



SYKES REGULARS

1ST BATTALION 20TH Inf



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PACIFICATION ON THE RED BALL

The projected concepts of the pacification and re-development of communities are no longer considered idealistic and unproven gestures in the I Corps area. Bravo Co. is currently demonstrating the reality of long-range efforts to produce viable communities without the harassing and restrictive presence of the VC.

The company is currently securing a two-mile stretch of Highway One, just north of Duc Pho, and has succeeded in virtually isolating the more than 5000 people there from VC forces in the area. Without access to the population, the enemy can no longer rely on the civilians for food, supplies, intelligence, and manpower.

The security of the civilians, which has led to their increased productivity and autonomy along the highway, evolved as the natural outcome of Allied operations against enemy strongholds in the Duc Pho District.

Co. B was assigned the mission of integrating its operations with the RF and PF soldiers against the constant activity of the VC who used Highway One as an intermediate link between enemy main force elements in the mountains to the west and the agriculturally rich communities to the east in the region of the Gaza Strip coastline along the South China Sea.

As Co. B and the government forces devoted all their efforts to stopping the flow of VC traffic, they found it necessary to set up along the highway on a permanent basis. Specific missions were directed against VC bases located in the five hamlets of Kim Giao, Vinh Hien(1), Vinh Hien(2), Thuy Truong, and Van Truong. Eventually, the Allied cordons, sweeps, and saturation ambushes severely limited the enemy's mobility and diminished their absolute domination of the population.

To gain the support of the people, the Allies encouraged Revolutionary Development (RD) teams to work extensively in the hamlets and to take up residence within them. To accomplish this goal, Co. B set up a number of permanent defensive positions with the government forces and installed perimeter wire and bunkers. Major Buu Tuong, Duc Pho District Chief, supplied additional PF platoons to supplement Allied strength.

"Two days after we moved into our bases on the bridges and hamlets, the village chiefs, hamlet security chiefs, hamlet chiefs, and RD teams were staying in the hamlets. The RD teams went right to work organizing the people and putting up a double barbed wire fence around the hamlets, and building houses for the relocated people from the outer areas that could not be secured.

"We worked up operations in which RFs, PFs, and US troops combined to move into all the outer areas with RD teams to relocate the people to the secured areas. People soon moved in of their own volition to take advantage of the security we were able to supply. Arrangements were made with Duc Pho District to furnish necessary extra food for the relocated people. Also, enemy rice caches found in the outer areas by patrols were bagged and distributed to the relocated people as necessary until they were able to establish themselves and rely on the economy to pro-

cure their own food," explained CPT Boyd Harris (Pontiac, MI) Bravo Co.'s CO.

With a foothold in the former VC stronghold, the Allies placed priority on pacifying the area, developing the economy, and upgrading the standard of living.

MEDCAPS were instituted on a regular basis with advisory teams administering direct medical and educational aid in three different locations at least three times a week.

The civilians came to accept and support the presence of the Allies, and numerous instances of their providing information on enemy activity were cited. The VIP program in which the people located and turned in enemy supply and ordnance caches began to flourish. In little more than a one-month period, Allied operations largely based on the civilian intelligence netted 105 enemy killed.

"The people are coming forward with information, instead of staying aloof and not becoming involved. They feel more secure now because the Allies are here to react. They no longer live with the fear that the VC will enter their homes to harass them and take away their young men, food, and money," observed CPT Andrew Lisowski, battalion S-5.

The US and government forces have prescribed two final goals toward the accomplishment of the pacification of the civilian population. First, the government forces must attain a level of combat efficiency to enable them to successfully eradicate enemy presence in the area. This project is well along the road to fruition.

"As far as their infantry is concerned, the only reason they need us is for support. As we integrated our operations and trained with them, the attained a level of confidence I hadn't seen before. I no longer have any qualms about their bravery and ability to fight. Time and time again, they've proved (PACIFICATION continued)

PACIFICATION continued
their effectiveness in almost any kind of combat action.

The second goal toward pacification concerns the redevelopment of the Vietnamese communities without relying on the US for materiel support.

"Eventually we will be leaving this area and won't be here to provide the people with all they need to have. We are eliminating ourselves as a crutch to rely on and are working through every official Vietnamese level to explain to the people how they can act through their own channels to get the whole system of government operating together from the grass roots on up," CPT Lisowski explained.

"Our primary concern is education. We make the effort to instruct them as to what Vietnamese fund and materiel sources are available so that when we do leave, they won't suddenly have to begin procuring for themselves. They will be well along the way to adapting to and working within their own system," he added.

Today, as US soldiers pass through the hamlets on this stretch of Highway One, the "victory" signs that the people flash to them have taken on a new meaning. They see the victory in the spirit of the Vietnamese people themselves.

EIGHT KIAs FOR SYKES' REGULARS

The SYKES' REGULARS continued to frustrate enemy operations in the battalion's AO this week and reported eight VC killed, one detained, and three weapons captured.

Jan. 28, Alpha Co.'s 1st Platoon spotted 13 NVA with packs and weapons. The men engaged the enemy with small arms fire and called artillery on them. They checked the area and found an enemy KIA, and suddenly received bursts from two automatic weapons from a haystack nearby. Reacting quickly with small arms fire, they sustained no casualties and confirmed one enemy KIA in a bunker under the haystack. The next morning they found several satchel charges and packs in caves in the area.

Jan. 30, Bravo's Gorilla squad killed an evading VC who was carrying a hand grenade and medical supplies. The company's 2nd Platoon killed two VC during its ambush that night and policed up two B-40 NVA rockets and a carbine.

Jan. 31, the 1st Platoon and Rangers were O/Ad to opposite sides of the Cau River in response to a sighting of enemy movement by Charlie-Charlie. The 1st Platoon found a carbine lying on the west bank of the river, and wounded one VC and killed another who were hiding in a hole. SGT Will Spillman (South Gate, Calif.) entered the hole and brought out the wounded

VC and the carbine and hand grenade he had with him.

Delta Co.'s 1st Platoon, operating southwest of Liz, engaged and killed a VC carrying a ruck sack and two hand grenades.

BRAVO HAS CHANGE OF COMMAND AND AWARDS

Thirteen men of Bravo Co. were presented awards this week in the village of Van Trong during a ceremony highlighted by the company's Change of Command.

Captain Boyd Harris (Pontiac, Ill.) passed the colors to Captain Andrew Lisowski (Columbus, Ga.).

The following men received awards:

- SILVER STAR
 - CPT Boyd Harris
- BRONZE STAR
 - SP/4 Henry Bash
 - PFC Darrell Smoot
- ARMY COMMENDATION MEDAL
 - CPT Boyd Harris
 - SP/4 Barry Wiertzema
- PURPLE HEART
 - 1LT Charles Wiley
 - SGT Leo Stagg
 - SP/4 William Mathieson
 - SP/4 Patrick Harvey
 - SP/4 Gary Oliver
 - PFC Walter Linn
 - PFC Harley Sandberg
 - PFC David Snyder
 - PFC Everett Hobbs

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SYKES' REGULARS REPORTER

- Battalion Commander LTC Arthur Fischer
- REPORTER OIC CPT Edward Mullen
- REPORTER NCOIC SSG Tom Ebert
- Correspondent SP/4 Toby Prodder

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