

MAY 1966

On 13 May at 0130 hours, Soc Trang Army Airfield was again under attack after a lull of several months. Some rounds landed on the flight line, others landed near the hootches and off the compound to the North. The men scrambled through mortar fire to their defensive positions while the "T-Birds" scrambled through more mortar fire to their aircraft. The "T-Birds" located the two positions. One was 5km Southwest of the airfield and the other was 3km to the Northwest. The "T-Birds" broke up the attacks. The VC fled, with casualties unknown, however they left many rounds of 60mm mortar and 57mm recoilless rifle ammunition behind. There was little damage to the aircraft or compound and one man was slightly wounded.

During the month of May, the "Warriors" participated in sixteen air-mobile operations, having mission command of four. One of the more interesting operations occurred on 17 May on what started out to be Dan Chi 228 staged from Soc Trang. (This was one day before the mortar attack mentioned above.) The "Warrior" had mission command. Intelligence sources reported that elements of the Soc Trang Dynamic Battalion were moving towards Soc Trang from the Southwest to launch a mortar attack on the airfield. The "T-Birds" and "Vikings" (gun platoon of the 121st "Soc Trang Tigers") reconned the area and found nothing. No lifts were placed in the area. At 1100 hours two regional force companies made contact with two VC companies 3 miles Northeast of Soc Trang. The "slicks" airlifted troops from Soc Trang to assist the regional force companies. The "T-Birds" and "Vikings" netted 75 VC killed and 25 wounded practically on our back doorstep.

(MAY CONT'D)

On 8 May, the "T-Birds" assisted on a raid of a VC prison camp in the Kien Giang sector. A "Chieu Hoi" (Viet Cong defector) gave the information about the camp to friendly forces and flew with the command and control aircraft to point out the area. When the "Chieu Hoi" pointed out the area, the "T-Birds" suppressed and an 80 man lift was placed in the area. 20 VC were killed, and weapons, grenades and documents were seized. Seven prisoners were released. The information proved to be accurate.

On 14-15 May at Ca Mau, Operation Dan Chi 227 was conducted. Troops of the 42nd and 44th Rangers and 2 battalions from the 21st Division were airlifted into LZs nearby. The "T-Birds" and other participating gun platoons netted 62 VC killed, 15 sampans destroyed, 16 structures damaged. The overall operation was very successful.

Prior to May each tenant unit at Soc Trang had their own A.O.D. The function of A.O.D. has been consolidated into one detail eliminating this duplication of effort.

An addition to the FM/NCO Club (Beetle-Nut Lounge) was completed this month. Construction began on a new hangar that will be built on the "Warrior" end of the airfield. It will be similar to the one now shared with the 121st; but it will be slightly wider. The proposed dimensions were 50 feet long, 25 feet high and 270 feet wide. It was to have a concrete floor, steel beam frame and sheet metal walls and roof. The completion date was September 1966.

On 29 May Vinh Long Airfield, our sister airfield to the North and home base of two of the "Delta" Battalion's airmobile companies, was mortared. Very little damage was reported.

During the month of May the "Warrior" slicks" flew 1,309 hours, and the "T-Birds" flew 498 hours. The high aviator of the month flew 113.8 hours.