



# STARS AND STRIPES

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## Red 'Blitzkrieg' Fails, 101 Die in Viet Battle

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FIRE BASE CAROLYN, Vietnam—Less than 200 1st Air Cav. Div. troopers Tuesday turned back a "blitzkrieg" North Vietnamese attack against their fire support base 65 miles northwest of Saigon.

The Sky Troopers killed at least 101 Reds and captured 29.

In more than five hours of bloody fighting, the Reds focused their attack on two bunkers at opposite sides of the base, and for a time held the bunkers before they were beaten back by small-arms fire and point blank artillery rounds. The Air Cav. suffered nine men killed and 62 wounded.

"At first we thought Charlie was aiming for the artillery, but he wanted these bunkers," said Capt. Skip (Harry L.) Taylor, commander of C Co., 2nd Bn., 3rd Cav. "This wasn't like his usual 360-degree siege. This was a new blitzkrieg tactic. Charlie pushed about 100 men at the No. 2 bunker on the south side and the same at the No. 10 bunker at the north. He wanted to take these bunkers then peel out on the flank."

The Reds, identified as part of the 95th Regiment, 1st NVA Div., were only a night's march away from Cambodia when they hit Fire Base Carolyn, which is eight miles south and eight miles east of the curving border.

A detainee later told inter-

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### 'Blitzkrieg' Blasted

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preters there had been 10 companies (estimated at 70 to 90 men per company) involved in the fight, but Taylor thought only 200 to 300 NVA charged the camp.

The action started about 1 a.m. after a rain, Taylor said. "It was cloudy and hard to see, but one observation post picked up movement and Charlie hit a trip flare so we went on alert."

A heavy mortar and rocket barrage hit the base about 1:30 a.m. "The 107 rockets were zeroed at the bunkers, and the Reds were coming in with them, through the middle of the barrage, taking losses from their own rockets," Taylor said.

"The Reds threw satchel charges and Bangalore torpedoes to blow the wire. My men pulled back from bunker 2 and Charlie took it. Several gasoline drums were standing between us and the bunker. We were going to move them the day before but didn't have time. A couple of men and I cut into the gas drums with M16. The fire scorched Charlie. The Reds in the bunker might have suffocated. But we opened up into the bunker. In the morning there were bodies all around."

The Reds fought up to the gun pit of a nearby 155mm howitzer. A GI fired the gun point blank, Taylor said, and the muzzle blast drove the Reds back. In all, 1,500 rounds, from 105s and 155s were fired directly at the enemy.

enemy soldiers in a brief clash eight miles northeast of Khe Sanh. One Leatherneck was wounded.

— Troops of the 9th Inf. Div. claimed an even 100 Reds killed Sunday night and Monday in operations throughout the Mekong Delta.

Meanwhile, artillery was coming in from friendly units as far away as Tay Ninh, 20 miles to the south, the defenders were also supported by army gunships, C47s and air force bombers. The aircraft drew fire from three heavy machine-gun positions, but none were hit.

Elsewhere in Vietnam:

— North Vietnamese forces ambushed a 25th Inf. Div. convoy Monday morning near Trang Bang, 25 miles northwest of Saigon, but security troops drove them off. The Reds left 11 dead behind. U.S. casualties were one killed and four wounded.

— A reconnaissance unit of the 3rd Marine Div. killed 10