



# SCRAPBOOK

EDITION

# 4

*for fighting men too busy to keep their own!*

The Philadelphia Inquirer



Wounded and weary American soldiers rest in a trench during a lull in Operation Masher, one of two big offensives calculated to achieve control of the tactical key to the war.



## Encircled Reds Charge Crazy

SAIGON (UPI)—Counter-attacking Viet Cong troops camouflaged as bushes charged up jungled slopes "screaming like crazy men" Sunday in a desperate bid to escape a trap laid for them by U. S. First Cavalry Division troops.

The Americans beat back the Communists in furious hand-to-hand combat. "Cease-fire, GIs," the charging Communists shouted at the American cavalrymen who had snared two large forces of Communists some two miles apart near the central coast.

The cavalrymen killed at least 23 of the Viet Cong and captured 15 others to raise the number of Communist dead in the three-week-old "Operation White Wing" to 1061. U. S. losses were described as light.

American artillerymen fired 5289 shells into the encircled Viet Cong in support of the cavalrymen, and airmen dropped 1000-pound bombs that battered the Viet Cong's lowland positions.

VIET CONG guerrillas also launched two separate attacks with mortar and recoilless rifle fire against two Allied air strips located 330 miles apart.

At least seven Viet Cong were killed by U. S. helicopters after the guerrillas poured 80 rounds of mortar fire on the U. S. First Air Cavalry Division's base at An Khe, 260 miles northeast of Saigon. The Communists also attacked the base defenses with small arms fire, causing light American casualties.

Other Communist gunners pounded the Can Tho air strip 80 miles southwest of Saigon with 104 rounds of mortar shells and also unleashed heavy recoilless rifle fire.

The hilltop fighting by a U. S. Air Cavalry company whose helicopters ferried in new troops and evacuated the casualties, was only part of heavy action raging all day around Bong Son, 210 miles northwest of Saigon.

COL. FREDERICK Ackerson of Des Moines, Iowa, called the bitter Communist

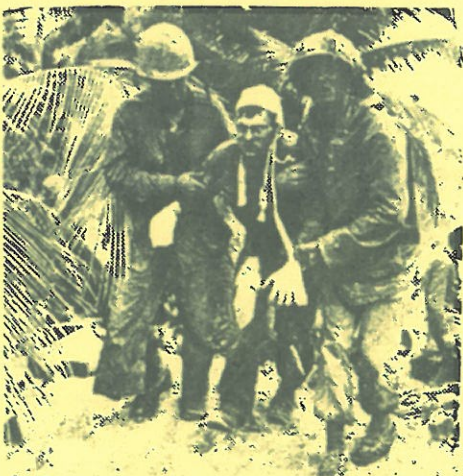
attacks against encircled cavalry troops "a stand to the last man."

Colonel Ackerson's First Battalion of the First Cavalry's Fifth Regiment fought all day against at least a battalion — some 600 men — of Viet Cong in the narrow Song Ngon Valley, about 11 miles southeast of the division's forward headquarters at Bong Son.

Another Viet Cong force was fighting equally savagely about two miles farther east, in a trap the GIs dubbed "the iron triangle" because of the metal they have fired into it.

A company of cavalrymen landed by helicopter on a saddle between two mountains that enclosed the "triangle" and fought off repeated Viet Cong attacks in hand-to-hand fighting Sunday.

"They were screaming like crazy men as they charged up the slope," said Sgt. Maxwell Henderson 29, who was wounded while defending the saddle against the charging Viet Cong.



Two members of the first Air Cavalry Division help a wounded buddy to an evacuation area after a battle with Vietcong guerrillas on the South Vietnam central coast.



# 88 Vietcong Killed, 7 Captured In New 'Eagle's Claw' Drive

PHILA INQUIRER

16 FEB 1966

## Battalion Chief Seized; 505 Reds Slain in 36 Hrs.

SAIGON, Feb. 15 (AP).—Elements of the U. S. 1st Air Cavalry Division pounded on Vietcong again Tuesday in Operation Eagle's Claw and killed 88. They captured seven, including one who identified himself as a battalion commander.

Overall Allied ground and air action across South Vietnam over a 36-hour period up to dusk was reported to have accounted for 505 enemy dead. Most of these were piled up in the Bong Son sector, the base of the cavalry drive, 300 miles northeast of Saigon.

### POST OVERRUN

Strictly on the defensive for three weeks along the central coast, the Vietcong centered two attacks on Vietnamese units in the Tam Ky area farther north. Tam Ky is roughly midway between Bong Son and Da Nang, a strategic air base which is the headquarters of U. S. marines in Vietnam.

About 300 guerrillas overran an outpost two miles northwest of Tam Ky and inflicted casualties called "moderate to fairly heavy" on its garrison of 60 to 80 militiamen. The guerrillas withdrew five hours later to escape the government's air and ground reaction forces.

A platoon of 30 government troops guarding a highway bridge three miles north of Tam Ky beat off an attack in the night by a Vietcong unit of undetermined size. A spokesman said they killed seven.

### CHIEF ASSASSINATED

Two terrorist gunmen assassinated the village chief of Le My, one of the first settlements to be pacified by U. S. marines operating out of Da Nang last summer.

Sprays of submachine gun bullets killed the chief, named Thong, and three bystanders at a Buddhist festival in Ap Quan Nam, a hamlet a mile from Le My. Another bystander was wounded.

At sea, the U. S. Navy lost its first SWIFT patrol boat to a Vietcong mine. One of a squadron of 22 SWIFTs on watch for shipping carrying Vietcong supplies, it was blown up in the Gulf of Siam about 250 yards off the southern coast and several of the six American crewmen were killed or injured. Survivors picked up by a Vietnamese junk said the mine had been detonated from the shore.

### CLOUD COVER

U. S. Air Force and Navy planes pursued the aerial campaign.

Cloud cover was heavy above the 17th Parallel on Monday and pilots depended largely on radar in seeking out North Vietcong's communication lines and military targets. There was reported visual sighting, however, of hits on a storage area five miles south of Vinh, the Dong Ngan shipyard and a suspected radar site on Tiger Island.

A U. S. spokesman said that in the south in the 24-hour period up to 6 A. M., American planes smashed 425 Vietcong buildings, hit three gun emplacements, sank 12 sampans and set off 10 secondary explosions, presumably from stores of fuel or ammunition. Spotters estimated 30 Vietcong were killed.

### DESERTED HOSPITAL

Northwest of Bong Son, cavalry patrols found a hastily deserted Vietcong hospital. It contained an operating room, mess hall and two huts full of hospital cots.

U. S. artillery backed up several hundred Vietnamese paratroopers in an attack Monday on a Vietcong stronghold of tunnels and trenches 20 miles north of Bong Son. A government spokesman said 20 enemy bodies were counted.



AP Wirephoto by radio from Tokyo  
Vietnamese child drinks from U. S. soldier's canteen as he and his family await evacuation from Bong Son after 1st Cavalry occupied the area.

## U.S. Cavalrymen Kill 54 In Attack on Red Base

SAIGON, Feb. 18 (AP).—U. S. cavalrymen cut deeper today into enemy strength near the central coast. A company of the 1st Battalion, 5th Cavalry Regiment established heavy contact with the Viet Cong 10 miles south of Bong Son and killed 54 in a fight still under way at nightfall.

Associated Press photographer Rick Merron reported the Viet Cong had a base in that area and appeared determined to defend it.

A Cavalry spokesman said that, in addition to the early count of 54 dead, the troopers captured 14 wounded men and 17 weapons.

American casualties were described as light.

The allies reluctantly abandoned one of the fruits of victory in Operation White Wing, the lush An Lao Valley. The last troopers of the U. S. 1st Air Cavalry Division involved there pulled out.

It had become clear the Saigon government was unwilling

or unable to send in an occupation force to protect that mountain-rimmed area of farms and villages west of Bong Son.

Nearly half the valley's 20,000 people have chosen to abandon their rich rice paddies and flee rather than await the prospective return of the Viet Cong.

A dispatch from the area said men, women and children clutched American troopers and begged to be flown to safety. Many were.

THE NEW YORK TIMES, THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 17, 1966.



United Press International Telephoto  
FOR ANYTHING: Laden with weapons and ammunition, troopers of First Cavalry Division cross stream near Bongson. Action was part of Operation Eagle's Claw.

## U.S. Airmobile Troops Intercept Retreating Vietcong and Kill 61

SAIGON, Feb. 16 (AP).—United States 25th Infantry Division finished clearing an area near Cuchi, to simplify defense of the camp being established there.

Further northwest, B-52 jet bombers attacked suspected Vietcong hideouts near the Cambodian frontier in Tay Ninh Province for the second successive day. A spokesman said the target areas included a major command center known to have been hit yesterday. The damage remained to be assessed.

Skies cleared over North Vietnam after a long spell of cloudy weather and United States Air Force and Navy squadrons dropped by helicopter in the area an enemy command center.

They seized 14 American and Chinese radios, seven field telephones and hundreds of spare parts.

No longer needing to depend on radar guidance, Navy pilots bombed the Dongnam shipyard 12 miles north of Vinh, Road 17. Until Jan. 25 it was called Operation Masher.

Koreans Ambush Patrol

South of Bongson South Korean troops ambushed a patrol of about 25 guerrillas and killed 10. Some of the arms they seized were Russian rifles.

Three battalions of the United States First Infantry Division completed Operation Masher, which turned up 24 Vietcong camps in the jungles and scrub east of Saigon since it was launched Jan. 28.

The division said 47 guerrillas had been killed, 10 captured, and 78 sampans sunk. Seized supplies included 13 tons of rice, 10 rifles, two trucks and six radios.

United States infantrymen completed their take-over of a new base area northwest of Saigon, expanding allied holdings within jungle areas formerly controlled by the Vietcong. The action followed three weeks of harassment by snipers, mines and mortars.

The Second Brigade of the





# Defector Leads GI Raiders To Hanoi Troop Stronghold

From Our Wire Services  
SAIGON, Feb. 17—U. S. Air cavalrymen, guided by a captured North Vietnamese battalion commander, fought their way through heavy mortar and machine gun fire into a North Vietnamese task force headquarters Thursday, killing 126 Communists.

The Communist regulars ignored pleas by their former commander to surrender to the superior U. S. forces and rushed to meet the attackers in a futile attempt to save a valuable cache of documents and maps.

The fighting was at such close range that air strikes and artillery bombardments were limited.

At nightfall one company of the cavalrymen was dug in at the headquarters, surrounded by Communists. Other 1st Cavalry Division units immediately executed an enveloping maneuver, surrounded the Communists and waited for daylight.

## U. S. LOSSES 'LIGHT'

A military spokesman said U. S. casualties in the action—about 300 miles northeast of Saigon near the coastal city of Bong Son—had been "very light, the lightest we've had in any action."

Meantime, U. S. troops and their allies pushed sweeps in other areas which officials said boosted the day's death toll of Communists to 250.

The Communist war effort featured terrorist explosions.

A pregnant woman was among suspects questioned by police about the detonation of two Claymore mines in a Saigon street that killed 12 Vietnamese and wounded 60. The woman, one of the wounded, was found carrying a batch of Vietcong propaganda leaflets.

## KILLS CART DRIVER

The explosives had been concealed outside Saigon's Tan Son Nhut Airport near the Vietnamese joint general staff's headquarters. There were no Americans among the casualties.

A mine blast that killed a cart driver and his horse led to street demonstrations in Tuy Hoa against the Vietcong.

Tuy Hoa is the center of a rich rice-growing area 240 miles northeast of Saigon in which three Vietcong mines killed 51 rice harvesters Monday. The cart driver was blown up five miles west of the town.

Briefing officers reported further air strikes against bridges

and storage centers of Communist North Vietnam. They have been largely confined to the five provinces around Saigon. The republic has 45 provinces. The 2d Brigade of the 1st Cavalry Division led the attack against the Communist headquarters near Bong Son.

Emphasis in the Honolulu summit conference on promotion of social and economic development of the South Vietnamese led to a new job for U. S. Deputy Ambassador William Porter. He was appointed to head all American aspects of the largely stalled rural pacification program.

Handicapped by inability of the Vietnamese armed forces to pull many troops from offensive operations for pacification work-

# Sizeable Contact Made With Reds

SAIGON, South Viet Nam (AP)—A Communist base camp abandoned under the Eagle's Claw attack of U. S. air cavalrymen yielded a truckload of arms Saturday. They included 34 recoilless rifles, lethal tubes that serve as light artillery.

The haul "amounts to almost a Chinookful," said Col. Hal G. Moore, 3rd Brigade commander of the U. S. 1st Cavalry Division, Airmobile. A Chinook is a heavy-duty helicopter that can lift six tons.

Three rocket launchers, two antiaircraft guns, two machine guns and 5,000 rounds of ammunition were among supplies the Viet Cong left behind in flight Friday from the helicopter-borne strike 20 miles southwest of Bong Son, 300 miles northeast of Saigon.

A U. S. spokesman said the troopers killed 46 Viet Cong and captured eight in the Eagle's Claw operation. It marked the first sizeable contact by Americans with the enemy since the seizure of the An Lao Valley west of Bong Son last week. The cavalrymen suffered only a handful of wounded.

U. S. patrols hunted elsewhere with little contact.

Several regiments of South Vietnamese troops pressed ahead in the Kien Binh area, 120 miles southwest of Saigon, in a sweep that a spokesman said wiped out three Viet Cong companies Friday.

The Communist forces were trapped in rice fields. The spokesman said 137 of the guerrillas were left dead in the fields and the troops estimated 150 others, killed or wounded, were dragged away by the survivors.

Government troops campaigning in the Quang Ngai and Hue sectors north of Saigon said they killed 57 Viet Cong and found 25 others in a mass grave in an area hit last week by U. S. B52 jets from Guam. Casualties among the government forces were termed light.

The B52s struck Friday at a target described as "a major Viet Cong supply base" about 340 miles northeast of Saigon in Quang Nam Province.

Reporting on air operations over North Viet Nam in the 24-

hour period ended at 6 a.m. Saturday, briefing officers said U. S. Navy and Air Force planes flew 47 missions in overcast weather.

One target was a 5,000-foot-long air strip at Dien Bien Phu, 185 miles west of Hanoi, which workmen had repaired during the 37-day bombing moratorium that ended Jan. 31. Bombs were reported to have smashed the south end and center of the runway and destroyed one building.

Pursuing the campaign to wreck Communist supply lines, other attacks centered on bridges, roads and trucks in the coastal areas of Vinh and Thanh Hoa. A spokesman said antiaircraft fire was light to moderate, but all planes returned safely.

Saigon had two terrorist incidents overnight.

Police said a Viet Cong agent was killed by the premature explosion of a bomb with which he was trying to booby trap an American Jeep outside a small U. S. billet. There were no other casualties.

A terrorist hurled a grenade at a Vietnamese policeman, but it proved to be a dud. The man who threw it escaped.

Among Communist broadcasts of the day was a Peking complaint that neither the Declaration of Honolulu nor the joint communique issued by President Johnson and South Vietnamese leaders Tuesday "even so much as mentions the Geneva agreements" of 1954 and 1962 on Viet Nam.

"This is surely not fortuitous," the Peking People's Daily said in an editorial relayed to the world by the New China News Agency.

A Cairo newspaper, Al-Ahram, said North Viet Nam's government has decided captive American pilots are not prisoners of war and will try them as "war criminals."

Al-Ahram said the North Vietnamese ambassador to Cairo, Nguyen Xuan, informed Egyptian Foreign Minister Mahmoud Riad that Hanoi considers the Americans were shot down while raiding a country with which the United States is not in a formal state of war and that they will be tried accordingly.

The Viet Cong had a warning for the Philippines, whose government has advanced a proposal—to send 2,000 noncombat troops to South Viet Nam for engineering work.

# Viet Cong Turn Captured Guns On U.S. Troops

By RICHARD T. MALLOY  
Daily World Tel-Sun 18 FEB 1968

SAIGON, Feb. 18 (UPI)—Viet Cong turned automatic rifles and grenades stripped from dead United States soldiers against 1st Division cavalrymen during heavy fighting today in the hills near Bong Son.

The Flying Horsemen were pursuing a large Communist force surprised yesterday in a valley near a Viet Cong regimental headquarters, about 300 miles northeast of Saigon.

The battle flared after two platoons of the 2nd Brigade of the 1st Cavalry walked into heavy automatic weapons fire from Viet Cong entrenched in deep bunkers.

Rifles and Grenades  
During the early stages the Communists hit the lead squad and captured several of the small, high-velocity M-16 rifles. They quickly turned the automatic weapons on the cavalrymen and also used hand grenades stripped from dead American troops.

The first squad was hit as it moved across a small creek. A wounded cavalryman said the hillside fronting the creek seemed to explode with gunfire from every point.

The second platoon tried moving around the hill to take the bunkers from the rear but an into heavy fire from the entrenched Viet Cong on the other side.

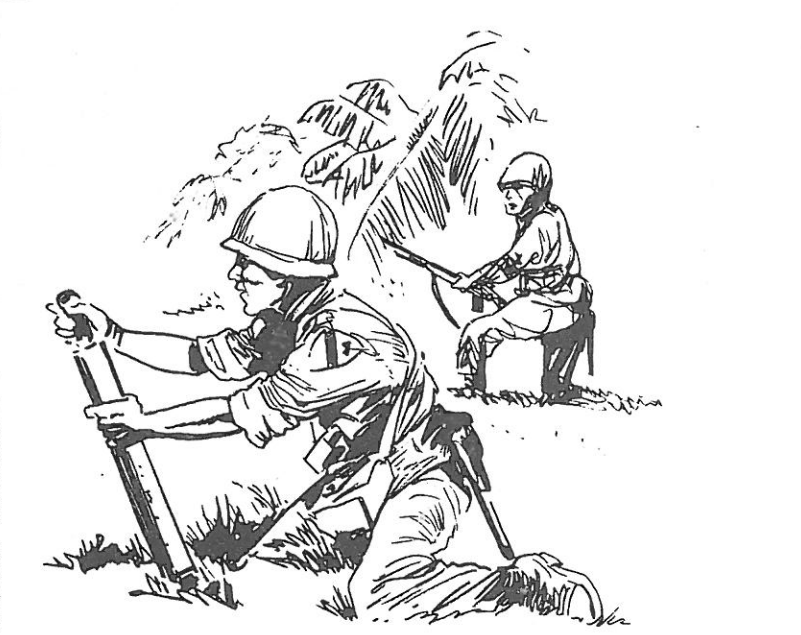
Call for Planes  
The cavalrymen called for heavy air and artillery support. But one platoon was reported still heavily engaged as night fell.

Col. William R. Lynch, 49, of Huntsville, Tex., commander of the 2nd Brigade, said his radiomen yesterday intercepted "frantic messages" to the Viet Cong ordering them to take to the hills and fight.

By 6 p.m. today, the cavalrymen had accounted for another 54 Viet Cong confirmed killed. It brought to 215 the total killed since the initial assault on the headquarters yesterday.



MOVE AHEAD—Troops of the 1st Cavalry Division drop low after coming in by helicopter under enemy fire in Viet Nam. The GIs are part of Operation Eagle Claw searching out the Viet Cong the central highlands. (UPI Radiotelephoto)



# TOUGH, TALL AND SMART 'Tucky colonel leads his troops where action is

BY BOB POOS

BONG SONG, Viet Nam, Feb. 23 — At 44, Col. Hal G. Moore holds a master's degree and is one of the youngest brigade commanders in the U.S. Army. He is the only man in Viet Nam promoted from command of a battalion to a brigade in the field.

"Gen. (Harry W. O.) Kinnard has been kind to me," Moore says.

Actually, Moore has been an asset to Kinnard, who three years ago was given the task of organizing an airborne division, a new concept of the U.S. military.

Moore's unit, the U.S. 1st Air Cavalry Division's 3rd Brigade, has reported, more than 2,500 Viet Cong dead since it came to Viet Nam last September. The cavalry is one of the most active divisions because of its mobility, provided by 450 helicopters.

MORE COMMANDED a battalion in bloody fighting last November in the Ia Drang Valley and at Chu Pong Mountain.

Now he commands three battalions.

The tall rangy, sandy-haired leader never seriously considered any other career than soldiering.

Son of an insurance agent in Bardstown, Ky., Moore left home at 17 to work for U.S. Sen. A. B. (Happy) Chandler of Kentucky. He was a clerk during the day and attended George Washington University at night for a couple of years. He got into West Point and was graduated in 1945 but his first fighting was as a company commander in Korea.

WHILE AT the Naval War College Moore again attended George Washington University at night and obtained a master's degree in international affairs.

Immediately after graduation from West Point he became a paratrooper and has been jumping ever since. Now, although a brigade

commander, Moore generally can be found walking with one of his battalions when it is in the field.

"Out here I can get acquainted with the terrain, the weather, the men," he says. "If I walk through mountains and rice paddies I know how fast a squad or a company or a battalion can move through them."

"Also, I think a commander ought to be where the danger is."

RECENTLY, while riding in his command helicopter, he pointed to a bullet-swept battlefield and said: "Take me down there."

The helicopter pilot, Capt. Woody Becker of Tuscaloosa, replied: "I don't mind taking you down there, colonel. But I don't think it would be good for the aircraft."

Moore considered this for a moment, then agreed. It wasn't long, however, before he was on the ground with his troops under fire.

During the battle of An Thi, Moore dragged a North Vietnamese machine-gunner from a bunker.

HE SAYS OF his adversary: "The Viet Cong is a tough enemy. When he fights, he fights hard. We usually can't be so lucky as to get him to stand up and battle it out. Our main problem is to find ways to prevent him from breaking contact with us."

Moore frequently resorts to unusual tactics to close with the enemy. He is one of the few brigade commanders who employ small unit ambushes, something the Viet Cong are known for.

As a student of international affairs, he has private opinions as to how the Viet Nam conflict should be conducted politically and otherwise.

But he says: "my job is to kill the enemy and I will do that to the best of my ability. I trust the wisdom of my superiors to deal with the other facts of this situation."



MOVE THOSE MEN UP . . . A TOUGH C. O. IN A TOUGH SITUATION  
... Col. Hal G. Moore, Bardstown, Ky., commands 1st Air Cavalry's 3rd Brigade



EXCLUSIVE  
WAR PHOTOS

by Birmingham News  
Photographer

TONY FALLETTA

### Down!

Forward combat unit hugs the ground as Viet Cong sniper bullets crack through jungle greenery, kick dust spots in the lush grass.



# Air Cavalry Pounds Communist Stronghold;

United Press International  
 SAIGON — U.S. cavalrymen pounded at the defenses of a Viet Cong stronghold they surrounded near Bong Son Monday. Elsewhere, Communist gunners zeroed in on widespread allied positions in the heaviest mortar bombardments in months. A force estimated at nearly 1000 Communists was still struggling to escape a trap in that area.

Farther up the coast, near Hue, a U.S. Air Force B-57 bomber crashed while on a strafing run. A helicopter rescued the two crewmen. But five American military men were disclosed to have been killed and a dozen others injured Sunday when their two Army UH1B helicopters col-

lided in flight 20 miles north-east of Saigon. In ground attacks, the Viet Cong fired 200 rounds of mortar shells at the Vietnamese district headquarters of Trieu Phong, 420 miles northwest of Saigon, causing light casualties. Communists also hurled simultaneous mortar barrages at five U.S. Marine positions around Chu Lai Da Nang and hit the U.S. 1st Air Cavalry's forward headquarters at Bong Son, around 310 miles north-east of Saigon.

The site of the fighting has been nicknamed by G.I.'s the "Little Iron Triangle" because of the large numbers of bombs and artillery shells being hurled into it by the Americans.

Northward up the coast, thousands of U.S. Marines swept through an area north and west of Chu Lai in a new phase of operation "Double Eagle." Marine units said the Communists killed 17 Viet Cong during the first 100 days of the current sweep.

**HIT TRIANGLE**  
 In the air war B-52s of the Strategic Air Force in Guam struck at Communist targets in the original "Iron Triangle" area, about 35 miles northwest of Da Nang, the Marine of Saigon Monday, but no damage assessments were made.

U.S. Navy and Air Force jets kept up their attacks on communications and military targets in North Viet Nam Sunday military spokesmen said. But the heaviest fighting reported Monday.

Monday, February 28, 1966

NY Herald Tribune

## Yanks Surprise Viet Cong With Guerrilla Tactic

By The Associated Press

BONG SON, Viet Nam.

Ambushes, booby traps and claymore mines are what makes the Viet Nam conflict a dirty war. Usually it is the Viet Cong who rely on stealth and cunning to kill.

But not always. The U. S. 1st Cavalry (Airmobile) Division triggered three ambushes Saturday night a few miles south of Bong Son, 280 miles northeast of Saigon, catching the Viet Cong off guard.

Men of Alpha Group of the 1st Battalion of the 9th Regiment had not even finished laying their trap when more than 30 Communist soldiers, heavily laden and with rifles slung, trooped into the kill zone.

Nightfall was only a few minutes away as the platoon-sized ambush patrol watched the Viet Cong move across rice paddies.

The signal was given and a Claymore anti-personnel mine spewed more than 700 steel pellets into the Viet Cong. Then followed five minutes of furious gun fire and a barrage of grenades. The Communists broke and ran.

"I don't think anybody of the other side managed to get off a shot at us," said Capt. James Sinclair, Camden, S. C., who fired the mine. None of his men was scratched.

### SURPRISE

"They were completely surprised and went to pieces," said Sgt. Henry Chew of Springfield, Ill.

Next morning, the cavalrymen no bodies. But they did find pools of blood and tracks where the Viet Cong had dragged away their dead, dying and wounded.

"I think that, at a conservative estimate, we wounded or killed at least 20," Capt. Sinclair said.

A second ambush laid by Alpha Company 2d Battalion of the 8th Regiment hit pay dirt in the foothills 10 miles south of Bong Son.

A Viet Cong machine gunner came trotting down a trail where the cavalrymen lay in wait, dragging down the gunner and stifling his cries.

Six minutes later, his ammunition bearer suffered the same fate. Both were captured without a shot being fired.

At almost the same time men of the 9th Regiment Bravo troop were in hiding when a Viet Cong soldier stumbled into a trip flare. The other Viet Cong in the party dived for cover as a claymore mine blasted pellets over their heads. A dawn search indicated that the Communists had been lucky. The mine had been exploded a second or so too late and missed them.

A fourth ambush attempt by men of Delta troop saw nothing. The Americans spent the night amid the ruins of a bombed hamlet under constant attack from mosquitos.

CASUALTIES LIGHT TO MODERATE AS COMMUNIST STAGE SCATTERED MORTAR ATTACKS.

U.S. FORCES HIT REDS WITH B-52'S NAVY GUNS AND GROUND TROOPS IN TWIN OPERATIONS TO SNARE AND DESTROY FOE.

- 1 B-52'S BOMB RED TARGETS.
- 2 5 G.I.'S KILLED WHEN TWO COPTERS COLLIDE IN A RESCUE ATTEMPT.
- 3 AIR FORCE AGAIN HITS MILITARY SITES IN NORTH VIET NAM.

The Boston Globe—Monday, February 21, 1966

WS, Saturday, Feb. 26, 1966

101 Cow Chicago News



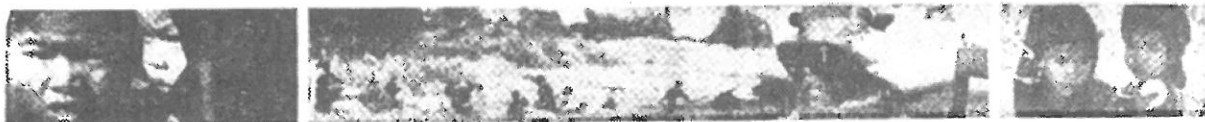
ARTILLERY is unloaded from a helicopter in South Viet Nam for use by the 1st Cavalry Division in reconnaissance. (UPI)



## Wounded GI Gets a Big Lift

A U.S. soldier wounded near Bong Son, South Viet Nam, is hoisted aboard a 1st Cavalry (Air Mobile) Division helicopter

by a new wrap-around "straitjacket" litter being used for the first time in combat. (UPI)





# ONE VILLAGE AIR EXPRESS F.O.B.



Villagers pile their belongings in tall grass while waiting for the air lift to safety miles away.



Lugging a heavy suitcase, a young girl hurries to join the others.



A youngster waits by his family's belongings.

Not long ago troopers of the U.S. 1st Cavalry Division in South Viet Nam, moving through a jungle area near the Cambodian border on a search and clear operation, came upon a village whose people were totally unsympathetic to the Communists who dominated the area.

Many South Vietnamese in isolated areas of the country have been plagued by the Viet Cong. The Cong tax them, requisition their food supplies, brainwash their children, conscript their men into guerrilla bands and force the rest of the villagers to work and spy for them.

The Cong has used innocent villagers, including women and children, as shields during battle. At other times bewildered villagers have been caught in the crossfire of opposing forces and suffered casualties.

The people of this village understandably wanted to move quickly, while the Cong were

helpless to prevent it. The troopers called in massive Chinook helicopters to ferry them to a safer area 15 miles south of the central highlands city of Pleiku.

The families piled their belongings in the tall grass and soon lines of villagers, from tots to elders, with rice, pets, livestock and all their moveable belongings, streamed to the waiting Chinooks.

The furnishings of their church — religious paintings, statues and a cross — were stacked in the grass until Americans in combat gear could carry them aboard.

The brave and adventurous clambered quickly into the choppers. The hesitant peeked in and then cautiously stepped aboard.

Soon the big helicopters roared off leaving the deserted village behind and settling to the earth again soon after to deposit the villagers in their new, safer and hopefully happier homes.



Children are apprehensive as they wait their turn to leave.



Reluctant water buffalo, owned by a villager, is led by insistent sergeant to waiting chopper.





**DISPLAYS VIET CONG BULLET** — PFC John O. Martin, 24, of Atlanta, displays a Viet Cong bullet that was removed from his left leg at the Seventh Field Hospital near Tokyo, Japan. Martin, a member of B Company, 2nd Battalion, 5th Cavalry, was wounded in Viet Nam when his platoon was ambushed by the Viet Cong Feb. 17 near Bong Son. He was also wounded by grenade fragments.—AP Wirephoto via cable from Tokyo.

This Week's PICTURE SHOW by AP Photographer Rick Merroun



An Army helicopter eases into a battlefield in Thach Long valley to evacuate a wounded soldier, while five of his buddies from the 1st Cavalry Division try to help out.

—Associated Press

1st Cav

### Cavalry Uses Rope Trick To Take Peak From Reds

2 MAR 1966

Bong Son, Vietnam, March 1 (AP) — United States air cavalrymen pulled a rope trick on the Viet Cong today.

So Cap Giap mountain, a jungle-crested peak three miles south-east of Bong Son, now is in American hands.

A reconnaissance platoon of the 5th Cavalry Regiment, 1st Air Cavalry Division, led the way.

#### Descend From Copters

The troopers swarmed down 50-foot ropes to earth from hovering helicopters through jungle growth so dense as to bar any orthodox landing. They quickly secured the crest.

There was one mishap. A chopper veered nearly 400 yards across the treetops, then crashed. Two clinging soldiers and the four-man crew were injured.

After the platoon's descent, other men poured down collapsible aluminum ladders from other helicopters. They made up two companies of the 5th Cavalry and a detachment of combat engineers. Among them was Lt. Col. Edward C. Meyer of Springfield, Va., commander of the regiment's 2d Battalion.

M. Sgt. Floyd Collins of Columbus, Ga., got an extra thrill on the ladder. The heavy-duty Chinook above him soared up unexpectedly about 150 feet, moved ahead about 100 yards and then descended.

"I just waited until it shook down," Collins said.

Working with axes, machetes, power saws and explosives, the engineers hacked out a landing zone and waved in the first of the helicopters in less than 90 minutes.

**Bulldozer Set To Work**  
A small bulldozer from the cargo of a Chinook was quickly set to work leveling the ground.

Communist resistance was slight. The troopers killed six snipers and captured three.

United States Navy gunners helped to keep the enemy occupied. From a position offshore, the cruiser Canberra shelled targets in response to radioed requests from cavalry spotters.



### Buddies' Helping Hand for Wounded Yank

A buddy takes a firm grip on the gloved hand of a wounded American machinegunner while others lift him to remove his field gear and make him more comfortable. The soldier, a member of the 1st Cavalry (Air Mobile) Division, was wounded in battle with Viet Cong in Thach Long Valley, south of Bong Son. Machinegunners wear gloves as protection from the weapon's hot barrel. (AP)

Machinegunners wear gloves as protection from the weapon's hot barrel. (AP)



# 1st Cavalry Labeled Best Cong Killers

By MARGARET SHANNON  
Atlanta Journal-Washington Correspondent  
WASHINGTON, March 4 (AP) —

Columbus, Ga., has been named as the best of the 1st Cavalry Division says the extra cost of making the division airmobile is paying off.

"It costs one and a half times as much to set up an Air Cavalry man," Rep. Charles Black told a group of Republican congressmen Thursday, "but he'll kill five times as much."

The 1st Cavalry, which has been in Viet Nam since late last summer, is producing "more kill figures per dollar spent" than any other U.S. unit, Mr. Black said.

"You've got a bargain," he declared.

Mr. Black went to Viet Nam for the Columbus Ledger-Inquirer last August and stayed until December, writing about the 1st Cavalry, which trained at Ft. Benning. He will return to Saigon March 19.

THE CORRESPONDENT was a guest at a breakfast given by Rep. Howard H. "Boo" Callahan of Pine Mountain, Ga., Sen. Peter Dominick, R-Colo., and four other GOP congressmen were there along with several others.

Mr. Black said he is "lobbying" for more tactical air sup-

port to be placed under the control of the 1st Cavalry Division commander.

The division was supposed to have 25 attack aircraft but only 10 were taken away before it went to Viet Nam, he said.

"We've got men killed because we didn't have enough MiGs in there," he said.

Mr. Black blamed Washington and the Air Force resistance to the Army's airmobile concept for the shortage of tactical air support.

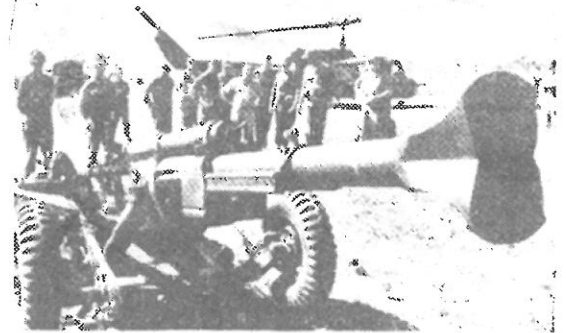
"In this climate here in Washington, the Army will not really get out and fight," he said.

MR. BLACK, small, wiry and 43, has earned the reputation of being a sort of Ernie Pyle because of his coverage of the war from the standpoint of the soldier in the field.

He stressed the need for a new study of the Army's need for close air support, but he also criticized the lack of follow-through in liberated villages.

Troops often clear the Viet Cong out of a village only to find that there are no political or propaganda agents to take over and proceed with the pacification, he said.

"This is where I'd break your heart," he declared.



Associated Press Wirephoto

## A Flying Blunderbuss

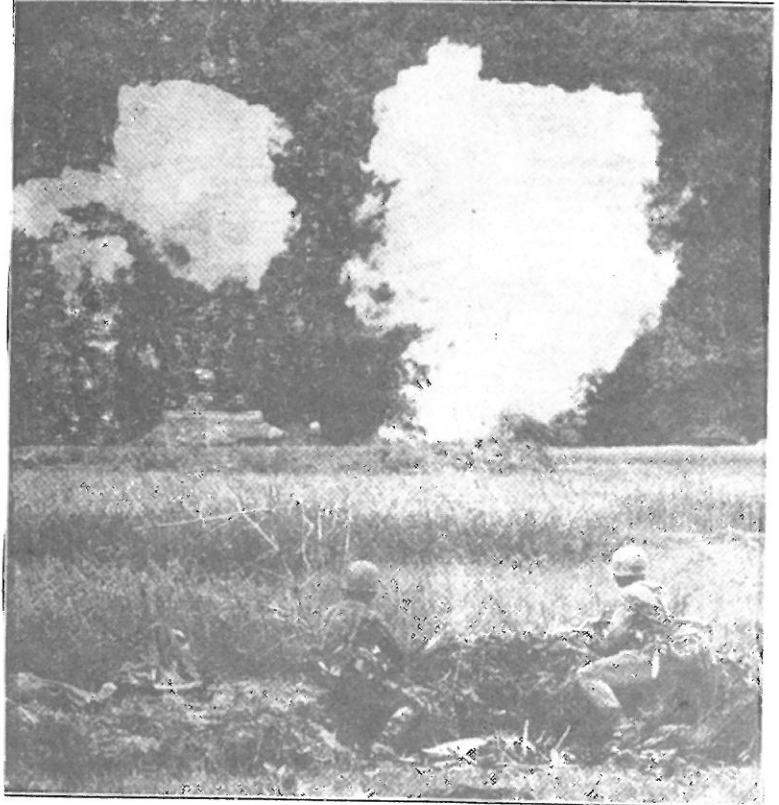
A NEW WEAPON, a 105mm howitzer, sporting a bell shaped flash suppressor on its muzzle, is inspected yesterday at the camp of the 1st Cavalry Division (Airmobile) in a mountainous area south of Bong Son in Viet Nam. The howitzer is lighter than other 105mm weapons and can be carried through the air by helicopter. The flash suppressor hides the muzzle flash and so prevents the enemy from locating the weapon.



AN ARMY helicopter starts to settle down to pick up a wounded 1st Air Cavalryman. The soldier was one of those wounded in the fight in Thach Long Valley, 12 miles south of Bong Son.



ARTICLES OF WAR — Loaded down with equipment and extra ammunition, his rifle in his left hand, a U. S. 1st Cavalryman moves along cautiously on a sweep operation in S. Viet Nam's central highlands. On his helmet cover he has written: "In God we trust."



## Score Two for Us

Two U. S. 1st Cavalry troopers take cover as mortar fire blasts enemy troops hiding in rice paddies near An Khe, South Viet Nam. Meanwhile, survivors of a Special Forces camp in the Ashau valley were flown to safety after garrison was overrun by North Viet Namese regulars.

—Story on page 6

# Air Ambulance for Casualty



Five air cavalrymen hovered protectingly over a wounded comrade Saturday as an Army helicopter landed in a clearing to evacuate him and other casualties to a field hospital.—A. P. wirephoto. (See Page 1 for war developments.)



**VIET CONG TARGET**—A wooden model of a plane bearing U.S. markings and attached to a stick is held up by a 1st Air Cavalry soldier after being found in a Viet Cong encampment south of Bong Son, Vietnam. Used in antiaircraft practice, the model was usually carried across a field by a running Viet Cong while his fellow soldiers took beads on it.—AP Wirephoto.

Seattle Times 8 MAR 1966

## Seattle Man Is Decorated In Viet-Nam



**RICHARD A. PIERCE**

Specialist 4th Class Richard A. Pierce, son of Mr. and Mrs. A. R. Pierce, 1624 S. W. 164th St., has received the Army Commendation Medal with "V" Device for heroic achievement in Viet-Nam.

Pierce, 22, was cited as the result of an action near Catecka November 12 when a Viet-Cong mortar and infantry force attacked a command post of the 1st Cavalry Division's 3rd Brigade.

Pierce, firing a machine gun, silenced three enemy mortar positions, then brought accurate fire on the attacking infantry force while exposed to heavy fire himself.

Holder of the Air Medal with six clusters, Pierce rides shotgun on helicopters for the commander of the 3rd Brigade. Pierce is a graduate of Moses Lake High School.



# Aid for Fallen Cavalryman



A buddy took a firm grip on a wounded machine gunner's gloved hand as others removed field gear to make him more comfortable while awaiting air evacuation from the Thach Long Valley, south of Bong Son Saturday. Machine gunners wear gloves to protect their hands from the hot barrel. The casualty was a member of A Company, 1st Battalion, 12th Regiment of the 1st Air Cavalry Division.—A. P. wirephoto.



Washington Star 18 MAR 1966



—U.S. Army

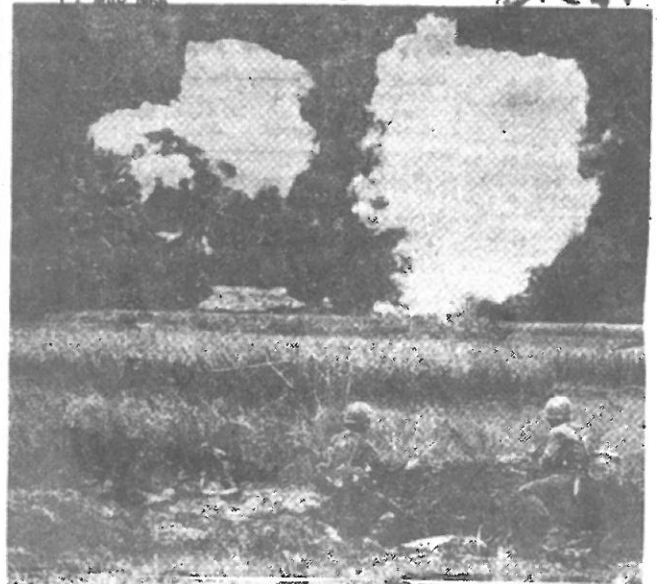
## JUNGLE OPERATION IN DEEP WATER

Troops of the 1st Cavalry Division, holding their rifles high, plow through a wide stream in South Viet Nam's flatlands. The squad is

moving into the wooded jungle area in the background in search of the Viet Cong enemy. (Story on Page A-5.)

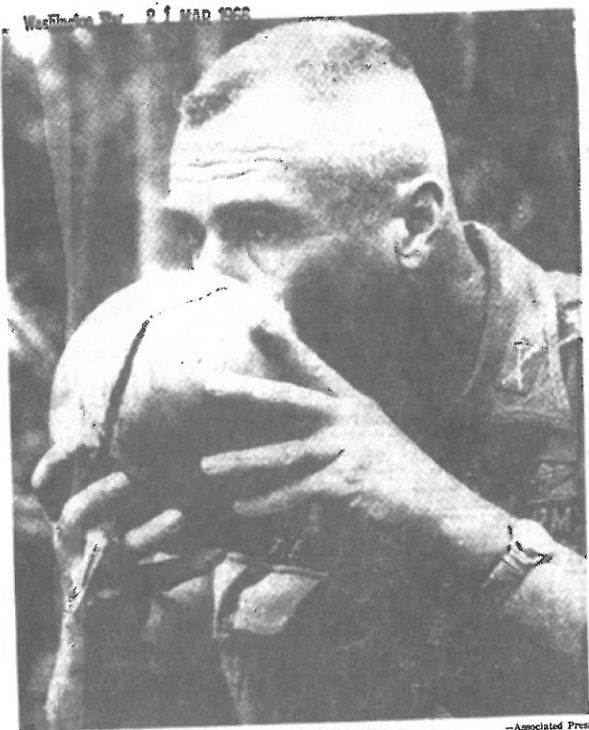
Washington News  
17 MAR 1966

D 107C9V



—UPI Photo by Staff Correspondent Steve Van Meter.  
RETALINATION — Members of the U.S. 1st Cavalry Division reply to sniper fire from Viet Cong troops at An Khe, South Viet Nam, with mortar shots. Billowing smoke indicates a hit on a house where the guerilla fire was coming from.





—Associated Press

### A SOLDIER LIVING OFF THE LAND

Lt. Col. Robert Little drinks coconut milk during a military operation in South Viet Nam. U.S. troops report the milk is better to drink than water, has a flavor, seems to quench their thirst longer and is nutritious.



UPI radiotelephoto

Sgt. Daniel Jack, of Buford, O., carries wounded North Vietnamese soldier past wreckage of helicopter shot down when units of the U. S. 1st Cavalry landed amid Reds near Chu Pong Mountain.

# GIs Challenge N. Viet Force Across Cambodian Border

SAIGON (AP) — Two brigades of the U.S. 1st Cavalry (Air Mobile) Division ranged over the rugged hills on the Cambodian frontier Thursday, challenging a large North Vietnamese force across the border to battle.

U.S. officers said a major fight may be in the making on the scale of the division's nine-day stand last fall in the Ia Drang Valley only a few miles away.

One report said two more helicopters were lost in new fighting Thursday morning, bringing the number down

by the Communists to six in 24 hours.

THE 1st CAVALRY Skytroopers in the highlands spotted Communist elements at noon Wednesday. A 50-man unit flew by helicopter into the wooded mountains 13 miles west of the cavalry encampment at Plei Me to take on the enemy.

The battle raged heavily and a full company was called in to help. Then a second company joined in. Four helicopters were shot down. By nightfall, the troopers were sur-

rounded by an estimated 1,000 dug-in North Vietnamese and Viet Cong. The Americans called in artillery and air power to plaster the Red positions.

More reinforcements flew in Thursday morning, cleared the landing zones, evacuated the dead and wounded and then fanned out in new searches.

U.S. officials reported bodies of 75 Communists were found. American casualties in one company were reported as moderate, in another company light. The troops captured six

of the enemy and found 14 weapons.

THE COMMUNISTS were reported entrenching on the border just inside Cambodia. U.S. field commanders have standing authority to chase the enemy across the Cambodia border under the definition of "hot pursuit," but there were no indications that such a decision may be made.

The rugged terrain 220 miles northeast of Saigon has considerable tree cover on the south side of the hills, unlike the more open Ia Drang Valley five miles to the north.

**U.S. Jets Blast  
Reds Encircling  
Small GI Unit**  
31 MAR 1966

SAIGON, March 31 (Thursday) (UPI). — A company of American cavalrymen, surrounded and outnumbered 10-1 by North Vietnamese regulars, clung grimly to a tiny landing area at the base of Chu Pong Mountain early Thursday as U. S. warplanes flung a deadly curtain of lead around them.

The 1st Air Cavalry Company, cut off Wednesday by Communist troops who shot down at least five U. S. helicopters, reportedly survived the night drawn into a tight defensive perimeter.

Air Force fighter-bombers and aerial artillery from rocket helicopters kept up an almost steady stream of suppressive fire around the company to shield it from the Communists.

**ARTILLERY SHELLS**  
An artillery company, hustled into attack positions early Thursday, brought 105-mm. guns firing high explosive shells against the Communists. Air Force transport planes dropped a continual stream of parachute flares before dawn to keep the area illuminated.

The company, from the 1st Battalion, 12th Cavalry Regiment, reported it was under sporadic sniper fire during the night and machine-gun fire until about midnight. It said the Communists did not attack in force.

Thick clouds of cordite fumes from the rockets, bombs and thousands of rounds of machine-gun and small-arms ammunition filled the forest-ringed landing zone. The Americans had held out after fierce hand-to-hand fighting Wednesday.

"The Air Force certainly did a magnificent job," an American military spokesman said.

**'HEAVIEST FIRE'**  
Some units of the American forces suffered moderate to heavy casualties in what was termed "some of the heaviest fire I've ever seen" by a correspondent with the 1st Cavalry. But a U. S. spokesman said over-all U. S. casualties were light.

In addition to the five cavalry helicopters shot down—one of them a big Chinook—several other choppers were badly shot up but managed to limp back to base. One of the helicopters flipped over on its back after being downed, and all four crewmen were killed.

In action elsewhere in South Vietnam, U. S. military spokesmen reported three more American aircraft downed by Communist fire—two helicopters and an Air Force F100 Supersabre brought down 90 miles southwest of Saigon.

**NEAR BORDER**  
The new Chu Pong fighting broke out less than one mile from the Cambodian border just to the south of the mountain, about 210 miles north-northeast of Saigon.

The two sides met head-on Wednesday when an air cavalry unit swept into the area to check out reconnaissance reports that about 50 persons in camouflaged uniforms had been sighted south of the mountain.

The 1st Cavalry then moved in a multi-platoon sized force of American troops to seek out the Communists. The cavalry unit was promptly pinned down by intense Communist fire. In the initial fight the Communists inflicted heavy casualties on the Americans.

**SURVIVORS TAKEN OUT**  
Helicopters were flown in to lift out the American survivors. A colonel said later that "everybody who is still alive" had been taken out.

A second unit was sent in to help extract the first cavalry force. But, it too, was pinned down by such heavy fire it could not be withdrawn.

Last November, the 1st Cavalry killed an estimated 2000 North Vietnamese troops on the slopes of Chu Pong Mountain and in the adjoining Ia Drang Valley in the bitterest fighting of the war. The battle also resulted in the highest number of American casualties.

CHICAGO DAILY NEWS, Thursday, March 31, 1966



Waving a blood-soaked bandage, a trooper tries to get further help for a wounded buddy as they huddle behind a fallen tree during fierce fighting at Chu Pong Mountain.

The fighting erupted after a reconnaissance unit from the 1st Cavalry (Air Mobile) Division dropped into the midst of a North Vietnamese regiment. (UPI)





# Trapped Cavalrymen: 'Heaviest Fire Ever'

By Martin Stuart-Fox  
By United Press International  
CHU PONG MOUNTAIN,  
South Viet Nam

It was some of the heaviest fire I've ever seen. We ducked behind an ant hill and couldn't move.

In the sound of the battle you could hear the screams of wounded men. These guys were veterans, battle-hardened, but you could see terror on some of their faces.

It was mid-afternoon when the first elements from the 1st Battalion of the 9th Cavalry dropped into the landing zone, a small clearing surrounded by thick jungle. The Reds opened fire immediately. At first it was only sporadic,

sniper fire. But within minutes the firing was intense. Air support was called for, and within 10 minutes Air Force Skylanders were making their first strikes. At the same time a second element, this one from the 1st Battalion of the 12th Cavalry's 12th Regiment, was enroute by helicopter.

The small landing zone by now was under such heavy fire that four of the Huey helicopters were shot down either coming in or going out. The Cavalrymen managed to capture one North Vietnamese soldier, who still had his weapon. He was loaded aboard a helicopter to be returned to the command post for interrogation. But as the helicopter was getting out of the landing zone, Communist ground fire shot it down. The prisoner died in the crash.

The element from the 'one-nine' was chewed up pretty badly. But the helicopters bringing in the 'one-twelve' managed to get survivors out. For a time the fighting was so close that F-100 jets overhead could not attack for fear of hitting American troops. So we withdrew on the run, so the jets could get in. I was taken out with photographer Steve Northup in the last batch of survivors. We were taken back to a command post and learned that the commander of the unit still in there was believed killed and command was

taken over by a platoon leader, a young 1st lieutenant. "That man was as cool as a cucumber," an officer said at the command post of the lieutenant. "I can't say too much for that man. When he gets out I want to shake his hand."



## Sky-Troop Raid Traps 100 Cong

From Cable Dispatches

SAIGON. Two companies of the United States 1st Air Cavalry Division yesterday caught up with a Viet Cong force of 100 men in a valley near Chu Pong mountain on the Cambodian border, hitting the Reds from the air and with artillery and tear gas.

At least 10 Communists were reported killed early in the battle, two miles east of the Cambodian border and 210 miles northeast of Saigon. The area was not from where Cavalrymen Wednesday broke out of a Communist trap, killed more than 100 Viet Cong and North Vietnamese, and sent the rest of the Reds fleeing across the border.

Yesterday's fight erupted at 1 p. m. as the Americans fired

down from the hills on Communist trenches and foxholes below. Four hours later 10 Viet Cong bodies were counted. Then the Americans called for air strikes, artillery support and helicopters carrying CS riot gas grenades.



To Spring a Trap. Skytroopers of the U. S. 1st Air Cavalry dodge around huge ant hill as they charge out of helicopter to help 50 other GIs pinned down by North Viet Namese soldiers and Viet Cong near Chu Phuong Mountain, close to Cambodian border. Yanks chased Reds across the border, killing about 75. See Story on page 7

## How an Outranked Lieutenant Led GIs to Victory

NEW YORK POST, THURSDAY, MARCH 31, 1966

Chu Phong, Viet Nam, March 31 (AP)—He is a slim, soft-spoken New Englander who wears glasses. Next year he wants to study at Harvard Business School. Last night, he took command of a battered company of U. S. 1st Air Cavalry and led them in a stand against a thousand North Vietnamese troops.

Second Lt. Daniel Kapica, 22, of New Britain, Conn., took over on the battlefield after his company commander had been wounded and the executive officer killed.

But for Copter Crews  
Though they outranked him, several first lieutenants in the company deferred to Kapica because he had been through three 1st Cavalry actions in Viet Nam. The company from the 1st

Battalion, 12th Cavalry, had set out late in the afternoon to find the crews of two helicopters shot down in heavy fighting between a platoon of Cavalrymen and the enemy. The action took place just south of the Chu Phong Mountains, about a mile from the Cambodian border in the central highlands.

Assault Goes On  
The company reached the first chopper about 5 p.m. and rescued the crew. Then it began moving to the second helicopter about 300 yards to the north.

As two platoons reached the downed aircraft and fanned out past it toward a line of trees, "all hell broke loose," Kapica said.

Small-arms and automatic-weapon fire flashed from spider holes and trees.

"We were taking casualties, but we continued the assault," Kapica said. "Then the company commander got hit and the fire became so heavy that we pulled back."

"But we moved up on in soon afterwards and then the executive officer got killed. I took over the company then, but I worked closely with the other lieutenants. We worked as a team, we put our heads together."

Ammunition Gone  
The company started pulling back to await air support, leaving an element behind to bring in the wounded. By nightfall, Kapica had his men in a 50-yard-wide line. A North Vietnamese prisoner they had taken told them they were surrounded by a thousand troops.

The enemy kept probing the beleaguered Americans' defenses all night, exhausting the ammunition supply of the little group. At 1 a.m. a U. S. Army Caribou transport plane came in over the treetops to drop ammunition and C rations.

As darkness still lay over the hills, helicopters brought in two more companies from the battalion, and this may have broken the will of the enemy. Kapica's company began moving out at dawn. It came across some dead North Vietnamese troops and picked up enemy weapons.

Propaganda Leaflets  
On one body, Kapica's men found a batch of English-language leaflets. They showed a sketch of a coffin draped with the Stars and Stripes on one

side and these words on the other: "E-culation up or down? Johnson's escalation can only take you down, way down into a coffin of rough pine if they can find your remains."

The leaflets apparently were for distribution in U. S. troop areas.

At noon, Kapica's company was still in the field moving through the slight rolling hills and tall trees.

Kapica's superior officers praised him for a superb job as acting commander.

THE NEW YORK TIMES, FRIDAY, APRIL 1, 1966.

## U.S. Airmobile Force Sweeps Area Near Cambodian Border

Special to The New York Times

SAIGON, March 31—United States troops swept a stretch of the Central Highlands near the Cambodian border today after a brief but sharp clash with North Vietnamese regulars yesterday.

During the sweep, conducted by units of the First Cavalry Division (Airmobile), a platoon was reported to have found some telephone wire at the border, about 210 miles north-east of Saigon, and to have seen five uniformed men running toward Cambodia. But a spokesman for the unit said there had been only scattered shooting.

The spokesman added that the troops had found the bodies of 20 soldiers clad in the gray uniforms of the Americans. The reinforcements brought in by the American force to about 200 the commander ordered a charge on the tree line. But the opposition proved too great, and the Americans pulled back. The remaining members of the final platoon were evacuated, and the company of reinforcements dug in for the night, the spokesman said.

According to the spokesman, the Americans fired into the area from helicopters yesterday spotted about 30 enemy soldiers running across a field. For two hours the enemy troops had taken refuge. The Ameri-

cans were reported to have suffered moderate casualties before a company of reinforcements arrived.

The reinforcements brought in by the American force to about 200 the commander ordered a charge on the tree line. But the opposition proved too great, and the Americans pulled back. The remaining members of the final platoon were evacuated, and the company of reinforcements dug in for the night, the spokesman said.

One of the first helicopters in the clearing to evacuate reinforcements crashed after being struck by enemy ground fire. Earlier, four smaller armed helicopters were shot down, the spokesman said. Three of these in the three hours of fighting yesterday afternoon.

In Saigon, United States military officials reported that 75 enemy soldiers were killed in the three hours of fighting yesterday afternoon.

But the Airmobile spokesman, speaking from temporary headquarters at the Central Highlands capital of Pleiku, 210 miles northeast of Saigon, said only 31 bodies had been counted.

The spokesman said that pilots of rocket-firing helicopters estimated that they had killed 50 more enemy soldiers, but that no bodies had been found. In air action, heavy shells continued to be fired over North Vietnam.

# Wounded Pile Up In Trenches As Bloody Fight Rages

Associated Press correspondent Bob Foos and photographer Henri Huot

accompanied U. S. First Cavalry Division troops into action on South Viet-

nam's central coast. This is their report.

BY BOB FOOS AND HENRI HUET

AN THI, Vietnam (AP)—Out in a shell-pocked Noman's land, a thick blob of mud moved toward our trench, formerly Communist real estate but now our haven—and our hospital and mortuary.

The muddy blob was a U. S. infantryman, wounded minutes earlier as his platoon made another attempt to reach a clump of palm trees 100 yards away and rout out the Communists.

Neither he nor the platoon made it. Now he was crawling back, bullets plattering around him.

He flopped into the trench, wounded in his hip. A medic floundered across American dead and wounded in the trench, a trench of misery with the rain falling, the bullets cracking and the wounded piling up.

IT HAD BEEN the Communists' first line of defense around this tiny village on the central lowlands that the First Cavalry had chosen to visit Friday.

The Reds had built it deep into the sand. The cavalrymen wrested it from them in charges across an open rice paddy under withering sniper fire that cut down several of the cavalrymen.

Medic Thomas L. Cole, from Richmond, Va., himself wounded in his head, helped tend the wounded, sprawled in the mud of the trench. He was nearly blinded by the bandage wrapped around his head.

IN LATE afternoon, Cole had civilian casualties to tend to, a whole civilian family.

They had been hiding in a house in the tiny village nearby and had suffered from the battle. A baby barely a year old had been hit by shrapnel in abdomen, arms and legs.

The company commander, Joel Sugdinis of Cornwall Bridge, Conn., cried out to the father as he carried the baby near the American positions, "Come, get in this trench."

enemy fire snapped around him. His wounded wife, blood all over her face, followed. There was little that Cole or any of the other medics could do for the wounded child. As the day passed into night, and as

the rain grew stronger in its intensity, the baby began whimpering, then died.

The command post of the Second Battalion of the Seventh Regiment was in a deep trench and the main force of the Communists fought from dug-in positions behind the line of palm trees. Enemy snipers with automatic weapons perched in the trees on each side of the command post.

Cavalrymen dashing across the open ground took refuge from behind raised graves of an old cemetery. Some of them made the trip time and time again until the enemy fled Saturday afternoon under air assaults that rained down bombs and napalm.

The abandoned Viet Cong trench line was oval-shaped—about 150 yards long by 100 wide. An open space in the middle became "Landing Zone 4" Saturday after the cavalrymen cleared away snipers so helicopters could land to take out the wounded and dead and bring in desperately needed supplies of ammunition, food and medical stores.

The drenching rain fell throughout Friday night and in the predawn hours of Saturday, then slackened off about dawn.

The light of dawn exposed a picture of bloody battle—the dead and wounded in the muddied trenches, the emptied cartridge clips and ration boxes scattered about, the shell holes.

In the village a rooster crowed and hens pecked in the mud. A pig rooted through empty C-ration cans.

## ATTACK FROM 2 SIDES

Troops of the 1st Cavalry Close In on Viet Cong in Fortress That Bombs Could Not Penetrate

## MANY ARE DEAD

Allied Offensive Has Reported 282 Viet Cong Killed

(From The Star's Press Services)

An Khe, South Vietnam—Assaulting from two directions, three battalions of the United States 1st Cavalry division (air mobile) battered Communist units yesterday in the coastal lowlands north of Qui Nhon. The Americans swept into areas crossed with long, log-covered trenches that were so deep neither artillery nor air strikes with high explosive bombs and napalm could force the enemy from them.

Like Tarawa Fortress

A veteran of the South Pacific campaigns in World War II said the fortifications reminded him of those of Tarawa.

The action, which included two distinct battles, came on the seventh day of Operation Mash-er, a bid for control of strategic Binh Dinh province and involves more than 5,000 members of the cavalry and large numbers of other allied forces.

Col. Hal G. Moore, the commander of the United States units in the offensive, said last night his men had counted 282 Viet Cong and North Vietnamese bodies. They found 75 bodies in the day.

Informed sources said that two battalions of South Korean marines, four battalions drawn from the South Vietnamese Airborne brigade had moved into other sections of the province.

According to the sources, the Marine landing south of Quang Ngai was part of the same offensive.

Officers here were unable to provide precise figures because of the varying sizes of battalions, but it appeared between 12,000 and 15,000 men had been committed to the battle for Binh Dinh.

V. C. From a Village

In rain and mud, troops have cleared the enemy out of their defenses in the village of An Thi, north of Bong Son. They wrested control of a series of Communist trenches and strongholds but the enemy troops held out in positions along a line of palm trees.

U. S. casualties were reported as light although two cavalry units suffered what were described as moderate casualties.

The operation started Tuesday. First contact of any size was made Thursday and Friday. Saturday's fighting produced the biggest blow against the enemy when an insurgent battalion of about 300 troops was caught between two battalion-size elements of the cavalry. A U. S. battalion is composed of between 450 and 500 men.

Early today, Viet Cong mortarmen fired about 60 rounds into the U. S. 1st infantry division's artillery area at Phu Lol, about 15 miles north of Saigon, a U. S. military spokesman said.

A large Viet Cong force wiped out both a government militia unit and a relief force in a fierce weekend battle 55 miles south of the big U. S. air base at Da Nang, military authorities reported today.

They said a small unit of U. S. Special Forces men involved in the fight near Tra Bong suffered heavy casualties.

A second relief force that searched the area said all the men in the two government units were killed, wounded or missing. No sign was found of the missing men, including Americans.

The Viet Cong again rejected U. S. terms for peace in Vietnam and got a pledge from Red China for all-out support, "whatever price we have to pay."

At the same time, a message from North Vietnam reached London by way of Moscow and the British foreign office indicated it was a copy of a letter President Ho Chi Minh had sent to other governments sticking by Viet Cong and Hanoi's terms for ending the war.

Terms Still the Same

A radio Hanoi broadcast quoted the South Vietnamese National Liberation Front—political arm of the Viet Cong—as saying Communist terms for ending the war are immutable.

"All negotiations with the U. S. imperialists at this moment are entirely useless if they still refuse to withdraw from South Vietnam their troops and all kinds of war materials," the Viet Cong statesmen said.



—AP Wirephoto

### An Innocent Victim Of War

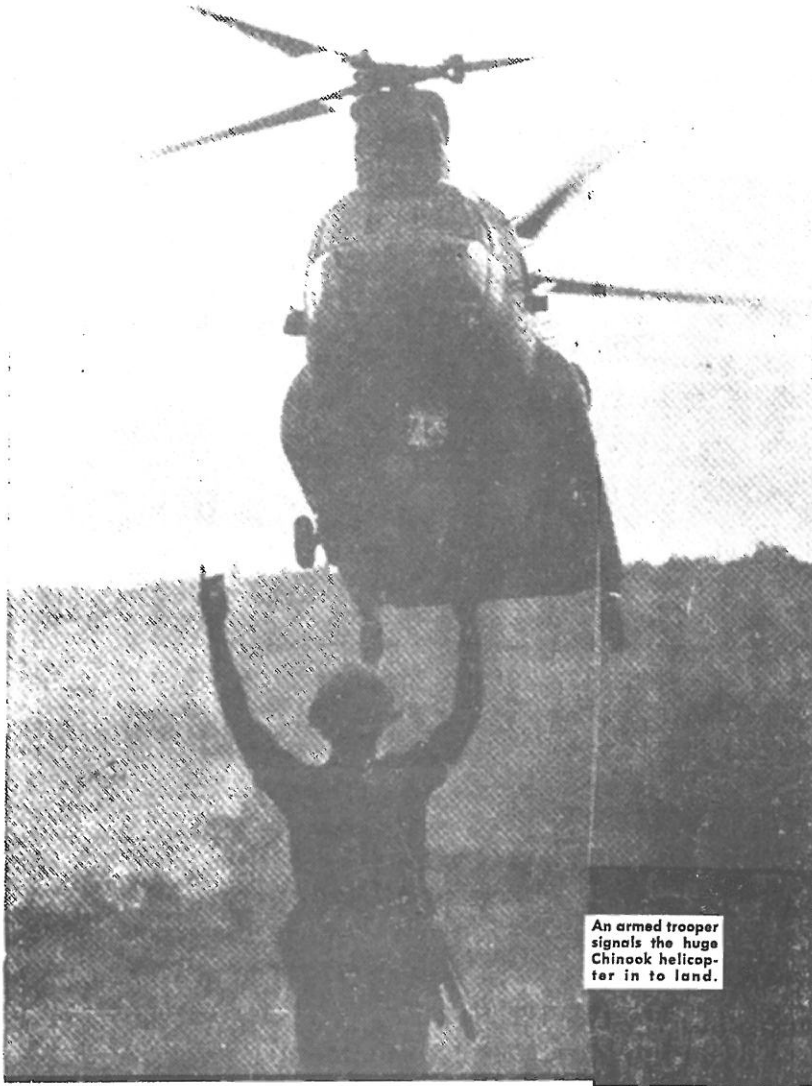
... South Viet father holds wounded baby ... who later died



HAULED OUT—Two soldiers of the U.S. 1st Cavalry Division drag a half-dead Viet Cong from his bunker during the division's sweep to the north of Bong Son, South Viet Nam. Viet Cong losses ran into the hundreds as American troops moved in against the Reds. (UPI Radiotelephoto)







An armed trooper signals the huge Chinook helicopter in to land.



Troopers carry church articles and bucket of rice to the waiting choppers.



Worldly belongings slung over their shoulders, villagers board the waiting helicopters for flight to safety.

# 1st Cavalryman's First Try at Piloting 'Copter Saves Two

2 APR 1966

PLEIKU (UPI) — The Army Aviation company commander was angry. He stood watching the helicopter come in, bounce almost nose over, rock back and bounce against the metal plates of the landing pad again. "That's the worst landing I've ever seen," he barked. "Who is that pilot?"

Just then the door of the chopper opened and an enlisted man slid out of the pilot's seat. "Give me a hand," he yelled. "I've got a couple of wounded men."

It was the pilot and co-pilot who were wounded. The man who landed the helicopter was the crew chief, PFC Ordel L. McKee of Farmington, N.M. He had never flown a helicopter before. But he learned in a few seconds. It was an emergency.

**First Combat**  
When the 1st Air Cavalry got into trouble at the base of Chu Pong Mountain Wednesday, it was the first real combat that McKee had been in. He was crew chief on one of the Huey helicopters that ferried troops into the fight with North Vietnamese forces.

"We weren't on the ground

more than a couple of seconds when the PAVN (North Vietnamese troops) opened up from a tree line only 10 yards away," McKee said. "Eight rounds came through the right windshield hitting the pilot. The co-pilot look over the aircraft and lifted it about 20 feet above the trees. But it began to lose altitude. Both sides brushed against the tree tops.

**On Today's Editorial Page**  
— Editorials today discuss the military honors for Columbus, Phenix City and T. G. Reeves; and the advisability of registering as either a Democrat or Republican.  
— Millard Grimes outlines a scheme by which Gov. George Wallace might have legally run for governor to succeed himself.  
— Letters to the editor concern the Alabama governor's race and the Viet Nam war.

"We were rocking around and the lieutenant (the co-pilot) was having trouble getting control of the ship. The ship was going around in circles. We radioed for help and one chopper came in and started firing at the Communists."

McKee, meanwhile crawled forward in the helicopter cabin and bandaged the pilot's left arm. The pilot also had been hit in the right thigh.

The crew chief managed to get the pilot out of his seat and make him comfortable in the rear of the helicopter. By this time, the co-pilot had the chopper fairly well under control and was gaining altitude.

McKee moved back forward to see if he could help the co-pilot.

"All of a sudden, the lieutenant looked at me in a funny way and hollered, take over," McKee said. "The lieutenant's face looked like it was starting to swell. It was white, and his head started nodding."

This was the first that McKee realized that the co-pilot also

had been wounded. A slug had torn into his left shoulder.

The crew chief put his hands on the controls. He had never flown a helicopter before, but he had watched the pilots go through the motions.

"I didn't have any time to learn," he said. "I just had to do it."

The landing field wasn't far and McKee managed to keep

the helicopter fairly level until the field was in sight.

**Co-Pilot Helped**  
"As we came in to land," he said, "I felt pressure on the controls and I looked over and saw that the lieutenant was helping me."

"At that instant, the ship touched the ground and the lieutenant's head dropped to his chest, his eyes shut and his hands passed from the controls."

The lieutenant, in his wounded condition, apparently thought the job was done and passed out.

But the aircraft lurched forward, bounced, tilted nose down toward the ground. McKee grabbed the controls and quickly pulled back. The helicopter settled back to the ground once again.

McKee didn't know how to shut the engine off, so he just left it running and jumped out to get help with the pilot and co-pilot.

"I was scared numb," he said later. "But everytime my mind would say I had to do

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(Continued From Page 1) something, I'd find I'd already done it.

"Maybe somebody else was at the controls helping the lieutenant and me."

When McKee got a chance later, he walked around the helicopter counting holes.

"We took 20 hits," he said. "It is a miracle that any of us got out."

## Markets At A Glance

**NEW YORK (AP) —**  
Stocks — Higher; heavy trading.  
Bonds — Firm.  
Cotton — Quiet.

**CHICAGO:**  
Wheat — Higher; good demand.  
Corn — Higher; fair demand.

Oats — Higher; light trade.  
Soybeans — Higher; steady demand.

Butcher hogs — Strong; top \$24.50.

Slaughter steers — Strong; top \$31.00.

(Continued on Page 5, Col. 3)

9 A Thurs, March 31, 1966 ST. LOUIS POST-DISPATCH



## Clearing Area for Air Strikes

First Cavalry Division troopers dashing from their firing positions just before United States Air Force planes hammered encircling Communists in a fierce battle near Chu Pong mountain, South Viet Nam, yesterday.

