

## *Rick LeBlanc*

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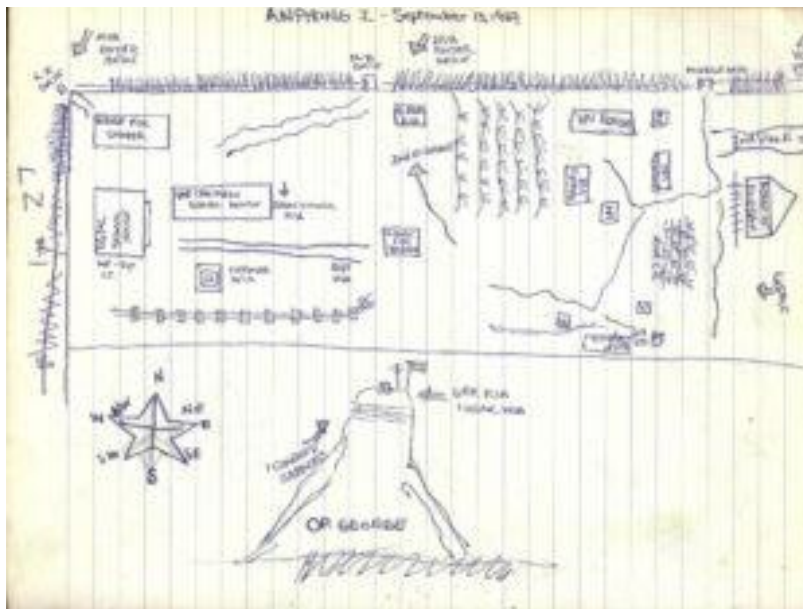
*This Site is a Tribute to The United States Marines, Navy Corpsmen and Popular Forces in Combined Action Platoons 1-3-9 & 1-3-2*

## **The Battle of An Phong**

### **A Resounding Victory for CAP 1-3-9**

Sunset on the night of September 12, 1969 came about 1930 and Combined Action Platoon (CAP) 1-3-9 set out in routine fashion with the command post (CP) and ambush teams going to different hamlets in the village of An Phong, Binh Son District, Quang Ngai Province in the Republic of South Vietnam.

An Phong, a strategic hamlet (village) consisting of three hamlets of refugee peasant farmers sympathetic to the Republic of South Vietnam, was at the north base of 9 George. The west hamlet was called the first hamlet, the middle was the middle, and the east was the third hamlet.



The village was not where it's noted on the map because it and all other villages and hamlets in 9's area of operations were relocated to An Phong if they supported South Vietnam or the Thach An Dongs and Ngoc Tris if they supported the Communists. This occurred sometime after Operation Texas in March 1966 and the startup of CAP 1-3-9 in December 1968. The maps 9 used in 1969 and 70 were from prior to the relocation. The CAP was at BS473867. (The Leatherneck details Operation Texas in its February 2005 and March 2019 editions.)

The CP, Sgt. Michael Murphy, PFCs Reginald Childs and James Samuel Parker, and HM2 Dewy Ray Burns (9's corpsman), moved to the southernmost part of the middle hamlet.

Other members of CAP 1-3-9 included LCpls Richard Wayne Sherrill and Mel Avant, PFCs Bill Hines, Steve Hicks, Jerry Meyers, David Lummis, and James McKnight, and HM2 Dewey Ray Burns, Jr. Meyers, Lummis, McKnight, and Burns were new in country and had not yet engaged in combat during their two to three weeks in the field. Sherrill, Hicks, and Burns are noted in the village drawing by their nicknames, Ridge Runner, Farmer, and Doc respectively.

The CP and both ambush teams were inside the ville.

It was a moonless night and was pitch black as only nights in remote Vietnam could be, black, pitch black, with visibility limited to a couple of feet.

Before the CP began their watches, Doc asked Murphy, Childs, and Parker if they knew how to apply a battle dressing. Childs and Parker were a bit baffled by the question and stuck Burns with the third watch just for asking.

One of the ambush teams was in the third hamlet.

A couple of explosions occurred about 0100. All four members of the CP were now wide awake. One Marine yelled, "Look at George, it's on fire!"

George was short for OP George and was generally called George or 9 George (9G). It was Hill 141, and was necessary, as it was the radio relay from the CAP to and from all other friendlies. Without 9 George, 9 couldn't communicate with any friendlies. George was the lifeline for the CAP. (During Operation Texas, 9G was known as An Hoa Outpost.)

Two Marines and about 17 Popular Forces (PFs) manned 9G at night with a smaller number manning it during the day.

Avant and Hines and the PFs were under attack and greatly outnumbered by a company of Viet Cong (VC) sappers estimated to be about 50 strong. The VC attacked the hill from the west.

Holmes, a member of one of the ambush teams, went to the CP, and told them, "There's gooks all over the ville." Murphy directed Holmes, Nguyen But (pronounced Boog), a PF who was the CAP's interpreter, and a couple other PFs to go to the school house and see what was happening.

Some hooches had been set on fire, allowing the team to see silhouettes of soldiers wearing packs inside the two-room Vietnamese school house. They appeared to be somewhat unconcerned as they were milling around and smoking. But called out to what he thought were PFs only to find out they weren't when they immediately fired at But, Holmes, and the two other PFs. But was shot in the thigh.

Little did the CAP know that they were now engaged in combat with two companies of the 6th Battalion of the 21st NVA Regiment reinforced with VC, totaling 250 in number. The 1<sup>st</sup> CAG September Command Chronology notes how well armed the enemy was in stating, "The NVA used satchel charges, grenades, SA, AW, RPG, and mortar fire during the assault."

The NVA entered An Phong through the bamboo fences on the west and north of the first and middle hamlets while the VC entered through the third hamlet.

Holmes and a few PFs got But back to the CP where Burns treated But's wound. But, bandaged up, started to leave to "fight VC." Parker told him to stay where he was, but But insisted on fighting the VC. But fought.

Avant radioed the CP that, "They're running all over up here." He followed it up with, "I don't know how long we can hold." Radio communications from 9 George to 9, Combined Action Company 1-3 (CACO 1-3), as well as with all others, ended at this point because the Marines and PFs on 9 George were in a fight for their lives with a company of Viet Cong (VC) sappers estimated to be 50 strong. All communications to and from the CAP ceased.

First Lieutenant James J. Mulhearn, Jr., CACO 1-3's Commanding Officer, Sergeant Robert Wray, the CACO Supply Sergeant, and a few other Marines were outside 1-3's communication bunker in Binh Son and were able to see the orange glow from the fire at An Phong, 14 kilometers (about nine miles) to the west. No one knew, but everyone wondered, what was going on at 9. It was obvious that 9 was under attack, but the extent of the attack wasn't known.

CACO 1-3 requested illumination from Fire Support Base (FSB) Stinson. They also requested gunships.

Mulhearn and Wray organized a reactionary force consisting of Marines from CACO 1-3 and Mobile Training Team (MTT) 1-2. MTT 1-2, like CACO 1-3, was in Binh Son. Including Mulhearn and Wray, the reactionary force was about 10 Marines. While not much, that was all the Marines that could be mustered from CACO 1-3 and MTT 1-2. A "minor" problem existed in that no pilots would fly into An Phong that night given the overwhelming size and intensity of the battle. CACO 1-3's reactionary force was delayed. Likewise, no PF, Regional Forces (RFs), Army of the Republic of Vietnam (ARVN), or Army units responded.

Murphy told the CP that gunships were about five minutes out. The artillery illumination had not arrived.

Burns said, "They're burning the ville!" He was referring to the first hamlet. The Vietnamese school house was there.

The fires were set by the NVA as they searched for the Marines in the first and middle hamlets. The NVA asked the villagers, "Where are the Marines?" Those who didn't know or didn't tell had their hooches' palm frond roofs set on fire. The end result was approximately 260 hooches burned.

Burns was fully engaged in the fight and was treating wounded civilians and PFs as he fought. He moved some wounded to cover while being fully exposed to enemy fire.

Fighting continued to be intense when Parker and Childs heard something to their rear. They saw Burns and a PF. An explosion rocked the area. An illumination round went off overhead

and they noticed an AK47 about five meters away. More explosions occurred, and there was firing behind them. Doc was hit and fell to the ground. What was thought to be a PF with Burns was actually an enemy soldier.

A battle dressing and tourniquet were applied, but they weren't sufficient. A medevac was requested.

Parker and Childs heard Murphy's M60 and worked their way there to link up with Murphy, Holmes, and But.

Murphy ordered Childs and Parker to find an LZ and get Burns to it. Burns was unconscious. The immediate area around Burns, Parker, and Childs was hot with small arms, automatic weapons fire, and explosions. The site of the LZ was the rice paddy between the middle and third hamlets.

Murphy and But, limping from being shot in the thigh, moved to another location.

About this time, 9G got back on the radio. This was about an hour after the battle began. They were still fighting, but they were able to communicate. This was a huge relief to 9 and CACO 1-3, but especially to 9 because they were still fully engaged in combat with a vastly larger enemy force.

Intense fighting continued and more hooches were burning. Two enemy were seen crawling on the ground in an effort to not be burned alive. Childs and Parker quickly ended their concerns of being burned to death.

More enemy were encountered. Murphy said, "If we gonna die, we make our stand here!" There was nowhere else to go. This was it.

Childs checked on Burns only to find that he had succumbed to his wounds. Childs was shaken because Burns was married and had been in the CAP less than a week. Murphy told him, "You've got to get a hold of yourself, I need you – and I won't have you running around like a damned fool!"

Murphy put the CP group in a 360 so that they would be better able to protect themselves.

Spooky, a twin-engine, propeller driven, cargo plane modified with side and rear mounted minigun pods, capable of firing several thousand rounds per minute and with the ability to drop flares, arrived. It circled the village, and its tracers made a steady red stream extending downward from the plane. Spooky departed around 0300 causing some in 9 to feel hopeless.

The CAP was tired from fighting steadily for about three hours and were eager for the sun to rise. The CP group thought the battle would be over at dawn because the casualties the CAP and air support had inflicted on the enemy was significant. The enemy couldn't afford to be in the ville, trying to escape, or just outside the ville when daylight came.

About that time the flareships said that they had to leave and couldn't provide any more illumination.

The sun finally came up. Someone muttered, "Thank God."

While the CP group thought and hoped the battle may be over, it wasn't. The CAP continued fighting throughout the middle and first hamlets.

Holmes noted that a large group of NVA was on the east hill near the waterfall and just outside the third hamlet. Two Marine F-4s decimated them.

As helicopter gunships worked in the ville, the CP group saw four rockets hit the bunker that was the last known position of the other Marines. This was close to the time the F-4s did their thing. The CP felt a sinking feeling. Their sinking feeling changed to relief when the missing team of Hicks, Meyers, Lummis, McKnight, and Sherrill appeared on a trail. They had survived the night.

Hicks, in typical Marine fashion understated, the severity of the attack and said, "Wow, where'd all the gooks come from?" Other Marines answered, "I don't know." Parker followed with, "We're sure glad to see y'all." That was immediately followed by several saying, "Amen."

A medevac helicopter was inbound at about 0700 and some of the Marines made a makeshift LZ between the middle and east hamlets. About 100 villagers, many with their belongings, immediately surrounded the medevac. The Marines secured the area immediately around the medevac and only allowed Doc and the wounded onboard.

First Lieutenant James L. Mulhearn, Jr., CACO 1-3's commanding officer, and Sgt. Robert Wray, 1-3's supply sergeant, arrived right after the medevac by Huey from CACO 1-3. Mulhearn and Wray were the reaction force because the only helicopter that would fly into the battle was a Huey and the critically needed ammunition, LAAWs, and other supplies, negated space for additional Marines.

Mulhearn said, "Well Murph, seems like you had a couple of gooks out here!" Wray added, "Wow, you guys have really got Chu Lai shook up, it's all over the place." Chu Lai was 1<sup>st</sup> Combined Action Group's (CAG) headquarters.

Wray took charge of getting the ammunition and supplies to Marines and PFs at multiple locations in the ville and Murphy and Mulhearn planned how 9 would attack.

Murphy and Mulhearn planned an attack consisting of three teams; one led by Sherrill, a second led by Wray, and a third led by Murphy and Mulhearn. The objective was to manage the battle by controlling the middle and first hamlets. Sherrill would lead a team consisting of Hicks, McKnight, Lummis, and Meyers to recon the NVA CP in the Vietnamese schoolhouse and Wray would lead a second near the NVA CP in the first hamlet.

Shadow 27, the call sign for a Spooky gunship, arrived on site shortly before any of the three teams set out and noticed a large group moving up the hill near the waterfall outside the third hamlet. Shadow 27 wasn't sure if they were enemy or friendly. Communicating directly with Avant on 9G, Shadow 27 expressed its concern. Murphy was on the same frequency and ordered Shadow 27 to fire on the group. Shadow 27 did and decimated the group of NVA.

The NVA and VC were trying to avoid being trapped inside the ville, as their chances for survival were greater outside where they could disappear into the surrounding areas. But they had a problem, they were in fact trapped inside the village, and their objective to have killed all the Marines and run the villagers from the village by daylight had failed.

Sherrill's team of Hicks, McKnight, Lummis, and Meyers set out first and got within 25 meters of the NVA CP at the Vietnamese schoolhouse. A large number of NVA were there and one was shot and killed as he took aim at Sherrill's team. Sherrill and a PF broke off from the team and maneuvered immediately outside the east wall of the NVA CP in an effort to assess the situation. The rest of the team continued to fight and later returned to where Murphy and Mulhearn's team was located.

Childs asked, "Where's Ridge (Sherrill)?" He was told that Sherrill and a PF split from the team to recon the schoolhouse and that they hadn't seen him since.

The two teams, Wray's and Murphy and Mulhearn's, planned to envelop the NVA CP from two sides and flush them out. Their objectives were to keep the NVA from regrouping in their efforts to annihilate the Marines and to find Sherrill.

Wray's team ("second element" on the map) of Parker, Meyers, McKnight, Lummis, and about 10 PFs set out.

Murphy and Mulhearn's team of Hicks, Childs, and about 10 PFs left shortly after Wray's team and also worked their way through the middle hamlet to the NVA CP at the schoolhouse in the first hamlet.

The Murphy and Mulhearn team moved to an area in front of the village barber's hooch.

The two teams approached the NVA CP from different sides, and found the enemy were well armed with small arms, automatic weapons, and RPGs.

Childs notes in "...Telling It Like It Was..." that the village was completely devastated, with hooches being mere skeletons of what they were just hours before. No animals were seen. There was one person, a Vietnamese woman, whose head was wrapped because she had been wounded during the battle. The PF interpreter told her she needed to leave, but she ignored him and sat there moaning and rocking back and forth. The NVA had burned over 260 hooches as they sought to annihilate the Marines.

Murphy fired his M60 into the schoolhouse as they approached. No enemy fire was returned. The team moved to the school yard adjacent to the south of the school building. Grenades were thrown inside. Again, no sign of enemy.

Childs approached an entrance to the school and was about to go in when Murphy ordered him to stop because the place could be booby trapped. Childs looked inside but didn't go in. It had been completely wrecked, and clothes, rations, and ammunition were strewn all over the place.

A Chicom (enemy grenade) exploded very near the team. Murphy wasn't sure if he had been hit by shrapnel from the grenade. Fortunately, he hadn't been wounded.

A single shot followed the grenade. The shot was from a sniper in a nearby hooch. A second shot from the sniper was a near miss. Murphy fired his M60 into the area the sniper was. The sniper shot a third time, this time wounding Hicks in the arm.

Hicks was fully exposed but Childs was able to get him to the relative safety of the concrete Vietnamese schoolhouse. As soon as he did, a PF yelled, "B40!" (RPG). The RPG bounced off the ground, got hung up in some barbed wire, and never exploded.

The team and sniper continued to exchange fire with the team of Murphy, Mulhearn, and Childs, which was at the USMC school house and the sniper was in a hooch directly north of them.

Some PFs were outside the school near the east wall. They called for Childs to come. Childs went and found Sherrill and the PF who had gone with him. Both had been shot and had succumbed to their wounds.

A reactionary force consisting of a company of South Vietnamese Regional Forces (RFs) landed outside the third hamlet at about 0930.

About the same time that the RFs landed, Murphy and Mulhearn's team laid down heavy fire and moved through the first and middle hamlets from the school house past the barber's because a gunship was getting ready to workover the school and surrounding area.

Mulhearn carried Hicks across about 60 meters of fire-swept terrain as the team moved to a position of relative safety back at their original CP at the southernmost part of the middle hamlet. The team heard rockets from the gunship exploding in and around the NVA CP, the area they had just left.

Wray's team carried Sherrill and worked their way back to the original CP, regrouped with the Murphy and Mulhearn team, after having killed 11 NVA. Six are noted on the map of the village.

The well-coordinated attack on the NVA CP by the Murphy and Mulhearn and Wray teams was successful in forcing the enemy to retreat and in retrieving Sherrill.

The RFs helped, but the battle was essentially over when they arrived. Sporadic firing existed at the time. They took one prisoner, an NVA soldier, and they had the dubious honor of stacking the NVA and VC bodies - all 116 of them.

The prisoner was later interrogated in Chu Lai, and as stated in the 1<sup>st</sup> CAG September Command Chronology states, "The attack, as told by a POW taken from the action, was primarily for political reasons. First of all, it was to show the people of An Phong that the GVN is unable to protect them. The attack was timed to disrupt the elections which were slated for the following day. The idea was to hold the village for two days and then retire back into the mountains." He was a soldier, thought to be a PFC, in the 10<sup>th</sup> Company, 6<sup>th</sup> Battalion of the 21<sup>st</sup> NVA Regiment.

A medevac helicopter landed and Childs and Parker helped Hicks get in.

The 1<sup>st</sup> CAG Commanding Officer, Lieutenant Colonel J. E. Hennegan, and the S-3, Major R. L. Padgett, arrived later in the morning. Hennegan was WIA minor that day.

The Marines were exhausted from fighting throughout the night and morning against the 6<sup>th</sup> Battalion of the 21<sup>st</sup> NVA Regiment, an enemy that outnumber the Marines and PFs by about six to one.

Childs wrote in his account of the battle, "Reggie Childs Telling It Like It Was...", that the Marines looked, "like they'd (sic) were in a gang fight and they were the only one in their gang to show up!" He also wrote, "So ended the longest day and night of my life – or anybody's for that matter. All I can say is that only by the grace of God am I here – and I'm glad he was watching."

Alpha Company, 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion, 52<sup>nd</sup> Regiment of the Army's Americal Division arrived on site at approximately 1130.

CAP 1-3-9 distinguished itself with great valor in combat by inflicting the second most KIA's of a single CAP in a one-day period, and was awarded the Meritorious Unit Commendation Medal for its actions on September 13, 1969.

As noted in the 1<sup>st</sup> CAG September Command Chronology, the ground and air attacks coordinated by CAP 1-3-9 resulted in 116 NVA and VC KIA, a substantial but unknown number of WIA, and 70 enemy weapons captured while incurring one Marine, one Navy, and eight Popular Forces KIA. Two other Marines and an unknown number of PFs were WIA. In total, four Purple Hearts were awarded to Americans in CAP 1-3-9. Several innocent civilians were killed and others wounded as a result of the communist attack. The final number KIA was increased to 119 when the first patrol outside the village, led by Parker on September 16 or 17, found three dead NVA on the northwest side of 9 George. The weapons captured consisted of 68 IW (Individual Weapons) and two CSW (Crew Served Weapons).

Personal awards received were the Navy Cross (Hospital Corpsman, Third Class, Dewey Ray Burns, Jr.), Silver Star (Sergeant Michael Murphy, Lance Corporal Robert Sherrill, First

Lieutenant James J. Mulhearn, Jr., and Sergeant Robert B. Wray), Bronze Star with Combat Distinguishing Device (Lance Corporal Mel Avant, Privates First Class Reginald Childs, James Samuel Parker, William Hines, Steve Hicks, and Nguyen But [Popular Forces Interpreter]), Navy and Marine Corps Commendation Medal with Combat Distinguishing Device (Privates First Class Gary Holmes, James McKnight, David Lummis, and Jerry Meyer), and the Purple Heart (HM3 Dewey Ray Burns, Lance Corporal Robert Sherrill, Private First Class Steve Hicks, and Lieutenant Colonel J. E. Hennegan). Additionally, HM2 Dewey Ray Burns, Jr. was meritoriously promoted to HM3, Petty Officer Third Class, for his heroism.

Combined Action Platoon 1-3-9, "Home of the Forgotten", forgotten no more.

*Written By: Richard S. LeBlanc, a U. S. Marine, served in CAP 1-3-9 from September 15, 1969 (two days after the battle) through June 1970 and rotated home in late July.*

## Photos

**THESE ARE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE PHOTOS THAT WERE TAKEN ON OR ABOUT SEPTEMBER 15, 1969.**



This is a photo of the west hamlet looking north. Between the tree line that runs from left to right and the mountains was the Son Tra Bong River, the northern boundary of our area of operations (A/O). The holes in the center left of the photo were inside the hooches and served as protection for the villagers during attacks.



This is the west hamlet looking northwest. The villagers were resolute in rebuilding their hooches



This was taken in the west hamlet in the area immediately behind the day command post (CP). The photo faces southwest. 9 George and an adjacent hill are in the background.



This is in the middle hamlet looking north. The mountains in the distance are about 3 clicks (kilometers) or 2 miles away. They were often, as they were here, below the clouds.



A mamason and a co (girl) were searching for their belongings, probably in the middle hamlet. The mountains are to the north



Another photo taken in the middle hamlet. Most of the hooches that were burned by the NVA were in the western and middle hamlets.



The fire set by the NVA was destructive to the point that very few things survived. People, livestock, and clay pots among them. This photo was taken facing northwest.



This was probably facing north in the middle hamlet because not all of their hooches burned to the ground.



This is an aerial photo of An Phong that was taken such that south is at the top, west is to the right, north at the bottom and east is to the left.

### Legend

1. Base of 9 George
2. School
3. Landing Zone (LZ)
4. Day Command Post (CP)
5. West gate
6. Bamboo fences
7. West hamlet
8. Rice paddies Middle hamlet
9. Rice paddies

### NVA document

This document belongs to Gary Holmes and is a museum quality artifact. He was a PFC when the battle occurred and he took it off an NVA who was KIA during the battle.

Two translations of this document exist, and they differ significantly.

The first was done in 2001 by Dong Tran, a Vietnamese Marine lieutenant during the war. His translation was made without knowing anything about the village of An Phong, the battle, or the document. His translation immediately follows this paragraph.

The second translation was done in 2009 by Mr. and Mrs. Fred Kligge. Fred is an Army vet who served in the war and his wife, Mia, is Vietnamese. Both are fluent in English and Vietnamese. Their translation is to the right of the NVA document.

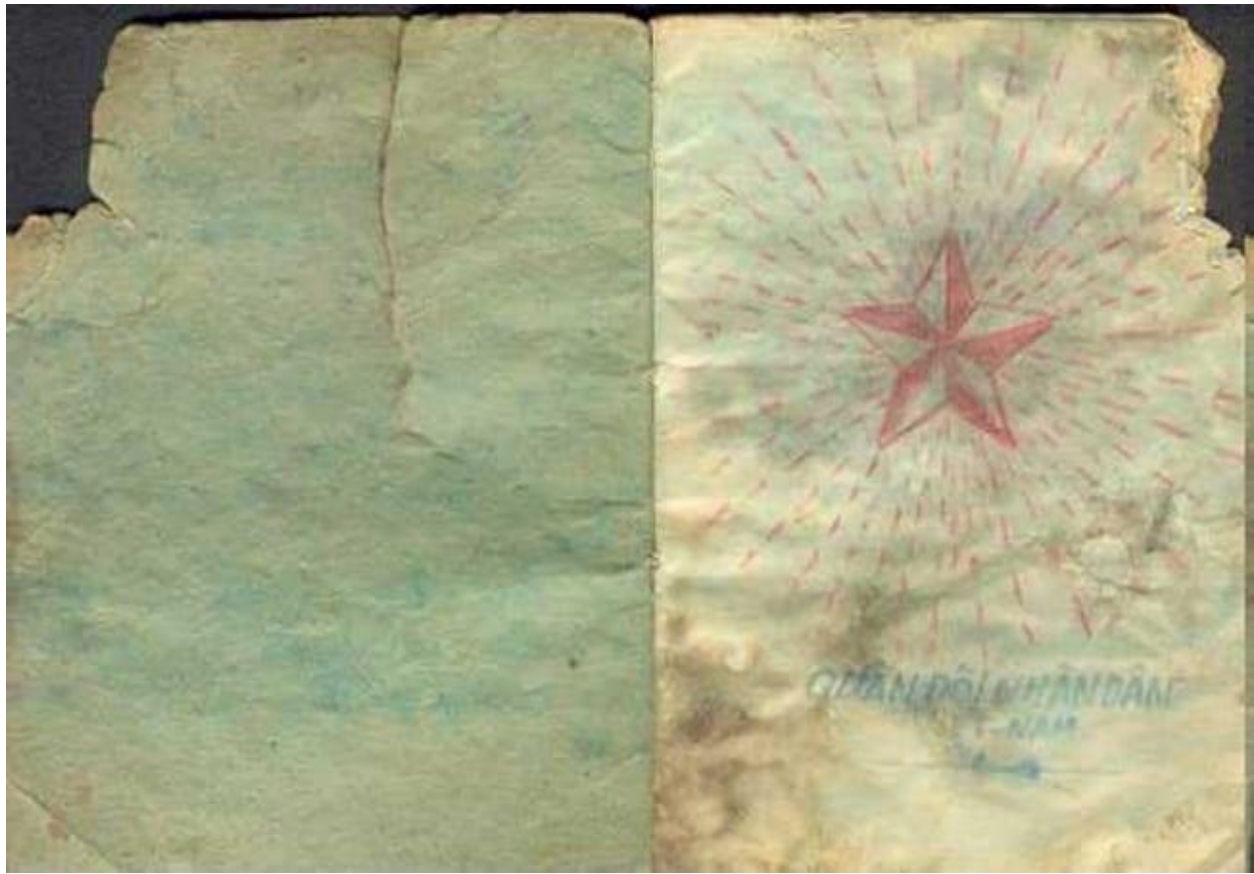
Dong Tran's translation follows.

Lt. Dong said the star on the cover page indicated, "This is a big man. You know, lieutenant, captain, major, . . . general."

Pages 2 and 3 of the document are very difficult to read, largely due to the blood stains on the document. No translation was offered.

Pages 4 and 5 make references to the fact that the people of An Phong do not listen to the VC so the village will be burned, causing the people to move away for a period of time. These pages also indicate that the U. S. forces help the people of An Phong. If you look closely at the bottom left of the third image you can see the number 10. Eleven is also present, but is very difficult to see. Twelve is at the top right of the third image. These numbers are significant because they are the days immediately before the day the 6th Battalion of the 21st NVA Regiment attacked.

Dong Tran's conclusion was that the document was a battle plan for an attack on An Phong. His translation proved to be accurate because 1) the people of An Phong were refugees and as such were for South Vietnam, which of course meant they were against the VC, 2) the NVA and VC burned most of the village, 3) information gathered after the attack indicated that the attack was conducted to kill all the Marines and drive the villagers from An Phong for a few days so that the upcoming election would go the way the communist wanted it to go, and 4) The U. S. forces noted in this translation refer to CAP 1-3-9 and 9's objective was to help the people of An Phong live free from the threat of communism.



The Peoples' Army of Viet Nam

**(Cover Page to the left)**



(pages 4 and 5 on the left)

## 12 RULES WHEN IN CONTACT WITH CIVILIANS, FOR THE PEOPLES' ARMY OF VIET NAM

We the soldiers of the peoples' army of Viet Nam, swear under the flag of our ancestors' land:

1. I swear: To sacrifice everything for our country Viet Nam, under the leadership of the Communist Party of Vietnam, striving to make peace in Vietnam, independence and socialism, thus contributing positively to the struggle of the world's people for peace and national independence, democracy and socialism.
2. I swear: To absolutely obey the orders of my superiors and when given any mission to be dedicated and committed to it and implement it quickly and correctly.
3. I swear: To love my country, continuously improve Socialist patriotism and proletariat internationalism, to train and fight with resolve to not be boastful of winning nor discouraged at loosing, no matter the hardship I will not be discouraged, even in life and death situations, I will not be discouraged. "Every task will be completed, every difficulty will be overcome, and every enemy will be defeated."
4. I swear: To try my best to learn the level of political, military, cultural, scientific and technical professionalism, thorough observance of the orders, rules, organizational

training, discipline and regular working style, build increasingly powerful forces, always ready to fight.

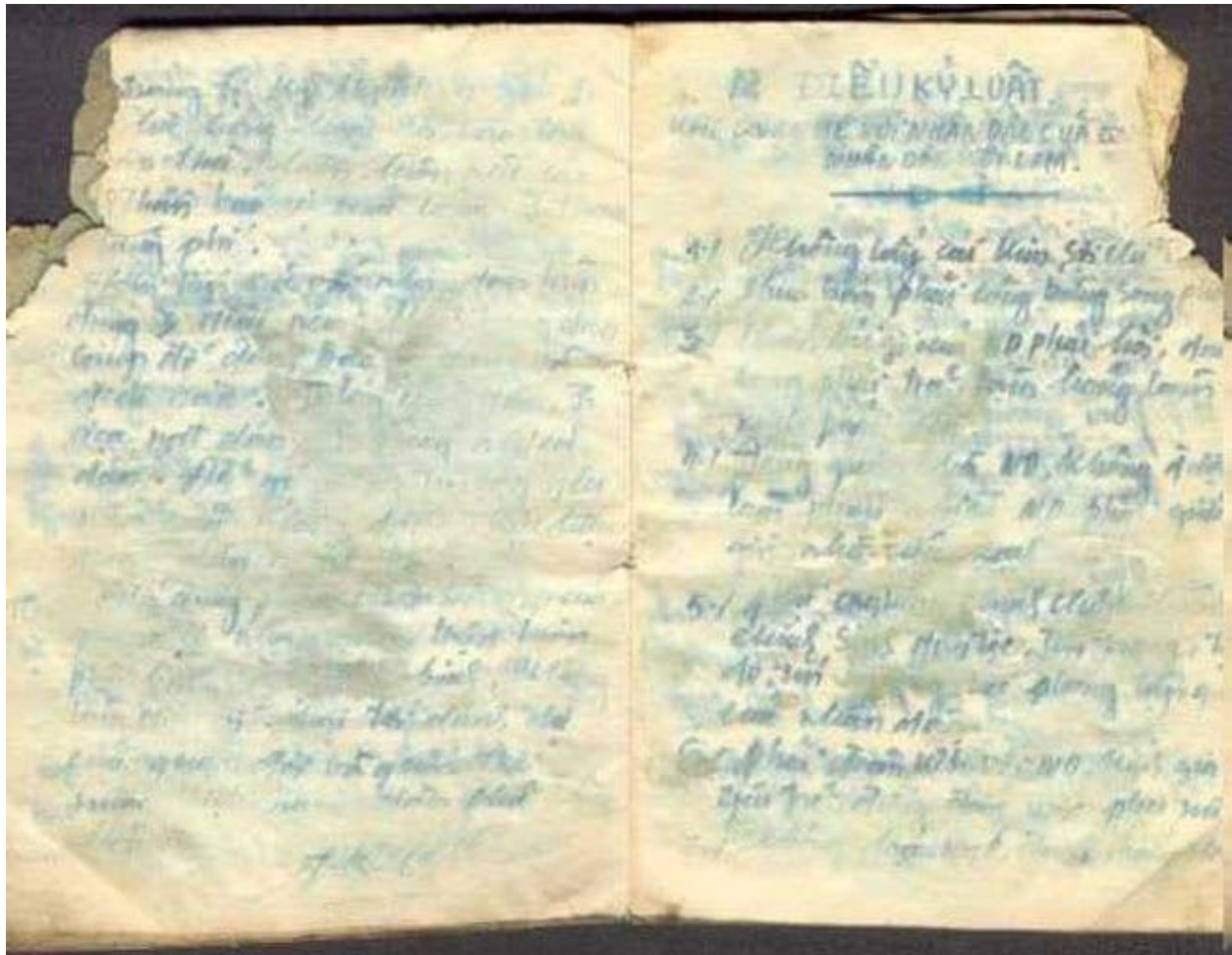
5. I swear: To uphold the spirit of collective socialism, to fulfill the task of defending the country, building socialism to fulfill international missions, to practice exemplary compliance, to mobilize people in every way, the advocates of the Party's policies and laws of the State.
6. I swear: To absolutely always be alert and keep the secrets of army missions and the county. If I am captured by the enemy and must bear the pain of torture, I must be faithful as a liberator and never be a traitor or give up information.
7. I swear: To be tightly united like blood brothers, love each other as older and younger siblings; with all our hearts help each other in times of battle and times of calm. The unit has one ideal.
8. I swear: To use my strength to protect my weapon from damage or from falling into the hands of the enemy and to always keep my sprits raised to protect public property and not be greedy and wasteful.
9. I swear: That when in contact with the people, I must do these three things:
  - Respect the people
  - Help the people
  - Protect the people

And practice these three things:

- Don't steal from the people
- Don't threaten the people
- Don't harass the people

Gain the love and trust of the people, thus creating in the soldier and the people, one mind.

10. I swear: To maintain a good quality and tradition of winning the war of the peoples' army, to always self-criticize myself, to do nothing harmful to the honor of the national army and to the Socialist Republic of Vietnam.



(pages 4 and 5 on the left)

## 12 RULES WHEN IN CONTACT WITH CIVILIANS, FOR THE PEOPLES' ARMY OF VIET NAM

1. Do not take [steal] even a needle or thread of the people.
2. Buying and selling must be fair.
3. Whatever you borrow from the people, you must ask and when finished, return it. If you damage or loose it, you must compensate for it.
4. If you are stationed at a civilian's house, you must not harass the people and you must keep the house clean.
5. You must strictly abide by the policy of ethnic and religious freedom and beliefs and customs of the people.
6. You must unite closely with the people, respect the aged, love the young and treat women with decency.
7. Don't threaten and strike the people.
8. You must protect life and the collective property of the state.

9. There must be unity, respect and support of agencies, the Party and local armed forces.
10. You must abide by the policy of the Party and the laws of the State in an exemplary manner.
11. You must advocate positive propaganda, help mobilize the people to perform all the policies of the state and the law.
12. You must keep secrets and mobilize people to keep government and military secrets.

## Periodicals

### Pacific Stars and Stripes

Sept 69 Page 1 of 1

16Sep69-Enemy Toll Heavy After Hamlet Attacks

By SPEC. BOB HODIERNE *(Pacific Stars and Stripes, on-line version)*

SAIGON U.S. and Vietnamese troops killed 116 North Vietnamese Saturday after the Communists had taken a heavy toll in civilian lives and homes during attacks on a refugee camp and a group of hamlets 65 miles southeast of Da Nang, the U.S. military command reported Sunday.

Two Communist companies began the attacks by storming a Marine Combined Action Platoon night camp and a Vietnamese regional forces outpost near An Hoa at 4 a.m.

The besieged allied posts called in Marine jets and Air Force Spooky gunships, spokesmen reported while Americal Div. troops and 2nd Div. Vietnamese soldiers were sent up an reinforced the defenders sometime later.

The Reds reportedly breached the wire of the night position but were repulsed in what was called "heavy" fighting.

While the attack against the allied units was underway, more Communists, estimated by the Vietnamese government to be the balance of a larger-than-battalion-sized force, attacked a refugee camp at the foot of the outpost. The Communists also overran several nearby hamlets.

The Reds burned 260 homes in the refugee camp and Vietnamese spokesmen reported that eight civilians had been killed. It was not certain if the civilians were popular force troops or not.

Fighting continued until about 3 p.m. when the Communists finally withdrew to the west - the same direction from which they had attacked.

U.S. casualties in the fight were listed as two killed and three wounded, all from the Combined Action platoon, which normally consists of 12 Marines, a Navy medic and about 30 Vietnamese militiamen.

<http://25thmivafes.org/ENR.htm> 4/15/2012

*Wash Post 9-15 69*  
**Abrams**

# Calls on Thieu

## Commander Reports After Seeing Nixon

SAIGON, Sept. 14 (AP) — Gen. Creighton W. Abrams returned to South Vietnam Sunday and immediately called on President Thieu, presumably to relay President Nixon's latest thinking on the war and U.S. troop withdrawals.

Abrams, the U.S. commander in Vietnam, went to Thieu's residence less than two hours after he returned from a strategy conference in Washington with Mr. Nixon and other officials.

The meeting with Thieu lasted 70 minutes. Abrams was accompanied by Samuel D. Berger, the acting U.S. ambassador. Officials would not comment on what was discussed.

A South Vietnamese official, noting that Thieu does not hold conferences on Sunday or at such as early hour—it was 8:10 a.m.—said, "There must be something from Washington. Otherwise they wouldn't have met so early."

In a report on the war, the U.S. Command said there were 25 rocket and mortar attacks overnight against towns and allied bases.

"Ten of these attacks were against U.S. units or installations," a communique said. "Fourteen of the 25 attacks caused casualties or damage. U.S. casualties were 22 wounded with no fatalities."

The heaviest shelling was a 75 to 100 round barrage against a U.S. patrol base called Ike, located 60 miles northwest of Saigon. Fourteen Americans were wounded. U.S. artillery and helicopter gunships attacked enemy positions. Headquarters said 12 North Vietnamese soldiers were killed.

The heaviest fighting over the weekend flared near Quangngai city, a provincial capital 62 miles southeast of Danang. North Vietnamese soldiers attacked a small combined platoon of U.S. Marines and South Vietnamese militiamen defending a village and three surrounding refugee hamlets before dawn Saturday.

Allied communiques said the enemy burned down about 260 houses and killed at least eight civilians "but were repulsed in heavy fighting."

The battle lasted until mid-afternoon, when the enemy troops withdrew towards the hills. A spokesman said a search turned up the bodies of 116 enemy soldiers and three wounded.

B-52 bombers continued their raids across South Vietnam after a 36-hour halt last week, apparently called to test enemy intentions.

*1-3-79*

# Operation: Sweet Appreciation Sparks Unexpected Reunion

A recent internet search by U.S. Marine Veteran and archivist Rick LeBlanc of Florida turned up an interesting result. Mr. LeBlanc was searching "Vietnam Veterans" and his search results eventually led him to UAW Local 1050's "Operation: Sweet Appreciation" webpage. He noticed the U.S. Marine T-shirts in the pictures and recognized one of those 1050 members. After 42 years, Rick recognized a team member from his Vietnam CAP team; our own Reginald Childs. Mr. LeBlanc contacted Chris Marotta, President UAW Local 1050, to verify his instinct, and the reunion was on.

USMC CAP (Combined Action Program) teams consisted of 8 Marines and 1 Navy Corpsman which were inserted "to occupy and control areas uncovered by



"Home of the Forgotten" CAP 1-3-9. cir. 1969

the forward movement of the US and ARVN units and to assist in Revolutionary Development efforts within these areas." In other words, after an area was deemed "secure", a CAP team was embedded in a village, worked with and trained the local militia, assisted the village and ran combat operations on their own. CAP teams also implemented a South Vietnamese initiative called "Chieu Hoi", which sought out North Vietnamese combatants and their supporters to defect to the U.S. campaign in Vietnam. Reggie joined the CAP effort which consisted of 30 days of in-country training.

Reggie was inserted into the village of Anphong in the Quang Tri Province of South Vietnam. "It was so far out that trucks couldn't reach us, and if it rained, choppers wouldn't come...so you didn't get supplied... we were the farthest from supply." He laughs when he says "That's why we called it The Home of the Forgotten".

When asked what his CAP team did from day to day, Reggie related "We set up two ambushes per night, L-shaped and (or) U-shaped. During the day we patrolled 1-2 clicks from the village."

Reggie related a bond with his fellow Marine James "Sam" Parker. "I owe my life to him. He was

a southern white kid from Mississippi, the South, and I was a black kid...we were opposites. In one situation (firefight) he could have left me, but he chose to fight our way out with mortally wounded..."



L-R front: Rick LeBlanc, Navy Corpsman "Doc" Clodfelter, SSgt. Mike Murphy, back row: James "Sam" Parker and Reggie Childs. USMC CAP Vietnam

## Commendations

For his meritorious Service, Reginald Childs was awarded the Bronze Star, a Presidential Citation, a Navy Commendation and various medals from the Vietnamese Government. Mr. Childs was reluctant to talk about his decorations, and attributed it to his Unit: The 1st Combined Action Group, 3rd Platoon, 9th CAP, "CAP 1-3-9".

Back in the world, Reggie earned an Associate's Degree in Labor Relations from Cuyahoga Community College, and is now married. Reggie is a 2nd Shift Chief

By Tim Yody,  
Photos by Reginald Childs

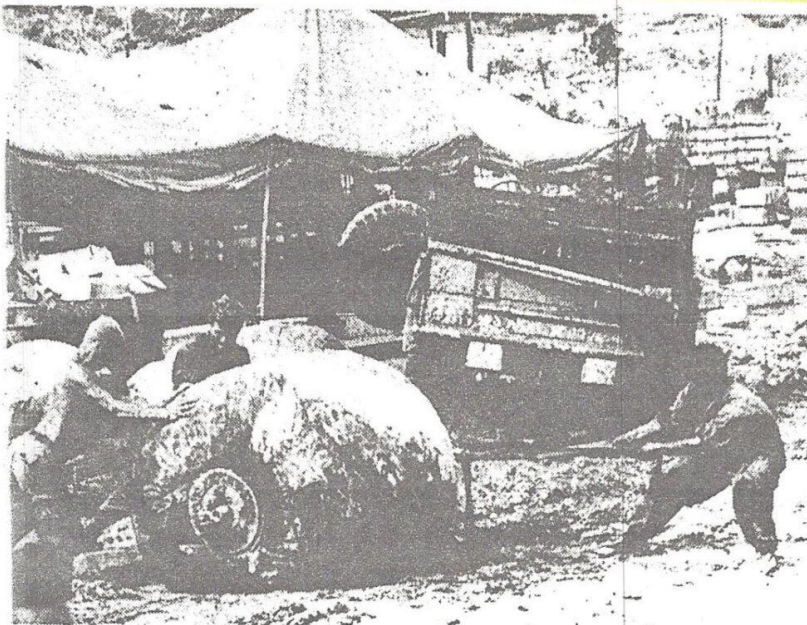
Steward in the Skilled Trades Classification. He has 11 years at Alcoa, and is an asset to the Union Local, and Alcoa Cleveland Works. "This is overwhelming to me" Reggie says about this reunion. It speaks to the bond between our Brothers in arms who've fought in the jungles and deserts of the globe for our great Nation. Job well done.

Operation: Sweet Appreciation is sponsored by the Girl Scouts of North East Ohio (GSNEO) - a Girl Scouts Gift of Caring service project, which sends Girl Scout Cookies to U.S. troops overseas. Operation: Sweet Appreciation sends "a taste of home" to U.S. troops deployed overseas. Local Girl Scouts team up with their cookie customers to send boxes of Girl Scout cookies to service men and women far from home.



L-R: UAW Local 1050 Veterans Cmte. Jesse Deel, Bill Lococo, Reggie Childs, & GSNEO Reps. at "Operation Sweet Appreciation" 2009.

This report is based on interview of Reginald Childs and was reproduced with his approval. Photos are courtesy of Reginald Childs. 1. <http://capmarine.com/>



WATER THEY GET BY HELICOPTER: Men of the U.S. First Cavalry Division (Airmobile) work for water to a truck at a combat base in South Vietnam. The base lacks supply of potable water.

### Ky Says That Saigon Would Lead to a Coup

Continued From Page 1, Col. 7  
his remarks in a 90-minute interview at this sprawling air base 18 miles north of Saigon. He flew here to address an audience of 300 young South Vietnamese air force officers of the 23rd Tactical Air Wing. Both in the interview and in his speech, Mr. Ky spoke of the need for a sweeping social revolution in South Vietnam. He said drastic steps were necessary to correct the social and economic inequities that still prevail in the country. "People are still making vast amounts of money in the war, while other people—common people who give everything and get nothing in return—continue to suffer," he said. "All these people must be given a chance to break through in our society if our struggle is to mean anything."  
Mr. Ky said he had told President Thieu "If we don't make a social revolution, someone else will."  
The President agreed with everything he had said, Mr. Ky said.  
"I am waiting to see if he

will take it be taken," said. "If he I will speak people what In his spe officers, Mr importance military in 5  
"The futur in our hands he said. "We leave our de of dirty pol we will repl country to v achievement lution."  
Softening Mr. Ky con want to say should overi ment. I only you hold the try.  
"I would pay too muc press report United State in Vietnam. I ng the Unit termine our

### Said to Plan Pullout of 35,000

Col. 7 Nations next Thursday have churned speculation about the future of the Administration's policy. There was no indication about whether the report on the draft and troops withdrawal had come from the White House meeting.  
The report from the source outside the Administration pointed out that the withdrawal of 35,000 men, in addition to the 25,000 previously brought home, would bring the total to 60,000, the same number that former President Johnson had said could be taken out of action without damaging the war effort.  
Planning for withdrawal has been reported to have focused on the remaining brigade of the Ninth Infantry Division and on the two remaining regiments of the Third Marine Division. That would account for about 25,000 men; the remaining 10,000 would presumably be logistics and administrative troops.  
The combined troop and draft moves, the source contended, would put pressure on the Congress to enact draft legislation already proposed by the President. It would eliminate the present system and set up a lottery to conscript only 19-year-old men.  
If the President were to suspend the draft, he would merely

have to instruct the Selective Service System not to issue induction notices for the months involved. Selective Service presumably would continue to register 18-year-olds and order men to appear for pre-draft physical examinations.  
The Pentagon usually instructs Selective Service 60 days in advance of its draft needs for a given month. This schedule is often not met. The October draft call did not reach Selective Service until Aug. 29.  
The Pentagon has not yet ordered a draft call for November.  
Under the Selective Service Law the President may change the prime-age group of draftees by Executive order and without Congressional approval. Congress, however, must first pass on any decision to institute a lottery. Many experts on the draft believe it unlikely that the Nixon Administration would begin drafting 19-year-olds without being able to select them at random.  
Both the Johnson and Nixon Administrations have felt that a system of inducting 19-year-olds without a lottery would be unfair to persons born at the end of a month or the end of a year, because under the law, the oldest within the prime-age group must be called first.

### Nixon Back in White House After Visit to Camp David

with the fact that not a single major appropriation bill has cleared Congress.

### VILLAGE ATTACKED BY FOE IN VIETNAM

260 Houses Are Destroyed— Enemy Losses Put at 113  
SAIGON, South Vietnam, Sunday, Sept. 14 (AP) — United States and South Vietnamese forces reported that they killed 113 of the enemy yesterday in repulsing a heavy attack that destroyed 260 houses of a Vietnamese village complex, United States military spokesmen said.  
About two companies of North Vietnamese regulars were reported to have attacked the village, 13 miles northwest of Quangngai in the north.  
The enemy force penetrated the perimeter of United States marines and militiamen and attacked three hamlets in the village complex, spokesmen said, destroying the houses and killing at least eight civilians.  
United States and South Vietnamese reinforcements and air and artillery support were called in. Initial reports put United States casualties at two killed and three wounded, and South Vietnamese losses at three killed and seven wounded.  
In a series of sharp clashes in the Mekong Delta southwest of Saigon, 69 of the enemy were said to have been killed by South Vietnamese troops, who reported only light casualties. On the coast 225 miles north

### Delegates at Paris Tall Cease-Fire and the De

Continued From Page 1, Col. 5  
withdrawal, then carry it out effectively. This was softer language than the ritual demand for total and unconditional withdrawal as the way to peace and some observers interpreted it as a signal to Washington.  
Stephen Ledogar, the American spokesman, and Nguyen Trieu Dan, the spokesman for the Saigon delegation, both commented that if the Communists had thought the remark to be important they had had the opportunity to expand upon it during today's meeting.  
The Communists made a direct reference to the sudden change in bombing tactics by Washington only in answer to questions from reporters. The spokesman for the revolutionary government, Duong Dinh Thao, declared that the resumption of bombing showed that the United States was pursuing the war.  
"We denounce the obstinate nature of the American Government," he said, adding that the change in 36 hours illustrated the difficulties of Mr. Nixon who is obliged "to confront public opinion in the United States and in the world which demands an end to the war."  
He said that whatever the methods or maneuvers of Washington, and no matter how

Vietnam by added that not come thru the United withdrawal negotiation which we ci The allied swered with peace depend Vietnam and The fruitless five hours. longest me months.  
Mr. Ledog Mr. Lodge's prisoners ha main point ( he said he c view. He s appropriate" means a sid  
Accord TOKYO. North Vietna today that taken prison the protectio agreement of prisoners of had been caj mitting "cri manity," the agency report  
The agency Cross delegat known in a sued at a me national Red Oct. 6, 19

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## 1st CAG Command Chronologies

Command Chronologies for all USMC units in Vietnam, including the four Combined Action Groups, may be accessed at the [Records of War website](#).

1. [1st CAG Cmd Chrono; Aug 69, page II-7](#)
2. [1st CAG Cmd Chrono; Aug 69, page III-5](#)
3. [1st CAG Cmd Chrono; Sept 69, page II-4](#)
4. [1st CAG Cmd Chrono; Sept 69, page II-5](#)
5. [1st CAG Cmd Chrono; Sept 69, page II-7](#)
6. [1st CAG Cmd Chrono; Sept 69, page III-3](#)
7. [1st CAG Cmd Chrono; Sept 69, page III-4](#)
8. [1st CAG Cmd Chrono; Sept 69, page III-5](#)
9. [1st CAG Cmd Chrono; Nov 69, page II-5](#)

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