



SCRAPBOOK

EDITION

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for fighting men too busy to keep their own!

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Charles Black Reports

Crazy Horse Stalls Planned Offensive

(EDITOR'S NOTE: Charles Black, Enquirer military writer, is in Viet Nam reporting on activities of the 1st Cavalry Division.)

By CHARLES BLACK
Enquirer Military Writer

AN KHE — Operation Crazy Horse was left behind by the First Air Cavalry Division on June 5 with field commanders' reports verifying the effect of the 20-day offensive on Communist forces which had been committed on the western flank of the Red monsoon offensive.

The Communists left 207 bodies on the field while friendly forces' deaths were light for the over-all campaign.

The First Air Cavalry Division was already in the field on the eastern wing of the battle for the central highlands. There its Second Brigade, the First Brigade, 101st Airborne Division and Third Brigade, 25th Infantry Division were ranged to the west and north of Pleiku. The units were stationed to counter expected thrusts by the 32nd, 33rd, 66th and 24th North Vietnamese regiments. The forces were kept busy east of An Khe shifting into the west, where the campaign is called "Operation Paul Revere."

A First Air Cavalry spokesman here summarized the immediate tactical effects of Crazy Horse as having accomplished these things:

"1. It put the 2nd Viet Cong regiment out of action with at least 40 per cent losses, loss of its rear services and headquarters area, and disintegration of its guerrilla support units.

"2. It stopped a planned attack on the Dinh Binh Special Forces camp, a planned ambush of First Cavalry relief, and a diversionary raid on our base at An Khe before the enemy got started.

"3. It forced the survivors of the 2nd Regiment to flee to the area of another Viet Cong unit which puts a heavy strain on a creaky supply system and is a hard morale blow to the entire apparatus in the area northwest of the Crazy Horse zone.

"4. It destroyed all supplies and base facilities in an area never searched before and compromised the entire trail system used by the Communists in this area.

"5. It ruined the over-all Communist aim of engaging and tying down First Air Cavalry forces to keep them from being committed to fighting in the west where the enemy had planned a coordinated offensive in the Kon Tum-Dak To-Pleiku areas."

camp's patrols which uncovered the original warning of Communist intent by killing a mortar survey officer from the Viet Cong regiment and capturing his documents. Special Forces advisers at the camp were down to half-strength because of casualties the green beret specialists suffered leading their irregulars into combat during the 20 days of fighting in the mountains around their base.

Cav Losses Light

First Air Cavalry losses were light when the over-all number of men involved was considered — but the personality of Operation Crazy Horse was one of particularly violent, small unit actions and some units had moderate or heavy casualties in the individual actions.

The Air Cavalrymen, in the final analysis, counted half a dozen enemy bodies for every one of their fallen comrades and the destruction of Communists trapped in narrow canyons and along jungle trails and battered by bombs, rockets and artillery, is believed to have been extremely heavy. Those casualties — incurred by B2 raids, 20,000 rounds of shells and rockets, and daily attacks by jet fighter-bombers — are estimated at being many more than the enemy dead counted by infantrymen on the ground.

The ROK soldiers, elite troops chosen for this first commitment of Korean soldiers on foreign soil in recent world history, proved sensationally effective in the few days they spent sweeping the south of the battle area at the close of the operation. They accounted for 91 enemy dead in a two-company action which involved a complicated night maneuver by one of the companies, under heavy fire, in thick jungle, on June 3-4. Their losses were light. One battalion had been engaged in the fight.

A representative battalion from the 22nd Vietnamese Army Division which had light contacts north of Phu Cat, swept and blocked one arc of the trap. It never figured heavily in the campaign and left several days before the end of the operations.

(Most regular Vietnamese troops in the II Corps area are involved in providing security for various headquarters and go into the field mainly for massive road clearing projects for occasional truck convoys from the coast to outlying headquarters, or in relief of outposts or headquarters under attack from Communist forces.)

The campaign was called an attack in which the First Air Cavalry Division "applied the total techniques of air mobility in the most difficult terrain we have ever seen," by its commanding general, Maj. Gen. John Norton.

Norton Cites Problems Norton underscored the difficulties of the opening rounds of the fighting.

"There was a combination of a very few good landing zones, firepower and air support available to us, which convinced us that if we maintained contact for the first few days we could punish the enemy by massive use of firepower. Our recourse then would be to build more landing zones on ridges. With our ability to always keep two companies back to back on all of our perimeters at night, these considerations all argued in favor of taking the risk of being forced to fight at close quarters. We expected a hard fight and expected to destroy a large number of the enemy. It was a calculated risk, as is all combat," Gen. Norton said.

The close quarter combat raged in exactly the manner the division commander and Brig. Gen. John Wright, assistant division commander and the field tactical representative of division headquarters, had expected and prepared for. Col. John J. (Big Thunderbolt) Hennessey sent his First Brigade paratroopers into the thickly jungled mountains quickly and then fed in additional battalions as the fighting went on.

In a series of encounters between small American units and the Viet Cong, the enemy broke, split into small units and ran for hiding and escape routes. The air mobile cavalrymen immediately shifted from the offensive slashes into target areas to a ring of ambushes around the battlefield. (In one sector of this ring, for example, there were a total of 40 ambushes of spaced to platoon size with 2,000 Claymore mines waiting to be tripped. Viet Cong fell into the traps in groups of as large as 15 and were cut down night after night along the jungle trails they believed secret and safe.)

The punishing air raids, helicopter patrols and artillery barrages and the sweeping ROK and CIDG units drove the Viet Cong into the ambushes. The closing days of the fighting saw the scattered, lost survivors coming in to surrender.

Communist Plans Norton said intelligence reports had verified that the entire Communist offensive was planned — according to supplies stockpiled — to last until June 27. Other sources say the strategy was designed to hold the cavalry forces close to their own base until a coordinated attack by several North Vietnamese regiments had achieved its goals of overrunning Dak To, a district headquarters near the Laotian border northwest of Pleiku; isolating Pleiku with a series of raids and attacks, and doing the same for Kon Tum, the headquarters of Kon Tum province.

The blow by the 2nd Viet

Cong Regiment was to mark the actions of the 33rd.

To build up the Viet Cong regiment, it had received North Vietnamese soldiers, survivors of the defeats suffered by Communists around Bong Son since February, and a battalion of Northern regulars. The regiment had assumed the name of the "Song Ba Regiment," after the river which runs through the Vinh Tinh Valley which they hoped to seize from allied control.

The campaign now underway in the west, "Operation Paul Revere" was opened by the 25th Infantry Division's Third Brigade on May 27 in a battle which completed the destruction of the 18th North Vietnamese Regiment, based in Cambodia, as an effective combat unit. The regiment had lost 406 men to the Air Cavalry in April and left 256 bodies behind after a raid on a Special Forces outpost, aimed at drawing pressure off the trapped Viet Cong east of here. It was turned into a debacle by two hard-fighting companies of the Third Brigade.

Intelligence gained from prisoners and espionage agents alerted the Field Forces Viet Nam I headquarters at Nha Trang, commanded by Maj. Gen. Harry W. O. Kinnard, and brought a quick concentration of U. S. brigades into the areas where the Communist force intended to attack.



TOMMY COLE TENDED HURT CAVALRYMEN
Own Luck Ran Out in Battle North of Saigon

Veteran Medic Badly Wounded

After 10 months on the front line aiding wounded of the 1st Cavalry Division, Army medic Tommy Cole's luck ran out last week and it was his turn to be snatched by a fellow corpsman.

Cole, 31, of Pittsburg, Kan., had taken part in every major battle of the 1st Cavalry since arriving in Viet Nam.

He was seriously wounded near the hamlet of Dong Tre, 255 miles north of Saigon.

The Boston Globe—Wednesday, June 22, 1966

2000 GIs Outfox Cong, Run Reds to Earth

By RICHARD M. GROWALD
United Press International
SAIGON — U.S. Paratroopers and Air Cavalrymen battled between 400 and 600 Viet Con Tuesday.

At least 69 Viet Cong were reported killed as a 2,000-man American force attacked the Communists. The battle began Monday when the Viet Cong tried to trap 101st Airborne

Division troops near the South China Sea coast.

The American broke out of the trap and U.S. generals, sensing the same battle pattern as in the Central Highlands battle last week, poured more troops into "Operation Nathan Hale," about 240 miles north of Saigon.

The reinforcements threw the Communist troops on the defensive. A U.S. spokesman said at last report the enemy was fighting strongly from entrenched, well-fortified positions.

The big jungle battle, above Tuy Hoa in Phu Yen Province, was only a few miles from the area where about 1500 American marines landed Saturday in "Operation Deckhouse." American troops in Tues-

day's fighting were from the 3d brigade of the 1st Air Cavalry and the 101st Airborne's 1st Brigade—the outfit which routed a big Vietnamese force in the Central Highlands battle.

FIRST CAVALRY, 400 REDS CLASH IN NEW FIGHTING ALONG COAST

U.S. Forces Blasting Dug-In North Viet Names With Artillery, Air Strikes

From Post-Dispatch Wire Services
SAIGON, South Viet Nam, June 24—United States helicopter-borne cavalrymen clashed today with a large Communist force in a fresh flare-up of fighting in the coastal hills 240 miles northeast of Saigon.

U.S. military headquarters reported heavy contact between units of the First Cavalry Division and about 400 North Viet Namese regulars 15 miles north of Tuy Hoa.

The cavalrymen blasted the Communists out of their dug-in positions with artillery and air strikes. The fighting was part of the six-day-old Operation Nathan Hale. The Reds have lost 347 killed, a U.S. spokesman said.

Reds Reinforced

The cavalrymen thought at first they were hitting a dug-in company of about 120 Communists today, but as they fought their way up a hill they discovered that the enemy had sent in reinforcements.

Air and artillery covered the enemy position with napalm, rockets, bombs and explosive shells.

Saturday, June 25, 1966

The Dallas Morning News

Go Home? Col. Hal Moore Would Rather Kill Reds

GIs Battle Reds At Close Range

SAIGON, Viet Nam (UPI) — U.S. 1st Cavalry Division troops Friday fought their way up a rocky jungle ridge, attacked a 400-man Communist battalion and called in artillery and air strikes for the kill.

Fighting was at such close range some Americans were hit by shrapnel from the bombs and rockets blasting the dug-in enemy.

The fighting was part of the 6-day-old Operation Nathan Hale 230 miles northeast of Saigon which has killed an estimated 634 Communists and is far from ended.

In the same region, vastly outnumbered U. S. Cavalrymen repelled a Communist mortar attack on a fortified American position. The North Vietnamese troops sent heavy mortar shells into the U. S. outpost and crawled through tall elephant grass to within 15 feet of the defense perimeter before withdrawing under heavy fire.

Brigade Commander Col. Hal Moore of Bardstown, Ky., then ordered five battalions — about 4,000 men — into the jungles to chase the Reds.

IN AIR ACTION over North Viet Nam, U. S. Air Force planes ripped up a 100-truck convoy while Navy pilots were attacking Communist supply and communications facilities near the coast.

American B52 bombers attacked a suspected Viet Cong division headquarters 40 miles northeast of Qui Nhon — about 310 miles northeast of Saigon.

The B52 raid occurred while Gen. William C. Westmoreland, U.S. military commander in Viet Nam, was on Guam praising the Strategic Air Command pilots for a "fine job" in carrying out almost daily B52 raids against the Communists thousands of miles away.

The American cavalrymen in Operation Nathan Hale went into battle Friday thinking they were hitting a dug-in company of about 120 North Vietnamese regulars. As they fought their way up the jungled ridge, however, they discovered the Communists had brought in some 300 reinforcements.

"I think we've got a battalion in there," said Capt. Michael Kalla of Cleveland, Ohio, commander of B Company, 2nd Battalion, 7th Cavalry.

"WE GOT PAST their outposts, and I personally counted 7 dead.

I think we killed about 20 with small arms before the artillery and air strikes took over."

UPI correspondent Leon Daniel, who with American Broadcasting Co. reporter Roger Peterson reached the ridgeline with the cavalrymen, said bombs and artillery were coming in "from all directions."

"They were using fragmentation bombs," Daniel said. "One piece of shrapnel about four inches long hit just a few feet from us. I picked it up and it was still hot. They also used beehive rockets, an antipersonnel device that explodes and sends out thousands of little nail-like pieces of shrapnel that really penetrate."

Specialist Edward Helsel of Duncansville, Pa., showed Daniel his left foot. One of the fragments tore completely through his boot and imbedded itself in his foot but Helsel refused to be evacuated for treatment.

"I'll go out later," he said. "I can still walk."

At the top of the ridge, the Americans had to move through dense jungle about 200 yards to a clearing about 100 yards wide and twice as long.



COL. HAL MOORE

BY RAYMOND R. COFFEY
Daily News Foreign Service

DONG TRE, South Viet Nam.—Col. Hal Moore, the 1st Cavalry (Air Mobile) Division's Sunday punch, was due to be rotated home to the United States Monday. His replacement already has arrived and Moore has twice postponed his departure. He didn't make it Monday, either.

He wants to stick around long enough to wind up one last big fight against the thousands of North Vietnamese regulars who have infiltrated South Viet Nam's vital central highlands.

Moore, commander of the 1st Cavalry's 3d Brigade, is

directing Operation Nathan Hale in which cavalrymen and paratroopers from the 101st Airborne Division have killed about 400 of the enemy in a week.

"I hope to stay until this (operation) is over," Moore said as he helicoptered in to inspect a battlefield on which more than 100 North Vietnamese lay dead. "I hope they don't send me home before the fight is over."

THAT IS a hope the enemy, who have nicknamed their nemesis "Yellow Hair," surely do not share.

When it comes to destroying the enemy, Moore has a record unmatched by any other U.S.

battalion or brigade commander in Viet Nam.

The tall, fair-haired, 43-year-old West Pointer from Bardstown, Ky., scored his first big victory last November as a battalion commander in the Ia Drang Valley fighting, still the biggest battle of the war.

A week later he was promoted to colonel and given command of the 3d Brigade.

Since Ia Drang, the 1st Cavalry has killed something like 4,500 enemy, and troops under Moore's command have accounted for at least 3,200 of those.

MOORE'S success is a compound of many ingredients. For one thing, he's an imag-

inative tactician. He is credited, for example, with development of the 1st Cavalry's so-called "hunter-killer" technique in which small reconnaissance units are put down by helicopter to hunt out and serve as a kind of bait for enemy forces.

They have just enough firepower and armed helicopter support to hold on and keep the enemy engaged until a larger force—standing by their helicopters on alert—can be lifted in to destroy the enemy.

But the key to Moore's success, some people in the division say, is that he views his mission singly and simply as killing enemy troops.

Some other commanders, experienced in other wars, tend to think in terms of cutting enemy supply lines, capturing his caches of rice, destroying base camps, forcing the enemy to fall back from some objective or other.

But there are, no real geographic objectives in this war, no territory to be taken and occupied. And Moore, the people around him say, figures the only real way to win is to wipe out the enemy.

LAST WEEK when a North Vietnamese company commander made the mistake of frontally attacking two U.S. companies near here and got wiped out, Moore was elated.



"It's great when they attack us for a change," he said. "That way we're able to kill more of them."

All week long the Americans taking part in Operation Nathan Hale had spectacular success in carrying out the objective as Moore sees it.

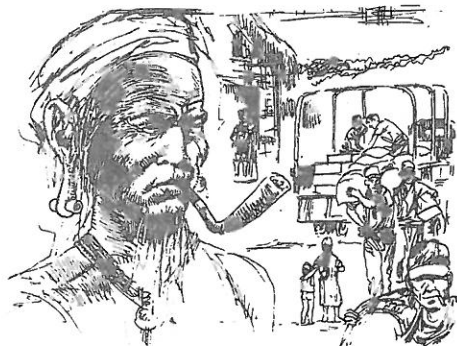
Even more encouraging was the extremely light casualty ratio the Americans were suffering. Security ground rules prohibit reporting specific figures for specific engagements. But, for example, in three separate clashes this week the Americans under Moore's command killed a total of more than 170 enemy while losing 10 men themselves.

Moore's success has not

made him a swaggerer or a man hard to get along with. His troops swear by him. He is, of course, aware of the reputation he has made and conscious of the attention he has gotten.

Referring to Moore's postponement of his rotation, one man said, "He wants to have one more big fight, then get right on the plane and get off at Clark (a Philippine stop-over point on the way home) still in his fatigues and ask them, 'Where can I wash off the mud and blood?'"

That's overstating it, but Moore, plainly, does want to leave in a last blaze of glory. And the way things were going up here he's going to.



Men of the U.S. 1st Air Cavalry Division lay down heavy fire concentration in a village near

Dong Tre as part of Operation Nathan Hale—another search and destroy mission.

—Associated Press

Viet GI to Return Degree

Rips Rutgers on Genovese

By MICHAEL HAYES

A 23-year-old Army veteran, who recently returned from Viet Nam with two Purple Heart medals, intends to return his Rutgers degree today because "the board of governors upheld the freedom of a man who sympathized with the enemies of the United States."

Richard Barrett, in referring to the university's stand last year allowing Prof. Eugene Genovese to state his opinions on the Viet Nam war, said:

"When I heard Mr. Genovese welcomed the victory of those same Communists who had killed many of my buddies, I wrote to Rutgers demanding his dismissal."

Barrett first was informed of the Genovese controversy last summer by reading the "Stars and Stripes" and a New Jersey newspaper. He immediately wrote to Rutgers objecting to the university's stand.

Rutgers Reply

About a month later Barrett said he received a letter from Charles Brower, chairman of the university board of governors. Included with the letter was a pamphlet which stated that "we may disagree with his views but we uphold his right to speak."

According to Barrett, Brower said, "You may not buy this, but you are fighting in Viet Nam for Mr. Genovese's freedom to express his views." Barrett contends that "when freedom is treason, then liberty is slavery."

Barrett said he "went over there to fight the Communists. Can you imagine how I feel to have Communists or their friends back here in the States?"

I want to beat the Communists whether they are in Viet Nam or in New Jersey," he added.

"Genovese's freedom is treason," Barrett said. "Freedom means America, and America means victory."

A 1964 Graduate

Barrett, who was graduated from Newark Rutgers as a history major in 1964, enlisted in the Army the morning following



Newark News Photo

NOT PROUD OF IT—Spec. 4 Richard Barrett, twice wounded Viet Nam veteran, holds degree from Rutgers which he plans to return to the university board of governors via Dr. Mason Gross, president, or the secretary of the board as a protest to allowing Prof. Eugene Genovese to give his opinion on the war in Viet Nam.

at his graduation. He asked to be well join the Army Reserved as sent to Viet Nam, but the officer soon as he returns to Tennessee. He has been visiting with East Orange friends. In Viet Nam he served with the 7th Cavalry as a rifleman and helicopter machine gunner. Barrett was wounded during the first major battle at Bong Son and while in a skirmish near An Khe.

"I want to return my diploma to Dr. (Mason) Gross (president of Rutgers) in person," he said. If he's not available today Barrett said he will give it to the secretary of the board of governors (Carl Metzger) either tomorrow or Friday.

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is an insult to our servicemen and to me personally," he added.

"Get Genovese and others like him out of schools and we have taken a long step forward in beating Communism abroad. He received quite a bit of undeserved publicity," Barrett said, "which does harm to the G.I.s. It makes the Viet Cong bolder and us shakier," he added.

Barrett, who hopes eventually to go into politics, said he doesn't care if the lack of a degree hurts his chances of finding a job. "I made a promise to the guys over there that if I were lucky enough to get home I would see that they were supported and those who died didn't die in vain."

Ta., Tuesday Morning, June 28, 1966

The Columbus Enquirer, Columbus, Ga., T

Charles Black Reports

'Paul Revere' Is Allied Offensive

(EDITOR'S NOTE: This week Charles Black, Enquirer military writer in Viet Nam, begins a series of articles on Operation Paul Revere, a multipronged offensive, designed to blunt the communist advantage during the rainy season.)

By CHARLES BLACK
Enquirer Military Writer

PLEIKU—Operation Paul Revere, which kicked off its multiunit U.S. attack June 2 but which has been part of a major battle for control of the Central Highlands from the coast to the border since May 17, would be more correctly called the western flank of the allied monsoon offensive.

The Communist summer strategy, designed to take advantage of rain and clouds which would hamper U.S. mobility and air capability, was to have mounted a major monsoon offensive about June 1.

Prisoners, documents captured in battle, and espionage agents have indicated that the enemy strategy depended on these operations:

1. Evacuation of the 2nd Viet Cong Regiment from the valley complex around Bong Son near the South China Sea, northwest of Qui Nhon. The 2nd, called the "Quiet Chin" in its old area, changed its name to the "Song Ba Regiment" and moved to the Vinh Thinh Valley (Happy Valley) to stage a surprise attack along the upper reaches of the Song Ba river.

Propaganda Stroke
The operation, only 10 miles east of An Khe, would be a propaganda stroke; revenge for Communist losses in the 2nd's old area around Bong Son to the 1st Cavalry Division during Operations Mash-er, White Wing and Davy Crockett — and most important — a move designed to keep the flying horsemen tied to a fight in their own back yard.

Wants "Stain" Purged
"My case is not with Rutgers — which is a fine school," Barrett contends, "but with these people (the board of governors). I'll be proud someday to have when they clean this stain on the good reputation of a fine school."

He explained that the "stain" was the influence of Communists or their supporters.

"Genovese can say anything he wants," Barrett said, "but not in a tax-supported school."



2. Movement of the 24th North Vietnamese Regiment out of a hidden base in Kon Tum Province to positions around Dak To, Tourmarang and other outposts held by government forces along the Laotian border.

It was to attack when the Happy Valley offensive was rolling and finally overrun the district capital of Dak To.

3. Infiltration of the remnants of the 66th, 32nd and 3rd North Vietnamese Army Regiments — all were torn up in the Ia Drang valley campaign by the 1st Cavalry Division last October and November into the Kon Tum Province to mount attacks on

the province capital and its outposts.

Thrust Back
4. Raids around Pleiku, around Duc Co on the west and in the Plei Me to Ban Me Thuot area on the south, to be executed by the 18th North Vietnamese Regiment which had been thrust back into Cambodia during March and April by the 1st Cavalry Division's Operation Lincoln.

5. An amalgamated force of Viet Cong "hard core" units, guerrilla bands, and available North Vietnamese reinforcements, to mount an attack against Pleiku itself, striking at air facilities and headquarters and holding the 3rd Brigade, 25th Infantry Division there. Sabotage, terrorism and ambushes were all part of this phase.

In summary, the Communist strategy was partially based

on desperation and partly on hope, according to best information here.

Safe Bases Untenable
Sources in the field believe that the attacks launched by the cavalry division have made so-called "safe base areas" untenable for the Communists and have shown the enemy command that they have not been able to solve the problem of defending against the air mobile power of the division.

Morale, a crippled revolutionary apparatus, the constant pressure and ensuing defeats, could be repaired only by some kind of communist offensive.

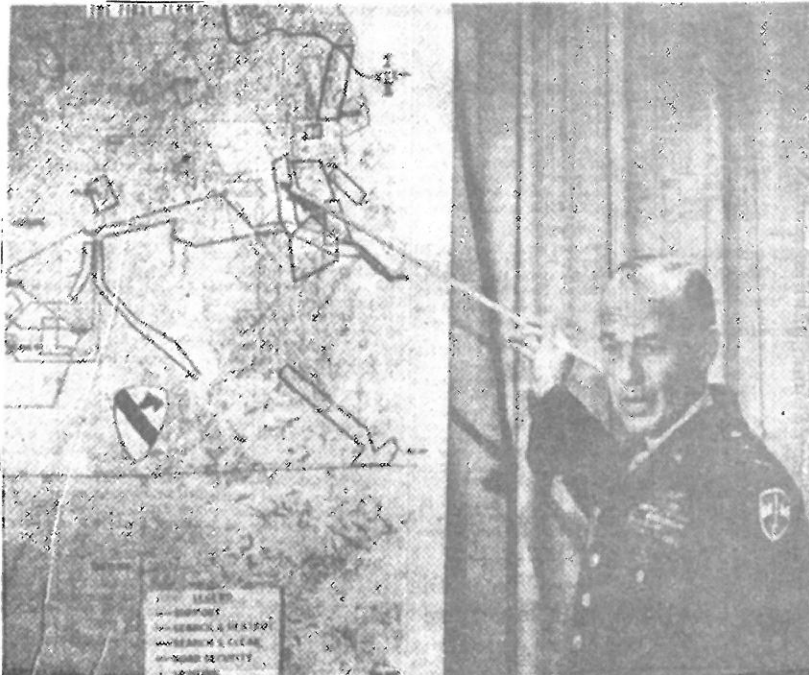
Knocking out the western centers of government and military organization could swing the tide in the II Corps area — and in the long run, the rest of the country.

Flushing the Foe



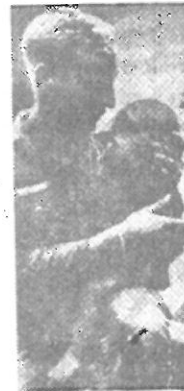
A U. S. First Air Cavalry trooper stands guard as one of three North Vietnamese soldiers, his head bandaged, scrambles from a cave in a cliff near Dong Tre, South Viet Nam. Trio was flushed from their rocky hideout after a photographer spotted them while on Operation Nathan Hale.





BACK FROM THE WAR — Maj. Gen. Harry W. O. Kinnard, former commander of the 1st Cavalry Division, uses a map of the central highland area of South Viet Nam to show his area of responsibility, at a Pentagon press conference Tuesday.

Kinnard, who is slated to become a deputy assistant chief of staff for the Army, said he did not think the war was being won "before the 1st Cavalry got there."—AP Wirephoto.



TENDER CARE—A soldier of the 1st Air Cavalry Division holds a Vietnamese child on his knee near Tuy Hoa in South Vietnam. The U.S. troops entered the village in search of Viet Cong and, failing to find the enemy, set about making friends.—AP Photo.

Kinnard Says

1st Cavalry Difference In Viet Nam

WASHINGTON (AP) — The former commander of the 1st Cavalry Division said Tuesday that in the central highlands area of South Viet Nam, which was his responsibility, "we are winning the war militarily and we can continue winning."

Maj. Gen. Harry W. O. Kinnard said that since he had taken the division to Viet Nam 10 months ago, "there definitely has been a marked and noticeable improvement."

At a Pentagon news conference Kinnard, slated to become a deputy assistant chief of staff for the Army, added he did not think the war was being won "before the 1st Cavalry got there."

Kinnard limited his estimate of the situation to military factors, saying political and economic developments "are up to Prime Minister Ky."

Kinnard described various types of actions his former division, now officially called an airmobile force, had engaged in, including operations along the Cambodian border. He said his force had "chased people to the border, and they kept going west." By people, he made it clear he meant North Vietnamese, their Viet Cong colleagues, or both.

Kinnard said that by "going west" he meant across the border into Cambodia, which has steadfastly maintained it is neutral.

Kinnard repeatedly emphasized that his American troops "did not cross the Cambodian border" and that his division "abided by the rules of engagement, and they are highly classified."

The general declined to be drawn into argument over North Viet Nam's military use of Cambodia, saying "I don't propose to add light or heat" to a state-

ment issued last May 27 by Secretary of Defense Robert S. McNamara.

At that time McNamara said of reports of North Vietnamese activity in Cambodia that the evidence was insufficient to prove the presence of North Vietnamese regiments in Cambodia and that reports of such units being stationed in that country apparently were traceable to movements of North Vietnamese units after fighting in South Viet Nam.

Kinnard agreed, as the McNamara statement noted, that the Viet Nam-Cambodia border was ill defined. Kinnard called the border "a map-makers hell."



HITTING THE DIRT—Troopers of the United States 1st Air Cavalry Division hit the ground to avoid enemy fire during Operation Nathan Hale in the Central Highlands of South Viet Nam about 230 miles northeast of

Saigon. North Vietnamese snipers were firing in front of them and their own men were blasting away with rocket launchers from the rear. (AP Wirephoto)



Marksman of U.S. 1st Air Cavalry Division trains M-14 machine gun on North Vietnamese sniper during Operation Nathan Hale. Ammunition bearer grimaces as he feeds the gun in hunt-and-kill mission.

—Associated Press Wirephoto

Ambush Proves American Soldiers' Killer Instincts

(EDITOR'S NOTE: This is the second of two articles by Charles Black, Enquirer military writer, on an ambush staged by 1st Cavalry Division troops in Viet Nam. Black has returned home from the battle area but his accounts of 1st Cav activities in Viet Nam will continue in The Enquirer.

By CHARLES BLACK
Enquirer Military Writer

AN KHE, South Viet Nam—A good ambush requires patience, stealth and ruthlessness in execution. Americans, according to some theorists, don't possess enough of those qualities to become proper bushwhackers.

The men from Delta Troop, 1st Squadron, 9th Cavalry, getting ready for an ambush they planned the night of May 23 near a wrecked South Vietnamese village named Hoi Son (5) hadn't read or heard about all of that, however. They went about their business with a certain calm attention to detail which would have drawn the envy of Murder Inc.

They, for example, put enough C rations into sacks tied to their belts to last for three days if the affair took that long. They pared the rest of their equipment down to ammunition, weapons, water and hand grenades and Claymore mines.

They also pared away at the inhibitions Americans are supposed to feel over killing an unsuspecting enemy and were remarkably enthusiastic over the prospect, according to Lt. Thomas K. Holland who planned and directed the affair.

Helicopters from C troop dropped down and picked up the 24 soldiers and darted north, scooting through the trees, making feints and dropping down in fake landings. The first pause was real but looked no different from two other swift drops by the choppers in other places. In seconds the three ships were deserted of the men going to make the kill.

There was no talking. Each man carried two Claymore mines, M16 areed plates with stands and an aiming slit, which fires 470 ball bearings in a swath. Holland recalled an expression he heard while attending a class on these things.

"If you fire a Claymore at a picket fence 100 meters away, each picket for 60 meters would have at least one hole in it," he said.

His Claymores would be set up in a complicated cross-hatch of fire zones only 10 meters from the trail. Behind them another 15 or 20 meters,

to escape the blast which flares to the rear of the shaped charge mines, his killer group would then throw two grenades. The work would be finished by a designated team moving out under flare light with M16 rifles.

PFC Theodore Simpson would be the third man on the south, near the bridge. He was to watch for any men on the trail beyond the bridge who weren't hit in the killing zone and to kill them with his M79 grenade launcher. (Another M79 gunner, Sp4 Frederick Everett, as to back him up if needed. Roberts was in the next hiding place.)

SSgt. Herbert E. Jeffery had briefed his men so well that he shortly pointed to positions along a scraggly little hedge and the teams moved there. They set their two Claymores.

Charles Black Reports

aiming them carefully, stringing the wire from the blasting cap set into the top of the mine to the little hand-triggered detonators.

Holland and Jeffery walked along the line about 6:30 and made finicky adjustments in sightings and then got one of SSgt. Lester Everett's Claymores and set it to give an extra crossfire where the footpath crossed the trail. An M60 machine gun was spotted to cover the northern approach from Hoi Son, from where any reinforcements would be expected to come. Sp4 Frederick Carpenter took charge of it with his shotgun handy.

P-Sgt. Russell C. Fordham and Everett worked it all out in the rear, setting up the same kind of deathtrap there.

Nobody would fire, nobody would talk, move or smoke, Holland, who took the first watch, or Fordham who would take over at midnight, hidden in grass only 15 feet from the south bridge, would set off the ambush by triggering their two Claymores. The rear guard would not fire. They would watch until Everett spotted danger and opened up.

"Before we left the troop area, I got my scouts together and designated two men to each position and told them where the position would be at the ambush. They knew what to do, there wasn't any need to talk," Jeffrey said.

"All he had to do was point. The same thing was true with Everett. There wasn't any talk from when we left the area on the choppers until the ambush was triggered. There wasn't any need for it," Holland said.

"Well all had coordination before we left, everybody was

briefed and knew his job. Holland did say one thing," Everett said. "This is it," he said when we got there."

"Well, we had moved to the site. I wanted an area with cover off the trail and enough clear ground in the killing zone to use the mines right. The bridges were ideal, they were noisy and would give warning when men crossed them no matter how dark it was. I said 'this is it' and the men went to work," Holland said.

The ambush was sprung within two hours from the time the last Claymore was aimed. Holland described how it happened.

"We had been set up and in position for an hour when shortly after 7:30 I heard movement to the south. After a few minutes, they rattled across the bridge and up the trail 15 feet from me, sounding like a herd of elephants. I thought there were ten, it was very dark, walking fast and close together. It turned out there were more of them. Fordham was behind me, 30 feet back in the brush with the radio operation and Lt. Joseph Jordan. He came on at midnight," Holland said.

"The group stopped for some reason after they went by me. I triggered my two Claymores and then raised up and threw two hand grenades. Every Claymore along the trail, all 13 of them, and eight other hand grenade explosions, came within 30 seconds. I heard moans and raised up from the grass. I fired an M16 then. Others were firing. Bodies seemed to be piled up on top of each other, thrown into a heap by those Claymore blasts, all piled in an area the length of a jeep! I heard an M79 round go off on the south of the bridge and saw a man fall over there, then I went back to the CP and had Jordan call for flares.

I popped a hand flare to give the cleanup team some light and we looked the trail over in both directions. The man Simpson had killed was lying in the road but there was nobody else except in the kill zone," Holland said.

"I called to Sgt. Rudolph Burns and he took PFC David Spaulding, Carpenter, PFC Rufus Hagins, Sp4 Claude Robinson and PFC Charles Polisky down onto the trail. They used their M16s to make certain everybody was dead and then popped up weapons, gear and papers while 'Burns and I each made a body count and checked each other on it."

Holland finished off one wounded with two shots in the head. There were 14 in that stack and one more beyond the bridge. The 14 were badly mutilated by the Claymores and the other stuff.

"They had lost arms and legs in fact, all there in that pile, all dead," Jeffrey said. "Everett, in the rear, had heard the Communists across the bridge and had a few moments of tenseness when he thought they had turned to come by him.

"Then the scouts opened up. It was just one explosion. The flare went off and I knew they had finished it. There was an M79 burst at the last, down the trail from me. M16 fire kept sounding for awhile then it got quiet again. My men didn't fire because there was nothing in our area to the rear," Everett said.

The artillery flares came and the team organized to pull out, distributing the documents, packs, weapons, etc., taken from the dead soldiers and due to be delivered to American intelligence officers who would fit them into a pattern for the next moves.

Jordan brought his carefully planned artillery concentrations down, cutting off any approach to the little ambush party as it hurried through the dark.

"It was great, it just boxed us in, 200 meters away, putting up a fence to keep the VC from any move," Fordham said.

The helicopters were on their way to the rendezvous when the platoon arrived at the pre-

planned pickup zone. Holland pulled the wire on a trip flare and three UH-1Ds swooped into the clearing.

"We got on. We had one man wounded from a piece of flying shrapnel but he wasn't hurt badly. He was one of the off-duty ones sleeping and he got up when the ambush exploded and got a cut jaw. That was the limit of our troubles," Holland said.

They were back at the command post giving details to Capt. Oliver Gillette by 10:25 p.m. The troop commander congratulated them and went back to planning the next day.

A helicopter swooped down over the ambush site three days later. The unburied bodies remained where they had fallen. The people and buffalo going from one hamlet

to another had beaten a new path, shunning the death scene. The new path jogged sharply up the slope and followed the straggly hedgerow where the ambush team had hidden, curving back to the other bridge. It looked illogical and generations later some Vietnamese farmer traveling from Hoi Son (5) to Than Pan (1) may wonder why the path does not follow a straight line.

The ambush team dropped down in the daylight and again checked their work on the third day. A senior officer had spotted the unburied enemy and was offended by the sight. He had ordered them to go back and bury the bodies and the team said—to a man—that this was an awful experience to go through.

8 JUL 1966

The Birmingham News

Wasn't funny then, GI says of freak ambush

By BERNIE FELD III
News staff writer

"It makes a good story, but it wasn't very funny then."

Pfc. Lacey Skinner, a soldier in the First Cavalry Division, was recounting the ambush his patrol ran into which was set by their own men.

Skinner is home on leave now with his parents, Mr. and Mrs. Grady Skinner of Graysville Rt. 1. He was in Viet Nam for five months, and he spent much of that time in combat.

He talks willingly about his experiences, but he won't mention that he has been recommended for two medals and a promotion. He'll probably receive the Purple Heart when he returns to Walter Reed Hospital after his leave is up on July 28.

THE SLENDER, red-haired Doc, a High School graduate is not the type of person you would expect to see crawling in the mud in a place like Viet Nam. Lots of people did see him crawling in a ditch when Life Magazine did a story on the war about three months ago.

"I had two pictures in Life," he said, "but that kind of popularity I can do without."

Skinner's patrol was attempting to set up an ambush one night when it ended up being ambushed by another Army company.

"We'd been out on a mission for two weeks and we were setting up an ambush," he said. "No one had any business out there then except Charlie (the Viet Cong). It was so dark that you couldn't see your hand in front of your face, and they had to shoot up flares for us from base camp.

"WE CALLED back and asked the CO if any friendly forces were in front of us. He said no.

"They shot up a flare, we moved out, and Charlie Company opened up on us. They had an ambush set up on the same trail."

Skinner said three men in his patrol were hit including himself. One man in Charlie Company was killed.

"AFTER I GOT hit," Skinner went on, "Charlie Company heard us talking and

planned pickup zone. Holland pulled the wire on a trip flare and three UH-1Ds swooped into the clearing.

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They had us pinned down in Bong Son, and the planes dropped napalm almost all day. They burned most of the jungle away."

The U. S. is getting some help from its allies, too. "I think those Aussies over there are by far the best jungle fighters," Skinner says, "and the Roks (South Koreans) don't play around either."

Americans at home have been criticized for their lack of support for U. S. fighting men, but the Graysville infantryman says that's a simple question to answer.

"When you're out in the field and get a letter addressed to any GI and it's from a 19-year-old girl telling you what a great job you're doing, it just makes these boys feel great," he said. "Some of them don't have any family, and when they come back to camp and see a package, tears come to their eyes."

The demonstrators don't bother them too much. "We realize they're in a minority, and we just pretty much feel sorry for them," he said.

"We realize there is more to winning the war than just killing enemy soldiers. Skinner says that when he was in a hospital there "I kidded the medic about the easy job he had. 'You know what I do my off days,' he told me. 'There is this village called Bong Son. Some of us medics get in a chopper, and we go out there and we try to help these people. We have to win the people before we can win the war.'"

Getting supplies wasn't much of a problem most of the time. "The way these choppers come in with C rations and water is really amazing," Skinner said. "The only time we had a problem with supplies was when we were pinned down for three days. And after we got Charlie out we found about 175 chickens that they had stored in the villages."

American GIs realize also that there is more to winning the war than just killing enemy soldiers. Skinner says that when he was in a hospital there "I kidded the medic about the easy job he had. 'You know what I do my off days,' he told me. 'There is this village called Bong Son. Some of us medics get in a chopper, and we go out there and we try to help these people. We have to win the people before we can win the war.'"

According to Skinner, the Viet Cong aren't the GIs big problem. "We're not afraid of the VC. Nine times out of 10 they don't hit in large force. We have a lot of respect for the North Vietna-

hollered. We hollered back Gary Owens — Gen. Curtis's favorite song — the soldiers greet their officers with it instead of good morning and they knew we were American."

Much of Skinner's five months in Viet Nam was spent in the field. "We made our home in a foxhole, or we might build a little shed with poles and vines. We learned all this from Charlie," he explained.

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LACEY SKINNER

Later Events Bring Revision Of 'Order Of Battle'

(EDITOR'S NOTE: Charles Black, Enquirer military writer, continues his reports on activities of the U.S. fighting men in Viet Nam. Black, who recently returned from his third assignment to the Asian battlefields, also has resumed his coverage of military affairs at Fort Benning.)

By CHARLES BLACK
Enquirer Military Writer

DONG TRE — An estimate of the "order of battle" which

the Communists were fielding in their wrecked monsoon offensive attempt written before "Operation Hawthorne" smashed the 24th North Vietnamese Regiment and thwarted the plans of the 32nd, 66th, and 88th regiments needs revision in light of later events. The 18th North Vietnamese regiment was said to have been the victim of two defeats by the 1st Cavalry Division in Operation Lincoln and by the 3rd Brigade, 25th Infantry in Operation Paul Revere and then to have retreated back to its sanctuary in the Ia

Drang River — Chu Pong Mountain area of Cambodia. The 33rd Regiment was included as one of the regiments refitted after the Communist debacle during October-November 1965 in the Cambodian border area. Prisoners seized here, including "cooperative officers," say the 18th Regiment was ordered to leave the action during Operation Lincoln after a single losing fight with Americans March 30-31. They said the 18th slipped away

from there and infiltrated to the coast.

The fighting was turned over to the 33rd Regiment, which suffered the heavy losses described in accounts of

Charles Black Reports

Lincoln's fighting. The losses to the Communists in the fighting of Paul Revere were probably in the 66th Regiment.

Both these units have been old-time sacrifice outfits. The

33rd was put back together from a regiment called "101-B" which was pounded down to the size of a provisional battalion in last fall's encounter with the 1st Cavalry Division.

The 66th Regiment provided a huge portion of the carnage around Chu Pong Mountain and, even after replacements and rest, was at less than half strength when Operation Hawthorne and Operation Paul Revere were launched.

Dubious Sanctuary The terrible blows dealt the

33rd, 66th, and 32nd in the western plateau and the malaria incidence, lack of food, and constant pressure, are believed to have driven them away from that dubious sanctuary.

Late reports said they have deserted the advantages of their Cambodian and Laotian sanctuaries and commenced following the 18th toward the coast after finding their final objective — the attack on Dak To, Toumarong, Kontum, etc. — blocked by the U. S. move-

The Miami Herald
Thursday, July 14, 1966 21-F

Young General Has Swift Punch

TUY HOA, South Viet Nam — (AP) — Maj. Gen. John Norton, commander of the U.S. First Air Cavalry Division, is a tough soldier who can fly a plane or a helicopter. He is qualified as a master parachutist, and made four combat jumps with the 82nd Airborne Division during World War II.

The 48-year-old general, who took command of the division two months ago, is enthusiastic about what he calls the third dimension — mobility. He was a pioneer in this field in the mid 1950's and early 1960's, and he now commands the only division of its kind with an armada of 465 helicopters.

With such a mobile force, the First Cavalry Division can move great distances with speed, drop into the enemy's rear or on his flanks and continue moving. The cavalrymen have won several victories over North Vietnamese army regulars in the Central Highlands.

When a new Vietnamese division commander visited him recently, Norton told him: "I think the enemy's on the ropes."

Later, Norton told a newsmag: "I know we have the military victory in our hands. There are signs that the economical and political victories are near. Complete victory is now possible and may be closer at hand than many people realize. I think the military man has been very much encouraged with

the progress the South Vietnamese government has made against various factions.

"I don't believe this division has met any North Vietnamese or Viet Cong units it hasn't decisively defeated. I think the ones we have fought, we have smashed, disorganized and demolished.

"Those North Vietnamese units, reconstituted and re-equipped and which have received replacements, have a rather desperate mission, related to gaining a tactical or strategic victory in the next few months before the South Vietnamese elections.

"We have the power and know-how to use it decisively to defeat their forces. For him to gain a decisive victory, he has to mass. This division has the speed of reaction to counter any move he makes, prevent him from accomplishing his objective and destroy a large part of

his force before he can get away."

Gen. Norton has his division headquarters set up at Tuy Hoa for operation Nathan Hale. In the opening days of the operation, 5,000 cavalrymen killed more than 300 North Vietnamese. Recalling that operation, Norton said: "We literally decimated one of his battalions. And some unknown proportion of the remainder of that regiment."

Norton is austere and a disciplinarian. In the field, he sleeps on an air mattress placed on the ground. It is covered by a mosquito net. There are only a field desk and chair in his tent.

"I have just enough time to myself," Norton said, "to write to my family and a few friends. Getting around and seeing the troops and flying myself — I average about two hours a day in the air — keeps me in good physical shape."

Norton is 6-1 and weighs 175 pounds.

"I think that's exactly what I weighed when I got out of West Point in 1941," he said.

Norton's wife, Cheyney, and two teenage daughters are living in Honolulu. His 18-year-old son, John Jr., entered West Point July 1. After completing a year in the Army as an enlisted man.

Norton was born at Fort Monroe, Va., April 14, 1918, the son of an Army officer. After graduating from Maury High School in Norfolk in 1936, Norton enlisted in the Army and served as a Coast artilleryman at Fort Monroe until entering West Point in 1937.

His parents, Mr. and Mrs. Augustus Norton, still live in Norfolk. His 78-year-old father retired as an Army colonel.

Gen. Norton served with

the 82nd Airborne Division in North Africa in World War II and later became an assistant chief of staff of that division. He recalls that in 1955:

The First Air Cavalry Division now has three brigades, one of which is airborne qualified. The total strength of the division is about 2,000 men.

Norton likes to tell the story about a captured North Vietnamese company commander he interrogated.

"He told me he and most of his compatriots had been told by superiors that American air power, artillery and helicopters were strong, very deadly, but the American infantry was weak. In this attack he led, he lost 121 dead while three soldiers were wounded on our side.

"Now, what do you think of the American infantry?" I asked him.

"They lied to me," he said.

which culminated in Operation Hawthorne.

The battered regiments apparently hope to find solace and recruits among the hard pressed Viet Cong units along the South China sea. If they finally abandon the west, it is a major defeat of Communist strategy and places these units in a desperate situation. Retreat from such forward areas would be terribly costly. They face annihilation, trapped miles from sanctuary.

If they have followed the 18th toward the coast, the aimless tactics and wanderings of these Communist units in recent battles will have had the final effect. The conventional forces sent here to win the victory the Communists hoped for in the highlands will have been sacrificed for sterile, futile goals and the lives of the very brave but outclassed North Vietnamese soldiers tossed into a political stew pot.

Tremendous Effect The effect on Hanoi and on the people of North Viet Nam of the losses in these units will have a tremendous effect on the course of this war.

Sending regular regiments on a long walk to coastal battlefields long since dominated by American power, after those regiments have already endured terrible punishment, is a peculiarly brutal act for responsible military commanders to perform.

The slippery 18th showed up here June 19 in a sudden onslaught against two outposts of the Dong Tre Special Forces camp in the classical ambush of a relief force. It had pinned down the separated platoon of Company A and Company C, 2nd Battalion, 327th Infantry of the 101st Airborne Division after those units landed in an obvious landing zone, close by Viet Cong riddled villages under the slope of a mountain.

It commenced its death pains, finally, June 21 when the 1st Battalion, 8th Cavalry was helicoptered to the rescue of the battered 101st Airborne companies.

Lop-Sided Victory On June 21, a single company of Sky Troopers — Company B, of the 1st of the 8th commanded by Capt. Gervell Plummer — killed 114 (by body count) of an attacking force of about 200, suffering six minor casualties in the process, in one of the most lop-sided small unit victories of this war. (The two companies of the pinned 101st Airborne troops had counted 69 enemy dead. Other Air Cavalry units in the fighting killed an-

other 142 Communists in the first five days since their commitment to the battle, and the relentless pursuit which has been typical of Air Cavalry fighting in the past ten months has commenced.

Reports that one more North Vietnamese Regiment — variously identified but possibly the 34th or 37th — has drifted into the southeast section of the Central Highlands are firmer than ever. The regiment could be in the Cheo Reo-Danlac area or it could be southwest of the present fighting, nearer the coast.

A second force of Air Cavalry battalions, (the wild card which fills out the U. S. military hand since Communist strategy was ruined by Operation Crazy Horse which eliminated an attempt to keep the airborne unit pinned in its own base area) has already been launched into the most likely hiding spot of that regiment. Any action it takes will hold only minimum content of surprise — as did the 18th Regiment's foray here on June 19.

Knowledge that another outpost was to be attacked, the availability of a mobile reserve force which has the best combat record in Viet Nam (with statistical proof of Air Cavalry prowess a matter of official record the comparative comment is justified), enabled Maj. Gen. Stanley (Steve) Larsen's corps command to slap the Communist hopes into oblivion almost in passing. Any attack west of here or attempted reinforcement of the now-dying 18th Regiment would simply compound the disaster already suffered by the monsoon offensive.

Suffered Same Fate

The 18th's fate was the same, whether it took the losses here or on the Cambodian border. The concentration of losses suffered during Operations Lincoln and Paul Revere in the 33rd and 66th Regiments, in fact, hurt more. Those units simply added another defeat to their dismal past experience.

With the 18th now thoroughly battered, the 24th, 33rd and 66th smashed and remashed, the coastal regiments 19-A, 95th, 101 and 2nd Viet Cong ruined around Bong Son and during Crazy Horse, the forces left intact to the Communist commanders are very slim. The 88th, 97th, (or 34th) and the remainder of the 32nd left from Plei Me about complete the roster unless Hanoi has enough desperation to send more men and supplies into the bloody pit.



Charles Black Reports

Three Men Offer Own Bodies To Save Wounded Comrades

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By CHARLES BLACK
Enquirer Military Writer

AN KHE — These men on June 17 offered their own bodies to save wounded comrades they were treating on a lonely battlefield near Tamaron when Company A, 1st Battalion, 327th Infantry called in First Cavalry Division artillery and helicopter rockets on its own position:

Spl4 Giacomo Cintianeo, PFC Rene Gosslen, PFC Roger Chale. They are combat medics. All are now patients in the Second Field Surgical Hospital here — as are the men they saved from further wounds.

PFC Glenn Furlough, with a handgaged bullet wound directly in the center of his chest (the slug miraculously ricocheted from a bone and did not kill him) is in the hospital cot next to Cintianeo and tells anyone who asks that "... the Doc there saved my life.

"He was giving me first aid. I saw a rifle flash 40 meters from me in the brush and then I was down. Then he ran over and commenced working on me.

"When the artillery and rockets came in on us, he lay on top of me and covered me with his own body. He stayed there when he was hit in the back by fragments," Furlough said.

All of the medics with the company did the same, sheltering seriously wounded men with their own bodies, taking artillery or rocket shrapnel wounds which would otherwise hurt the wounded men again, remaining in the open during the fury of a fight which was so close that

the company called for its own support weapons to shoot on top of the G. I.'s own positions to smash a foe which outnumbered them and closed in.

Spent Night on Ridge
The company had been on a ridge overnight in a perimeter defense with other units of the 101st Airborne Division's 1st Brigade, when orders came to sweep out in small unit searches of the area.

"It was fine in the perimeter. We were all together and we had plenty of help. Then we broke down into companies and platoons again. This is a different enemy than the Viet Cong guerrillas. They are in small units, they shoot and run. Three times we have hit into battalions of these North Vietnamese soldiers in the past two months, and they keep on fighting. This kind of fighting is different than any we have done before," Cintianeo said.

The 23-year-old paratrooper medic, a professional soldier by his own definition, has been in the Army for six years. He re-enlisted and asked for duty with the Screaming Eagles in Viet Nam in March. He had his first combat experience in the coastal areas where the paratroopers have long contended with Viet Cong guerrillas by breaking their forces down into small units and making long patrols.

"It is hard to find the VC and you have to go after him differently. But these regular troops always seem to have a battalion dug in. We always seem to be outnumbered and have to fight him hard and close. Every fight in this operation (Hawthorne) has been like that! When we called in the Air Cavalry artillery and the helicopters, they made him pull back and quit. He was close, right on top of us. It was what we had to do. They had .50 calibre machine guns and all kinds of automatic weapons. We were pinned for four hours until we got that fire right on top of us," Cintianeo said.

Early reports from the isolated fight said five men had been killed and others wounded by friendly artillery fire and that there "were no other details available." The artillery and rocket fire, according to the soldiers in the fight, was deliberate and intentional — and the salvation of the surrounded company.

Evacuated by Helicopters
The patients brought to the An Khe hospital by helicopter after medical evacuation pilots had lifted them from the battlefield said one platoon of their company had left in advance to provide forward security, traveling down the steep ridge on a narrow trail. The woods and underbrush were thick.

About 350 yards from the place where the march had started, the company (with the file of men moving slowly and cautiously) was hit by fire from the front and the left flank.

"The right side of the trail was simply a sheer drop. There wasn't any cover there," Furlough said.

The front platoon pulled back, then the company attempted to move back up the trail to get out of the fire. Communist weapons opened up from the rear and stopped the maneuver.

"When the fire came from the rear we simply had one choice, form as good a perimeter as we could and fight it out where we were," Furlough said.

The company was isolated and hard pressed for four hours. The enemy pressed close. His automatic weapons fire and superior numbers allowed him to push in almost to the company's hastily dug positions and to escape the artillery fire brought in to aid the surrounded paratroopers.

The heroic medics, warned to take cover because of the impending barrage, instead chose to save the wounded they were treating.

Cintianeo said that "... it is a funny thing to say, but the shells and rockets that wounded us saved our lives. After the helicopters came in and fired those rockets, there wasn't any more shooting. They ran them out and we were evacuated."



1ST CAVALRY DIVISION MEDICS GIVE AID TO WOUNDED NORTH VIETNAMESE OFFICER. Pfc. Mike Caldwell, left, Quincy, Ill., and SP4 William Wisebey, Durand, Mich.

—THE INDIANAPOLIS STAR—



IN DEPTHS OF JUNGLE—Capt. Frederick Mayer (left) of Connecticut, briefs Sgt. John L. Bryant of Fayetteville, N.C., and First Lt. David Poor (right) of Kansas,

during Operation Henry Clay by 1st Cavalry Division troops in action that took place about 250 miles north of Saigon last week. (UPI Telephotos)



They Lay Wounded as VC Approached

BY CHARLES BLACK
Ledger-Enquirer Staff Writer

AN KHE — PFC John Spanza, wounded by bullets and shrapnel, lay in 12-foot-tall elephant grass and watched Sgt. Robert M. Kirby fire the last shot of the 45-minute battle between 22 Americans and 300 Viet Cong which took place on "Landing Zone Hereford."

Kirby had thrown his last hand grenade.

The 29-year-old NCO from Selby, N. C., had fired his last M79 grenade launcher round.

He had loaned his pistol to a magazine photographer who had just died in a burst of machine-gun fire — fighting alongside the last half-dozen GIs left in the struggle.

"That last VC in the bunch who had been looking for us down in the elephant grass came back. He was three feet from Kirby, who was in front of me. Kirby was bleeding from fragments in his head and a bullet in his arm. He had a 40 mm. Communist flare pistol he had picked up over on the Cambodian border and one round of red flare for it. He had it out and cocked, and I remembered hoping the VC would just go on by...but he didn't," PFC Spanza said.

"Poked Head In"

Sgt. Kirby was lying on his back, the flare pistol held ready when "... the VC parted the grass and poked his head in. He looked at me; his face was about three feet from the flare pistol muzzle. I pulled the trigger. It ruined his whole day. He gave a grunt and flopped back over. I could hear his body thumping when it rolled down the slope. That was it — all I figured it was time to get away," Kirby said.

LZ Hereford is now an ugly, scarred, blackened, deserted nob which rises abruptly from the tag end of a ridge ten miles northeast of An Khe. During Operation Crazy Horse it was the scene of bustling activity, of tragedy and drama — and finally of the end of an American platoon.

It is now a monument to the fighting courage of Americans — including that of Sam Castan of Look Magazine who was killed there.

There were five men still alive after the last-ditch struggle on May 21 or the mortar platoon from Capt. Donald Warren's Company C, First Battalion (Airborne), 12th Cavalry.

Only One Unhurt

All except Sp4 Nathaniel Johnson were wounded, and he was in great shock after the fight, but came back to duty.

Kirby, an NCO about whom not enough can be said in praise of courage, leadership and cold fighting ability, returned to his company quickly after a short

hospital stay for a dozen fragment wounds and the bullet through his arm.

He was very calm and matter of fact when talking about the fight. He has been in many others since he first clashed with the Communists on a battlefield last October, and had borne other wounds from bullets during the Plei Me-La Drang campaign in November and the fighting at Song Son in February.

The other survivors were evacuated.

After Kirby had fired the unlikely weapon which killed the searching Viet Cong Main Force soldier, he made a typically cool assessment of his chances.

All Separated

"We were all separated by now. Spanza had crawled up the hill after I finished that last one. Six feet from each other that grass, you were lost. The artillery was raising hell, plowing into the LZ. I figured Charlie wouldn't want to be there. That was the place for me. I just crawled through the grass to where the shells were landing and waited for the company to come back. I knew they would. They did. I came out and the GIs were there...St. Earl Roberts ran over first. I remember he was crying, tears running down his face. God, he looked good," Sgt. Kirby said.

One by one the others came up through the grass from hiding places or were found by the questing patrols of their company. Johnson had hidden in bushes along a little creek in a gully. The other survivors had barely missed a last Viet Cong whiff, laid in grass along the hillside and watched the Communists dragging more than 60 of their own dead off down a trail to a jungled valley.

The fight was one which will be talked about for a long time in Air Cavalry circles, and because so few men are alive who really know what happened, it is one which will be conjectured over.

GIs' Account

The way it happened, according to the Kirby and Johnson was like this:

Castan, the Senior editor of Look in the Vietnamese area, came to An Khe to "walk with a company of soldiers and to do a picture story." He was around the press camp the night before, joking with Maj. Chuck Siler, the division public information officer, over the sight of men filling sandbags because an attack (which came) was expected on the base and men naturally think about improving bunkers at times like that.

"Don't worry. Nothing will happen as long as I'm here. I'm the luckiest guy in Viet Nam," Castan said.

The 31-year-old photographer had been in Viet Nam for three

years, his wife and young daughter lived in Hong Kong where he commuted between assignments, and he was an old hand at living with the tension behind even quiet days in the fighting zone of the Central Highlands.

Center of Action

Operation Crazy Horse had been wending its violent way for five days and for four of them LZ Hereford had been its nucleus. The first helicopters had landed there — only two could come in on the bare knob at a time, it was decided, after one had rolled down the steep slope into elephant grass attempting a landing too close to the edge — and the activity was continuous.

Supplies were dropped here, wounded were carried back here for evacuation and reinforcements landed in a steady stream. Both Company A and Company C of Lt. Col. Rutland Beard's First of the 12th were in a perimeter defense around it and the jungle edging down from the top of the ridge to within 100 yards of the bare knob had been combed again and again.

Sgt. Kirby had dug in the position for his mortar tube toward the northwest side of the clearing. A circle of holes was dug for defense works. The elephant grass grew twice as tall as a man down an almost precipitous slope to a little creek to the southwest. An equally steep slope leading to a taller ridge came then.

If the trail on top of that next ridge were followed, it would lead to the Song Ba River and a ford which gave access to the Dinh Binh Special Forces camp which held Happy Valley (as GIs call the Vinh Thinh Valley, its formal name). The fighting had come when a Communist regiment's preparation for an attack on that camp were uncovered on May 16.

Routine Start

Sam Castan got there about 7:15 a.m. on a chopper bringing in C rations. It was the start of a hot day and what appeared to be a fairly routine one. Company C was going to leave the mortar platoon here to fire support as it crossed to the next ridge and walked 2½ miles (but a gruelling affair of brush, mountain and head which made

the distance seem imposing) to the camp.

The mortar platoon, 21 men under command of Sgt. Kirby, would be picked up by choppers.

That was how it started. Another hot, dusty, exhausting day with the chances for death at everybody's elbow, just like most such days.

About 10:30 a.m., Company A, which had occupied the section of the perimeter nearest the thick jungle up the slope from LZ Hereford, pulled out. Sgt. Kirby had been firing his mortars to clear the point and flanks for his company as it sloggled through the elephant grass and "wait-a-minute" thorn vines toward the Song Ba River.

Word came in, Kirby said, that helicopters would pick them up about 12:45 p.m.

Holes All Over

"There were 21 GIs and Castan. There were holes all over the LZ and I couldn't cover the whole perimeter. I put my security in a kind of arc along the lower side in the clearing to cover the mortar tubes. I had a position up ahead on each flank to cover a couple of gullies. We had a good field of fire across the LZ — the grass was cut down or burned off — but that jungle up at the top...you couldn't see into it," he said.

The woodline at the top had been heavily patrolled for four days, however, and there was no urgent feeling about it.

"Castan said he was staying with us because he thought we were the ones who would get hit. I didn't believe him then, but I wish I had. The position on our right saw them, 250 or 300 of them, moving out of the trees," Kirby said.

The entire line of GIs opened fire. The heavily camouflaged Viet Cong assaulted, screaming, grenading and firing. The M16 rifle and M79 grenade launcher barrage from the handful of Americans stopped them.

Rain Rockets

The Viet Cong began raining rockets onto the LZ. The rocket launcher, a shoulder affair which fires a slow-moving projectile which can be seen arcing through the air, trailing smoke and flame, is the equivalent of the M79. It hurt.

"They were landing in the mortar pit. I yelled to turn the tubes around to fire on them. The guys there couldn't. They were all hit or pushed back from the tubes by those rockets," Kirby said.

Johnson said he was driven from the pit and ran over a little rise of ground to the forward rifle positions, firing an M16 until it ran out of ammunition.

"There were about 60 of them trying to come up that gully. We shot them and grenaded them and we were getting fire and grenades back. Everybody got it but me over there. I ran out of ammo. I ran back to the mortar pit and hollered for them to throw me some ammunition. There wasn't anybody there. I got two M-16s with clips and I moved up to the rise to a hole and kept firing," Johnson said.

Kirby said Castan ran and jumped into his hole.

Companion Killed

Castan said the NCO he had been with was killed.

"When in the hell are we

going to get out of here?" Kirby said Castan asked him.

"Then he asked me for a pistol and I loaned him my .375 magnum and a handful of ammunition. I looked around and hollered for a count and there were six GIs and Castan alive. I hollered, 'Let's Make it!' Kirby said.

The men lunged up from the holes, backing off the LZ with its 15 dead Americans and at least 60 dead Communists littering the little battlefield.

"Johnson rared up. He came up hollering, backing off and shooting both M16s. I saw him backing off, then he dived into the elephant grass. The rest of us kept backing. All of us were hit. Castan was hit with fragments and had a bullet in his arm. He was backing off and firing. When we hit the grass we started running downhill. There was a trail, we saw it and somebody yelled, 'Hold up! We all knew they would have it covered. Castan ran on and I heard the machine gun. He yelled, 'I'm hit! I'm hit bad! I couldn't see him but I knew that was it. He had left his cameras on the hill and when I told him about it, just as we hit the grass, he said, 'We'll worry about that later,' and kept on shooting. He was a good guy. We all liked him," Kirby said.

Slumps Into Grass

Another GI was hit by the same automatic weapon and slumped dead into the grass. Then the little handful of survivors split, with Kirby killing one VC at point blank range with an M79, throwing grenades which he and Spanler said "killed seven right in one little bunch," and finally shooting that last flare.

Kirby said that when he tumbled into the open when Charlie Company came back 45 minutes later "... the guys I saw were crying. I guess I was too. There was some good men killed there."

us, Ga., Tuesday Morning, July 19, 1966

Charles Black Reports

'Crazy Horse' Was Apt Name

(EDITOR'S NOTE: Charles Black, Enquirer military writer, has returned from Viet Nam where he worked 3½ months covering activities of the 1st Cavalry Division. In addition to continuing his articles on the Asian war, Black also has resumed his coverage of troop activities at Fort Benning. Following is the first of three articles on Operation Crazy Horse.)

By CHARLES BLACK
Enquirer Military Writer

AN KHE — Operation Crazy Horse got its name on May 18, courtesy of the 2nd Battalion, 12th Cavalry. The outfit landed on a piece of Viet Nam even more weirdly arranged than most of the mountain range flanking Happy Valley east of An Khe, where the issue was decided with a 1st Air Cavalry victory over the 2nd Viet Cong Regiment.

Lt. Col. Otis Lynn the battalion commander, Maj. Gene Fox, the battalion operations officer, and Capt. Joseph R. Beeman, commander of Bravo Company which landed there first, had been told the little clearing was named "Landing Zone Horse."

Things Happen

During the day of May 18, a lot of things happened around LZ Horse and it became a kind of joke at the battalion command post to call it "The craziest horse ever seen." Col. Lynn reached back into old Cavalry history, pulled out the name of Sitting Bull's famous war chief, Crazy Horse, and

the campaign was named. Beeman started the day of May 17 by landing on LZ Horse at 11:15 a.m. and meeting Lt. Bruce Wilson whose reconnaissance platoon had just checked the place out.

"The LZ looked secure. I talked to Bruce for a minute, then got word from Col. Lynn to push out to hill 766. We kept arguing about that for the next two days. The map is very inaccurate. I never did get on 766, to tell you the truth. I got on a foothill of it. Every now and then during the next couple of days we would have this argument about the hill. Once I remember he said 'Look, you hard-head, you're not on hill 766. Whether you believe it or not, you're just not on it,' Beeman said.

Where Shooting Was

The matter of the proper hill name was one of aesthetics of course, because the location of B Company was very easy to determine. It was where all the shooting was.

Beeman moved up the slope of 766—as shown incorrectly on the maps of this wild Crazy Horse area—with his company's feet wet.

"We had to cross a little creek and then head straight up a slope. It was one where you really had to grab for the vines. Those big, wet boots made the first 75 yards like a ski slide and it took some scrambling. It was a tough climb for 30 minutes and then it got tougher because we started taking small arms fire about half way up," he related.

From the air, the hill described as 766 on the map is a vastly different arrangement than the one on paper. It is creased in the middle by a gorge 250 yards deep with the southern section of the mass, shown as one big hill by the cartographers, actually a T-bone shaped hill all its own.

Firing Stopped Climb

The small arms fire, which sounded like two weapons, one fully automatic, effectively stopped the scrambling climb of Beeman's three platoons, although it hadn't hit anyone yet. He decided to have this third platoon work on the problem from the first line of march while he moved the first and second platoon around to the northwest in a circular approach to the top.

The fire from the hilltop was too high to bother the two platoons and it went well. The third platoon kept the snipers engaged with fire of their own.

The fire was getting heavier and more effective on the third platoon as it tried to move ahead, however. The terrain was rough, there was some grass and scrub brush, a very tall tree growth over this. The shadows were heavy and we couldn't spot the enemy," Beeman said. "The third platoon was laying down a good base of fire and hadn't taken any casualties yet."

Achieved Position

He managed to achieve a position west of the steep

banked saddle which didn't show on the map, putting his second platoon in to cover the rear and moving the first platoon onto the top.

"The first platoon was hit by three machine guns and seven or eight rifles. We had moved the V. C. out of some holes here coming up. We were in the open and the fire was very heavy. There was an empty Cong position behind a tree and I grabbed it for a command post—and later on found out it was about 20 feet from two machine gun positions," Beeman said.

The third platoon had come under heavy fire by now and had three casualties.

"I decided the weapons platoon wasn't in a good spot up on the slope. I sent them and the second platoon down to the hill base again to set up and support us and they also took the casualties down," Beeman said.



Staff Drawing by Angelo Franco

Charles Black Reports

'Friends' Help Company A Own Wrong Hill

(EDITOR'S NOTE: Charles Black Enquirer military writer, has returned from Viet Nam where he worked 3 1/2 months covering activities of the 1st Cavalry Division. In addition to continuing his articles on the Asian war, Black also has resumed coverage of troop activities at Fort Benning. Following is the last of three articles on Operation Crazy Horse.)

By CHARLES BLACK
Enquirer Military Writer

AN KHE — Capt. Joseph Beeman had led his Company A, 2nd Battalion, 12th Cavalry into a bitter fight on top of a mountain ridge during Operation Crazy Horse on May 18.

A Viet Cong charge had come in within yards of his own position and he had fired on the advancing enemy and killed one of them.

"You know, until now I really didn't think we had done them any damage. All we could see were more and more of them filtering in toward us. All of the fire we were putting out, I should have known it, but you just couldn't tell," Beeman said as he described the burst of action which opened May 19, on the wrong hill.

Lt. Col. Otis Lynn, battalion commander, called on the radio then and asked if Beeman was "having a mad minute?" (A preplanned all-out fire used to clear an area in front of a position in which every man fires as fast as he can for one minute.)

"Charlie is!" I told him, "no, but Charlie is!" I told him my situation and said I thought I needed help. He sent two platoons up from Company A then and I saw that Lt. David Porreca came up first. We were shooting in the CP and the left side of the line was about done.

"I turned my eyes from seeing Porreca and saw a rifle moving away from the hole on my left where a GI had been killed. Then I saw a little helmet and a little face and I shot that Cong twice with an M16 from about 15 feet . . . that was the first one I KNEW was dead. I realized then that we must be hurting them badly."

"I started tossing grenades and decided to move my CP back, it was too close to the Cong for good management. Sgt. Harvey came over and laid down next to me by the tree. He was going to fire to cover me and the RTOs leaving. The machineguns opened up then and he was hit in the wrist by two rounds. We pulled him back.

"Lt. Claiborne Randall Jr., my first platoon leader, ran up to the tree then. I yelled for him to get away from there and he got hit in the wrist or hand. Somehow I got hold of a couple of people and got them into the hole with the jammed machinegun and they got it to working."

"When that thing started putting out some fire we were able to get the CP and the wounded back a little ways. I guess we got back 30 or 40 feet. It was about 9 a.m. now," Beeman said.

Porreca had just started what was going to be a memorable day's work by moving around to the side of the embattled line and moving up the hill to the positions Sgt. Hawthorne's squad had held earlier.

Porreca used a page from the Communist's own book — one often ignored by American commanders in preparing their troops for combat—and had his men camouflage as the enemy had, tying branches around them and hanging them on their backs. He headed them out of the line on a crawling approach to the enemy.

"At the same time, Charlie was trying the same thing on us. He was crawling out of his lines just as Porreca and his boys were crawling in on his flank! He had about 30 men behind him. Another platoon came up and I told them to move down, come around the southern slope, and try to flank the Cong on that side. The same approach the third platoon had tried the day before. That situation was developing out front when the platoon from A Company got fire at the old third platoon position, just like the preceding day." Capt. Beeman said.

Man Stood Up

Beeman then told of suddenly seeing a man standing up out to his front.

"He stood up and yelled—here's one for you, you dirty S.O.B." and he threw a grenade. I yelled ' . . . get down you damned fool.' He hit the ground and the grenade went off and knocked out a machinegun, killing four Cong. Then he came up again, charging the second gun, grenading it and knocking that one out!

"It was Porreca. His platoon was moving on, now, and I told the platoon on the slope to push forward. They did and then we all pushed the Cong on back to the other side of the draw.

"The Cong were over on hill 768, where we were supposed to have been and weren't, and they had reinforced with three more machineguns from the east slope. Porreca had nine wounded now and he had gone as far forward as he could, the forward movement stopped at the draw," Beeman said.

The platoon which had come up from the slope had also stopped there and had one man wounded. The fire was too heavy for them to pull back from there.

Jockeyed Units

Beeman "jockeyed" the two platoons back a few feet at a time. One platoon would shoot, the other pull its wounded back, then it would take up the fire and the other group

Beeman went to work and created a luxurious position. He tied in rifle positions, dug deep, set out trip flares and Claymore mines, kept mortars coming in all night and moved out the two freshest platoons early the next morning.

They found 83 dead Communists. There were 30 VC grenades thrown which hadn't gone off—defective grenades are the bane of the Communist troops — and picked up five machineguns and a stack of other weapons.

The extra room he had

hacked out also brought aid from Lt. Col. Joe Bush's 2nd Battalion (Aberdeen) 19th Artillery who fired their 105mm howitzers all night. Big eight-inch guns joined in and pounded the retreat routes. The ARA from the 2nd Battalion, 20th Artillery had a clear field of fire and went to work.

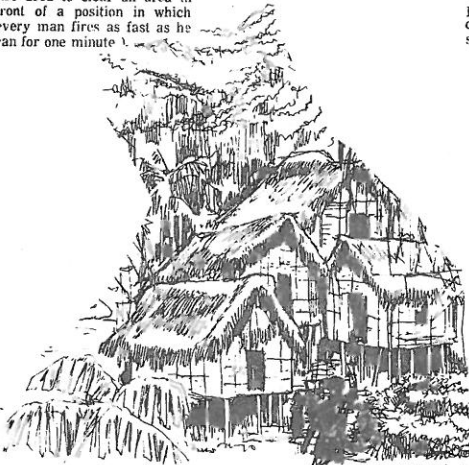
Company B — with the help of friends — owned the wrong hill at last. There was a final act of irony on the last morning, however, and it was all in the savage, macabre vein of the humor of Crazy Horse.

A Communist found a Claymore mine wire and dragged it toward him. He pulled the little exploder mechanism from its position in an American hole to his own hiding place behind a small tree.

"Just at daybreak, he shot it. I don't know what the devil possessed the guy. He hadn't turned the Claymore around and it was aimed right at him. It tore him to pieces, just as if he had committed suicide. He was the last one to die up there," Capt. Beeman said.

pull back. The position was finally established about 50 yards down the ridge from the old CP line.

"It was about 3:30 p.m. and I had myself a pretty good position. I had my weapons platoon portering up ammunition all of this time so I had a triple load. Then I saw Lt. William C. Comee bringing the rest of Company A on up the hill and into position. In fact, he had water and they brought up cold chicken with them and passed it out to the hungry men from Company B.



PHILA INQUIRER

Brig. Gen. S. L. A. Marshall
31 JUL 1966

GIs Prove the Mainstay of Viet Civil-Action Programs

AN KHE, South Vietnam. I HAVE just returned from the dedication of the first public school to be opened in this community. It was a heartwarming event and an impressive ceremony.

The district chief, Vu, presided. Vu, 32, labors an average 18 hours daily to further the welfare of his people and every American here vouches for his honesty.

Gen. John Norton, 1st Cavalry Division commander, spoke, and so did Gen. Che, who commands the Government division near here. A colorfully dressed Boy Scout troop from An Khe, organized and attired by U. S. troops, raised the flag and formed the special honor guard.

Then the generals inspected the school and dedicated a plaque and flagpole. Afterward, we went on tour to the

An Khe library, opened a few days ago, and the An Khe are already up. There are 4000 children here of school age up to the 5th year of elementary, and classrooms for less than 1000. There would be none whatever had not the members of this garrison at Camp Radcliff—the same men who are doing the fighting—put up their money to pay for the school and buy the benches. It was their idea in the first place, and they shared with Vu's office the costs of the materials besides providing much of the labor.

THE hospital was built by U. S. soldiers out of the ruins of a building which the Japanese occupation force set up here in 1954 as a dispensary and morgue. An Khe one year ago was a desolate, oppressed village of 2100. It is now a greatly attenuated city of 25,000, having become such after the cavalry division moved here. Happy Valley, which extends from it for 20 miles, and is good rice-growing country, was then depopulated and overrun by Vietcong. It has become re-peopled and its farm families are beginning to have hope because of what our military

are doing for them. The walls of a second school are already up. There are 4000 children here of school age up to the 5th year of elementary, and classrooms for less than 1000. There would be none whatever had not the members of this garrison at Camp Radcliff—the same men who are doing the fighting—put up their money to pay for the school and buy the benches. It was their idea in the first place, and they shared with Vu's office the costs of the materials besides providing much of the labor. One town in Connecticut sent \$2000 for the new hospital ward, which is now nearly complete. The construction is being directed by an American medical sergeant who knew a little about such things when in civilian life. The refugee camp here was

put in order by U. S. soldier labor. A concrete pigpen set up as a project to help one hamlet, and a coconut plantation that was seeded to assist another hamlet, were also aided by the American military.

BUT these are no Special Service soldiers directly assigned to carry out civil action programs in support of the Vietnamese rehabilitation. They are combat men and what they give in funds and labor is purely voluntary. There is no pressure from the top command for such contributions. A bucket is put in the messhall, just another kiddy to be fed.

On every hand there are large shortages—the library, the schools, the hospital. Here is an opportunity for Americans at home who ask:

What can I do? If they could see the tots in the hospital—the malaria, pneumonia and malnutrition cases — they'd know what to do. Or the thousands of children playing in the streets and fields during school hours because the classrooms are already bulging.

The settlement and the valley have been pretty well purged of Vietcong at the cost of American blood. To give its thousands of people a living chance to better their existence through adequate institutional care requires tenfold the money and effort that U. S. soldiers here can put forth. There will be adequate programming only when there is a voluntary fund-raising drive by citizens and organizations on our home front. The money will be carefully administered by our military command. This is a large part

of the business of defeating the Communist enemy and it is getting hardly any attention.

IS IT any wonder the recent speech by Vice President Hubert H. Humphrey, in which he said that the war here will not be won by U. S. soldiers with rifles and bayonets but by American civilians, bringing order to the villages, sounds like mockery and humbug? Troops here resented every word of it.

Look in these villages and you see no American civilians. The good works and the good will are being provided by U. S. soldiers. They know U. S. civilian specialists will not come here in any number until the situation is deemed fairly safe. It will only be made so by soldiers who care more about people than about fighting.

Expectancy Surrounds Song An Hutches

(EDITOR'S NOTE: Charles Black, Enquirer military writer, continues his reports on activities of the U.S. fighting men in Viet Nam. Black, who recently returned from his third assignment to the Asian battlefields, also has resumed his coverage of military affairs at Fort Benning.)

By CHARLES BLACK
Enquirer Military Writer

AN KHE — It is best to have a certain amount of background about Vietnamese pigs; rabbit genetics; the pardonable curiosity of the 1,700 residents at Song An Village; the hopes of the First Cavalry Division's 1st Brigade Civil Affairs Section; the two-story

birdcage owned by Father Ngoc in East An Khe and a certain deal made with Capt. Donald Savage, the Civil Affairs Adviser to the Air Cavalry Division — and the drama attending the recovery of one buck rabbit from surgery made necessary because of being frightened by a Caribou.

Then the story becomes perfectly simple and logical and is transformed into a straightforward account of the kind of thing being done to further good relations around An Khe by the civil affairs programs. This is about the way it goes.

There is considerable frustration available where Vietnamese pigs are concerned. They aren't exactly Yorkshire elite. A good Arkansas razor-back would be shocked at the spectacle of a Vietnamese porker, in fact. They have sway backs, undersides which often trail the ground, taper ungracefully at the ham end and run to a lot of snout and ears at the other.

"Can't Believe the Pigs"

"It just isn't possible to really breed pigs which look like these pigs, I don't believe. We hope to figure out a way to improve the breed, but it is going to be a slow program any way you look at it. There must be thousands of years of background in producing a pig which has as little to offer as the ones we found in Song An and An Khe in general," Savage said.

The villagers needed a livestock program which would yield some quick results while the pig program originally envisioned worked out some of the problems.

"Rabbits! Now rabbits have a 28 day gestation period and are fryer-size in four weeks. We . . . well, everybody knows about rabbits as a quick livestock program," Savage exclaimed.

Lt. Salvatore Raveri and Lt. Homer Wilson of the 1st Brigade's civil affairs section went over to Song An where the brigade has been working for months on one program and another and talked about rabbits. They found 11 families who would put up pinesties to purchase breeding stock on the Saigon market at about 90 piastres a kilo, on the hoof, or paw — whichever.

Bucks and Does

Early in May they came back with 20 rabbits, suitably arranged in sets of bucks and does (as rabbit experts separate the bunnies) and a crisis.

The biggest and most prom-

ising herd sire of the lot, a burly, spotted buck considered to hold the real future of the rabbit herd for Song An, had become enraged at the sound of the Caribou engines when the CV-2 took off at Tan Son Nhut and had attempted to kick his way out of the cage. He had incapacitated himself and the four does in his particular group were just plain out of buck.

Somebody a little more familiar with rabbit ranching was called in, the division veterinarian who made a hasty examination of the injured buck and performed delicate surgery. He is treating the buck at base camp and expects a full recovery and the residents of Song An and the Song An rabbit hutches are all equally hopeful of success.

The vet also explained that the reason Vietnamese pigs looked like Vietnamese pigs is because there had not been enough crossbreeding done over the centuries.

The horrible thought of Song An rabbits looking like Song An pigs (rabbits could accomplish the same thing accomplished by pigs in an infinitely shorter period of time, considering the quick change of generations) caused more concern.

Savage, who works closely with Father Ngoc, the Vietnamese priest at the mission in East An Khe, interested the padre in the rabbit program.

Interested Priest

"He offered the use of a two-story bird cage he had, the best rabbit hutch in the area. The bamboo cages used in Song An aren't quite the right thing, we've found out. What we needed was that fine, long, two-story bird cage," Savage said.

Father Ngoc said he would provide the cage (or rabbit hutch) and Savage, in the interests of a well-planned rabbit herd, is obtaining another group of rabbits from the Saigon market. The mission would take a percentage of the rabbit crop.

"When the two bunches of rabbits get started, we will swap them from East An Khe to Song An so we can get improved specimens," Capt. Savage said.

There is one final problem, however.

The rabbits at Song An had been there for 30 days on June 17, a couple of days past the minimum period for a new cycle of rabbits to be expected.

No new bunnies

"You see, the people around here never have raised rabbits before. They haven't seen too many rabbits, in fact. The rabbits are a kind of attraction, and all of the folks watch them all of the time. Well, there just hasn't been any increase as yet. We've got to get something more private than those bamboo cages, I guess," Savage explained.

The pig program, still a major project, has continued its slow and patient march toward getting more pork per porker, with pig feed and other agricultural supplies coming in through the Civil Affairs program, as well as veterinary advice, etc. — but it hasn't quite captured the imagination of Song An and East An Khe and the Americans involved quite as much as the rabbit project.

"It is going to be a real great thing when it all goes going right. The rabbits will give those people a sense of ownership and when the program starts producing a large number of rabbits, it will be a very important supplement to the local diet. Rabbit meat is a delicacy in this country," Savage concluded.

Kinnard Attributes Security to 1st Cav

By CHARLES BLACK
Enquirer Military Writer

The 1st Air Cavalry Division's battlefield exploits in the central highlands of South Viet Nam have been reflected in a gridwork of areas freed from Viet Cong domination and put under government control and a "feeling of general security" over huge chunks of that zone, Maj. Gen. Harry W. O. Kinnard said in Columbus Thursday.

Kinnard, appearing at a Chamber of Commerce-sponsored press conference and reception at the Chamber office building at 5 p.m., predicted that the future of combat operations in Viet Nam will be "more and more campaigns aimed at road security."

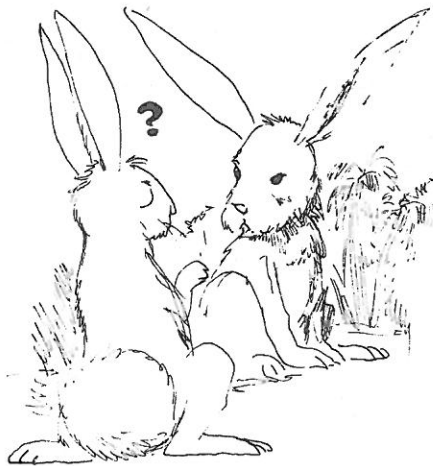
This type of operation, possible now that regular North Vietnamese regiments and Viet Cong Main Force regiments have been kicked out of areas where they formerly had a "winning technique," opens surface transportation routes, taking the pressure off aerial supply lines and allowing the civilian economy to develop by letting traffic and merchandise move from one place to another, Kinnard stated.

Public Thanks

The briefing which the former division commander gave local news media also included a word of "public thanks to the people of Fort Benning, Columbus and Phenix City for the tremendous support, sympathy and compassion shown not only for our families who remained here but also for the men on duty with the division."

"I would also like to publicly commend the families of the 1st Air Cavalry Division. I was extremely proud of them," he said.

After the formal briefing, Kinnard told The Enquirer that "there is no question concerning 'if' there will be further developments of airborne units. The question is 'when.' The questions of helicopter production and training of pilots and mechanics are the big problems."



AN KHE TO COLUMBUS—Back in Columbus which he left almost a year ago as commander of the 1st Air Cavalry Division, Maj. Gen. Harry W. O. Kinnard points to An Khe, the base his division hacked out of the mountain wilderness for a new home. Kinnard reviewed his former division's operations in the central highlands since last September in a press conference at the Chamber of Commerce office building Thursday. Local officials and members of the Citizens and Military Council attended a reception after the press briefing. Gen. Kinnard assumes new duties in Washington, D. C., in August.—Enquirer photo by Jim Adams.

Cites Missions

In outlining the operations of the division, from September 1965 until he turned over command to Maj. Gen. John K. Norton in May 1968, Gen. Kinnard explained the various type missions of his force as:

Search and destroy operations in which the target was destruction of North Vietnamese and Viet Cong main force units. Search and clear operations which were to open an area for permanent occupation by Vietnamese troops and allow permanent pacification.

Road security operations which opened up Highway 19 and other routes from the coast to the interior of the highlands. Spoiling attacks aimed at defeating the strategy of the enemy by uncovering his designs and moving against him.

He noted that huge areas around Bong Son, Qui Nhon, Binh Khe, An Khe and the "Happy Valley" area northeast of An Khe had been opened for permanent pacification by Air Cavalry operations.

The historic "Masher - White Wing" operation around Bong Son, which took the biggest toll of Communist military strength since the battles around Plei Me, Chu Pong Mountain and Ia Drang River last fall, was a search and destroy operation

which turned into a sweep and clear campaign before it was finished.

He said the division's 3rd Brigade, commanded by Col. Harold Moore, and its 2nd Brigade, commanded by Col. Ray Lynch, "cut a 360 degree traverse" around the coastal plain city to wipe out Viet Cong units and ruin the "infrastructure" of the Viet Cong political apparatus there.

A second campaign into the same area which "beat up on the remaining Viet Cong units" had added to the general security of the area, now under full government control and completely reorganized for regular government administration, Kinnard added.

He said a major success in the most recent campaigns, commencing with the first Bong Son battle, was the quality of combat intelligence available to American forces. He said that they were able to develop information from prisoners and other sources which let them know what enemy units were in the fighting and what their strength was and how hard they were hit by losses during the combat.

"If I were to pick an outstanding point, I would say the deployment of artillery into unlikely spots by helicopters would be it," Gen. Kinnard said as he asserted that the concept of air mobility had been proved in combat "even beyond our hopes and expectations." He also lauded the aerial rocket artillery battalion (rocket firing helicopters) of the division.

He said that the ability of the 1st Squadron, 9th Cavalry, developed in Fort Benning testing and commanded by Col. John B. Stockton, was the biggest surprise to him personally.

"I had some personal doubts that they could find this type of enemy under the conditions of this kind of combat. They proved that they could not only do so, but that they also could get hold of him and fix him so other forces could get into the fight," Kinnard said of the sky cavalry squadron.

Commenting on the low rate of helicopter losses (one chopper totally destroyed to 24, 16,500 combat sorties according to figures he quoted) he termed the craft ". . . a very durable bird." He added that one of the best sources of combat intelligence for locating the elusive Communist units was "ground-fire on helicopters."

"When somebody shoots at a helicopter, you can be reasonably sure there is an unfriendly party on the ground and that you have an accurate location of them," he said drily.