

(Morgan Gandy)

PHUOC VINH REPEAT PHUOC VINH, SOUTH VIETNAM, 1826 (UPIS)--

Totally without fanfare, troops of the Unistates First Infantry Division have been sweeping out of this frontier town in ~~Warfame~~ DDD-Zone on what could become aye pattern for future allied operations.

For in addition to killing Viet Cong and blasting their base camps, Operation Rolling Stone will grab back an ~~ad~~ arteriaall highway used by the enemy without hindrance for the past nine years.

By the time the "Big Red One" Infantry Division has finished, Route 22 repeat Twenty Two will have been secured, repaired and widened to allow two lanes of heavy trucks to pass.

Sweating in ninety five degree heat and lungchoking red dust, american army engineers will have rolled their tank-dozer through ~~to~~ twenty miles of this Viet Cong redoubt by the end of the month.

(More--Malloy--BD)

first add--morgan gandy--saigon

x x x of the month x x x.

The big battles monopolize the daily headlines. But the smaller operations like Rolling Stone are just as much a part of the American military buildup and in the end may prove more decisive in reaching ~~and~~ isolated villagers who have been under Viet Cong control for years.

Reliable military sources stressed today that in the coming months more a nd more allied ~~offen~~ offensives will be aimed at opening up South Vietnam's ambush-prone highway and railroad networks.

To combat the inevitable Viet Cong mines, detonated both ~~but~~ for the most part electrically ~~and~~ by a hidden sentry, ~~more~~ American troops are using a "rooter", which literally ~~is~~ plows the roadside ditches three feet underground to winkle out the ~~mines~~ contact wires.

(More--Malloy--RD)

second add--morgan gandy--saigon

x x x contact wires

Still, with ^{ALL} the mechanical might, American troops are suffering ~~this~~ an estimated thirty percent of their casualties in this area by "mines from an enemy which is never seen--which makes this war so frustrating," according to one officer.

Though few Viet Cong have been killed in the ~~m~~ area, thirty five miles northeast of Saigon, their food stores, hospitals, tunnels and fortifications have been destroyed.

Operation Rolling Stone began February tenth when two infantry brigades moved from Phuoc Vinh on the east ~~x~~ and Ben ~~Sam~~ Cat on the ~~east~~ west--with twenty miles of ~~xx~~ Viet Cong controlled road between them--to link up the two Vietnamese government-held towns, which also ~~xx~~ serve as the home of two American infantry brigades. By ~~repairing~~ ~~repair~~ repairing and widening the road, American troops can move logistical supplies, tanks and trucks down the road. By extensive use of ~~ph~~ psychological warfare and ~~moving~~ roving medical teams along the highway, the American troops--with Vietnamese civic action units--hope to convert some of the fence-~~se~~ sitting villagers living along the highway to side with the government.

(More--Malloy--BD)

third add--morgan gandy--saigon

x x x with the government x x

In sweeping the jungled terrain the American troops discovered:

1. ² Aye Viet Cong hospital--covering with its defensive system aye one square kilometer area--for thirty ~~conve~~ convalescent patients whose occupational therapy was to make hand-grenades. The tunneled labyrinth under the hospital--plus four tiers of ~~six~~ concentric defensive foxholes and fortifications--gave the Viet Cong sick time to escape as the American troops advanced.

2. Aye Viet Cong post office with three hundred pounds of undelivered mail, stacked in neat piles and loaded into a ~~postbox~~ blue-grey postal bag.

3. Eight Viet Cong trucks, one of which was helicoptered out of the jungled. "We're going to paint it infantryman's blue, put a license plate number 'V. C. One ' on it, and use it to haul PPPXX supplies," one officer explained. The other seven trucks were destroyed--more than ~~in~~ fourteen ~~been~~ boobytraps surrounded each of the trucks. "There were mines in the trees, ~~on~~ the ground, around the truck tires and under the hood," one officer explained. "Everything we touched was boobytrapped."

~~4xx~~ One American unit once found a ~~ph~~ photograph of Henry Cabot Lodge pasted to a ~~ccc~~-ration box. Under it were two ^{But} hand grenades that would explode once the photo was moved. The American troops had learned ~~Since their September arrival to~~ remove such items with long-distance wires or lasooes lasooes."

(More--Malloy--BD)

fourth add--morgan gandy--saigon

^{LASSOES}
x x x or ~~lassoes~~ x x x.

American troops already have figured out a few of the Viet Cong secrets. Two shaven sticks ^{PLACED} ~~lying~~ along the road means the route is clear of mines and ~~booby~~ boobytraps. A broken ~~tree~~ branch hanging straight down along a footpath means the route is clear; if it's hanging sideways the route is boobytrapped.

Phuoc Vinh (pop. two thousand) means ~~"Eternal Happiness"~~ "Eternal Happiness" in Vietnamese. It is an ironic name for a city that never was. Under former President Ngo Dinh Diem, ~~this~~ ^{PHUOC VINH} ~~small town~~ ^{D-Zone} was dug out of the jungle, ^{and} (as a model city) laid out with mauls and flower ~~garden~~ gardens in classical French design. ~~But~~ In 1961, the Viet Cong overran the city, then a provincial headquarters--the first of many to fall under momentary enemy control. During the attack the Viet Cong captured the government province chief, chopped off his head and threw it into the latrine. Today, a dusty-colored bust of the former province chief dominates the middle of the little town, over-looking the mauls of dead grass, ~~and~~ the hundreds of American GI tents and the barbed ~~wire~~ wire barricades on the ^{dusty} ~~dirty~~, well-laid out boulevards. Shortly before the American troops arrival in September the ~~city~~ town was downgraded from a provincial capital to a district capital.

(More--Malloy--BD)

fifth add--morgan gandy--saigon

x x x district capital x x

The American ~~an~~ defensive positions here are laid out with trenches, sand-bagged bunkers, and four tiers of giant ~~barbedwire~~ balls of barbed wire, ~~on~~ on which the American troops have placed pebble-filled ~~monaxmohum~~ coke cans to rattle when the fences are touched.

The ~~amphistamm~~ American troops ^{UTILIZE} used the best of their technological means to spot and harass the enemy--batteries of artillery, including the gigantic onehundred seventy ² ~~milli~~ millimeter guns with an accurate firing range of thirty miles, electronically calibrated counter-mortaring devices, and most important, the portable ground radar known as "Pipsy" repeat "Pipsy."

"This little Pipsy is great," one American officer explained. "It will show you that five figures are moving towards you on a certain angle and at a given speed."

But, the American concede it isn't foolproof.

"One night, ~~we knew~~ we were in contact with Viet Cong platoon when the Pipsy showed alot of activity further away," one officer explained. "We called in all our artillery to hit that area at the same time. The next morning we had twohundred dead by bodycount--^{SALL} dead monkeys. We always razz the artillerymen about their Monkey Massacre."

(Endit-Malloy--RD)