

IN-COUNTRY

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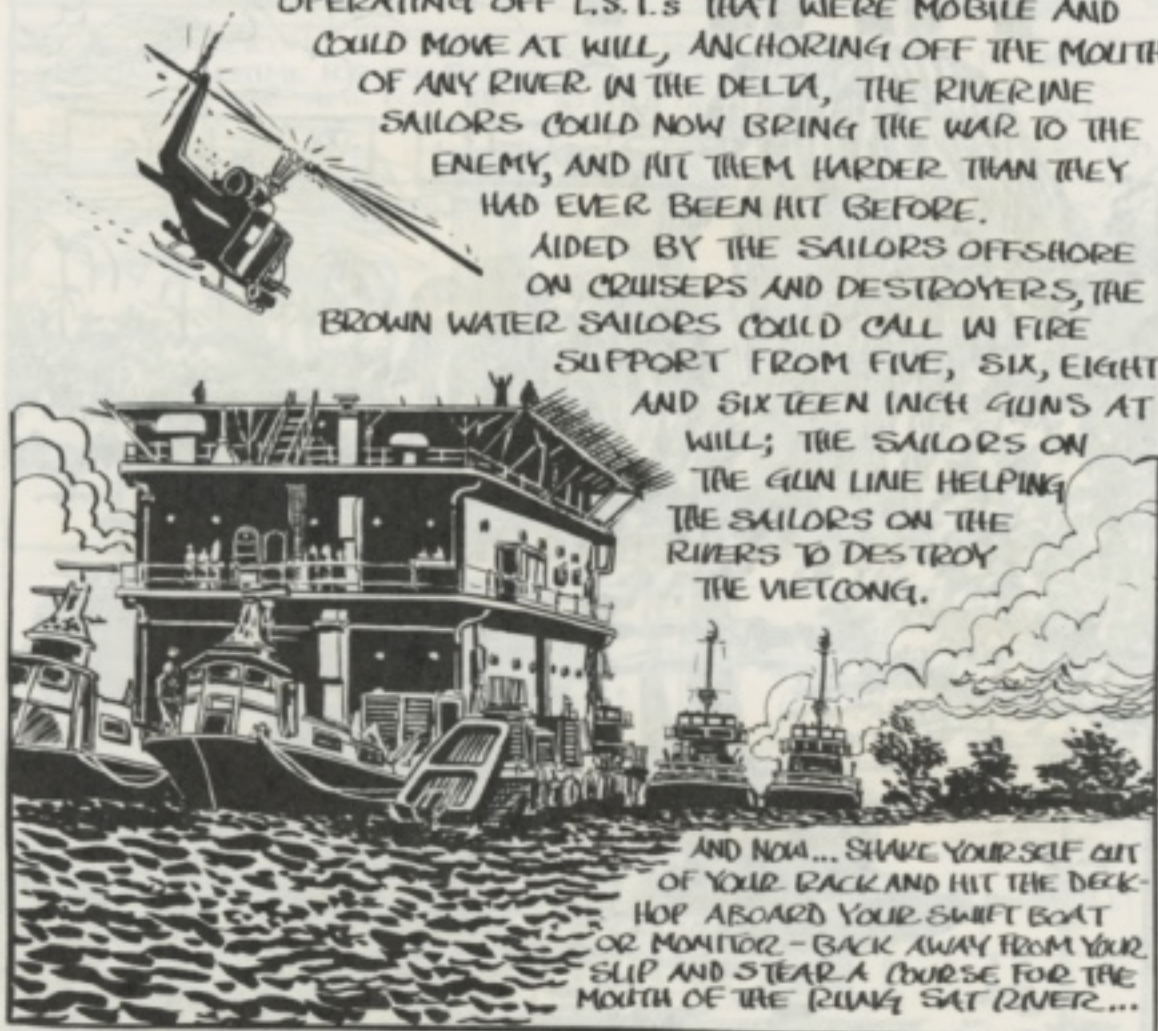
THE VAST MEKONG WATERWAY WAS THE RICEBOWL OF VIETNAM, AND OVER ITS RIVERS AND CANALS MOVED THE STAPLE FOOD OF OF THIS COUNTRY. BUT THE MEKONG WAS ALSO THE MOST PRIVILEGED SANCTUARY OF THE VIETCONG, AND THEIR TAX COLLECTORS WHO ROAMED AT WILL, TAKING WHAT THEY NEEDED FROM THE PEOPLE. ITS TROOPS AND THOSE OF THE REGIME TO THE NORTH INFESTED EVERY BEND OF EVERY RIVER THROUGHOUT ITS LENGTH AND BREADTH MAKING IT ALMOST IMPOSSIBLE FOR THE SIAIGON GOVERNMENT TO EXERCISE ANY FORM OF CONTROL OVER THE AREA.

BUT BY MARCH OF 1966 THE VIETCONG MONOPOLY OVER THE MEKONG WAS CHALLENGED WITH THE DEPLOYMENT OF TASK FORCE 116. AMERICAN PBR'S BEGAN TO PENETRATE DEEPER AND DEEPER INTO THE SHADY BACKWATERS, AND WITH THE ARRIVAL OF TASK FORCE 117, ARMORED MONITORS WITH 20MM AND 40MM CANNONS BLASTED THEIR WAY INTO THE VIETCONG STRONGHOLD.

THE BROWN WATER SAILORS WERE NOW A FORCE WITH WHICH THE V.C. AND N.V.A. TROOPS HAD TO RECON WITH, OPERATING OFF L.S.T.'S THAT WERE MOBILE AND COULD MOVE AT WILL, ANCHORING OFF THE MOUTH OF ANY RIVER IN THE DELTA, THE RIVERINE SAILORS COULD NOW BRING THE WAR TO THE ENEMY, AND HIT THEM HARDER THAN THEY HAD EVER BEEN HIT BEFORE.

AIDED BY THE SAILORS OFFSHORE ON CRUISERS AND DESTROYERS, THE BROWN WATER SAILORS COULD CALL IN FIRE SUPPORT FROM FIVE, SIX, EIGHT AND SIXTEEN INCH GUNS AT WILL; THE SAILORS ON THE GUN LINE HELPING THE SAILORS ON THE RIVERS TO DESTROY THE VIETCONG.

AND NOW... SHAKE YOURSELF OUT OF YOUR RACK AND HIT THE DECK - HOP ABOARD YOUR SWIFT BOAT OR MONITOR - BACK AWAY FROM YOUR SLIP AND STEER A COURSE FOR THE MOUTH OF THE RUNG SAT RIVER...



THE BROWN WATER NAVY



THIS OPERATION MAINLY INVOLVES TASK FORCE 117, BUT WE WILL BE THERE TO PLUG UP ANY HOLES THAT MIGHT OPEN UP AS THE ASSAULT GETS UNDERWAY.



I EXPECT IT WILL BE ON THE ORDER OF A FEW BOATS THAT SLIP PAST.

AND WE NAIL EM DOWN RIVER?



YEAH—THE VIETCONG TAXCOLLECTORS HAVE BEEN WORKING OVERTIME FOR THE PAST SIX OR SEVEN YEARS. BUT THE TIME FOR THEM TO FOLD UP THEIR TENTS AND SCREW HAS COME.



LIEUTENANT, IF THERE IS CONG TAX COLLECTORS—THERE'S BOUND TO BE A LOT OF SHOOTERS TOO.



NO DOUBT ABOUT THAT BOATS. THAT'S WHY TASK FORCE 117...



IS SENDING EVERY SINGLE THING IT HAS THAT FLOATS AND CARRIES A GUN.







MEANWHILE, THE MONITORS AND ARMORED TROOP CARRIERS OF TASK FORCE 111 ARE PUSHING THEIR WAY UP RIVER.



ANY COMMO FROM THE SWIFT BOATS YET?

YEAH LIEUTENANT, WE JUST PICKED THEM UP ON THE NET. THEY ARE ON THEIR WAY, BUT...



THEY ARE GOING TO BE A BIT LATE.

THAT'S OK - THE RIVER IS PRETTY QUIET FOR THE NEXT FOUR OR FIVE MILES.



IF WE SLOW IT DOWN A FEW KNOTS THEY SHOULD BE ABLE TO CATCH UP BEFORE WE REACH THE CANAL.



IT'S NOT THEM I'M CONCERNED ABOUT. THEY'LL CATCH US UP. IT'S THE SEAL TEAM, THEY'RE UP THE CREEK.

SEVEN MILES UP RIVER, ALREADY IN PLACE U.S. NAVY SEALS FROM BOAT SUPPORT UNIT ONE ARE DISEMBARKING FROM A P.B.R. LYING IN THE SHADOWS ALONG THE RIVER BANK NEAR THE RUNG SAT MARSH.



OKACE! OUR GEAR IS OFF-LOADED - POINTS OUT AND THE BULLNECK AND I ARE WAITING ON YOU.



YEAH, I KNOW. GIMMIE A HAND WITH THE EXTRA AMMO PACKS. HAVE THE BULLNECK LUMP THE BIG ONE - WE'LL NEED ALL WE CAN CARRY WHEN WE SPRING THE BUSH ON THE RATS THAT LIVE IN THIS MARSH, AND THAT'S A FACT



YOU AIN'T SHITTING ACE. HOW FAR AHEAD OF US DO YOU FIGURE THE LIEUTENANT AND TEAM TWO ARE?

DON'T SWEAT IT - THEY GOT MORE SWAMP AND SHIT TO CROSS WE'LL MAKE IT ON TIME.



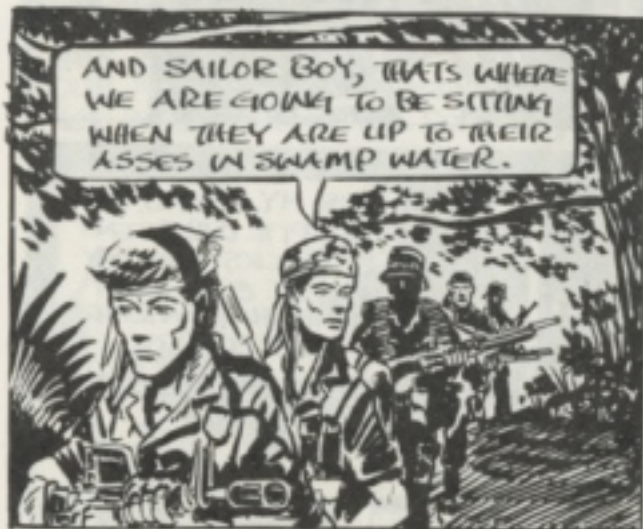
WE'VE GOT THREE HOURS TO
GET INTO POSITION ON THE
BACK SIDE OF THE VONG TI
CANAL- WE'LL BE THERE
IN HALF THAT TIME.



WHEN THE ASSAULT BOATS
START FLUSHING THE CONG
BACK OFF OF THE RIVER-
YOU CAN BET YOUR DITTY
BAG WHEN THAT HAPPENS
THEY WILL HOT FOOT IT
FOR THE MARSHES.



AND SAILOR BOY, THATS WHERE
WE ARE GOING TO BE SITTING
WHEN THEY ARE UP TO THEIR
ASSES IN SWAMP WATER.



DON'T CALL ME SAILOR
BOY HOTSHOT- SAILORS
RIDE SHIPS, THEY DON'T
HUMP SALT THROUGH A
JUNGLE.



COMRAD LI, MY HUMBLE
WORDS CAN NOT EXPRESS THE
ESTEEM WHICH IS FELT FOR
YOU AND YOUR COMRADES BY
OUR LEADERS IN THE NORTH.

COMRAD COLONEL
THAT IS
KIND OF YOU
TO SAY, BUT
WE MERELY DO
OUR PART.

MEANWHILE: UP RIVER THE VIET CONG
ARE PREPARING TO MOVE MANY TONS
OF ARMS AND AMMUNITION OUT OF
THE RUANG SAT MARSHES TO SUPPLY
THEIR FORCES WHICH OPERATE ALL
OVER THE MEKONG RIVER DELTA.



SOON THESE SUPPLIES WILL FIND A WAY DOWN RIVER AND INTO THE EAGER AND WAITING HANDS OF OUR DEDICATED COMRADES-AND THEN COMRAD LI- THEN...



THEY WILL IN TURN PUT THEM TO THE GOOD USE OF TOPPELING THE PUPPET REGIME THAT FESTERS AWAY IN SAIGON.



AND THAT IS THE DAY THAT WE HAVE ALL BEEN WORKING TOWARDS FOR SO LONG COLONEL.



YES MY FRIEND, AND DESPITE OUR RECENT SETBACKS THAT DAY MAY BE CLOSER AT HAND THAN ANYONE MAY SUSPECT.



THE VIETCONG COMMUNICATION SYSTEM IS NOT SOPHISTICATED, BUT NONE THE LESS IT IS EFFECTIVE, AND IT WORKS...



THAT IS CORRECT COMRAD, A
FORCE OF AMERICAN GUN BOATS
ARE AT THIS VERY MOMENT MERELY
NINE OR TEN KILOMETERS FROM
WHERE YOU ARE NOW!!



AND UP RIVER...

ALLIESTE!! A MESSAGE
FOR THE COMRAD COLONEL!



THIS IS NOT GOOD. WHY DID
OUR NETWORK OF OBSERVERS
NOT INFORM US OF THIS SOONER?



SURELY THIS MUST BE A MISTAKE
COMRAD. THE PUPPET REGIME'S
PUNY RIVER FORCE HAVE NEVER IN
THE PAST VENTURED UP THIS FAR.



THESE ARE NOT CRAFT
OF THE PUPPET
GOVERNMENT COMRAD,
THEY ARE AMERICAN!

THEN IF THEY REACH THIS
POINT THEY WILL OBSTRUCT
OUR EFFORTS, AND ALL
OF THESE MUCH NEEDED
SUPPLIES WILL BE DESTROYED.



NEVER THE LESS, WE WILL SET INTO MOTION VARIOUS OBSTACLES TO AT LEAST SLOW THEM DOWN WHILE WE DISPOSE OF THE SUPPLIES.



MEANWHILE THE SWIFT BOATS HAVE OVERHAULED THE MONITORS AND THEY TRAIL ASTERN ON THIS HOSTILE STRETCH OF THE RING SAT.



RIVER BOSS TO THE NINETY ONE MONITOR.

GO AHEAD SKIPPER!

FROM NOW ON BURN UP ANY LIKELY AMBUSH SITES ALONG THE BANKS AT YOUR OWN DISCRETION—DO YOU COPY?

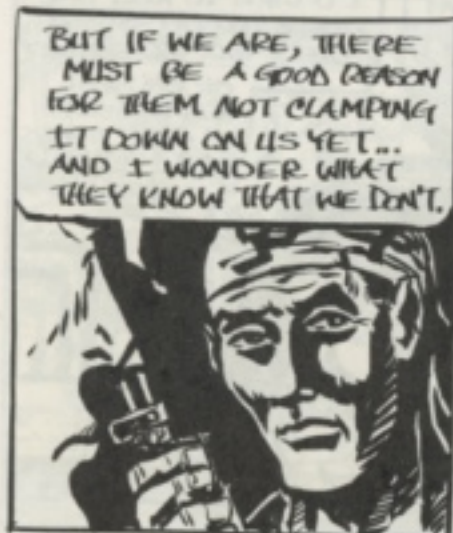
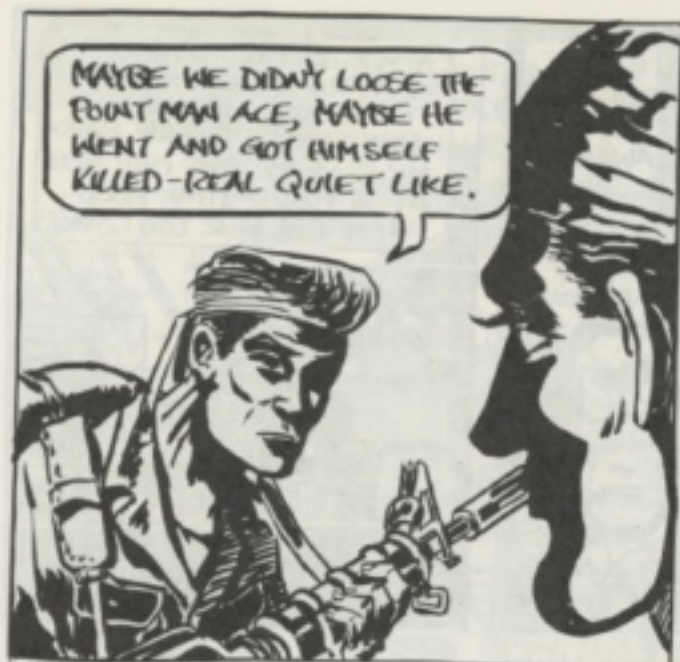




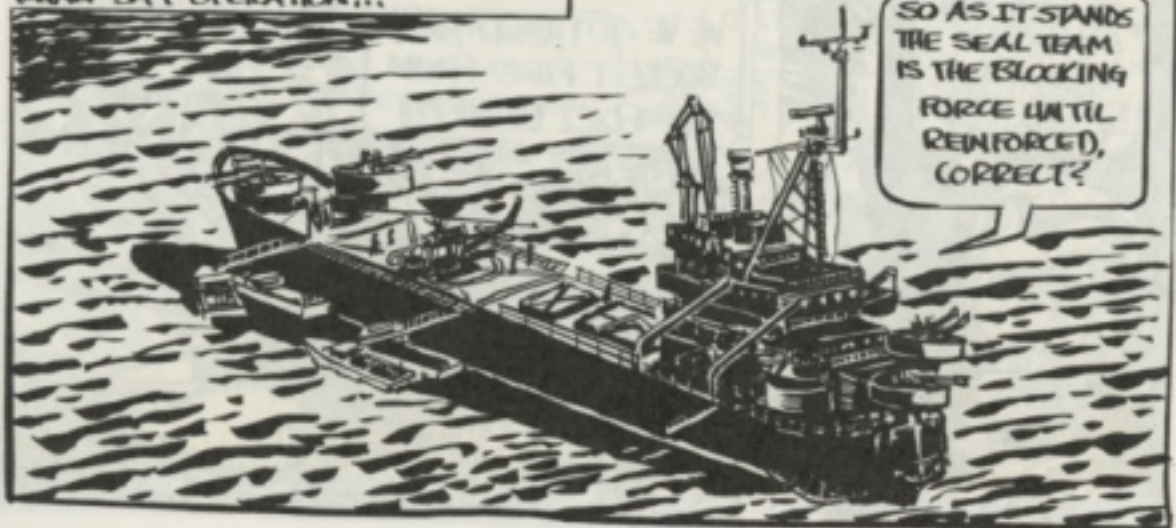
IN THE MEANTIME THINGS ARE NOT GOING SO SMOOTHLY FOR ONE OF THE SEAL TEAMS...

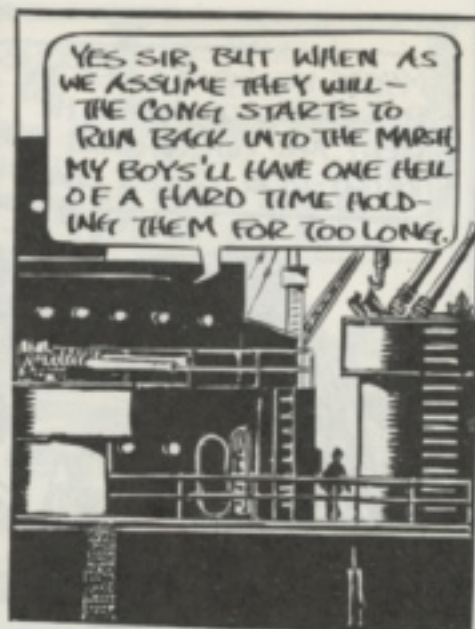
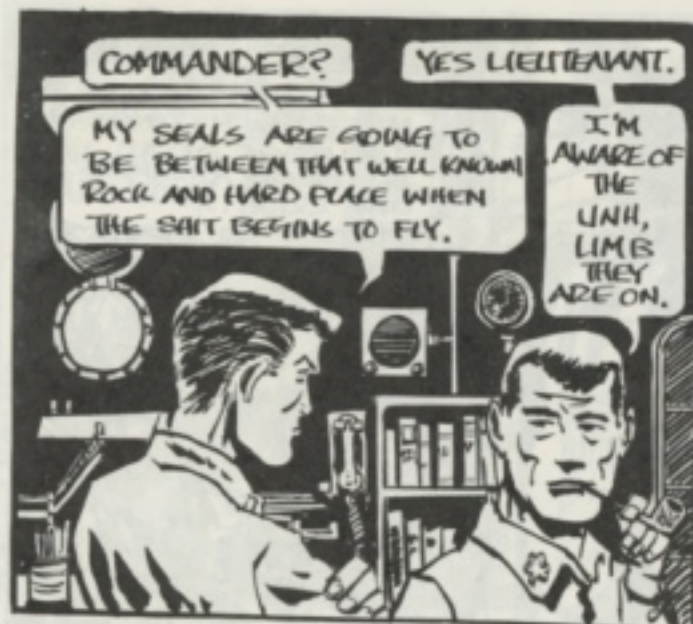






BACK ABOARD THE U.S.S. GARRETT COUNTY LST-786, SUPPORT SHIP FOR THE RING SAT OPERATION...





I SEE IT NOW! THAT
CLUMP OF TREES—ALL BOATS
CONCENTRATE YOUR FIRE ON MINE.



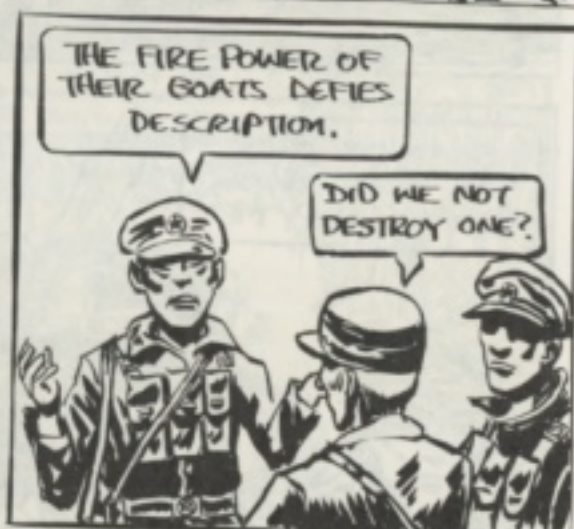
AYE, AYE,
SKIPPER!



I HOPE THEY
LIKE
TOAST!!

IF THEY DON'T
THE MOTHERS'LL
LEARN TO LIKE
IT QUICK!!



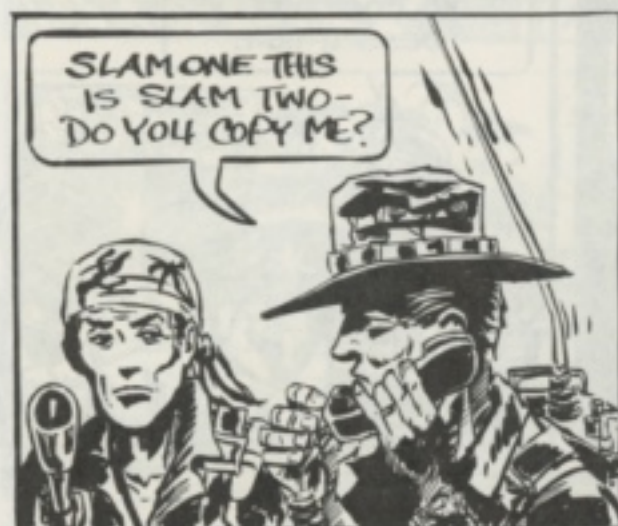


AT THAT MOMENT...



WELL, WE KNOW
THAT WE'VE FOUND
THE RING SAT
MARSH.

I CAN TELL THAT ME,
I'M ONLY UP TO MY
ASS IN SWAMP WATER.



SLAM ONE THIS
IS SLAM TWO-
DO YOU COPY ME?



YOU MUST BE
CLOSE SLAM TWO,
MY EARS ARE
VIBING FROM
YOUR
TRANSMISSION



YEAH, WE'RE COMING UPON
THE MAIN CANAL NOW, I'LL
SQUAD YOU WHEN WE ARE
INTO POSITION...COPY?



AND INSIDE THE FIVE INCH GUN MOUNTS
SWEATING SAULORS LOAD PROJECTILES
INTO THE GUN BREACHES...



THE VIETCONG HAVE LAID AN
ELABORATE AMBUSH FOR THE
RIVER ASSAULT TROOPS.



AND SO THEY WAIT... WAIT
UNTIL THE UNSUSPECTING
ASSAULT TROOPS WALK
INTO A STEEL AMBUSH...



BUT IT IS THE VIETCONG
WHO WILL BE CAUGHT IN
THE TRAP OF STEEL...



AND PULVERIZED BY
THE INCOMING FIVE INCH
HIGH EXPLOSIVE SHELLS.



AND WHEN THE SHELL FIRE
LIFTS THE ASSAULT TROOPS
MOVE IN BEHIND IT.



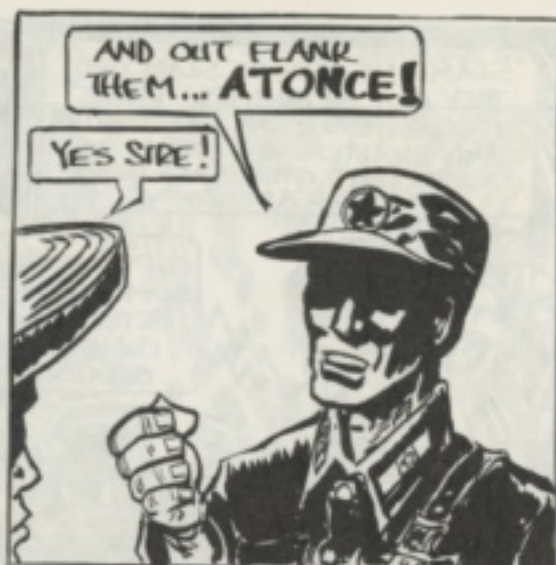
BUT NOT FOR LONG, ALREADY THE
FIRST BOAT LOADS OF SUPPLIES
ARE CROSSING THE CANAL.



THEN!

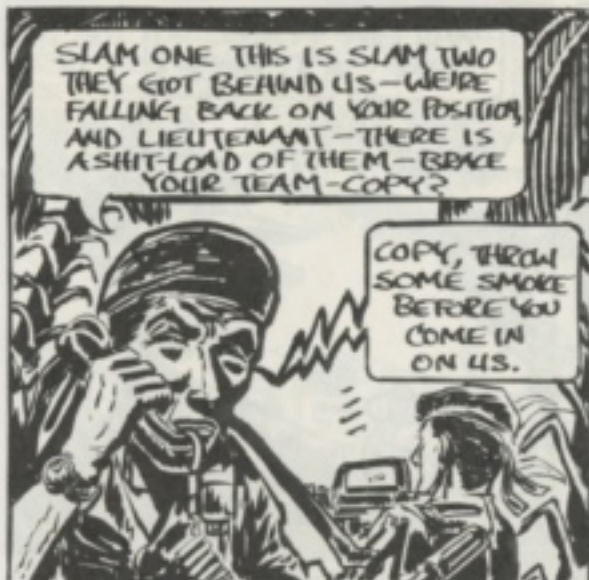
BUP-BUP-BUP-BUP!!!





THE COLONEL'S ORDERS ARE OBEYED
RAPIDLY AND SOON THE CONG ARE
DISHING IT BACK AT THE SEALS.





ONCE AGAIN FIVE INCH SHELLS FROM DESTROYERS OFF-SHORE COME SCREAMING IN
AND RAIN DOWN ON THE NORTH VIETNAMESE AND VIETCONG...



THE ASSAULT TROOPS ASHORE,
THE RIVER MONITORS AND THE
DESTROYERS ARE SQUEEZING—



FALL BACK COMRADES!
BACK TO THE BUNKERS,
BEYOND THE TREE LINE
THE BOATS CANNOT COME
UP ON THE LAND!



WHILE THE MAIN BODY OF THE V.C.
RETREAT TO THEIR BUNKER SYSTEM
A SAVAGE REAR GUARD ACTION IS
FIGHT BY STAY BEHIND TROOPS.



AND DEEP WITHIN THE BUNKER SYSTEM.

SEE CAPTAIN, WHEN THEY
ADVANCE ON THE FRONT OF
THE BUNKER COMPLEX THEY
WILL BE DECIMATED BY
REMOTE DEACTIVATED MINES.

AND WE
WILL SIMPLY
SLIP BACK
INTO THE
BUNKER SET.



YES! TO COME BACK ANOTHER DAY
TO FIGHT, THEY MAKE THE VERY SAME
MISTAKES AS THE FRENCH THESE
AMERICANS - IN THE END WE WILL
DEFEAT THEM IN THE SAME WAY.
IT IS ALMOST TOO EASY...



NOW THE JOINT ELEMENT OF RIVER ASSAULT FORCE HAS FINALLY MADE CONTACT WITH THE ENEMY.



NO QUESTION SIR, THIS IS THE BACK DOOR TO A BIG BUNKER COMPLEX-I'M TALKING BIG-THIS MOTHER RUNS ON FOREVER!

WE MADE CONTACT WITH THE SEAL TEAM. THEY ARE LOOKING FOR BUNKER EXITS NOW.

COPY THAT.



THE SEARCH FOR RAT HOLES GOING IN AND OF THE BUNKERS IS TEDIOUS, BUT PATIENCE PAYS OFF IN THE END...



THE INFORMATION ON THE BUNKER COMPLEX IS GIVEN TO THE RIVERINE FORCE COMMANDER WHO IN TURN REQUESTS MORE NAVAL GUNFIRE ON THE TARGET.

PULL YOUR MEN BACK A THOUSAND YARDS-I JUST CALLED IN ALL THE OFF-SHORE GUN FIRE I COULD GET MY HANDS ON- GIVE ME THE WORD WHEN YOU ARE PULLED BACK.

COPY.



AND NOW... BIGGER GUNS ARE BROUGHT TO BEAR ON THE ENEMY WHO THINKS HE IS SAFE DOWN IN THE DARKNESS... THE LIGHT CRUISER OKHOMA CITY CLATS STEAMS ONTO THE GUN LINE WITH ITS SIX INCH RIFLES.



PROJECTILES AND POWDER BAGS ARE LOADED INTO THE GUN BREECHES, THE ARMORED TURRET SWINGS TO STARBOARD ON ITS GARDETTE AND...



GASSES VENT FROM THE BIG RIFLES WHEN THE BREECHES ARE OPENED FOR RELOADING - MORE HIGH EXPLOSIVE PROJECTILES AND POWDER BAGS...



AND FIRE!



THE BIG SIX INCH SHELLS ARE HURLING INLAND NOW AND MORE WILL FOLLOW- THE SAILORS ON THE GUN LINE OFF-SHORE ARE HELPING THE SAILORS ON THE RIVERS



AND IN THE JUNGLE TO RILVERIZE THE V.C. AND NORTH VIETNAMESE AND SEAL THEM PERMANENTLY IN THEIR TUNNELS AND SPIDER HOLES.



WITH THIS FIRE MISSION OVER THE SHIPS STEAM AWAY- THEIR WORK FINISHED- PERHAPS NORTH WHERE THEY WILL GO TO GENERAL QUARTERS AGAIN FOR THE SAME REASON- PERHAPS THE NEXT TIME THEIR BIG GUNS BELCH FIRE AND SMOKE IT WILL BE TO KEEP A MARINE RIFLE PLATOON FROM BEING OVER RUN, OR MAYBE SIMPLY TO DESTROY A VIETCONG ASSEMBLY AREA- WHATEVER THEIR NEXT FIRE MISSION



IS, THE RESULT WILL BE THE SAME - DESTROYED ENEMY BUNKERS - DESTROYED ENEMY ARMS AND SUPPLIES - DESTROYED ENEMY PLANS - DESTROYED ENEMY SOLDIERS - DESTROYED ENEMY WILL, ...



AND WHAT OF THE SAILORS OF THE RIVERINE FORCE? THEY HAVE ALREADY GONE BACK TO THEIR JOBS



PATROLLING THE RIVERS AND CANALS OF THE VAST MEGHONG DELTA - FOR TOMORROW IS JUST NOT ANOTHER DAY IN WAR TORN SOUTH VIETNAM.

Next in
In-Country Nam
No. 4

From Survival Art Press

