



# 9<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division



## The Old Reliable

Vol. 3, No. 25, Page 1

Republic of Vietnam

June 25, 1969

### ***HOMeward BOUND***

DONG TAM – Major General Harris W. Hollis, commanding general of the 9<sup>th</sup> Division, in a message read by unit commanders to the men of the division on June 14, announced that the division, less one brigade, will be pulled out of Vietnam by August. They will be replaced by Armed Forces of the Republic of Vietnam.

Hollis' message followed the initial announcement of unit redeployment made simultaneously by Secretary of Defense Laird and General Abrams nine hours earlier.

In a series of subsequent messages from MACV it was announced that the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Brigades will be redeployed while the 3<sup>rd</sup> Brigade "Go Devils" made up of the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> Battalions, 60<sup>th</sup> Infantry; 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion (Mechanized), 47<sup>th</sup> Infantry; and the 6<sup>th</sup> Battalion, 31<sup>st</sup> Infantry, will remain in Vietnam.

One brigade of the division, comprising approximately 4,000 men, will be inactivated. It will be spearheaded by a 909-man battalion, yet unnamed, that will be airlifted to the United States by the second week of July. Additional units of the brigade will be airlifted to the Continental United States.

A second brigade of the division, which will be redeployed, will move from Vietnam by air and ship in July and August. The destination will be announced later.

A regimental landing team from the 3<sup>rd</sup> Marine Division, based in I Corps, just below the Demilitarized Zone, and four ships of the Army-Navy Mobile Riverine Force (MRF) will also be redeployed. According to MACV, two self-propelled barracks ships, USS Mercer (home of the 3/60th) and USS Nueces (home of the 4/47<sup>th</sup>); the landing ship USS Whitfield County; and an auxiliary personnel liner will return to the United States.

The spokesman went on to say that the 1,200 Navy personnel to leave Vietnam will be drawn from the MRF and naval support units working with the Marines in I Corps.

The initial withdrawal was recommended by a special task force meeting in Hawaii to plan President Nixon's 25,000-troop replacement program.

The joint announcement of the redeployment was made by Presidents Nixon and Thieu at the Midway Conference June 8.



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### PFs, 6-31 rout Cong

**DONG TAM** – A Popular Forces element, working with Company B of the 6<sup>th</sup> Battalion, 31<sup>st</sup> Infantry, killed eight Viet Cong with AK-47s and RPGs on a cordon and search operation only one mile north of here.

After leaving the berm at 3 a.m., the PF element and Company B moved into position. The PR unit then started a sweep north of a nearby woodline, while Company B and the remainder of the PF unit, acting as a blocking force, cordoned to the east and west.

Moving through a heavily booby trapped area, the lead element of the PF unit spotted 10 to 15 VC. After engaging them with small arms fire, M-79s and hand grenades, a sweep of the battle area revealed eight VC dead, seven AK-47s, one RPG launcher, two RPG rounds, two AM/FM radios, two pounds of medical supplies and documents.

Commenting on the PFs, Captain John C. Ricker of Portland, Me., Company B Commander, said, "I was impressed with them from the start when they went across the berm. They were well motivated."

Sergeant Steven Werring from Brooklyn, N.Y., a member of Company B's blocking force, added, "It was really the PFs who did everything. They did a magnificent job of pursuing the enemy and catching them completely by surprise. The VC did nothing but drop their weapons and flee."



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### Hoi Chanh helps 6-31 new platoon gets VC

DONG TAM – The newly formed Recon Platoon of the 6<sup>th</sup> Battalion, 31<sup>st</sup> Infantry went out on their first mission, and in a period of three hours they detained four VC suspects, killed one and captured several weapons.

The operation began when a hoi chanh agreed to lead the force to a weapons cache and his 10-man squad.

The platoon immediately loaded onto Navy Tango boats, the Hoi Chanh telling them the only path of the three into the area that was not booby trapped.

There was almost immediate contact, Specialist Four Roger McClelland, of Beasville, Ohio, described the action. "As soon as we landed, out tiger Scout, Dat, started running down the trail. I, Specialist Four Bob Betz (Gardena, Calif.), and Specialist Four Gary Sholtz (Winona, Minn.) tried to catch him.

"Then we heard him fire a couple of rounds, and we thought he had been his. When we caught up with him, we saw eight or 10 VC running down a road. We started chasing them so they wouldn't have time to ambush us, but they dropped off the side of the road into a rice paddy. We ran as hard as we could, but when we got to the rice paddy, they were gone."

Further down the road, the three saw a Vietnamese woman disappear into the bushes. The remainder of the field was an open rice paddy, and when there was no further view of either the VC or the woman, the men were sure they had disappeared into bunkers or tunnels.

In fact, the area turned out to be covered with well-concealed bunkers with jigsaw type doors at ground level.

After searching one bunker with no results, the hoi chanh told the platoon to search the river bank. There they saw two VC who attempted to flee. The Tiger Scout killed one, the other was detained, and an AK-47 rifle was captured.

The hoi chanh led the Recondos to two more bunkers. In the first they found a carbine and the second held four VC. They were ordered to surrender by the interpreter from the battalion civic action section and complied. Two grenades were also found.