

ON 15 SEPTEMBER,

the Marines had made one more mark in the heroic military history of the Nation

(Quoted from President NGUYEN VAN THIEU)

defense positions scattered around the city.

Finally the city was liberated from the communists, but the Marines did not stop there since their utmost objective was the Citadel where 1500 communists of the 48th Regiment were ordered to fight to the death.

The Dinh Cong Trang Citadel is a square area and looks like a cake from the top. It is surrounded with long walls and has a perimeter of 2,889 meters. The walls were built 4 meters thick and 8 meters high. Based on history, the Citadel was built in the 8th year of the Minh Mang Dynasty; its architecture is similar to that of Hue. The old Citadel plays an important role in defense. In addition, the interior of the Citadel had an elaborate defense system built by RVNAF units.

Taking advantage of those factors North Vietnamese Communists intended to use the Citadel as their last defense position. But the Communists illusion quickly vanished when they faced our valiant Marines who all know by heart this slogan :

" Any obstacle is surmountable,

Any enemy is vanquishable,

Any battlefield is appropriate."

These words are considered as a daily prayer by the Marine's Commander and all the Vietnamese Marines.

On the afternoon of the 14th of September our Marines overwhelmed the old Citadel.

Although sporadic resistance continued into the night, by 1700 hours on 15 September 1972, the last Communist rebel had paid for his crimes and the 3rd and 6th Marine Battalions were in com-

plete control.

At 1000 on 16 September, the colors were hoisted during a ceremony held at the western main gate. This announced to the people of the nation and of all the world the Marines had re-captured Quang Tri City and the old Citadel. This great feat was accomplished 4 days sooner than the time table laid out in the "Three month Campaign to reconquer territory temporarily lost to the North Vietnamese Communists".

Over 1000 enemy troops were killed within the walls of the old Citadel. Those survivors who manage to flee westward tried to cross the Thach Han River, but were annihilated by the Marines 2nd and 8th Battalions who were stationed outside the city.

After 51 days of fighting that began on the 27th of July, the Marines had exterminated 14000 communists captured 4350 weapons, 73 howitzers and seized or destroyed 79 assorted tanks. Most of this fighting was inch by inch, house by house, and block by block.

The National Flag was waving high over the ruined Citadel amid the cheerful shouts of our victorious troops.

This scene of joy was witnessed by the Marine Brigadier General who had commanded the troops and had directly conducted the battle. He was the one man who had been praised by the press.

With the victory of the Quang Tri Citadel, the Marines have shown their determination to defend our country as pointed out in the cable of congratulations from our President on 15 September 1972. The history of military heroism will record the recaptured of Quang Tri as one of its most brilliant exploits.