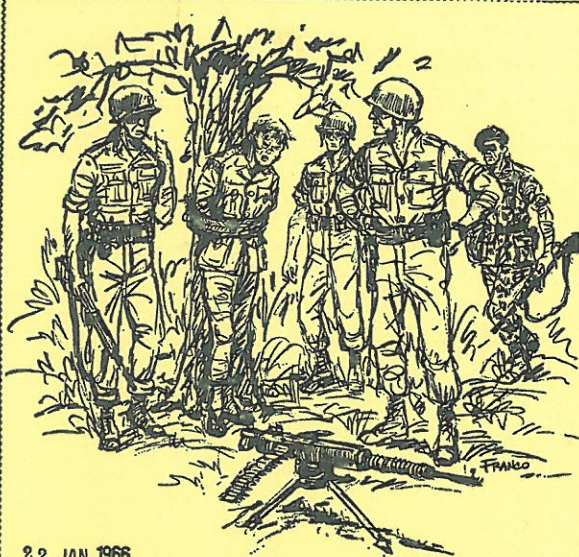




for fighting men too busy to keep their own!

Columbus Enquirer, Columbus, Ga., Saturday Morning, January 22, 1966



22 JAN 1966

Battalion CO Gets His Man Without Drawing Pistol

(EDITOR'S NOTE: Charles Black, Enquirer military writer, has returned home after four months in Viet Nam. He was with men of the 1st Cavalry Division during many of their recent engagements with Communist guerrillas, and his articles on the war as he saw it will continue in *The Enquirer* daily.)

By CHARLES BLACK
Enquirer Military Writer

Time moved like a speeded-up movie film during the kind of events which took place in the area of South Viet Nam where B and C Companies of 2nd Bn. (Airborne), 8th Cavalry were fighting.

Somehow a lot of people had arrived on the landing zone and had moved into the cover of trees around the field.

Lt. Col. James Nix had come in very early, for example. I heard of his presence in a manner which seemed perfectly ordinary at the time but which is rather fantastic now that I think of it.

A radio message came in from someplace and I heard it on the speaker of the PR-225 located in the brush below me. I was lying on my stomach with the reconnaissance platoon riflemen who were firing over the top of a steep bank

in reply to a spate of sniper bullets from the trees.

Captures Prisoner
The gist of the message was that Nix, the battalion commander, had captured a North Vietnamese prisoner and a machine gun.

When it came to my rather belated attention that a bat-

Charles Black Reports

talion commander tied in that personally to a fight isn't quite the ordinary event of the day, the firing had died again and my recon friends were pushing on out into the brush on a sweep to clear the area of any further resistance.

I saw some men around a small, frightened North Vietnamese soldier wearing his long-sleeved gray khaki shirt and sandals cut out of truck tire rubber. He was tied to a tree and a big, sweating sergeant was looking at him as if he couldn't believe a man that small could be so much trouble in a fight.

"That's the colonel's man," he told me.

Sees Machine Gun

S-Sgt. Richard Jones told me Nix had prowled along the creek bank and "saw a light machine gun. When he

pulled the brush back and took another look, that North Vietnamese soldier was on the other end of it!"

Nix, who came along then, joked about it.

"I saw this little guy with the big machine gun," he said. "I grabbed for my .45 and the holster flap stuck. All I could think of to do was to throw up my hand and holler 'HALT!' just as loud as I could.

"He threw up his hand, just like I did, and hollered 'HALT!' right back and handed me the machine gun," he grinned. "To tell you the truth, I wasn't certain who had captured you for a second there."

Carroll Arrives
Maj. Anthony Carroll, who had brought me into the area, suddenly showed up on a wave of rotor noise, and the sniper fire in the woods became lively. Everybody scattered and hit cover again. Somebody was on the radio telling Carroll "there's fire down here! Pull off, they're firing on the LZ."

The little OH13 didn't swerve. It dived into a landing and Carroll got out and dashed across the field, grinning.

"No sense in giving them a second shot at me," he

(Continued on Page 7, Col. 8)

CO Gets Prisoner

(Continued from Page 1)

said. "I was already here. Why turn around and go back and do it all over again?"

We crouched in some brush and listened to the firing and then my friends from the recon platoon opened up and there was a sudden silence. The radio brought word of the fate of three PAVNs.

"Five of them tried to get away," the speaker said. "We got them in that little clearing where they hit us yesterday. Three of them down. We're going on after them and sweep out along that creek."

Carroll and I skirted around the landing zone, keeping in the brush because the sniper fire was still coming from other directions, and walked along a little trail littered with equipment and beaten down by the passage of troops.

We passed eight American bodies in a little opening in the woods, big men lying quietly with grim-faced boys arranging ponchos so they could carry them to the helicopter landing zone. They were in a little circle, the ground around them littered with empty shells from their M-16s.

"The others pulled back to that creek and fought," a grim-faced PFC said. "There were just three guys shooting in here when the PAVNs finally broke off their attack. Just three guys and they ran off what must have been an company."

The creek was only 10 yards from the bodies of the GIs, and it also was littered with empty brass. There were two more American bodies there, covered with ponchos.

Counts Bodies
In a circle around the little field, I counted 47 PAVN bodies without walking from the American firing position. They were crumpled in twos and threes, some in the open, some in tall grass. All had good camouflage, a little bamboo frame tied to their back filled with twigs which made them hard to see in the wooded battle zone.

"There's another hundred of them scattered here and Charlie Company," the

PFC said. "Charlie Company is off to the right about 200 meters, but it ain't healthy to walk over there just yet. They're still mopping up."

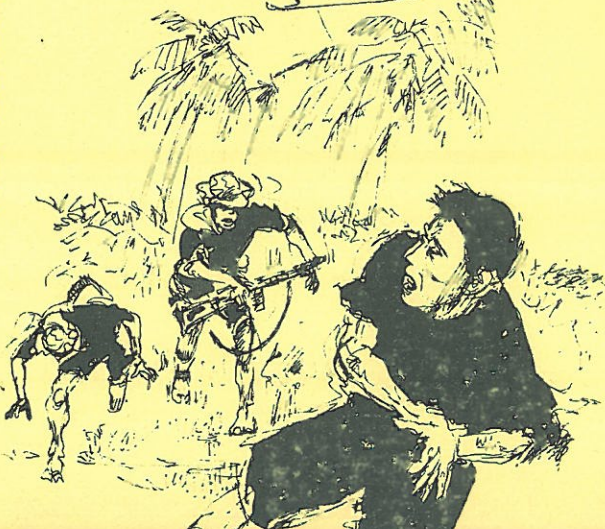
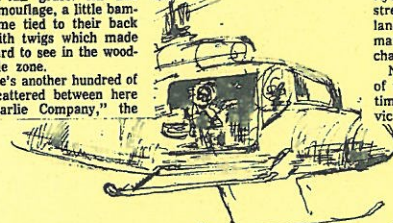
I hate the scene of a fight the day after it is over, and this one suddenly crashed in on me hard. There is a smell of smoke, burned gasoline and death, and it seems as if the ground has been torn up and dirtied. I walked away without going in any further and traced out the line of PAVN holes and fighting positions along another creek.

The positions formed a big triangle. There seemed to be a concentration of about a company at each point of the triangle, with individual fighting holes dug in along between these strong points. However, a unit approached the position, it had the advantage of concealment and local terrain, and if an assault smashed through the thin fighting line it was caught between at least two of the heavily dug-in perimeter defense setups.

High Praise

There can't be any higher praise of Nix's outfit than to say that Bravo and Charlie Companies assaulted those positions, fought off the counterattacks, and forced a dug-in battalion with good weapons and every advantage of terrain to run away and face the artillery and air bombardment which surrounded the entire area.

The creek bank was littered with packs and equipment. The PAVNs had left their good rucksacks, better and handier than American carrying equipment, filled with new clothing and gear. Their food was abandoned. Weapons were thrown away and made a big pile now as the U. S. paratroopers kept carrying them in. Prisoners were hustled in from the woods, some wounded and some just ready to quit.



18 JAN 1966

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COMMENTARY

Indianapolis Star

Cavalry Dashes In Sky - Thanks To Gavin

By RALPH MCGILL

An old cavalry horse—34 years old—is being kept in comfort and ease—a sort of souvenir of the old days and the old ways. In the highlands of Viet Nam the 1st Cavalry Division is doing a superb job of stopping Viet Cong forces. The helicopter enables the troopers to have mobility undreamed of in the years before the choppers were developed.

The cavalry charge in battle must have been one of the most dream-filled scenes imaginable. The writer recalls riding a bicycle out to rustic Fort Oglethorpe, Ga., on Sunday afternoons to watch the famous 5th Cavalry Regiment at drill. The drills often closed with a charge, the cavalrymen leaning over their saddles with sabres extended. To see them coming, to hear the thud of the many shod feet, and to hear the yells of the troopers was a thrill that requires no memory pill to bring it back.

MODERN WEAPONS, including the tank, made cavalry obsolete. But the modern cavalry units are even more effective than the old. Helicopter development was spurred by performances in the Korean War. The big egg beaters of today dwarf and outperform those that proved so dependable in many operations on that distant peninsula.

Viet Nam's jungles, its delta swamps, its vast buffalo-grass "hells" present a problem that only helicopters can solve. The 1st Cavalry Division can put troopers where a horse troop could never go. A flight of helicopters against the sky or flying low over the vast stretches of canal-cut delta land offers a dream that matches that of the old nose charge.

Nathan Bedford Forrest, one of the great cavalrymen of all time, said that the secret of victory in battle was "getting



GEN. JAMES GAVIN
"Army's Box Of Brains"

there fustest first with the most mostest." The forces with the most fire power usually win.

THIS REPORT recalls a talk in a NATO office at Naples, Italy, in 1952. The officer being interviewed was Gen. James Gavin. (Admiring associates called him "The Army's Box of Brains.") His job was to reorganize the Army along the lines of getting there first with the most. He had plans then for helicopter cavalry. He was pushing planners to come up with big aircraft troop carriers that could land on short runways. He talked of missile and rocket uses.

Gen. Gavin was one of our eminent military planning geniuses as well as a superb combat soldier and division commander. He resigned in 1958 in protest against the almost incredible stupidities of Charles E. Wilson, then secretary of defense. Wilson was against experiment and change. He blocked research. He held up missile development.

SHORTLY AFTER Gavin's retirement the Russians put their first sputnik in the sky. A stunned Defense Department reversed itself and ordered work to be resumed on the missile "family" Gen. Gavin had begun.

The present secretary of defense, Robert McNamara, is unpopular in some circles because he gets things done. He has been called the father of modern Army. Gen. Gavin would not begrudge him that honor. Secretary McNamara has cleaned out the debris of delay that for years had stagnated military development. But he, too, would be the first to say that the planning done by Gen. Gavin made it easier for him to get the cavalry in the sky.

'A LONG, COLD NIGHT'

Bombers Tip Scales for the Plucky 1st Cavalry

By BOB POOS
Associated Press Staff Writer

AN THI, South Viet Nam—Two understrength companies of the U.S. 1st Cavalry, Airmobile, Division welcomed air and ground help yesterday in one of the most effective strikes of the year against the Viet Cong.

"Ain't that pretty?" said a mud-stained soldier as Skyraider fighter-bombers splashed napalm on guerrilla lines that had held up the Americans through a cold, rainy night in the Bong Son sector 300 miles northeast of Saigon.

"That's getting into old Charlie."

The vanguard of this push was made up of two companies of the 2nd Battalion, 7th Regiment, one of the outfits that mauled North Vietnamese regulars in the Ia Drang Valley last November. They dropped from helicopters separately Friday into heavy contact with Viet Cong companies.

Plane Crash Kills Many

One of the American units had suffered the loss of 42 men and its mortar support in the crash of a transport plane Tuesday that also killed the transport's four U.S. Air Force crewmen. Grenadiers using the shot gun-like M79 grenade launchers tried to make up the difference.

The action was part of a probe called Operation Masher. By Saturday night the Americans had counted 159 Viet Cong dead and captured 80, most of them wounded. Seized Communist weapons included an an-

ti-aircraft gun and two 81mm mortars.

Efforts Friday of the two companies to link up included a drive by one from a grove of palm trees about 100 yards across a rice paddy, thigh deep in water and mud, against heavy fire from Viet Cong entrenched on higher ground.

The Americans, who had suffered some casualties, moved out in two columns in single file, carrying their dead and wounded.

"I wouldn't have given three cents for anyone's chances of getting across there alive," said Pfc. Edgar S. Jones, Shelby, N.C.

But few casualties were suffered in the paddy.

Reach Foes' Trenches

The second company, which had been dropped by the helicopters in two separate groups on the left, was fighting hard to hold off the Viet Cong and trying to unite its elements.

The first company worked its way into an oval-shaped Viet Cong trench system at the village of An Thi, about 10 miles north of Bong Son, and here the company commander, Capt. Joel Sugdinis, Cornwall Bridge, Conn., established his command post.

He sent out patrols in an attempt to clear away snipers and move across an old Vietnamese graveyard to a line of palm trees about 300 yards away. But the attempt was futile. Every try was beaten back with furious blasts of fire.

Heavy rain prevented the use of American air power here except some strikes by the divisions helicopter rocket

Associated Press correspondent Bob Poos went along with U.S. elements in the probe of Viet Cong holdings on Viet Nam's central coast. Here is his account of a two-day fight.

artillery. But even this was abandoned after one of the gunships accidentally had fired into American positions, inflicting some casualties.

1st Lt. James Wallace, an artillery forward observer, called in regular artillery fire. Most of the shells dropped right on the target at the tree line. But three rounds strayed to within a few yards of the company command post.

Though the trenches prevented any casualties, Wallace radioed the artillerymen:

"You'd better watch those charges. That bunch fell right in on us." After that there were no more short rounds.

Copter Draws Fire

Lt. Col. Robert McDade, New York City, commander of the 2nd Battalion, arrived by helicopter to direct the two companies. His chopper was hit by Viet Cong fire when it dropped down but made it away safely.

Using his command radio, McDade began attempting to link up the divided elements. A solid defensive line was finally formed at 3 a.m.

A helicopter on a supply mission was shot down by machinegun fire. Its crew escaped uninjured and joined in the perimeter defense.

Desperately in need of reinforcements, McDade called for

the third company of his battalion. Each of six helicopters landed 17 men in the middle of the trench line. Three of these helicopters were hit by gunfire, but all got away.

The fresh troopers, eager for a fight, formed up, and one man blew a charge on a Communist bugle they had captured in the Ia Drang Valley. They moved out into palm trees ringing the landing zone.

Darkness fell, and the officers put out a defensive picket line about 50 yards outside the trenches.

Many weapons had been jammed by the fine, white sand of the trenches. Unwounded men searched among the casualties for weapons that would operate.

Then began what Sugdinis called "a long, cold night." It rained throughout. Insects buzzed. Two wounded men died. So did a Vietnamese infant hit in the fighting.

At day break Viet Cong snipers, perched in trees, fired at everything that moved. More wounded came in until the section of trench holding them was more than 75 yards long.

But the clouds lifted, and forward observers were able to call for air strikes.

B57 bombers roared over, dropping their explosives and returning to strafe with 20mm cannons. The Skyraiders dropped the flaming napalm.

The 2nd Battalion of the 12th Cavalry arrived in helicopters to relieve the men in the punished 2nd of the 7th. The 12th immediately moved out across the graveyard into the long tree line.

Col. Harold Moore, commander of the 3rd Brigade, arrived and brought in other cavalry battalions to further engage the dug-in enemy.

The 1st Battalion of the 12th Regiment, with the aid of air power, carried the tree line.



The Washington Post

Times Herald

47 GIs Die In Vietnam AF Crash

Cause Uncertain; Troop Transport Had Left Anke

From News Dispatches
SAIGON, Jan. 25 (Tuesday)—A U.S. Air Force C-123 transport plane with 47 Americans aboard crashed and burned early today shortly after takeoff from a base in the central highlands, killing all aboard.

The cause of the crash was not immediately known but a U.S. military spokesman said the weather was marginal for flying.

The victims included 43 men from the Seventh Cavalry Regiment and four crewmen. The plane had just taken off from the big U.S. base at Anke and was carrying the troops to a nearby staging area.

Earlier, Vietcong guerrillas rained 42 mortar shells on the sprawling U.S. Marine base at Danang and nearby Marble Mountain, killing three Americans.

Two Vietnamese soldiers also were killed, a U.S. military spokesman said, and 25 persons were wounded — 11 Americans, 11 Vietnamese soldiers and 3 Vietnamese civilians.

He said no planes were hit and there were no fires although 8 to 10 rounds of mortar fire fell in a zone that included an oil and gasoline storage area. Several trucks, other vehicles and a mobile crane were damaged, he said.

The Americans killed were two Marines and one air policeman. The air policeman died from a direct mortar round near the flight line. One of the Marines killed was a mortarman on duty at the Seabee mobile construction battalion encampment across the Han River from the main airbase.

The hit-and-run mortar barrage lasted only 15 minutes, the U.S. spokesman said. No small arms fire was reported from the guerrillas and they made no effort to send demob.

See VIETNAM, A7, Col. 1

lition teams into the sprawling complex.

Marine helicopters took off from the base, 385 miles north of Saigon, to hunt the attackers.

Earlier, U.S., South Vietnamese, South Korean, Australian and New Zealand forces launched what were described as major search and destroy operations, but few details were given. All forces reported little initial contact with the Communists.

With the expiration of the 34-day allied lunar New Year truce at 6 a.m. Sunday, U.S. Air Force planes went into action and struck a major Vietcong encampment near the provincial capital of Cantho, about 80 miles southwest of Saigon. A spokesman said no planes were lost.

A forward air controller estimated 190 Communists were killed. A U.S. spokesman said the planes destroyed 30 buildings, damaged 35 and touched off an explosion that could have been a fuel or ammunition dump.

The Vietcong raised a new threat to U.S. prisoners. A broadcast said the United States and South Vietnam would "have to bear full responsibility" if they imprisoned or executed three terrorists arrested Jan. 7 with 285 pounds of explosives near Saigon. They were plotting to bomb a U.S. Army billet in Saigon, Vietnamese police said.

The Communists issued similar warnings last year, then announced they had shot three U.S. prisoners in reprisal for executions by South Vietnam. They are known to hold at least 22 Americans.

News agencies reported these other developments in Vietnam:

• The bombing pause against North Vietnam entered its 33d day. Peking sneered at the cessation of air attacks as "a ridiculous farce."

• American military authorities disclosed yesterday that a U.S. Navy anti-submarine plane disappeared Saturday while on patrol off the coast of Vietnam. A spokesman said that what happened to the plane is a "mystery." He added, however, that "its disappearance coincided with a claim by Radio Hanoi that an American plane had been shot down in the area."

• Intelligence sources in Saigon revealed that approximately 10,000 men, the equivalent of a full division of North Vietnamese regulars, are concentrated in an area along the Laotian border, no more than 20 miles north of the 17th parallel. Robert S. Elegant of the Los Angeles Times reported yesterday. The troops have moved into position near one of the northern terminals of the Ho Chi Minh Trail during the past 3½ weeks, taking advantage of the halt in bombings against the North. Elegant said intelligence sources point out that North Vietnamese regulars now in the South number in excess of 20,000 men.

• Two French television newsmen, Mry Honorin, 32, and Michel Parbot, 27, said yesterday they were held by the Vietcong for 27 hours and escaped when it appeared they might be executed. The two said they overpowered their guard, took his weapon and drove wildly over a back road until they reached a government base.

On 'Highway of Death'

Red Ambush Foiled by Jeep Radar Force

Washington News
26 JAN 1968

SAIGON, Jan. 26 (UPI) — First Cavalry Division troops, sweeping Viet Nam's "Highway of Death" in a major operation, used jeep-mounted radar today to foil a communist ambush attempt.

About 100 guerrillas tried to stage the ambush on North-South Highway 1 near An Duong, 300 miles northeast of Saigon. It is a favorite ambush target for the Reds and marks the first time U.S. troops have been along this section of the highway north of Qui Nhon, where the road tapers off into a trail.

The Cavalrymen used "pipsy" radar, a scanning device that can locate a hiding soldier two miles away, and quickly called for air support. A squadron of helicopters blasted the Viet Cong positions and the ground troops attacked.

9 COPTERS HIT

Four guerrillas were killed, 10 captured and the rest fled. Nine of the American helicopters were hit by communist ground fire but none was shot down.

The Cavalrymen uncovered a huge tunnel and found 200 unarmed women and children hiding inside. The GIs also found a four-ton cache of rice. Numerous small caves also were found.

Spokesmen in Saigon today

reported 21 Americans killed in action last week and 193 wounded. The Allies lost a total of 245 men killed in action against 406 for the Viet Cong. It was the lowest figure reported for the Reds in 19 weeks.

A Vietnamese government spokesman said today hard-core Viet Cong guerrillas have virtually disappeared from the battlefield. He said that in the past week only part-time guerrilla forces had engaged the allies.

B-52s STRIKE

U.S. Air Force B-52 bombers from Guam today pounded a Viet Cong supply and staging area near the Cambodian border.

A terrorist today tossed a hand grenade at a U.S. jeep near Saigon's Tan Son Nhut Airport. The driver swerved out of the way and crashed into a pole, escaping unhurt.

A Viet Cong assassination squad yesterday raided the Chanh Thanh hamlet 15 miles north of Saigon and killed the hamlet chief. At Binh Chanh, 10 miles southeast of the capital, a government youth worker was kidnapped by another terrorist team.

American pilots flew 414 combat sorties yesterday over South Viet Nam. An estimated

35 Viet Cong were killed and 340 "buildings" destroyed.

A Marine patrol west of the Da Nang airbase engaged in a "heavy" firefight last night. One Viet Cong was killed but the 10-man Leatherneck unit suffered "moderate" casualties.

'Copter Passenger Slightly Nervous

(EDITOR'S NOTE: Charles Black, Enquirer military writer, has returned home after four months in Viet Nam. He was with men of the 1st Cavalry Division during many of their recent engagements with Communist guerrillas, and his articles on the war as he saw it will continue in *The Enquirer* daily.)

26 JAN. 1966

By CHARLES BLACK
Enquirer Military Writer

I left the Catecka Tea Plantation for one last look at the First Brigade's share of the Plei Me campaign even as Col. Thomas Brown, commander of the Third Brigade, and Lt. Col. Harlowe Clark, commander of the First Brigade, were conferring over an operations map. Joe Galloway of United Press International had achieved a ride with Lt. Col. John B. Stockton in his command ship, decorated with four machine guns because Lt. Col. Stockton likes to pursue a hobby while flying through the trees, and I

got aboard with Sgt. Maj. Lawrence Kennedy and Sp5 Steve Lannigan, constant companions of the First Squadron Ninth Cavalry's commander.

A third newsman, a photographer who had newly arrived in the country, came over and asked if he could join the group. While room was being made

Charles Black Reports

for him Vo Hynn, NBC-TV photographer, and Robin Mannock, the goateed Associated Press representative, spotted the group and came over.

Somehow, the helicopter had become so crowded with the gathering clan of reporters and photographers that an additional chopper had to be put into the fleet, this one flown by CWO John Goldenfein.

Sp4 Reginald McTarr was handling an M-16 rifle in the door of this craft and there was also a full set of machine guns mounted. The new photograph-

er joined Galloway, Hynn (an imperturbable Vietnamese) and myself in the second ship.

"Since you want to take some pictures of the area, you ride on the outside. I'll loosen the strap for you so you can lean out," McTarr said to the new man.

CWO Goldenfein turned around and grinned.

"Low and green! We'll shoot some contours for you and see what we stir up," he said.

He shot some contours. He contoured the trunks of trees and careened through branches, banking the UH1B helicopter as if it were a fighter plane.

"Welcome back to the Cavalry, Charlie," he shouted over his shoulder, topping a rise in the ground by inches and hurriedly slamming the chopper toward a minute opening between some towering trees which appeared on the other side.

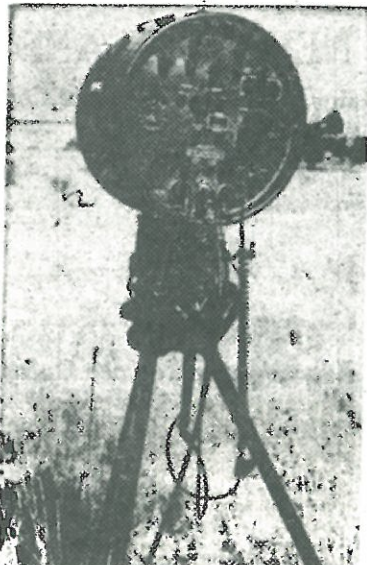
It was good, honest 1st Cavalry style flying, but even though I was a fairly harden-

(Continued on Page 3, Col. 1)



Boston Globe

27 JAN. 1966



RADAR FOILS AMBUSH—Unit can detect enemy movements two miles away. It can be used on ground or on vehicles.

'Copter Passenger Slightly Nervous

(Continued from Page 1)

ed veteran it was exhilarating and I felt like giving cow-hand whoops and slapping my hat on the Huey's flanks.

The effect on Vo Hynn was surprising, more, it was almost shocking.

Vo Hynn is possessed of one of the most inscrutable poker faces in an Orient renowned for such visages.

I have seen him shot at with no change in his expression and have seen him win a respectable pot in a 25-cent limit poker game without a flicker showing in his eyes even though I knew he had bluffed his way through.

A man who can conceal his feelings under those circumstances, who does not give even a hint of nervousness on the one hand or triumph on the other, and who suddenly beams a big white grin at you has to have reason.

The reason I found when I looked at our photographer friend.

He had come to South Viet Nam on a wave of publicity concerning his exploits on other risky assignments, but this was his very first helicopter ride and he was getting the full course with appetizers and garnish.

He had three cameras flying around his neck in abandoned disarray and one hand clutching the helicopter ceiling while the other was clenched on the squirming arm of poor Galloway.

He was shouting in Galloway's ear as the UPI reporter tried vainly to release the grip on his arm and restore circulation.

"Tell them to stop this thing! Tell them I came here to take pictures, not to fight their war! Get this thing down," he was screaming.

Galloway tried to placate him by pointing to various memorable scenes which flashed by a few feet below.

"That is the Plei Me Special Forces camp right there, no it's back there now, no it's up front now. . . nuts. . . turn loose of my arm! Look, this is the way to fly in these things come on, turn loose," Galloway was shouting back.

Vo Hynn looked politely out the other side of the helicopter as the landscape swept by or sometimes around us. He made a magnificent effort and concealed his grin. His shoulders kept shaking, however.

He leaned over to me. "Some people are very nervous in here," he said gravely. A startled man with a rifle, plodding along a path near a Montagnard village, threw one wild shot at our chopper as we swept by. The advantage of flying low in forested and rough country came to me again.

He had actually not seen the helicopters until they were over him and when he fired they were already zipping through trees ahead of him and his bullet didn't have a chance.

The two helicopters, both heavily equipped to enter into duels of this kind, went back after him. I missed what happened because of a horrendous scream from our photographer friend. I thought possibly he had been wounded, an especially sensitive portion of his body, in fact, and was worried.

What happened was that the

M-60 machine guns right outside the open door by him had opened up all at once and the wild chain of noise from them was swept into the poor man's ears all in a jolt. It was too much for him. He almost clambered over Galloway at one point trying to get to the center portion of the helicopter but the loose belt kept snapping him back.

Galloway finally got him calmed down enough to sit in his seat again and jerked the seat belt very tight, very firmly, and then offered to bribe me to change places with him.

"This guy is either going to make a nervous wreck out of me or cripple me! He has yelled in my ear until I'm deaf and my right arm feels like it has been sprained," he yelled.

I told him that any good airline stewardess was able to handle small nervous tensions

among the passengers and that he would have to turn in his wings if he didn't get his side of the helicopter calmed down enough for a landing.

We got back to Catecka finally and I still didn't know the outcome of the shooting—it turned out the VC was killed—or have very many memories of that swing over the old battlegrounds except for the green of the jungle and the green of the photographer's face.

He got out of the helicopter, we were riding it on to Pleiku but he turned down our invitation, and said that he would try to catch a jeep.

It was a very brave thing for him to do. The Viet Cong had been busy exploding land mines just south of us on the highway and I wouldn't have ridden a jeep down it except as an absolute last resort!



Radars on Jeeps Spots Cong Ambush

By RAY P. HERNDON
United Press International

SAIGON—U.S. 1st Cavalry troops using jeep-mounted radar foiled a Viet Cong ambush Wednesday along the "highway of death" and sent the Communists reeling back after a fierce battle.

The clash broke out during a major new multi-battalion operation by air cavalrymen some 300 miles northeast of Saigon.

An estimated 100 communist troops had set up ambush positions along both sides of Highway One, called the "highway of death" because of the many communist ambushes along it.

American cavalrymen spotted the communist ambush with their "pipsy" radar mounted on jeeps—the scanning device that can pick out people up to two miles away. They immediately called in air support.

Communist ground fire was so intense that nine helicopters were hit, but none of them was shot down.

As the air cavalrymen smashed in on the heels of the aerial attack, the Communists reeled back from the highway on both sides.

Four Viet Cong were killed and 10 suspects captured. The cavalrymen also captured four

U.S. 7th Fleet warships poured hundreds of rounds of shells into Viet Cong installations in the central highland and delta areas of South Viet Nam. Spotters reported nearly 100 Communist structures destroyed or damaged by the fire from the guns of the destroyers Shelton, Higbee and Ernest G. Small.

The new action called "Operation Masher" marked the first time American troops had been along this section of the national highway. At present

the paved road has deteriorated into little more than a dirt trail with chunks of concrete lying about. Every bridge has been blown up by the Viet Cong and many detours have to be made.

The operation was kicked off Monday but could not be disclosed until Wednesday for security reasons.

The American cavalrymen were alerted for ambushes along the road and every so often the radar jeep would stop, take a reading and then report that a group of persons was a mile or two up the road.

Even before the cavalrymen left their base camp at An Khe they had practiced ambush alerts. When they finally moved out, the seats were taken out of the trucks so men had to stand, facing outward, with their guns ready.

Near Da Nang, a Viet Cong patrol unit walked right into a U.S. Marine ambush just 500 yards west of the big Marine Seabee installation at Da Nang East. The Marines opened up with heavy small arms fire and lighted the ambush area with flare. They killed an estimated six Viet Cong and wounded another.

Reporter Gives Assist In Military Briefing

27 JAN 1966

(EDITOR'S NOTE: Charles Black, Enquirer military writer, has returned home after four months in Viet Nam. He was with men of the 1st Cavalry Division during many of their recent engagements with Communist guerrillas, and his articles on the war as he saw it will continue in The Enquirer daily.)

BY CHARLES BLACK
Enquirer Military Writer

At Camp Holloway, Capt. J. D. Coleman, the towering assistant to Maj. Chuck Siler in the 1st Cavalry Division's Public Information Office, spotted me as I got off a chopper.

It was easy for him to do. He is about six feet six in his stocking feet and his stocking feet were one of the local conversational topics in Viet Nam when I was there.

forming me that my presence was requested as a member of a briefing team which was going to Saigon to tell interested persons — including the press corps — about the Plei M campaign to that date.

"It is a little unusual for a reporter to be put on assignment as part of a briefing team, but you're invited on the official roster. I hope that Saigon press corps goes after you, too," Capt. Coleman told me kindly.

I accepted the invitation, since it was delivered by him, as a vast education to me. I had not realized until this time how many journalists are actually in South Viet Nam.

The little club of men who showed up out in the wilderness — men such as Horst Faas and Peter Arnett of Associated Press and others whom I have named, as well

Capt. Coleman, who also weighs 265 or so, wears an appropriate size boot — 14½ to be exact.

Despite the fact that boots were being sent to the division in adequate numbers to replace the ones rotted away by jungle dampness, the U. S. Army logistical system hadn't properly planned for Capt. Coleman's arrival. When his boots wore out, there just weren't any that big in all South Viet Nam.

Charles Black Reports

Correspondents and interested Army friends had prodded every conceivable source of supply in search of boots size 14½. Since the average Vietnamese man wears size 5½ or six there aren't many substitutes available from the local economy, either.

as some whom I haven't — are only a representative fraction of those who seldom venture there.

Lt. Col. Harlowe Clark, commander of the First Brigade, his battalion commanders and their executive officers and myself got there on a Caribou piloted by Capt. James Lybrand and CWO Bill Combs with a representative display of captured weapons between our feet.

We were picked up at Tan Son Nhut air terminal and taken to one of the guarded "R and R" (rest and recreation) hotels, the Myerkerd, where we left our gear and then went almost directly to the famous "five o'clock briefing."

There was one other stop during which public information officers explained the ground rules of these affairs. They mainly concerned time and not losing one's temper, as I re-

Capt. Coleman had taped the flapping soles of his last pair of boots to the uppers but the supply of green tape was also running low on my last visit with him.

This time he swaggered up in a pair of jungle boots which looked as if they had been left over from the French adventure in this land. They were brown, had buckles and bright green canvas uppers — and they were big.

"Maj. Siler found them down in Saigon someplace. How do you like them?" Capt. Coleman asked.

He was obviously proud of them and he was also about twice as big as anybody in the group of correspondents who had just alighted, so we all stood around and admired them for him. There was quite a bit to admire and I almost overdid it walking around and studying the

member. Be brief and be sweet, seemed to be the idea of it all. The officer who gave the lecture seemed embarrassed to be telling a correspondent how to

Markets At A Glance

NEW YORK (AP) —
Stocks — Mixed; heavy trading.
Bonds — Mixed.
Cotton — Higher.
CHICAGO: —
Wheat — Weak; active liquidation.
Corn — Steady to easier; liquidation.
Oats — Weak; liquidation.
Soybeans — Weak; liquidation.
Hogs — 25 to mostly 50 cents lower; top \$29.75.
Slaughter steers — Steady to 50 cents lower; top \$28.25.

deal with correspondents.

The briefing takes place in an auditorium in the U. S. Information Service Lincoln Memorial Library. Marine guards check the correspondents in, studying their credentials with the care Marine guards always use whether they know you or not. There were almost 300 men and women in the rows of seats by 5 p.m. with some standing up in the back.

An Air Force officer came down the aisle handing out mimeographed sheets of paper. The ink was very blurred on mine. A lieutenant colonel stood up on the stage and pointed to numbers on a big map and read the items on the mimeographed paper. He only missed pointing to the correctly numbered spot

(Continued on Page 3, Col. 7)

On Today's Editorial Page

— Revolts in Africa seem to be catching the U. S. State Department by surprise. The question is: Why? The lead editorial offers a possible answer.

— Millard Grimes writes about Gov. Sanders and the "senator game."

— Joseph Alsop is back in Saigon and finds that the peace offensive has produced confusion and loss of morale.



UNDER FIRE—Two members of helicopter medical crew race to recover body of a marine during Viet Cong raid. (UPI Photo)

Reporter Aids in Briefing

(Continued from Page 1)

twice, which was fairly impressive to me.

There was a long list of Air Force sorties, numbers of bombs dropped, and estimates of damage done from these bombs. Many of those reports said things such as "45 VC structures destroyed and 38 damaged."

I remembered the bamboo camps I had helped touch off with cigarette lighters and wanted to ask if the VC structures were different than those, but since I was on the briefing team I felt it wouldn't be fair play to join the other team.

A report had come in during the day that 27 South Vietnamese men and women had been slaughtered by Viet Cong in a raid on a Buddhist pagoda southwest of Saigon because the peasants had been working on a government canal which would help local sanitation, aid local farmers and provide transportation for them. This one went by with only cursory questions.

A report that a bonze in a temple near Da Nang had threatened to burn himself in order to protest a "desecration" of a pagoda there drew instant fire from some reporter in a front seat, however.

It seemed that an elderly man in the area had said that he "thought" he had seen a U. S. Marine leave the pagoda in the early morning and the protest from the Buddhist elders had been stringent and apparently addressed to all comers. The reporter seemed quite incensed over this occurrence.

I became fairly upset myself when I found that somebody had promised the U. S. would build a new pagoda for them — whether an American was at fault or not, apparently.

I went so far as to ask whether the slaughter of innocent peasants by the VC in the other pagoda was also an act of desecration. So far as the information available indicated it wasn't.

The damage to the pagoda near Da Nang had been mainly confined to some scrawls on the wall, soiling of the floor and a statue of Buddha knocked over, it was told.

I asked if a good scrubbing and a touch of repair wouldn't suffice — most of the pagodas I've seen could stand both, anyway — but the reporter in the front row had the full attention of the briefing officers and my question got lost in the shuffle.

The wrangling over the desecrated pagoda went on and on until some reporter with a heavy German accent suddenly burst in and asked if it were true that "the Buddhists in the Da Nang area have launched a submarine fleet to attack the Seventh Fleet in protest" and somebody else asked if "the Rhade (a rebellious Montagnard tribe) had protested yet, since everybody else seems to have something to say on this." With this the subject was closed. (I believe the last questions had humorous intent but one is never sure at these briefings.)

Nobody ever printed a story on it that I saw, come to think of it, it just took 45 minutes to get it over with and the entire episode seemed peculiarly typical of things in Saigon.

The briefing officer then underwent some very searching questions on another item from Joe Freed, the New York Daily News reporter who has become a legend in Saigon because he has never left it in his three years in South Viet Nam except under extreme circumstances.

(Once an airplane was returning to South Viet Nam aboard after a vacation was forced to land at Bien Hoa, about 16 miles away, for example.)

Freed has become very expert at grilling suspects as they climb onto the stage at the briefings. He was quite relentless in his pursuit of some nugget of fact on this particular afternoon

— I can't remember exactly what it was he wanted to know about but I will always remember the tremendous effort of his search for it at the five o'clock briefing.

Lt. Col. Clark took his turn on the stage then and I performed my personal mission for him. I was supposed to keep track of how many times he slipped up and used a swear word. Infantrymen in the bonodocks occasionally indulge in mild expletives and they may lapse into them on public occasions when suddenly jerked back into civilized surroundings.

He did nobly both on that chore and in his critique of what his brigade had done.

The greatest compliment which could be paid him in fact came from a reporter near me who apparently lived from one five o'clock briefing to the next and considered himself an aficionado.

"Now I believe that man. He is giving straight information," the reporter told me. "I think the First Air Cavalry Division is really accomplishing something up in the highlands."

None of the rest of us were called to enlarge on any of the points Lt. Col. Clark had made so apparently the rest of the press corps also was impressed, or possibly simply enervated.

I saw some of my correspondent friends from the bonodocks as we left and I stopped and whispered to one of them that I was surprised at how many reporters there were in Viet Nam.

"There are a lot of people, not a lot of reporters," he whispered back to me.

DA NANG NEWS, SATURDAY, JANUARY 29, 1966

Saigon, Jan. 28—American forces fought the Viet Cong on three major fronts today, shattering the post-cessation lull in ground action in South Viet Nam.

In the skies, two U.S. planes were lost today over South Viet Nam, and hope was given up for two others missing since Monday. The suspension of air strikes against North Viet Nam, begun Christmas Eve, was reported still in effect.

Two of the Yank forces surprised the Cong with helicopter swoops along the coastal plain and touched off heavy fighting.

Heavy Small Arms Fire In Binh Dinh Province, choppers disgorged elements of the 1st Cavalry Division (Airmobile) this morning at two landing zones north of Bong Son. The GIs, engaged in Operation Masher, came under heavy small arms fire. Moderate to heavy contact was reported throughout the day.

In neighboring Phu Yen Province, paratroopers of the 101st Airborne Brigade reported heavy contact with the VC after piling onto a landing zone seven miles north of Tuy Hoa. The airborne unit and South Korean troops have been engaged in Operation Van Buren.

In a third U.S. push, elements of the 1st Infantry Division operating 20 miles northwest of Saigon slew 12 Viet Cong in Operation Buckskin.

Allied Casualties "Light" So far, 87 Reds have been killed, 11 captured and 12 suspected.

Near 200,000 GIs in Viet

Saigon, Jan. 28 (Special)—An official U.S. announcement today set the number of American forces inside South Viet Nam at 197,000. It is expected they will total 200,000 next week.

The outlook for 1966 is a doubling of U.S. troop strength here to 400,000. Informed sources said another 20,000 to 40,000 are programmed for 1967 as a logistical backstop.

Of the 197,000 currently here, 126,000 are Army, 39,000 are Marines, 23,000 are airmen, and 9,000 are Navy.

Joseph Fried

Buckskin drove, against "light" casualties for allied forces. Before today's helicopter assaults, 37 VC had been slain and six captured, with 102 suspects detained. In Operation Masher, and Operation Van Buren accounted for 102 VC killed, 12 captured and 397 suspects detained.

A propeller-driven Skyraider was shot down and its pilot killed while supporting Viet Nam troops 25 miles northwest of Saigon. A second Skyraider was ditched due to engine failure near Qui Nhon, but the pilot was picked up safely.



Foil Attack on 1st Cav.

SAIGON, Jan. 27 (UPI) — South Korean troops killed at least half of a Viet Cong force they found sneaking up behind U.S. Army 1st Cavalry Division units on a sweep 27 1/2 miles northeast of Saigon, a U.S. military spokesman said today.

The ROK forces, out numbered two-to-one, killed at least 35 Viet Cong in a region about 25 miles south of Bong Son, where a multi-battalion element of the 1st Cavalry is sweeping the coastal highlands.

The Americans met little opposition today. Since the sweep — "Operation Masher" — began Monday the cavalrymen have killed 27 Viet Cong in a series of small contacts.

450 SORTIES

The pause in the air war against North Viet Nam was in its 35th day, but U.S. planes yesterday and early today flew 450 combat sorties against Viet Cong facilities in the South.

South Vietnamese Premier Nguyen Cao Ky today strolled conspicuously down Saigon's main street to disprove rumors that he had mysteriously disappeared.

The handsome, mustachioed Premier said: "Today I am a rumor-killer instead of a lady-killer."

Reports earlier had swept the capital that Premier Ky's whereabouts were not known.

MARINES STRIKE

U.S. Marine units fanning out on patrols around the Da Nang airbase reported seven Viet Cong killed in actions yesterday. Leatherneck casualties were described as light.

U.S. 1st Infantry Division troops closed out the three-day "Operation Quick Kick" 30 miles north of Saigon late yesterday. They reported only one Viet Cong killed and four captured, but large arms supplies were captured.

The Americans seized a 500-pound bomb, plastic explosives, 110 gallons of kerosene, mortar shells, 600 cartridge casings and seven Claymore mines along with a



Two members of a medical evacuation squad dash across an open field under fire to recover the body of a marine killed near Da Nang. They were covered by fire from other Leathernecks.

Saigon to Free 24 Hanoi PWs

DA NANG, Viet Nam, Jan. 27 (UPI) — The South Vietnamese government will release 24 North Vietnamese prisoners Sunday and try to send them across the 17th parallel to North Viet Nam.

A spokesman said the Hanoi regime has not indicated whether it will accept the prisoners. He said the unprecedented release was for humanitarian reasons and in honor of Tet, the Vietnamese new year.

quantity of mines still being constructed.

A South Vietnamese spokesman today confirmed that a government pilot flew his tiny L-19 observation plane into Cambodia. He said he did not know whether the airman asked for political asylum as Cambodian authorities claimed.

North Vietnamese Soldier Helpless When Cut Off From Food Supplies

(EDITOR'S NOTE: Charles Black, Enquirer military writer, has returned home after four months in Viet Nam. He was with men of the 1st Cavalry Division during many of their recent engagements with Communist guerrillas, and his articles on the war as he saw it will continue in The Enquirer daily.)

By CHARLES BLACK
Enquirer Military Writer

The little asphalt road which led from Pleiku to the Cateka Tea Plantation where Lt. Col. Harlow Clark's First Brigade had its headquarters had become one solid line of trucks and jeeps during the afternoon. Clark told me that he was pulling his men out of the fight. They had been in the field almost 30 days by now at Binh Khe, the Mang Yang Pass and during the Plei Me campaign.

The trucks were bringing in men and equipment of Col. Thomas Brown's Third Brigade, an outfit with a penchant for

naming its operations to include the word "bayonet." I met Col. Brown, in company with Lt. Col. Harold Moore, Lt. Col. Fred Ackerman, Lt. Col. Walter Tully and Lt. Col. James McDade who commanded the three battalions of 1st Cavalry soldiers who would take up the fight.

Charles Black Reports

Lt. Col. Moore's First Battalion Seventh Cavalry and Lt. Col. McDade's Second Battalion Seventh Cavalry are units steeped in the old "Gary Owen" spirit of the plains days. Lt. Col. Ackerman's outfit, the First Battalion Fifth Cavalry, was one I had been with on a previous operation and Lt. Col. Tully was an old friend from Fort Benning. I had been up with his unit on the perimeter defense around the An Khe base when that was a hectic undertaking but had not been in the field with it.

The Third Brigade's operation seemed aimed at the area

north of Pleiku, between Pleiku and Kontum, and Lt. Col. John B. Stockton's hard flying scouts from the First Squadron Ninth Cavalry were already swooping over that terrain in search of targets.

It didn't work out quite like that, however. The fights which the Third Brigade found have been entered in Vietnamese history now as the most effective defeats of North Vietnamese Army forces in the course of the war, and they came in the ominously familiar locations of Chu Pong mountain and the Ia Drang River in quick succession.

The original operations plan was aimed at finding and fighting the 32nd PAVN Regiment which had fled the Plei Me arena after ambushing a South Vietnamese relief column. The 66th had been hit by Lt. Col. Stockton's ambush on the Ia Drang and was known to be lurking around Chu Pong Mountain.

The 101st PAVN Regiment, (Continued on Page 3, Col. 4)



Soldier--

(Continued from Page 1)

some three hours after the accident.

Pvt. McElroy was assigned to Co. A, 8th Battalion, 2nd Training Brigade of the Army Training Center. He is a son of Mr. and Mrs. Benny N. McElroy, Sheffield.

Investigation into the cause of the accident is being continued, PIO said.

+ 1st CAU Vietcong Avoid Contact With U.S. Pursuers

From News Dispatches
SAIGON, Jan. 26 — U.S. troops launched another drive through Vietcong-dominated territory today but the enemy continued to avoid any substantial contact with the probing troops.

Since the lunar New Year truce ended Sunday night, South Vietnamese and allied forces have sought combat, but the Vietcong have limited their operations largely to harassment and acts of terrorism.

The new drive by First Cavalry troops in Binh Dinh Province 300 miles northeast of Saigon was reported to have killed 12 Vietcong so far. U.S. casualties were described as light.

Highway Now a Trail

The U.S. troops were pushing their way along Highway 1, which has deteriorated into little more than a dirt trail with chunks of concrete lying about. Every bridge has been blown up by the Vietcong and

many detours have to be made.

The Cavalrymen were alerted for ambushes and the seats were taken out of their trucks so they had to stand facing outward with guns ready.

Vietcong lobbed two mortar shells into the Danang Air Base complex early today, but they did no damage. Five people were killed in a mortar attack on the base Tuesday.

South of Danang, U.S. Marines ambushed a Vietcong patrol and estimated they killed six guerrillas.

Destroyers Shell Targets

Three Seventh Fleet Destroyers fired 729 shells at various suspected Vietcong installations along the coast and U.S. planes flew more than 400 missions against targets in South Vietnam.

In other developments:

* A U.S. spokesman said 21 Americans were killed, 183 wounded and one was missing who had become disenchanted

in action last week. South Vietnamese forces had 209 men killed and 185 missing. The Vietcong casualties were listed as 408 killed and 56 captured. There were no figures for government or Vietcong wounded.

* In Moscow, Pravda reported that Haiphong, North Vietnam's main port, has been partially evacuated and mobilized in anticipation of U.S. air strikes. Pravda's correspondent said the city looks like a fortress with anti-aircraft guns mounted on roofs. Nearly all children and some adults have been evacuated, he said.

* Government sources in Saigon reported that a South Vietnam Air Force pilot, 2d Lt. Nguyen Duc Hien, 31, flew to Cambodia and asked for political asylum. The sources said he was one of several officers who had become disenchanted

with the administration of Premier Nguyen Cao Ky.

Vietcong's Damage To Routes Revealed

By Jack Foisle
Los Angeles Times

SAIGON, Jan. 26 — A U.S. spokesman today described the terrorism and sabotage that go on in South Vietnam every night.

He emphasized the havoc the Vietcong inflict upon innocent villagers in the belief that they are pro-government. But in most areas the villagers would stay neutral if they could.

The spokesman also wanted to show what damage has been done by the Vietcong to communications that keep the government-held areas in touch with one another. The spokesman in doing this, also revealed the Vietnamese-American inability, despite the substantial U.S. buildup that began 10 months ago, to improve the situation

Air Cavalry Clashes with Reds on Coast

CHI TRU
31 JAN 1968



Wounded and weary 1st cavalry division soldiers lie in trench near An Thi, South Viet Nam. (AP Wirephoto)

Bullets Fly, Yanks Die in Mud of Viet

Correspondent Bob Poos and Photographer Henri Huët accompanied American 1st cavalry division troops into action on South Viet Nam's central coast. Here is their report.

BY BOB POOS AND HENRI HUËT

AN THI, Viet Nam, Jan. 30 (AP)—Out in a shell-pocked no man's land, a thick blob of mud moved toward our trench, formerly communist real estate but now our haven—and our hospital and mortuary.

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

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

Yank Is Wounded

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

It had been the Communists' first line of defense around this tiny village on the central lowlands that the 1st cavalry had chosen to visit Friday.

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

Answers Cry of Wounded

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

But Cole kept on going, answering the cry of a wounded

Marines in Third Day of Massive Assault

SAIGON, Viet Nam, Jan. 30 (AP)—United States 1st air cavalry troops clashed with North Vietnamese regulars today at Bong Son on the central coast and B-52 bombers from Guam hammered communist positions 25 miles to the north where United States marines were in the third day of a massive amphibious assault.

The tempo of an allied new year offensive quickened elsewhere. United States 1st infantry division troops opened Operation Mallet 20 miles southeast of Saigon and South Vietnamese government forces launched nine new search-and-destroy operations in a variety of places.

Combination Force

The 1st air cavalry division troops established that the enemy blocking forces were a combination of main force Viet Cong and the 18th regiment of



the 325th North Vietnamese division, a United States army spokesman in Saigon reported. This is the same division that engaged the 1st cavalry in the bloody fighting at Ia Drang valley in November. The division has three regiments.

900 to 1,000 Men

A cavalry spokesman said troopers counted 282 communist dead after three days of sharp fighting. He said however, that as many as 475 Communists may have been killed in combined land, air, and artillery attacks. The Americans captured 77 Viet Cong, the spokesman said.

The 18th regiment, the spokes-

REJECTED AGAIN
United States peace proposal again spurned by Viet Cong; Peking renews promise of support to Reds. Story on page 3.

man here, a dying man there. Cole spent an hour in mouth-to-mouth resuscitation trying to revive one terribly wounded soldier. The man died.

In late afternoon, Cole had civilian casualties to tend to, a whole civilian family.

Baby Dies, Family Grieves

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

The company commander, Joel Sugdinis of Cornwall Bridge, Conn., cried out to the father as he carried the baby near the

[Continued on page 2, col. 4]

RED REGULARS AGAIN FIGHT GI FORCES IN VIET

Face 1st Air Cavalry Along Coast

[Continued from first page] man said, has between 900 and 1,000 men.

In Ia Drang valley, about 110 miles west of Bong Son, the North Vietnamese lost about 1,300 dead, American officials say. The cavalry losses were 270 killed and 600 wounded.

That was the last time that the cavalry troopers had encountered the North Vietnamese division until Operation Masher.

Several thousand marines made the biggest amphibious landing Friday since Inchon in Korea but the news was withheld for security reasons until today.

Hit Three Targets

United States air force B-52s hit three different target areas today in support of the marine assault, dubbed Operation Eagle. The eight-engine jets made saturation bombing runs 12 miles inland from the marine assault area.

The marines came under sniper fire from Viet Cong villages prior to the bombing attack.

At one point, the marines called in an artillery attack on one complex of huts where sniper fire was heavy. Marine casualties were listed as light.

Several more companies of special landing force marines from the carrier Valley Forge were lifted into inland hill positions 20 miles south of Quang Ngai, a coastal city 325 miles northeast of Saigon.

Rough surf and a low ceiling slowed operations but the marines were steadily building up their force.



(AP Wirephoto)

Pfc. Lacey Skinner of Birmingham, Ala., crawls thru mud of rice paddy under heavy Viet Cong fire near An Thi, South Viet Nam. Troops of United States 1st cavalry division engaged in 24-hour battle with the enemy along the central coast.

WEATHER IMPEDES ATTACKS ON NORTH

Some Strikes Are Called Off—One Plane Downed but Pilot Is Saved at Sea

1 FEB 1968

By CHARLES MOHR
Special to The New York Times

SAIGON, Jan. 31—The resumption today of United States bombing raids against North Vietnam was restricted by bad weather.

The air strikes had been suspended for 37 days since Christmas Eve. Today's attacks apparently had limited results, mainly because of the weather. It was learned that some strikes planned for the day had been called off.

Some of the pilots who flew over North Vietnam described antiaircraft fire as "heavy." But informed sources said it was too early to tell whether the long cessation in raids had allowed the North Vietnamese to replace destroyed antiaircraft positions and to increase the danger to pilots.

Rescue Made Near Coast
At least one American plane, an A-4 Skyhawk fighter-bomber from the carrier Ranger, went down this morning, apparently from North Vietnamese ground fire.

The pilot, Lieut. Comdr. Sylvester G. Chumley of Lemoore, Calif., was rescued by an Air Force Albatross amphibious plane about half a mile off the coast of North Vietnam.

Commander Chumley and the rescue plane were both under fire from shore batteries of machine guns and artillery. The pilot was quoted as having said as he was hauled into the rescue craft:

"I'm in good shape—no sweat. But I wish they would stop firing those damn machine guns."

Another pilot who took part in today's raids, First Lieut. Jerry Driscoll, a 25-year-old Air Force officer, from Hinsdale, Ill., said in an interview later:

"It was a little scary to be

[Continued From Page 1, Col. 7]

going up North again, but we kind of expected it, because we knew for sure the pause could not last, really."

The exact number of planes that raided North Vietnam and the amount of bombs and other ammunition expended was not disclosed because of orders from Washington to restrict the amount of information given.

A military communiqué said that Navy aircraft from the carriers Ranger and Kitty Hawk had struck a number of targets in the panhandle of North Vietnam, far south of Hanoi. One flight reported destroying a bridge about 12 miles southeast of Donghoi, which is about 40 miles north of the 17th Parallel, the dividing line of North and South Vietnam.

Other Navy aircraft "hit bridges, warehouse areas and storage facilities," the communiqué said. It added that assessment of bomb damage was not possible because of bad weather. Pilots on one raid released their rockets at 300 feet because of the low ceiling.

The Air Force reported strikes by F-405 Thunderchiefs and by F-4C Phantom jets. The first Air Force attack was directed against a river-ferry site near a bridge previously destroyed by other bombings 20 miles northeast of Thanhhoa.

This area is about 230 miles north of the 17th Parallel and about 60 miles south of Hanoi. So far as could be determined, this was the northernmost strike made on the first day of the new phase of bombing.

Lieutenant Driscoll, a 1965 graduate of the Air Force Academy, also participated in a ferry raid. He described flak and ground fire in that raid as "light to moderate."

"I've seen worse," said Lieutenant Driscoll, who had gone on 28 sorties in the North before the pause. "We shot our rockets

and got out quick—there is no point in staying around to make a target."

The communiqué said a flight of Thunderchiefs had struck a "cluster of barges" about 25 miles south of the North Vietnamese city of Vinh, using rockets and 20-mm. cannon fire. Pilots encountered "heavy flak."

In two other missions later in the day, F-4C Phantoms raided a truck convoy about 100 miles north of the 17th parallel and destroyed a bridge in the same area.

A military spokesman said all trucks in the convoy had been damaged and that all planes had returned safely, despite heavy automatic-weapons fire from the ground.

Three Days



Associated Press

ESCAPE ROUTE—A wounded 1st Cavalry Division soldier limps painfully toward a rescue helicopter, which evacuated members of his unit hit by heavy Vietcong sniper fire near Hoa Chau in Vietnam.

BONGSON, South Vietnam, Feb. 1—Vietcong units fled before a reinforced battalion of United States and Vietnamese troops this afternoon. In a wide sweep 18 miles north of Bongson, the Allied forces attempted to clean up and secure the scene of some of the fiercest fighting of the war.

U.S. officials said that 208 Vietcong were killed in two actions yesterday and tonight involving units of the First Cavalry Division (air mobile) and South Vietnamese infantry participating in Operation Masher. U.S. and South Vietnamese casualties were described as light to moderate.

Elements of the 12th Cavalry Regiment yesterday afternoon had pushed north to a tiny village bordered on three sides by paddies.

Troops had settled down for lunch when heavy sniper fire came from trees and reinforced bunkers. Lt. Col. Earl Ingram called for artillery fire and air strikes, but the enemy held.

In a separate operation to the north, a squadron of South Vietnamese with 12 armored personnel carriers heard of the fight and offered their aid. It was instantly accepted.

About 5 p.m. the armored cars peeped through a tree line about 400 yards to the east. Accounts vary on what happened next, but it seems that an American rifleman saw the cars and yelled, "It's the PCs," meaning personnel carriers.

Then, according to this account, other Americans opened fire, misunderstanding "PC" for "VC," meaning Vietcong.

In any event, the Vietnamese opened up with 50-cal. machine gun and rifle fire, raking the exposed rice field. The firing lasted about 5 minutes as American commanders screamed into field telephones for them to stop shooting.

Finally the Vietnamese got positioned and moved off into the palm groves in pursuit of the enemy.

Supported by the South Vietnamese, the Americans moved forward, pushing Vietcong into a narrow oasis in the middle of a paddy.

Despite the casualties taken from machine gun fire from the armored cars, few Americans had anything but the highest praise for the South Vietnamese. Today, the Americans and

WITH SUNDAY MORNING EDITION

Feb. 2, 1966

VIET NAM

Viet Cong Lose 1,100 Men in Bloody Battle

B52s From Guam Block Any Retreat Toward Cambodia

SAIGON, South Viet Nam (AP)—Communist losses were reckoned today at more than 1,100 killed or captured in Operation Masher, the big allied drive in the central coastal plains, U.S. military spokesmen reported.

They called it one of the bloodiest fights of the Vietnamese war. Allied losses were not given, but were believed light.

U.S. fighter-bombers continued the renewed air war against North Viet Nam for the third consecutive day, hitting mainly at bridges, railroad tracks, truck convoys and storage areas. Bad weather again hampered assessment of damage.

Jets from 7th Fleet carriers flew 20 combat missions and Air Force planes hit Ben Thuy, the port on the South China Sea for the city of Vinh, 160 miles south of Hanoi, for the second day in a row, spokesmen said.

Hundreds of Bodies Found

U.S. air cavalrymen, South Vietnamese paratroopers and South Koreans carried Operation Masher into the ninth day in a 13-mile-square battleground around Bong Son, 290 miles northeast of Saigon. Spokesmen said the allied troops found several hundred more enemy bodies.

The spokesmen said the Communist toll has been established as 695 killed, 102 captured and 437 suspects detained. Three-fourths of the latter have been identified as Viet Cong, they said.

Fighting, however, tapered off into only an occasional fire fight, and U.S. B52s from Guam lashed the western borders of the battle zone to cut off any Communist retreat toward Cambodia.

Commenting on the large find of Communist victims, a U.S. spokesman said: "It proves they are no longer able to get their bodies out as they used to do."

U.S. Casualties Rise

A U.S. military spokesman announced that the number of Americans killed, missing or captured in Viet Nam last week was more than triple that of the week before.

The spokesman said 57 Americans were killed in action, 11 were missing or captured and 281 were wounded. The figures for the week that ended Jan. 22 were 21 killed, 193 wounded and 1 missing.

Viet Cong losses were put at 519 killed and 224 captured, while a Vietnamese military

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U.S. Weapons Better, Giap Says

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spokesman said government losses were 127 killed and 52 missing.

American officials did not report any plane losses on the third day of attacks against the Communist north since the 37-day bombing pause.

North Viet Nam claimed two planes were brought down Tuesday by its gunners. U.S. spokesmen did not report any losses in Tuesday's raids but said three planes were downed in the first day of strikes.

Cambodia Says Plane Shot

The official Cambodian News Agency said Cambodian anti-aircraft fire hit a U.S. Navy C130 Hercules cargo plane Sunday about 1,000 yards inside Cambodian territory in the region of Kaam Samnar in Kandal Province. The report said the plane limped back across the border and landed in South Viet Nam at An Long after dropping two wing tanks and seven rockets on Cambodian territory.

There was no confirmation from U.S. officials.

Operation Masher had developed into pincer movements, with American air cavalrymen coming in from the south and north, the Korean marines hitting from the east, and South Vietnamese troops taking on the Communists on a broad front six to 16 miles north of Bong Son.

As a result, U.S. spokesmen said the combined Viet Cong forces and the 18th Regiment of the North Vietnamese 25th Division were left with only one escape route — the hills in the west pointing toward Cambodia.

A Vietnamese army spokesman said government troops killed about 100 Communists — with only light over-all casualties themselves — in a half dozen brisk skirmishes against two enemy regiments between last Friday and Tuesday.

Tunnels Found

American tanks overran a big tunnel complex discovered 15 miles southeast of Saigon in the U.S. 1st Infantry's Operation Mallet. The Viet Cong fled after opposing the tanks with small arms fire. In the week-long search and destroy operation, the infantrymen have killed 17 Communists, captured 11 and destroyed 70 sampans and 10 base camps, U.S. spokesmen said.

U.S. officials displayed considerable satisfaction with results of the big American-Vietnamese propaganda offensive mounted in connection with the lunar New Year celebration.

A spokesman said 1,672 Vietnamese linked with the guerrilla movement turned themselves over to the government last month. Many carried safe-conduct passes, of which some 12 million were dropped on Communist territory to encourage defections.



—United Press International

Tired soldiers of the 1st Cavalry Division, Airmobile, catch a short nap after engaging Viet Cong forces in Operation Masher near Bongson.

