

196th Gathers Rice

By 1LT David Coffman

LZ HAWK HILL—If an army really does travel on its stomach, then a lot of VC must be moving very slowly these days, at least in the area of the 196th Bde. The brigade recently captured over 60,000 pounds of enemy rice in a period of 26 days.

It all began when D Co. 4-31st Inf., discovered 1,500 pounds of grain 20 miles west of Tam Ky. Throughout the next week, the brigade continued to find more hidden storehouses.

Then came the biggest find of them all.

Early one morning, A Co., 3-21st Inf., began to search a hooch area 18 miles northwest of Tam Ky. Soon the Division infantrymen were flooded by rice.

Before the day was over the men of A Co., had netted 22,000 pounds of the unpolished grain.

Over the next three days, 3-21st Inf., found three more tons of rice in nearby areas.

A week later, C Co., 2-1st Inf, operating seven miles west of Tam Ky, discovered over a ton of rice under a false floor. Not wanting to pass up a good thing, the company continued to search the area for two more days and came up with 8,800 more pounds.

D Co., from the same battalion, found two more tons as the 26-day period drew to a close.

"The VC have suffered critical food shortages for a long time," said CPT William H. Marty (Santa Cruz, Calif.) PSYOPS Officer, 196th Inf. Bde. "These recent caches have caused them incalculable problems."

Perhaps more eloquent testimony came from a former NVA who recently rallied to the 196th Bde. When asked to describe his daily ration of rice, the rallier drew a tiny circle in the palm of his hand. (196th IO)