



for fighting men too busy to keep their own!

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State News

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9 Sections, 86 Pages



Staff Photos by Charles Black

'IT WAS LIKE THIS . . . ' PFC DAVE RUTH STARTS STORY OF HIS 24-HOUR ORDEAL

Charles Black Reports

He'd Laugh, Then Weep

BY CHARLES BLACK
Ledger-Enquirer Military Writer

BINH DINH—They came to him—his friends—kneeling to hold his hand or pat him on the head. Some hugged him and he mixed tears with laughter.

For PFC Dave Rose of Philadelphia, it was a day he will never forget. And it was the climax of an ordeal which started at 2:15 p.m. May 15 on a mountain ridge near here in the rugged terrain of South Viet Nam.

Rose was one of a squad of 1st Cavalry Division soldiers who had fought a heroic battle against a Viet Cong platoon, and although outnumbered three to one, the handful of GIs had kept the VC from surprising and overrunning the rest of their company.

Rose's squad lost heavily in the hand-to-hand battle—four men were killed and only one escaped unhurt. Rose was wounded in the arm and from 2:15 p.m. May 15 until 8:30 a.m. the next day his ability to "play dead" kept him alive.

The Viet Cong searched his clothing and rolled his body about on the ground. One of Rose's buddies lay by him, also wounded. He moved and the Viet Cong shot him.

Rose remained motionless until the VC left the battle area

and then hid until he was rescued by a patrol.

In the uneasy safety of the rear area, Rose sat quietly while his wound was bandaged. His buddies looked on and then they touched him, as if they couldn't believe he was there. They were very tender and very profane as they talked to him.

And Rose cried and grinned in turn.

The company of air cavalrymen had been engaged in a fight which led up to the big battle to follow in "Happy Valley."

Company B, Second Battalion, Eighth Cavalry, commanded by Capt. J. D. Coleman, fought the VC for more than five hours before reinforcements, under the command of Lt. Col. Rutland Beard, were flown to the scene in CH47 Chinook helicopters.

The helicopters flew back to An Khe with the dead, wrapped in ponchos and poncho liners. There were two rows of those who had paid the price for a remote ridge in Viet Nam.

Rose was luckier than his poncho-covered comrades. He sat on a muddy Vietnamese hillside and mixed tears with laughter.

And his friends were doing the same.



THEN STRAIN, HAPPINESS BECAME TOO MUCH AND HE BEGINS TO WEEP



A BUDDY PUTS HIS ARM AROUND YOUNG GI

AIR CAVALRY GETS SUPPORT IN 2-DAY BATTLE; REDS ON THE RUN

Three U.S. Battalions
Help Beat Back N.
Viet Namese—Rains
Slow Air War

SAIGON, South Viet Nam, May 17 (AP)—United States air cavalrymen moved heavy reinforcements against 350 or more North Viet Namese regulars in the central highlands today and reported that the Communists were on the run.

Helicopters airlifted three battalions of reinforcements to the battle, 35 miles northwest of Qui Nhon and 250 miles northeast of Saigon.

After brisk fighting throughout the day—the second day of the engagement—reports from headquarters of the First Air Cavalry Division said the enemy force was retreating at nightfall.

The engagement started Monday when an outnumbered company of cavalrymen clashed with strongly entrenched North Viet Namese. Some of this fighting was hand to hand.

The U.S. command in Saigon said that 28 Communist troops had been killed in the opening six-hour fight Monday, but an officer at the scene said 30 enemy bodies had been counted and he estimated the total enemy dead at 85. American casualties were listed as moderate. It was the only reported ground action of any size in the Viet Nam war and monsoon rains once again cut sharply into the American air offensive over North Viet Nam.

B-52s Above Weather

U.S. Air Force B-52 bombers, flying above the weather at 40,000 feet, struck for a third successive day at a Viet Cong troop base and storage area 70 miles north of Saigon in Binh Long province, near the Cambodian border.

Also along the Cambodian border, the U.S. First Infantry Division, winding up a 25-day sweep through a Communist sanctuary, reported today that it had destroyed enough supplies and equipment to house, feed and arm a guerrilla army.

In its clean-up of War Zone C, 70 miles northwest of Saigon, the division seized 4,200,000 pounds of rice and 163 boats and sampans. It destroyed 66 Red base camps, four jungle factories, three hospitals and 814 other buildings. The division killed 118 Communists in the operation.

U.S. Navy and Air Force pilots hampered by foul weather, flew only 17 missions yesterday over North Viet Nam. The concentrated on roads, bridges and other targets in the southern panhandle near Vinh, Dong Hoi and the Mu Gia pass.

U.S. planes flew 297 sorties over South Viet Nam yesterday to support ground operations.

CAJ Viet Reds on Run Chicago News 17 MAY 1966 In Highlands Battle

SAIGON (AP) — U.S. air cavalrymen hurled heavy reinforcements against a force of 350 or more North Viet Namese regulars in the central highlands Tuesday and reported the Communists were on the run.

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It was the only reported ground action of any size in the Viet Nam war, and continuing monsoon rains once again cut sharply into the American air offensive over North Viet Nam.

ON THE political front, Buddhist leaders threatened a

showdown with Premier Nguyen Cao Ky's military regime and vowed to give their lives if necessary to force the government to end its campaign against antigovernment Buddhists and troops in the northern provinces.

Ky alerted troops of the elite 7th Infantry Division Tuesday to stand by in case of Buddhist rioting in Saigon. Two battalions — about 1,000 men — were reported moving in from the south.

Acting U.S. Ambassador William Porter conferred with Ky. There was no official statement on their exchange, but informed sources said Porter demanded that the United States be kept informed of all future moves of the Saigon government.

Loyal Vietnamese marines tried to extend their control in Da Nang but called off a march into the eastern part of the city when they encountered a strong rebel force. The rebels took control of a third pagoda while sniping continued.

In Hue, a Vietnamese officer fired two pistol shots at a helicopter carrying the new Vietnamese 1st Corps commander and the U.S. Marine Brig. Gen. Jonas M. Platt, on a peace mission among the dissidents.

One shot hit the helicopter, causing no appreciable damage, but a U.S. spokesman said an American gunner in the aircraft returned the fire, killed the officer and wounded six Vietnamese soldiers.

U.S. Air Force B-52 bombers, flying above the weather at 40,000 feet, struck for a third successive day at the same target near the Cambodian border.



19 MAY 1966
THE INDIANAPOLIS STAR



ON DEFENSE IN A RICE PADDY—Members of a scout platoon of the 1st Cavalry Division take up defensive positions in a rice paddy near Bong Son, South Viet Nam, Wednesday after it was fired on during a sweeping opera-

tion. The platoon, an advanced unit sent to prepare the way for a brigade, was trapped in the paddy and suffered some losses—its lone officer fell wounded and had to be evacuated—before help arrived. (UPI Radiotelephoto)

GI's Mop Up,
Count 416
8 MAY 1966
Cong Killed

SAIGON (AP) — Survivors of a smashed Communist battalion threw away their weapons and melted into the countryside Saturday in an effort to elude hotly pursuing U.S. Air Cavalrymen and South Vietnamese troops who already have killed 416 of them.

The battleground victory on the central coast overshadowed other military developments. U.S. spokesmen in Saigon said that despite the arrival of monsoon rains American warplanes blasted targets in North Viet Nam.

Bridges Blasted

A delayed report told of the destruction by U.S. planes of two spans of the Bac Giang Railroad and highway bridge 25 miles northeast of Hanoi, the northern capital, cutting a vital supply route from Communist China.

The U.S. Air Force and units of the U.S. 1st Air Cavalry Division accounted for 332 of the Communists killed in operation Davy Crockett, 10 miles north of Bong Son and about 280 miles northeast of Saigon. The South Vietnamese claimed 84.

Jettison Weapons

Associated Press Correspondent Bob Poos, with the cavalrymen, reported the Communist survivors followed their usual tactic of throwing away their weapons to facilitate escape. Poos said the enemy force had been identified as the 7th Battalion of the Quyet Tam (determination) Regiment.

In Saigon, a U.S. military spokesman said there was "precious little left" of the enemy unit.

40 Captured

In addition to the enemy death toll, the allied force reported capturing 40 prisoners and questioning 515 persons suspected of being Viet Cong or Viet Cong sympathizers. Presumably those questioned were natives of the area.

The scene of the fighting was near South Viet Nam's route 1, a main highway that runs along the coast from the 17th Parallel to Saigon.

It was the sharpest ground fighting in three weeks. It began Thursday.

Memory of Another War

By PAUL HEMPHILL
Atlanta Journal-Columbian
AN KHE, Viet Nam, May 16--The convoy pulled out of Kontum at 8:30 in the morning. In all, there were nearly 100 vehicles. The sections of the convoy were spaced 10 minutes apart. Ours came last, and there were 25 to 30 trucks and Jeeps in it.



Paul Hemphill

When you abandon a small place like Kontum, it makes a lot of people sad to see you leave. People like Adam Bombay, for instance, an Indian who owns almost a whole block of stores and can get you anything wholesale and had sold enough in one week to the 1st Air Cavalry Division to retire and go back home. And the kids who sneak up to the back of your tent and sell beer and Cokes.

And the girls at the Texas Bar, who had not done so well since the last time the Americans came and tried to mop up the area of Viet Cong. May be all of this is why there was a sign at the bridge leaving town, a sign which had sprung up overnight and said: "Good Luck."

"NO GRENADES, please," one of the GIs yelled at the people lining the streets as the convoy moved out.

"Hurry up, you'll be late for the ambush," said another.

It was a good line, everybody who heard it laughed. Everybody also laughed a sort of dry laugh, because they knew where the convoy was going. Halfway between Pleiku and An Khe, it would go over the Mang Giang Pass. There are not many soldiers in Viet Nam today who have not heard of the Mang Giang Pass.

Highway 19 is a bad stretch of road, but it is one of the

better ones in this country. It connects the towns of Pleiku and An Khe, a stretch of about 50 miles. The road has always belonged to the Communists. Halfway between the two towns is the Mang Giang Pass. The pass is less than two miles long, a place where the highway has been cut through tremendously steep mountains covered with heavy trees and elephant grass. If there were ever a perfect spot for an ambush, this is it.

The French found this out in 1954, less than three weeks before the end of its fruitless eight-year war in Viet Nam.

ON JUNE 24, 1954, the elite Group Mobile 100 of the French forces was forced to abandon An Khe to the Viet Minh. There were nearly 3,200 men in the convoy as it set out for Pleiku. Group Mobile 100 was a highly mobile, flexible fighting force, the pride of France. It was about

all France had left for its last-ditch stand.

Group Mobile 100 approached the Mang Giang Pass in the middle of the day, and suddenly all hell broke loose. Screaming out of the tops of the peaks in the pass, the Viet Minh made a shambles of Group Mobile 100. There was nowhere to turn. After the ambush was finished, the French had lost half of the 3,200 men, all of their artillery, 85 per cent of their vehicles and 68 per cent of their signal equipment. For all intents and purposes, Mang Giang knocked France from the war.

The convoy had been steadily climbing for some time now. All of the bridges between Pleiku and An Khe had been blown up by the Viet Cong. Helicopters hummed overhead, escorting the convoy. About 1,000 foot soldiers had been guarding the entire

Turn to Page 7, Column 2

HEMPHILL

Continued from Page 1

route, Highway 19, with tanks and big guns, waiting for the convoy to pass through.

"There's what's left of the French," an officer said.

BEFORE the convoy had reached the highest point in the pass, everybody could see it. There were two French armored trucks, rusted and broken, left just as they had been left 12 years earlier by the Viet Minh. And then a monument, in French and Vietnamese, to the memory of the French Group Mobile 100. It was a chilling sight.

"The French theory in an ambush was to try and out-run them. We stop and fight," the officer said.

And we went through the pass, Mang Giang Pass. It went straight up from the winding road, straight up to the sky with elephant grass so high it could hide a tank. And what you kept thinking about was how it must have felt to be a part of an elite force like Group Mobile 100, proud and strong but done in by a bunch of people in pajamas and sandals.

"Of course," somebody said, "we've got helicopters and the French didn't." You wonder how much difference it would have made.

CHICAGO SUN-TIMES, Fri., May 13, 1966

17 MAY 1966

THE TIMES-PICAYUNE, NEW ORLEANS, LA

Cavalrymen, Entrenched Viet Cong Force Battle

Six-Hour Contact Is
Broken Off

By ROBERT TUCKMAN
SAIGON (AP)—American Air Cavalrymen and a strongly entrenched Viet Cong force fought a six-hour battle Monday near the coast of central Viet Nam, a U.S. military spokesman reported Tuesday. Details were sketchy.

The battle was the first report of significant ground fighting after a weekend of political turmoil. Viet Cong terrorists struck against police in Saigon Monday in a series of attacks, however.

Communist harassment in the capital apparently was aimed at pouring more trouble on the military government beset by a new wave of Buddhist unrest in Saigon and open rebellion in its northern provinces.

Bad weather slowed the U.S. air offensive.

The U.S. spokesman said elements of 1st Air Cavalry division made contact with the Viet Cong at 2 p. m. Monday about 35 miles northwest of coastal Qui Nhon, which is 275 miles northeast of Saigon. Contact was broken after six hours.

He said there were no reports on casualties on either side, but indications were the cavalrymen were trying to re-establish contact.

"The enemy is strongly dug in in the area and is well camouflaged," the spokesman said.

In one terrorist attack in Saigon, a Viet Cong squad ambushed a South Vietnamese police patrol in the dock area. One policeman was killed. Two others were wounded. Three Americans and 11 Vietnamese were wounded in raids at four other points in the capital and its suburbs. One Viet Cong was reported killed.

U.S. military officials looked gloomily at the possible effects of the political turmoil on the war against the Communists. The officials said it could only help the enemy if it drags on.



Message From Garza Pays Off In Viet

Remember that message from Sgt. Paul Garza, the Chicago GI in Viet Nam, to Mayor Daley? He asked for a Chicago street sign to bolster morale of Chicago soldiers in his outfit, Company A, 1st Battalion, 5th Cavalry. And while the mayor was at it, could he please see his way clear to sending a Chicago flag and perhaps a beer cooler? A State and Madison sign arrived and Chicagoans (l. to r.) Specialist 4 Jimmy Clay, Sgt. Gerald Bracken, Garza and Specialist 4 Elmer Larson of Des Plaines erect it at village of An Khe. And the cold beer is being enjoyed by Garza (wearing cap in photo at left) and his buddies at the city flag adorns a recreation room. (AP)



TOUGH ROAD FOR CAPTOR AND CAPTIVE—A muddy, bedraggled Viet Cong guerilla suspect is followed by a heavily laden U.S. paratrooper as they cut through a rice paddy in the jungles of the central highlands near Bong Son, 280 miles northwest of Saigon. The U.S. 1st Cavalry Division troops tried to clear the Viet Cong from the area in Operation Davey Crockett.—AP Wirephoto.

1st Cavalry Kills 240 Reds in Week

24 MAY 1966
From Wire Reports

SAIGON, South Viet Nam (AP) — U.S. troops of the 1st Cavalry Division (Airmobile) killed 240 Viet Cong in a week of hard fighting in the rain-soaked jungle of Viet Nam's central mountains, a U.S. military spokesman said Tuesday.

American casualties were described as light in the "very, very difficult" operation called Crazy Horse.

The spokesman said 25 Communist bodies were found during the night in shallow graves or pits. The air cavalrymen have been using helicopters to aid the men afoot trying to flush the Viet Cong from the tangled growth and ridges.

Clearing weather Monday permitted the heaviest air strikes in a week against North Viet Nam. Air Force and Navy planes slammed communications lines and a military barracks 28 miles northeast of Haiphong, Hanoi's chief port.

Communist guerrillas knocked out a U. S. Navy patrol vessel with heavy gunfire and forced it to run aground just 20 miles from Saigon, an American spokesman said Monday. The 50-foot "swift boat" sank later during salvage operations.

Spokesmen said the six-man crew of the American patrol craft—similar to the PT boats of World War II—suffered "moderate" casualties in the attack that occurred Sunday night along the Dinh Ba River.

In the air war, U.S. planes smashed at a wide range of North Vietnamese targets Sunday around the Communist capital of Hanoi, its port city of Haiphong, Dong Hoi, Thanh Hoa, Vinh and the vital Mu Gia Pass gateway to the Ho Chi Minh trail.

Cavalrymen Chase Cong in Copters

SAIGON, South Viet Nam — (UPI) — U.S. Army helicopters whirled low Saturday over an elephant grass valley near the South China Sea coast, machine gunning Communist bands fleeing after a three-day battle in which 108 Reds were killed. The helicopters killed at least 24 more Viet Cong.

American spokesmen said U.S. 1st Cavalry Division troops suffered light casualties in the victorious valley campaign 275 miles north of Saigon. But an American civilian news correspondent was killed by mortar fire during the action known as Operation Crazy Horse.

In New York, the newsman was identified as Look magazine correspondent Sam Castan, 30, who has been covering the Viet Nam war for the magazine since 1962. His wife and child have been living in Hong Kong.

The helicopter hunting involved a brigade of air cavalrymen who in addition to firing on the Viet Cong from their aircraft alighted from time to time to pursue them through the grass.

Such helicopter hopping was a hide-and-seek form of warfare unknown even in the Korean War.

In addition to picking off the small Communist bands—sometimes fleeing only in twos and threes—the helicopter-borne cavalrymen seized arms and ammunition the Communists left behind.

Their haul included 23 individual weapons, six crew-served weapons, 1,800 rounds of small arms ammunition and 60 and 80 mm mortar shells.

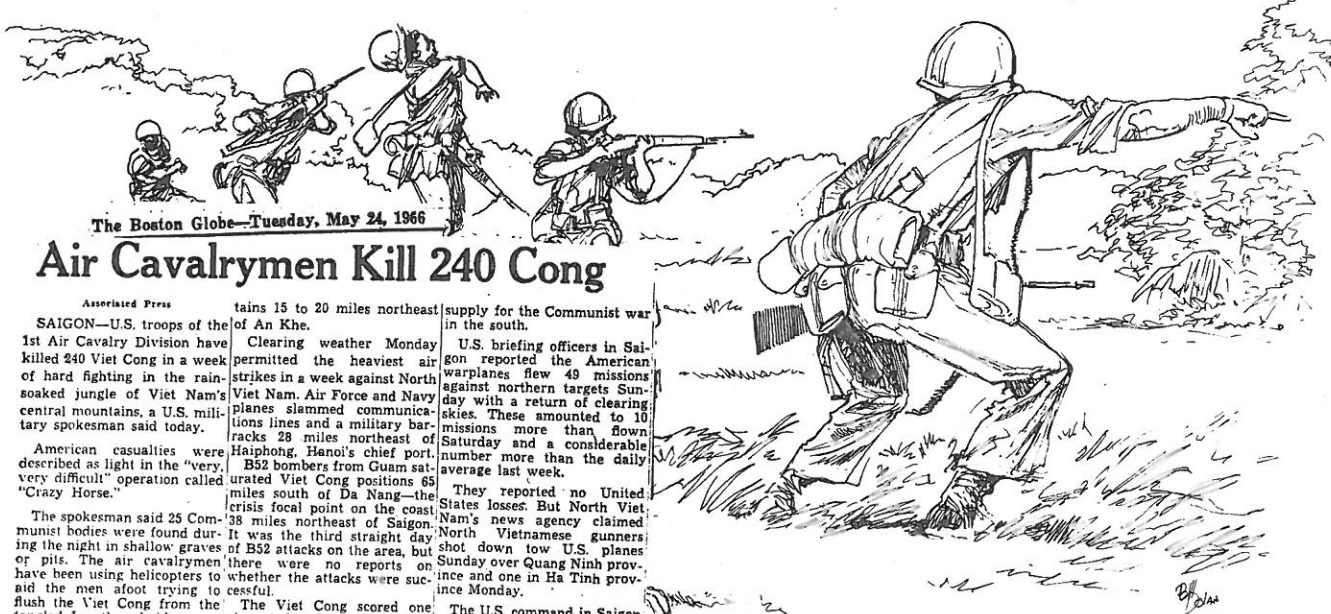
Air Force B57 crews who supported the helicopter warriors in Operation Crazy Horse were credited with killing at least 20 Communist guerrillas.

But in the air war against the north, bad weather held down U.S. Air Force and Navy missions Friday to only 15. U.S. spokesmen described the flying weather over North Viet Nam as "extremely unfavorable . . . heavy overcast . . . rain over most targets . . . storms."

Nevertheless, Air Force B57, F105 Thunderchiefs and F4C Phantom jets managed to hit a storage area near Dong Hoi and that most constant of recent targets the Mu Gia Pass, gateway to the Communists' Ho Chi Minh supply trail.

But the weather was so bad that for the first time in weeks U.S. spokesmen said they had no assessment of Air Force bombing damage. The Navy's missions fared little better. They struck at railways, coastal and river shipping, barracks and supply areas and offshore islands, hitting one rail yard only two miles east of the big Communist supply center of Thanh Hoa.

South of the border, U.S. Navy, Air Force and Marine strike pilots flew 386 sorties against Viet Cong targets. They killed about 50 guerrillas and U.S. B52 bombers from Guam struck at a suspected Viet Cong concentration 65 miles southeast of the crisis-ridden city of Da Nang Saturday afternoon.



The Boston Globe—Tuesday, May 24, 1966

Air Cavalrymen Kill 240 Cong

Associated Press

SAIGON—U.S. troops of the 1st Air Cavalry Division have killed 240 Viet Cong in a week of hard fighting in the rain-soaked jungle of Viet Nam's central mountains, a U.S. military spokesman said today.

American casualties were described as light in the "very, very difficult" operation called "Crazy Horse."

The spokesman said 25 Communist bodies were found during the night in shallow graves or pits. The air cavalrymen have been using helicopters to aid the men afoot trying to flush the Viet Cong from the tangled growth and ridges.

The operation appeared to be slowing because of monsoon rains. The troops were hunting the remnants of a Viet Cong battalion in the rain-soaked elephant grass and moun-

tains 15 to 20 miles northeast of An Khe.

Clearing weather Monday permitted the heaviest air strikes in a week against North Viet Nam. Air Force and Navy planes slammed communications lines and a military barracks 28 miles northeast of Haiphong, Hanoi's chief port. B52 bombers from Guam saturated Viet Cong positions 65 miles south of Da Nang—the crisis focal point on the coast, 38 miles northeast of Saigon. It was the third straight day of B52 attacks on the area, but there were no reports on whether the attacks were successful.

The Viet Cong scored one victory, knocking out a U.S. Navy river patrol boat 20 miles southeast of Saigon.

Monsoon rains in the past week had limited American air attacks against North Vietnamese targets deemed by military strategists as sources of

supply for the Communist war in the south.

U.S. briefing officers in Saigon reported the American warplanes flew 49 missions against northern targets Sunday with a return of clearing skies. These amounted to 10 missions more than flown Saturday and a considerable number more than the daily average last week.

They reported no United States losses. But North Viet Nam's news agency claimed North Vietnamese gunners shot down two U.S. planes Sunday over Quang Ninh province and one in Ha Tinh province Monday.

The U.S. command in Saigon said the Navy river craft—a 50-foot "swift boat" capable of speeds up to 25 knots—was hit by a shell from a Viet Cong 7mm recoilless rifle on the Dinh Ba River Sunday. A spokesman reported moderate casualties among the boat's six-man crew.

The crew fired back at the Communist ambushers with their 50 caliber machinegun. It was the second of the "swift boats" to be sunk since they began their large-scale patroling of South Viet Nam's coast-

Columbus Enquirer

FOUNDED BY MIRABEAU B. LAMAR IN 1828

902, Monday Morning, May 23, 1966

22 Pages — Two Sections

FULL AP, UPI, AP Wirephoto

Cavalrymen Clash With Red Holdouts

Viet Cong Battalion Loses Half Its Men Fighting 1st Cavalry

SAIGON (AP)—U. S. cavalrymen clashed again Sunday with stubborn Viet Cong holdouts in the rough mountain country of central Viet Nam. They reported killing 51, bringing the total enemy slain to 187 in the week-old Operation Crazy Horse.

Flareups of heavy fighting occurred elsewhere in scattered parts of Viet Nam, but new internal strife marked by Buddhist disorders in Saigon and fighting between loyal and rebel troops in Da Nang overshadowed the war against the Communists.

In a one-day sweep Sunday in Quang Tri Province 400 miles north of Saigon, Vietnamese forces reported they killed 35 Viet Cong and captured three others. Vietnamese casualties were light, a spokesman said.

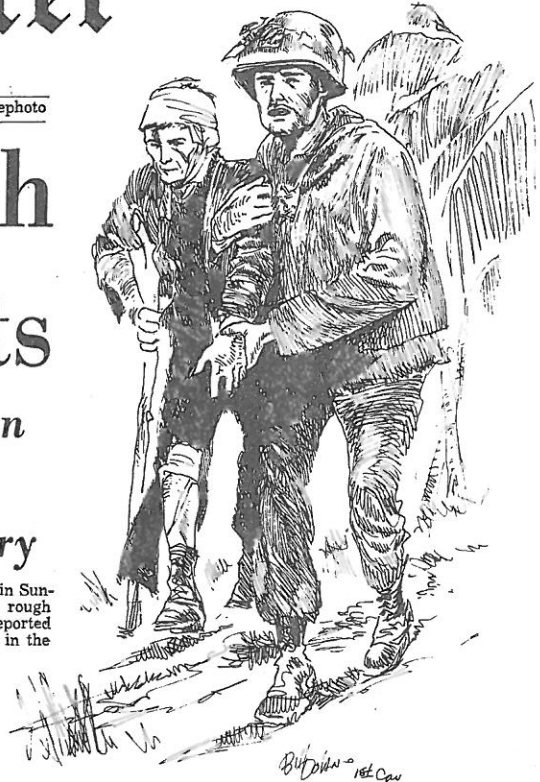
The helicopter-flying Americans claimed to have killed more than half the Viet Cong battalion of 350 in the action 20 miles northeast of An Khe and about 250 miles northeast of Saigon. The fighting is about 130 miles south of Da Nang, scene of the civil turmoil.

Unusually Aggressive
A U.S. military spokesman said contact ran from light to heavy after heavy fighting Saturday. A communique described the Viet Cong as unusually aggressive and well armed with automatic weapons and mortars. The spokesman said the fighting ranged over an area of five to six square miles.

On Saturday the heaviest fighting occurred 17 miles northeast of An Khe, where a company of air cavalrymen overran a Viet Cong hill position, killing 30 enemy at the cost of moderate casualties themselves.

But in the same area a mortar platoon of cavalrymen was attacked by a reinforced Viet Cong platoon and suffered heavy casualties.

In the almost continuous action that started last Monday the cavalrymen reported also the capturing of seven Viet Cong and 46 weapons. Overall casualties to the cavalry brigade were reported light, although individual units took moderate to heavy losses.



B52s Strike

In air operations B52 Stratofort bombers struck again in Quang Ngai Province as they had on Saturday. The target was a suspected Viet Cong base camp and troop concentration 55 miles southeast of Da Nang.

With somewhat clearing weather Saturday the U.S. Navy and Air Force sent 39 missions north of the 17th parallel — the highest number in a week of monsoon storms and double the 15 missions of Friday.

In support of ground action U.S. pilots flew 390 sorties over South Viet Nam Saturday. The Air Force logged 199 Viet Cong killed, 16 sampans sunk and destruction to Viet Cong bunkers and buildings. The Vietnamese air force flew 68 sorties Saturday.

Other operations reported by the allied command:

In a sharp engagement Saturday (Continued on Page 8, Col. 1)

(Continued from Page 1)

day nine miles southwest of Da Nang, a squad of U.S. Marines clashed with a platoon of Viet Cong and with the help of helicopter-lifted reinforcements killed 53 of the enemy and captured 16 weapons.

The action started in paddy fields when a squad of 14 Marines opened fire on a Viet Cong platoon. Helicopters lifted two more squads of Marines to the scene. Under attack by tanks, helicopters and Marine jets, the Viet Cong took losses, including some who were strafed from helicopters as they tried to swim a river. Marine casualties were described as light.

A unit of the U.S. 25th Infantry Division, trained in Hawaii for jungle fighting, reported killing 10 Viet Cong in sporadic action Saturday in the sweep through the Boi Loi woods and rubber plantations 35 miles northwest of Saigon.

Since the start of the drive by two brigades from the division on Wednesday, spokesman reported 82 Viet Cong killed, 20 weapons captured, 70 tons of rice and 36,000 yards of cloth seized and 106 buildings and 56 tunnels destroyed.

Vietnamese military headquarters reported a mortar and mine attack Sunday by the Viet Cong against the Vietnamese training center at Thu Duc, 10 miles north of Saigon. Three Vietnamese were killed and 37 wounded in the pre-dawn attack on the center, which houses 700 persons, mostly recruits. There was no estimate of Viet Cong casualties.

The Vietnamese headquarters reported 177 Viet Cong killed Saturday by government troops in heavy fighting in Kien Gian Province on the Gulf of Siam 110 miles southwest of Saigon.

In what a U.S. official described as an atrocity, Viet Cong guerrillas killed 19 and wounded 16 unarmed Vietnamese canal workers Sunday. The workers were taken prisoner earlier at a small village in the Mekong Delta 110 miles southwest of Saigon. The official said a Vietnamese militia unit tried to rescue the workers and the Viet Cong shot them down during the attempt. Most of the dead were shot in the head.

Tuesday, May 17, 1966

THE CINCINNATI ENQUIRER

U. S. Air Cavalrymen Fight Six-Hour Duel With Reds

SAIGON (Tuesday) (AP) —

American air cavalrymen strongly entrenched in a Viet Cong force fought a six-hour battle Monday near the coast of central Viet Nam. A U.S. military spokesman reported today. The battle was sketchy.

The battle was the first report of significant ground fighting after a weekend of political turmoil. Viet Cong terrorists struck against police in Saigon Monday in a series of attacks, however.

The U. S. spokesman said elements of First Air Cavalry Division made contact with the Viet Cong Monday about 35 miles northwest of coastal Qui Nhon, which is 275 miles northeast of Saigon. Contact was broken after six hours.

He said there were no reports of casualties on either side, but indications were the cavalrymen were trying to re-establish contact.

"The enemy is strongly dug in in the area and is well camouflaged," the spokesman said.



Captured rebel South Vietnamese soldiers who fought against the government forces at Da Nang are held in a makeshift barbed wire enclosure following their surrender.—AP Wirephoto.

U. S. Troops Take Toll Of Viet Cong

83 MAY 1966

Saigon (AP)—U. S. Air cavalrymen reported today they have wiped out two thirds of a Viet Cong battalion in a week of fighting in rugged mountains and high elephant grass of Central Vietnam.

The 1st air cavalry division reported 47 more Viet Cong killed yesterday, raising the total to 207 since Operation Crazy Horse started May 16 about 250 miles northeast of Saigon.

Ground fighting elsewhere was light, but American planes took advantage of slightly improved weather to increase their attacks against North Vietnam.

The U. S. Command announced that a Navy "swift boat" was hit by Viet Cong fire and sank 20 miles southeast of Saigon yesterday.

For the third successive day, B-52 bombers hammered at Viet Cong positions in Quang Ngai province.

Cavalrymen Clash Again with Cong in Mountains

187 Total Slain in Week-Old Operation

SAIGON (AP) — U. S. cavalrymen clashed again Sunday in the rough mountain country of central Viet Nam. They reported killing 51, bringing the total enemy slain to 187 in the week-old Operation Crazy Horse.

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But in the same area a mortar platoon of cavalrymen was attacked by a reinforced Viet Cong platoon and suffered heavy casualties. The action was broken off when helicopters flew in reinforcements.

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BOMBERS STRIKE AGAIN

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Other operations reported by the allied command:

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CONG TAKES LOSSES

The action started in paddy fields when a squad of 14 Marines opened fire on a Viet Cong platoon. Helicopters lifted two more squads of Marines to the scene. Under attack by tanks, helicopters and Marine jets, the Viet Cong took losses, including some who were strafed from helicopters as they tried to swim a river. Marine casualties were described as light.

A unit of the U. S. 25th Infantry Division, trained in Hawaii for jungle fighting, reported killing 10 Viet Cong in sporadic action Saturday in the sweep through the Boi Loi woods and rubber plantations 35 miles northwest of Saigon.

Since the start of the drive by two brigades from the division on Wednesday, spokesman reported 82 Viet Cong killed, 20 weapons captured, 70 tons of rice and 36,000 yards of cloth seized and 106 buildings and 56 tunnels destroyed.

TRAINING CENTER HIT

Vietnamese military headquarters reported a mortar and mine attack Sunday by the Viet Cong against the Vietnamese training center at Thu Duc, 10 miles north of Saigon. Three Vietnamese were killed and 37 wounded in the predawn attack on the center, which houses 700 persons, mostly recruits. There was no estimate of Viet Cong casualties.

The Vietnamese headquarters reported 177 Viet Cong killed Saturday by government troops in heavy fighting in Kien Gian Province on the Gulf of Siam 110 miles southwest of Saigon.

In what a U. S. official described as an atrocity, Viet Cong guerrillas killed 19 and wounded 15 unarmed Vietnamese canal workers Sunday. The workers were taken prisoner earlier at a small village in the Mekong Delta 110 miles southwest of Saigon. The official said a Vietnamese

GIs Kill 207 Viet Cong in Week-Long Sweep

SAIGON, May 23. —(AP)—U. S. air cavalrymen reported today they have wiped out two-thirds of a Viet Cong battalion during a week of fighting in central Vietnam.

The 1st Air Cavalry Division reported another 47 Viet Cong killed yesterday, raising the total to 207 since Operation Crazy Horse started last week about 250 miles northeast of Saigon.

STEP UP BOMBINGS

Ground fighting elsewhere was light, but American planes took advantage of slightly improved weather to increase their attacks against North Vietnam.

The U. S. command announced that a Navy "swift boat" was struck by Viet Cong fire and sank 20 miles southeast of Saigon yesterday. It was the first of the speedy 50-foot river patrol boats to be lost. A spokesman said there were casualties among the six-man crew.

For the third successive day, B-52 bombers hammered at Viet Cong positions in Quang Ngai Province. The giant Stratofortresses hit at a suspected Viet Cong headquarters, 65 miles south of Da Nang.

KILL 11 CONG

The U. S. 25th Infantry division continued its sweep through woods and rubber plantations 35 miles northwest of Saigon. The division reported

killing 11 Viet Cong yesterday to raise the toll to 85 since the operation started May 16.

In 10 air missions over North Vietnam, Air Force pilots reported hitting highway traffic, a railroad yard and a radar site.

Navy pilots from the carriers Kitty Hawk and Hancock, flying 39 missions, struck at an army barracks 28 miles northeast of Haiphong and coastal bridges, roads, junks and barges.

American airmen flew 378 combat sorties over South Vietnam yesterday and claimed 50 Viet Cong killed while supporting ground operations.

REDS REPULSED

The Tam Ky airstrip 35 miles south of Da Nang was attacked today by Viet Cong. No planes were damaged at the field, which was defended by Vietnamese and American units. The Vietnamese reported killing 10 Viet Cong and taking moderate casualties themselves. No U. S. casualties were reported.

In another action today, the Vietnamese headquarters reported killing 59 Viet Cong of an estimated force of 200 in an operation 33 miles southeast of Saigon.

In the northernmost province of Quang Tri, a Vietnamese force in a sweep yesterday reported killing 35 Viet Cong and capturing three.



Montagnard woman from BUON EAYANG... (RHADÉ TRIBE)

The Birmingham News

83 MAY 1966

Cong unit takes beating

Cong unit takes beating

From Page 1

SAIGON, May 23 — (AP) — U. S. air cavalrymen reported today they have wiped out two-thirds of a Viet Cong battalion during a week of fighting in rugged mountains and high elephant grass of Central Viet Nam.

The 1st Air Cavalry Division reported another 47 Viet Cong killed Sunday, raising the total to 207 since Operation Crazy Horse started May 16 about 250 miles northeast of Saigon.

Ground fighting elsewhere was light, but American planes

took advantage of slightly improved weather to increase their attacks against North Viet Nam.

AIR FORCE and Navy planes flew 49 missions north of the 17th Parallel Sunday. This was 10 more than on Saturday and well above the usual number last week, when monsoon rains curtailed operations in the north sharply.

The U. S. command announced that a Navy "swift boat" was hit by Viet Cong fire and sank 20 miles southeast of Saigon. It was the first of the speedy 50-foot river patrol boats to be lost. The boat was hit by a 57mm recoilless rifle while patrolling the Dinh Ba River. It ran aground and sank during salvage operations, a spokesman reported. He said there were moderate casualties among the six-man crew.

For the third successive day, B52 bombers hammered at Viet Cong positions in Quang Ngai Province. The giant Stratofortresses hit at a suspected Viet Cong army headquarters 65 miles south of Da Nang.

The U. S. 25th Infantry Division continued its Operation Wahiawa sweep through the Boi Loi Woods and rubber plantations 35 miles northwest of Saigon. The division reported killing 11 Viet Cong to raise the toll since the operation started May 16 to 85. The infantrymen also destroyed 32 structures and 18 tunnels and said their own casualties continued light.

IN OPERATION Crazy Horse, ranging across an area 15 to 20 miles northeast of An Khe, a military spokesman reported that heavy monsoon rains made fighting "very, very difficult." He said the action was being fought over dense jungle terrain with elephant grass up to 12 feet high and a double canopy of ungle growth.

HEMPHILL IN VIET NAM

Over Charlie's Shoulder

By PAUL HEMPHILL
Atlanta Journal Columnist

PLEIKU, South Viet Nam, May 24 — The strip is less than 15 miles from the Cambodian border, and for some reason everybody calls it The Oasis. It probably took less than half a day to build it. The 1st Air Cavalry Division just came in one day before an operation in the area, dropped some bulldozers by helicopter, cleared a little ground and then spread a sort of rubber canvas over it and called it an airstrip.



Paul Hemphill

Any other time, you could insult a self-respecting pilot by asking him to land at a place like The Oasis. In war, it is a helluva fine little airfield.

It was a few minutes after 2 o'clock when WO Carl Matney of Virginia Beach, Va., and First Lt. James Williford of Kannapolis, N.C., were let out of the Jeep next to the flight line. The monsoon season is coming, and the heavy midday rains had made a quagmire of the field. Matney and Williford picked their way through the mud, put their M16 rifles and their armored vests in the flimsy single-engine L19 spotter planes, and then stood

and looked up at the black clouds boiling in the sky.

MATNEY said, "That looks pretty."

"Sure does," said Williford. "You got a mission?" they were asked.

"Just looking. Same as usual. We've got rockets, and there'll be some gunships, choppers, with us. If Charlie takes a shot at us, they go after him."

"Can you fly in weather like this?"

Williford looked at Matney and grinned. "You go through rainclouds same way you go through trees. You turn sideways and go between 'em."

IT IS A lot like World War I. The outfit is officially the

219th Aviation Company, but everybody calls them the Headhunters. The plane is not much more than the old Piper Cub you see around, with one engine and a flimsy paper-thin body and a top speed of something like 130 miles an hour.

Their primary job is to fly a few feet above the treetops, draw fire and then sic the heavily armed helicopters hovering nearby on the Viet Cong. They are also used for reconnaissance and tactical air support and for anything else that might arise.

Sometimes if the troops on the ground need some strafing, a Headhunter pilot will hold the stick of his plane between

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Headhunters Dog Charlie's Trail

Continued from Page 1

his knees, point his M16 rifle out the window and cut loose. One time there were some infantry soldiers pinned down and running out of ammunition, and a Headhunter flew low and tossed his bag of M16 clips out the window to them at 120 miles an hour.

"One VC prisoner told us they call the L19 the 'Old Lady' because we're always looking over their shoulder," Carl Matney was saying. In only two months of piloting "Bird Dog," as the L19 has been nicknamed, he has taken four bullets from enemy rifles on the ground.

The Headhunter pilot does not bring a parachute along because it takes up too much room in his cramped cockpit. The only armor he has is a flak vest, which most of them prefer to sit on.

NOW THEY were over the Ia Drang Valley, a deep gorge in the far western corner of South Viet Nam where hordes of North Vietnamese soldiers pour into the country every day from the Ho Chi Minh Trail. Williford was riding treetop as "bait" for the mission. Matney was circling at 1,500 feet, more or less a combat operations center in the air. Halfway down and a half-mile behind were two Huey helicopter gunships, loaded to the ears with rockets and grenades and tracer bullets.

"That shower didn't do much for navigation," Matney said over his radio. "A little rain in this jungle and then you can't see a thing."

"I don't know how much longer I can keep this up. There's a lot of wind down here," Williford answered.

"Seen anything yet?" "Nothing. They found out we shoot back."

THEY HAD been doing this for 15 minutes now. There was still no sign of the enemy. Williford had been whizzing through the lovely dark green gorges, showing off like a broad in a bikini, trying to attract attention, but there was nothing. Then Matney saw something.

"Seven-seven, this is four-two," he radioed.

"Roger, four-two," Williford said.

"I've got some hooches (thatched huts) down here."

"Roger." "Come back and make another run, seven-seven. Right off to the left, about 300 meters to your left. That's one of them, and I've got two more now near that one."

Williford pulled up and circled and dropped down and zipped over the trees, almost taking foliage with him. He flew low and fast, hoping to draw fire and hoping to see some sign of the enemy in the hooch. There was neither.

"No Montagnards living around here," he radioed Matney.

"Roger. This is no-man's-land in here."

"Let's take the hooches, then."

"Roger, seven-seven."

THE CHOPPERS went in first, one behind the other flying very low and very close. The choppers hurled their rockets at the well-camouflaged shacks. They heavily damaged two of them. What they wanted was a secondary explosion, meaning they had hit ammunition storage points, but there was none. The huts lay smoking and flaming in the damp green jungle.

Then Jim Williford took on the third one. Williford has been doing this job for more than 11 months in Viet Nam, and he is a pro. He pulled his rank on Matney so he could fly the dangerous treetop assignment, simply because he likes it hot. Williford's plane was in its final approach now. The hut was at the edge of a clearing, and when Williford dropped into the clearing he was below some of the trees and he was flying at 130 miles an hour. He pointed his plane at the front door of the hut, and when he had the front door in line with a thin red mark in the middle of his cockpit he let go with two of the rockets hanging from his wings, and he jerked up just in time to get away from the blast. The hut was disintegrated.

"I thought you were going to go through the front door of the hooch, seven-seven," Matney said.

"Ain't no hooch no more," Williford radioed back.

They were up more than two hours, and they never saw the enemy or got shot at. They dipped into valleys and circled heavy jungle and made themselves available, but Charlie wasn't biting this time. Charlie has been stung enough. He has learned that these "Bird Dogs" may look like bees, but they sting like wasps. It's the price the Headhunters are paying for success. Hell, nobody even shoots at them any more.



Paul Hemphill watching 175's fire an operation Mobery Kontum, Viet Nam

Bill Odan

Charles Black Reports

Callaway Praises Combat Units' Civil Affairs Work in Viet Nam; Describes Fame of 1st Cavalry

(EDITOR'S NOTE: Enquirer Military Writer Charles Black has been in the field with troops of the 1st Cavalry Division in South Viet Nam. While in the field, Black interviewed Georgia 3rd District Rep. Howard (Bo) Callaway during the congressman's tour of the country and reports on his comments.)

By CHARLES BLACK
Enquirer Military Writer

AN KHE, May 16 — U.S. Rep. Howard (Bo) Callaway of Pine Mountain, Ga., took time to get a close look at the military situation in South Viet Nam in general and the 1st Air Cavalry Division in particular following a series of Saigon committee hearings delving into the application of foreign aid.

Callaway came to the 1st Cavalry Division, commanded by Maj. Gen. John Norton, after a visit to the Navy carrier Enterprise, where he interviewed pilots who have bombed North Viet Nam.

He had also taken part in an air assault made by the 1st Infantry Division in Tay Ninh province, 75 miles northwest of Saigon near the Cambodian border, in Operation Birmingham.

He arrived here May 14 as Operation Davy Crockett was in its final days.

Visit: Marine Area
Callaway also visited the Marine area at Da Nang, where he took a close look at the work being done by indi-

vidual servicemen in civil affairs. This work takes place on the local level and is not supported to any great extent by the U. S. Operations Mission. Troops and the people of the U. S. support such efforts on a volunteer basis.

"The best chance I've had to see the people was actually in a village near Da Nang... where we had a chance to spend several hours in a village where a small team of four men had been working for four months," Callaway said. "It is amazing what four Americans have done with a hamlet of 200 or 300 people."

Subject of Charges
"This was the only place we got down to seeing how they are cooking their meals, eating, what they are doing, how the wells the Americans have dug are fitting into the community — in general, how these people really react where these four men know the name of each of these people and have worked with them on a personal basis," he said.

Callaway's committee has been investigating the major programs of aid set up by

USOM. These programs have been the subject of charges of black market diversion, misapplication and of not getting to the basic roots of the pacification problem in South Viet Nam by using the same type of civil action at the village level as that practiced by the Marines and soldiers in their base areas.

Callaway said it would be "some time" before any results of his committee's investigation of the foreign aid program are released.

However, he praised the civil affairs program in South Viet Nam.

Findings
"We know in our own Air Cav division that things have found good for things we have sent from Columbus to soldiers here for their civil affairs work, such as dolls and soap," he said. "We know from this that these children like Americans. I think Americans have tried to win over a country as well as defeat the enemy."

Callaway said his first im-

(Continued on Page 6, Col. 3)

Callaway--

(Continued from Page 1)

pression when he came to An Khe was one of surprise at the huge engineering job which had been done in tearing out bamboo and jungle to create a division base, a helicopter port, etc.

He commented on the fame which the division has won since it left Fort Benning and moved into combat.

"Throughout the entire country of South Viet Nam, whether you are talking to U. S. troops or the Arvins (Vietnamese troops), when you mention the Air Cav you get nothing but the most remarkable answers," he said.

He said he had visited the commander of II Corps, Maj. Gen. Cao Lynn, and that when he spoke of the 1st Cavalry Division, "his eyes just lit up." He said "No one has been able to handle the Viet Cong like the 1st Cavalry Division."

When he asked Gen. W. C. Westmoreland about the effectiveness of the helicopter division and if the unit had lived up to expectations, Callaway said, Westmoreland answered that "they exceeded my fondest dreams."

Battle Museum
Callaway toured the division's battle museum of captured Viet Cong and North Vietnamese equipment, uniforms, flags, etc., and was briefed on past and current operations. He then said he wanted to visit one of the division's brigades "to see if the men are as proud of themselves as we are of them. The people from Columbus are certainly proud of the Air Cav. We think it's the finest unit ever committed to combat."

As he toured the 1st Battalion, 12th Cavalry; 1st Battalion, 8th Cavalry, and 2nd Battalion, 8th Cavalry, Callaway went to individual paratroopers in the airborne 1st Brigade, commanded by Col. John J. (Big Thunderbolt) Hennessey, and talked to them about their unit, families and Viet Nam experiences. He said he found them as proud as could be expected of their victorious tour in Viet Nam.

"This is the best division the Army ever had," he quoted one soldier as saying to him when asked what he thought of the 1st Cavalry.

Callaway left An Khe after an eight-hour visit and tour of the area to take part in a Navy river patrol.



—AP Wirephoto

Good Old Compass!

First Lt. Francisco Ball Jr., of El Paso, Tex., looks at a bullet that was stopped by the compass he holds. Lieutenant Ball, with the U. S. First Cavalry Division, was wearing the compass on his belt when shot by Viet Cong during operation Davy Crockett near Bong Son, 280 miles northeast of Saigon in South Vietnam.



Associated Press Wirephoto

FIRING INTO THE JUNGLE, infantry of the U.S. 1st Cavalry Division advances across a

paddy in South Viet Nam's Central Highlands. Object of fire was to flush any hidden Viet Cong.

Coleman's Company Spoils Enemy's Surprise

(EDITOR'S NOTE: Charles Black, Enquirer military writer now in Viet Nam with the 1st Cavalry Division, was in on a big battle with the Viet Cong near Binh Dinh recently. This is the fifth in a series of six articles on the engagement.)

By CHARLES BLACK
Enquirer Military Writer

BUNH DINH — Capt. J. D. Coleman may have been new in the management of B Company, Second Battalion (Airborne), Eighth Cavalry when he took that outfit up on the mountain east of this Special Forces camp, but he was old in the ways of the infantry.

Reports Charles Black

The big officer, 35, of Kalispell, Mont., was a squad leader in the 177th Airborne Regimental Combat Team during Korea, making two combat jumps there. He came into the commissioned ranks via the tough route of Officer Candidate School at Fort Benning and has been an airborne soldier a good bit of his life. When he heard the terrific brawl his lead platoon was engaged in, he hurriedly took stock of the situation and made a decision which proved exactly correct by events which were quick to follow. He put his company into a tight circle, a 75-yard radius of a circle, letting the squads of his embattled lead

platoon fall neatly into their arc. "We were like a boy out in the middle of a man's job. You take your choice of what was there. We had run into communications wire just before this so we were traveling

edge and ready for trouble. That is why that wonderful squad over on the left saw those people, opened fire and assaulted them. They were all ready for it. I've never heard

of these people putting out communications wire for less than a battalion. I saw a reinforced company in front of me at one time, on by part

(Continued on Page 8, Col. 5)



STRATEGY SESSION—Lt. Col. Rutland Beard, right, commander of the First Battalion (Airborne) 12th Cavalry, and Capt. J. D. Coleman, commander of Company B, Second Battalion, Eighth Cavalry, discuss the course of battle during an engagement against the Viet Cong near Binh Dinh in South Viet Nam. Coleman's outfit made first contact with the enemy and Beard came in with reinforcements.—Enquirer photo by Charles Black.



RECEIVES COLUMBUS FLAG—Maj. Gen. Harry W. O. Kinnard, left, who was commanding general of the 1st Cavalry Division in Viet Nam when this picture was taken, accepts a Columbus flag from Charles Black, Enquirer military writer. Black, assigned to cover 1st Cavalry activities in Viet Nam, delivered the flag in behalf of Columbus Mayor B. Ed Johnson. The 1st Cavalry, which was formed at Fort Benning, is now under the command of Maj. Gen. John Norton. Gen. Kinnard has been assigned to the Pentagon.—U. S. Army photo.

s, Ga., Friday Morning, June 10, 1966

Coleman's Company Spoils Enemy's Surprise

(Continued from Page 1)

of the perimeter, so it was a big lot of trouble we ran into there," Coleman said.

To secure Base He said he believed the platoon which desperately charged and was countercharged by his machine gun squad up front was there to "secure a battalion base. I imagine a company joined in, then the rest of the battalion worked into the fight before it was over."

The Special Forces sergeant from this camp, who was guiding the company, radioed to his home base at the height of the battle:

"This is Raspberry One Eight: I feel like Custer at Little Big Horn. We have run into the center of a regiment."

The sergeant, a few feet from Coleman, his Vietnamese radioman and two of Coleman's men were killed just after this by a burst of automatic weapons fire as the Communists attempted to charge the command post.

Coleman carried a light machine gun taken from a Communist he had killed about 15 yards from him and he had a bloodstained piece of paper which had come from the Communist's pack. It was a neat sketch of the Special Forces camp, easily visible

from the nose of this ridge, with arrows outlining the proposed assault on the camp.

One big arrow hit the north side of the camp. A line indicated automatic weapons and mortar support for this assault. Two arrows arced out inside of the camp, one circling just inside of the wire and slashing into the command post where the American advisers headquarters is. The other hooked to the left where a smaller arrow from outside showed a diversionary attack.

Looking from the bloody paper to the camp, shimmering in the sun across the Song Ba river, the tactics were easy to follow and they had a very deadly simplicity. The object was to overrun the camp and wipe it out, cut it into sections so it could be chewed up in detail once the major assault drove through the wire.

Coleman Stopped It Coleman's company stopped this with its bloody fight in the jungle of the ridgetop, however. It wiped out the battalion's hopes of surprise and — more — it hit the battalion with its eyes open and ready to fight.

"Right after I got the perimeter set up and my people in, they hooked around and tried an assault on the left. Then they tried the right. Then

they came around and tried it from the rear, which was when all hell broke loose in the command post. They never got in. That last assault they made bloodied them badly."

"We were fighting in the middle of a cloudburst part of the time. My boys were magnificent. I felt ineffective. I was tied to the radio and tied to moving people in fire and maneuver and I felt out of it, but you can't command a company playing platoon leader. When they hit into the rear I was right in the middle for a while and I still had to concentrate on keeping control of the rest of the perimeter," Coleman said.

The fight went on for five hours without a lull — the assaults were spaced out over this time. Artillery and aerial rocket artillery from An Khe battered the Communist positions. The Second Battalion 20th Aerial Rocket Artillery once more earned the accolades of the infantry here—it has been so blessed on thousands of large and small occasions like this since last fall.

"The ARA saved us. That was the secret, those choppers coming down and smashing them up right in front of our lines, pinning them down and holding them there, giving us a chance to get the

edge on them," Coleman said.

About 5:30 p.m. he heard choppers landing on the end of the ridge. Company A, First Battalion (Airborne) 12th Cavalry was on its way to help. The paratroopers from Lt. Col. Rutland Beard's battalion, commanded by Capt. Jackie Comings, had a hard time getting through the circuitous route the situation made necessary. They fought through jungle and darkness fell.

"We held hands sometimes it was so dark, making a foot at a time. In the jungle we scuffed up those phosphorescent routes and leaves you see out there, the ones that are kind of rotting, and we put them in our helmets so we could keep contact on the move. It was a hard walk. We got a little sniper fire but they just seemed to pull back and let us come on into the perimeter." PFC Rene Couture, a radioman from A Company told me.

Couture, 22, Fittsburg, Pa., said the company was "fed into" the perimeter and almost as soon as it got into fighting position the fire became heavy again.

"It was like . . . well, as if they had pulled out of in front of us, not knowing what was happening, and then decided to go ahead and fight some more and crawled back again," Couture said.

