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~ 2/503d Photo of the Month ~



Thank you for your service.

(Photo by Ed Kearney, B/2/503d at Arlington Cemetery)



2/503d **VIETNAM** Newsletter / May 2012 – Issue 40

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Chaplain's Corner

Band of Brothers

It is a privilege and opportunity to share this Chaplain's Corner with you. I am, of course, aware that the trooper that I follow, Chaplain Connie Walker, leaves deep tracks and I am privileged not only to follow him, but to have had the opportunity to serve with him.



Cap

Perhaps you haven't had the opportunity to be around Chaplain Walker during your tour with the "Herd", but I was and he made a definite impact on my life. The most memorable time was on June 29, 1966 (Operation Yorktown) when our company, A/2/503d, met up with the 308th Viet Cong Main Force Battalion. Tuff day! Hard fought battle and Chaplain Connie was with us...and touched our lives. On that day he was everywhere with comfort, assurance and prayers. For his actions on that day he would be awarded the Silver Star for gallantry in action. We who were there will remember, and be thankful for his service and valor. (See Issue 38, Pages 26-27).

Here's where I'm going with you during my time in the Chaplain's Corner. Walk with me and let me share thoughts on where we were, are and might be. Stay with me--because this introduction sets the scene for all I want to share with you during these months we'll be together. Here's my Scripture... Isaiah 6:8:

"Also I heard the voice of the Lord, saying: 'Whom shall I send. And who will go for us?' Then I said, 'Here am I! Send me.'"

Let me set the stage. **Band of Brothers**, where does that term come from? Where have you seen it used? Maybe in the book by Stephen Ambrose on WWII about Company E, 506th Airborne Regiment of the 101st Airborne Division? The name of the book, *Band of Brothers*, or the movie by the same name actually comes from a play *Henry V* written by William Shakespeare.

The story was taken from a historical confrontation called the **Battle of Agincourt** that was fought in the year 1415. The English army is in France and at war with France. They are encircled and outnumbered 5 to 1 by the French. Additionally, they are short of supplies and need to breakout and reach the coast for supplies and reinforcements. It doesn't look good!

Shakespeare's *King Henry V* calls his men together and casts a vision with his call to battle. He convinces his men that fighting in this noble cause was worth their very lives. It will be a battle, the King tells them, that they do not want to miss....for it will be talked about until the end of the world. His speech convinces his men.

Listen to the Kings words:

*"This story shall the good man tell his son
That this day shall ne'er go by,
From this day to the ending of the world, But we in it shall be
remembered-
We few, we happy few, we band of brothers;
For he today that sheds his blood with me
Shall be my brother;
And gentlemen now back in England now abed
Shall think themselves cursed they were not here.
And hold themselves cheap while any speak
That fought not with us this day.
But we—shall be remembered
We few, we happy few, we band of brothers."*

In both illustrations, the play and the book, I sense a bond in the men, and it is just as possible with us who served in 2/503rd in the Pacific, Vietnam, Iraq or Afghanistan. Perhaps you'll agree that there is a present, potential and much needed cause that we who did and still serve with the 2/503 need to reach out to one another...a bond of concern and outreach for a brother. For after all, remember who we are:

"We few, we happy few, we band of brothers."

First, men in our society, even men we have served with, feel and have felt the pressure to achieve, to earn, to conquer and to win...and to do all things on our own. On the other hand, James, in the book of *James Chap 5: 16*, would encourage each of us to develop deep and caring relationships with other men. To help, watch over, and pray for each other. A man who doesn't have at least one other man to whom he can be accountable to regarding his hurts, failures, temptations, as well as his joys and victories is a prime candidate for anger and bitterness.

Question: Who are those brothers in your unit, chapter, neighborhood, maybe even in your home that you can reach out to? Who are those brothers whose lives that can be changed simply by reaching out and sharing with them in time of need? Who can you and I turn to and be accountable to? Who do you know that needs a friend right now, and who can help them? Here's the answer from the Scripture...

"Here am I, send me."

So we're walking together and sharing about what is happening and what needs to be done when we see a need. And for sure--we know who can make an impact on the needs that are around us! Here's the answer:

"We few, we happy few, we Band of Brothers."

Thanks for stopping by the Corner.

Jack Kelley

Reverend Jack Kelley, LTC (Ret) (then Captain), served during June-December 1966 as Company Commander of A/2/503rd. In January 1967, he moved to Brigade Headquarters and became the Aide to Brigadier General John R. Deane, the Brigade Commander. His last assignment with the Herd was as the S-3 of the 3/503d in January 1970. Welcome aboard Cap!



~ Dwight D. Eisenhower ~

My fellow Americans:

Three days from now, after half a century in the service of our country, I shall lay down the responsibilities of office as, in traditional and solemn ceremony, the authority of the Presidency is vested in my successor.

This evening I come to you with a message of leave-taking and farewell, and to share a few final thoughts with you, my countrymen.

Like every other citizen, I wish the new President, and all who will labor with him, Godspeed. I pray that the coming years will be blessed with peace and prosperity for all.

Our people expect their President and the Congress to find essential agreement on issues of great moment, the wise resolution of which will better shape the future of the Nation.

My own relations with the Congress, which began on a remote and tenuous basis when, long ago, a member of the Senate appointed me to West Point, have since ranged to the intimate during the war and immediate post-war period, and, finally, to the mutually interdependent during these past eight years.

In this final relationship, the Congress and the Administration have, on most vital issues, cooperated well, to serve the national good rather than mere partisanship, and so have assured that the business of the Nation should go forward. So, my official relationship with the Congress ends in a feeling, on my part, of gratitude that we have been able to do so much together.

We now stand ten years past the midpoint of a century that has witnessed four major wars among great nations. Three of these involved our own country. Despite these holocausts America is today the strongest, the most influential and most productive nation in the world. Understandably proud of this pre-eminence, we yet realize that America's leadership and prestige depend, not merely upon our unmatched material progress, riches and military strength, but on how we use our power in the interests of world peace and human betterment.

Throughout America's adventure in free government, our basic purposes have been to keep the peace; to foster progress in human achievement, and to enhance liberty, dignity and integrity among people and among nations. To strive for less would be unworthy of a free and religious people. Any failure traceable to arrogance, or our lack of comprehension or readiness to sacrifice would inflict upon us grievous hurt both at home and abroad.

Progress toward these noble goals is persistently threatened by the conflict now engulfing the world. It commands our whole attention, absorbs our very beings. We face a hostile ideology -- global in scope, atheistic in character, ruthless in purpose, and insidious in method.



Unhappily the danger it poses promises to be of indefinite duration. To meet it successfully, there is called for, not so much the emotional and transitory sacrifices of crisis, but rather those which enable us to carry forward steadily, surely, and without complaint the burdens of a prolonged and complex struggle -- with liberty the stake. Only thus shall we remain, despite every provocation, on our charted course toward permanent peace and human betterment.

Crises there will continue to be. In meeting them, whether foreign or domestic, great or small, there is a recurring temptation to feel that some spectacular and costly action could become the miraculous solution to all current difficulties. A huge increase in newer elements of our defense; development of unrealistic programs to cure every ill in agriculture; a dramatic expansion in basic and applied research -- these and many other possibilities, each possibly promising in itself, may be suggested as the only way to the road we wish to travel.

But each proposal must be weighed in the light of a broader consideration: the need to maintain balance in and among national programs -- balance between the private and the public economy, balance between cost and hoped for advantage -- balance between the clearly necessary and the comfortably desirable; balance between our essential requirements as a nation and the duties imposed by the nation upon the individual; balance between actions of the moment and the national welfare of the future. Good judgment seeks balance and progress; lack of it eventually finds imbalance and frustration.

The record of many decades stands as proof that our people and their government have, in the main, understood these truths and have responded to them well, in the face of stress and threat. But threats, new in kind or degree, constantly arise. I mention two only.

A vital element in keeping the peace is our military establishment. Our arms must be mighty, ready for instant action, so that no potential aggressor may be tempted to risk his own destruction.

Our military organization today bears little relation to that known by any of my predecessors in peacetime, or indeed by the fighting men of World War II or Korea.

Until the latest of our world conflicts, the United States had no armaments industry. American makers of plowshares could, with time and as required, make swords as well. But now we can no longer risk emergency improvisation of national defense; we have been compelled to create a permanent armaments industry of vast proportions. Added to this, three and a half million men and women are directly engaged in the defense establishment. We annually spend on military security more than the net income of all United States corporations.

This conjunction of an immense military establishment and a large arms industry is new in the American experience.

(continued....)



The total influence -- economic, political, even spiritual -- is felt in every city, every State house, every office of the Federal government. We recognize the imperative need for this development. Yet we must not fail to comprehend its grave implications. Our toil, resources and livelihood are all involved; so is the very structure of our society.

In the councils of government, we must guard against the acquisition of unwarranted influence, whether sought or unsought, by the military industrial complex. The potential for the disastrous rise of misplaced power exists and will persist.

We must never let the weight of this combination endanger our liberties or democratic processes. We should take nothing for granted. Only an alert and knowledgeable citizenry can compel the proper meshing of the huge industrial and military machinery of defense with our peaceful methods and goals, so that security and liberty may prosper together.

Akin to, and largely responsible for the sweeping changes in our industrial-military posture, has been the technological revolution during recent decades. In this revolution, research has become central; it also becomes more formalized, complex, and costly. A steadily increasing share is conducted for, by, or at the direction of, the Federal government.

Today, the solitary inventor, tinkering in his shop, has been overshadowed by task forces of scientists in laboratories and testing fields. In the same fashion, the free university, historically the fountainhead of free ideas and scientific discovery, has experienced a revolution in the conduct of research. Partly because of the huge costs involved, a government contract becomes virtually a substitute for intellectual curiosity. For every old blackboard there are now hundreds of new electronic computers.

The prospect of domination of the nation's scholars by Federal employment, project allocations, and the power of money is ever present and is gravely to be regarded. Yet, in holding scientific research and discovery in respect, as we should, we must also be alert to the equal and opposite danger that public policy could itself become the captive of a scientific technological elite.

It is the task of statesmanship to mold, to balance, and to integrate these and other forces, new and old, within the principles of our democratic system -- ever aiming toward the supreme goals of our free society.

Another factor in maintaining balance involves the element of time. As we peer into society's future, we -- you and I, and our government -- must avoid the impulse to live only for today, plundering, for our own ease and convenience, the precious resources of tomorrow. We cannot mortgage the material assets of our grandchildren without risking the loss also of their political and spiritual heritage. We want democracy to survive for all generations to come, not to become the insolvent phantom of tomorrow.

Down the long lane of the history yet to be written America knows that this world of ours, ever growing smaller, must avoid becoming a community of dreadful

fear and hate, and be instead, a proud confederation of mutual trust and respect.

Such a confederation must be one of equals. The weakest must come to the conference table with the same confidence as do we, protected as we are by our moral, economic, and military strength. That table, though scarred by many past frustrations, cannot be abandoned for the certain agony of the battlefield.

Disarmament, with mutual honor and confidence, is a continuing imperative. Together we must learn how to compose differences, not with arms, but with intellect and decent purpose. Because this need is so sharp and apparent I confess that I lay down my official responsibilities in this field with a definite sense of disappointment. As one who has witnessed the horror and the lingering sadness of war -- as one who knows that another war could utterly destroy this civilization which has been so slowly and painfully built over thousands of years -- I wish I could say tonight that a lasting peace is in sight.

Happily, I can say that war has been avoided. Steady progress toward our ultimate goal has been made. But, so much remains to be done. As a private citizen, I shall never cease to do what little I can to help the world advance along that road.

So -- in this my last good night to you as your President -- I thank you for the many opportunities you have given me for public service in war and peace. I trust that in that service you find some things worthy; as for the rest of it, I know you will find ways to improve performance in the future.

You and I -- my fellow citizens -- need to be strong in our faith that all nations, under God, will reach the goal of peace with justice. May we be ever unswerving in devotion to principle, confident but humble with power, diligent in pursuit of the Nation's great goals.

To all the peoples of the world, I once more give expression to America's prayerful and continuing aspiration:

We pray that peoples of all faiths, all races, all nations, may have their great human needs satisfied; that those now denied opportunity shall come to enjoy it to the full; that all who yearn for freedom may experience its spiritual blessings; that those who have freedom will understand, also, its heavy responsibilities; that all who are insensitive to the needs of others will learn charity; that the scourges of poverty, disease and ignorance will be made to disappear from the earth, and that, in the goodness of time, all peoples will come to live together in a peace guaranteed by the binding force of mutual respect and love.



Dwight D. Eisenhower



The Kid Next Door

Sunlight haloed her silver hair as the Ft. Benning sun brought its sweltering heat to bare. Beside her stood a young man dressed in an uncomfortable suit and hair too long to pass inspection. She adjusted his hair, held his hand and waited.

Our little band was composed of former brigade members, active duty soldiers and next-of-kin. All with a common bond to the 173d; standing side-by-side and close enough to read the monument names. We were here to honor our brother Sky Soldiers and give witness to still more additions to the granite etched role of combat fallen comrades.

Reminding me of Abe Lincoln in *The Rail Splitter* painting, he reluctantly represented the best of America. He could have been the kid next door from *Anywhere, USA*. Standing by his mother on a summer's day, a study in humility, it was a Norman Rockwell moment for sure.



The kid next door...

With hand over heart; face taunt with sincerity, his eyes lifted to the colors. The blue ribbon slid from under the open collar. A metallic flicker caught the morning sun. He tucked it back in, pulled up his suit-coat and never took his eyes from the red, white and blue.

There were bugle calls to stir the soul; a well-executed rifle volley and a chaplains' prayer. Association leadership had indeed carried out their duties above and beyond the call. But most impressive of all was when this reluctant young man finally spoke.

Initial speaking requests had been respectfully declined. But at his mother's urging, Sal Giunta accepted. This fine young man, former 173d trooper serving in Afghanistan and holder of our nation's highest honor, began to address his 173d family.

Tell-tale tears rolled discretely across our cheeks. For most of us, this was a family moment. Our brother paratrooper, one of our living recipients of the Medal of Honor, expressed in everyday language the patriotism, love, and devotion we all felt.

Sal never once referred to the medal as his. It was always "Ours".

He had expressed the same sentiments months before when the President of the United States placed the coveted Medal of Honor around his neck. He made us all feel proud for standing to the colors, for giving our best; for being 173d *All The Way!*

Reportedly, the 173d Airborne Brigade remains the most decorated battle group in American history. We could not have a better Sky Soldier representative than Staff Sergeant Sal Giunta, the kid next door with The Medal of Honor.



...the man and men of war

Whatever your unit tie may be, you *might leave the unit but the unit will never leave you*. Please continue to support the 173d Memorial Foundation. Our brothers have laid down their lives for us; it's time to standup for them.

Paul Epley
173d BDE PIO RVN (PFC retired)
Attached to 2/503d and all our battalions



173d Airborne Brigade Memorial Foundation

The 173d Spartan Club

In 480 BC, three hundred Spartans stood in a rocky mountain pass at Thermopylae and for seven days held off the mighty Persian army, allowing Greek forces to muster and eventually defeat the invaders. Three hundred warriors preserved the cradle of civilization. Three hundred Spartan Warriors made a difference.

The 173d Airborne Brigade Memorial Foundation needs the support of 300 warriors to preserve and maintain our Memorial that was dedicated in June 2010 at the National Infantry Museum campus near Fort Benning, Georgia.

The Memorial Foundation requires a minimum of \$5,000.00 annually for basic maintenance costs (electricity, landscaping and irrigation). In addition to periodic costs of adding new information to the Memorial, funds will be required for maintenance, minor repairs, insurance and the Foundation's administrative costs. To ensure perpetual care for the Memorial, the Foundation has established an endowment fund goal of \$300,000., raised over ten years, in addition to annual donations received from other sources.

The Foundation is seeking 300 warriors willing to help preserve our legacy and maintain our memorial. This letter constitutes your invitation to become a member of the 173d Airborne Brigade Memorial Foundation's *Spartan's Club*.

We ask each Spartan Club Commander to pledge between \$200.00 and \$1,000.00 for each of the next ten years. We ask each Spartan Club Centurion to Pledge between \$173.00 and \$199.00 for the same period and each Spartan Club Lancer to pledge between \$25.00 and \$172.00 for a similar period. If the Spartans contribute an average of \$100.00 each for the next ten years, the Foundation Endowment Fund will achieve its objective. Each Spartan Club member will receive periodic communications regarding events held at the Memorial, as well as receiving recognition in our annual programs and reports.

As with the Spartans at Thermopylae, the burden of preserving our memorial and heritage is shared equally regardless of position, title and rank. Membership in the Club is open to all Sky Soldiers, their families, and military and patriotic organizations and friends of the 173d. As in the past, we hope that you will accept this challenge and support your memorial.

**Ken Smith, Chairman
173d Memorial Foundation**

The 173d Spartan Club

I/We wish to share the honor of preserving our memorial and heritage as a member of the 173d Airborne Brigade Memorial Foundation *Spartan Club*.



Beginning in 2011, and for nine succeeding years thereafter, I pledge to donate the following amount each year to the 173d Airborne Brigade Memorial Foundation:

As a **Spartan Club Commander** (\$200.00 or more)
\$ _____

As a **Spartan Club Centurion** (173.00 to \$199.00)
\$ _____

As a **Spartan Club Lancer** (\$25.00 to \$172.00)
\$ _____

(Please print)

Full Name: _____

Primary Telephone: _____

Street Address: _____

City/State/Zip: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Signature: _____

Please mail your signed pledge form and your check (payable to the 173d Airborne Brigade Memorial Foundation) to:

**173d Airborne Brigade Memorial Foundation
1160 Lake Royale
Louisburg, NC 27549**

Pledges may be paid electronically by going to the 173d Airborne Brigade Memorial Foundation website at www.173dairbornememorial.org and clicking on the tab, "Memorial Donations."

To assist you in remembering the timing of your annual pledge donation, the Foundation will send you electronically or by mail a brief reminder.

Note: The 173d Airborne Brigade Memorial Fund has been granted 501(c)3 status by the Internal Revenue Service. Contributions may be deductible under Section 170 of the Internal Revenue Code.



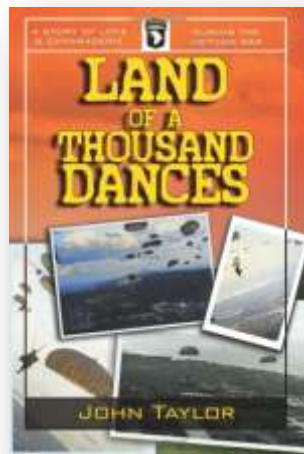
An Excerpt

Sergeant Kalama brought 1st Platoon together in a huddle like a football coach giving his players a pep talk before the opening kickoff. "All right, listen up! We're not expecting a hot LZ, but the gunships are gonna make a couple of runs and fire up the area to make sure anyway. But everyone should be ready for a firefight as soon as we leave the birds. We'll lock and load prior to boarding, but I want each squad leader to personally check each man to make certain *all* safeties are on. We don't want any accidental discharges and shoot down one of our own birds." Kalama paused and scanned the taut faces surrounding him and then continued on in a reassuring voice. "You all know what has to be done. We've practiced bird assaults back at Campbell. Just listen up and follow your squad leaders and everything will work out fine. It's gonna be real confusing out there. Twice as confusing as any training maneuver we've ever done 'cause there's a fear factor we have to deal with now. It's natural to have fear, but you can't let fear gain control. OK, the birds are comin' in, so let's form up with the first lift on line."

The Huey's settled in to land on the road in a long column and the first lift surged toward them. The deafening roar of the rotor blades and the dust storm they caused contributed to the confusion and disorder. Brian joined Willie, Fred and most of first squad and clambered aboard their Huey into the cramped passenger cabin. When the first lift finished loading, one after another the Huey's rose in the air and flew in a loose formation toward a range of hills silhouetted against the early morning sun.

The Huey's doors were open and Brian was thankful for the cool flow of air that swept through the cabin and helped clear his head. The hollow feeling sank to his legs and they felt numb. He turned his head and looked out at the valley below, at the rice paddies which reflected the sun like mirrors. He watched a lone farmer use a water buffalo to plow through the muddy water. The scene seemed peaceful, tranquil, and totally removed from the mission before them. Then a thought struck him that seemed so absurd, so senseless that it defied all logic. They were actually en route to kill people. Brian looked toward the low-lying hills where they were headed and imagined soldiers not so different from themselves, maybe cooking a meal or attending to some other mundane task, unaware that an armed force of men was fast approaching to murder them.

They were almost there now. Up ahead, Brian watched the gunships streak in low and rake the ground with cannon and machine gun fire. Geysers of rice paddy water sprouted into the air from the explosions, and machine gun rounds danced across the surface, forming lines and crisscrossing patterns. The sound of the firing caused a young black trooper Brian met briefly the day before to lower his head on his chest. Brian saw his shoulders shake and knew he was crying. Brian returned his attention to the gunships as they made a second run over the LZ. The gunships fired furiously, but Brian did not see any signs of return fire. Maybe it was all a mistake.



Maybe there were no VC waiting down there. Maybe it was just another fiasco, another dry run that they would all laugh and kid each other about when they return to base camp. Thinking this made Brian's hollow feeling subside and he hoped that the war would wait another day.

Now, the gunships finished and it was their turn. The Huey's came in low and hovered a few feet above the rice paddies. Brian looked down at the murky water and thought how cool it would feel when he fell into it. Then he followed Fred and Willie and jumped clumsily, splashing into the foot deep rice paddy and falling head first into the turbid water. He struggled to his feet and the wind from the rotor blades ripped at him and chilled his soaked body. The only sound came from the Huey's engine and the blast of air that whipped up the rice paddy water into pellets that stung the skin on his face and arms.

The rotor blades and wind subsided as the Huey soared away, and for the first time Brian heard multiple cracks from small arms fire. The firing seemed to be going on all around him. He sloshed through the water aimlessly, searching for some reference point to which he could start forward. Then he saw Lieutenant Edwards, Sergeant Kalama, and Nick Cepeda crouched next to a rice paddy levee. The lieutenant squatted over a vinyl-covered map and talked on the radio at the same time. Kalama studied a steep hillside about a quarter of a mile away through a pair of field glasses. Just as Brian joined them, a shout caused Kalama to adjust the binoculars down from the hillside to a rice paddy levee about two hundred meters away.

"Medic!" the voice screamed again. "Doc, Doc, over here!"

"**John Taylor's *Land of a Thousand Dances*** is a fast-paced, gripping novel of a war found and a war lost. More than that, it is also about love found and lost and then, with time, found again. Set during the Vietnam War, it is more than another war novel. It is about the cost of war on the soldiers that fight it, and those left behind and struggling to understand it. It is the Vietnam War's *From Here To Eternity*, only with a better storyline and style. As a combat medic during the war, Taylor knows his way around the Army and the jungle warzone, so that what you get here is a book that bleeds authenticity. Buy this book. You won't be disappointed." – **Kregg Jorgenson**, author of *Acceptable Loss* and other books of the Vietnam War era.

John Taylor served with Bravo Company, 2/503d Infantry, 173d Airborne Brigade (Sep), and a tour of duty with the 1st Brigade 101st Airborne Division in Vietnam. After a thirty-one year career in law enforcement, John retired from the Oakland Police Department in 2002 and now makes his home in a small town in Northern California.



Available on [Amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com) and at Barnes & Noble. The author reports it was awarded second prize in two novel-writing contests: the Southwest Writers Contest and the Branson Stars & Flags contest.



U.S. troops spearhead Viet fight

By John Hughes
Staff Correspondent of
The Christian Science Monitor

With U.S. Paratroopers in the Ho Bo Woods

In the world at large the quest for peace continues. But for the American paratroopers assaulting this forested Viet Cong redoubt, the war remains very realistic.

Back at the headquarters briefing room in Saigon, even at brigade headquarters in the field, the world of these paratroopers looks neat enough on the war maps. There are lines drawn around it. And it has a crisp, efficient, name: "Tactical area of responsibility."

New pattern

But on the ground itself their world looks far from tidy. It is hot and dusty, shared with persistent mosquitoes at night and hungry red ants by day. It is a world of matted brush and alien, eerie, tropical forest.

And always there lurks the murderous presence of the Viet Cong, the cunning enemy with the sniper-scope, the booby trap, the buried mine, the poisoned stake, the hidden gunport.

In North Vietnam there may be a pause. But in the South the war continues without pause. And from actions such as this one in the Ho Bo Woods, the largest American operation of the war, a new pattern is emerging for the use of American troops.

Upon the arrival of regular American units last year it was said they would be used to guard base areas, freeing more South Vietnamese troops for combat. If anyone believed that at the time, it is no longer true today.

It now seems clear that units such as the tough and proud 173d Airborne Brigade, with its equally tough and proud attached Australian battalion, are being used as shock troops to crack some of the toughest Viet Cong strongholds.

If the initial assault is successful, South Vietnamese troops will come in to continue the fight and hopefully to secure. Ultimately behind them would come the police and civilian authorities to pacify the area and wean its loyalties away from the Viet Cong.

But for the moment there is not much talk about "pacification" in the Ho Bo Woods. To our rear is the crack of the big guns and the "whump" of the mortars and the whirring of shells through the air.

Above, armed helicopters pour machinegun fire into Viet Cong positions ahead and occasionally, with an angry "whoosh," release podfuls of rockets. Then Skyraiders, the sturdy old faithfuls of this war, wheel in with an air strike.

And out in front the troopers on foot pursue this dangerous and dirty war which sends young men back with sorrow in their eyes and tension chiseled into their exhausted faces.



173d paratroopers entering the Ho Bo Woods

"Pacification" is not much talked about today in the Ho Bo Woods. Instead the immediate object is to "sanitize" the area, to kill or capture the Viet Cong, and to clear the area of civilians.

(continued....)





HHC/1/503d troopers on 13 Jan 66 with suspected VC sympathizers in Ho Bo Woods

Out of the woods and down the tracks they came, the women, the children, and the aged. No young men, for this is 100 percent Viet Cong territory and the able-bodied men are away fighting elsewhere. Or in these woods, waiting for the Americans.

At the forward command post these refugees, for that is what they now become, are given initial screening by field interrogators, given C rations, and held for Truck Transport to the rear.

Tragic cargo

A child screams. An old lady sobs. Then with incredible gentleness a detail of burly paratroopers swing young and old alike up over the truck tailgates.

With tragic irony this refugee compound is sited next to the emergency landing pad in which medevac helicopters race back with American wounded.

Impassively the refugees watch as the choppers clatter down, the corpsmen race out through the dust from the whirring vanes. To the hospital tent the walking wounded get a shoulder. The stretcher cases are run in at the double, four corpsmen to a litter. Then there is the silence which seizes all as the motionless forms covered by ground sheets are moved in without urgency.

It is the husbands and fathers of those refugees who have killed these Americans in the Ho Bo Woods.

Snipers at work

The full Viet Cong regiment which the Americans are hunting in the woods has not, at the time of writing, been found, but there are snipers enough in the trees, and machine gunners in the concealed bunkers, and marksmen beneath camouflaged traps who pop-up and fire at the Americans from the rear and flanks, then vanish without trace.

A 19-year-old corpsmen with the Australians was shot in the head from a distance of 18 inches. The fire came from a concealed gunport not much bigger than the size of an American silver half dollar. He fell dead upon the man he had crawled out to save.

Upon these tunnels and bunkers the troops are using flamethrowers and explosives. Some are so extensive and complex that they defy destruction. On these the American are using a type of riot gas which makes them untenable without masks for anything from 4 to 12 months.

This is the world of the men fighting their way into Vietnam's Ho Bo Woods.





VFW DISCUSSES ISSUES WITH PRESIDENT

Protecting VA budget and stopping negative DOD proposals lead agenda



VFW's DeNoyer meets with the president
(White House photo by Pete Souza)

WASHINGTON — The national commander of the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the U.S. met with President Obama this afternoon to discuss issues important to veterans, service members and their families. Topping the agenda was protecting the Department of Veterans Affairs from mandatory budget cuts should sequestration occur, and VFW opposition to certain Defense Department proposals that could jeopardize the continued existence of the all-volunteer force.

"The president has been consistent in word and action on protecting and increasing the Department of Veterans Affairs budget, and he pledged to continue to do so even in these tough budget times. We gratefully appreciate that commitment," said Richard L. DeNoyer, a retired Marine and Vietnam combat veteran from Middleton, Mass., who leads the 2 million-member VFW and its Auxiliaries.

"The advocacy work he and First Lady Michelle, and Vice President Joe and Dr. Jill Biden, continue to do for our military and veteran families everywhere has been outstanding," he said, citing as examples the passage of advanced VA budget appropriations, the Family Caregiver Bill, and just this week, bringing financial relief to thousands of service members and veterans whose homes may have been wrongfully foreclosed upon since 2006.

Discussed with the president was the VFW's opposition to certain DOD proposals that would significantly raise healthcare fees on military families and retirees, and change the current military retirement system. DeNoyer also expressed his concern about the negative impact sequestration would have on overall force readiness and national security.

The VFW national commander said that ensuring the security of the nation is expensive, but that cost pales in comparison to asking people to voluntarily do more for their country in a few short years than most Americans do in a lifetime.

"In my travels to Afghanistan, Europe, the Pacific and around the country, the number #1 issue from the troops is what the Pentagon is doing to their pay and benefits," said DeNoyer. *"I am honored to carry their concerns to the Oval Office, because as the nation's largest and oldest major combat veterans' organization, one of the reasons why the VFW has maintained its relevancy for more than a century is we work hard to defeat any proposal that negatively impacts national security or the many people programs we fought equally hard to create within DOD and the VA."*

Also addressed was the need for full funding of those organizations charged with returning missing Americans from current and previous wars and conflicts—the Defense POW/Missing Personnel Office, Joint POW/MIA Accounting Command, and the U.S.-Russia Joint Commission on POW/MIAs.

"The president fully agreed that there is no mission more sacred than to recover our fallen from the battlefield and return them home to their families," said DeNoyer. *"The VFW is very comforted to hear that, because the upcoming renewal of recovery operations in North Korea is a new mission requirement that must come with additional funding so that all missing Americans from all wars and conflicts receive the same highest recovery priority,"* he said.

"I sincerely appreciate the opportunity to sit down and address these VFW issues with the president, and I look forward to discussing them further in the near future," he added.

DeNoyer to Congress: "Don't Balance Budget on Backs of Disabled Veterans and Military"



1965 1966 1967 1968 1969 1970 1971 1972 1973 1974 1975

~ This Month in History ~

"They were the best of times; they were the worst of times."

May 1965

1st: U.S. military strength in Vietnam is approximately 23,000.

1st: Battle of Dong-Yin, a naval conflict between ROC and PRC, takes place.

1st: Spike Jones, composer (Spike Jones Show), dies at 53.

2nd: Responding to a VC assault on the U.S. Air Force base at Pleiku, South Vietnam, President Johnson authorizes Operation Rolling Thunder. The operation is a bombardment campaign meant to cripple North Vietnam's transportation system and its industrial centers in order to halt the flow of men and supplies into the South.

3rd: Cambodia drops diplomatic relations with the US.

3rd: 1st use of satellite TV, Today Show on Early Bird Satellite.

4th: Willie Mays 512th HR breaks Mel Ott's 511th.

5th: 1st large-scale US Army ground units arrive in South Vietnam. The 173d Airborne Brigade (Sep) deployed to the Republic of Vietnam on 5 May 1965 on Temporary Duty (TDY) status, the first army "combat" maneuver element to arrive in Vietnam. On 5 August 1965 the TDY status was changed to Permanent Change of Station (PCS).

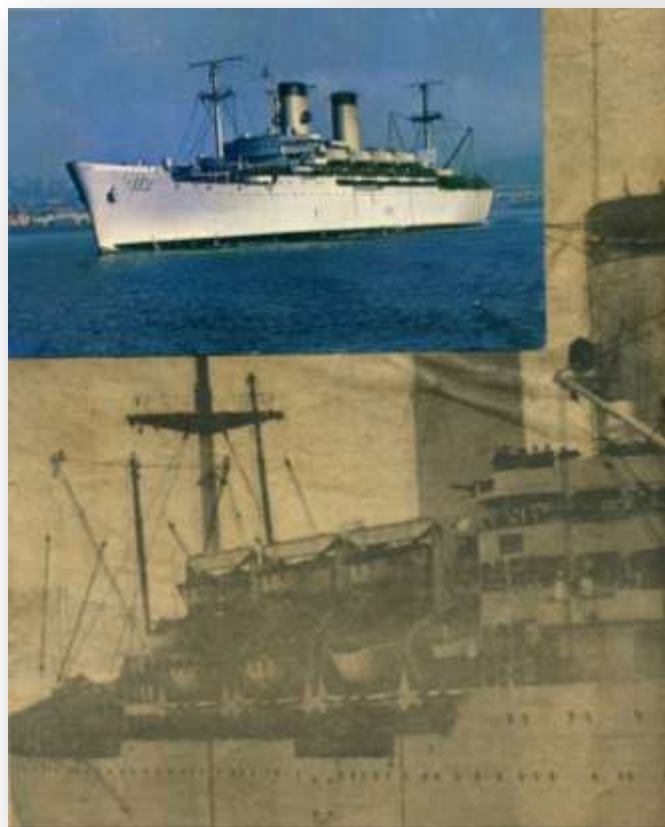


173d Airborne Brigade (Sep) arrive RVN

2/503d Enroute to TDY in a place called Vietnam



(Photos from "Top" Jim Dresser, A/HHC/2/503d)



Where the hell are the C-130s! We ain't sailors!

(continued....)



The 173d Airborne Brigade (Sep)

5th-9th July: Operation Opord conducted in Bien Hoa area. Initially, the 173d was assigned to defend the Bien Hoa Air Base. The brigade routinely conducted sweeps up to 15 kilometers around the base, with company size operations often being the norm.



"Sky Soldiers"

The 173d Airborne Brigade has a long and distinguished history of over 45 years of service spanning almost 88 years. The Brigade originally was activated in 1917 as the 173d Infantry Brigade and assigned to the 87th Infantry. The Brigade deployed to France as part of the Division, but did not see any major combat action. The Brigade was demobilized in January of 1919 at (then) Camp Dix, New Jersey.

The Brigade went through a series of re-designations and reorganizations, culminating in the re-designation in February 1942 as the 87th Reconnaissance Troop, 87th Division. The Brigade experienced extensive combat in Europe as part of General George S. Patton's Third Army, to include the battle of the Bulge and the Rhine river crossing. In 1945, the brigade again was deactivated, this time at Fort Benning, Georgia. In 1947, the Brigade was briefly activated as the 87th Mechanized Cavalry Reconnaissance Troop, deactivating again in December 1951.

The greatest chapter of the Brigade's history began in 1963. The 173d Airborne Brigade (Separate) was activated on the island of Okinawa on March 26, 1963. The "Sky Soldiers" as the nationalist Chinese paratroopers called the 173d, made thousands of parachute jumps in a dozen different pacific area countries. The Brigade was the first Army combat brigade sent to the republic of South Vietnam in May 1965. In the combat operations to follow, the paratroopers made their superb training payoff. They were the first to go into War Zone "D" to destroy enemy base camps; they introduced small, long range patrols; they fought the battles of the iron triangle, conducted the only major combat parachute jump in the Tay Ninh area, and blocked NVA incursions during the bloodiest fighting of the war at "Dak To" during the summer and fall of 1967, culminating in the capture of "Hill 875". Elements of the Brigade conducted an amphibious assault against NVA and VC forces as part of an operation to clear the rice growing lowlands along the

"Bong Song" Littoral. The paratroopers of the 173d Airborne Brigade wear their combat badges and decorations with pride. During more than six years of nearly continuous combat in Vietnam, the brigade earned four unit citations, had 13 Sky Soldiers earn the Medal of Honor, and over 130 troopers were awarded the Distinguished Service Crosse. Over 1700 Sky Soldiers were killed in action and more than 8,300 were wounded in action. These 10,000+ casualties incurred by the Brigade were five times greater than the 187th Airborne Regiment in Korea, four times greater than those suffered by the 11th Airborne Division in the Pacific in WWII, more than twice those suffered by the 101st Airborne Division in Europe in WWII, and two thirds of those suffered by the entire 82nd Airborne Division in WWII. The Brigade took part in 14 designated campaigns and conducted the only U.S. mass combat parachute assault of the Vietnam War. Sky Soldiers of the 173d Airborne are proud to carry forward the lineage of the heroic paratroopers of the 503rd Infantry Regiment of WWII. The Brigade was deactivated on 14 January 1972 at Fort Campbell, Kentucky. On 12 June 2000, the colors of the 173d Airborne Brigade were unfurled for the first time over Italian soil in Vicenza, Italy, as the Brigade began another chapter in its proud history. On 26 March 2003, the 173d Airborne Brigade Combat Team again became the only line Airborne unit to perform a combat jump when it parachuted 1000 paratroopers into Northern Iraq to open the northern front in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.



L-R: Medics of the 1/503d on Okinawa, Lawrence Joel and friend Alfred Rascon. Both men would later earn the Medal of Honor for their heroic actions during combat in Vietnam.

(continued....)



This was the largest combat parachute operation since WWII. The jump was the longest combat operation in airborne history, over 1800 miles from Vicenza to Iraq. The Brigade participated in numerous designated campaigns in Iraq. In March 2004, the Sky Soldiers returned from combat operations in Iraq. Nine Sky Soldiers died and approximately 95 were wounded in Iraq during the deployment. The Sky Soldiers of the 173d Airborne Brigade have continued their training and preparation to meet the challenges of the war on terror, seeing multiple tours of combat duty in Iraq and Afghanistan, and is now gearing-up for yet another tour of duty in Afghanistan.

The "Herd"

Thanks to John "Dutch" Holland with Bravo Company, 1/503d for his recollection of how the 173d Airborne got the nickname of *The Herd*:



Dutch...one of the *Best of the Best*

"The term *Herd* is used with pride by veterans of the 173d Airborne Brigade. This nickname was coined by Colonel 'Rawhide' Boland of the 1/503d. Colonel Boland, while on leave, heard, liked and bought a copy of Frankie Laine's old song *Rawhide* from the TV series of the same name. The colonel on returning to camp played the song over the PA system during all battalion formations. We as paratroopers had to run to and from all these formations, and with the roads being unpaved kicked-up quite a cloud of dust. One of his staff remarked that we looked like a herd of cattle and you can guess the rest. Colonel Boland was given the name 'Rawhide' and the battalion was referred to as the Herd. The rest of the brigade adopted the name once in Nam and no one is sure when or how that began.

Colonel Boland is alive and kickin' and still signs his name as 'Rawhide Boland.'"

Some of the lyrics to *Rawhide*

Rollin' Rollin' Rollin'

*Keep movin', movin', movin',
Though they're disapprovin',
Keep them doggies movin' Rawhide!*

*Don't try to understand 'em,
Just rope and throw and grab 'em,
Soon we'll be living high and wide.*

*Boy my heart's calculatin'
My true love will be waitin',
be waiting at the end of my ride.*

*Move 'em on, head 'em up,
Head 'em up, move 'em out,
Move 'em on, head 'em out Rawhide!
Set 'em out, ride 'em in
Ride 'em in, let 'em out,
Cut 'em out, ride 'em in Rawhide.*

*Rollin', rollin', rollin'
Rollin', rollin', rollin'
Rollin', rollin', rollin'
Rollin', rollin', rollin'
Rawhide!*

11th: Viet Cong overrun South Vietnamese troops in Phuoc Long Province north of Saigon and also attack in central South Vietnam.

12th: The Soviet spacecraft Luna 5 crashes on the Moon.

13th: The first bombing pause is announced by the U.S. in the hope that Hanoi will now negotiate. There will be six more pauses during the Rolling Thunder bombing campaign, all with same intention. However, each time, the North Vietnamese ignore the peace overtures and instead use the pause to repair air defenses and send more troops and supplies into the South via the Ho Chi Minh trail.

13th: Viet Cong attack the U.S. Special Forces camp in Phuoc Long. During the fighting, 2nd Lt. Charles Williams, earns the Medal of Honor by knocking out a Viet Cong machine-gun then guiding rescue helicopters, while wounded four times.

14th: 2nd Chinese atom bomb explodes.

(continued....)



16th: B-52 bomb accident destroys much of USAF base at Bien Hoa, South Vietnam killing 26 airmen.



"After the explosions, a great number of Generals and their staffs came to Bien Hoa to see for themselves what had happened. The Air Force Inspector, General, Lt. General William K. Martin, convened an Investigation Board headed by Major General Gilbert L. Meyers. General Westmoreland along with retired Four Star General Maxwell D. Taylor, Ambassador to Vietnam, also came to see the extent of damage so they could brief their superiors. The Maintenance Officer (Dennis E. Hickey) had a one-on-one conversation with General William Westmoreland. 'He just wanted to know what I thought might have caused the disaster.' Later in his book, General Westmoreland said that Bien Hoa looked worse than Hickam Field after the Pearl Harbor Attack."

18th: Gene Roddenberry suggests 16 names including 'Kirk' for Star Trek Captain.



19th: U.S. bombing of North Vietnam resumes.

19th: Patricia R. Harris named 1st US black female Ambassador (Luxembourg).

20th: Hanoi restates its peace proposal which "Washington" has already rejected.

21st: Over 30,000 people attend a three-day anti-war teach-in at U.C. Berkeley. Among those in attendance are novelist Norman Mailer, socialist leader Norman Thomas, philosopher Alan Watts, civil rights activist Bob Moses, and Mario Savio, a prominent leader of the Free Speech Movement. The event, organized by the Vietnam Day Committee (VDC), will be the largest of its kind held during the Vietnam War.

22nd: Buddhists demonstrate against RVN Government at US Embassy Saigon.

22nd: "Super-cali-fragil-istic-expi-ali-docious" hits #66.

25th: Muhammad Ali KO's Sonny Liston in 1st round for heavyweight boxing title.



25th: Martial law imposed in Hue after serious disturbances.

27th: Lt Gen Nguyen Khanh takes over SVN government from Premier Tran Van Huong in bloodless coup.

27th: United States warships begin bombardments of National Liberation Front targets within South Vietnam for the first time.

30th: Viet Cong offensive against US base at Da Nang, begins.

31st: Brooke Shields, New York City, model/actress (Blue Lagoon, Suddenly Susan), is born.

(continued....)



May 1966

2nd: Secretary of Defense McNamara privately reports the North Vietnamese are infiltrating 4500 men per month into the South.

4th-6th: Operation Dexter conducted in Tan Uyen area.



Slicks landing men of the 173d Abn Bde near Tan Uyen on May 4, 1966

13th: Federal education funding is denied to 12 school districts in the South because of violations of the 1964 Civil Rights Act.

14th: Political unrest intensifies as South Vietnamese troops loyal to Prime Minister Ky overrun renegade South Vietnamese Buddhist troops in Da Nang. Ky's troops then move on to Hue to oust renegades there. Ky's actions result in a new series of immolations by Buddhist monks and nuns as an act of protest against his Saigon regime and its American backers. Buddhist leader Tri Quang blames President Johnson personally for the situation. Johnson responds by labeling the immolations as *"tragic and unnecessary."*

15th: South Vietnamese army battle Buddhists, about 80 die.

16th-8th June: Operation Hardihood conducted in Phuoc Tuy Province.



2/503d on Operation Hardihood
(Photo by Jack Ribera, A/2/503d)

16th: Janet Jackson, Michael's sister, born in Gary, Indiana.

19th: A tortoise, reportedly given to Tonga's King by Capt. Cook in 1773, dies. (May we have a moment of silence please).

19th: The 1/503d Infantry became engaged with an estimated fifty (50) VC. The firefight that ensued resulted in twenty (20) VC killed with minimal friendly casualties.



21st: "Downtown" by Mrs. Miller hits #82.

21st: Muhammad Ali TKOs Henry Cooper in 6 for heavyweight boxing title.

25th: 1st Aviation Brigade arrives for operations in Vietnam.

26th: Buddhist sets self on fire at US consulate in Huế, South Vietnam. A 17-year-old Buddhist girl has committed suicide by setting herself alight in a street in the city of Hue. She was protesting against the South Vietnam regime. It is the fifth such death in three days. A girl of 19 set herself alight two days ago outside a pagoda in Saigon and a monk did the same in the mountain town of Dalat. In June 1963 Buddhist monk Quang Duc became famous when he was photographed setting himself alight in a suicide protest against the South Vietnamese government then under Ngo Dinh Diem.



Quan Duc immolates himself in Saigon square.

30th: 300 US airplanes bomb North Vietnam.

30th: Graham Hill wins Indianapolis 500 car race (232.2 kph).

30th: US launches Surveyor 1 to Moon.

(continued....)



31st: Student David O'Brien and three friends burn their draft cards on the steps of the South Boston Courthouse in protest of the war in Vietnam.

Late May to June '66: In late May 1966, the North Vietnamese 324B Division crosses the Demilitarized Zone (DMZ) and encounters a Marine battalion. The NVA holds their ground and the largest battle of the war to date breaks out near Dong Ha. Most of the 3rd Marine Division, some 5,000 men in five battalions, heads north. In Operation Hastings, the Marines backed by South Vietnamese Army troops, the heavy guns of U.S. warships and their artillery and air power drive the NVA back over the DMZ in three weeks.

May 1967

1st: Ellsworth Bunker replaces Henry Cabot Lodge as U.S. ambassador to South Vietnam.

1st-4th: Operation Fort Wayne conducted in War Zone "D".



1st: Elvis Presley & Priscilla Beaulieu wed in Las Vegas.



Sgt. Presley and Priscilla on the day he left Germany

2nd: The U.S. is condemned during a mock war crimes tribunal held in Stockholm, organized by British philosopher Bertrand Russell.

5th-17th: Operation Dayton conducted in Phuoc Tay Province.



6th: 400 students seize administration building at Cheyney State College.

8th: Muhammad Ali is indicted for refusing induction in US Army.

9th: Robert W. Komer, a former CIA analyst, is appointed by President Johnson as deputy commander of MACV to form a new agency called Civil Operations and Revolutionary Development Support (CORDS) to pacify the population of South Vietnam. Nearly 60 percent of rural villages in South Vietnam are now under Viet Cong control. \$850 million in food, medical supplies, machinery, and numerous other household items will be distributed through CORDS to the population in order to regain their loyalty in the struggle for the "hearts and minds" of common villagers. CORDS also trains local militias to protect their villages from the Viet Cong.

11th: 100,000,000th US phone connected.

13th: In New York City, 70,000 march in support of the war, led by a New York City fire captain.

17th-23rd: Operation Cincinnati conducted in Bien Hoa/Long Binh areas.



18th-26th: U.S. and South Vietnamese troops enter the Demilitarized Zone for the first time and engage in a series of fire fights with NVA. Both sides suffer heavy losses.

18th: Silver hits record \$1.60 an ounce in London.

19th: US bombs Hanoi.

19th: USSR ratifies treaty with England & US banning nuclear weapons in space.

20th: 10,000 demonstrate against war in Vietnam.

22nd: President Johnson publicly urges North Vietnam to accept a peace compromise.

23rd-31st: Operation Winchester conducted in Pleiku.



24th: AFL grants a franchise to Cincinnati Bengals.

27th: Australians vote in favor of a constitutional referendum granting the Australian government the power to make laws to benefit Indigenous Australians and to count them in the national census.

28th: USSR performs nuclear test at Eastern Kazakh/Semipalitinsk, USSR.

30th: Claude Rains, actor (Invisible Man), dies at 77.



Claude Rains

(continued....)



May '67: Desperate air battles rage in the skies over Hanoi and Haiphong. America air forces shoot down 26 North Vietnamese jets, decreasing the North's pilot strength by half. In the Central Highlands of South Vietnam, Americans intercept North Vietnamese Army units moving in from Cambodia. Nine days of continuous battles leave hundreds of North Vietnamese soldiers dead.

May 1968

3rd (begun April 30th): The Battle of Dai Do occurs along the Demilitarized Zone as NVA troops seek to open an invasion corridor into South Vietnam. They are halted by a battalion of U.S. Marines nicknamed "The Magnificent Bastards" under the command of Lt. Col. William Weise. Aided by heavy artillery and air strikes, NVA suffer 1568 killed. 81 Marines are killed and 297 wounded. 29 U.S. Army are killed supporting the Marines and 130 wounded. For the time being, this defeat ends North Vietnam's hope of successfully invading the South. They will wait four years, until 1972, before trying again, after most of the Americans have gone. It will actually take seven years, until 1975, for them to succeed.

5th: Viet Cong launch "Mini Tet," a series of rocket and mortar attacks against Saigon and 119 cities and military installations throughout South Vietnam. The U.S. responds with air strikes using Napalm and high explosives.



"Smoke rises from the southwestern part of Saigon on May 7, 1968 as residents stream across bridge leaving the capital to escape heavy fighting between the Viet Cong and South Vietnamese soldiers." (AP photo)

Mar. '68- Jan. '69: Operation Cochise conducted in Bon Son area.



8th: Jim (Catfish) Hunter of Oakland pitches perfect game vs Twins (4-0).

10th: An NVA battalion attacks the Special Forces camp at Kham Duc along the border of Laos. The isolated camp had been established in 1963 to monitor North Vietnamese infiltration. Now encircled by NVA, the decision is made to evacuate via C-130 transport planes. At the conclusion of the successful airlift, it is discovered that three U.S. Air Force controllers have accidentally been left behind. Although the camp is now overrun by NVA and two C-130s have already been shot down, Lt. Col. Joe M. Jackson pilots a C-123 Provider, lands on the air strip under intense fire, gathers all three controllers, then takes off. For this action, Jackson is awarded the Medal of Honor.

10th: Peace talks begin in Paris but soon stall as the U.S. insists that North Vietnamese troops withdraw from the South, while the North Vietnamese insist on Viet Cong participation in a coalition government in South Vietnam. This marks the beginning of five years of on-again off-again official talks between the U.S. and North Vietnam in Paris.



"This is a general view of the first meeting between the United States delegation, left, and North Vietnam delegation on the Vietnam peace talks at the international conference hall in Paris, May 13, 1968." (AP photo)

15th: 1st AL game played in Milwaukee is a 4-2 California win against Chicago.

19th: 20th Emmy Awards: Get Smart, Mission Impossible & Barbara Bain.

21st: Nuclear-powered sub USS Scorpion, with 99 men reported missing & is later found at the bottom of the ocean off the Azores.

(continued....)



25th: Gateway Arch in St. Louis dedicated.

27th: Thailand announces it is to dispatch a further 5,000 troops to Vietnam.

27th: In United States v. David Paul O'Brien, the U.S.

Supreme Court rules that the criminal prohibition of draft card burning does not violate the First Amendment's guarantee of free speech.



May 1969

May: The number of U.S. troops in Vietnam peaks at 543,000. President Richard Nixon announces his plan for "Vietnamization" of the war—that is, training and transitioning South Vietnamese troops to assume the roles that have been fulfilled by American troops—and promises to withdraw 25,000 American soldiers.

10th Mar. – 24th May: The 173d Airborne Brigade conducted its 50th operation, Operation Darby Punch II, in and around the city of An Khe. Combat Reports from 1st Battalion, 503rd Spring Operation Darby Punch II.



15th Apr. '69 – 1st Jan. '71: In Binh Dinh Province On April 1, 1970, 3rd Battalion, 503rd Parachute Infantry Regiment (-) continued operations in Area of Operations Rock with negative contact. At 3:35 a.m. LZ Uplift received one incoming 82mm mortar round. At 4:45 a.m. Company A (-) was placed on 30 minute standby by 173d. Between 4:35 a.m. and 5:05 a.m. LZ Uplift took 14 incoming 82mm rounds. A Flaeship and Gunship were called in and expended all ordinance with unknown results. Total U.S. casualties were 29 WIA. Company B's 3rd Platoon found one .50 caliber ammunition can at BR 839796 with bandages and methiolate belonging to one male. Also found were unknown-type batteries (C type), U.S.-type stationary and assorted documents. LZ Uplift went on red alert status later in morning due to enemy activity. LZ English and LZ Bits were mortared.



May 1969: The *New York Times* breaks the news of the secret bombing of Cambodia. As a result, Nixon orders FBI wiretaps on the telephones of four journalists, along with 13 government officials to determine the source of news leak.

5th: Ben Alexander, actor (Frank Smith-Dragnet), dies at 57.

7th: Lt General Robert E. Cushman, Jr., USMC, becomes deputy director of CIA.

10th-20th: "Forty-six men of the 101st Airborne die during a fierce ten-day battle at 'Hamburger Hill' in the A Shau Valley near Hue. 400 others are wounded. After the hill is taken, the troops are then ordered to abandon it by their commander. NVA then move in and take back the hill unopposed. The costly assault and its confused aftermath provokes a political outcry back in the U.S. that American lives are being wasted in Vietnam. One Senator labels the assault "*senseless and irresponsible*." It is the beginning of the end for America in Vietnam as Washington now orders MACV Commander Gen. Creighton Abrams to avoid such encounters in the future. 'Hamburger Hill' is the last major search and destroy mission by U.S. troops during the war. Small unit actions will now be used instead. A long period of decline in morale and discipline begins among American draftees serving in Vietnam involuntarily. Drug usage becomes rampant as nearly 50 percent experiment with marijuana, opium, or heroin which are easy to obtain on the streets of Saigon. U.S. military hospitals later become deluged with drug related cases as drug abuse casualties far outnumber casualties of war."

10th: Apollo 10 transmits 1st color pictures of Earth from space.



Apollo 10 photo of our home

(continued....)

