

H Company tanks rumble through a village, just after leaving Cambodia.

Journeying back to RVN

"Let's move out. We're going back," said Captain James Sutherland, commander of E Troop, 2nd Squadron.

It was the morning of June 28 and E Troop, one of the last remaining 11th ACR units in Cambodia, was heading back to Vietnam.

Spirits ran high, but memories of wounded friends and past Cambodian battles lingered on.

In two months in the Fishhook, these E troopers and other Blackhorse Cavalrymen had killed 375 NVA and detained 24 others.

They had captured 1,650 tons of rice, 22,997 pounds of medical supplies, 4,510 gallons of diesel fuel, 784 bicycles and 30 trucks. And they had taken numerous weapons and thousands of rounds of ammunition from the enemy's cache sites and from the enemy himself.

Now, except for the short push through the Cambodian mud to Vietnam, it was all over.

It was already over for 1st Squadron. Two days earlier, led by A Troop mine sweepers, the Bengal armor column swung south through the rubber near Mimot.

As the massive column rolled past, children along the road flashed peace signs and stretched out their hands for candy and C rations. They weren't disappointed. Many of the tracks had set aside candy and gum for just such an occasion.

Private First Class Frank Yukovich caught the mood of the

(Continued on page 8)

Di An move complete

"We just packed up and moved."

That's the way Captain James C. Pate, assistant Regimental S-4, summed up the move of the Blackhorse's forward operations from Quan Loi to Di An. But it wasn't quite that simple.

Preparations for the move south began midway through June. At that time elements of the 919th Engineers came down to Di An to repair buildings and clear land for chopper pads and motor pools.

At about the same time, 1st Squadron, which was to have its standdown immediately after leaving Cambodia, began preparing its area for the sudden influx of troopers who would be living in the base camp.

Prior to the move, the Squadron had only one operational mess hall in Di An. They would need four. Three more buildings were cleaned out and equipment and screening were installed.

Other buildings had to be renovated and electricity put in. Additional latrines and showers were also needed.

When the Squadron moved down on June 28, their area was ready.

2nd Squadron fire base show

"The USO show is really coming out here?" That was the reaction of 2nd Squadron troopers when they found out they were to be visited by a musical group from Sydney.

Field shows are a rarity in the 11th ACR, but the troopers did their best to make the base camp look like a show place. For a stage they trundled out an AVLB.

The group, consisting of three men and three women, came out to the fire base in two Hueys. As the mini-skirted girls stepped off the choppers, the waiting crowd of troopers bristled with binoculars and long-lensed cameras. Amid clicking shutters, the group climbed aboard ACAVs for the short ride to the perimeter.

There was a brief delay while the girls changed into their briefer show dresses. Then the show got underway. The band pumped out organ, guitar and drum music. A stand-up man provided the humor and the girls bounced back and forth across the make-shift stage.

Songs like "By the Time I Get to Phoenix," "Houston," and "Do You Know the Way to Santa Fe" brought back memories of the world.

The girls did, too.

BLACK HORSE

— Find the Bastards — Then Pile On —

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BLACKHORSE

August 1970

Generals praise troopers for Cambodian operation

The performance of Blackhorse troopers during the Cambodian operation has earned them the praise of three American commanding generals.

Lieutenant General Michael S. Davison, II Field Force commander, Major General Edward Bautz, 25th Infantry Division commander, and Major General George W. Casey, the late commander of the 1st Cavalry Division (Airmobile) have all expressed praise of the men of the Blackhorse and their valor in Cambodia.

Referring to the units which worked with the 25th Division in Cambodia, Gen. Bautz wrote: "There can be no doubt that the performance of these Squadrons dealt the enemy a severe blow and has brought the war much closer to its conclusion. Please express to the soldiers of the

Blackhorse Regiment my sincere appreciation and congratulations for a job well done."

Gen. Casey singled out the "Regiment's professionalism and leadership." "Especially noteworthy was your capture of weapons, ammunition and food desperately needed by the enemy. Perhaps an even more crucial loss to the enemy is the damage you inflicted to his border sanctuaries in conjunction with the Rome Plows during extended hard-fought contacts in the Fishhook area.

"It is with pride," Gen. Casey concluded, "that we recall our long association with your magnificent Regiment. We are proud to have fought along side the troopers of the Blackhorse Regiment in Cambodia."

11th ACR takes up new AO

July was stand down time for 1st Squadron. For 2nd and 3rd Squadrons, however, it was a month of settling into new areas of operations.

After leaving Cambodia, 2nd Squadron worked along QL 14A between Bu Dop and Loc Ninh, keeping the road open for convoys and providing support for 1st Cav elements in the area.

On July 9, E Troop together with the fourth platoon of the 919th Engineers moved into the new AO and established Fire Support Base Victory, 20 miles northeast of Di An. G Troop, H Company, and the How Battery and Squadron CP moved to the new AO two days later. And on July 13, they were joined by F Troop.

Once settled in their new area, the squadron began working in combined operations with a Regional Forces Company, looking for enemy base areas.

Third Squadron, which set up its CP at Fire Support Base Petrie, 10 miles northeast of Bien Hoa, has been making Rome Plow cuts through the area and conducting reconnaissance missions.

M Company has been conducting daily mine sweeps on the road leading to Petrie.



Ships of the Air Cav Troop, as they were lined up after flying to Di An.

Commander's column

New operations,
difficult tasks

The closing days of July find the Blackhorse in pastures familiar from its earlier days in country. Those pastures have, however, changed significantly during the Regiment's sojourn in Binh Long, Zone C and Cambodia.

The Regiment has returned to areas from which most major enemy formations have been driven. Our mission now is to assist in destroying or neutralizing the remaining enemy forces. At the same time we are charged with enhancing the effectiveness of the Vietnamese territorial forces (RF and PF), which in the future must provide local security for their villages and hamlets. These are difficult tasks.



JOHN L. GERRITY
Colonel, Armor
Commanding

The enemy we face is cagey and expert in the guerrilla tactics to which he has been forced. Quite appropriately, it has been said that we are up against the "smart ones" because only their kind have survived in these areas. What does this mean to us? It means the use of tactics and techniques different from those we used in Zone C and Cambodia. It places accent on platoon operations, use of the night, and dismounted actions. It requires the effective use of every tool made available to us. It demands from us patience, imagination, innovation, and superb skill.

I am confident that Blackhorse will measure up to these challenges if every trooper does his job as he knows it should be done.

"Allons"

Progress comes to Di An

With a quiet feeling of accomplishment and an almost audible sigh of relief the men of Blackhorse Forward pulled out of Quan Loi and road-marched sixty miles south to Di An, an area of almost Stateside tranquility.

But Di An wasn't always so peaceful.

Men who served with the Big Red One in 1967 remember having to fight their way south to Saigon and north to Lai Khe.

In those days the eight villages and 36 hamlets that comprise Di An District were riddled with Viet Cong. With the political future uncertain, the district's 42,000 people were unwilling to commit themselves to the Saigon government.

Local rubber, rice, sugar cane, peanut, and tobacco production was at low ebb. Only 40% of the eligible children attended high school.

But now all of Di An's hamlets are rated secure by the MACV District Advisor. Terrorist incidents and political assassinations, once commonplace, have diminished considerably. Elected officials have replaced government appointees in key position positions.

Today, the area boasts two sawmills, four rice mills, 13 brick kilns, and five grindstone factories. More than 1,000 children, or 80% of those eligible, attend Di An's two high schools. And in 1969, for the first time in recent years, the area's population increased.

Di An's people are 80% Buddhist, 15% Catholic, and 5% - or some 1800 - Cao Dai, that eclectic religion that embraces both Christ and Buddha and

counts Victor Hugo as one of its saints.

The population is almost entirely ethnic Vietnamese. There are a sprinkling of Chinese, but, unlike Quan Loi, an insignificant number of Cambodian and Montagnards.

Red Cross--how, when to use it

Family problems are real problems - particularly when you're 10,000 miles from home. Your best link with home in a time of crisis is the American Red Cross.

The Red Cross handles approximately 250 individual cases in the 11th ACR each month.

The most urgent cases usually require emergency leave. If something happens at home, relatives should notify the Red Cross chapter near them immediately. The information is then rushed to the serviceman and the proper military authority. The Red Cross acts as a messenger service and makes no recommendations concerning emergency leave. Doctor's recommendations are passed along, however.

Those receiving an emergency leave and in need of money for travel in the States may apply for an immediate loan at the field director's office in Di

An. Loans may also be obtained at Travis Air Force Base or McChord Air Force Base, where the Red Cross offices are open 24 hours a day.

In cases where emergency money is needed either here or in the States and mailing a check or money order would be too slow, the Red Cross office can wire it.

The field director's office also provides a counselling service to those who wish to apply for a hardship discharge or a compassionate reassignment.

When a man has not heard from his family for a long time, he may have the Red Cross make an enquiry to make sure that everything is all right.

The field director's office for the 11th ACR, located behind the Regimental Chapel, is open during normal duty hours and at any time in emergencies. The telephone numbers are 2267 and 2884.

Did you get your shots?

By Chaplain (Major)
James P. Cooke

R and R is a wonderful experience: you see new things, make new friends, store up new memories, as well as forgetting, for a week, the dangers and discomforts of combat.

But there are a few small prerequisites to going on R and R: excess piastres must be disposed of; contraband goes in the amnesty box; sideburns and moustaches are trimmed; and your shot record is checked. No matter how well you have taken care of everything else, if you didn't get your shots your record, it's too late to change it - if it's not there, you can't go!

Now, religion and life (and death) are like that, too. We would all rather ignore the possibility that our lives might come to a sudden end, or that at least they may be placed, suddenly and without warning, in extreme danger - but they might. If

that happens, there will be no time to make overtures to God or to look for a religious point of view that will make the end of life more tolerable.

I won't suggest that heaven is another R and R site - but at that one decisive moment the question each living soul is asked will sound like this: "Did you get your shots?"; and you either did or didn't. And whatever future life there is for a man may be determined, affected by the answer he gives.

Many of us had religious training in our families, and we tend to forget or ignore that part of our upbringing. We should, however, pay as much attention to our religious 'records' as we do to our shot records, keeping religion up to date, vital, useful at all times, wherever we are serving, whatever the circumstances. Our faith is an important part of our lives, not to be neglected. It may stand us in good stead some day when the question is suddenly asked, "Did you get your shots?"



Captain Lincoln Spurgeon examines an infant in a village near Loc Ninh. With him is PFC Michael Rafferty, a medic.

Surgeon Spurgeon

'Hey Doc'-- call to duty

By Darrel Jensen

"Hey Doc, can you fix me up?"

That's the kind of request Captain Lincoln Spurgeon, the 2nd Squadron surgeon, gets every day at the Squadron's Forward Aid Station.

Surgeon Spurgeon (what else?) has a three-fold job.

As medical platoon leader, he is responsible for

thirty field medics. The medics usually provide first treatment for wounds, injuries, and illnesses in the field.

The surgeon also serves as special advisor to the Squadron Commander on field sanitation, personal hygiene, and malaria control.

But most important, he serves each of the men. During enemy contact the surgeon can frequently get to a wounded man - or have him brought to him - before the Medevac ship arrives.

Minor illness, infection, small cuts and scrapes are all treated at the aid station.

When the squadron moves into a new area of operations, a doctor and a medic go to the surrounding villages for Medical Civic Action Patrols (Medcaps).

Capt. Spurgeon believes firmly that a squadron surgeon's place is with the troops in the field: "It is only there that you can do justice to your job."

BLACKHORSE

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Service club corrals troopers

On the night of June 28 battle-weary 1st Squadron troopers packed in finally getting short

barn-like structure to absorb the various installations around Vietnam. "It was the Squadron's second night in Di An and the grand opening of the Corral, a new Service Club annex in the Blackhorse sector of the basecamp.

The Corral was set up to augment the Stateside Service Club, which is located near the PX. "The main club is quite a distance from the 11th ACR area," explains Miss Liz Ann Malleson, the club director. "We wanted something in the immediate area for the troops."

Liz Ann received a phone call early June 27 from the Regiment, offering her the use of Mitchell Auditorium. "It was a happy combination," Liz Ann said. "We had the equipment and the personnel, and the Regiment had a building in the right location."

Liz Ann and four enlisted men immediately set to work, cleaning out the building and decorating it. They worked practically non-stop to get the club ready for its opening the next day.

The Corral, which is open from five to ten p.m. has either a movie or a floor show each evening. The club also has a writing lounge behind the stage, ping pong and pool tables on the first floor, and a reading room on the second floor.

According to Liz Ann, the club personnel are very pleased with attendance. There were between 400 and 500 people at each of the floor shows and more than 100 at the evening movies.

Plans for the future include a floor show every 10 to 12 days

installations around Vietnam.

Thinking like the colonel

When Chief Warrant Officer Jeffrey C. Starrak leaves Vietnam in September, he should know about as much as anyone about the workings of the Regiment.

For during the past year this Cavalry-mustachioed aviator has served as personal pilot for three Blackhorse commanders.

"After a while, you get to think like the Colonel," Mr. Starrak commented. "We've flown him to places he didn't tell us to, but we knew where he wanted to go. And when we're circling around something, we get to sense at just what altitude he wants to be."

Looking back at a year's flying, one day sticks in Starrak's memory. It's the day Colonel Starry, the former commander, was wounded.

He flew into the area to pick up the colonel in the midst of a hail of .51 caliber fire. After flying him back to the 37th Med at Quan Loi, he went back to Snuol to pick up Colonel Bradley. This time they had to go through .51 caliber and mortar fire.

Summing up, Mr. Starrak expressed pleasure that he was able to see so much of what the 11th ACR was doing this past year. "And of course, it's a great honor to fly that guy back there."

Honored for Valor

SILVER STAR

Captain Paul J. Kern, I Troop.
First Lieutenant Arthur E. Smith, Air Cav Troop.
First Sergeant Paul S. Curran, H Company.
Sergeant William J. Fambrough, B Troop.
Specialists 4 Richard S. Cunningham, H Company; Johnny K. Lamontia, 2nd Squadron Headquarters.
Private First Class Paul M. Dailey, 2nd Squadron Headquarters.

DISTINGUISHED FLYING CROSS

First Lieutenants David S.W. Gordon III, 2nd Squadron Headquarters; Michael Huff, 1st Squadron Headquarters.
Chief Warrant Officers Douglas W. Farfel, 2nd Squadron Headquarters; Stephen Gardipee, Air Cav Troop; John H. Mallette, 2nd Squadron Headquarters.
Warrant Officers William F. Davis, Air Cav Troop; Douglas Mercer, 1st Squadron Headquarters; James A. Rohrer, Air Cav Troop; Duncan Wortmann, Air Cav Troop.

BRONZE STAR

Lieutenant Colonels Grail L. Brookshire, 2nd Squadron Headquarters; William Trobaugh, Regimental Headquarters.
Major Frederick Franks, 2nd Squadron Headquarters.
Captain Harold T. Collins, 2nd Squadron Headquarters.
First Lieutenants Timothy F. Brooks, D Company; Dwaine R. Clather, H Company.
Master Sergeant Robert C. Bolan, 2nd Squadron Headquarters.
Platoon Sergeant Homer J. King, H Company.
Staff Sergeant James R. Walker, E Troop.
Specialist 6 Morris D. Patterson, 2nd Squadron Headquarters.
Sergeants John Cavello, Jr., 2nd Squadron Headquarters; Manuel Hernandez, Jr., E Troop; James L. Hobgood, Jr., H Company; Joseph L. Jackson, H Company; Loran E. Holms, E Troop; Eddie Urban, H Company; Wade S. Wall, 919th Engineers.
Specialists 4 Solomon M. Baker, 919th Engineers; James C. Boltin, E Troop; Elvin A. Dillon, G Troop; James R. Garrett, 2nd Squadron Headquarters; Dennis D. Johns, E Troop; Henry D. Lovegrove, H Company; Francis P. Tullier, B Troop; Raymond F. Vicario, D Company; William D. Whiteford, 409th RRD; Steven J. Zellmer, Regimental Headquarters.
Privates First Class David E. Bartling, 2nd Squadron Headquarters; Edward C. Borsdorf Jr, 2nd Squadron Headquarters; Charles Depew, 2nd How Battery; Larry Doyle, 2nd Squadron Headquarters; Sheldon O. Manthei, 2nd Squadron Headquarters.

AIR MEDAL

Lieutenant Colonels Grail L. Brookshire, 2nd Squadron Headquarters; Richard L. Coffman, 2nd Squadron Headquarters; James B. Reed, 1st Squadron Headquarters.
Second Lieutenant Philip C. Reynolds, Air Cav Troop.
Specialists 5 Johnny K. Lamontia, 2nd Squadron Headquarters; Richard A. Taczala, 2nd Squadron Headquarters.
Specialists 4 Steven W. Storie, Air Cav Troop; Dennis L. Vonnella, Air Cav Troop.

ARMY COMMENDATION MEDAL

First Lieutenants Michael Huff, 1st Squadron Headquarters; William L. Wynne, A Troop.
Chief Warrant Officer Douglas W. Farfel, 2nd Squadron Headquarters.
Warrant Officer Douglas E. Mercer, 1st Squadron Headquarters.
Command Sergeants Major John A. Carlson, 3rd Squadron Headquarters; Frank S. Zlobec, 1st Squadron Headquarters.
Sergeants First Class Dennis R. Bonner, 2nd Squadron Headquarters; Clifford M. Campbell, I Troop; Terry A. Dotson, B Troop; Jerry J. Howerton, B Troop; Carlos A. Sanders, 919th Engineers.
Staff Sergeants Terry Bradford, D Company; Kenneth F. Wagner, B Troop.
Sergeants Harold J. Chance, C Troop; Vincent P. Conway, 1st Squadron Headquarters; Donnie J. Colwell, A Troop; Jack A. Marchant, L Troop.
Specialists 5 David S. Haire, B Troop; Jerry L. Jansson, A Troop; Johnny K. Lamontia, 2nd Squadron Headquarters; Blankenship, L Troop; Merville F. Blakesley, 1st Squadron Headquarters; Philip B. Crew, C Troop; Larry E. Cole, B Troop; Barry H. Cook, 1st Squadron Headquarters; Ronald L. Culver, L Troop; Garlin J. Henderson, D Company; James D. Forkin, L Troop; Anthony Hebert, L Troop; Thomas Jackson, A Troop; William R. Keller III, A Troop; Gary D. Leas, B Troop; Fred D. Lopez, Air Cav Troop; Michael W. MacDougal, 3rd How Battery; Johnnie H. Mann, C Troop; Francis E. Melby, A Troop; Richard M. Saldana, A Troop; Lyle C. Sanna, 1st Squadron Headquarters; William Thorpe, 2nd Squadron Headquarters; Francis P. Tullier, B Troop.
Privates First Class Bennie H. Bernabo, L Troop; Garry P. Carpenter, L Troop; Richard Carranze, L Troop; Lawrence W. Connor, B Troop; Thomas N. Cocco, A Troop; Charles T. Fishback, L Troop; James R. Garrett, 2nd Squadron Headquarters; William J. Griffen, B Troop; Presley L. Smith, B Troop; Raymond E. Sans, B Troop; Karl C. Thorpe, L Troop.



One hamburger, cooked medium rare, is served up.

Just call them cooky

Chow time -- and a herd of 150 troopers assault a row of mermite cans filled with hot food.

"The men just call us spoon or cooky," says Specialist 4 Danny Norris, a field cook who serves the men of G Troop two "hots" a day.

Field cooks work in two-man teams. One cook stays with the troop all the time. The other comes out with the resupply, bringing with him a hot supper and the next day's breakfast.

The two cooks set up the chow line for the evening meal as soon as it is unpacked.

Early the next morning, they prepare breakfast. When the meal is finished the cans and the cook

wait for the afternoon resupply to take them back to Di An. Another cook and two more meals accompany the same ship.

Every job has its drawbacks and cooking is no exception. "We've had the food dropped out in the jungle where it couldn't be recovered," said Norris. "That makes the guys angry because they have to eat C rations."

To complaints of Army chow, PFC Tommy Hall has a ready answer, used by cooks all over the world: "Some guys are never satisfied. It's hard to please everyone."

Stand down D & R for the tracks

"It's almost like being born again. When I crashed into bed the first night in Di An it was like sleeping on a cloud." That's how Specialist 5 Garry G. McCubbin described his feelings about 1st Squadron's stand down.

For the first time in nine months the men of the Squadron had a chance to visit the P.X., have a few beers at the club, and see a live show or two.

Perhaps all the time in the field had toughened the men or perhaps it was simply just an illusion, but a basecamp seemed nicer than ever before. Mess halls and clean billets were luxuries compared to open-air chow and make-shift shelter halves.

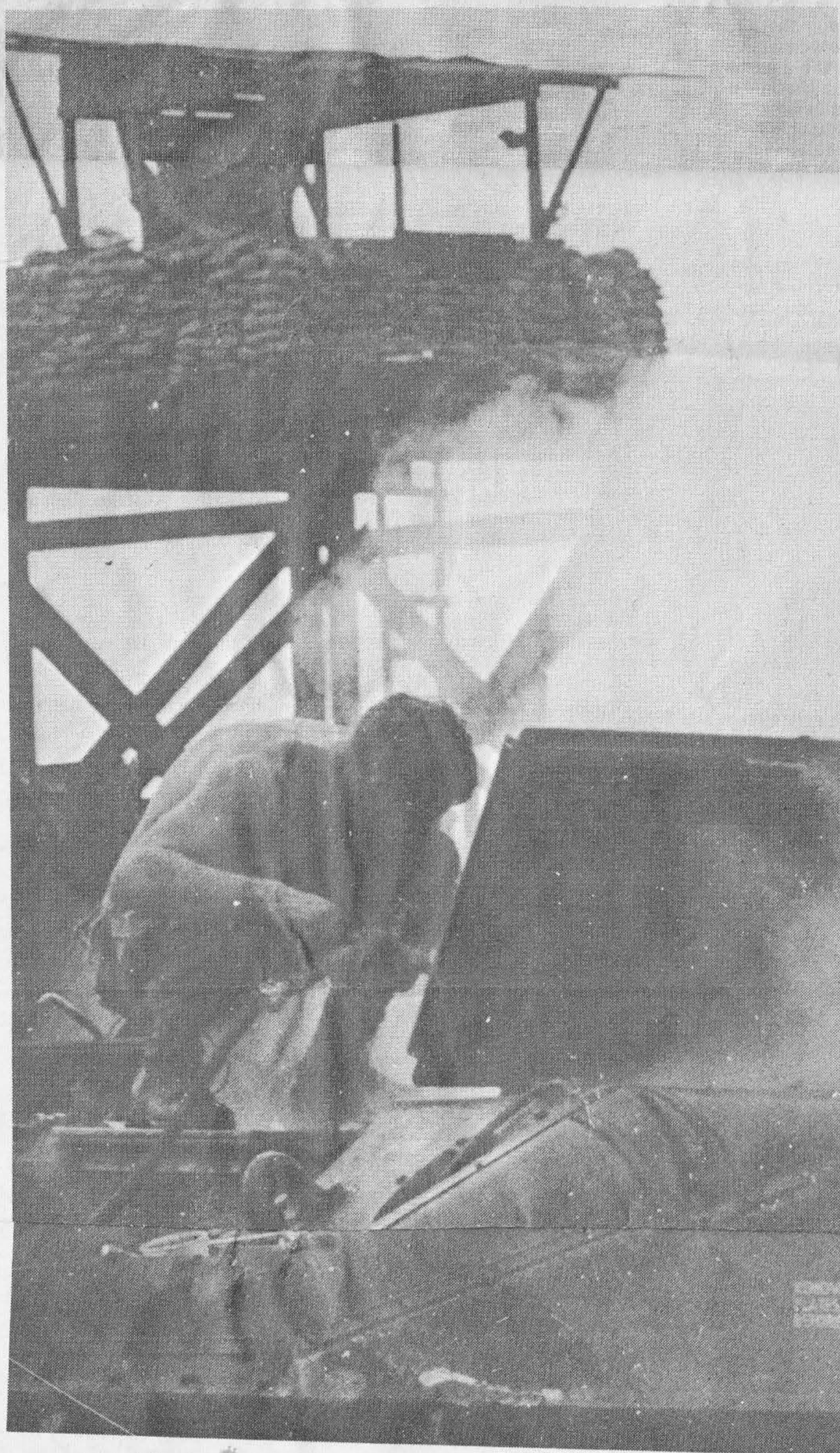
Standdown gave the Bengal troopers a chance to overhaul their Armored vehicles and repair the damage that mud, long miles, and the enemy had done.

The maintenance of the vehicles was performed according to schedule, with each day set aside for a specific job. By the end of the month, each vehicle had been worked over from cupola to road wheels.

There is a time for everything, and the month of July was a time for 1st Squadron troopers to be a little farther from the war and to recover from the wear and tear of combat.



The paraphernalia that accumulated in nine months in the field is cleaned out of the tracks.

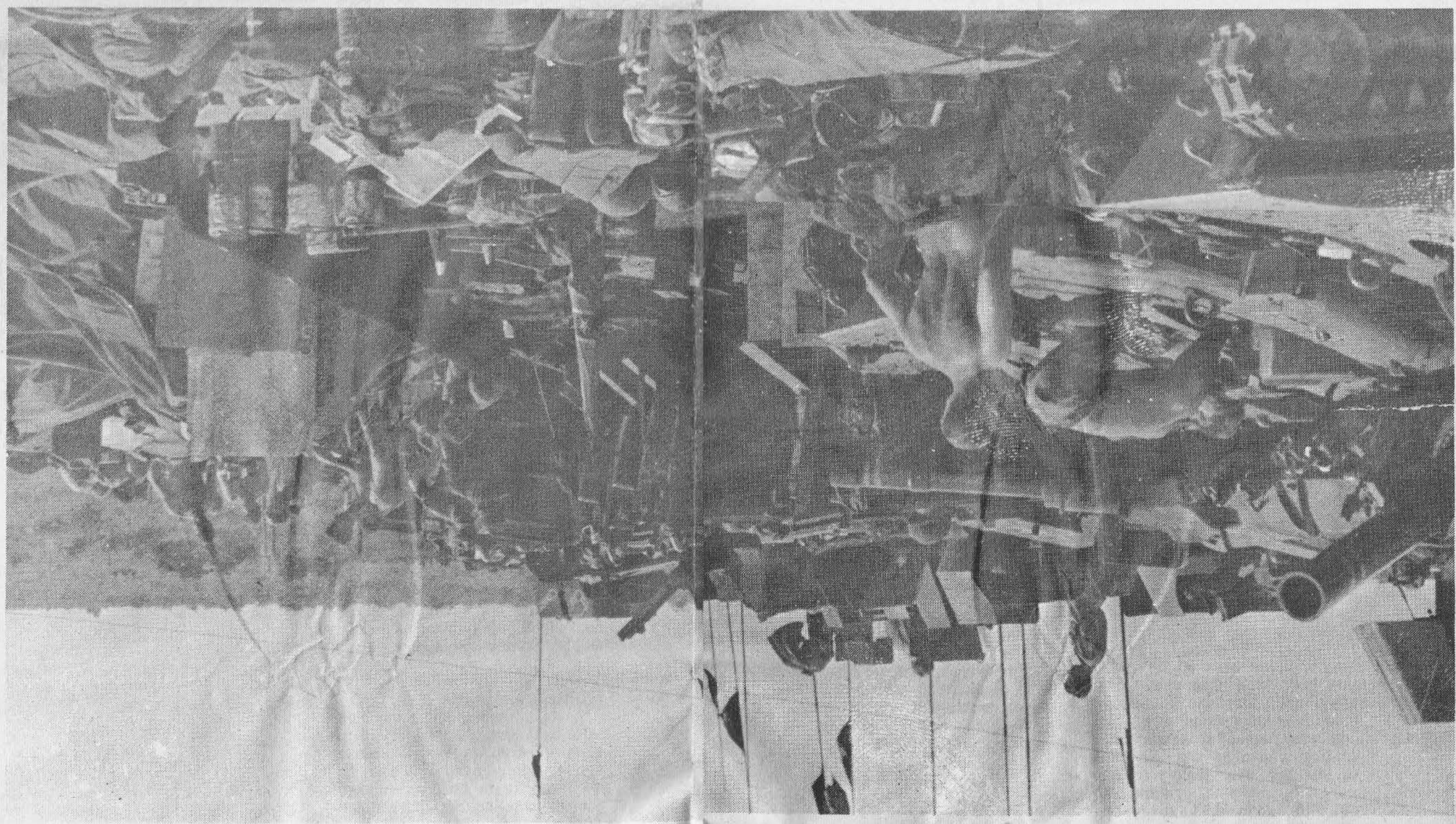


A trooper steam cleans the engine compartment of his ACAV.



"Now that we got it out, what do we do with it?"

P & R for the tracks

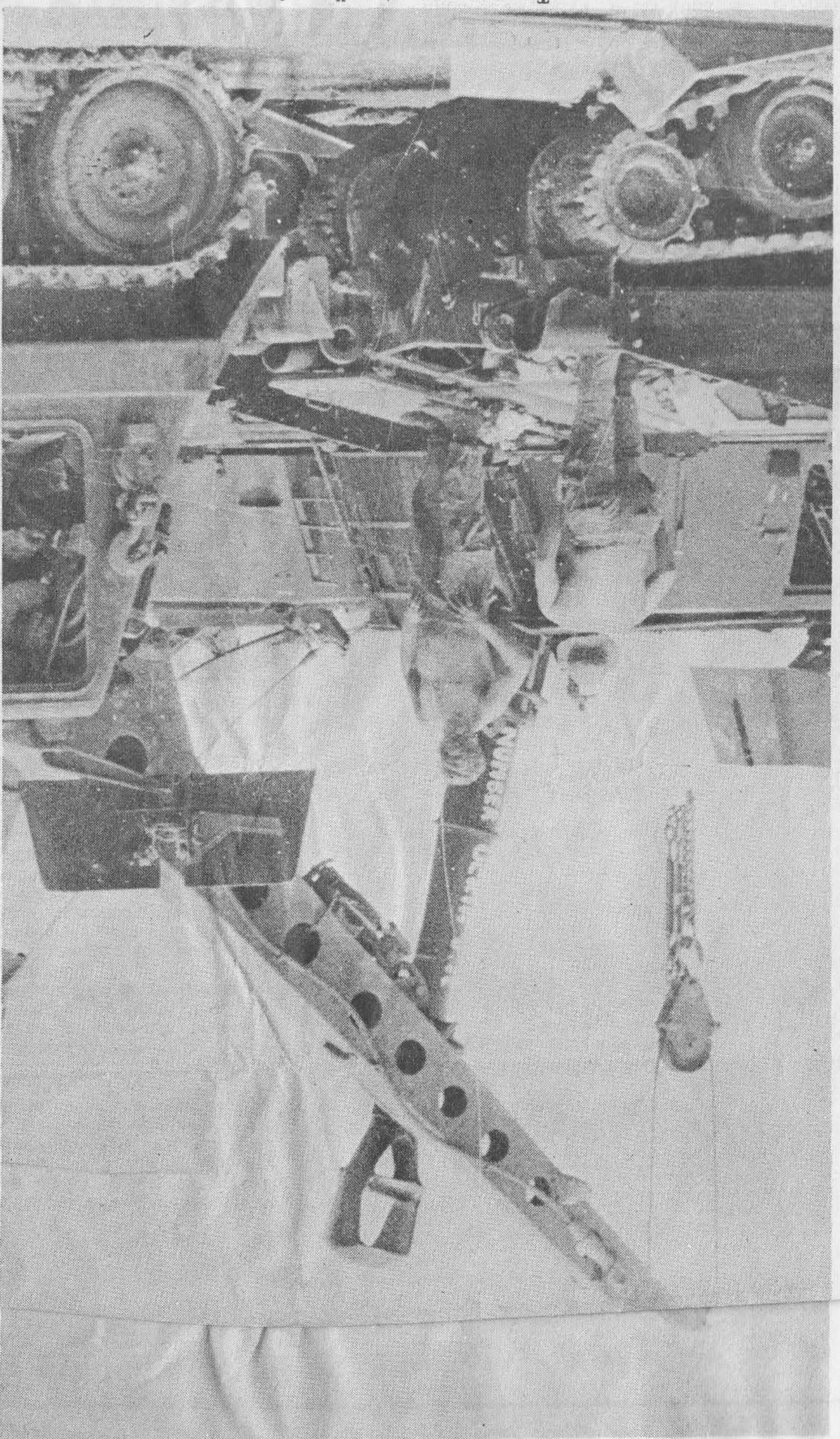


The paraphernalia that accumulated in nine months in the field is cleaned out of the tracks.



"Now that we got it out, what do we do with it?"

Story and Photos
by Ed Yokum



Two men prepare to pull a pack.



Replacing a road wheel on a Sheridan.

Blackhorse medicine men

Keeping troopers healthy

By Joe Marchesani

The expedient blend of tent and ACAV looks like an OD version of a patent medicine man's side-show at a State Fair.

But the medicine men of 3rd Squadron are no back country hustlers. They're a happy combination of trained medic and tribal shaman.

The Squadron medics provide immediate aid for injuries, both combat and accidental, sustained in the field.

"This sounds like a war story, I know," admits Specialist 5 John Kennedy, the clinical specialist of the forward aid station, "but to give you a small example - About two a.m. I got a call one night. An M-79 had fallen off a track and landed on this guy's face, and the barrel end had cut him around the eye. He didn't want to be dusted off, because he was a TC, and they needed him to go out on an operation the next day. So there I was, working under a flashlight and attempted sterile conditions, closing the cut with eight stitches."

Because each man is needed for the smooth operation of the unit, the attempt is made whenever possible to treat cases in the field. "But we don't hesitate a second when we feel that a dust-off is needed," Kennedy asserts.

An aid-man, usually Specialist 5 Paul Simpson or Specialist Ricky Lockwood, accompanies the Headquarters Troop when it goes out on an operation.

Lockwood prefers working in the field to being back with the Med Company in Di An: "The work I do here presents more of a challenge," he says. "And the time passes faster too."

The responsibilities of their work weigh heavily on all the medics. Says Sergeant Robert Mueller, who handles the dust-offs: "There have been many times when a matter of seconds has meant life or death, but I guess someone up there is watching over us."

Over the shoulder repair

"The big difference between civilian and military vehicles is the transmissions," declared Specialist 4 Mike Prine. "you'll never see transmissions as big as this in civilian life."

And he should know, for Prine has been a heavy duty mechanic both in the Army and at home in New Castle, Penn.

Prine has been a mechanic and gunner for 3rd Squadron's M Company for the past 11 months. That's long enough for him to find out just how many things can go wrong with a vehicle. He has encountered

"It's not exactly like working in a garage, but I've gained a lot of experience and picked up some new techniques that I never even knew existed," he commented.

After a mining incident, track blocks and road wheels must frequently be replaced on the spot - ASAP. Then the field mechanic spends as much time looking over his shoulder for the enemy as he does at his work.



An injured man protects his eyes from the dirt churned up by the medevac ship coming in to pick him up. (Photo by Darrel Jensen)

Stop and go Blackhorse-style

By Vincent Spadafora

To the uninitiated, driving an ACAV might be considered just another Army job, but to the drivers themselves, it is more like a religion.

Take Private First Class Steve Abney, a driver for Headquarters Troop, 3rd Squadron. After driving ACAVs for five months he knows the meaning of the word "care" when it comes to his mechanical baby.

"You have to make sure that everything is properly lubricated and there is the proper tension on the track," stated the 20-year-old native of Russellville, Ky.

But his job doesn't stop with maintenance. He must know how to avoid mines, search for traces of the enemy and maneuver his ACAV when contact with the enemy is made.

"I always look for freshly dug camouflaging their mines," asserted the red-headed trooper.

If a breakdown occurs, the men usually try to repair the damage right in the field.

"In Cambodia alone, we tore up three transmissions! Even with the proper maintenance your track can still break down. The terrain is very tough on the equipment."

In contact, the driver must put his track in the best position

to dish out the most firepower and still have protection.

As soon as the track is in position, the driver immediately lets loose with M-79 fire. If a barrel of the TC's .50 needs to be replaced, it is the driver who does it. "Our TC named this track the 'House of Ill Repute',

Abney said. "I'd hate to be in Charlie's shoes facing the likes of an ACAV."

When out on a RIF, the driver tries not to run over big logs or dead trees that may be booby-trapped. He is always looking for any little sign that will betray the presence of the

enemy. Lately the hunting has been bad.

"Charlie seems to be scared to death if a track is around," he observed. "Some of the time he'll stay around long enough to unload an RPG and then high tail it out. He's not even doing that now."

11th ACR aviators checked out for monsoon season flying

Flying along at 3,500 feet, an 11th ACR Huey suddenly loses power and starts diving toward the ground. But then the big rotors begin whirling again, and the ship glides safely down.

Emergency, actually it's part of a training exercise to insure that real emergencies do not turn into disasters.

Each helicopter pilot in the 11th ACR must take one proficiency flight test every 90 days.

The usual check flight emphasizes safety procedures and tests a pilot's reactions in emergency situations. Here pilots experience simulated engine, tail rotor, hydraulics and governor failure.

But now, during the monsoon season, when visibility is often poor, special attention is being given to instrument flight procedures, according to Captain James R. Hamilton, operations officer for the aviation platoon.

During this part of the check a visor is attached to the pilot's helmet to prevent him from seeing anything but the instrument panel. Receiving radio instructions from a radar ground station, the pilot must be able to make a safe approach and land using only instruments.

The Regimental aviation platoon checks its pilots and those of each squadron and the 398th Transportation Detachment while the Air Cav Troop checks its own.

ACAV TC: pilot and advocate

By Darrel Jensen

After hours of ducking overhanging limbs and tasting red dust churned up by the track in front, Sergeant James Hines brings his ACAV into the fire support base and eases it into its position on the berm.

He gently pulls off his CVC helmet and climbs out of the cupola.

Since early morning Hines has been bouncing through the jungle, directing his driver over the intercom, and keeping an eye out for signs of the enemy.

Now the day's mission is over - but not his responsibilities as Track Commander.

The TC has to make sure that all weapons are thoroughly cleaned and proper maintenance is pulled on the vehicle. If his men have personal problems or just need more clean clothes, C's, or beer and soda, the TC is their advocate.

Each evening the TC meets with the troop commander to find out about the following day's mission, report on his crew and make supply requests. He then returns and briefs his crew on the meeting.

That done, he might take a few minutes to write a letter (if it's not too dark) or just relax with some of the guys.

But he will probably try to get a couple hours of sleep before his turn at guard comes.

Tomorrow is another day, and whether the mission involves busting jungle, escorting a convoy or a Medcap, or just making a routine trip to the water point, he's going to have to be alert and keep his men alert for whatever might happen.

"That's my life," reflected Hines, who has been a TC with 2nd Squadron's Headquarters Troop for eight months. "It's a lot of headaches, but as long as I'm here, I'll take the job."

ARVN interpreters

Serving RVN in English

"I can help my country most by speaking English," says Sergeant Bui Chi Lan, an ARVN interpreter assigned to 2nd Squadron.

Trung and the other interpreters in the Blackhorse Regiment provide a vital communications link between American troops and the Vietnamese they encounter.

The interpreters working with the Regiment come from different backgrounds. Some, like Cas Van Trung, are refugees from the North. Others, like Staff Sergeant Bui Chi Lan, are natives of the South. What they all have in common is a working knowledge of English.

Interpreters are first assigned to a line troop to gain experience. Later, they are

assigned to other troops. Here they move from troop to troop as the need arises.

The interpreters spend much of their time working with the 541st Military Intelligence Detachment translating NVA and VC documents. They are also called on to go to local villages with the squadron medics to provide their services during Medcaps. "A Medcap is one way to stay close to the Vietnamese people," said Trung.

Interpreters are also used to interrogate enemy personnel detained by the Regiment. Sgt. Bui Chi Lan says that one of his most satisfying moments was an encounter with an NVA soldier captured by 3rd Squadron's K

troop gave him clothes and food.

"Three days later he lead us to a bunker complex we never would have found without his help," Lan recalled.

Both Trung and Lan hope that someday they'll be able to go to ARVN officers candidate school. They feel their association with the 11th ACR has given them a chance to learn valuable military skills that they will be able to use later in their careers.

Their respect for the Blackhorse is obvious. "If they can spend almost a full year in the jungle," Trung comments, "they have to be a hardcore regiment."



A door gunner watches out for any movement on the ground

Air Cav gunners, crew chiefs

Waiting for the call to where action is

"The worst part of this job is the waiting - not being sure when you will go out or even if you will."

Speaking was Specialist 4 Loren D. Bustin, a door gunner in the "Slick" platoon of the Air Cav Troop. He had just spent a nervous day waiting in his hootch for his ship to be called for a sniffer mission, but the clouds never gave way and the call never came.

The daily activities of the gunners and crew chiefs of the platoon present a contrast between the routine and the unexpected, the safe and the precarious.

There are eight Hueys in Air Cav Troop: two command and control ships and six "Lift" ships.

The slicks are used to ferry the Aero Rifle Platoon and for sniffer, resupply, Nighthawk, and flare missions.

The men are on call 24 hours a day and a scramble may come any time. There is never a time to relax, not even after sunset.

At night there are Nighthawk missions, where a Huey and a Cobra gunship fly through the darkness looking for the enemy. The Huey is equipped with miniguns and a huge searchlight. The doorgunner scans the ground with a scope.

when he spots movement, he opens up with his minigun and switches on the white light. With that the pilot banks the slick sharply and the Cobra gunship overhead comes hurtling down on the enemy position.

Nighthawks aren't the only missions flown after dark. Each night two Hueys are detailed for flare ship duty. One slick is loaded with flares; the other serves as a backup.

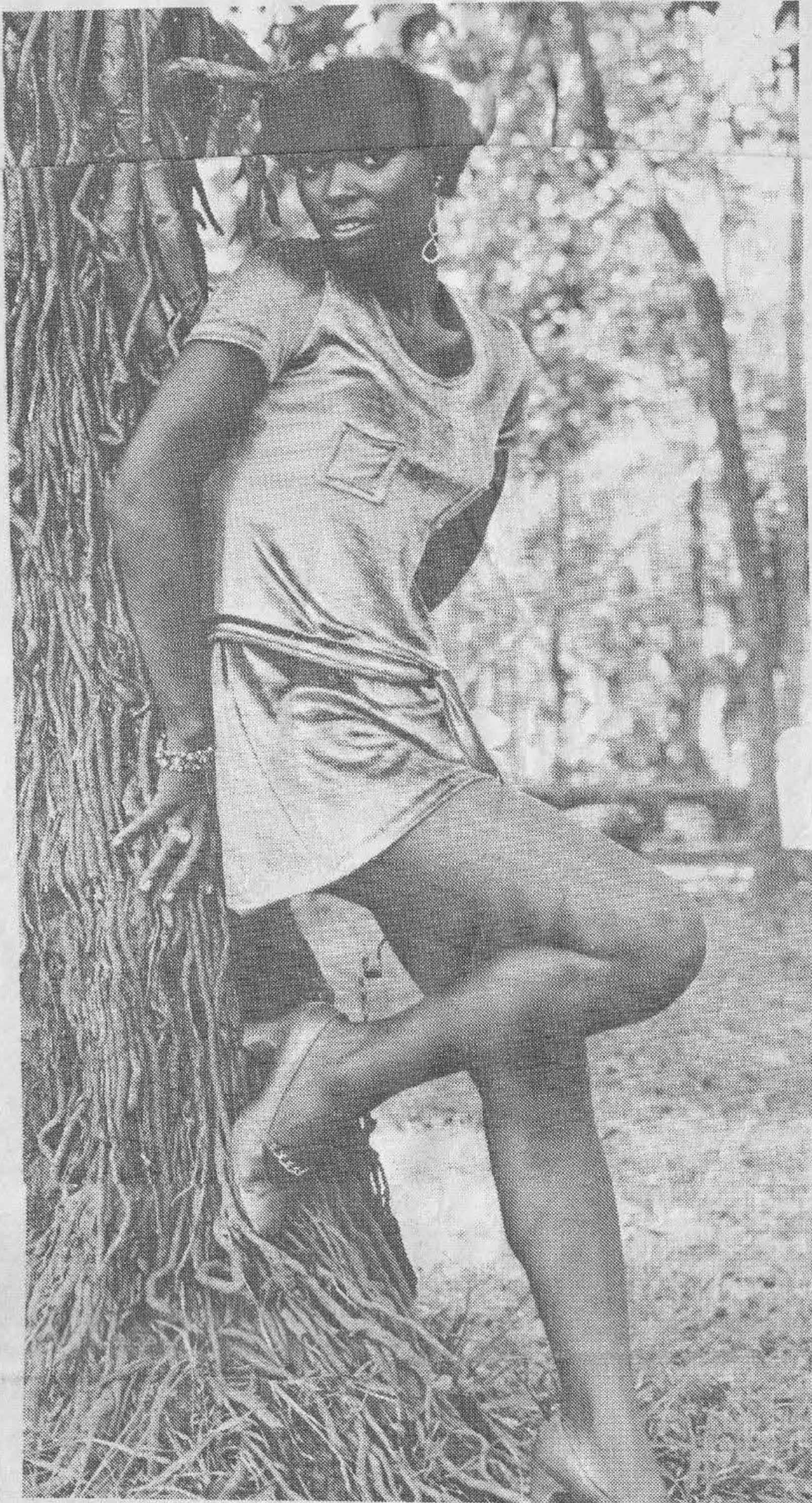
The flare ship goes out when an 11th Cav unit comes in contact and artillery illumination is inadequate or impossible.

illumination to a squadron from the morning.

Lift ships are also on standby at night to fly emergency supplies to the squadrons.

Because they are always on call, the men pull the daily maintenance and pre-flight inspections right after the day's operations so that the ships are ready to go again.

But there are no complaints. "Flying is fun," says door gunner Specialist 4 Robert M. Johnson, "and you always feel that you are doing something important. And you're where the action is."



He keeps Hows roaring out

In the center of the 3rd Squadron fire support base, protected by a ring of tanks, Sheridans and ACAVs, two shirtless troopers are leaning into their big 155 Howitzer. Their trousers, arms and faces are covered with a layer each of grease and dust.

Sergeant Travis G. Morrison, a section chief, stands up, wipes his hand across his brow, a gesture which does absolutely no good, and starts speaking of his job. "Basically I have to see that all the work gets done."

The crewmen of the How Battery, which supplies artillery support for the entire Squadron, don't have very much time to sit around waiting for something to happen. They work constantly to make sure that the big "Hogs" are ready when they're needed.

When the call for fire support comes, the whole battery quickly swings into action. The element in contact radios the fire direction center. The FDC They get right to work. The gunner uses his scope and aiming post to make the final calculations, while the loader rams in a ninety-five pound round and waits for it to fire.

If the crew has time, they'll try to warn anyone who may be nearby before the big gun roars out.

And it is Sgt. Morrison's job to make sure it roars out when

needed. So, he wipes his forehead once more and leans back into the Hog.

Wherever there's trouble

"Wherever 3rd Squadron goes, we go," stated Private First Class Bruce R. Van Etten.

Van Etten, a member of the 185th Maintenance Battalion, is a part of the 3rd Squadron's contact team, a group of vehicle maintenance specialists who follow the squadron "by Chinook, Colonel's ship, or LOH," to keep the vehicles up.

Providing third echelon work, the men of the contact team are dispatched wherever there is a downed vehicle. "Third echelon is getting the parts," Va Etten explained. "We check out the vehicle and the needed work as soon as the contact team gets them the necessary parts."

However, the contact team takes over whenever extensive work is needed. The team can bring rear area maintenance right to the field, saving both time and travel for the crew of the downed vehicle. Vehicles are sent to the rear only as a last resort.

11th Cav on road to Vietnam

(Continued from page 1)

moment when he said, "I'll bet they think the inside of a track is made of candy."

At 1:45 the first vehicles in the convoy spotted a bullet-riddled sign reading, "Welcome to Vietnam." And, with a loud cheer, 1st moved south from their base at the border. In the same fashion, 3rd Squadron last Bandit track crossed into Vietnam. Three hours later the 1st Squadron, gray column was rounding Black Virgin Mountain and heading to Tay Ninh.

Third Squadron spent the night in Tay Ninh West. For most of the troopers it was the first night in a basecamp in months. There was no guard duty, no light discipline. Some of the men even slept in buildings.

One trooper found himself muttering something that never would have occurred to him two months before: "I feel a lot safer now that I'm in Vietnam."

Now on June 28, E Troop roared down Route 13 through torrential monsoon rains. As his troop crossed the border, Capt. Sutherland folded his arms, leaned back, and smiled. The job was done.



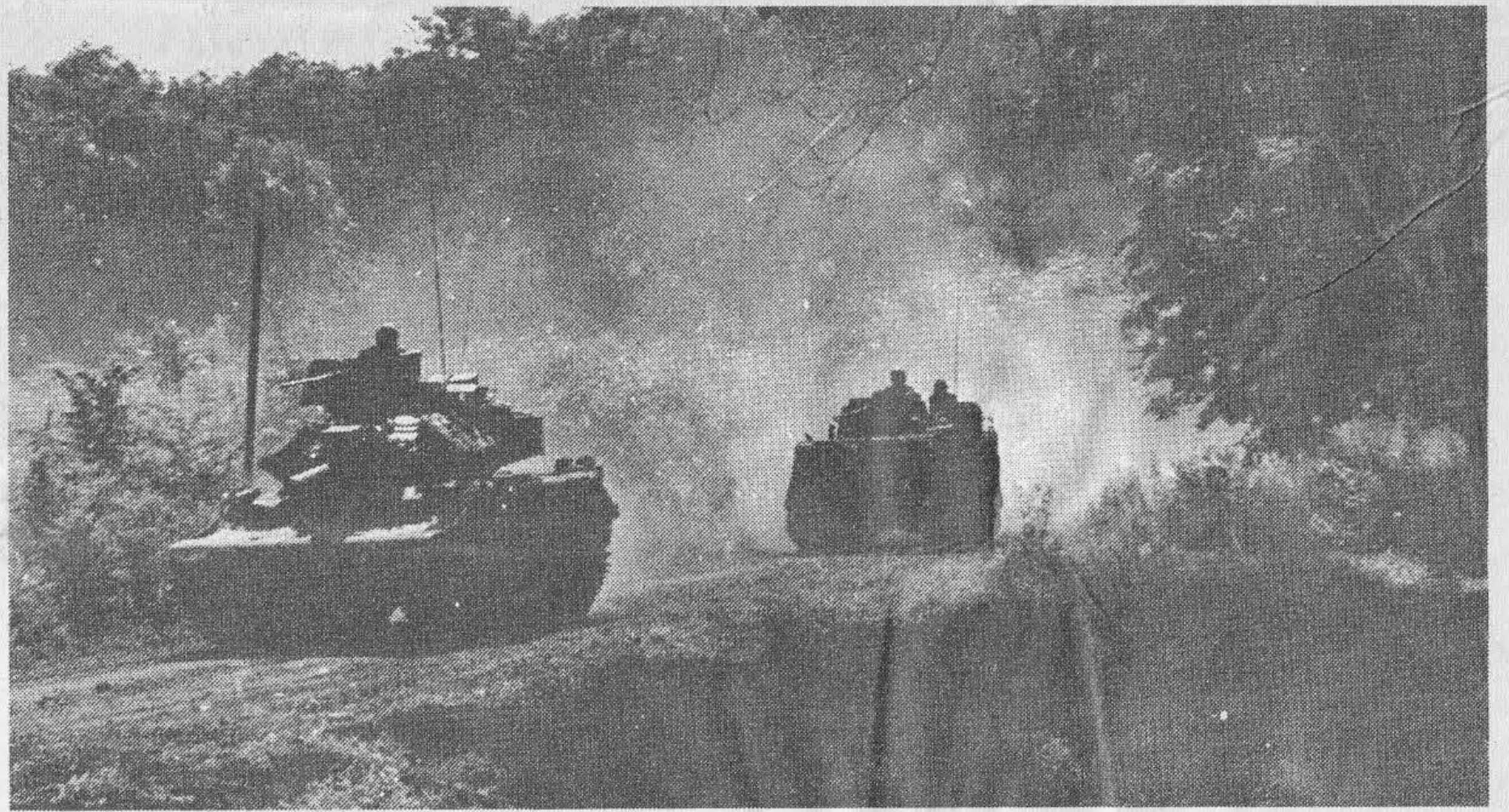
First Squadron's A Troop lines up while waiting to cross a bridge on the road to Katum.



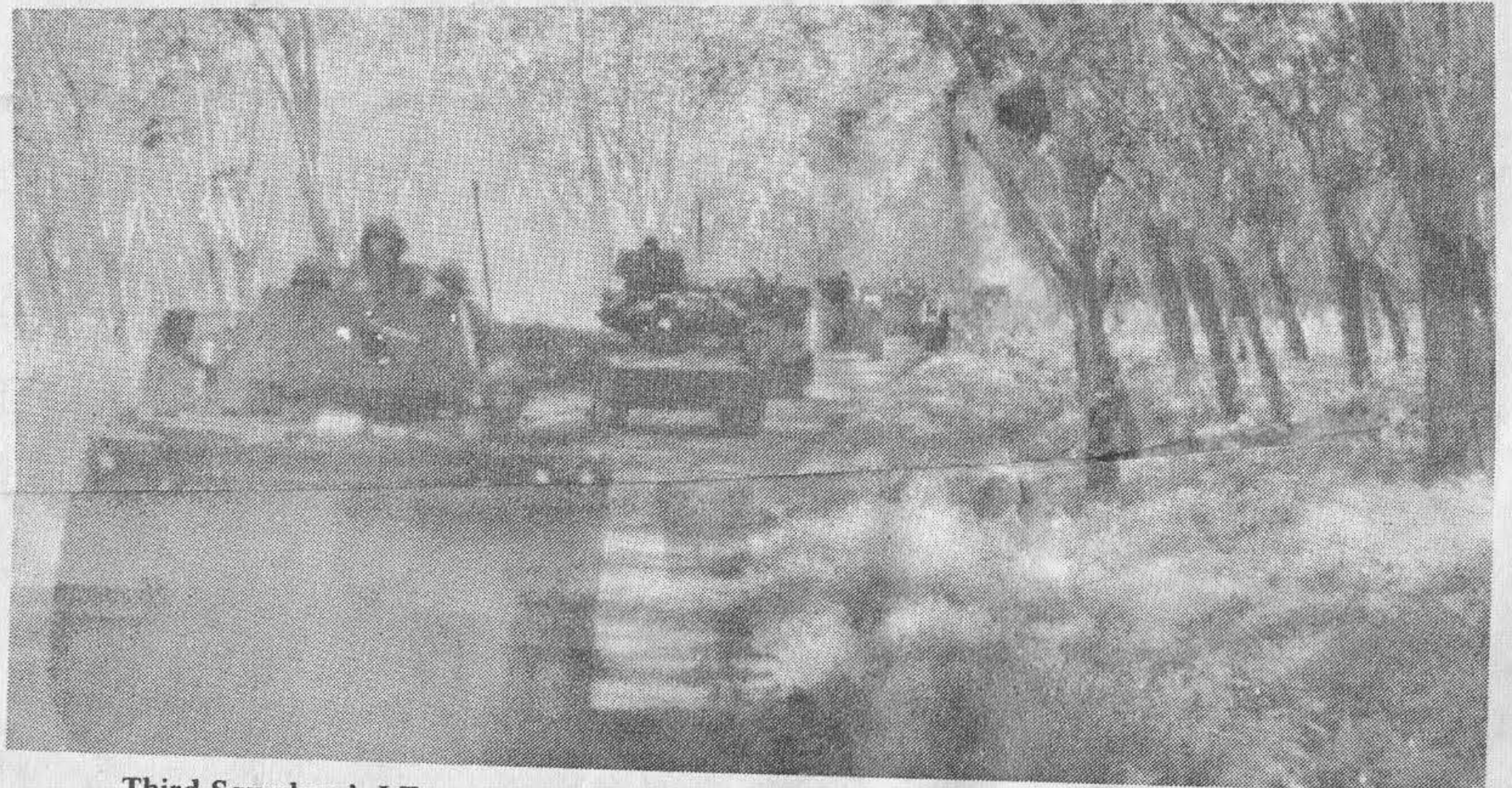
A Troop provides road security a short distance from the border.



The medic's track of 2nd Squadron's Headquarters Troop on the road march.



Second Squadron's F Troop heads for the border.



Third Squadron's I Troop rumbles through the Cambodian rubber for the last time.