

# *You Bet He Does!*





Military Assistance  
Command, Vietnam



United States Army,  
Vietnam



I Field Force, Vietnam II Field



4th Infantry Division



9th Infantry Division



25th Infantry  
Division



5th Infantry Divi  
(Mech) (1st Bd)



20th Engineer Brigade



1st Aviation Brigade



1st Logistical Command



1st S



44th Medical  
Brigade



173rd Airborne  
Brigade



11th Light  
Infantry Brigade



19  
Infan



1st Cavalry Division (Airmobile)



Americal Division



1st Cavalry Division (Airmobile)



1st Infantry Division



82nd Airborne Division (3rd Bde)



101st Airborne Division



U.S. Army Engineer Command, Vietnam



18th Engineer Brigade



1st Cavalry Division (Airmobile)



5th Special Forces Group



11th Armored Cavalry Regiment



18th Military Police Brigade



1st Cavalry Division (Airmobile)



198th Light Infantry Brigade



199th Light Infantry Brigade



34th General Support Group

# 1967 — The Squeeze Period

## The Counteroffensive

The year 1967 saw the Free World Forces tighten the screw on the enemy. His manpower was slowly whittled down by many operations. His weapons and food caches were seized, blunting many planned raids and offensive actions. Increased bombing raids made his routes of supply difficult to use, curtailing his operations further. His cause was weakened by thousands of Viet Cong, political cadre and North Vietnamese who turned themselves in to the government's Chieu Hoi Program.

During the latter months of 1967, the enemy made two spectacular tries at propaganda victories, at Loc Ninh and Dak To. These two battles alone accounted for nearly 3,000 enemy dead.

His losses for the year included 87,534 killed in action and over 31,000 weapons of all types captured. He lost almost 14,000 tons of rice and 162 tons of salt. His ammunition supply was reduced almost 2.5 million rounds. His ranks were depleted by 27,178 to the Chieu Hoi Program, 17,671 of whom were fighting men. He was found to be recruiting boys from 12 to 16 years old.

He was feeling the pinch—yet he continued to fight. Civilians in South Vietnam were his victims almost as often as the military. Communist terrorists slaughtered over 4,000 South Vietnamese and wounded over 8,000 in their attacks. Kidnaping accounted for another 5,454 persons, all in an attempt to control the people.

More people moved into government protected resettlement areas than ever before. The enemy's source of labor, recruits, food and shelter was slipping away.

During the spring, hamlet and village elections were conducted and in the fall months the upper and lower houses were filled and the president and vice president were chosen. Despite threats of death and destruction, the people turned out in large numbers to vote.

On the political and diplomatic side of the war, the draft constitution for South Vietnam was put before the Constituent Assembly for debate; Thailand announced it would allow bases within its borders to be used for support of Vietnam operations, and Premier Ky visited Australia and New Zealand.



*Jungle clearing by Rome plows denies the enemy his sanctuaries. Photo by Sp6 Jay J. Smith.*



# Continues

At the beginning of February the American military strength had risen by 20,000 men. The increased manpower permitted the U.S. forces to enter the field for long periods of time and the month saw the termination and beginning of many operations.

The four-day truce for the Lunar New Year, Tet, provided a stand-down period in which many operations were terminated. The truce itself was marred by 272 violations.

Operation Lam Son II in Binh Duong Province and Operation Thayer II were terminated with a combined kill of slightly over 2,000 enemy soldiers.

By mid-month elements of the 9th Infantry Division started Operation Enterprise in Long An Province and other 9th Division units began operations in the Mekong Delta with U.S. Navy units. This marked the beginning of gradual U.S. and ARVN weakening of the Viet Cong's dominance of Delta waterways.

## LARGEST OPERATION BEGINS

Other 9th Division units joined elements of the 1st, 4th and 25th Infantry Divisions plus troops from the 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment, 196th Light Infantry Brigade, and 173rd Airborne Brigade in what was to be the largest operation of the war—Operation Junction City. The gigantic force was

supported by the 11th Combat Aviation Group and 7th Air Force aircraft.

U.S. troops in War Zone C north and west of Saigon formed a giant horseshoe enclosing 250 square miles of enemy-held territory. Heavy fighting characterized the operation. Large stores of ammunition, weapons, clothing, food, documents and utensils were confiscated.

## PARACHUTE ASSAULT

During one phase of Operation Junction City it was decided to employ paratroopers from the 173rd Airborne Brigade in a surprise combat assault along Highway 4 to block enemy escape routes from the battle area. On February 22, 1967 the only mass jump of the war took place at 9 a.m. when over 700 troopers from the 2nd Battalion, 503rd Airborne Infantry and supporting elements parachuted into a drop zone north of Tay Ninh. Twenty-three Air Force C-130 Hercules aircraft delivered the men and their equipment over the drop zone. The force blocked the enemy and released badly needed helicopters to 1st and 25th Division troops attacking the enemy.

Eighty-one days later 2,728 enemy lay dead from the operation and War Zone C was no longer a VC stronghold.

*Cargo ships unload at Newport, Saigon's newest harbor facility. Newport was built to relieve congestion in Saigon Port. Photo by Maj. Don Blake.*





*Troops move through a village while on a patrol in War Zone C. Photo by Sp5 Gordon Gahan.*

Their bases were destroyed; many of their supplies were gone. The Free World Forces counteroffensive was making remarkable advances.

Further north the 1st Cavalry Division had begun Operation Pershing and the Communists pounded the Da Nang Airbase with over 50 Russian-made 140 mm rockets, killing 43 and wounding 137. A few days later in March, Da Nang was hit by 10 more of the huge rockets.

The February-March period was active diplomatically. The Manila Conference countries and their ambassadors met in Saigon in preparation for a two-day conference on Guam with high Vietnamese leaders and President Johnson. The Constituent Assembly had approved the draft constitution for South Vietnam a few days prior to the meeting. Premier Ky presented President Johnson a copy of the new constitution. It was ratified a few days later.

In Thailand, B-52s began to arrive at bases in accordance with a previous agreement with the kingdom. The huge bombers were used mainly against enemy complexes in South Vietnam in early April. Previously they had flown from Guam to South Vietnam in a 5,000-mile round trip.

The 9th Division's Operation Kittyhawk began in March. While the Viet Cong and North Vietnamese were trying to keep out of the way of the major operations, they made small-scale attacks on Vietnamese Popular Forces and surprise attacks on other installations.

U.S. forces climbed to a strength of 470,000, a few thousand

from the year-end peak of 490,000 servicemen in-country.

In April, an eight-week election period began for thousands of villages and hamlets throughout the country. About 77 percent of the eligible voters turned out to elect their local leaders despite constant threats from the Viet Cong. Many of the threats were carried out as 12 candidates were slain by terrorists and 31 others kidnaped.

The government also announced fall elections would take place to select the upper and lower houses of the new government and to choose a new president and vice president.

In Saigon Ellsworth P. Bunker assumed duties from Ambassador Henry Cabot Lodge who was retiring from public life.

Operation Adams was completed during the month by the 1st Brigade, 4th Infantry Division in Phu Yen Province with an enemy death toll of 491. Elements of the 4th and 25th Infantry Divisions began Operation Francis Marion in Pleiku Province which resulted in 1,203 enemy deaths.

Enemy pressure was building in the I Corps Tactical Zone (I CTZ) in the vicinity of the Demilitarized Zone (DMZ). It became apparent Marine units would have to be moved to counter the threat. The 196th Light Infantry Brigade was moved into the Chu Lai area to replace relocated Marine units. This was one of the first of many major ground combat units from USARV to operate in the northern provinces.

Other units joined the 196th in I CTZ. They were the 3rd Brigade, 25th Infantry Division and, in May, the 1st Brigade,