

**WEATHER TODAY**

Sunny, Warmer  
High, 83; Low, 58

Yesterday  
High, 73; Low, 57

# THE INDIANAPOLIS STAR

"Where the spirit of the Lord is, there is Liberty"—II Cor. 3:17

**TODAY'S CHUCKLE**

As soon as a man marries that one girl in a million, he starts wondering what the other 999,999 might have been like.

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CARRIER DELIVERED 42¢ PER WK.  
MOTOR DELIVERED 74¢ PER WK.

10¢

**EYEWITNESS REPORT FROM TRANG BANG:**

## 'The Little Girl Stumbled Forward, Whimpering...'

By CHRISTOPHER WAIN

Trang Bang, South Vietnam (UPI)—We knew what was going to happen, and there was nothing we could do to stop it from happening. That was the worst part.

South Vietnamese army troops were getting the worst of a firefight yesterday with about 100 North Vietnamese infantry, who were dug into bunkers in the tiny hamlet of Gia Log on Highway 1 on the outskirts of Trang Bang.

At about 11:30 a.m. the heavy monsoon rains lifted enough for the South Vietnamese to call in an airstrike, but we—a group of watching newsmen—were surprised when the A1 Skyraiders turned up. The cloud base was very low at about 600 feet, and the A1s kept disappearing into the clouds.

A FORWARD air control plane flew in and, ignoring bursts of gunfire from the ground, sent in two white marker rockets to indicate the North Vietnamese positions. The ARVN (South Vietnamese troops) showed their own lines in the traditional way with a purple smoke grenade.

But the white smoke dissipated in the rain.

It was then that things started going wrong. An A1 came in and, as we saw the four high explosive bombs fall

from his wings, we realized they had been released over the wrong side of the road at least 300 yards from the North Vietnamese bunkers.

THE BOMBS exploded and then we could see ARVN troops racing across the road. Their own positions had suddenly become death traps.

Among the olive-green ARVN uniforms, I could see white shirts of the villagers who had been caught in the crossfire and also were trying to get to safety. I could see the soldiers waving the civilians to safety, and I could also see what they couldn't — another A1 coming in, straight at them.

I suppose all the pilot could see was figures running, which was what he would expect the North Vietnamese to be doing. You cannot identify people when you are 100 feet up and flying at 300 miles per hour, so he flew in and dropped four canisters of napalm on top of them. They exploded right on target. I turned away instinctively.

OUT OF THE dense black smoke caused by the flaming bombs, a group of figures eventually emerged. We left our positions and walked forward, slowly, hoping the A1s would not return.

A little girl, about 9, stumbled forward, barefooted, naked, whimpering. Three boys, who I suppose were her brothers, were with her. The girl's back

was in shreds, with the skin hanging off, as if she had suffered an instant case of third-degree sunburn.

As she reached me, she stopped. An ARVN soldier asked me if I had any water. I emptied my water-bottle on her back. There's not much you can do for napalm burns, but water does reduce the surface temperature.

The little girl stopped whimpering. Then, still obviously in deep shock, she walked along the highway back toward the refugees cowering beneath their buses and ox-carts.

THE OTHER casualties were far, far worse. There was a baby whose skin was hanging off so that it looked like a doll that had been savaged by wild dogs. The mother, next to the child, moaned in a sort of monotone. There were other burn cases. I tried not to look too hard.

An ARVN officer said he had five men dead and several others wounded, some in the fighting and some by the napalm.

It was one of those incidents that has happened countless times before in this war and presumably will happen many more times.

These were South Vietnamese planes dropping napalm on South Vietnamese peasants and troops. I believe the usual Vietnamese phrase is "Xin Loi"—or "Sorry about that."



SOUTH VIETNAM FORCES FOLLOW TERRIFIED CHILDREN FLEEING MISPLACED NAPALM STRIKE  
Girl At Center Ripped Off Her Burning Clothes; She Suffered Severe Back Burns

(AP Wirephoto)