

It's A Mine ...

DUC PH0, - Vietnam (IO) -

Swinging in an arc, a mine detector searches each inch of ground for metal content. The man behind the machine hears the constant hum through his earphones. A change in pitch could mean a mine.

When the operator gets a positive reading, he marks the spot with white tape and leaves it. A "prober" follows up. Using a bayonet, he carefully clears the dirt from the area, searching for the mine. With painstaking patience he plunges the bayonet into the dirt, waiting for the scrape on metal which may mean a mine is hidden below the surface.

Many times a tin can or scrap of metal is discovered. But the prober anticipates a mine each time he goes to work. When a mine is found an explosive charge is attached and detonated, eliminating the danger.

The job of sweeping the road between the 101st Airborne's command post near here and the airstrip at Montezuma, home of the 3rd Brigade, 25th Inf. Div., has become daily routine to members of companies A and C of the 39th Engineers. The 3 mile road is a major supply route and excellent place for VC mines.

Five men have died clearing the road.