



# RECON PLT HITS LARGE ENEMY FORCE

On Friday afternoon, September 6, the Recon Platoon of Echo Company was attacked by a large and deadly VC/NVA force. It was estimated that the enemy force was between 100 and 150 men. The enemy was well dug in and heavily armed. They had at least four .50 cal. machine gun positions. The rest of the enemy force was armed with 30 cal. machine guns, various automatic small arms, M79 grenade launchers, hand grenades, and mortars.

The Recon Platoon suffered heavy casualties during the 12 hour ordeal. However, enemy losses were estimated to be quite high due to the heroic efforts of the men of the Recon Platoon, and to American fire power which included F-100 and F-104 jet air strikes, gun ships, support helicopters, and "Snowbird" with several rows of mini guns mounted on it.

## BATTALION ACTIVITY

On Wednesday, September 4, Alpha, Charlie, and Delta Companies were combat assaulted from their positions at Quang Ngai air base to the area around LZ Duff. Bravo Company and the Recon Platoon were already on LZ Buff and left for the field early Thursday morning.

Wednesday afternoon Charlie Company found several VC suspects and brought them in for questioning. The men of Charlie Company also found a great amount of enemy supplies. Included in the haul was a large amount of medical supplies (pain tablets and penicillin), 50 workable batteries, and 55 VC blasting caps. On the same afternoon, Alpha Company found a 250 lb. bomb and destroyed it with demolition.

The next day, Thursday, all the Companies in the Battalion made enemy contact. Early in the morning, Alpha, Bravo, and Charlie Companies reported that they had been under heavy enemy automatic weapons fire. No friendly casualties were taken in either of the three Companies. That morning Alpha and Charlie Companies both apprehended VC suspects. One of the suspects that Charlie Company brought in was an NVA that they found in a hole. ( cont. pg. 2 )

## ENEMY MORTAR KILLS VC

A VC apparently was killed by incoming VC mortar rounds late Monday night, September 2, on Hill 54. The dead VC was found the next day by CPT McAmis, S2, while he was making a routine check of the perimeter. The VC was found inside the barbed wire. In front of him was the spot where a VC mortar had landed during the night. The VC was covered with shrapnel wounds which indicated he had been

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The Recon Platoon was operating southeast of LZ Buff at about 1400 hours in the afternoon when they were pinned down by heavy enemy automatic weapons fire. The Platoon was split in two columns with about 100 meters between the two columns. The left element was the hardest hit. The Platoon was caught in an open rice paddy which was quite muddy due to the recent heavy rainfall. Heavy fire prevented anyone from making any sort of movement for about 2 1/2 hours. The Platoon was widely dispersed.

After 2 1/2 hours, PFC Phillip Shields, PFC Donald Stronach and PFC Roosevelt Robinson tried to get to the left element from their position on the right element. The group became pinned down in a ditch between the two elements. The men had to run about 25-30 meters under fire to get to the ditch line. SGT Augustine Purnell and PFC Erwin Sharper low crawled to the right position trying to consolidate the right element.

Mud fouled up the men's weapons so that the men were not able to defend themselves. They ran low on ammo and could ward off the enemy only with hand grenades. One position, led by PFC Donald Stronach was about to be overrun when they were rescued by helicopter. The other chopper that came in with it was unable to land because of heavy enemy fire.

One position, led by SGT Russell could see the enemy closing in on their position. The enemy was laughing and pointing at them, for they figured the men in the position were unable to defend themselves. As they were approaching the position a gun ship came in and cut the enemy down. SGT Purnell said he saw at least 10

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BE ALERT...KEEP CLEAN...DIG IN

**COMMANDER'S  
COMMENTS**

by LTC Albert L. Russell

Recent enemy activity by the VC, NVA indicates they are mounting the third phase of the offensive which started at TPT. The most notable of these attempts was the one on Tam Ky the latter part of August which cost the VC about 500 men. The battle in the vicinity of Quang Ngai, in which we participated, has so far resulted in 385 VC/NVA KIA. These two battles alone have cost the VC/NVA dearly and it was accomplished by you and men like you. Good Work!

Now for a few other items that I consider extremely important. That is YOUR health and welfare. We have recently had several men stricken with infectious hepatitis and vivax malaria. Some of the men who contracted hepatitis stated they did not know they had to wait 30 minutes after putting iodine tablets in water before they could drink it. I don't understand this; it is stressed in the Combat Center. I brief all new arrivals on it, the Battalion Surgeon gives a lecture on it, and the directions are written on the iodine tablet bottle. In regard to the vivax malaria; it is practically impossible to contract if you take the little pill daily. We have also had several accidental discharges of weapons recently. All of these are due to carelessness and people not following instructions. It is the responsibility of every one in the Chain of Command to insure that instructions are followed. It is also the responsibility of each individual to follow these instructions for his own safety, health, and welfare. The diseases mentioned can shorten your life and every man we lose due to illness or accidental means is one less man to help and protect YOU in the field.

In closing, I wish to express my special thanks to Delta and Charlie Companies for the assistance they rendered to the downed chopper on Sept. 5. In particular I want to thank SSG Patterson, PFC Walter Yeargin, SP4 Gene Bass, and PFC Allen Davis, all of D Company. These men demonstrated the highest order of courage and quick thinking under fire. All of you guys are tremendous. Thank You!

Old Guard

LTC Albert L. Russell; CC  
CPT John A. Gonzalez; SL  
PFC Herbert Horton, Reporter

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of the enemy go down when the gun ships opened up.

A group of seven men, led by SGT Purnell, low crawled 600 meters to the relative safety of the woodline at the bottom of a ridge line. The long crawl took about two hours.

About midnight, elements of Alpha and Bravo linked up with the men of the Recon Platoon and the men were evacuated out of the area.

**( BN CONT )**

Around noon that day, Echo Company was hit with sniper fire. Later in the afternoon, Delta Company became pinned down by heavy automatic weapons fire. Gun ships were called in and the Company was able to continue on. Both Echo and Delta Companies received casualties in the exchange of fire. The "Charlie-Charlie" was shot down later that afternoon while attempting to revive Delta Company's wounded. Although LTC Russell was not harmed in the action, several casualties were taken.

On the same day Bravo Company captured an NVA Khaki uniform, VC gas mask, 2 NVA packs, tents, ponchos, medical supplies, a US canteen, and various propaganda leaflets.

On Friday, the search continued and the men of the 4/3 continued to find enemy supplies and personnel. Alpha Company found five mines hidden in a hollow of several trees and destroyed the mines. They also found a VC gas mask. Both Alpha and Echo Companies killed a VC that tried to evade capture. On the same day, Charlie Company found two booby trapped mine cans containing M26 grenades which were set to trip wire.

The operation is still in progress. Gun ships and Aero Scouts working in conjunction with the 4/3 have recorded several VC/NVA kills. In addition, the heavy aerial bombardment that has been given the enemy by gun ships and air strikes has undoubtedly brought the number of enemy kills up much higher.

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**( VC CONT )**

killed by fragments from the mortar. Two men of Bravo Company, PFC Charles Bram and PFC Louis Tannacore, fired M79 and M16 fire. The actions of these two men might have also stopped the VC.

The down VC had two Clicon grenades, a French 6.5 pistol (complete with two magazines), and various propaganda leaflets on his possession.

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ly personnel in the 4/3 Inf and may not be duplicated or released to the news media.