

## **5-60 Offers New Hope To Tan Phu Long**

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**BINH PHOU**C — The village of Tan Phu Long, isolated by Viet Cong terrorism, has been dying for two and a half years.

Two 9th Infantry Division companies, armed with ambitious projects, moved into the village recently and plan to save it from becoming a ghost town.

Indicative of Tan Phu Long's plight is its tiny hamlet of Xom Cau three miles east of Binh Phouc. In 1965 the hamlet was the thriving district headquarters of Binh Phouc with a population of more than 700.

Today only a small cluster of thatched huts and rusty tin frames house less than 200 villagers.

Why the change?

Communism. Infiltrating the village more than two years ago, the Viet Cong launched an intensive propaganda campaign. When the people refused to embrace the communist ideology, another method of persuasion was employed — terrorism.

**The final crippling blow struck Xom Cau more than a year ago when Army of the Republic of Vietnam soldiers clashed with communist forces there. Though it cost the Viet Cong 250 of their hard core troops, the enemy successfully destroyed the two bridges that link the hamlet with the outside world.**

Now the spans are a bleak tangle of steel and crumbled cement. Lime-green moss covers the rubble. And Xom Cau, with its life lines snapped, withered.

The two companies from the 5th Mechanized Battalion, 60th Infantry hope to breathe new life into Tan Phu Long.

**Engineers will rebuild the bridges, roads will be repaired. The village marketplaces will be refurbished and reopened. A fresh-water well will be dug and the schools, most of which are now in complete ruin, will be erected again.**

note: Original edition of The Old Reliable saved by PFC Don Westphal.

file: 2018 Tan Phu Long Bridges AUG 1967