



9th Infantry Division



The Old Reliable

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Republic of Vietnam

October 30, 1968

Two days of fighting

"Go Devils" kill 59 Viet Cong

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FIRE BASE MOORE – The 3d Brigade "Go Devils" of the 9th Division tangled with elements of an estimated Viet Cong battalion killing 59 in two days of action.

The fighting, involving the 6th Battalion, 31st Infantry, 1st Battalion, 16th Infantry, and Troop D, 3d Squadron, 5th Air Cavalry, raged about 10 miles west of Cai Lay.

It began Oct. 18 when elements of the 3d/5th Cav detected enemy activity with people sniffer and visual contact.

A platoon of the 1st 16th was inserted to establish contact and were immediately taken under sniper fire.

An intense firefight broke out as the enemy withdrew to a bunker line near a river. One helicopter was downed after being hit with an RPG round and most U.S. casualties (four killed and 28 wounded) were taken during this period.

Additional troops were airlifted into the area of contact, and 105mm, 155mm and eight-inch artillery was brought into pound the enemy position.

During the night, Company B, 6th/31st engaged eight VC in two sampans trying to escape the trap. Two .45 cal. Pistols, seven AK-47 rifles, a 75mm recoilless rifle with bipod, seven recoilless rifle rounds and 10 pounds of documents were captured.

The next morning, ground units assaulted the enemy positions while the 3d/5th Cav screened the rear to prevent the enemy from escaping. The 3d/5th "Doughboys" spotted four sampans and followed them to a location approximately two and one-half miles northwest of the original contact area where they appeared to be regrouping.

The Recon Platoon and Company D of the 1st/16th unit inserted and made immediate contact. The recon platoon discovered a booby trap and detained one VC suspect before coming under fire from an unknown size VC force.

One VC was killed fleeing as the firefight waned and ten more who had been hiding were felled by gunships of the 3d/5th as they tried to escape.

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Company D, 1st/16th inserted a mile away and promptly detained 14 VC suspects. Meanwhile, the Recon Platoon uncovered four sampans loaded with equipment.

“The area the enemy occupied was pulverized,” said Lieutenant Colonel John A. Hemphill, 3d Brigade commander, of Springfield, Va. “The success of the operation can be directly attributed to Air Cav techniques and outstanding fire support rendered by the 1st Battalion, 11th Artillery, and 1st Battalion, 84th Artillery along with the Air Force strikes.”

Major David Halela, Honolulu, Hawaii, brigade operation officer, had special praise for the 3d/5th Cav. “They pinpointed the target for us and the following day tracked the VC,” Halela said.

Totals for the operation were 59 VC killed, 16 suspects detained, 81 bunkers destroyed, 10 sampans captured along with 13 AK-47s, 15 sets of web gear, 1,087 rubber gas masks, 500 pounds of medical equipment and many pounds of documents.



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3d Bde kills 4 VC, seizes boats, arms

CAI LAY – In the same area where 59 enemy fell in sharp fighting Oct. 18-19, troops of the 3d Brigade killed 4 VC and seized assorted weapons and equipment Oct. 17.

The day scattered contact began with an early morning ambush north of Giao Duc. The 3d Platoon, Company D, 6th Battalion, 31st Infantry, opened fire on three enemy sampans. The captured boats yielded three AK-50 rifles, a 9mm machine pistol, two hand grenades and 10 pounds of documents.

Later in the day, Company A, 6th/31st cut down two VC who fired on them at a landing zone. Gunships of Troop D, 3d Squadron, 5th Cavalry added two enemy bodies and destroyed a complex of 50 bunkers.