

"They were singing, talking and laughing all at the same time," the team leader recalled. "They were really happy about something."

With the entire team now awake, the Ivyman prepared for any event.

"Whoever they were, they were heading straight for us," explained Private First John Leninger of Forest Park, Ill.

Apparently, the strangers were not aware of the team and continued walking toward the hidden Red Warriors.

With the possibility of more enemy in the area, the team pulled back to higher ground.

From their vantage point, they guided the artillery, them moved out for the fire base.

## Smoke Billows From Destroyed Bunkers

BAN ME THUOT—Air Force fighter bombers and Cobra gunships from Alpha Troop, 7th Squadron, 17th Air Cavalry, in support of the 4th Division's 2nd Brigade pounded 100 L-shaped enemy bunkers for five hours, destroying 80 percent of them. Eight secondary explosions were spotted.

According to Major William P. Glover of Ozark, Ala., commanding officer of the "Ruthless Riders," no accurate count of NVA dead could be made.

"We had been working north of Ban Me Thuot all day," the major continued, "and earlier, our gunships with the help of air strikes, knocked out a smaller complex of 14 bunkers. There were a lot of trails and some looked fresh and well-traveled."

"The enemy was in there, too. They opened up on our 'Loaches' with what seemed like an arsenal," Major Glover said.

First Lieutenant James L. Devito of Sacramento, Calif., piloted one of the "Loaches," "The Reds."

His observer, Sergeant Robert M. Evander of Minneapolis, Minn., spotted several bunkers on the first pass.

"The bunkers had steps going down into them and there were water containers standing outside," said Sergeant Evander. "The whole area had deep and wide zigzag trenches. We also saw partially covered rockets. About 25 of them."

Surprisingly, the scouts received no immediate fire. "We were on our fourth pass when they finally opened up on us," said Lieutenant Devito. "As we were pulling out, we saw heads popping in and out of several bunkers."

The "Ruthless" Cobra gunships made runs on the bunkers, blasting them with rockets and mini-guns. Then the Air Force got its chance.

Captain Jerome McChristian of Odessa, Tex., 21st Tactical Air Support Squadron assigned to the Ivy Division's 2nd Brigade, was flying a Forward Air Control (FAC) plane high overhead.

He had three sorties (two planes each) of F-100 Super Sabres and one sortie of F-4 Phantoms unload 750 pound bombs on the NVA bunkers. Eight secondary explosions were counted during the bombing runs.

## Mail The IVY LEAF Home

FROM: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

POSTAGE

3rd Class 4 cents

Air Mail 10 cents

TO: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Fold paper three times and secure edges with staple or tape before mailing. Does not meet requirements for "free" mail.