

# **Diary of a Special Forces Trooper in Vietnam, 1967**









**Diary of a Special Forces  
Trooper in Vietnam, 1967**

David John Pristash

Publishing Systems, Inc. Brecksville, Ohio 44141







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To my family, friends, and associates who have helped me with my many projects over the years. But mostly to the men that served with me in Vietnam. This is your story to.







# **My Military Experiences 1965 to 1969**

The following account is written from notes I made while in the hospital in San Antonio recovering from wounds I received while in Vietnam and from communications I had with 5th Special Forces Group when I was stationed at Fort Campbell in 1968 and 1969. More recently I read several books on Vietnam (in 1992), listed in the Bibliography, which aided me in the geography of the area and which put the fighting I was involved with in Phuc Long Province in context of what was happening in the country as a whole.

In 1993 I joined the Special Forces Association, Cleveland Chapter XLV, and I am currently the Secretary of the Cleveland chapter. Some of the former SF troopers in that organization read drafts of this account and helped me to clarify this work (especially the parts relating to operations in Vietnam) prior to the final copy. Their help was greatly appreciated.

In 1994 the Cleveland Chapter of the Special Forces Association (Jim Cole, President) was the host Chapter for the national convention, which was held at the Rockside Holiday Inn. During that convention I met Steve Sherman, also an ex Special Forces trooper, who is compiling a history of Special Forces people and activities. I acquired from him a set of the "Green Beret" a magazine published by the 5th Special Forces in Vietnam from 1966 to 1970. In addition, I reviewed other material he had that allowed me to expand on the work I had been doing to write this book.

Lastly I have used the National Archives section of the Smithsonian Institute in College Park, Maryland. The military records of that period are now declassified and available for research. I have found many reports and references to the military action I was involved with by using this valuable resource. This has probably been the since most important resource to me and I do want to thank the researchers there who were able to dig out the records I needed with the limited information I was able to give them.

Every attempt has been made to accurately state what happened to the team, the camp and me. My original notes were done while recovering from severe wounds in the hospital and at the time there were things I could not remember (there were several weeks were I was in a delirious state and it took many months to get back to close to normal), especially some names of people. Materials I read in 1992 and 1994 brought back some of this loss. Sherman's work with Special Forces personnel missing in action (MIA) or killed in action (KIA) when compared to the dates and times of some of the battles I knew of gave me a way to place some other names back in. I will state that although everything that I tell about in this book is accurate to the best of my knowledge it is possible that some of the patrol activity is not in the proper time sequence, I don't think so but it is possible.

NOTE: In May of 2001 I converted this book to "PDF" format using Adobe Acrobat V 5.0 for electronic distribution. While doing so, I corrected a few typos and clarified a few points that weren't clear in the first and second editions. None of these changes were significant and so I do not consider this a true revision to the work.







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# Chapter One, History of Special Forces

The following short history is taken from information in the book written by Shelby Stanton the "Green Berets at War". This narrative was developed from the foreword to the book that was written by George C. Morton a retired U.S. Army Colonel. Colonel Morton was also the first commander of the U.S. Army Special Forces Vietnam (Provisional). It is by no means a complete history of Special Forces but it does give a very good overview of this elite unit.

The story starts just after World War II when General William J. "Wild Bill" Donovan's Office of Strategic Services (OSS) was demobilized. When this occurred the United States lost its capability to conduct unconventional warfare and the vast experiences gained by the American personnel involved with the World War II resistance movements worldwide was irretrievably lost. Unfortunately for America, this occurred at the same time that communist expansionism was being manifested throughout the newly emerging and Third World countries of Asia, Latin America, Africa and the Middle East in support of so-called national wars of liberation. Without a capability to support resistance movements in those affected countries and regions, opposition eventually withered and those nations fell under the firm grip of either the Soviet Union or the People's Republic of China. The resultant was that most of Eastern European as well as most of mainland Asia, fell under communist control.

*Note: This was the period when the "Domino Theory" was developed. This theory basically stated that countries would fall to communist expansion one after the other (geographically) much as dominos fall after the first one is pushed down. Under this scenario the Communists would use the borders of adjacent countries to infiltrate into their neighbors spreading unrest. This theory also assumed that there was a "monolithic" communism. Many years later it would be seen that both these assumptions were false and that there were other factors that were in play. In my opinion it was the significant wealth difference of the have countries verses the have not countries. This combined with the illusion of sometime for nothing promised by the Communists gave those in third world countries something to get peoples hopes up over. In actuality Karl Marx stated that industrial nations would be the first to fall to communism not the backward countries that did. In any case, the Communist system collapsed in the early 1990 and no longer presents much of a challenge to other economic systems.*

The American strategy developed in the 1950's and 1960's to block further communist expansion relied on containment backed up by the three strategic nuclear deterrents (One, Air Force B-52's; Two, the strategic land based missiles (ICBM's) and Three, the navy's; nuclear ballistic submarines and aircraft carriers.) These elements were called "The Triad". This policy resulted in a proliferation of collective or bilateral defense treaty organizations, which all involved large numbers of U.S. and allied conventional units supported by an arsenal of nuclear weapons. Although formidable these forces were totally unsuitable for the grassroots wars of liberation, which cropped up throughout the third world during this period.



The Greek Civil War and the Hukbalahap Guerrilla War in the Philippines shortly after the end of World War II both further highlighted the necessity for a national defense policy aimed at countering communist expansionism using an alternative to massive conventional intervention or atomic annihilation. Such a requirement also received impetus during the Korean War, when bands of South Korean irregulars were formed behind the lines in North Korea and conducted successful sabotage, ambush and intelligence collection operations, as well as establishing escape and evasion nets for the rescue of downed American pilots in the famous MIG Alley.

As a result, on June 20, 1952, the first contingent of volunteers assembled on Smoke Bomb Hill at Fort Bragg, North Carolina, to be organized into the 10th Special Forces Group under the auspices of the Army Chief of Psychological Warfare. The formation of this first SF unit was the direct result of the efforts of Colonel Aaron Bank an OSS veteran who is now considered to be the father of Special Forces. These volunteers were trained for infiltration deep into enemy territory by land, sea or air to conduct unconventional warfare: guerrilla warfare, sabotage, and escape and evasion. Although this original contingent included a smattering of former OSS men and individuals who had served with other guerrilla and resistance groups in World War II, the majority had no previous unconventional warfare experience. They were, however, outstanding paratrooper (airborne) qualified officers and non-commissioned officers (NCOs) who were dedicated and highly motivated individuals.

These professionals brought with them their skills in operations, intelligence, demolitions, communications, light and heavy weapons, and medicine. They were capable of operating independently as small teams for extended periods in hostile territory with minimal support. They were taught to organize, train, and equip guerrilla forces; conduct sabotage operations, support resistance movements and to evade, and if necessary, escape from enemy forces. These elite troopers adopted the insignia of the Trojan Horse as their symbol, and *De Oppresso Liber* (To Liberate from Oppression) as their motto.

In November of 1953, the 10th Special Forces Group, which had completed over a year of training at Fort Bragg, deployed to Bad Tolz in Germany. There the group prepared to support resistance movements and organize guerrilla forces in the Soviet-dominated Eastern European satellite countries and, if indicated, throughout Africa and the Middle East. On the departure of the 10th SFG for Germany, the 77th Special Forces Group was activated at Fort Bragg and cadred by members of the 10th SFG. In 1957 the 1st Special Forces Group was activated on Okinawa to support unconventional warfare missions in the Far East. By 1961, Special Forces teams from both the 77th and the 1st SFG's were operational in Korea, Taiwan, the Philippines, Vietnam, Laos, Thailand, and other nations, primarily as mobile training teams for their indigenous counterparts.

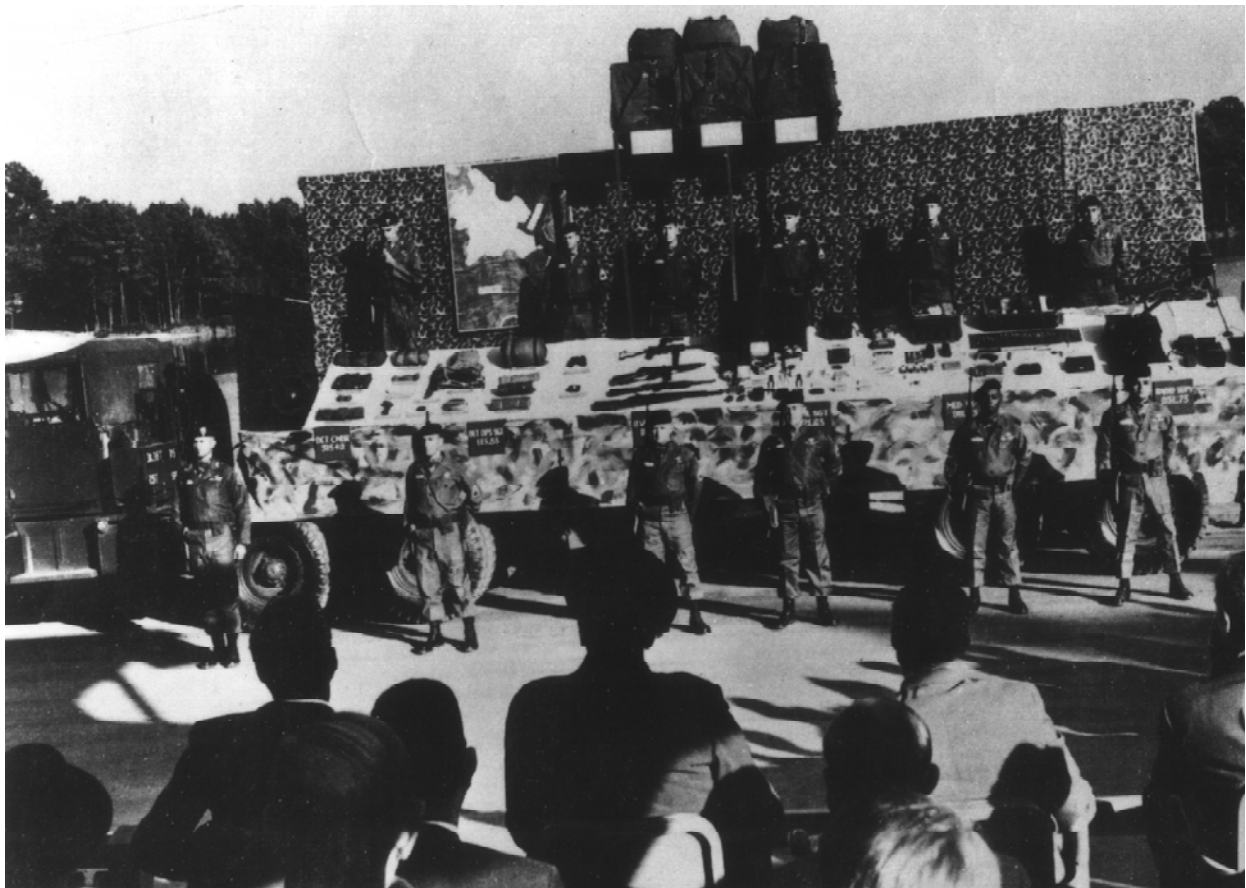
By the time John F. Kennedy became President of the United States on January 20, 1961, the communist supported national wars of liberation conducted along the periphery of the Soviet Union and Red China, as well as in Africa, the Middle East, Latin America, and Southeast Asia had assumed major proportions. President Kennedy embarrassed by the abortive Bay of Pigs operation in Cuba (which was an unsuccessful attempt at preventing the establishment of a communist regime in the Western hemisphere) and confronted by imminent communist insurgency in Laos and South Vietnam sought an alternative to committing regular U.S. forces in these areas. Later



that year, during a visit to the U.S. Army Special Warfare Center at Fort Bragg, President Kennedy found his answer.

While there Kennedy met and had discussions with Brigadier General William P. Yarborough (the Commander of the Special Warfare Center). General Yarborough was young and dynamic and, more importantly, a highly articulate advocate of unconventional warfare and counterinsurgency operations. While there Kennedy observed the capabilities of the Special Forces troops and knew this was what he was looking for. One of my friends, Ernie Tasseff, in the Cleveland Chapter of the Special Forces Association was a member of that team; he was the 2nd SF trooper from the left on the ground in the picture below. President Kennedy (first on left bottom of picture) thought that he could expand these forces and then commit them to fight communist inspired insurgencies anywhere in the world.

### **Ft. Bragg Demonstration to John F. Kennedy**





## Copy of communications from Kennedy to Yarborough

FM PRESUS THE WHITE HOUSE WASHDC

TO CG FT BRAGG

DA GRNC

BT

UNCLAS CITE WH670-61 FOR BRIGADIER GENERAL WILLIAM P.  
YARBOROUGH, COMMANDING GENERAL U.S. ARMY SPECIAL WARFARE  
CENTER FORT BRAGG, N.C.

MY CONGRATULATIONS TO YOU PERSONALLY FOR YOUR PART  
IN THE PRESENTATION TODAY AT FORT BRAGG, AND ESPECIALLY  
FOR THE IMAGINATION AS WELL AS THE PRECISION WHICH YOUR  
DIRECTION GAVE TO A DIFFICULT SUBJECT. I CAME AWAY  
WITH A NEW APPRECIATION OF YOUR MISSION AND ENTHUSIASM  
FOR ITS PERFORMANCE. I KNOW THAT YOU AND YOUR MEN NOT  
ONLY SERVE AS GOOD INSTRUCTORS, BUT AS AN INSPIRATION  
TO THE ALLIED OFFICERS WHO ATTEND YOUR SCHOOL. PLEASE  
CONVEY MY CONGRATULATIONS AND MY APPRECIATION TO ALL  
OF THE MEN WHO TOOK PART. THE CHALLENGE OF THIS OLD  
BUT NEW FORM OF OPERATIONS IS A REAL ONE AND I KNOW THAT  
YOU AND THE MEMBERS OF YOUR COMMAND WILL CARRY ON FOR  
US AND THE FREE WORLD IN A MANNER WHICH IS BOTH WORTHY  
AND INSPIRING. I AM SURE THAT THE GREEN BERET WILL BE  
A MARK OF DISTINCTION IN THE TRYING TIMES AHEAD.

JOHN F. KENNEDY

BT

CFN WH670-61

13/0259Z RUEPWW



Upon his return to Washington, President Kennedy instructed the Secretary of Defense to improve America's paramilitary and unconventional warfare capabilities. Kennedy also advised him that the United States needed a greater ability to combat communist guerrilla forces, insurgency, and subversion. Kennedy then authorized the Green Beret as the official headgear for Special Forces, describing it as a symbol of excellence, a mark of distinction, and a badge of courage (prior to this the U.S. Army did not condone its use), see copy communications on previous page. Counterinsurgency became a buzzword in Washington, and the Army Special Forces became predestined to fight in a protracted war in Vietnam that no one in Washington could foresee at the time.

The Army Special Forces lost its champion and foremost advocate of counterinsurgency and unconventional warfare on November 22, 1963, when President Kennedy was assassinated in Dallas, Texas. However, by this time, many of his directions had already been implemented. In addition to the 10th SFG in Germany, the 1st SFG in Okinawa, and the 77th (later designated the 7th) SFG at Fort Bragg, the 8th SFG had been activated in Panama, the 5th SFG was already sending personnel to Vietnam, and the 3d and the 6th SFGs were activated at Fort Bragg with African and Middle Eastern areas of assignment. The United States had finally regained its capacity to conduct unconventional warfare and counterinsurgency operations.

In Appendix A the structure for an A team is shown as it existed in the 60s. The current structure of Special Forces is totally different from that period, as is its mission. Following the A team structure list is a brief description of the course work required to become a "Green Beret." This course description is not what it was in the 60s but is more current. I have included it since, even though the details are different, it does give a feel for the amount of training required to join this elite unit.

The core mission, at least prior to the Vietnam conflict, was to have a unit with the capability to infiltrate behind enemy lines, recruit local people, train them into a fighting guerrilla force, and then to conduct military operations as required. To accomplish this require men skilled in the arts of war as well as teaching and training. Since they were to operate behind enemy lines they also needed to be independent thinkers, resourceful and self-motivated. This combination of skills was not required in any other unit in the military then or now and that is what made "Green Berets" unique.

Shortly after Kennedy's assassination the Special Warfare Center was renamed the John F. Kennedy Center for Special Warfare (in his honor) and all Special Forces troopers feel a special relationship to the young dynamic President who saw the worth of their elite unit.







## Chapter Two, Military Background Vietnam

The Political and military background of Vietnam (relating to the 1960's) is very complex with its roots starting in the early nineteenth century with the arrival of French missionaries in this part of the world. By the middle of that century the French began to consolidate their hold on the area, which they called French Indo-China so that by the start of World War II (and after about 100 years of colonialism) Vietnam had a significant French influence and virtually all the "educated" people spoke French. In 1945 the French tried to reoccupy the area after the defeat of the Germans and the Japanese. However, after being occupied by first the French and then the Japanese (the Vietnamese had a resistant movement in place during WW II to fight the Japanese) they were not about to allow the French to re-occupy their country without a fight. A war of national liberation was started by Ho Chi Minh (a political leader much like our own George Washington, who unfortunately was also a communist) shortly after the French re-occupied the area in the late 1940's. The French suffered a major military defeat at Dien Bien Phu on May 7, 1954 and this resulted in the splitting of the country on July 20, 1954 into North and South Vietnam. Several months later the French withdrew all their occupation forces. See Appendix B for several maps relating to Vietnam and the Special Forces presence there during the war.

Unlike the situation in Korea (a similar political military circumstance that occurred in the early 1950's) the leadership of South Vietnam was not good and the North saw the opportunity to re-unify the country under their leadership. This procedure started with gorilla operations in the South and was countered initially with a limited military response by the United States. However, this conflict was viewed in a global context at the time, not as something relating only to Vietnam. The prevailing political theory relating to the Post WW II era was the "Domino Theory" which indicated countries would fall sequentially to the spread of communism, so the American response started to escalate. The American leadership felt that if Vietnam fell so would Thailand and Indonesia fall, and this taken in context of what was happening in Europe was not an unreasonable assumption. Special Force personnel as well as other agency people were sent there to advise and help the south to prevent the fall of South Vietnam. By the time Kennedy was assassinated in 1963 Special Forces troops had been involved in combat for several years. Special Forces losses from 1957 through 1962 were 9 killed in action. In 1963 there were 21 USSF killed in action.

President Johnson thought he could solve the conflict by use of the regular army and escalated the situation by introducing American ground forces into a direct combat role. This was done, initially, under the "Tonkin Gulf Resolution" passed on August 7, 1964. History has shown that Johnson forced (tricked might be a better word) this resolution through congress to give him authorization for what he wanted to do and that he and MacNamara (Secretary of Defense at the time) micro managed the war without much input from the military. This lack of military input would later prove to be very costly for Johnson. In the 1990's MacNamara would write a book stating that he was wrong in what he did and that the US should not have gone in. Historically this is an absurd statement and it was not that we should not have been there so much as that the war effort was managed by Johnson and MacNamara and neither of them were up to the task. The military took the heat for a very bad situation, however it is my opinion that it was a lack of civilian leadership more than a lack of military competence that resulted in the



losses and humiliation that we incurred. The military leadership that was in place in the 60's was basically the same as that which had totally defeated the Germans and Japanese armies only fifteen years before. It's hard to believe that they would now (in the 60's) be so incompetent as to conduct an unwinnable war. Therefore, logically what was different in the 60's and from the 40's was the civilian leadership and that must be suspected as being the real reason.

*Note: What civilians forgot then and still don't comprehend is that live in the military is very different creating a structure that doesn't allow for debate over issues. This results from four core facts. One, the military is very structured and oriented on the "chain of command", a requirement of effectively doing battle. Two, military personnel are under a different set of laws called the UCMJ (Unified Code of Military Justice) and not subject to the same freedoms that civilians that for granted. Three, to prevent the enemy from knowing what you are doing it is critical to maintain secrecy. Four, and perhaps one of the most important is that the President is the Commander in Chief of the military. What this means is that unlike another government agency or branch the military is required by law to: One, obey the orders of the President without question, Two, not discusses these orders with anyone under any circumstances. Three, carry out these orders even it means you will not survive there conduct. The penalty for not following these rules is very strict and governed by the UCMJ and not any civilian court. Therefore, since the Vietnam war was fought in an un-military manner it is only logical that the military did not agree with what President Johnson was doing but was not being listened to and more importantly not allowed to talk about it to anyone under penalty of imprisonment.*

The strategy that was instituted by Johnson and MacNamara was to use the American Military as advisors to the Vietnamese military (ARVN). Since there was no "declared" war the policy was to "support" the ARVN troops so they, not the US could secure their own country. The US would supply air power, logistics and training for this to happen. However, the reality of the situation was that the South Vietnamese were not able to absorb this influx and the US military had to fill this active combat role by default. As the US pumped in more and more money and manpower the US military became more and more involved in active combat. Unfortunately, the policy of support was never changed and since North Vietnam, Cambodia, and Laos were officially off limits in the developing actions the situation was basically out of control and unwinnable for the American military command. We could react but not really gain control of the battlefield (We were always in a defensive not offensive mode). The North had the initiative and used it. Despite this it should be remembered that the United States Army never lost a major battle in Vietnam. Special Forces losses in 1964 and 1965 were 75 killed in action. In 1966 there were 97 USSF killed in action.



## Vietnam in 1967





The turning point of the war (America verses the North Vietnamese) occurred early in 1968 and was a major military action initiated by the North against the Americans and South Vietnamese in January 1968. According to James J. Wirtz in his book "The Tet Offensive" the fighting I was involved in was a diversionary effort designed to confuse the allied command prior to this now famous Tet Offensive launched on January 30, 1968. According to Wirtz, the fighting that occurred around Khe Sanh, Song Be/Loc Ninh (where I was when this occurred) and Dak To in late 1967 was designed to draw American military attention away from the build up of their forces around the major cities in Vietnam in preparation for their (VC and NVA) January 30th (Tet) attack on the cities. In 1967 there were 121 Special Forces troopers killed in action (seven of them in my camp's operating area). In 1968 this rose to 202 USSF killed in action, the peak for the war.

*Note: VC, were the Viet Cong, insurgents (theoretically recruited in the South) fighting for the overthrow of the government in the south. NVA, North Vietnamese Army, were regular army units sent from the north to fight in the south. During the course of the war the distinction between these two units was blurred (recruitment in the South was difficult and so men from the north were placed in the VC units) such that by 1969 there was really only one force. To reflect this I use the abbreviation VC/NVA extensively in my writing.*

This "Tet Offensive" was part of the military strategy developed by General Giap (who was the senior military commander for the North Vietnamese) to take over the South and reunify the country. Giap was also the general who developed and conducted the offensive that defeated the French at Den Ben Phu. The Special Forces camp I was assigned to, was in the Song Be area of operation, one on the targeted areas of the NVA diversion effort.

Giap's plan was to trick the allied command into sending all or most of the U.S. troops toward the borders with Cambodia and the DMZ (De-Militarized Zone, which was a buffer between South and North Vietnam). Once this was accomplished he would commit all his forces (VC and NVA) in a massive attack on the cities. The South Vietnamese Army units that were left protecting the cities would then collapse under this attack. It was Giap's belief that after these attack's occurred the South Vietnamese people (civilians and military) would rise up and overthrow the government in the South.

They believed that this would then lead to either a neutral government in the South or an outright re-unification of the South with the North, which was, of course, their main objective. In either case the Americans would have to leave the country. Giap and the rest of the North Vietnamese actually believed that this plan would work and this was the final battle that would win their war. This assessment, according to Wirtz, was based on totally erroneous information and intelligence in Giap's possession. In other words his entire plan was wishful thinking and doomed to total military failure.

Allied intelligence during the period August 1967 though January 1968 indicated that the North Vietnamese were going to initiate a major attack in their effort to take over the country. Unlike the North Vietnamese the allied command had an excellent grasp of the current situation in both the North and the South. They knew with certainty that the plan they were hearing about



(and which was attributed to Giap) would and could not possibly work and therefore they dismissed it as a propaganda attempt at deception (deception and false information are one of the ways to confuse an enemy as to your true objectives). The allied command, therefore, reasonably believed what they were hearing was an attempt to divert attention away from Giap's real objective. They knew that the South Vietnamese people would not support the North and that the VC/NVA commanders in the South were overestimating their military effectiveness (strength and battle results) by huge amounts (much worse than anything the US Officers did with their focus on body count).

*For example, during one six month period they (VC/NVA) reported to Giap that they killed over 80,000 Americans. There were at the time only 300,000 Americans in country and the total number of Americans killed for the entire war was fewer than 56,000.*

The allies also knew that the ARVN units, although not up to US standards, were much better than the North thought they were. To the allies a major assault on the cities, such as their intelligence indicated was being planned, would be a total military disaster and therefore would never be done (hence, in their opinion, it was a diversion to the real objective or objectives). They believed that the real offensive would be attacks on places such as Song Be or Khe Sanh, since this made a lot more military sense. They believed that Giap was going to try and capture a major military objective near the boarder with either Cambodia or North Vietnam (the DMZ) and use that for it's propaganda value. One scenario the Americans thought might happen was that the North would try to capture and hold an entire province and then set up a puppet government. To them (the Americans) this would be a logical and achievable objective.

What no one (neither the North Vietnamese nor the Americans) realized was that this massive military disaster (the Tet offensive), which totally wiped out the Viet Cong and decimated the NVA, would actually win the war for them. This massive unanticipated assault was to turn off the American people such that without their support the political leaders in America lost all credibility and therefore they were left with no options but finding a way to get out of this conflict. It cost President Johnson a second term and created a lot of problems for President Nixon. It also probably contributed to the mentality that eventually led to the Watergate break-in and cover-up, which then brought down the Nixon administration. Two American administrations discredited over a military mistake by the North Vietnamese leadership. What strange tricks fate plays on us?

After 1968 Special Forces losses in Vietnam dropped off dramatically, in 1969 there were 142 USSF killed in action and from there until 1972 there were only 125 more killed in action. This brought the total killed in action in Vietnam for Special Forces at 792 according to the work that Steven Sherman did.







## Chapter Three, Personal Background

I joined the army shortly after graduating from Ohio University in 1965 with a BBA degree in business and with a specialization in Economics. I was not into sports per se and had not taken ROTC but I was also not a "book worm" person. At 6' and 180 pounds I was physically active in hiking, swimming and lots of "pick up" games in baseball and basketball and since I had no immediate plans, I decided to join the Army. The Army had an enlistment option called the College-Op Program in the 60s, so that if a man (sorry this was the 60's no women were allowed in) was a college graduate and passed the mental and physical tests he could join the Army with a guarantee for attending Officers Candidate School (OCS). This was a very demanding army school six months in length that if a person could graduate from they would receive a commission as an officer in the United States Army as a Second Lieutenant. This was the lowest grade of Officer in the Army in a system of 10 grades (O-1 to O-10).

It was first required for the candidate to attend Basic and Advanced training as an enlisted man (the same as anyone coming into the army). This took about six months and so by the time a person graduated from OCS he was usually in the army for at least twelve months. There was a two-year minimum service after graduating so the total minimum commitment to the army was about three years. I passed all the tests in the summer of 1965 and was scheduled to start basic training at Fort Benning. I was sworn into the Army on November 20, 1965 and left by plane for Georgia where Fort Benning was located. This was also my first time on an airplane. I went down with another person from Cleveland, also in the college-op program, Roger Krumhansl. We went through all the basic courses together but he did not make the OCS program and was cut about half way through, if I remember correctly. We met a few years later and I found that he had spent the remainder of his tour of duty on Okinawa and had not seen combat.

Just prior to leaving I met a girl Darlene Ann Fill on a blind date. She was a teacher in the Parma School system and a recent Kent State graduate. We went out several times in October and November 1965 and we had a good time together. I wrote to her many times while I was in Basic Training and during this period I realized I missed her very much. When I returned to Cleveland in January (break in training) we went out some more and I realized I had fallen in love and therefore I asked her to marry me. She accepted and we made plans to get married after I got my commission in September 1966.

About a week prior to going into the service my brother who was a student at Kent State University had me come visit him and we went out and had a few beers in the local bars in the city of Kent, Ohio. My brother is 6' 3" and was really into sports and he also had a quick temper which sometimes got him into trouble. In any case, he and another guy got into some kind of argument and so we ended up on one of the campus sports fields in a fistfight. Somehow I got dragged into it and so my brother was fighting one guy while I was fighting another (I have no idea now what we were fighting about). My brother is a natural boxer (snap in his wrist) that allowed him to quickly subdue the guy he was fighting without ever getting hit. I, on the other hand, was not a boxer so I ended up in a real brawl. Eventually I subdued the guy out but he did get in a few hits such that I had a split lip and a very nice black eye.



When I showed up at Ft. Benning for Basic Training I kind of stood out and so I did take some heat initially for the way I looked. We were assigned to barracks at Harmony Church and I spent the next several weeks cleaning the place up. The 1st Cavalry prior to their being deployed to Vietnam had occupied this area. Once the training started I quickly learned the military way to do things and had no problems with the training or the discipline. In basic, AIT and later OCS we used M-14 rifles not the M-16's used today. It actually wasn't until I was at Ft. Bragg that I was issued an M-16 (AR-16 then). I qualified either expert or sharp shooter with all the military weapons I fired for qualification.

I completed all my initial training (Basic and AIT) and started OCS in March 1966. Infantry OCS was also at Fort Benning, Georgia and when I went in it was a very difficult program. Typically only 1/2 to 1/3 of the starting candidates would graduate from the grueling six-month program. We graduated 89 (I pulled out my graduation book and counted, since I actually thought it was 110 or 120) so we must have started with about 200, I don't remember the exact number. My class, called a company, was in the 7th battalion, we were OC 12-66, 71st Company, and I was in the fifth Platoon. We were also the last OCS class (in this period) where the Army made a concerted effort to cut candidates in an attempt to only commission the very best officers. Some would disagree with this evaluation but I was there and saw the difference. Good officers were graduated after this but also some that should not have been.

*Note: The best Lieutenants and Captains (company grade) in the army came through OCS, not ROTC or West Point the only other source of officers in the Army, other than battlefield commission. The West Point training only came into play at field or general grade where their extra military schooling started to pay off. There are always exceptions of course.*

The build up of combat forces in Vietnam generated the requirement for lots of junior officers, which meant the program was changed in about April 1966 to graduate typically 85% to 90% of the starting candidates. The difference to us in the program at the time was very obvious. The need in 1966 for junior infantry Lieutenants was so great that quality was sacrificed for quantity. They didn't have to do any of the things we had been required to do, and were still required to do, like spit shine the floors in our barracks. Some of the other things we had to do were; that for the first 11 weeks we had to eat at attention; that we were not allowed to walk for the first 18 weeks of the program (Any time we were not physically in the barracks 24 hours a day 7 days a week we were required to run); that in order to keep our cubicle's ready for inspection we never walked on the floor; and to save time in the morning we slept on the bunk not in it (that way we didn't have to make it).

The OCS class I was in was about half college graduates in the college-op program, like I was, and half NCOs (non commissioned officers) in the army trying to advance their standing by becoming officers. What this meant was that the class I was in was comprised of the very best mentally and physically qualified men available in the country. To be in a class like this meant something and it would be a personal challenge to graduate high in the class with this kind of physical and mental competition.



One example of the demands of the training at OCS, in July/August, 1966 on a Sunday morning one of our TAC officers decided we should go for a run. This was not unusual except there was a class four heat alert on at the time (this meant that you should not be outside except under cover). This was southern Georgia in the middle of the summer. The company went on the run anyway and of the 120 or so candidates still in the program less than half were able to complete the 5 or 6 mile run that day. Many just passed out along the way (they didn't quit) some did end up in the hospital although none were seriously harmed. I was one of those that made that run and after that I felt there was nothing I couldn't do.

Just prior to graduating from OCS Darlene and I decided to get married and so we did at a chapel at Fort Benning on a Saturday afternoon August 20, 1966. That morning some of the guys from my platoon had a bachelor party for me at a bar in Columbus, despite being a little high I did manage to say yes at the wedding. Her family came down to Georgia for the wedding but my family did not. We didn't have much of a honeymoon since I only had a weekend pass and had to go back Monday morning for training. Darlene had come down to see me once and just prior to getting married she rented an apartment for us in Columbus, Georgia next to Fort Benning. We lived there for about two or three months until I was transferred to Fort Bragg North Carolina.

### Graduation Pictures









## Chapter Four, Assignment to Special Forces

During the last half of the OCS program we were recruited by various branches/sections of the army to sign up with them. More on a whim than anything I signed up for Special Forces (Green Beret) not actual thinking that I would get in to this very elite unit. I was in excellent physical condition and with my high-test scores I qualified mentally and was tentatively assigned to the 7th Special Forces Group providing I passed some additional schools. These were airborne training (jump school) and a course at Fort Bragg for Special Warfare training for officers.

I graduated from Infantry OCS on 13 September 1966 in the top 10% or 15% of my class and received my commission as an infantry 2nd Lieutenant, MOS 1542 (MOS stands for Military Occupational Specialty). After graduating I went to jump school, also at Ft Benning, and made 5 jumps (C-119's flying box cars) as part of the qualification program. It was a physically demanding program requiring a lot of running but after OCS I was in excellent physical shape and so the course was not that much of a challenge. The second jump has the most apprehension associated with it since on the first one you don't know what to expect.

### C-119 Aircraft



*Note: Military jumps are very different from civilian jumps. In the Army Airborne units, training jumps are done in formation and with full equipment. It's the equipment that makes the difference since an airborne trooper can easily weigh in at between 250 and 300 pounds. What this means is that you come down a lot faster and hit harder. Military jumps were done at 1,200 feet except in combat when that was reduced to 500 feet to reduce exposure to ground fire.*



After graduation we drove to Fort Bragg, North Carolina, where I started Special Forces Officer training at the John F. Kennedy Center for Special Warfare. While I was at Fort Bragg Darlene and I rented a house in Fayetteville almost adjacent to Ft. Bragg and we lived there for almost a year. It was not easy for junior officers to get "on post" military housing at that time so most of us lived off post.

One of the last things we did during our special warfare training (I think it was just after Thanksgiving) was to make a jump into the Uwharrie Forest about 100 miles west of Fort Bragg. This was a training exercise where we simulated jumping into enemy territory met up with a resistance leader and where we had a specific mission to accomplish in a one-week time frame (see exhibit A for a detailed description of the course as it existed in the 70s). The 82nd Airborne Division operated in these exercises and the aggressor forces. The civilian population in this area played along with the military on these war games so it ended up being a very realistic exercise with some people supporting one side and some people the other. We, of course, did not know whom and so had to play it just like it would be done in real life.

To start the mission we took off in a C-123 from Pope Air Force base at Ft. Bragg with several "A" teams and we did a "contour" fly to the jump area. A contour fly is where you fly at low level say 500 to 600 feet above the ground to avoid radar. In hilly territory this is like a roller coaster ride. When you get to the drop zone (DZ) the plane goes up to 1,200 feet (non-combat jump altitude) and you go out. This occurred at night with no moon and full equipment (maybe 100 pounds). On the DZ, (farmers field) was to be a representative of the resistance unit we were to meet and the DZ was to be lit with bond fires.

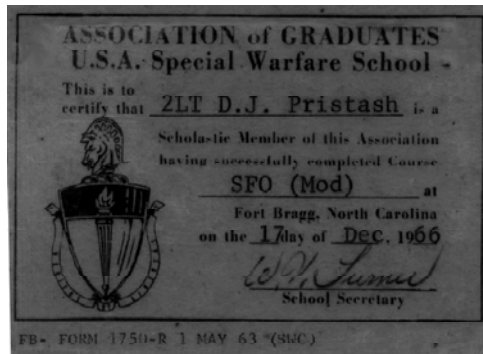
After jumping and feeling that my chute (T-10 steerable) had opened and checking my equipment I looked around and could see absolutely nothing. The plane was now gone and I couldn't see any of the other jumpers. It was total blackness, nothing above, nothing below, and nothing to the sides. It was very eerie to be hanging there and experience nothing but blackness. It was almost like sensory deprivation since almost none of my senses were registering anything. Fortunately, just before landing I was surprised to see the faint silhouette of the top of a pine tree pass by and I had a few seconds to prepare before I hit the ground. After securing my chute I saw I was in a small clearing surrounded by tall pine trees. We had been expecting to land in a large DZ not in the forest. Apparently, either the wind was not what was expected and we were all carried into the woods; or the plane was just plain off course; or it might have been intentional on part of the school to simulate the kind of mistakes that happen in real life. In any case we were all in the woods and I was the only one in the plane that was not caught up in a tree on that jump that night.

We spent the week on our assigned mission, which was to blow-up a bridge across a small river near a town. We had several planned and unplanned adventures during the week to include several long forced marches and being ambushed in our base camp. All in all it was fun living in the woods and plotting against the 82nd airborne troops. After blowing the bridge early in the morning our mission was accomplished and we were driven back to Ft. Bragg to complete the rest of the course.



On 17 December 1966 I graduated from the Special Warfare School completing all my formal army training. After graduating from all these various army courses I was assigned to A company 7th Special Forces as an A team commander (CO). Our primary mission was training of reservists. This along with intensive training of our own occupied all our time. Since the Special Warfare class I was in was shortened (shortage of SF qualified officers and enlisted men) we still had additional training to go through to be fully qualified (3 added to the MOS 31542). We were allowed to wear the Green Beret but it was not until January 10, 1967 that orders were cut officially making me a Green Beret officer.

### Card Given after Graduation



### Orders Making be a Green Beret

HEADQUARTERS  
7TH SPECIAL FORCES GROUP (AIRBORNE), 1ST SPECIAL FORCES  
Fort Bragg, North Carolina, 28307

ATCSW-SFPERP

10 January 1967

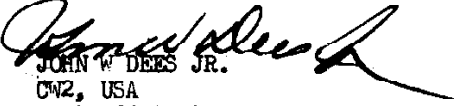
SUBJECT: Award of Prefix 3

TO: 2LT David J Pristach, 05331798  
Co A 7th SFG (Abn) 1st SF  
Ft Bragg, NC

1. Under the provisions of AR 611-101, AR 611-103, and Letter, ATCSW-SAR, HQ USASPMARSCH, 17 December 1966, Subject: Completion of Course, you are hereby awarded prefix 3 to your primary MOS.

2. Appropriate entries have been made on your DA Form 66 (Officer Qualification Record).

FOR THE COMMANDER:

  
JOHN W. DEES JR.  
CW2, USA  
Asst Adjutant



During that spring and summer I developed a close friendship with two other SF officers Gary Schlierf and John Pharaoh who were also Second Lieutenants. John was in my OCS platoon and I think Gary was in another company in our battalion (I'm not exactly sure now). Since we were all in A Company of the 7th Group we ended up spending a lot of time together both in the field and after hours. The next picture is a composite taken during one of our training sessions at camp McCall. In the picture with the three of us Gary is to the left, John is in the middle and I'm on the right.

### Camp McCall



I had one other very interesting experience while at Ft. Bragg. This occurred in the summer of 1967 when a company 7th Special Forces was given the assignment of supporting the production of John Wayne's new movie to be called the Green Beret's. Forty or fifty Officers and NCOs were given support assignments, I fortunate to be in one of them. We were all excited over this assignment and to actually be in a movie with the Duke was going to be something. One of the assignments called for going to Elgin Air Force base in Florida to film a night parachute jump. I was given the CO assignment for this assignment and a special demo "A" team was put together for this task and we flew down in a C-130, arriving in the late afternoon. Being SF the first thing we thought about was a beer and since we were a team we went to the NCO club (the NCOs wouldn't be allowed into the Officers club). We also needed someone to watch our gear so the solution was for me to switch fatigue jackets with the junior NCO on the team so I could get in the NCO club. This was accomplished without any problems and since 2nd Lieutenants were always being given odd jobs any way it was not totally unheard of for a 2nd Lieutenant to be guarding equipment. Since I was several years older than most 2nd Lieutenants (working for 1 1/2 years and than 4 1/2 years in college) I could pass as an E-5 or E-6 without any trouble.



## My Team with John Wayne



The next day my "A" team was to make a night simulated combat parachute jump from an old C-47 (military version of DC-3), which was to be filmed for a rescue scene in the up coming movie. To aid in the filming we all wore strobe lights (not very likely in real combat). After loading up and flying to the DZ we exited and we all made it down without incident, it was a large DZ. To my recollection we did not make any simulated maneuvers while on the ground it was only the jump that was filmed. We made three parachute jumps while there but none of them made the movie, apparently after the filming the script was changed. My one chance at making the movies and I got cut.

While we were there I was also able to get John Wayne to pose for a picture with my "A" team. Unfortunately, I was not in it since I was attending a staff briefing on assignments for the filming that was to be done that day when the photographer showed up to take the picture. The last day we were there, there was a party at the officers club where we met John Wayne and David Janson and all the other "Stars" that were in the movie. I did get to personally meet the "Duke" and shake his hand, he really seemed to be a great guy, and he also demonstrated that he could put down a few drinks.



I received orders to go to Vietnam in July with an in country date of 10 September 1967. Prior to leaving for Vietnam in September I thought this would be good time to take 30 days leave and Darlene and I decided to use this time as a belated honeymoon. First we went back to Cleveland and dropped off one of our cars and put in storage all the things we had accumulated in the service. Then to start we drove to the World's Fair in Toronto, Canada, which was called the Expo 67. We spent a few days there but it was nothing special and so we decided to see some other sights in Canada. We drove first to Montreal and then we were going to go to Quebec but before we got that far we decided to go to the US East Coast instead. We cut down from Canada into Vermont I think but it could have been New Hampshire and while there we had some excitement.

We did some camping on this trip to save money and we had found a campsite near the road that looked good and so we decided to stop there. We set up our tent, eat and went to sleep. Later that night while we were sleeping in our tent we heard an awful racket and a bunch of banging. Something was in the garbage cans that were near our car. Since this was Vermont and we were definitely in the woods I went out to check and could not find anything except it looked like the camp garbage cans had been disturbed, the tops were off them. Since they were on a stand and chained down I didn't think it could be a raccoon, they were too high. I thought maybe it was a bear and because there had been a rash of bear mauling's in several of the National state parks that year we moved into the car to be safe. I then moved it so it faced the garbage cans and we waited. A period of time pasted we fell asleep and then the noise was there again. This time I was ready and I hit the car headlights. The area lit up and showed not a bear but the world largest raccoon. It was as big as a small bear standing up over four feet to reach the cans and it must have weighted close to 100 pounds it was so fat from eating all the garbage. We watched it eat and leave but decided to spend the rest of the night in the car even though this was nothing to worry about.

The next day we left the raccoons and drove to Boston. While there we there we saw a real witch's home (at least according to the information given us), Plymouth rock and a replica of the Mayflower that had been built in England and sailed from there to the US a few years before. I thing we spent either one or two days there and in Main seeing the sights. We then left New England for Cleveland to spend about a week with our families before I left for Vietnam. While in Cleveland Darlene was able to get a teaching job in the Parma school system and so she would be working there while I was in Vietnam. She had taught there before we got married and so it was easy for her to get back in.

In the top two pictures on the next page the one on the left was taken of us at one of my aunt's home with my grandfather, but he got cut off and it looks like I'm asleep. The one to the right is of Darlene showing off a new outfit she had, this picture was taken at her parent's home. The last night before I was to leave we rented a motel room to get some privacy, since both our parents had small homes and no real place for us. The next day after meeting all the relatives and saying goodbye to everyone I left Cleveland by plane. Other than a few days of training here and there this would be the first real separation for Darlene and I. I always believed that I would come back but than we never now so that though that I would never see her again did cross my mind and that prospect was not good.



### Pictures Taken at Home



Upon arriving in San Francisco I was assigned to the Oakland processing terminal along with thousands of others to await assignment and transportation to the Republic of Vietnam. While I was waiting for my scheduled flight (a charter civilian plane hauling nothing but military personal to Vietnam) another officer and I toured the San Francisco bay area. Since there was nothing to do and we had several days to kill and so one day we decided to rent a car and drive over the mountains to Reno, Nevada to see what gambling was like. Neither of us had been in a casino before. We spent a few hours there lost a few dollars in the slots and than drove back the same day. It was not something either of us cared for but it was still worth the trip to see the process and the people involved in gambling.

During this two-week period between leaving Cleveland and actually arriving at my assigned unit in Vietnam, I qualified for making First Lieutenant (on 14 September 1967) by having twelve months of service as a Second Lieutenant (and of course not screwing up). Orders were cut once I was in Vietnam officially making the promotion. Therefore, when I arrived at my assigned unit I was a First Lieutenant, granted I was a junior First Lieutenant but that was ok. Since I was no longer a Second Lieutenant with all the connotations of that this was a major promotion for me.

See Appendix C for copies of the various orders and communications that I received during my military career. I have also included here copies of some of my awards.



**Darlene at her Parents Home**





**Picture taken Prior to Leaving for Oakland**





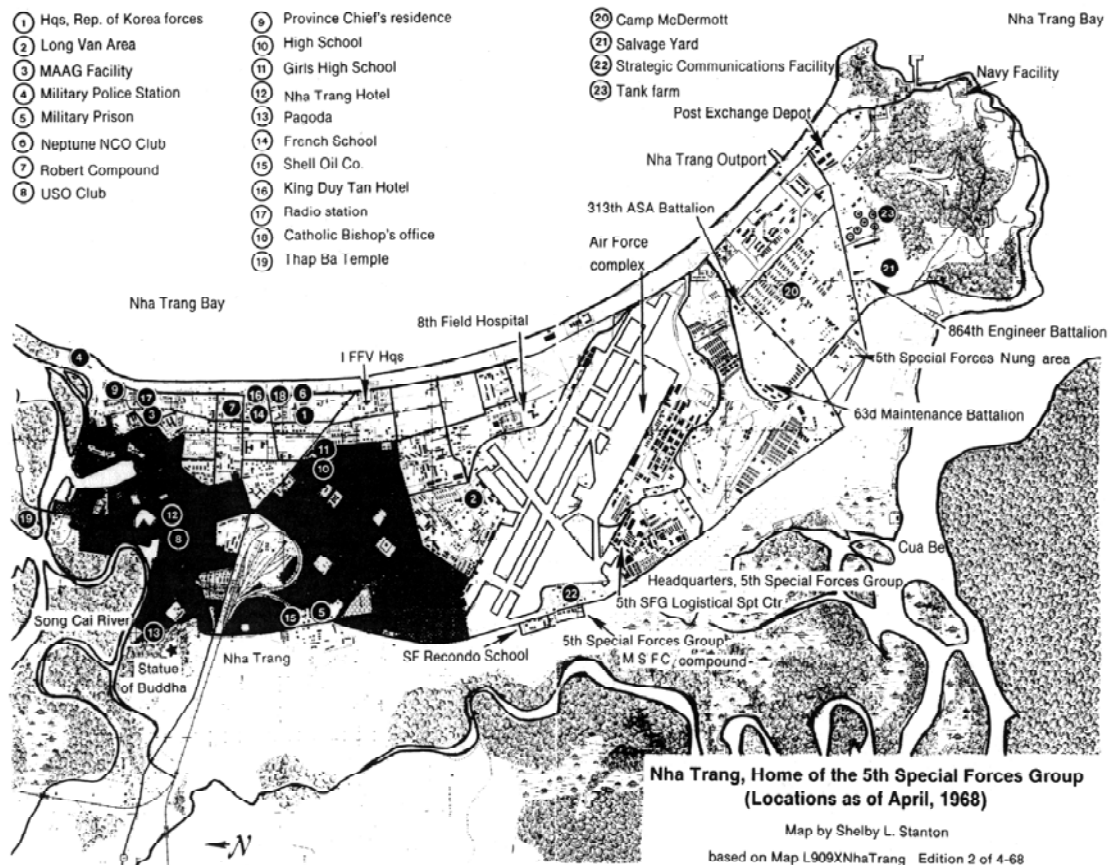




## Chapter Five, Arrival in Vietnam

The flight from San Francisco was very long with stops in Hawaii, Guam, The Philippines and finally Saigon. After just one day one day there I was flown to the 5th Special Forces Group (Airborne) 1st Special Forces Headquarters in Na Trang. The following map is of the Na Trang area and the military and Special Forces compounds. I was billeted in the main SF compound to the South East of the airstrip in the middle of the page.

### Map of Na Trang



I spent about two days there and bought a Polaroid camera in the PX to take pictures. It was a new cheap version of the famous Polaroid Land Camera that was only B & W and still of the old method that required you to coat the picture with a gel after they were taken. The following two pictures were taken in Na Trang. The one on the left is of a Parachute demonstration in the Na Trang Bay and the one on the right is behind the barracks where I was staying. I did go out one night while I was there with another officer to see the sights. We had dinner in a French restaurant in Na Trang I don't remember the name or what we had to eat but I remember it was open air and exotic and that I liked it.



## Na Trang



I was assigned to "A" Company, which had its headquarters in Ben Hoa. Ben Hoa is only a few hours by direct air travel from Na Trang (about 200 miles), but it took me three long days via truck, plane and bus to get there. Ben Hoa is a city near the Saigon, now called Ho Chi Min City. Processing in Ben Hoa took another four days including several hours of instruction on VC/NVA tactics and characteristics. The most interesting of the instruction periods were where all the incoming personnel went to the Area Specialist Team (AST) and received a briefing on the terrain, enemy forces, and friendly units in each of our respective areas of assignment.

Long Binh was a sprawling military base (the largest in Vietnam) near Ben Hoa, which had representatives of all services present on its many acres. I was told initially that I would be assigned to a unit called B-36, which is the Special Force's Mobile Gorilla Force. However, after going to Song Be in Phuoc Long Province for processing and working with the B team (B-34) S-4 for two days on a new Special Forces camp design, I was assigned instead to their Camp A-341 Bu Dop as the team XO (executive officer). Camp Bu Dop was what was called a border surveillance camp and it was in the northern most point of the B team's TAOR (Tactical Area of Responsibility) near the Cambodian boarder. There was a few more days delay before getting to Bu Dop by helicopter but once I was there I quickly fell into the camp routine and the time past by very quickly.

## SF Compound at Song Be





Special Forces Camp Bu Dop was located 80 miles almost due north of Saigon in the III CTZ (Core Tactical Zone) about 3 to 4 miles (6 to 7 klic's) south of the boarder with Cambodia. There was a dirt airstrip directly east of the camp protective wire (large enough for C-123 aircraft), and a small village called Bu Dop adjacent to the camp on the south (where the camp got its name from). There was also a French Michelin rubber plantation to the northeast about half way to the Cambodian border at a small village called Ap Phuc Tien. It was my understanding that the French plantation manager lived in Saigon and only visited this area one or twice a month. I never met him while I was at Bu Dop, although I did see his plane land at our airstrip. The Michelin rubber trees went all the way from the northeast to the southeast of camp, about 20 square miles in all and ran parallel to the runaway on the east.

*Note: The French in Vietnam were very difficult to deal with, which was somewhat strange to me since they had created the situation in Vietnam to begin with. It seemed like they had a very arrogant attitude about them, which created this situation. One thing I was told (I did not have direct knowledge) was the French kept track of any damage to their rubber trees and they charged the American's \$500 per damaged rubber tree. I believe the VC/NVA knew this and used it as part of their strategy to cost the American's money. This situation also created ill will between the American's and the French since with the VC/NVA operating in the rubber plantations there was no way we could not damage the plantations. During my stay in Vietnam I learned to generally dislike the French.*

### **C-123 Landing at Bu Dop**





There was also a dirt road (Rt. 14A) running from the camp airstrip to the plantation and on across the border into Cambodia. South of camp the road continued about 5 klic's to the district town of Bo Duc. There it split with one leg (1A) going on to the Song Be River. The bridge over that river was blown blocking motorized traffic in that direction. Route 1A then continued after the Song Be River all the way to the city of Song Be where our B team was located about 20 miles to the South East. The other leg of this road continued generally West as 14A to the city of Loc Ninh where it joined with Route 13, which went all the way to Saigon. However, the road to Loc Ninh was in very bad shape suitable only for foot travel. It was, in effect, nothing more than a trail so that the only practical way to Bu Dop was by air.

### Camp Bu Dop A-341



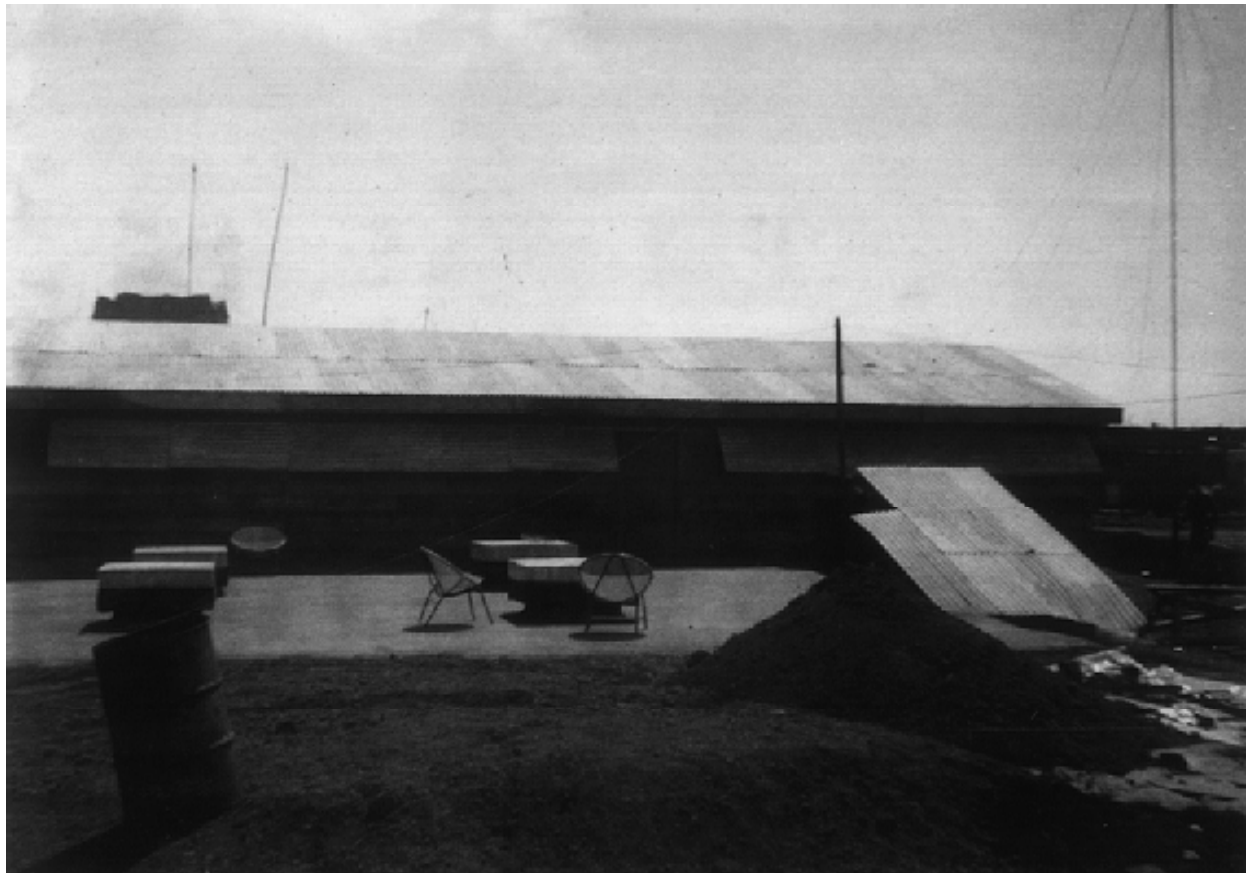
To the east of Bu Dop was the start of the Vietnamese highlands; this was a very rugged mountainous area with little population except Montagnard tribes and no active Special Forces camps for about 40 miles. I think there was a Special Forces camp at Bu Prang when I was there, but this was in II Core (The military boundary between II and III Core was about 25 miles to our east running north west to south east ). To the west of Bu Dop was Loc Ninh, which did have a Special Forces camp. The Special Forces camp at Loc Ninh was about 20 miles due West from Bu Dop. This area of the border between Vietnam and Cambodia was where the Ho Chi Min Trail turned into Vietnam and then on into the areas called War Zone C and D. In other



words, it was a very heavily traveled infiltration route. South of Bu Dop there were no Special Forces camps for about 30 to 40 miles where there were four camps grouped together on the boarder of War Zone C & D. Bu Dop, then was a very isolated military output in a hotly contested area.

Bu Dop was one of the better Special Forces camps in 1967. It was approximately square in shape with roughly 100 meters to a side and had a solid wood/sand bagged wall as its perimeter. There was a trench beyond that and barbed wire out to about 75 to 100 meters. The main gate was to the south facing the small village of Bu Dop. There were also cleared fields of fire out to several hundred meters (these are areas where all vegetation has been cut down to deny the enemy cover and concealment if and when they would attack the camp). In the approximate middle of the camp was the Special Forces compound with its own defenses and perimeter. There was a new team house, an underground bunkroom, a watchtower (also held a water tank for the kitchen and shower), an underground commo room and a command center. Bu Dop's LLDB (LLDB stood for Luc Luong Dac Biet, or Vietnamese for Special Forces) CO Lieutenant Theiu was a good Vietnamese officer (very unusual) and this made a big difference in the operations we conducted.

### **Team House**





There was in inner compound as well as the outer one. The inner defensive perimeter surrounded the SF and LLDB team houses. While I was at Bu Dop the inner defenses were not completed. Normally there would have been wire all around this inner compound. Due to all the construction the wire was not yet in place. The following picture is of one of the inner defensive bunkers that contained an M-60 machine gun.

### **Inner Bunker**



Camp Bu Dop was a heavily manned facility consisting of: a US Special Forces team (12 to 14 USSF troops); about 390 CIDG troops, we called Strikers (CIDG stood for Civilian Irregular Defense Group); an ARVN (Army of the Republic of Vietnam) artillery unit consisting of two 105 mm howitzers; and a LLDB team. The LLDB were South Vietnamese equivalent of U.S. Special Forces and technically we were their advisors and they were in charge of the camps. In practice the Special Forces CO was in charge and ran the show. The CIDG were not technically soldiers but were recruited for pay to defend their "villages". They were technically civilians being used as troops, they were more like police and never received the training required of regular military units. This is something that people including military people tended to forget (more on that later).

USSF personnel in Vietnam were on what was called separate rations. What this meant was that we were responsible for getting and preparing all our own living needs including food and laundry. The only thing the army supplied us with was uniforms, weapons and ammunition, and



even that was hard to get sometimes (We were considered to be outside the normal supply channel). This also meant that the A team needed a good scrounger to pick up needed items. What the prior team members had done to get these services performed was to hire local Vietnamese or Cambodians to shop, cook and clean for them. Since they worked very cheap it didn't cost us very much to get all this work done. We all chipped in to pay and one of the duties the XO had was to take care of the local payroll for the team. The XO was also responsible for the camp payroll for the almost 400 Strikers and so a good portion of my administration duties at Bu Dop were financial.

### **Camp Bu Dop A-341, North**



### **Camp Bu Dop A-341, South**



Prior to the two week siege of Bu Dop, starting in late November and continuing into early December, 1967 our intelligence net (local informants) started reporting more than normal VC/NVA activity. Also, our combat patrols began making more and larger contacts with the VC/NVA units operating in our area. It almost seemed that my coming to Bu Dop in September brought the increase in enemy activity from the previous low levels it had been at during the prior months of July and August. During most of 1967 and up to about mid October there had been no contacts beyond platoon size and no serious wounds among the "Strikers," LLDB or USSF personnel.



The Special Forces medic's were famous for their training and ability to act as "doctors" in parts of the world like Vietnam. Our medic's were no exception and as part of our mission to help the local peasants our medic's treated the ailments of the Vietnamese and Cambodians that lived in our area. In other areas of the country SF medics treated Montagnards and partly for this reason a special relationship developed between the "yards" and the SF.

### **Bu Dop Dispensary**



Toward the end of this quite period on my first combat patrol we ran into a small VC unit (probably a squad) and had a brief firefight (exchange of small arms fire). This was my first taste of combat and I will admit that it was scary being shot at for the first time. However, after two or three times you get used to it such that it becomes irrelevant to your actions. You feel you are either going to get it or not, it almost just doesn't matter what you do. That's not to say that you don't watch out for yourself, no one wants to be killed. It's just hard to describe the feeling, and maybe only someone who has been in combat can really understand. It's an attitude that I'll do my job to the best I can and that if I do it right and my teammates to their job's right we'll be OK. An important point to remember is that an aggressive unit with motivated and trained individuals will take fewer casualties than a timid or poorly trained unit. Mostly this is due to gaining the initiative and fire superiority (causing the opposing unit's personnel to duck down or just try to get out of the line of fire). Although this principle would obviously only apply to units of comparable size.

On this patrol after the contact was over I was on the radio with camp describing what had happened and during this communication a question came up regarding the camp's payroll (if I remember the situation correctly). During this discussion about the payroll I made the mistake of



using a personal name in the clear. We used code names to prevent the VC/NVA from gaining information about us, and I realized after I said it, that I had made a mistake, but it was too late. This was not a serious breach of security but I was informed of my error when I got back to camp. I guess I was a little rattled (being shot at for the first time) after the firefight (what we called a shooting situation) and I slipped on my radio protocol.

On this patrol as on most of them we never saw the VC/NVA. Even in the middle of most firefights while we were maneuvering you didn't see the enemy, unless it was a body or a seriously wounded person that had been left behind. Also the huge billowing fireballs and flaming flashes from guns firing that we see in movies are "Hollywood" special effects. Military weapons and explosives are designed to create destructive force not visual effects. The result of this was that during a firefight there wasn't a lot to see except some residual smoke if the battle lasted for any length of time. Noise, however, was another matter. The thud of rounds impacting, the popping of automatic weapons fire or the cracking explosions of a claymore mine were very real and exhilarating, for if you were hearing these things you knew you were still alive. Especially at night when you would be on watch and it would be completely dark and the only things you heard were of strange and exotic jungle sounds and then; you would hear the echo of a motor tube pop and several seconds later a round impacting with the hollow reverberating sounds as the blast was absorbed by the jungle. Then only deadly silence as the night jungle sounds disappeared in response and all you could experience was the visual residue of a few flashes from a firefly.

Camp construction was the word in 1967 and Bu Dop was the latest word. As previously stated we had a new team house, an underground bunker type team bunkroom and new concrete MG (machine gun) bunkers in the inner compound. This modern construction plus our nearness to the Cambodian border (6 klic's) made Bu Dop the place to come for the US military brass. We had more VIP's than VC, and I think sometimes I preferred the VC to the "leg" General who showed up one day and didn't like the police call (military term for how clean the place was) in our camp when he inspected it. What he expected to see in a camp of irregular Cambodians, Vietnamese and Montagnards in the absolute middle of nowhere, I'm not sure. It (Bu Dop) was not American unit, and it was probably more like an old frontier town in the American Wild West days than anything else.

A typical day was marked with a coded message coming in from Song Be saying Colonel "X" was on the way to visit your camp. This would start a flurry of activity. Starting with a trip to the LLDB team sergeant asking him to please conduct a police call; however, he was always on poc time (break) and could never be found. Next a cleanup of the team house to include scrapping out all the beer cans from the poker game the night before. Lastly, putting on a fresh set of jungle fatigues and freshly shined pair of boots. When Colonel "X" landed in his chopper, I would go out in our jeep to meet him and bring him into the camp for a briefing.

*Note: The term "Leg" is a derogatory one in the military and refers to a person that is not jump (airborne) qualified. Airborne units such as the 82nd Airborne Division the 101st Airborne Division and the 1st Special Forces and all it's groups considered themselves to be the best of the military, and they were.*



These briefings were conducted in our TOC (tactical operations center) by the CO 1st Lieutenant James Carter. To impress all the VIP's that visited the camp, we constructed a very impressive briefing room. It was underground with the radio room, S-2 shop and the living area. The TOC was about 12 X 16 feet in size. The front wall was false and covered with a canvass type cloth with a map of the camps TAOR (picto map 1:25,000) in the center. It was covered with plastic and opened behind so that when a switch was flipped on the podium a florescent light behind the map would come on, lighting it up. There were also curtains that could be pulled over the map. The podium was of typical size but finished in bamboo. The podium also had all the controls for the amplifier, room lights, and a homemade projector behind the map that would light up the different areas that were being discussed in the briefing. For the VIP's comfort we had a finished table 4 X 7 feet in size with 6 chairs. On the table we kept notepaper, pencils, napkins and ice water.

**Lieutenant James Carter**





The briefings were usually very short (maybe 10 or 20 minutes) since the only things the VIP's were interested in were our estimates of the locations of Viet Cong (VC) and North Vietnamese Army (NVA) units in our TAOR and where our latest enemy contacts had been and how many VC/NVA we had killed. After the briefing we would show the VIP around the camp, emphasizing the camp construction and finally take them back to their waiting chopper. Then good riddance until the next time a VIP was in our area for a visit. See Appendix D for the directive on treatment of VIP's dated October 1967.







## Chapter Six, History of SF Camp A-341, BU Dop

I was writing a short history of the camp for these VIP briefings; however it was destroyed during a motor attack in November 1967 and it was never actually passed out. The following narrative is paraphrased from a description of one of the battles that occurred at Bu Dop and was found in a book by Shelby L. Stanton called *Green Berets at War* published in 1985. The information contained in these paragraphs was also identical (as I remember it) to what I was told at Bu Dop in 1967 by some of the older team members and Lieutenant Theiu. There were also some camp records from that period that I was using in my write up that were helpful in writing the history. The following paragraph starts the narrative.

Camp Bu Dop had been the scene of a major battle on July 20, 1965. Bu Dop and the Special Forces team there were split into two camps, A-341A Bu Dop consisting of: 6 Special Forces (commanded by Captain Nugent), 8 LLDB, and 289 Stieng and Vietnamese CIDG troops. The rest of the split team A-341B consisted of: 7 Special Forces (Commanded by Lieutenant Olivaz), two CIDG companies, and a 130 man Nung Response Company and was located at Camp Bu Ghia Map, over 22 miles to the east. The Americans had intelligence that an attack was eminent but believed that it would be at Bu Ghia Map not Bu Dop. However, at 0100 hours on July 20, 1965, Special Forces Camp Bu Dop was swept by a heavy volley of mortar shells and volleys of recoilless rifle fire that immediately seriously wounded the detachment commander, damaged the camp generator, and disabled the camp's radio, cutting radio communications with Song Be.

### VC/NVA Trooper with Heavy MG

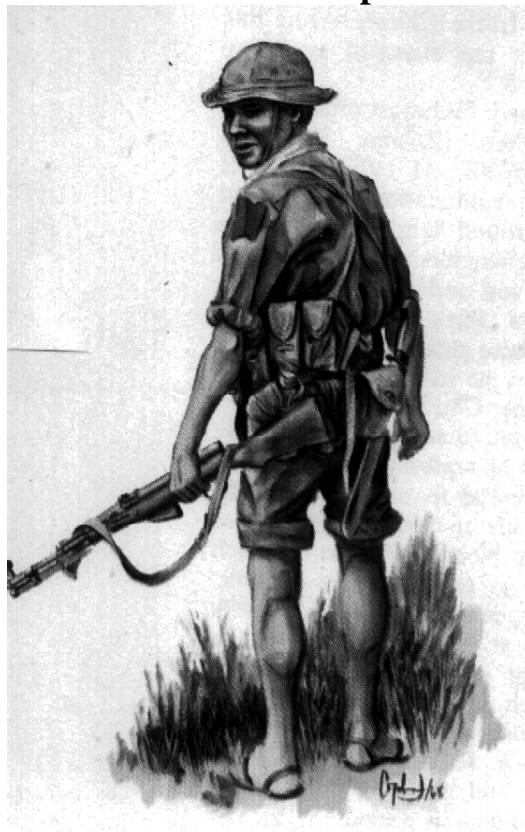




Shortly after the initial bombardment the Viet Cong followed up by storming forward, bridging moats and defensive wire with bamboo ladders. Viet Cong shock troops overwhelmed the Northwest bunker, where all the defenders died manning their posts, as other VC troops with flame throwers and VC breaching parties charged the North Wall. The Viet Cong attackers breached the wall and raced into the camp turning and machined-gunned thirty CIDG manning the northern rampart from behind. There were three Special Forces sergeants on the North Wall near the supply building and they were defending it with a light machine gun, M-16 rifles, and claymore mines. Two were killed (I believe they were SSG Faybert R. Bradshaw and SP5 Stanley P. Kierzek) and the other sergeant was wounded in this action. Other Viet Cong reached the fort's inner trench, where the camp's SF radio operator and light weapons sergeant engaged them in hand-to-hand combat at the 4.2" mortar pit.

In a darkness broken only by grenade explosions, VC signal pyrotechnics and streams of tracer rounds from automatic weapons heavy fighting was being conducted. There was also close (hand to hand) combat by the mess hall, last held defensive trenches, and generally throughout the camp. The LLDB camp commander responded valiantly, shifting CIDG troops, ammunition, and weapons to critical strong points throughout the battle that night. He bolstered the southeastern corner bunker just in time to kill scores of Viet Cong trying to cut through the defensive wire in an attempt to hurl demolition charges into that position.

### **VC/NVA Trooper**





After about 2 1/2 hours of battle at 0230 hours, aircraft arrived and dropped flares, which illuminated the compound enough for aerial firepower to be used against the Viet Cong in the open and their nearby assembly positions. The ground fighting continued in close quarters both inside the camp and along the walls. Two Special Forces troopers from the mortar trench led a counter attack to the east wall and linked up there with the LLDB captain. During this firefight, the radio operator was hit and knocked down by a group of Viet Cong riflemen recovering bodies and equipment. A final VC attack across the airfield against the east wall of the camp was beaten back at 0800 hours and the elated defenders raised a South Vietnamese flag at the East gate.

Reinforcements were airlifted in by helicopter to Bu Dop at noon, most of them from Bu Ghia Map. Bu Ghia Map, which had been scheduled for eventual closeout, was already under harassing fire. The hasty evacuation of the Bu Ghia Map Camp forced its deliberate destruction and abandonment the same day. This dictated action in which all supplies and equipment that could not be immediately airlifted out were destroyed on the spot. Meanwhile, Bu Dop was a smoking shambles. The well executed Viet Cong assault had nearly overrun the camp before it was repulsed in violent close-in fighting, inspired by the courageous leadership of the LLDB camp commander who took over after the American detachment commander had been wounded in the opening mortar barrage.

### **VC/NVA Troops**





### Bu Dop Under Construction, early 1967



That ends the narrative written by Stanton, since that period over two years ago there had only been small unit activity in Bu Dop's TAOR. This quiet period allowed the USSF command to redesign the camp and construction and fortification projects were started. It was also during this period that the main gate was moved from the East Wall to the more defensible South Wall. In fact, when I got there the camp construction was still going on. There was an excavation to the east of the American team house which was to be the underground bunker complex for the LLDB team. There was an American engineering unit at Bu Dop working on that project when I arrived there.

The picture shown on this page was probably taken in the summer of 1967. In this picture it can be seen that the gate has been moved to the South and there is construction going on in the center of the camp. A close look at the bottom of this picture will show a faint track in the wire where the road and gate were. This point is about 2/3 of the way from the Southeast corner of the camp to the Northeast corner of the camp (basically left to right). In the almost exact center of the camp is a white rectangle. This is the top of the underground bunkhouse where I slept for the time I was at Bu Dop. Directly below that white rectangle is the excavation for the team house. The far right of the area is what would be the commo room. The area to the left was



where we had the briefing room. In this picture the ARVN 105 mm howitzers are in the low left (Southeast corner) of the camp. When I got there they had been moved to the right (Northeast corner) of the camp. The area where they are located in this picture is where the American 155 mm howitzers were placed that fired in support of me many times.

### **ARVN 105mm Position**









## Chapter Seven, General Camp Activity

The basic mission at camp was to conduct border surveillance from an area about 16/18 klic's southwest of camp to a point 18/20 klic's east of camp. We also patrolled south (less frequently) about 10/12 klic's. Beyond the western point another Special Forces camp picked up the responsibility, this camp was at Loc Ninh. To the east, beyond where we patrolled, was the start of the Vietnamese highland area. There were no active American units or Special Forces Camps operating in that area while I was there (this was where the SF camp of Bu Ghia Map used to be). Our patrol area was actually beyond the range of our PRC-25 radios that we carried while on patrol (The range of a PRC-25 was officially listed as 5-8 klic's depending on terrain, jungle density and the antenna used. It could be plus or minus from that by a large degree). During those periods that we didn't have commo we were always concerned over what might happen if we ran into something that we couldn't handle.

The B team supported our long-range patrols with surveillance aircraft such as O-1 "Bird-dog" planes used by FAC (forward air controllers) as much as they could. This plane was a military version of a Cessna L-19. When they came to Bu Dop they would normally land at our strip to get a briefing and take a break and I would catch rides with them whenever I could. During the period I was in Vietnam, I logged quite a few hours over Phuc Long Province and was shot at more than once from the ground.

**View of Bu Dop taken from an O-1**





The “Bird Dog” picture below is typical of that type of plane which saw extensive service during the Vietnam conflict.

### **Bird Dog**



In the picture on the previous page you can see the difference from the picture taken earlier in the year and shown in Chapter 6. In this picture, which is taken from the West looking east, you can see that the SF team house is now completed (large white rectangle almost in the center of picture). Directly below that is the team sleeping bunker (smaller light gray rectangle). Directly above the SF team house is a small dark area. That's the excavation where the LLDB team house was going to be built. To the right of the SF team house is the existing LLDB team house and related buildings. On a diagonal line drawn from the SF team house and down and to the left about a 1/2 inch is a small white square. This is the MG bunker shown in Chapter 5 marking what was going to be the start of the inner defenses. In the lower left corner of the camp is a series of building comprising our "Hospital" and the camp armory. Not much other camp detail is discernible in the picture except the runway running across the picture from left to right and the aircraft turnaround located in the upper right hand corner. Across the top of the picture you can see the tree line marking that start of the Michelin rubber trees.

We kept at least one company of CIDG along with one or two each of LLDB and USSF personnel out on patrol at all times. The balance of the camp was kept on camp construction and repair and as much small unit training as we could get in. By manpower a typical Special Forces CIDG camp was the equivalent to a U.S. battalion, which meant there was an extensive amount of logistics required just to keep the whole operation going. A note of interest was that the CIDG were mostly armed with older WW II or Korean War era weapons (M-1's, Carbines, BAR's and 60 mm mortars), we even had some "grease" guns in our armory. One exception to this was explosives we did have access to and used lots of Claymore mines and C-4 and det cord. Even the LLDB did not have the newer M-16 which had just been issued to the army recently

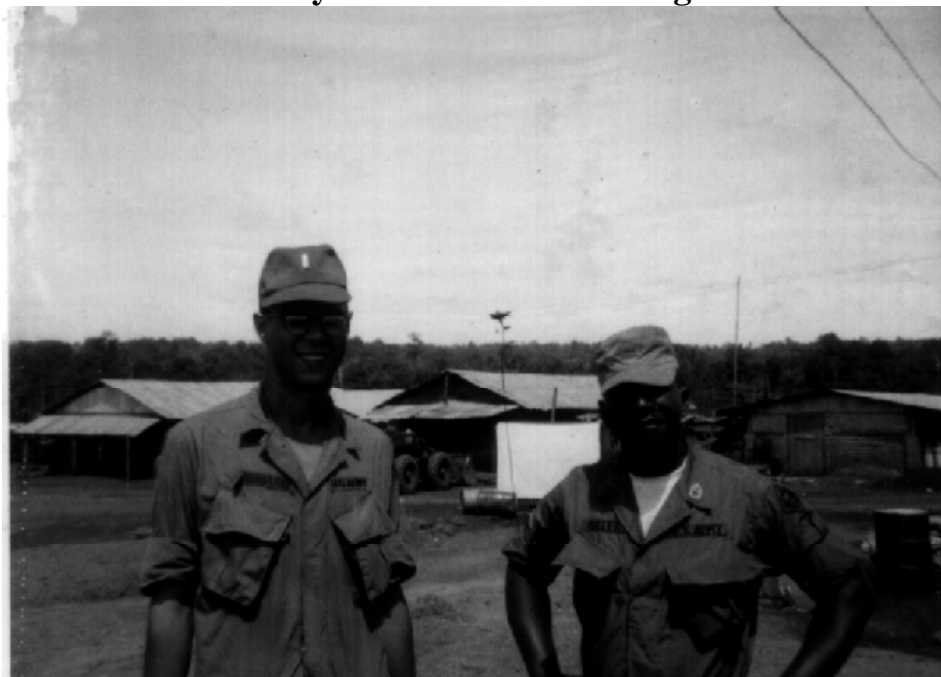


replacing the older M-14 rifle. In addition, we also had access to and used U.S. Air power. However, because we were with Vietnamese units not American units we had the air support only if American units had no need at the time. The priorities for US air support were US units first, ARVN units second and CIDG units third. Normally this was not a problem but it could have been if there was a lot of activity going on at one time.

The end result of this situation was that if we encountered VC/NVA units in the field we were usually but not always out gunned by them (they had their own problems with weapons and supplies). This along with the rudimentary military training the CIDG had meant that they could not conduct effective operations against anything but a very small VC/NVA force. This was a key factor that was sometimes lost in the heat of battle by some officers either untrained in the details of CIDG training or without enough actual field experience with them at the small unit level (platoon or company). They were willing but untrained civilians acting as soldiers and as a result there were, on occasion, unfortunate consequences for both the CIDG troopers and the USSF with them.

During the month of October, two tubes of American 155 mm artillery were airlifted into our camp as part of the continued joint operations that were always being conducted by the military command. These supplemented our two tubes of Vietnamese 105 mm artillery that were permanently assigned to the camp. The American Artillery unit was set up in the Southeast part of the camp and they proved to be very helpful to us in the coming months. The picture on the next page is of the unit's commanding officer and his first sergeant.

### **Artillery Officer and First Sergeant**





The picture below is of one of the two artillery pieces that were assigned to Bu Dop, it was typical of what was used in Vietnam during that period. Having artillery support was then and is still today very important to all infantry or ground troops. However, with the antique weapons and poorly trained CIDG troops that we (Special Forces) were working with; it was not in our capability to get into protracted firefights with the better equipped VC/NVA and win. It was only the U.S. artillery and U.S. Air support that we could count on keeping us alive. These guns and their support crew's saved us on more than one occasion from being wiped out in the field when I was in Vietnam in 1967.

### **155 MM Artillery Piece**



When this artillery unit was first assigned to Bu Dop we set them up to the South of a six foot deep excavation that had been dug out by the army engineers, just prior to my arriving in camp. This placed them in the southeast corner of the camp. As I previously explained this excavation was for the future LLDB team house on the East side of camp (last phase of the planned camp renovation project that had been started in the spring). The pit was for the fortified bunker complex that was to be below the main team house. This was basically the same design and way that our team house had been constructed during the summer. While we were moving things around in the camp to accommodate the artillery pieces one of our SF team members (I don't remember who now, and actually as I think about it I don't think anybody actually admitted to it at the time) drove a 2 1/2 ton truck a little too close to the edge of the excavation and the earth gave way on the edge with the result that the rear of the truck dropped into the pit. It ended up sitting at about a 30-degree angle and it took us quite a while to get it out. The picture below was taken just after it happened.



**Truck in Pit**



**Artillery Units Hooch's**





The picture on the previous page is of the "Hooch's" (name given to a place where the troops lived when they had the time and a chance to build shelter) the US artillery troops built for protection while they were at Bu Dop. They are typical of what was built by any American unit in the field during this period. They were basically made from sand bags with the exception of steel decking used to support the roof. If properly constructed they would protect those inside from small arms fire, mortar rounds and RPG's (rockets contain a small shaped charge grenade launched from hand help weapons). This picture is taken from the side of the SF team house looking toward the Southeast. In the foreground is the pit previously described (you can only see a corner of it). A few American artillery troopers can be seen in the picture to the right side. As can be seen the hooch's stand only about 5 feet tall so they are good only for sleeping and basic protection and they were very cramped.

In the middle of the picture just before the sky line starts you can see the inside of the East wall of the camp. Toward the middle of the portion of the wall that you can see is a latter on a slight mound of earth. We used these latter's to climb on top of the wall. We had several of them placed around the camp so we could get up on the wall lie down and make observations as to our surroundings. I used this method many times while I was in Vietnam at Bu Dop. It was especially effective at night. I might add here that the VC/NVA did not have night vision devices and no one then a thermal imaging devices which would have made this method of observation less than desirable. The next several pictures (given to me in 2002 by Paul Posey) show the 155 mm artillery unit in action.

### **Kind of Messy**





**On the Way**



**Two for One**





The next picture, below, was taken of me during this approximate time frame, it's typical of how we looked and dressed in camp (at least when no one was around to see us) this was not quite a regulation U.S. Army sanctioned uniform as can be seen, and there is more on this "dress" subject later in my story. To my right (in the picture) is the team shower room, which was placed under a water tower that we used to store potable water. Behind me on the ground is some kind of either an equipment boom or an antenna mast, the former I think. I can't remember which and I guess I didn't think it important enough to write about or make a note of at the time. The barrels to my left are right on the edge of the pit as shown in the "truck" picture a couple of pages back. Directly behind me is one of the fortified Vietnamese artillery positions. There were two of them in camp and each contained one 105 mm artillery piece manned by a crew from the regular Vietnamese Army artillery which was assigned to this camp. In this picture you can see the sand bag fortification but not the 105 mm guns, which are inside and protected from all but a direct hit. This picture was taken looking almost due north toward Cambodia from the East side of the team house.

**Lt. Pristash in Work Uniform**





**Another View of Bu Dop**



**Looking West**





## When it Rained

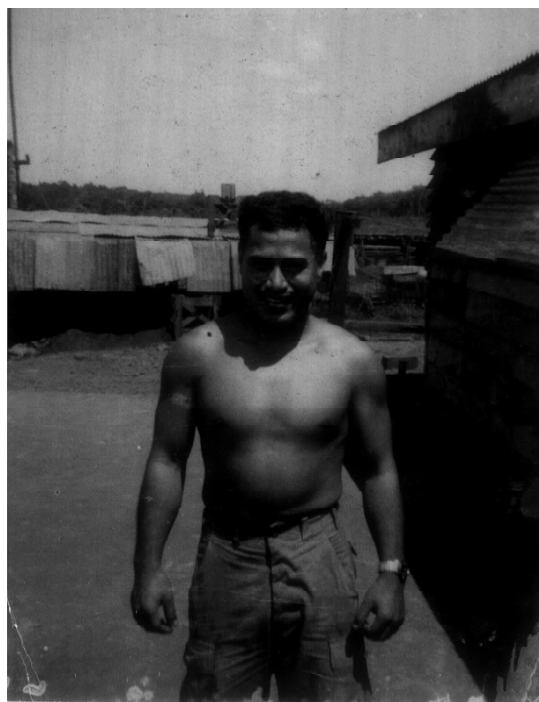
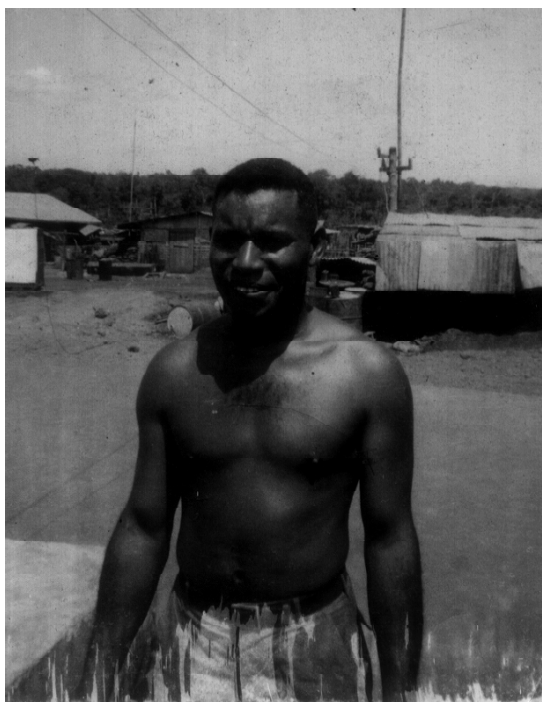


The above picture shows what it was like, in camp when it rained, and it rained a lot. The entire inside of the camp was dirt and so it quickly turned to mud within a few minutes of the rain starting. I was not there during the actual rainy part of the year but I can imagine what it must have been like from what we got during the time I was there.

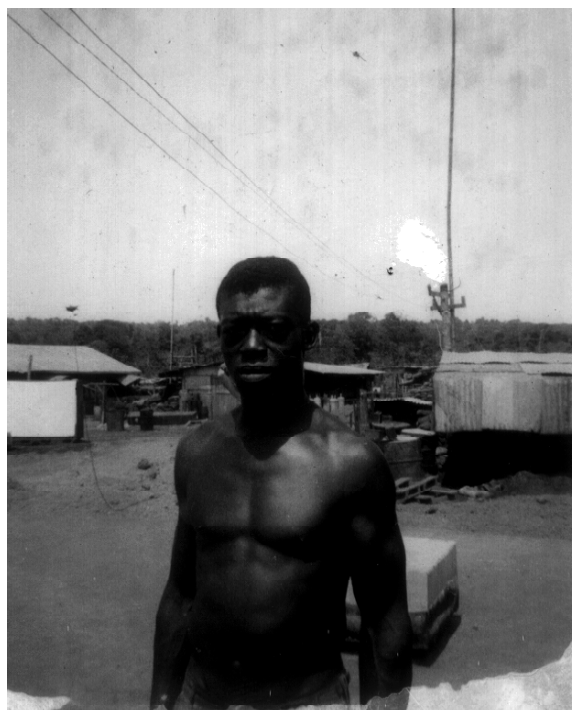
The following pages have pictures of various team members that were assigned to Bu Dop while I was there. I have some names (most without proper spelling) but not all of them and so rather than taking the chance of placing incorrectly spelled names with the wrong picture I will not put any names with these pictures, I know I won't get them right, it was just so long ago. I apologize to any team member that may ever see this book but thirty years is a long time and I'm just not sure which name goes with what picture. Also, these are not all of the team members some pictures were lost and others I never got a chance to take while I was there. I have also included here a few pictures of the Vietnamese LLDB team members and also one of the Vietnamese interpreters that we used.



### **Camp Bu Dop SF Team Members**

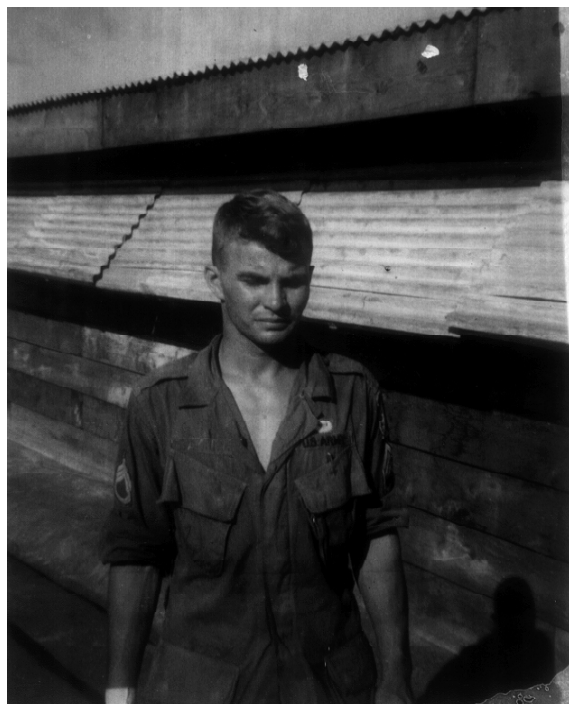


### **Camp Bu Dop SF Team Members**

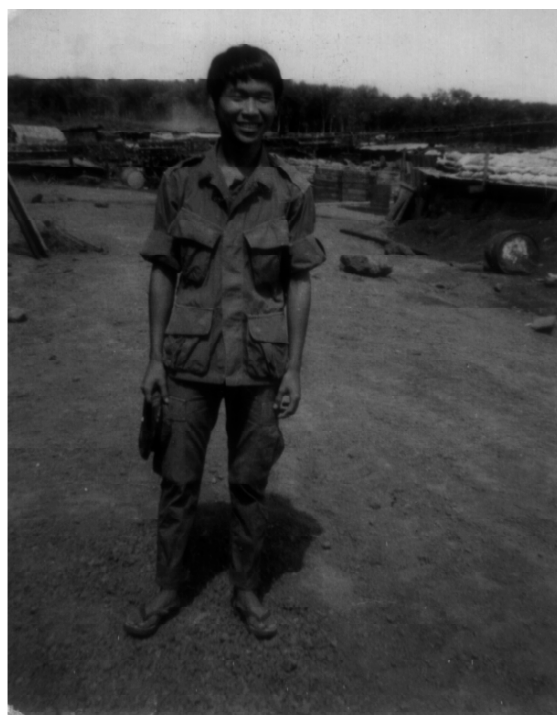
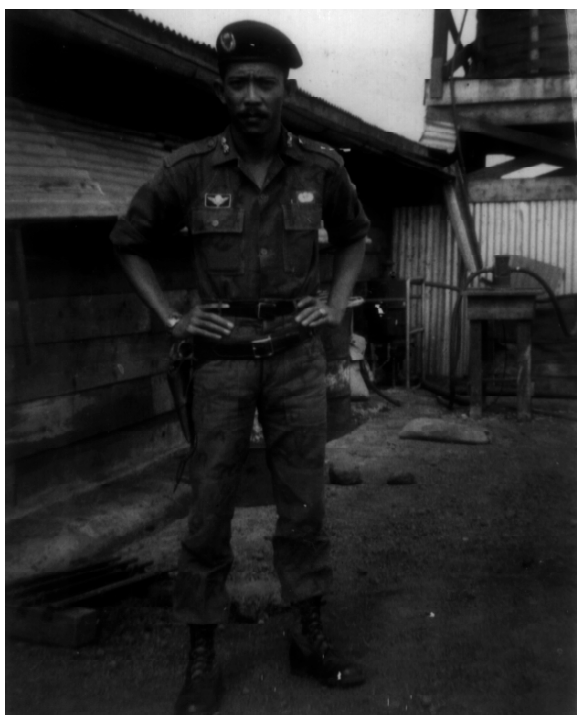




### **Camp Bu Dop SF Team Members**



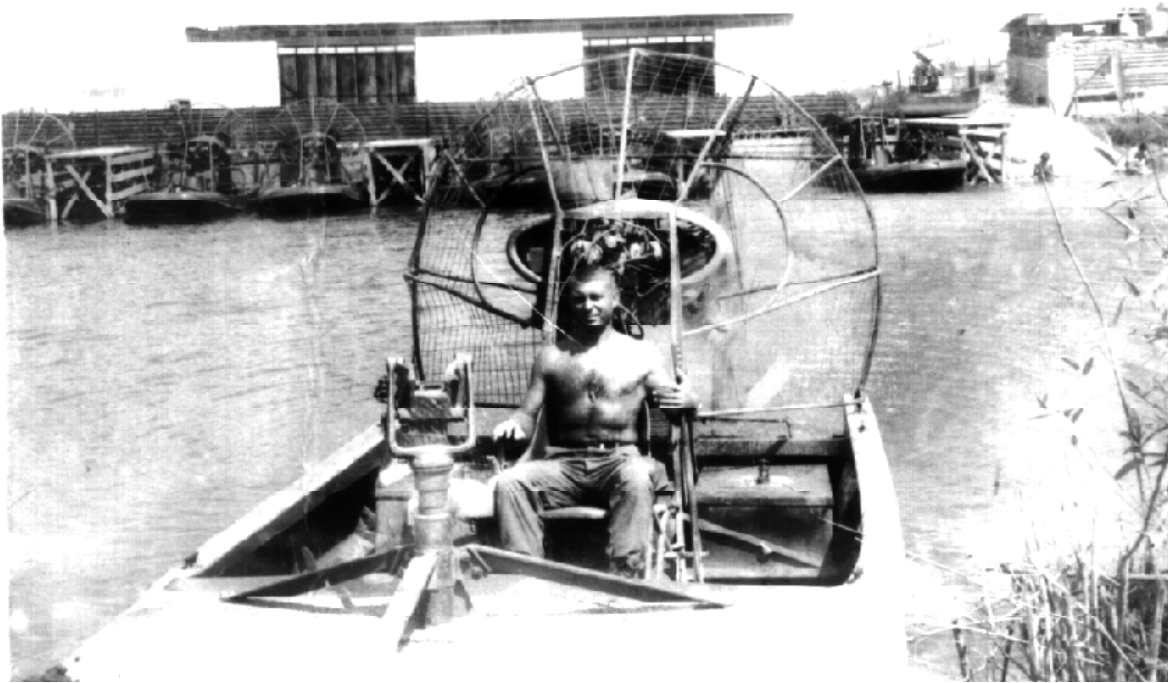
### **Camp Bu Dop LLDB Team Member**





My friend John Pharaoh who had also been sent to Vietnam at about the same time that I was ended up being sent to an A Team in IV Core to the South. I did not know this at the time and the following picture was received by me much later. As can be seen his uniform was about the same as mine.

**Lt. John Pharaoh**









## Chapter Eight, Patrols

On one of my first patrols I experienced some unforeseen excitement. After forming up, leaving camp and going through several rice patties, we entered the swamp to the northwest of camp. During the rainy season this area was totally impassable but at this time of year the water was only about waist deep. We were into the swamp about 500 to 600 meters when two American gun ships flew by our patrol firing their M-60's and mini-guns at us. They had mistaken us for a VC unit. This was somewhat understandable since we dressed very similar to the VC and most of the patrol was Vietnamese (our point unit carried captured AK-47's and looked like a VC squad, we did this intentionally to try and confuse any VC we might run into). The rounds impacted about 25 to 50 meters to our left flank but it was still much too close for any of our comfort. The only thing we could think of was to get deeper in the swamp to lose them, we sure couldn't dig in. For a while we received incoming rounds all around us but as we got into denser canopy they could no longer see us. This was one time I was sure glad the Americans gunners couldn't shoot straight; no one on the patrol was hit.

**VC or CIDG trooper**





While all this was going on I tried calling the camp but the jungle canopy was way too thick and I could not get through (a very common experience when on patrol in Vietnam). We could all hear the gun ships circling overhead but they had lost us in the swamp by this time. After it was clear for a while we started walking back toward the rice patties to try and get clear of the jungle canopy and report what had happened to us, and to make sure they did not do this again. Once we were out of the jungle, maybe an hour after this all happened, I was able to re-establish communications with Bu Dop. I explained to them the situation and they acknowledged the problem and said that they would contact the B team to tell them our location, by this time it was too late to call off the gun ships they were long gone. They did tell us, in a follow up communications 10 or 15 minutes later, that besides our patrol that the gun ships had seen a large force of VC north of where we were, as they were leaving, and that we should get back to camp since it was a lot bigger unit than we could handle. By mid-afternoon we were back in camp and that ended that patrol.

When we went on patrol our equipment was totally different than that which would be carried by an equivalent American unit. We (USSF) custom designed our patrol gear to be as light as possible which gave us the ability to move fast and quickly in the jungle, we also never moved on trails. We wore camouflage fatigues and jungle hats (not the standard issue American jungle fatigues) and generally tried to blend into the jungle as much as possible. We carried LRP (long range patrol rations) called "lurp's" which were dried food in sealed bags that required only water to eat. We normally used backpacks instead of web gear and carried hammocks to sleep on. Since most of us spoke only a little Vietnamese, we each took an interpreter with us and also had a CIDG radio operator for our PRC-25. On a few patrols, I carried my own radio for speed of communications. The radio was literally our lifeline and I so felt more comfortable caring it myself. Since I was 6' plus and 180# and in excellent physical shape caring a 30 or 40 pound radio was no burden to me.

When on patrol we generally went single column sometimes with and sometimes without flank (flank is to the side either left or right) and rear security, but always with a point man/unit. We always moved fast and in indirect paths to get where we were going. We avoided all paths or roads at all times for (at least to us) obvious reasons. This type of patrolling minimized ambushes since it would be almost impossible for the VC or NVA to predict where we were really going or when we would get there. Conventional American infantry units tended to patrol in a more conventional method that dictated that they move much slower. This was both safer (they secured an area before moving to the next) and more dangerous since they were more predictable in their actions. I think that the methods we used were more suited to the quasi gorilla warfare we were in and where there were seldom large units of VC/NVA around.

While writing this account many years later I can't recall that any of our patrols were ever ambushed while I was there. That's not to say that we did not make contact with enemy units, for we did many times, but only that we were never ambushed (there was one almost ambush which I'll talk about later in this book) which I attribute to this patrol policy that we used. What I don't know since Bu Dop was the only SF camp I ever served in is whether other camps did the same things we did. I do know that this policy was forgotten since in talking to SF officers who served 20 years later they were never told of patrol policies like we used in 1967 at SF camp A341 Bu Dop.



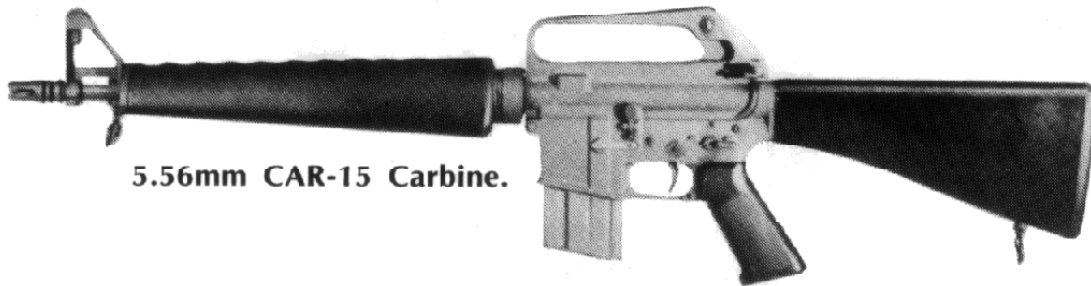
## On Patrol in Vietnam



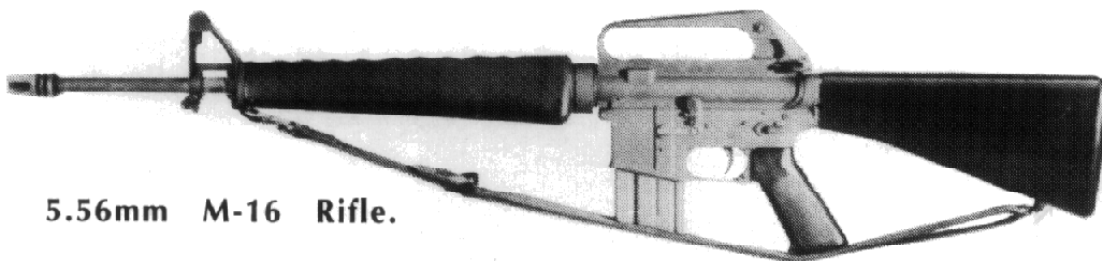


The following pictures depict some of the weapons that were used by Special Forces and the CIDG troops in Vietnam during the 60's. By no means are these all of the weapons used but only the most common hand weapons found. The CAR-15 shown below was an early version without the folding stock that became standard later.

### **Weapons used by SF in 1960's**



**5.56mm CAR-15 Carbine.**



**5.56mm M-16 Rifle.**



**Cal. 45, M-1911A1  
automatic pistol.**



The following weapons were the ones used by the CIDG troops and in some cases SP personal also. They were for the most part surplus WW II style weapons.

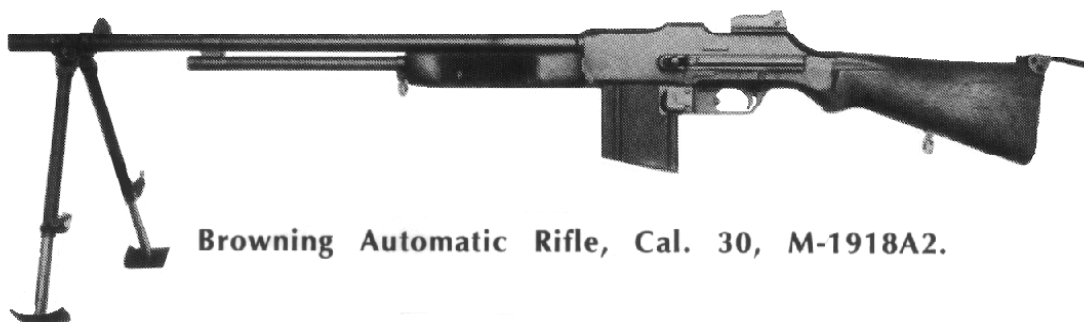
### **CIDG Weapons 1960's**



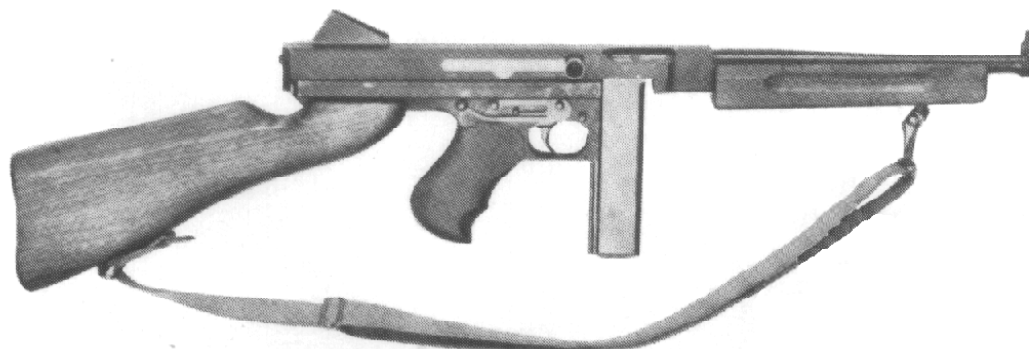
**US Rifle, Cal. 30, M-1.**



**US Carbine, Cal. 30, M-2.**



**Browning Automatic Rifle, Cal. 30, M-1918A2.**



**Cal. 45 Submachine Gun M-1.**







## Chapter Nine, Start of the Tet build up

The increased enemy activity at Bu Dop started in the middle of October, 1967 when a patrol advised by Lieutenant James Carter, the camp CO, found a hospital complex being constructed near the Song Be River. This alone was a good indicator of an offensive somewhere in Phuc Long or Binh Long Province (to the west) since the VC never built hospitals unless they were planning an operation that would have need of them. The VC construction crew was routed with 5 KIA's and an unknown number wounded. The camp patrol's only casualties were 2 WIA's, of a minor nature not requiring evacuation. Several weapons were captured along with 40 to 50 pounds of medical supplies and many documents. These documents when brought back to camp and translated later when the patrol was finished stated that the coming winter offensive would begin in November with attacks on either of two targets. The Special Forces camps at either Loc Ninh or Bu Dop were to be taken and held (nice to capture documents stating that you may be a target). On the return to the camp the patrol found a new road/trail that appeared to come from Cambodia (VC/NVA made) but they were too low on ammo to set up an ambush and so they continued back to camp. The picture below was of the Song Be River South of where the hospital complex was.

**Song Be River Area**





This road was a very tempting target and so Lieutenant Carter and the B team planned an ARC Light (B-52 strike) for the next week, 24 October 1967. To follow up on that they planned an airmobile operation for 25 October 1967 into a nearby LZ (landing zone) to do a BDA (bomb damage assessment) of the strike. At the time the ARC Light was scheduled (dusk) we all went outside and watched it from Bu Dop (about 14 klic's away). We all came out and sat on top of our underground team room/sleeping quarters, which was a heavily fortified bunker, and sat there watching while we had a couple of cans of beer. It was an amazing sight to see the huge clouds of smoke billow up above the jungle in the distance. Considering the distance that we were from the bombsite these smoke clouds must have gone up thousands of feet. At the time I was thinking about all the incredible damage that must be going on in that jungle.

Lieutenant Carter, myself, along with one of the team medics, SP4 Paul Posey were to go along with 160 Strikers (two companies) on this airmobile mission. The LLDB CO, Lieutenant Thieu, would be the Vietnamese officer in charge. This high profile mission consisted of a flight of approximately 14 UH1-D's "Hughy's" helicopters with gunship support. There were no incidents from the camp to the LZ and it was also a cold LZ (we were not shot at when we landed) and as soon as we were formed up we started for the road about 2 klic's away. As soon as we got to the road we made contact with a VC squad and had a brief 10-minute firefight. We wounded one VC and captured him, however he was severely wounded and died on the way to be medevaced despite what our medic SP4 Posey did try and save him.

**SP4 Posy with M-60 machine gun**





After first moving south about 3 klic's and searching the road for signs of use by the VC, we turned 180 degrees and went north to the B-52 strike about 5 klic's up the road. A B-52 strike is something to see for it leaves some very large holes in the jungle over quite an area. One crater from a 1,000 pound bomb is about 60/70 feet across and about 15/20 feet deep. The jungle is resilient however, and 10 to 15 meters into the jungle from the crater's edge it's hard to see that anything had happened. I'm not sure how many bombs are carried in a B-52 but there were three planes in this strike and there must have been at least 30 craters. After check a number craters and the surrounding area we didn't find any signs that this strike had hit anything. Of course, with the size of the explosions it may be that there was a hit and there was nothing left to see. However, despite all the awesome craters it was not exactly what I had expected to see the day before. There were large gaps between craters and with trees standing between it was difficult to see the whole effect.

While we were checking the strike area we made contact again with another VC/NVA squad that was carrying supplies south toward Saigon. Again we had a brief firefight, maybe 5 minutes in duration, with no known VC/NVA casualties. We had no wounded or killed in this short firefight. I was in the bottom of one of the craters when the shooting started and by the time I got up to the top the action was mostly over. In my scramble up to the crater rim the sling on my M-16 rifle became hooked on some of my equipment and it took me a few seconds to untangle it. Fortunately I did not need to return fire immediately and so it was not a mayor problem. But I was a little shock up as I realized that if it had been a major firefight I could have been killed. After that experience I removed the sling completely, I didn't want anything like that happening again. When we checked the area after the firefight we found that they had left the supplies and a cross cut saw that they were carrying. We gave the supplies (food) to our Strikers who were always hungry. It seems as though they ate twice what I did and I outweighed them by at least 50 pounds.

We took a 20 minute break there and then moved north along the road for about 2 to 3 klic's with the idea of setting up an ambush near the Cambodian border that night. However, before we reached the spot where we had picked for the ambush we again made contact. After a 15 minute firefight with an estimated VC squad we had one WIA (slight) and had killed one VC. Because we had, had two firefights in a very short period of time we decided it might be a good idea to get additional ammo and so we called Bu Dop for a re-supply to be delivered at a LZ about 3 klic's from our position. We moved out toward the LZ and hadn't been moving more than ten minutes when the point of our patrol made contact with an estimated VC/NVA platoon. As we deployed in an attempt at encirclement, the rear security made contact with another platoon sized VC/NVA unit and a few seconds later, the left flank came under fire.

It was obvious from the extent of the contact that we had met a unit at least our size, if not larger. The patrol was returning fire and holding its own, but after all the fighting we had done our ammunition was too low to try and maintain the contact. Lieutenant Carter advised an immediate withdrawal to our re-supply point. With the maneuvering that was going on the rear element (about 20 CIDG) with SP4 Posey was not in contact at this time and so they were moved up into a covering position. By the time this was accomplished the VC/NVA were on three sides of the patrol and they were attempting an encirclement of our patrol. We gave them as much ammo as we could possibly spare and while they laid down covering fire the rest of the patrol



withdrew to the right flank. SP4 Posey and the CIDG platoon were able to delay the assault long enough for the rest of the patrol to disengage safely.

Then at a prearranged signal, SP4 Posey and the rear security withdrew and artillery (two tubes of 155 mm howitzer at camp Bu Dop) were called to provide covering fire while we went for our re-supply point. The artillery covered our withdrawal and we were able to completely break contact and get to the LZ without further incident. This artillery support would not have been possible prior to the 155 mm guns being placed in Bu Dop since the 105 mm guns in camp had a range of only 11,000 meters Vs 14,600 meters for the newer 155 mm guns. Unfortunately, when we got to the LZ we found it was under about 3 feet of water but it was also now almost dark, and so we had no choice but to use it. We received our ammo and we also evacuated the dead and wounded from the last firefight (2 KIA and 4 WIA). We never found out if we had wounded or killed any VC in that battle, but we the extent and duration of the firefight I would have been very surprised if the VC/NVA had not taken heavy casualties.

By the time the re-supply and evacuation had been completed, it was pitch black in the jungle and we were in the water, not the best place to spend the night. Lieutenant Carter, Lieutenant Thieu and myself studied the map we had looking for an area that we could defend for the night. By the map there was some high ground to our southeast and we decided to try for that to set up our RON (also known as a "NDP" Night Defensive Perimeter). What we didn't know was that there was over 600 meters of swamp between us and where the swamp stopped (this swamp or any water was not indicated on our maps). It took us about four hours of difficult travel to clear the swamp and get to dry land. That was it, the Strikers were beat and could go no further, we dropped in place and they slept that night right on the edge of the swamp without much of a security element.

We were awakened a short time after falling asleep by the explosions of mortar rounds landing near our position. The VC/NVA were trying to get us to reveal our position with H&I (Harassment and Interdiction) fire. One purpose of this kind of fire is to get a unit to reveal its position by firing its weapons. We maintained fire discipline (not returning any fire) and SP4 Posey and I stayed up most of the night plotting and calling in counter mortar fire from our camp's 155 mm howitzers. We did this by listening to the sound of the rounds being fired and the sound of the rounds going off when they hit. We would get general bearings from this information and then using the time factors from firing and impact and knowing the speed of sound we could estimate the position that they were using. We were still over 14 klic's away but just within their range of our 155's. After about four hours of back and forth between the VC/NVA unit and our artillery the H&I fire stopped. We, of course, didn't know if it was as a result of our artillery hitting them or they just gave up for the night.

We were up at daylight had a quick breakfast, checked equipment and personal and were then ready to complete the reconnaissance of the area, however, the B-team told us to stay put they were putting together a plan. Since we were not in a good position by the swamp we moved about 300 meters and set up a defensive perimeter. Because of all the contacts we had made the day before there was a strong indication of major VC/NVA activity in the area. Lieutenant Carter had several radio conversations with our camp and the B-team and it was decided that reinforcements would be brought in to see what could be found in this hot area. After a short time



we were informed that a Mike Force unit would be airlifted into our vicinity and that we were to link up with them and sweep the area.

*Note: Mike Force units were elite CIDG units run directly by Special Forces, without LLDB involvement, that were used as quick reaction forces for situations just like one. They could be quickly brought into a situation to exploit an opportunity or as a rescue mission for out manned CIDG units in trouble. Because they were trained directly by SF they were better in a fire fight than regular CIDG troupes.*

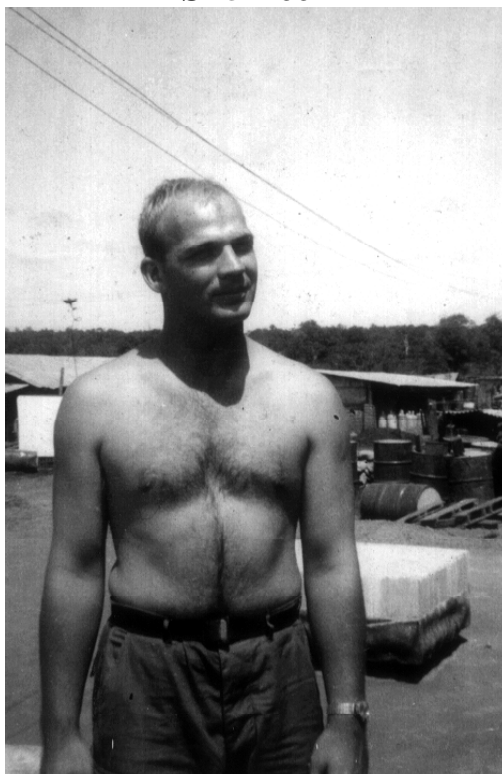
At 1000 hours on 26 October 1967, two companies of Mike Force were brought into the same LZ we had used the day before in our airmobile operation; they were commanded by a Captain Nestor Pino-Mauina. Normally it would be bad policy to use a LZ twice, but an exception was made for lack of another LZ nearby. After consolidating and checking the immediate area they moved north to link up with us. They quickly got to the road we had found and immediately made contact with an estimated platoon of VC/NVA, which stood and fought for about 20 minutes. The VC/NVA then withdrew taking their dead and wounded with them. The Mike Force had 1 KIA and 2 WIA and called for a medevac. There were none available in the area so the B-team XO got a slick, the C&C (Command and Control) ship that had been used for the airmobile operation and picked up two of camp Bu Dop's SF people (Medic and Intelligence sergeants) to help in the extraction.

When the slick (term used for an unarmed Hughes UH1-B or UH1-D) got to the area they found there were no LZ's nearby so they decided to hover over the Mike force position. Then they threw out a rope and tried hauling up the body of the dead Mike Force trooper. It must have been a short rope, which then brought the slick very close to the canopy top. The Mike Force troops attached the body to the rope and the chopper then started to lift, but as the body came up through the canopy it snagged. The pilot could feel something was wrong and when he tried to free the body from the trees he must have lost lift momentarily. Before he could recover, the helicopter dropped onto the top of the jungle canopy, probably pitching forward. The rotors hit the canopy (probably shearing off) and the helicopter nosed over and went down through the trees nose first straight to the jungle floor. The impact crushed the helicopter but it did not explode or catch fire.

The crash killed the B-team XO (Major John O. Cooper, III) and the two Camp Bu Dop Special Forces troopers SP5 Joseph R. Beck, Jr. and SFC Elmer Ables, Jr. (they were probably not strapped in and thrown out when the chopper hit the trees). The pilot and co-pilot were still alive but trapped in the mangled wreckage of the helicopter. Amazingly, the two door gunners were both shook up but OK. The Mike Force troops tried unsuccessfully to get the trapped men out but they had no tools of any kind and so it was an impossible task. Our camp did, so I called them by radio and had them get hammers, hacksaws, crowbars and any other thing they could think of that would help. Staff Sergeant Mike Millner, our light weapons sergeant, got everything together and was ready when another slick came a few minutes later. Just about the time he got picked up, the Mike Force came under attack again. This time they estimated that it was a company of VC/NVA.



**SP5 Beck**



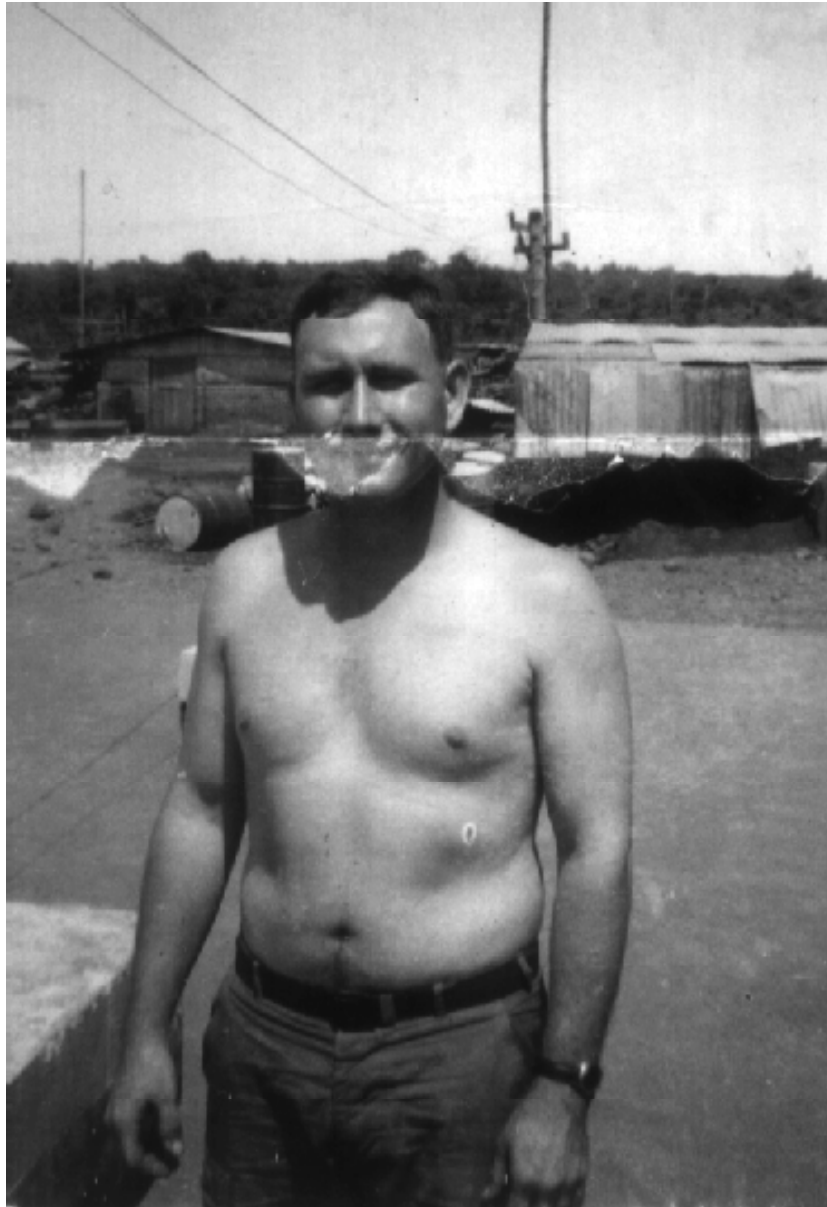
**SFC Ables Jr.**





When SSGT Millner and the helicopter got there an intense firefight was still going on and so the slick dropped him off about 500 meters away. He then worked his way through both the VC/NVA and Mike Force lines to get the tools to the crash site (none of us thought he would make it). However, SSGT Millner was a dedicated and professional SF trooper and did what needed to be done no matter what the obstacles. The Mike Force had set up their perimeter completely around the downed helicopter for protection but it still wasn't safe working on the wreckage to get the pilot and co-pilot out, especially with spilled fuel all around the crash site and a firefight going on. We followed all this on our radios and couldn't do anything to help either the Mike Force or SSGT Millner.

**SSGT Millner**





After about two hours of hard work by SSGT Millner they got both the pilot and co-pilot out and another medevac was called in. Fortunately, there was a lull in the battle during the late afternoon and so the medevac was able to take advantage of this and this time all the wounded were successfully evacuated without incident. Unfortunately, this rescue had taken so much time that it was starting to get dark. It was now too late for the Mike Force to move and they also couldn't leave the downed slick without destroying it (the VC/NVA might find something useful to them) so they had no choice but to spend the night where they were. It was generally not a good idea to spend too much time in one spot as the longer you spent in one position the more likely it was that a large enemy unit would know where you were. If they had sufficient forces in the area you could get into big trouble by doing this. Since we were very close to the Cambodian border and known major VC/NVA staging areas as well as a major infiltration road this was an especially dangerous situation for them to be in.

While this was going on we were also getting ready to set up a RON again and had moved maybe another 200 or 300 meters from our previous position to conceal our location as we weren't in the same predicament (unable to move) as the Mike Force was in. We never had a chance to link up with them that day, as planned, because of the helicopter crash and the resulting activity for rescuing the injured troopers. All we were able to do all day was listen on the radio to what was happening to them. We were under orders to stay put because the B-team wanted us to hold as a reserve in case the Mike Force was hit with forces they couldn't handle. We believed that the VC/NVA thought the Mike Force was the unit that was patrolling in this area (us) and that they were not aware that there were really two units in the area. That gave us the potential element of surprise, hence the use of our patrol as the reserve or reaction force. Since we could quickly react to a developing situation we had the potential to trap a VC/NVA force between our units and inflict heavy casualties on them.

A few hours after dark the Mike Force troopers were again under attack (not a big surprise). This time they estimated it was a company of VC/NVA. This firefight lasted about an hour (fortunately the VC/NVA did not have a large unit, battalion or larger, in the area or both the Mike Force and us would have been in real trouble). They tried to request artillery support from our camp but the radio communications were unusually bad that night and they could not get through. They could talk to us and so their artillery requests were relayed through us to the 155 mm howitzers at Bu Dop. We were a little closer to camp than they were and that was apparently just enough to make a difference and so we still had contact. The artillery fire must have done the job as the firefight ended after the barrage was over and we did not need to move in to help out.

The next morning when the battle area was checked, the Mike Force found 5 VC/NVA bodies, several weapons and a 120 mm rocket launcher. The fact that the VC/NVA left these bodies indicates that they were under a lot of pressure (Artillery and small arms fire from the Mike Force) or they would not have left the bodies. They then moved south to an LZ to extract 2 more wounded they had received during the night. Once they were clear of the crash site two gun ships that had come in with the medevac destroyed the wreckage of the slick with rocket and mini gunfire.



Higher headquarters (B team) then decided to end this mission and requested us to link-up with the Mike Force troops at a position due south of where we presently were. We made the moves and the link up without further incident, and then headed back, toward Bu Dop. By that night we were still almost a day's march from the camp and so we set up another RON. While we were setting up our defenses we decided to call in def-con's. To do this we estimated where we were and then had the artillery fire a WP round set for an air burst. There was danger in doing this because the VC/NVA would know that we were within visual range of that air burst and they would then have a tentative location for our position. However, after all the activity we had been involved in over the past several days we decided that we had better be safe and do it. While I was in Vietnam we only did this once or twice because of this risk of revealing our position to the enemy troops.

*Note: Def-cons were prearranged artillery coordinates that we could call on if we were attacked, normally, but not always a few rounds were fired to verify the coordinates. The supporting artillery units keep all the firing data on file so they would know exactly what to do when or if they were called. During an attack you could then call on these prearranged points quickly to bring fire down on attacking forces.*

After the round was fired we were very surprised when the round was both short and also went off as a ground burst, oh and by the way it also landed inside our defensive perimeter. Luckily no one had set up where it impacted, they were still clearing the perimeter and so no one was injured. Had we done this artillery adjusting 5 or 10 minutes later it would have killed quite a few of our CIDG troops and possibly me; as it was, I was only about 20 meters away from where the round went off. I could see that I would not like being shelled with artillery and I was very glad the VC/NVA did not have much artillery support available to them. The only good thing about this situation was that we did have verification of our position, in fact, our exact position. It also made me feel good that I knew exactly where we were. In the Jungle it wasn't always easy to figure that out.

The next day we finished our march into camp without incident and shortly thereafter the Mike Force was airlifted out from our airfield to their base camp. However, before the Mike force left, one of their SF Officers gave me his CAR-15 rifle for helping them out in this operation. The CAR-15 was a cut down version of the standard issue M-16 rifle, and it was a lot better in jungle fighting since it was smaller and lighter than the M-16. They were very hard to get at that time and so I was very appreciative of this act.

The first thing I did after getting into camp and seeing the Mike Force off was have a cold beer or maybe even two and then take a long shower (we had only cold water but it still felt very good after several days in the jungle). After cleaning up we all got together and talked about this mission and we all thought we should go back to that road in the near future since it seemed to be well used. We were thinking that after a few weeks we could set up a company size ambush and catch some unit's crossing over from Cambodia.



## Back from Patrol



In this picture you can see I was wearing “tiger” fatigues not normal Us Army “jungle fatigues. We did this for two reasons one they concealed us better then the standard uniform and two this was what the Vietnamese and CIDG troopers wore. We didn’t want to stand out any more then we already did. After all the VC/NVA had targeted US Special Forces for assassination. They new we were good and acted accordingly. You can also see here that I had a compass on a cord around my neck. That was one piece of equipment I certainly didn’t want to lose while I was on patrol.



Shortly after this airmobile operation, Lieutenant Carter, who had been in Vietnam and Bu Dop for over six months, went on R&R. After his R&R was over he was given another assignment, somewhere else in Vietnam and so we never saw him again. This left me as the acting CO of Bu Dop for about a month. Lieutenant Carter was a good officer, knew his troops and tactics and ran the camp very effectively. I learned a lot while serving as his exec, even if it was for only a short time.

In Appendix E and Appendix F are some of the after action reports written on this combat patrol as well as others during this period. These reports were received from the National Archives section of the Smithsonian Institute as indicated in the forward to this book.







## Chapter Ten, Back to normal activity

After Lieutenant Carter left, we made no changes to the routine and continued to send out combat patrols. Every one that I went out on got into some form of enemy contact, as a result of this the camp CIDG gave me the nickname "Contact". Since our casualties during these activities were very slight and we had killed or captured quite a few VC/NVA, I decided to create an elite unit of CIDG who would wear blue scarf's to designate their aggressive status. I went to the local tailor in camp and asked him to make me 50 or 60 blue silk scarfs. This was accomplished in a day or two and on all patrols that I was on thereafter blue scarfs was worn by all patrol members.

There was one other thing I did at this time. The CAR-15 I had received from the Mike Force had been damaged in the battle, the sight was broken off and the folding stock damaged. I was able to repair it by putting a scope on the rifle and by using a conventional M-16 stock making it a very unusual CAR-15. To do this I had a part made in the local village. I used this weapon on patrols for the entire time I was in Vietnam. In the picture below I show the modified CAR-15 in comparison to the standard M-16 issued in the late 60's.

**Custom CAR-15**





About this time we decided that all this increased activity meant that Bu Dop was the camp that the VC/NVA were deciding to take in their winter offensive. We had also heard reports from our intelligence net of light tanks operating in Cambodia just across the boarder from us. Based on this information we decided to take the initiative and blow the bridge on the dirt road, Rt. 14A, from Bu Dop into Cambodia just to be safe. None of us wanted to face NVA tanks across our wire. Since this was the boarder between Vietnam and Cambodia it was an unauthorized mission and so Lieutenant Thieu and I decided not to tell the B-team what we were doing. It was our but not theirs on the line.

This bridge consisted of two heavy steel beams across the river and heavy wooden decking on them as the road surface. It probably wouldn't have held a light tank as it was but it could have been reinforced and it was certainly capable of holding military trucks. I gave this demolition's assignment to the SF team engineer SP5 McGanney (it is the dream of every demo man to be able to blow a bridge and McGanney was no exception). This was a small bridge but a bridge none the less and so McGanney was eager for the assignment and he immediately planned his mission and took a patrol out to blow the bridge. This was to be accomplished with charges of C-4 (plastic explosive) and det-cord (an explosive material that looks like clothes line and is used both as an explosive and to set off other explosives in this case the C-4). They arrived at the bridge in a few hours, secured the area and then set the demolition charges. After the bridge was blown and the smoke and debris from the explosion cleared they found that only one beam had been completely cut and dropped, the other was damaged but still spanning the river. Since they were out of explosives and the bridge was now only good for single file foot traffic at best, it was decided not to go back for a second attempt at completing the destruction. The main mission of stopping any trucks and tanks from crossing at that point had been accomplished and McGanney did get to blow his bridge.

Also during this period a Radio Direction Finding (RDF) team was assigned to Bu Dop to monitor VC/NVA radio traffic. RDF teams had special equipment they used in conjunction with other RDF teams to locate the sources of enemy radio transmissions (triangulation with these other RDF teams). They set up in our radio room and monitored the radios continuously from then on. Technically they reported to the B team and were not part of our camp; however, since they were SF and living with us we cooperated as much as possible. Having three additional Americans brought us up to a head count of 15 SF and that helped take some of the load off the core team members.

One of the duties all of us pulled was radio watch. We had someone at our radio 24 hours per day, 7 days per week. We were in constant radio communications with the B-Team, pulling radio checks at minimum once an hour. Officers and NCOs alike pulled this duty, it was that important. With only a handful of SF people actually in camp at any given time this meant that we each pulled this duty every other night or so. A big difference in Special Forces units over the traditional Army units was that we shared most duties without much regard to our rank, we were a team.

Then unexpectedly, on 29 October 1967 and lasting until 4 November 1967 our sister Special Forces camp to the west, at Loc Ninh, was attacked by elements of the 272d & 273d VC regiments augmented with elements of the 165th NVA regiment with support of the 84th VC Ar-



tillery Regiment. There was a major battle around this camp and the near by city of An Loc to the South. We could hear some of the action on our radios and actually see some air activity in the distance to our West from our camp. This major battle lasted seven days and between 800 and 1,000 VC/NVA were killed in that action, it was a major military defeat for the VC/NVA. We all thought when this attack on Loc Ninh occurred, that this must be the attack that our patrol's captured documents had predicted. We also thought that if this were true we were off the hook it was them not us. What we didn't know was that this was only the prelude to the heavy fighting that would continue in our area and other areas of the country and eventually lead to the Tet offensive which started on January 30, 1968.

Sometime during this period I ordered, on my own, several hand held CB radios and a base station radio (about \$500 if I remember correctly). I wrote home and asked my father to order them for me. He was a radio ham; call letters W8HFN and he knew what I wanted and took care of it. My thoughts were that these radios were of a higher wattage then the army issue PRC-25's we used (5 watts verses 2 watts) and therefore they might allow us to communicate at the far ranges of our patrol activity. In letters to my father we discussed whether the CB frequencies would penetrate the jungle but even though there was some doubt we felt it was worth the chance at improving communications. I also thought that they might be more secure since there weren't many Trucker's or CBer's in Nam and these were not normally used frequencies. As the situation developed I never got the opportunity to test my radio communications theories out because of the time lag in ordering and shipping the radios and that the situation would change before I could get them.

Our next combat patrol to meet trouble left about two weeks after Lieutenant Carter went on R&R. SP4 Posey and SSGT Bunn were the SF members on this patrol. The first day was uneventful as the patrol swung southeast for 8 to 10 klic's, then east for a few more klic's where they ROned for the night. The next day after breaking camp they turned north with the intent to go another 6 or 8 klic's then turn west back toward the camp. I monitored most of what happened that day on the radio in our camp's commo bunker.

The morning was quiet with just the normal radio checks and after a short lunch break they started to move again. Then at about 1300 hours we received a request for artillery or air support from SP4 Posey because they were in very heavy contact with at least a company of VC/NVA. By this time the US 155 mm howitzers were gone and all we had were the ARVN 105 mm guns. The patrol was out of their range and we could not help them from the camp so we called the B-team for air support, luckily there was some air on standby not too far away and they were soon on the way to our patrol's aid. Meanwhile the patrol was having its problems, the VC/NVA were trying to encircle them. The USSF advisors knew that they would not be able to prevent this from happening without the air or artillery cover as they were out manned and out gunned. The Strikers not knowing that air was almost there realized that they were being encircled and decided this was not a very good place to be. They broke ranks and ran in an attempt to get away from their enemy. The two USSF advisors had no choice but to follow the quickly retreating strikers. It took them about 100 to 200 meters before they re-gained control of the patrol and set-up another defensive perimeter.



At about this time the air support arrived (F-4 phantoms) and put napalm, rockets and canon fire on the VC/NVA. However, this was not enough to stop their advance on our patrol and the Strikers broke and ran again. SP4 Posey contacted us again and while telling us that SSGT Bunn was hit his radio signal suddenly disappeared from the air. We could not get him back and so I immediately organized another company of Strikers for a reaction patrol and went out after them by a different route than they had followed. I didn't want to wait to see what happened, our patrol was in trouble and we needed to help.

We traveled hard and fast for about 3 hours when we received a radio message from Bu Dop saying that they had regained radio contact with the patrol and also that the Strikers were still running toward camp. Most everyone was OK but they could not stop the retreat. What had happened was that as they were talking to us the CIDG radio operator was killed and the radio he was carrying damaged. The back-up radio had also been damaged in the firefight and so they had to piece together one good radio out of the two broken ones. SSGT Bunn had just received a minor flesh wound in the leg and was limping but all right. They told us they expected to be in camp by dark.

Since we were no longer needed we turned back and headed for camp. After traveling only a short while our flank security detected some movement on our left flank. Before they started firing at us and we immediately moved to our left flank in a combat assault. The counter fire from our patrol was more than they could handle and the VC/NVA (estimated Platoon) broke contact and ran leaving behind several blood trails. Later when we returned to our original position we found a DH-5 mine and dug in positions where they had been setting up an ambush. After clearing the area and blowing the mine we returned to camp. This action had lasted only a 10 or 15 minutes.

Normally we would not have returned to camp on the same path that we had gone out on for this very reason. The VC/NVA would set up ambushes on either the out-going path or on the path where they thought we would be returning to camp on. They had an advantage here since they knew where the camp was and therefore our patrols had no choice but to take somewhat predictable in and out paths. We were fortunate in this case since they had not expected us to reverse and come back after only a few hours and so we caught them while they were unprepared. The other patrol returned to camp shortly after we did. They had 2 KIA's and 4 WIA's, they had left the bodies at the site of the firefight.

The next operation to go out was planned to be just north of where the previous one had been. We also planned to sweep by that site and see if we could find the bodies of the Strikers that they had left behind. I was on this patrol and we left early in the morning, as usual, and by the middle afternoon we had searched the position of the battle a few days before. We found the site and some debris but no bodies. The VC either buried them there and camouflaged the graves or moved them to another place, why they would bother to do this I don't know. In either case we could not find them.

Our next objective was north near the border with Cambodia where we suspected the VC were crossing over into Vietnam. We got about half way to our objective by nightfall and set up our perimeter for the night near a small stream. At daybreak the following day, we were on our



way again. After the noon break at about 1300 hours, we moved into a small clearing and came across fresh tiger tracks. We were surprised and after looking at them and talking about them for a few minutes someone said look there and then when we looked we thought we saw it move into the tree line in front of us. This may just have been our imagination but it seemed real to us. We stopped a few minutes later for a break and I called artillery rounds on the next two hills, just in case. When we got to the second hill we found it had been a good idea since a VC platoon was caught digging in and had not fully recovered when we got there. We had a brief 15 minute firefight with the VC and when they broke contact and ran I called in artillery on their suspected routes of withdrawal. While we had been out on patrol two more tubes of American 155 mm artillery had been moved into camp. The heavy activity in our TAOR justified this action (military resources were generally focused on where the action was or where it was anticipated that it might be going to occur). These were the guns that had conducted our fire mission.

We regrouped after the firefight and headed north for about 400 meters than we turned west back toward camp. After traveling for a few hours at what we thought was the south side of the Cambodian border we began to realize that something was wrong. We stopped the patrol and set-up a defensive perimeter and started analyzing our maps and the route of travel we had taken. After a few minutes of debate all agreed that we were actually inside Cambodia. The stream we were following was not the one we initially thought it was. In the jungle it's not always easy to tell exactly where you are. After a few minutes rest we turned south and crossed back into Vietnam and continued on to camp which we got to at about 2100 hours that night. Thus ended my only trip into Cambodia.

With all the enemy activity we were experiencing we were using everything we could to counter the VC/NVA moves. This included the use of our 4.2" mortar, which we used to fire H&I around the camp and even across the border into Cambodia on occasion. With a range of just over 5,600 meters we could hit a few spots in Cambodia. We could not use the ARVN or U.S. artillery since they had to officially report all their fire missions. This unauthorized firing was in addition to the normal H&I fire that was always being conducted by our assigned artillery units to their maximum range in our camp's TAOR.

*Note: We were not allowed to fire into Cambodia or conduct ground operations into Cambodia. An exception could be made if you were in a firefight and were at the border and it was part of protecting your patrol. There were clandestine operations in Cambodia and Laos but they were not officially recognized. So for us who were officially there we ended up being stuck with rules and regulations to follow that didn't always make sense to us. We were, however, careful not to fire into any known villages across the boarder, when we broke the rules. Since the VC/NVA didn't recognize any boundaries we felt no obligation to do so even though our political leaders did. We were the ones getting shot at not them.*

This was actually a good time for us at Bu Dop as our patrols were almost always successful and we took only light casualties. The following pictures were taken of some of the team members in our lighter moments during this period.



## **Who Drank The Most Beer**



## **USSF & LLDB Team Members**





## LLDB Team Members



We also conducted a lot of personal training both on weapons and in tactics while we were in Vietnam. While in camp we were always involved with some aspect of this training, fortifying the compound, or studying; and while we were out of camp, on patrol, we were applying what we learned. The following series of pictures are taken of me during this period firing different weapons for practice (and fun). We also practiced with captured weapons like the Chinese AK-47, although I don't have any pictures of that weapon.

One thing we did do that was definitely not in the book was to fire 60 mm mortar rounds with minimum charges (so they would go slow) and then try and hit them with our M-16's while they were in flight. Kind of a supper advanced skeet shooting. We would put a high elevation on the tube and than drop the rounds. We could see the rounds after they were 100 or 150 feet out of the tube and down range maybe a like amount but if we ever hit any of them we don't know for they didn't go off as we thought they might. In any case it was fun to try and we did do this several times while I was at Bu Dop.



**Lt. Pristash dropping 60 mm Mortar Round**





**Lt. Pristash Firing 60 mm Mortar**





**Lt. Pristash with Modified CAR-15**





**Lt. Pristash with CAR-15**



**Lt. Pristash Firing 106 mm Recoilless Rifle**





### **Lt. Pristash firing 50 cal. MG on West Wall**



One other experience I had was one of some unusual Vietnamese foods. The most bizarre of these was a sauce they called "nuc-mham." It was an evil smelling (kind words for this material) delicacy made from fermented fish. They made it by putting layers of herbs and leaves in a wooden barrel interspersed with layers of fish (I don't know what kind). This concoction was then placed in the sun and the resulting juices leaked out of a hole in the bottom into a container placed under it. In its purest form it was incredibly strong, but even the Vietnamese diluted it before using it on the food.

This ends the first phase of my introduction to Vietnam and real warfare (as opposed to training). I learned how to function and lead men in combat and more importantly how to distance myself from death. These are experiences I would not give up (I can say this because I lived through all that happened) as they helped shape who I am today and what I believe in. Prior to these experiences (the military and combat) I had a tendency to be naive and liberalish in my beliefs. After this I was more pragmatic and realistic in my views of the world. That's not to say that I still don't think that it would be nice to live in a better world, it's just that I don't think it's possible at our (human kind) stage of development.



After this, the combat got a lot closer to home and the situations much more intense. At the time I didn't see this but writing about it now I can see the difference. I started to feel and act very differently to situations after this period of time than I had when I first got in country and been assigned to Bu Dop.







## Chapter Eleven, Joint Operations

While I was on this last patrol a new commanding officer was assigned to Bu Dop replacing Lieutenant Carter, he was Captain Mathew Hasko. This ended my short stint as acting CO of Bu Dop. After I returned to camp and cleaned up we got together and I discussed this latest operation with him. Because of all the signs of VC/NVA activity we had found I recommended we try an airmobile operation 10 or 15 klic's to the East and then sweep back toward camp through the area where these last contacts had been to see what we could flush out. Captain Hasko agreed with the concept and told me that he, personally, wanted to conduct this operation immediately to try and catch them before they moved. We both felt there were a lot of VC/NVA out there and that we should be able to find something in this sweep. This was to be Captain Hasko's first combat patrol at Bu Dop and he was to take about 80 Strikers on this patrol with him. The LLDB CO, Lieutenant Thieu also wanted to go on this patrol with Captain Hasko so he could get to know him.

Later that week while Captain Hasko and I were working on the planning for this new airmobile operation we received notice from the B-team that a battalion of the 1st Infantry Division (1st Battalion 28th Infantry, 1-28th) would be up in our area for about a week conducting ground operations around our TAOR. They were headquartered in Quan Loi about 25 miles Southwest of us at the time and were from the same unit that had supported the Special Forces camp at Loc Ninh four weeks ago. That support operation was part of a bigger operation code named QUICKSILVER, which was conducted from November 21, 1967 to December 20, 1967 by the 1st Division also known as the Big Red 1. They were to start arriving while Captain Hasko was on patrol, November 29, 1967.

We had also been assigned another officer at about the same time we were assigned Captain Hasko. He was Lieutenant Berry and he was given the responsibility for PSYOPS (psychological operations) in our TAOR. Since he had just gotten in country and was very green we thought that it would be a good experience for him to help in the C&C ship on this patrol, (if I remember correctly he was a Second Lieutenant when he arrived at Bu Dop). I was to stay in camp to coordinate activities with the 1-28th Infantry troops when they came in after this combat patrol left.

The choppers arrived early in the morning of November 27, 1967 and Captain Hasko and the CIDG troopers left on their mission. Hasko's patrol landed at the LZ, formed up without incident and started their sweep to the west toward Bu Dop. However, within minutes of leaving the LZ they found themselves in heavy contact with a large VC/NVA unit. They called me and asked me to set-up a stand-by company of Strikers in case they needed them. I had Sergeant Millner and SP4 Fass form up the reserve company in camp and while they were doing that I received a second call from Captain Hasko that they definitely did need them as they were still engaged in a heavy firefight with this VC/NVA unit.

Next I called the B team and had the chopper's that had dropped off Captain Hasko's patrol diverted back to Bu Dop to handle the deployment of the reaction force. They were back at Bu Dop within a few minutes and SSGT Millner and SP4 Fass loaded up the CIDG and took the re-



action force to rescue our patrol. They used the same LZ that Captain Hasko had used and immediately linked up with him since he had not gotten very far. This was not good policy (using the same LZ twice) but we got away with it this time. With the reinforcements they were able to route the VC/NVA, who withdrew to the North. There were 4 Strikers wounded while the VC had suffered 9 KIA. As always we did not know how many WIA they had suffered. The rest of the day was quiet for the patrol as they searched the hills for signs of additional VC/NVA activity. They did find several abandoned base camps but they had not been used for some time, but nothing else.

The next day November 28, 1967 the B team CO, Major Miller decided to have two of our sister camps Dong Xoai (A-342) and Duc Phong (A-343) send one company each for an air-mobile assault to an LZ southwest of where our patrol had gone. His plan was for our two companies and the two new companies to conduct a battalion size sweep of this very hot area. I advised against this since the Strikers are good only for platoon and maybe company size operations. They are not even trained for operations of this scale (multi-company) and are not regular army, there more like police than soldiers. I was overruled by Major Miller (he was a Major) and the joint operation was planned anyway (with American units this would have been a very good plan and so I wasn't criticizing the logic of his plan only it's application to CIDG troops). Since Captain Hasko was in the field, I prepared a summary of the operation along with overlays for his maps. This packet was then flown out to him in the field so he would know what was planned. He wasn't happy with this operation either but there was nothing that either of us could do about it. The two companies of CIDG were to be air lifted in to our TAOR during the morning off November 29, 1967.

That night at about 2000 hours the VC/NVA launched a heavy rocket and mortar attack against Bu Dop and Bo Duc, the nearby district headquarters. The rockets and motors aimed at us were not well aimed and as a result they mostly missed the camp and landed in the wire to our North. These mortar rounds were dispersed all over that area and only a few actually landed in or near the camp. Bo Duc was not so lucky and one section of their compound was very heavily hit. The VC/NVA then started a ground assault on the Bo Duc compound. I called the B team and they sent several flights of gun ships, F-4's and a dragon ship in support of Bo Duc.

*Note: A dragon ship (also known as puff) was an airplane fitted with a mini-gun in the side door typically they were C-47's. To use this weapon the pilot would bank the aircraft so the gun was pointing down and then circle an area with the crew firing the gun. At 6,000 rounds per minute a lot of shells could be dumped into a small area very quickly. This was a very effective weapon against ground troops in an assault. In the movie the "Green Beret" there was a scene where this weapon was used. It showed a lot of VC/NVA troops being shot while they assaulted the Special Forces camp. In the movie it looks like an exaggerated Hollywood effect but it wasn't.*

By the time the air cover got there the VC/NVA were in the wire and almost in control of the south wall of the compound at Bo Duc. We could see quite a bit of the action from our camp



because the district was only about 5 klic's to our south. Most of that night I spent in the watch-tower observing the action. I had commo with the radio bunker via HT-1 (a short range radio) that all SF personnel carried while on alert in the compound. We also kept a starlight scope (this was a night vision device that amplified ambient light enough to see by) in camp, which allowed us to see movement up to the rubber trees. While maintaining constant radio contact I was either watching the jungle to my east across the airstrip with the starlight scope or the air action to my south.

When the U.S. aircraft arrived they were taken under fire by at least four VC/NVA anti-aircraft guns in the jungle to our southeast. They fired for sometime and we could see the tracer rounds arching up from their jungle locations to try and hit the American planes. To my knowledge at the time they scored no hits on the U.S. aircraft (in reading reports of this action later I would find that several of the planes did take hits but none were shot down). The ground attack had progressed at Bo Duc to the point where the VC/NVA had control of part of the compound; however, with the air strikes pounding them they couldn't take anymore and just before daylight they withdrew to the south. The U.S. air support had done an excellent job of covering the area with ordinance and in my opinion it was solely their activity that saved the district compound from being overrun. However, the Vietnamese defenders did put up stiff resistance and the VC/NVA were not having an easy time prior to the air arriving. Toward daylight a very heavy fog developed and we could not see much beyond the camp wire. We were worried that the VC/NVA might attack Bu Dop since they would have excellent cover; however, they did not take advantage of this opportunity and no ground attack on Bu Dop occurred.

*Note: Because of the similarity of the names Bu Dop (special forces camp A-341) and Bo Duc (district town) there were conflicting reports in the American Newspapers at the time. In the first few days of this battle the civilian world thought that Bu Dop had been overrun. That was not true it was Bo Duc that almost got overrun. Both areas saw lots of action but the ground assault started at Bo Duc that day.*

The morning was one of considerable activity with the airfield having to be cleared and repaired for all the reinforcements that were to be brought in. This was a priority project and it was tackled by our engineering NCO's. They were quickly able to accomplish this task so that the incoming planes would have no problems with craters and spend ordinance. First came the 1-28th Infantry starting at 0859 hours when three companies of the 1-28th Infantry were sent from Quan Loi in 65 sorties of C-123's turboprop transports and CH-47 helicopters. They quickly secured the airfield and moved to the North side of our camp where they started to set-up their defensive perimeter. Then came a battalion of RVN troops that were to reinforce the district town. Another flight of C-123's brought them in and the RVN troops formed up and moved south to Bo Duc without incident. Well over a thousand troops and all of their equipment had been brought in within the span of a morning. It was an impressive sight to see all that movement handled so quickly and without incident. Logistics is a very important key to a successful military campaign.



## C123 Aircraft as used in Vietnam



Meanwhile the 1-28th infantry was digging in. They were tied directly into our wire on the our North side so that we were effectively one unit running basically in a North to South direction with the Bu Dop air strip directly on our East and the Rubber plantation about 100 meter East of that. They also had six 105 mm howitzers with them and so they were well prepared to defend themselves. Since Captain Hasko was still on patrol I met with the battalion staff in the afternoon and briefed their G-2 as to the current situation, where our patrols were presently located, the scope of the sweep operation and where we thought the VC/NVA were located. With all the U.S. and ARVN reinforcements that had come in that day we certainly did not expect an attack on Bu Dop or for that matter another attack on Bo Duc.

*At Bu Dop we had over 1,000 troopers between our camp, the 1-28th and it's artillery support. At Bo Duc we had about 800 troopers between the ARVN unit and the original district defenders. Then in the field we had close to 300 SF lead CIDG troops in the four company sweep operation. Well over 2,000 troopers' equipment and support.*



The planned multi-company striker operation was proceeding on schedule and after the two CIDG companies were lifted in they secured the LZ, formed up and started to move to link up with the Bu Dop patrol for their planned sweep. They moved only a few hundred meters and ran into heavy contact with VC/NVA troops. A very heavy firefight developed and after a short period the Strikers broke and ran leaving behind their USSF advisors. These two advisors were from either the Dong Xoai (about 30 miles to our south) or Duc Phong (about 30 miles to our south east) camps, I'm not sure now (writing the details of this action this in 1992) which one it was. The C&C ship was still in the area so they found and picked up the two USSF advisors. However, there was no radio contact with the rest of the patrol. The C&C ship circled the area for several minutes while trying to find the patrol but couldn't so they flew back to Bu Dop and let off the two advisors. The helicopter then took off and returned to the last known contact area for one more shot at finding the lost patrol.

*While writing this in 1992 I don't remember why they dropped off the advisors at Bu Dop and then went back to look for the patrol again. It may be that they did not intend to return and search but once airborne they were ordered to after they left Bu Dop. That would at least make some sense, as just flying around would not normally be done. Also I don't remember if there were any USSF troops with the lost patrol or the two that had been taken to Bu Dop were all there were with that unit. If these were the only two then it was probably one from each camp.*

They circled the area for quite a while and eventually were able to spot the still running patrol troopers. They were also able to re-established radio contact and ordered them to an easily identifiable hill, which also could serve as an LZ, and where they would be able to link up with the Bu Dop element. The acting patrol leader acknowledged the request and started moving the unit to the designated LZ. We then radioed Captain Hasko and told him where they were going and he said he would move his patrol to their location and try and get control of the situation. But, as the Bu Dop unit started moving to the link up point they were hit again by another large VC/NVA unit. Yet another fierce firefight developed and Radio contact was broken again when the Bu Dop Strikers broke ranks and ran. However, this time the Bu Dop USSF were able to regain control after only a few minutes of disorganized retreat. Captain Hasko regrouped the patrol and after a short break they proceeded on to the designated link up point so they could extract their wounded and get re-supplied. There was a lot of confusion at this time (broken radio contacts as well as poor radio quality because of the distance to the patrol from camp) and it was unclear exactly what was going on, however, I believe that it was at this time that we realized that SGT. Millner and his interpreter were both missing.

While this relatively short but intense action was going on the C&C chopper again came back to Bu Dop and picked up the two USSF, who had been dropped here, to also take them to the link up point. Before they left I was talking with one of them (SFC Herman A. McBride) and he told me he had a very bad feeling about this operation from the start. He also told me he thought he was not coming back from this mission alive. I tried to reassure him but he was in a very melancholy mood when he left and he was convinced he was going to die. When they were dropped off at the LZ the C&C ship was used to take out all the wounded. At this point an accu-



rate head count was made and the totals were 2 USSF WIA, 1 USSF MIA (SSGT. Millner), 1 interpreter MIA, 1 LLDB WIA, 15 Strikers WIA, 5 Strikers KIA, and 5 Strikers MIA. The VC/NVA losses were unknown. This was enough for Major Miller (He realized at this point that the CIDG could not conduct this kind of complex mission) and so he canceled the operation and ordered all four companies to return to Bu Dop. This kind of disaster was what I (and Captain Hasko when he found out what was being planned) had warned the Major would happen with this kind of complex operation involving the poorly trained Strikers. They were just not qualified to conduct this kind of mission; they were not even regular army, which I think people tended to forget.

With the mission canceled the disorganized units formed up and proceeded west toward camp. Then at dusk just as they came out of the jungle into the rubber about 4 or 5 klic's to our west they ran right into a company, if not more, of VC/NVA in dug in positions. The VC/NVA weren't expecting the patrol (this was not an ambush) but they reacted quickly and assaulted the disorganized returning patrol. A violent battle ensued but the CIDG were out manned and out gunned so they were no match for the VC/NVA who succeeded in breaking the patrol into two groups in the initial assault. The main body of Strikers broke and retreated to the south. Another group of about 60 or 70 troopers, the balance of the unit, ran to the north. Captain Hasko was with the group that broke to the south and he was never able to gain control of them on their run back to the camp.

*No one in that group that went north was ever seen alive again including one USSF trooper. This was the same SF trooper, SFC McBride; I had talked with before he left camp to join back up with this ill-fated operation. His feelings about not coming back alive from this patrol had unfortunately been right. This was the only experience that I ever had like this while I was in Vietnam, or anywhere for that matter. A situation where someone made a statement that he believed he was going to die and then he or she actually did. Before he left on that last patrol he honestly believed he was not coming back. Was it that fatalistic belief that caused this to happen or was it just a premonition of what was coming?*

While this battle at the edge of the rubber and the jungle was going on we had tried to fire the 155 mm guns we had in their support but in all the confusion and continuing broken radio contacts we could not get proper coordinates for either the patrol or on the VC/NVA. So after the initial assault by the VC/NVA we had to stop firing, as we were afraid of hitting our own troops. It was a very helpless feeling knowing that they could have used that artillery but we were completely unable to do anything because we just didn't know where they were. Later at about 2000 hours the first of the Strikers started straggling into camp, they continued to do so in small groups until about 2100 hours. Captain Hasko made it into camp with one of the last groups to make it in that night. Of the four companies of CIDG troops (320 troops approximately) that went out only about 75% returned. This was definitely a major defeat for us. About 80 CIDG MIA many more wounded and a loss of 4 USSF (2 WIA 2 MIA) from the three SF camps involved in this operation.



*Later we would change one of the MIA's to a KIA but at this time we only knew that we had 2 missing SF troopers SFC McBride and SGT Millner.*

With all this heavy contact (4 heavy battles in just two days) and the attack on Bo Duc we probably should have suspected that there was a major situation developing. I guess that we didn't because it did not appear to be coordinated or focused and with the 1-28th adjacent to us we felt no one would attack us.

In Appendix G, Appendix H and Appendix I are some of the weekly, monthly and quarterly summary reports written by 5th Group during this period. These summaries were picked because they either directed referenced Bu Dop or they referenced related action around the Bu Dop TAOR. These reports were received from the National Archives section of the Smithsonian Institute as indicated in the forward to this book.







## Chapter Twelve, Attack on Bu Dop

A little later that night at about 2200 hours the VC/NVA launched a major mortar and rocket attack against both SF camp Bu Dop and the 1-28th infantry positions next to us. Both units immediately went into their alert status as the incoming rounds began impacting, mostly on our camp's North perimeter wall, the wire between our positions and in the adjacent 1-28th infantry positions. As soon as we heard the explosions and felt the concussions rattling the camp we all ran for our assigned alert positions. I don't remember (it was a long time ago and I never made a note of it in my writings) exactly where I was when the rounds first hit but it was probably in the team house going over the days activities with Captain Hasko, since this attack started shortly after he got back to camp. I do remember being inside and that I didn't actually see any of the rounds impacting and in any case I was inside the commo bunker (my position) within minutes. The attack must have lasted for twenty to thirty minutes and I could hear and feel the explosions rocking the camp as I communicated with the B Team by radio giving them a series of SITREP's (status report) as the rocket and motor attack progressed. I was also in communications with Captain Hasko who had immediately gone to his position on the camp perimeter getting reports from him as to the camps fighting status.

The 1-28th infantry commander, LTC James F. Cochran III, estimated that sixteen to twenty 122 mm rockets and about one hundred motor rounds were fired at us (I got this detailed information from the 1-28th after action reports when writing this book and that seemed about right to me from what I remember hearing at the time of the attack). We received no casualties and only minor damage to the North wall resulted from this initial attack (as I stated most of the rounds landed in the wire between the Bu Dop North wall and the 1-28th positions). The 1-28th infantry troops did take some casualties and at least one medevac was called to pick up the wounded. No matter what the logic to this VC/NVA mortar and rocket attack their marksmanship was way off. In my opinion there were only two possibilities to the conduct of this mortar and rocket attack. One, they did not know the 1-28th infantry was there, in which case they completely missed Bu Dop. Two, they did know the 1-28th was there and were aiming for them, in which case they were only partly successful as a few rounds did land in the 1-28th positions, but most of them fell to their south missing them. In either case most of the rounds missed both Bu Dop and the 1-28th infantry and were just in the wire. Of course, I'm not complaining about this at all, it's just an observation of what happened.

After the mortar and rocket attack ended there was a lull for about thirty or forty minutes, at least that's how I remember it. During this period we were able to check everything out take care of any problems and get back to a 100% ready state. Then at about 2400 hour (midnight) the forward OP's of the 1-28th infantry started picking up noises deep in the rubber to their East. Their CO not wanting to take any chances called for US air cover (we were all jumpy as the result of all the VC/NVA activity we had since they had arrived) to support him. LTC Cochran also pulled back his OP's so the US air could use their ordinance close in when they got there. By this time I had relieved Captain Hasko on the perimeter so he could get some sleep after his long hard run in the jungle during the day (policy was for the XO to be in the commo bunker and the CO to be on the perimeter, as I have already stated, but neither of us expected anything to



happen that night, especially with this long lull in the action). He was totally exhausted by then and even with all the activity that occurred during that night I don't remember seeing him again until after daylight the next morning.

About 10 minutes or so before the air cover was scheduled to arrive some of the CIDG troops in our Northeast corner bunker started hearing noise in the rubber across the runway and reported it to us. The 1-28th infantry troops were also picking up sounds in their east and northeast positions. They opened up with small arms fire (M-16 rifles, M-60 machine guns and M-79 grenade launchers) and it was immediately returned (AK-47 assault rifles, SKS rifles and RPG rounds). We also started to receive some incoming mortar and rocket rounds again although it was very sporadic and not like the first bombardment. The Bu Dop CIDG troops manning the East Wall and the Northeast Bunker now detected some movement at the edge of the rubber and so they also started firing their weapons (M-2 carbines, M-1 rifles, M-1 carbines, 30 caliber and 50 caliber machine guns) into the rubber along with the 1-28th infantry troops to our north. The VC/NVA were now directing small arms fire toward our camp and it did now appear that we were under a VC/NVA attack or at minimum a probe.

Note, even though there was no indirect artillery fire or air ordinance being dropped at this time there was still a lot of noise being generated by the SA (small arms) fire and so it was not easy to communicate even with someone right next to you. Battlefields are very very noisy places.

However, most of the heavy action was to our northeast and therefore the 1-28th infantry was actually much more involved in this fighting than we were. They were being assaulted from the Northeast and East and only the left flank of the attacking VC/NVA force was in direct contact with us. The 105 mm artillery that the 1-28th had in support went into a direct fire mode and it appeared to us that the enemy attack was only making only limited success against them. Probably the main reason the VC/NVA attack failed was that their coordination was off (mortar and rocket attack was followed by a very long lull giving us time to recoup and prepare before the ground assault started) and as a result they had lost the element of surprise in this action against us. By this time I was at the camp's East wall and other than the crack of small arms fire and thump of incoming mortar rounds I could not see a major ground assault developing (lot of rounds being fired but few if any observed VC/NVA troops). After observing the rubber and airfield for 10 or 15 minutes I could not see any signs of a major assault and it was therefore my impression that this was a probe and not a full-blown ground assault.

However, while this action was going on another major attack was occurring at the district compound of Bo Duc. By the radio reports that I heard prior to moving to the East wall, Bo Duc again appeared to be getting the brunt of the focus from the attacking VC/NVA troops. The pattern was the same as the first assault there and also at our camp, first rockets and mortars than a ground assault. Since they had been reinforced with the ARVN troops they were in good shape to defend themselves and the attack did not get as nearly as far as it had the previous night. They also got air cover but I was more concerned with our situation and I was not following that action very closely, for obvious reasons, and in addition it appeared to be under control.



*The ARVN troops were capable of holding their own on many occasions and were not intimidated by this ground assault. A direct proof of the faulty logic used by Giap and his staff in their planning for the Tet Offensive as indicated in Chapter Two. That's not to say they were up to US standards or even as good as the VC/NVA but that they were not totally ineffective, especially when they had good officers in command.*

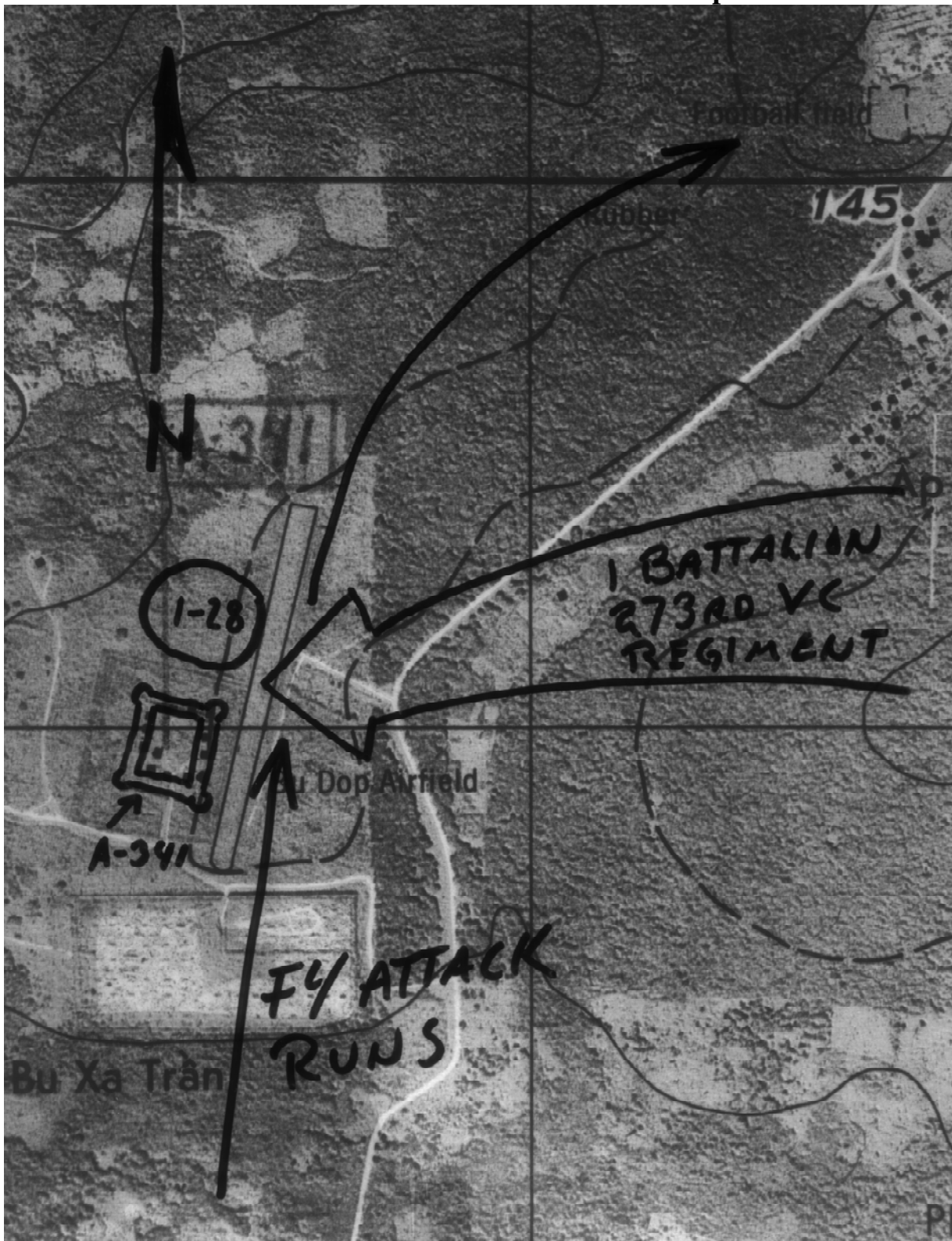
Now the US air cover (F-4 Phantom's) started arriving and they dropped their ordinance consisting of: 4 napalm canisters, about 8 750 pound bombs, and about 6 canisters of CVU (these are canisters of small bomblets used against personnel in the open) on the runway and in the rubber immediately to our east. They also conducted many strafing passes between the far edge of the runway and an area may 200 to 300 meters into the rubber with their mini-guns. While this air bombardment was going on I was on the east wall watching and since this was only a few hundred meters from where most of the ordinance was impacting it was a very spectacular sight (I was under 100 meters from the runway and 300 meters from the edge of the rubber). The roar of the F-4's streaking by, the brilliant white flashes and booming concussions of the bombs being dropped, the glowing billowing yellow and red flames of the expanding napalm fire balls and the intense cracking of the aircraft cannon was overlaid against the background sounds of the on going ground battle.

There were literally thousands of rounds of M-1, M-16 and AK-47 small arms fire being fired at the time the F-4's were dropping their ordinance. This was all being combined with the constant stuttering of M-60 and 30 and 50 caliber machine gun fire that both added their own noise and color as the MG fire produced streams of arching red tracer rounds that disappeared into the rubber. This all made for an experience not seen in any Hollywood war movie, especially since this was all very real. The visual and audio impact on me was intense, and I can say that there really is a high in a battle. However, had I known at the time who and what was really in the rubber trees opposing us, only a few hundred meters away, I would certainly not have been in such an exposed position (More on this in the next Chapter) on top of the East wall of the camp. At this time I still thought that the attack on Bu Dop was a probe or diversion since the main action really appeared to be occurring at Bo Duc again. I didn't know how wrong I was until well into the next day.

It was my belief at this time that we had been probed by either a reinforced platoon or possibly even a company of VC/NVA. I believed that they were trying to divert attention, by probing Bu Dop, away from the district compound at Bo Duc so they could concentrate their forces there and over run that outpost. I thought that their plan (at Bu Dop) was to take up positions in the rubber and hit us with H&I indirect fire and some SM's fire to keep us occupied. Since I was on the East wall most of the time during this action and I saw very little movement and no ground assault this was, I thought, a very reasonable assumption. In addition, to me it made no sense for a VC/NVA to assault Bu Dop, we were just too strong. We had almost 400 troops in the SF camp now that everyone was back and the 1-28 had about 800 troops in their positions, for a total of almost 1,200 troops. And, this included a lot of artillery pieces as well. The district compound of Bo Duc was not as well defended and would have been a much easier target. To actually attack both in force never occurred to me.



## Positions of Forces in Attack on Bu Dop





The F-4's finished their mission and we all stopped firing. There was only silence as no more SA fire was being directed at us. We wait for something to develop but nothing else happened. An hour or so later the rubber stopped burning and all was still quite and so we settled down for what was left of this night. The 1-28th infantry unit did require another medevac but that was all that disturbed the jungle noises until sun up. The results of this ground assault by the VC/NVA were that the 1-28th had taken a number of casualties to include 7 KIA and 11 WIA most all of these were from the initial mortar and rocket fire. At Bu Dop we had no KIA and only a few wounded (I don't remember the count and I could find no records of the SF portion of this battle in my records search). We treated the wounded in camp and I don't think we medevaced any CIDG from this battle. We knew we had inflicted heavy casualties on the attacking force but that night we did not know what losses they had sustained.







## Chapter Thirteen, After the Battle

At first light the 1-28th infantry CO sent out a recon patrol to check the area of the air strike the night before. As soon as they left their perimeter and got on the airstrip they started finding VC/NVA bodies. However, they did not, on this limited patrol, go any farther than a few meters into the rubber and then returned to their positions. Their quick limited sweep was only of the North end of our runway and the edge of the rubber. At about 0730 hours, I took out a runaway clearing detail and we also found some bodies on the Southern half of the runway and in the rubber near by. By the number of bodies we both had found it was pretty obvious that we had stopped a fairly large force the night before. After organizing the clean-up detail I returned to the camp and set up a meeting with the LLDB commander to see if he agreed with me that we should do our own more comprehensive recon patrol to check out the battlefield. While we were talking about this operation a Huey HU-1B slick showed up with supplies for us and after he unloaded I got an idea. I found the pilot and asked him if we could do an air recon to our north. He said OK and Lieutenant Thieu (the camp LLDB commander) and I took our M-16's and got aboard for an air recon.

Flying very low we first we checked out the area to the east of camp about 10 to 15 klic's. Then while flying back over the rubber north and east of Ap Puc Tien, we saw some movement in the jungle below. It appeared that the rear elements of the unit that had tried to attack us the night before were still in the process of withdrawing across the boarder into Cambodia. Lieutenant Thieu and I fired all of the M-16 rounds we had into them from the air while the helicopter pilot made multiple passes over where we had seen the movement. I don't know if we hit anything or not but we tried. After exhausting our ammunition I called back to camp using the helicopters radio and had the artillery do a fire mission on the most likely withdrawal paths from there to the Cambodian border. With the artillery rounds in the air we didn't want to stick around so we started back to camp before the firing started.

When we got back to camp, Lieutenant Thieu and I continued our plans to set up a more comprehensive recon patrol (farther from camp) than the 1-28th infantry troops had been conducting. We also thought (based on our just completed air recon) that we should head north to see if we had hit anything with our M-16's or the artillery fire. We approached Captain Hasko with what we wanted to do and he agreed with our plan. Since by this time I was one of the most experienced team members in camp I was to take the patrol out and Captain Hasko would stay in camp to coordinate with the 1-28th staff which he had not yet meet.

Lieutenant Thieu had his NCOs call one of the CIDG company leaders and request they form up for a combat patrol. After 10 or 20 minutes of waiting we only had a few troops and realized we had a slight problem, the Strikers were refusing to go on patrol. Lieutenant Thieu had enough of this behavior by this time (all the recent problems on patrols with the Strikers breaking contact rather than fighting) and since only about half the patrol was in formation he had his NCOs drag the stragglers out of their hutches into formation. Some of them were still in their shorts. Lieutenant Thieu argued with them for a few minutes (this was all in Vietnamese and since I spoke and understood only a few words I couldn't follow what he was saying, but I could



tell that he was very angry) and then he pulled his M-16 pointed it at them and told them if they didn't go he would shoot them on the spot. This convinced them and so they got their weapons and some clothes and after forming up again Lieutenant Thieu and I and the reluctant Strikers left camp on this patrol.

*Note: Lieutenant Thieu had been given his M-16 by our team, at this time the South Vietnamese LLDB did not have access to the M-16 weapon.*

As soon as we got past the runway and into the rubber we started to find lots of VC/NVA bodies. However, that's not exactly true since after all the ordinance that was dropped by the F-4's there weren't many whole bodies there, just pieces. Most of their intact dead must have been carried away because what we found were only body pieces and whole bodies in concealed places that the VC/NVA must have missed in the dark when they withdrew. We also did not find very many weapons, which confirmed that they had tried to remove everything from the area. We continued to sweep north and all total we found the equivalent of about 30 bodies in the area we swept. By the uniforms and documents we recovered, we had been attacked by the 273d VC/NVA regiment. We also found scaling ladders and commo wire leading to the village of Ap Phuc Tien and one unexploded 750 pound bomb.

*Note: Because of the heat and moisture, bodies began decomposing very quickly in the jungle. While we continued our patrol the camp had a bulldozer cut a shallow trench and then a CIDG troop detail round up the pieces and bodies and they were immediately buried without ceremony just outside the rubber.*

As the sweep continued, lead elements of our patrol heard some noise in the brush and investigated. They found a wounded NVA officer, a Lieutenant by his ID hiding there. He had a leg wound disabling him enough that he could not walk. We didn't get him to talk when we questioned him and since some of the Strikers wanted to make him talk we decided to take him back to camp. We did not condone or practice physical abuse of POW's at Bu Dop. Since we were close to the dirt road to AP Phuc Tien (highway 14A) and we had swept that area it was clean, we called camp and had them send out our 2 1/2 ton truck with a security guard for our prisoner. They got there in a few minutes and took him back to camp where he was evacuated to the B team at Song Be for interrogation.

We continued north until we reached the village of Ap Phuc Tien where we maneuvered into an assault position and moved on to sweep the village. This village was suspected by us of being a VC/NVA strong hold and given the attempted attack the night before, we expected some resistance. We also thought that this was one of the places where the mortar rounds had come from that had been landing on our camp (there were several areas that would have made good mortar positions near by). Surprisingly we did not receive any resistance but we did a thorough search of the village anyway. We found nothing but villagers. When questioned they said a large force of VC had just left and gone north. It was probably a lie since they were hostile to ARVN personnel, but just in case I called for the 155 mm guns in camp to fire a grid saturation mission between the village and the Cambodian border. While that was being plotted, I had Lieutenant Thieu call the RVN artillery and had their 105 mm artillery guns fire on two areas where I suspected that ambushes might be set up for us. When that was over we moved east to search for



bodies from our lost patrol that day before. We thought that we would sweep the area North of where Captain Hasko's patrol was split into to see if we could find anything.

What bothered both Lieutenant Thieu and I was that all during this period the villager at Ap Phuc Tien never once warned us over what was going on in or near their village. The French also must have known about the local VC and were in fact probably paying retribution to the VC/NVA as protection for their rubber trees. This was why we considered this to be a hostile village and the French to be our enemy. Neither cared what happened to us.

After going about 1,000 to 1,500 meters to the East of the village we found the bodies of nine Strikers and SFC McBride (this was the SF trooper I had talked to the day before who said he was not coming back) that had been lost when Captain Hasko's force was split in two. Of course all their gear and weapons were gone. The VC/NVA had also placed a handful of cooked rice on the chest of each body. No one was ever able to explain to me the significance of that action. I called the camp again and told them what we had found and told them we needed the truck again. We then made carrying poles for the bodies and carried them back to the road where the truck picked them up and took them back to camp. I personally helped carry SFC McBride's body to the truck after removing the rice from his chest. These people had been killed only the day before but rigormortis had already set in making it difficult to carry them. Basically we had to wrap them in ponchos and tie them down. With the ten bodies this took a while to accomplish. With this finding the final tally for the day before was 23 KIA, 17 WIA and 40 MIA. We had lost over 25% of our forces in this poorly planned operation against maybe a total of 10 to 15 VC/NVA KIA, not very good results for us. These VC/NVA losses did not include those at Bu Dop where they took heavy casualties in assaulting our camp that was a separate action where we came out on top.

I went over the area where the bodies were found very thoroughly before leaving and it appeared that they had run into a company of VC/NVA. There were clusters of foxholes in groups of three with enough room inside for at least three troops. They also had overhead cover that would have probably stopped a mortar round. After seeing the amount of bunkers that had been dug and seeing the number of bodies the VC/NVA had left back at Bu Dop it became obvious that Captain Hasko had run into a major force the day before and he was very lucky that he or any of that patrol had escaped from being totally wiped out. This area was probably just one of many assembly areas for the VC/NVA troops getting ready to attack Bu Dop and Bo Duc. We went south for a while after dropping off the bodies but found nothing else and returned to camp at about 1600 hours.

The next day I was talking to one of the RDF NCOs and he told me that they were picking up strong radio traffic east of Bu Dop (they weren't supposed to tell us but to pass it up the chain where it would then come back down to us). Since they knew the system was too slow and the signal location was within the range of our 155 mm guns they told us what was happening. After talking about it for a short time I decided to have a fire mission and not to telling anyone why we were picking that particular target area. I had the 155 mm guns do a saturation fire mission with a mixture of VT and contact fuses in the area where the signal was coming from. The fire mission was conducted and as the artillery officer counted down the seconds to impact as we listened on the radio to their continuing radio traffic. The radio signal disappeared from the air



about the same time that the rounds impacted. We couldn't tell if we hit them or just came close and scared them and so after the fire mission was over we sent out a recon patrol to see if we were lucky.

The patrol that went out was platoon size and after reaching the suspected site they called back to say that we had been right on. There were bodies and gear all over. They did a reconnaissance of the area and then returned with a CHICOM radio, a half dozen AK-47's still in cos-line (packing grease) and as much ammunition, hand grenades and web gear as they could carry back. They destroyed the rest of the gear that they couldn't bring back with explosives. We must have wiped out the entire unit since they never would have left that much good equipment there. The RDF team members after looking at the radio said that we had probably hit a regimental headquarters unit since that type of radio would never be found below battalion level. Since it was the 273d that had attacked us, it was our guess that we had knocked out their entire communication company. The RDF people also said that to their knowledge this was the first radio of that type captured in country.

### **Captured Hand Grenades**





## Ho Chi Min Sandal and Web Belt



### Analysis of Attack

What follows is what I believe happened in the attacks on the camp that occurred in late 1967. However, it was only after doing the research for this book and going back over my notes that it all started to fit together and make some sense to me. Back in 1967, in the heat of battle, we all knew something was going on but we did not really see all of it or understand the ramifications of what was happening, we were way too close to the action at the time. To us the attack on our camp just made no tactical sense since when it occurred, it was done in the worst possible way for the VC/NVA troops (but, don't get me wrong, what was good for us was bad for them so we weren't actually complaining about what happened). However, the VC/NVA commander couldn't have been that stupid and so some other factors must have been in play. And having said that, we had also been very very lucky for with just a few days difference in the attack timing or for a slightly different set circumstances in the conduct of the battle we and or the 1-28th infantry troops could very easily have been overrun by the VC/NVA attacking forces. Under that scenario I wouldn't be here writing this book.

This then is my analysis of the various mortar/rocket attacks and ground assaults that were conducted by the VC/NVA against Bu Dop and Bo Duc between November 27, 1967 and December 8, 1967. The 273d VC/NVA regiment (there was some disagreement as to whether it



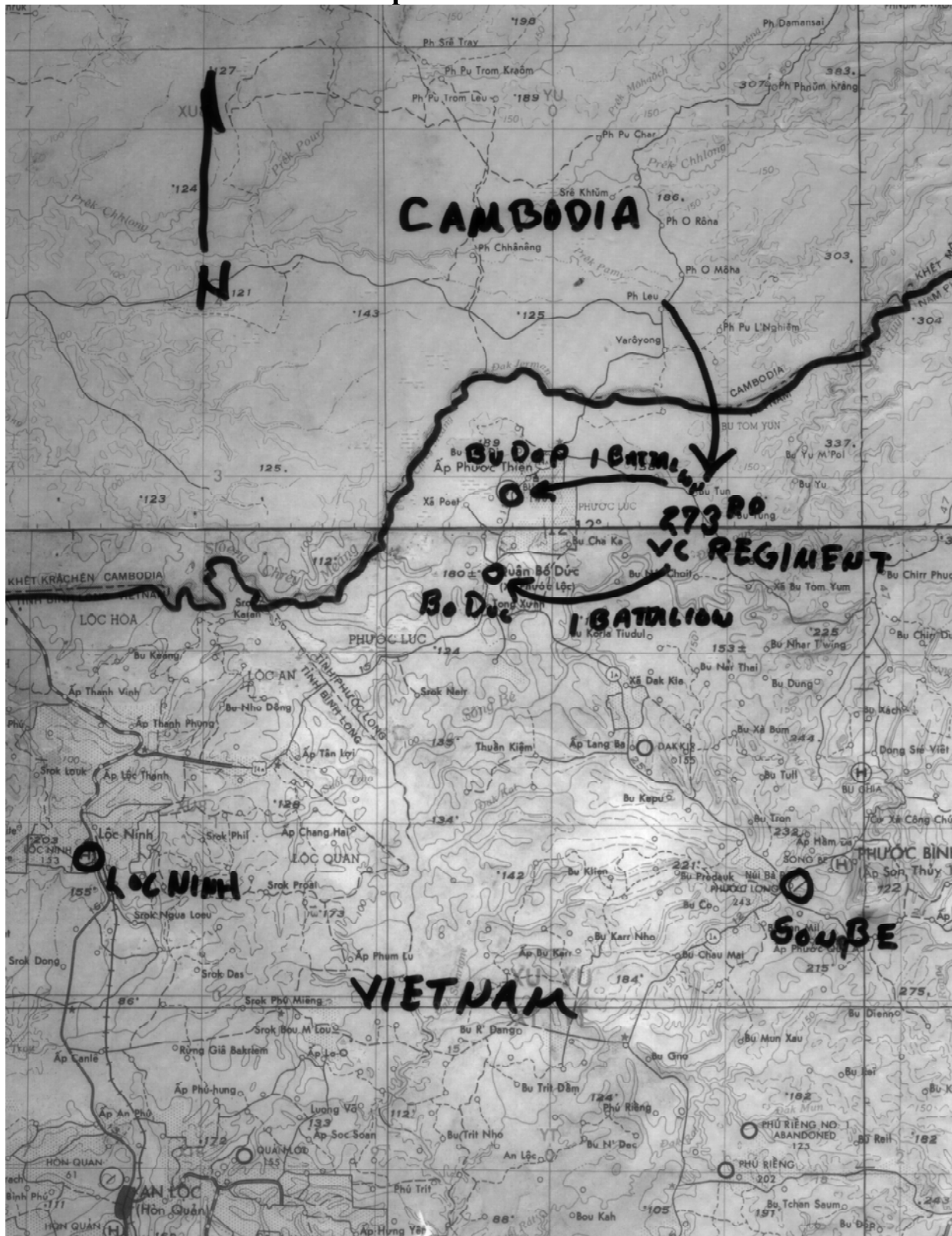
was the 273rd or the 272nd regiment, but it doesn't really matter which and so I picked the 273rd as the most likely) or major elements of it had planned to assault Bu Dop from the rubber at our northeast corner. They also planned to assault the ARVN compound at the district town of Bo Duc 7 or 8 klic's to our South. They probably crossed over from Cambodia and staged in the area 10 to 15 klic's due East of Bu Dop in the two to three weeks prior to the assault. This was the hot area for our patrols and where Captain Hasko's and the other SF camp's patrols were split up and decimated on the 29th of November. Given the size of the VC/NVA force (probably 1,500 troops in the regiment) to the east of camp they were very lucky that they weren't completely wiped out. Fortunately for Captain Hasko and the rest of the SF assault forces the VC/NVA were probably spread out over 10 square kilometers to prevent them from being spotted from the air.

This attack on Bu Dop was to have occurred either at the same time as the attack on the district headquarters at Bo Duc, or possibly either somewhat earlier or later, it would work tactically either way; however, I personally believe that the two attacks were planned to occur together. What may have happened was one of two situations. One, that the unit commander (probably a Battalion in size) that was supposed to hit Bu Dop realized that there was more at that location than they had planned on. He then may have held up the attack until he could get confirmation to continue. Two, or it may just have been the interference of the Bu Dop patrol lead by Captain Hasko on the 27th, which caused their coordination to be off. Personally I think it was the second reason. However, in either case, since the VC/NVA strategic plan was to draw American forces away from the cities whether a particular unit met heavy resistance or not was not important. So even if the unit commander knew he would be wiped out in the attack it would still have served its strategic goal or purpose. The attack at Loc Ninh the prior month followed this pattern but was better coordinated than what occurred at Bu Dop. It was, I believe, the first major battle conducted by the VC/NVA against an American position and it was also a major tactical defeat for the VC/NVA.

In any case the assault on the Northeast corner of Bu Dop would have been a reasonably good tactical plan of attack except that the 1-28th infantry was there and this spot was, in effect, the center of our combined front. This was then the worst possible place they could have picked to hit us since the combined fires of both Camp Bu Dop and the 1st Division troops could be brought to bear upon them (This is the reason I feel this was not the original purpose or plan of the assault) and we also had clear fields of fire on their approaches. When the 1-28th infantry forward OP's heard noise and their battalion commander called for air he had actually jumped the gun because it was only noise that was involved not actual enemy ground action. But as it turned out it was the best thing he could have done since just as the air support arrived the VC attacked and they were caught in the open by the aircraft as they crossed the airfield. The lead elements of the VC/NVA were not even to the wire when the full force of both ground units and the U.S. air support hit them inflicting very heavy casualties on them. None of us realized the extent of what was happening until it was over, because the air strikes hit the VC/NVA before they actually engaged us in a ground attack. In my opinion had this attack come before the 1-28th infantry arrived, camp Bu Dop would probably have been overrun in the ensuing battle given the size of the attacking force.



## Disposition of Forces









## Chapter Fourteen, Attack on Bu Dop again

The next day December 1, 1967, Lieutenant Berry took an operation out west of camp to investigate possible VC/NVA mortar sites. He encountered no problems in the morning. Also that morning SP4 Posey left to go to Ben Hoa to try and get medical supplies, with all the action we were starting to run low on some items. PFC Fitzgerald, our radio operator, went with him to receive treatment for a slight case of Pneumonia. He had picked it up from spending many hours in the commo bunker since it was very damp down there. Had he stayed in camp it was our medic's opinion that he would not recover even with antibiotics if he was spending most of his time in the commo bunker.

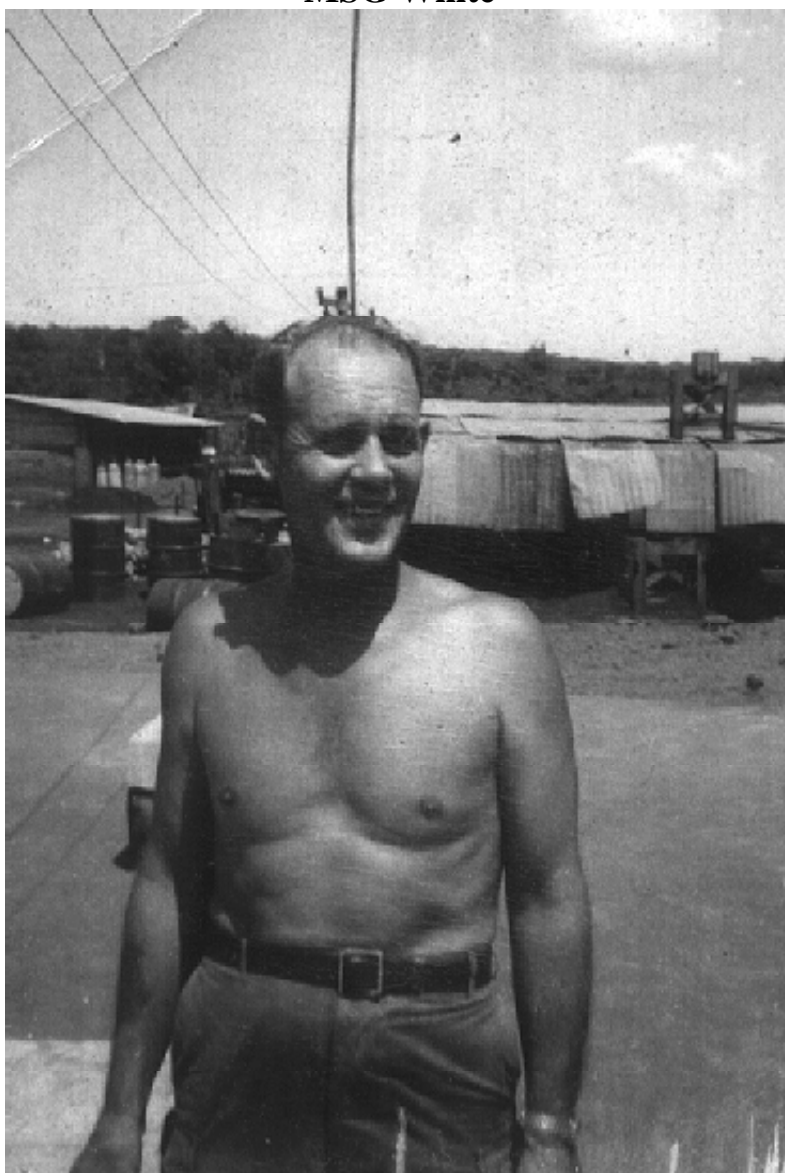
**PFC Fitzgerald**



During the afternoon, Lieutenant Berry's patrol made a light contact with a VC unit and they had about a 10 minute firefight, we fired the 155 mm guns in support of them. The artillery fire stopped the VC and they withdrew to the west. The Strikers wanted to come back to camp at this point but we said no. They started to move again but within minutes ran into another small VC unit, or possibly the same unit again. Again the 155 mm guns were used in support but the Strikers could take no more action and they broke contact and started running for camp. There was nothing that we could do so we told Lieutenant Berry to try and at least get them under control on there way back to camp.



## MSG White



About 30 minutes later just as it was getting dark Master Sergeant White, the Bu Dop team sergeant, and I were paying some of the civilian labors that we used in the camp. I heard a noise and when I looked up and out the open team house door to the East I saw the start of a mortar attack on the camp. This attack was to last for several hours. The first 3 or 4 rounds landed in the camp wire directly east of camp and then they started to fall progressively more West on to the camp wall and then into the camp itself. Since the team house and my desk were directly in this path MSG White and I started running for the door to the underground bunker. Before we could get there the first of the mortar runs hit the east side of the team house and the concussion knocking us to the ground. Master Sergeant White was slightly wounded but went to his position and I quickly got down into the commo bunker, which was my alert position. I could hear the rounds continuing to impact overhead as I called the B team to let them know we were under motor attack again.



Next I called Lieutenant Berry who was still out on his patrol to inform him of our current situation. My recommendation was for him to try and stop the Strikers and form up about 1 or 2 Klic's south of the camp. I thought it might be good to have a reaction force outside the camp in case we were hit with a ground assault. But he was too inexperienced to accomplish this task and they continued on toward the camp despite his efforts. They all made their way into camp in small groups or individually between incoming mortar rounds and explosions over the next several hours. Since we were under mortar attack, I was surprised at what they did, but it didn't matter what I thought they were going to do; they did what they wanted to do.

During the initial attack the team house took about 4 to 5 rounds of 82 mm mortar fire on the south end and was severely damaged in that area. We also had set up a temporary storage area that day for 4.2" mortar rounds and 155 mm artillery rounds and their powder canisters that had come in on a re-supply C-123 about two hours before dark. Before the American artillery people could store it properly we were under mortar attack. Unfortunately, the incoming mortar rounds found this temporary ammunition staging area and when they hit it the explosions really rocked the camp as a lot of it went up. The following picture was taken several days before but does show about what the situation was when the incoming hit us.

### **155 MM Rounds**





During the attack some of the incoming mortar rounds landed near the 4.2" mortar position severally wounding Master Sergeant White and also wounding one of the RDF NCOs. Despite these wounds they both continued to operate the 4.2" mortar firing illumination rounds so we could see all the approach paths to the camp. This may not sound very important but keeping those flares in the air illuminating the area around the camp was critical to us being able to see what was going on. Master Sergeant White refused several times to be evacuated until the mortar attack was over. The attached 155 mm crew also took some casualties initially I think four, from shrapnel. A medevac was called for our 7 wounded and another one for some wounded that the 1st Division had taken during this attack. I never found out how many rounds they received in the position. Before the medevac's arrived 2 more USSF were wounded when mortar rounds landed near the 81 mm mortar position they were manning. Only one of them required evacuating and he went with the first chopper with the other wounded. About 20 minutes later another medevac was called for 3 more artillery crew who had shrapnel wounds. I lost count of who was wounded and who was still manning their position during this period there was just too much going on and this narrative is only the best reconstruction of this period that I can put together.

#### **4.2" Mortar Position**





Being in the bunker we didn't know what was going on and we had also lost contact with some of the incoming rounds impacted in the ammo staging areas and the explosions threw unexploded artillery rounds all over the camp. They also started some secondary fires all through the artillery positions and that part of the camp in general. Most of the stored rounds did not explode when hit but a lot of them did end up in sections of the staging area that were now on fire. These secondary fires started burning more and more materials and became very hot. We couldn't do a lot about this as the camp was still taking incoming rounds and there was no way to put out these fires.

After 20 to 30 minutes the fires around the ammo in the staging area were starting to get big enough and hot enough to start setting off the unexploded rounds that were cooking in the fires. Once they started these secondary explosions lasted until about 0300 in the morning. The hot flaming debris from these explosions started to set off other secondary explosions and fires all over the camp. It was very difficult to tell at this time whether these explosions were from our exploding ammo or incoming motor and rocket rounds or both. The remains of the team house caught fire in the southeast corner about this time and it quickly started to spread to the section that hadn't been hit. Since the commo bunker and TOC were under the team house they now started to fill with smoke and to get hot from the fires raging above us.

I didn't know where Captain Hasko was and I still couldn't raise him on the internal com system to give him a status report. But I knew it was import to determine our status so I asked Lieutenant Berry to come out with me and inspect the camp for damage. In our inspection we found that red-hot fragments from the exploding rounds were landing near our 2 1/2 ton truck, which was filled with WP (White Phosphorous) 155 mm rounds (more ammunition that had come in on the re-supply that day). I decided to drive it across the camp and move it toward an empty area near the gate to prevent it from blowing up where it was. Lieutenant Berry and I did so and we thought it would be out of range of the falling hot debris. I then returned back to the commo bunker where I told the people there to clear out if the trap door from above started to burn. If that happened I told them to go to the emergency commo bunker in the medical building near the North Wall. After talking to the B-Team by radio, we again went out to continue to check the camp, as we still had not been able to make contact with Captain Hasko. We still assumed that he was at the East wall and hadn't heard anything about him being wounded or killed, but we were concerned that we hadn't talked to him in quite some time.

We checked positions and troops through out the camp finding that most areas were ready and functional. Then when we got to where we had put the truck that we had moved we saw that it was still receiving hot fragments. This was not good and so Lieutenant Berry and I got in the truck and we drove it through the near by front gate. To do this we had to crash the gate and drive through a bunch of barbed wire that we used to block the road. When the truck became tangled and would go no further we crawled back into camp. Since the back of the truck with the WP rounds was facing the camp I set up a 106 mm recoilless rifle so it was pointed at the truck. I instructed the CIDG manning that position to blow the truck with a 106 mm heat round if the VC got to that point on a ground assault which we now expected at any time. Not all the artillery rounds would have gone off but some of them would have so that if this had happened that truck would have taken out quite a few VC/NVA.



As we moved into the center of camp from the gate 106 mm position we heard a very loud booming explosion and almost simultaneously a huge concussion knocked us both off of our feet and to the hard ground. We both recovered and got behind some stacked PSP in time to see a 20 foot diameter fireball rising from our 30 foot high watchtower, which then proceeded to fall over onto the north end of the team house. The 106 mm recoilless rifle and it's ammo, in the tower, had just exploded taking out the tower and wherever else was left of the rest of the team house. The burning debris from the tower quickly set fire to the North end of the team house and so it was now burning at both ends and soon it was completely engulfed in flames. I don't know if the explosion was a result of a direct hit from a rocket or if it was from burning fragments from the exploding ammo. But because of the magnitude of the explosion I believe it was a direct hit from either a mortar round or a RPG round (rocket propelled grenade). We had put this 106 mm recoilless rifle in the watchtower in case there was some truth to the tank rumors since from that elevated position we could fire over the camp wall. The 106 mm rifle was the only weapon we had that could knock out a tank. We figured that at least we would get a few shots off before it was taken out by enemy fire.

### **Camp Water Tower**





PFC Fitzgerald who was in Ben Hoa at the time the attack started, heard that Bu Dop was under siege and contacted the operations officer at A Company 5th Special Forces and requested to be flown back to Bu Dop. The Operations Officer not knowing that Fitzgerald had pneumonia put him on the first medevac flight into Bu Dop. I was surprised to see him at his position in the commo bunker when I went back again to check what the heat from the fire was doing to our equipment. The room was now starting to fill with dense smoke from the fires above and the burning insulation that was now melting off the antenna wires near the bunker's roof. We were talking about moving the commo operations to the backup position in the medical bunker when the camp was hit again with mortar or rocket fire. These rounds knocked out our power generator and also took out both our primary and secondary antennas cutting all communications out of camp with the B team.

The blasts from these latest rounds also spread the fire into the lower levels of our bunker complex. Since I wasn't sure how safe it would be to move to the Medical Building I told them to set up an emergency communications room some place closer. Someone suggest a nearby MG bunker that was easy to get to from where we were. This seemed like a good idea so we all started moving the radio equipment from the commo room to this machine gun bunker in the northwest corner of the inner defensive perimeter as fast as we could since the fires were really starting to get bad now. There was a short tunnel from the team bunkroom to this position and so we could carry the equipment from the commo room into the bunkroom through the tunnel and then into the MG bunker. PFC Fitzgerald was able to set up a working radio by using a 292 antenna on a PRC-25 radio and he then re-established communications with Song Be (B-34) after about two hours work.

While PFC Fitzgerald was doing that, I organized a bucket brigade to try and put out the raging fires in the commo room and S-2 shop. We did manage to get the fires out after about 30 minutes work but not before they had destroyed most of the remaining radio equipment and all the camp records in the S-2 shop and TOC. After putting out the fires in the bunkers I found Lieutenant Berry and we started to check the perimeter again. I couldn't believe that we hadn't had a ground assault and with all of our internal communications equipment now gone we didn't have much control of the CIDG troops. I still believed that Captain Hasko was manning the East wall of the camp at this time since that is where we always believed any VC/NVA assault would come from.

We started our checks on the South Wall and worked our way clockwise to the West wall than on to the North wall. Just as we were about to turn toward the East wall to try and check in with Captain Hasko, a terrific explosion blew us both off our feet, it felt like we were blown 15 feet through the air. The explosion was from the other end of camp (somewhere near the Northeast corner). After recovering and realizing that we were both still alive and relatively unhurt we moved forward to see what had happened. There was a lot of smoke near the ground from all the fires and explosions and so we couldn't tell what had happened until we got to the actual sight of the blast and found that one of our 81 mm mortar positions had apparently taken a direct hit blowing all the HE ammunition stored there. It left a gaping hole 20 feet across and at least 10 feet deep. Luckily there had been no one in that position and so there were no injuries from the blast.



Leaving this still smoking pit and moving south along the East wall we got to where our American artillery was positioned. The two tubes of 155 mm howitzer had by this time taken quite a pounding from the incoming rocket and mortar rounds and now from all the secondary explosions so that their CO told me they were no longer operational. They were both completely mangled by all the blasts and the shrapnel hits they had taken. It was now about 0400 hours and Lieutenant Berry and I split up here. I don't remember what assignment I gave him at this point but it was probably to help with the re-supply's now coming in.

All through this period the B team had been sending in supplies and replacement people as well as removing wounded. SP4 Posey returned on one of the incoming medevac flights and additional commo people with equipment came in on another flight to set up a better radio communications systems than we had cobbled together. The incoming rounds had now stopped and most of the fires were either out or under control. The secondary explosions had also stopped. Efforts now turned to our wounded; SP4 Posey and the other medical people started treating all the wounded SF and CIDG personnel in the medical bunker. These were non-life threatening wounds all the seriously wounded had been medevaced.

We had one major problem still facing us and so SP5 McGanney our engineering Sergeant and I set out to see if we could restore power to the camp's underground bunkers. We found that the main generator was OK and that the fires and explosions had caused shorts in the main feed wires that had in turn blown the fuses at the generator. We cut the old lines and ran new feed lines to the bunker complex and replaced the fuses restoring power to this part of camp. As soon as the lights came on the commo people started working on the commo room. They took out the burned radios and replaced them with new ones that had been brought in with the re-supplies. This re-supply allowed us to quickly re-established good communications with the B-team.

By this time it was just about dawn and we started to reorganize the outer and inner defenses in case we were hit with a VC/NVA ground assault, although it was looking less and less like this would happen. Fortunately, most of the damage was superficial (the loss of the team house had no bearing on our ability to fight), the exceptions to this being the loss of the two American 155 mm guns, the 106 mm recoilless rifle that had been in the tower and one 81 mm mortar. The outer wall was undamaged and intact as well as most of the inner Special Forces bunker complex. If a VC/NVA assault would come we were still at about 80 to 90% strength and still in solid fighting condition.

*The 155 mm artillery and the 81 mm mortar would not have been much help in an actual ground assault as these are indirect fire weapons. What this means is that they throw a round up in an arcing path that comes down at a distance from where the pieces are. Mortars in particular cannot give close in fire support. Artillery pieces can lower there tubes and fire close in "Direct Fire" but in our case they were inside the camp so that our perimeter wall was in the way. The VC/NVA would have had to be in the camp for the artillery to be used on them.*



The VC/NVA had missed an opportunity here as from the period starting just after midnight and running until maybe 0500 we were very vulnerable to a ground assault. With all the raging internal fires and the loss of communications we would have been in a poor position to defend ourselves in any kind of major assault. The following series of picture show the results of this attack on the camp.

### **Remains of Team House**





**Entrance to Underground Bunkers**



**Walls blown Out**





**Team House Remains**









## Chapter Fifteen, Clean up

The first job of the next day was to clean off the runway so we could get supplies into camp other than by helicopter. The CIDG detail went out and after about an hours work the runway was operational again. Major Miller from B-34 was in on about the third plane to land. He also allowed four or five reporters into camp to talk to the SF personnel about the battle. They had apparently come in that night and spent the night in the 1st Division positions and so they had seen most of what happened anyway. We didn't like them being there but there was certainly nothing we could do about it. While all this was going on the VC decided to hit us again with a good morning mortar barrage. This one was not as effective as the one the night before (all the easy targets had already been hit); however, the 20 or so incoming rounds did do some additional damage in the camp.

One of the incoming round apparently landed near the 4.2" mortar position causing a secondary flash explosion that severely burned SP4 Posey on his legs as he was firing the mortar in the camp's defense. He was given first aid and medevaced first to 24th medical evacuation hospital in Long Binh and than later on to Japan and then on to the States. I was beginning to wonder about this position since first MSG White was wounded here and now SP4 Posey. Also, we had now taken so many casualties that there weren't many left from the team, as it existed when I got there in September.

The next priority was to clear the camp of all the unexploded 155 mm and 4.2 inch rounds that had been thrown all around camp by the explosions the night before. SP5 McGanney was given that job as well as removing the 2 1/2 ton truck full of WP rounds that was still in the wire where Lieutenant Berry and I had put it.

Captain Hasko and I attempted to inventory the camp losses after this mortar attack and by the end of the morning we came up with a list of critical material and equipment that we would need to carry out operations and get the administration office working again. The B team S-4 was there and he helped us as much as he could. That afternoon supplies started coming in for our personal needs as well as equipment to start to get the camp back to 100%. The balance of the day was spent cleaning up to include sifting the ashes of the team house looking to see if anything of value had survived. While doing this I could see that an 82 mm round had landed right where my desk had been (there was a small crater in the concrete pad). By that night the commo room was at 100% and new SF personnel had been assigned to make up for all our personnel losses.

We did receive incoming mortar rounds several times during that day. During one of these attacks I was firing HE (high explosive) rounds from the 4.2" mortar at a position where we thought the incoming mortar rounds might be coming from (counter mortar fire). While I was doing this I was photographed by one of the members of the press that Major Miller had let into camp. My picture ended up in the Cleveland Plain Dealer (my home town paper), I believe the next day 4 December 1967. I didn't find out about it or even known it had been taken until I got home and was shown the picture by my dad much later.



**LT. Pristash in 4.2" Mortar Position**



**RETURN FIRE—A U.S. Special Forces officer works 4.2-inch mortar alone during Communist mortar attack on American base at Bu Dop, South Vietnam.**

AP Wirephoto



One of the first things we did after reestablishing normal security at camp was to send out a patrol to try and find SSGT Millner or his interpreter or their bodies. The first patrol was not successful and so we sent out a second patrol a few days later. They were able to find the site of the battles but neither of them were able to find any sign of SSGT Millner or anyone else that was missing. SSGT Millner was a well liked NCO and this was a big loss to the camp and I'm sure his family.

*According to the book Green Berets at War by Stanton no trace of him was ever found and he is still listed as missing in action.*

Because SSGT Millner's body was not found then or later I'm reasonably sure he was captured by the VC/NVA. He was a resourceful and experienced SF trooper and since he was never released he probably died either in captivity or trying to escape his captors. Knowing him I'm sure he did his best and that he conducted himself in a manner that brought honor to him, his unit, and his country.

We all wanted to stop the mortars that kept harassing us but we could not find them. All our intelligence said that the mortar rounds that continued to fall in or around camp came from the northeast and that was where the village of AP Phuc Tien was. We also knew that this village was at best sympathetic to the VC and probably harbored them at worst. We had also made contact with VC units several times in the area of that village. What we wanted to do was destroy the village but without direct knowledge of acts against us we couldn't do it. Since we were all certain of what was going on I came up with an idea that wouldn't harm them but would cause them and the French some inconvenience.

We were picking up unexploded 155 mm and 4.2" rounds all over camp and storing them outside the wire until we could figure out what to do with them (even though that looked good we couldn't use them as they could go off in the tube). I had an idea that solved two problems what to do with the rounds and how to inconvenience the VC/NVA French. I told SP5 McGanney to take all these rounds to the road that went to the village of Ap Phuc Tien and explode them on the road (Route 14A). He did this by blowing 20 or 30 rounds at a time with TNT and Det Cord and after several days he had blown a hole in the ground 75 to 100 feet across and 25 to 30 feet deep. We stopped only when we hit water and the bottom started to fill up. This crater was also completely across the road and up to the tree line on both sides of the road. This effectively cut the village off from the rest of the world since SP5 McGanney had already blown the bridge on the other side of the village into Cambodia.

While we were blowing the plantation road the attached 155 mm artillery crew received replacement personnel and also two new 155 mm guns (the old ones were way beyond field repair). Their FDC (Fire Direction Control) center was not damaged in the VC/NVA attack and so once they had put up new antennas and re-laid the guns they were back in business. Later that day, once they were operational, they began firing fire missions for us on any suspected mortar positions we could think of. We really wanted to take out the mortar positions that were causing us so much trouble.



Because this unit had helped us so much over the past two or three weeks I gave their CO, a Lieutenant, a gun I had made out of an M-1 Carbine (WW II style weapon used by the CIDG). After I had been in camp a few weeks I took one of the regular M-1 carbines and cut the barrel down (not beyond the point it wouldn't fire on automatic) and made a pistol grip for it. Basically it was an automatic pistol with 30 round clips. He (I can't remember his name) really like this modified M-1.

We also received new vehicles for the camp since our jeep, 3/4 ton and 2 1/2 ton truck were all either destroyed or severely damaged in the attack. These were brand new vehicles and since our old ones had been rolling junk anyway, this was a real improvement. New freezers and cooking equipment also came in so that we had hot food, which was prepared by the artillery unit cook. All this happened very quickly so that within days Bu Dop was back to normal, we were just minus a team house.

A few days after we had blown the road the French plantation manager flew up to Bu Dop (they used our air strip) and he met some of his people at the airstrip. We could see them talking from the East Wall of camp and the French manager was obviously mad at what had happened to the road. He then walked past the crater on the road and got in a truck that took him to his plantation. After a short time he returned, walked around the crater then walked to his plane and left, presumably for Saigon, in any case we never saw him again.

The only inconvenience we had, was having to go to the nearby stream to wash up. The local Vietnamese women who did their laundry there got a real kick out of watching us take our bathes in this stream. We took turns doing this and almost always went there in groups and posted guards in the jungle for protection from ambush. During this time and after a particularly dirty day of clean up I decided to clean up. I was either walking out the gate or in (I'm not sure now) in my shorts and tennis shoes to go the stream when the B-team CO Major Miller showed up. He saw me and went nuts because I was not in uniform. He was a stickler for starched fatigues and spit shined boots and we had clashed several times in the past over this issue. At Bu Dop we allowed USSF troops to work without fatigue tops because of the heat. I was all for the military formalities in garrison; however, this was not the time and place for that kind of observance. During my stay at Bu Dop I got to dislike him very much as it appeared he did not understand anything about what was going on in the field.

It's been a long time since this all occurred but thinking back I believe that Major Miller may not have been 3 qualified (Special Forces) or he had just gotten it (and had no practical experience) and that would explain his apparent lack of understanding of Special Forces operations. The prefix 3 was added to the code of an officers rating to signify that he was qualified in Special Forces operations and had gone through the required training at the John F. Kennedy Center for Special Warfare located at Fort Bragg, North Carolina. For example, my base MOS code was 1542 (infantry small unit officer) after graduating from jump school it was 71542 (jump qualified) and with my Special Forces qualification it became 31542. This signified that I was both jump qualified and Special Forces qualified.

The explosion that had wounded SP4 Posey also wrecked the 4.2" mortar position. I took it upon myself to rebuild that position using the camp's civilian labor. Under my direction we



completely rebuilt the position from the ground up. We started by resetting the base plate and putting in all new sand bags. We also made a new ammo bunker covered with PSP logs and sand bags. The pit walls were about four feet high and three feet thick. I installed a wooden cabinet (ammo case) with a PRC-25 radio with long antenna to monitor the radio channels we used and also the aircraft, which flew in our support since they used different frequencies. There was an HT-1 hand held radio and plenty of small arms ammunition to complete the process of making this an operational pit. Since the primary mission of the 4.2" mortar was to fire illumination rounds for battlefield illumination this was the bulk of the ammunition that was in the new ammo bunker.

The women from the village of Bu Dop did a lot of the manual labor in this area since most of the men were in the CIDG and not available. The local civilian labor crew I was using was all female and during the reconstruction of the 4.2" pit their forewomen told me that the red mole on my chest was a very lucky mark. Since I did live through my stay in Nam I guess she was right although I think maybe two red moles would have been better.

In Appendix J, Appendix K and Appendix L are summary reports from the 1-28th and other convention units written during this period. These summaries were picked as they related to action around Bu Dop. These reports were received from the National Archives section of the Smithsonian Institute as indicated in the forward to this book.







## Chapter Sixteen, WIA

The night of December 7, 1967 was an eventful one for me because of what would happen over the next six hours. It all began at about 2100 hours when the VC/NVA launched another rocket and mortar attack against Bu Dop and the 1-28th infantry. While my normal alert position, when the CO was in camp, was in the commo bunker, we had received so many replacements over the past several weeks, due to casualties, that we had lost continuity. Therefore, I went with the new Heavy Weapons Sergeant, SFC Ernest O. Broom and another SF trooper, SP4 Gerry D. Schroeder (I can't remember his specialty now) to their assigned post at the 4.2" mortar position. Both had just arrived in camp and were unfamiliar with anything relating to Bu Dop operations and so it made no sense to send them out into a potential combat situation without help. Especially, as the 4.2" mortar position was a key spot, since we used it to illuminate the area around Bu Dop so that we could see any enemy troop movement near the camp. I went there to show them where we fired the illumination rounds and also where the HE was to be fired, if required. The 4.2" mortar couldn't fire in close on attacking troops (for technical reasons beyond the scope of this story) but it could fire on suspected staging areas and routes of withdrawal and we used it extensively for this purpose.

Over the next several hours we continued to receive sporadic incoming mortar rounds from the Northeast (probably from somewhere near Ap Phuc Tien as in most of the past mortar attacks), I don't remember any rockets being fired at or hitting the camp. There was also some small arms fire but no signs of any kind of ground assault. It appeared that this time we were just being harassed or probed and not attacked. As I remember it about 20 or 30 mortar rounds were fired at Bu Dop and the 1-28th infantry positions during the night, more to keep us from sleeping than to inflict major damage. The 1-28th infantry was taking some casualties from shrapnel but I don't think they had any KIA's during this mortar bombardment. We fired counter mortar fire as did the 1-28th infantry but I don't think any of us hit the VC/NVA mortar positions. They were probably just moving around firing a few rounds from one position and then a few rounds from another near by position.

However, at about 0300 hours early in the morning of December 8, 1967 one of these incoming rounds landed either: near the 4.2" pit sending hot shrapnel into the ammo bunker; or it landed directly on the ammo bunker itself penetrating it with flash or hot shrapnel (There was no way for me to know then or now). In either case it didn't matter for it ignited the charges on the staged illumination rounds (on the back of mortar rounds are placed propellant charges/explosives that fire when the round is dropped in the tube. That's what propels the round to the target). Maybe even some of the illumination rounds themselves that we were getting ready to fire were set off. I do remember that there was a dull explosion and then several very intense waves of heat that went through the position igniting everything that could burn. Fortunately we had used up all the HE rounds that night and only a few illumination rounds were left unfired. If there had been any HE rounds in the pit and they had gone off when the incoming round hit they wouldn't have found much if any of us. Just a few pieces and parts here and there scattered around the camp. For sure I wouldn't be here writing this book now.



I had on a standard issue steel pot, a nylon flack vest, jungle fatigue pants and jungle boots, your basic standard uniform for combat in Vietnam. Because we were in camp I did not have on any web gear and I wasn't carrying a side arm (45 caliber pistol). My CAR-15 was in the pit with me but I did not have it in my actual possession. Most of us didn't wear socks or underwear to try and prevent getting fungus infections from the heat and moisture that was always present. The heat from the blast hit me from the right rear while I was talking on the PRC-25 radio. I remember being engulfed by the flames as the fire ball rolled past me and several intense waves (I could feel the pressure as they hit me) of heat hitting me on the back and right side. These blasts or waves of heat were extremely hot such that the intensity of them melted the nylon flak vest completely off me as well as instantly setting fire to my pants and jungle boots. I must have instinctively closed my eyes as the fireball engulfed me and then there were a few seconds where I don't remember what happened. The blast either blew me out of the pit or I crawled out (I'm not sure which), the next thing I do remember a few seconds later was that I was laying on the ground just outside the pit and seeing that I was on fire.

My first action was to put out the flames that were still consuming what was left of my clothes and flack vest. That probably took 20 or 30 seconds and while I was doing that I also saw there was an intense fire still burning in the 4.2" mortar pit. After I put out the flames with dirt I got up and saw that SFC Broom and SP4 Schroeder were down on the ground in the pit and still burning, I think they were both unconscious. They were behind me when the blast hit and so this was the first I saw of them after the fireballs rolled over us. I was in the process of climbing into the pit to help them when some of the other team members showed up. They stopped me and took care of the other two guys in the pit. I don't remember which team members helped me (If ever any of them read this thanks for what you did) besides that being a long time ago I probably wasn't in the best state of mind.

I knew I was injured and burned but I had no sense that I might be seriously or even mortally wounded. I was placed on a stretcher and I do remember getting a shot of morphine. A dust off was called and by 0400 hours we were loaded in it and we left Bu Dop for the last time. It was still dark and as we left I could see the camp and 1-28th positions dropping away as the chopper rose into the dark night sky. Still, not realizing the extent of my injuries I was concerned over my team and that I needed to get back right away, they needed my experience. I was thinking that I'd be gone for a few days, get some rest and then join my team in a week or so. I was very wrong in this assessment of the situation.

*When doing the research for this book one of the documents I was able to get from the National Archives was the 1st Division radio logbook for the period November 25, 1967 through December 8, 1967. When going through it to check the accuracy (dates and times) of what I was writing I found on two of the pages the references to my medevac. It wasn't my name (names were not used in most cases) but it was the right date, time and place and I know it was me. It was a very eerie feeling reading about your own medevac and also knowing that later you would almost die from those wounds. It was almost like reading your own obituary. A very strange feeling indeed.*



# 1st Division Log

CONFIDENTIAL WHEN FILLED IN					
DAILY STATE JOURNAL OR CITY OFFICER'S LOG					Page No. of Pages
Organization or Installation		Location		Period Covered	
HHC, 1st Bde, 1st Inf Div APO San Francisco 96345		QUAN LOI		Hour	Date
				0001	8 Dec 67
Item No.	Time	Incidents, Messages, Orders, etc.	Action Taken	Init.	
41.	0304	(1/28) Mortars stopped.	F		
42.	0307	(1/2) Attack has stopped.	F		
43.	0307	(1/28) Reports SF WHA (furnishing own Dust Off) 5 WHA Dist HQ & 4 slight at 1/28.	F		
44.	0310	(1/28) Reports Dist HQ has 3 serious & 1 Amb.	F		
45.	0320	(1/28) Dist HQ rec mortars.	F		
46.	0321	(1/2) rec 1 more mortar round.	F, DTOC		
47.	0328	(1/28) incoming mortars.	F		
48.	0326	(1/28) Mortars stopped.	F		
49.	0327	(1/28) rec incoming mortars again.	F		
50.	0327	(Rebel) LFT Rebel 36 thinks he has mortar Psn spotted at 1/28.	F		
51.	0328	Rebel 36 engaging mortar pos.	F		
52.	0329	(1/28) Mortars ceased.	F		
53.	0330	Receiving Sparodic S/A fire along perimeter. (1/2)	F		
54.	0330	Req Dr C send Dust Off to Dist HQ.	F		
55.	0337	Rebel 36 Dist HQ got 1 mortar psn engaged 50 cal psn this time.	F		
56.	0337	(1/2) Sparodic S/A & poss some RPG's.	F		
57.	0340	(1/28) 3 50 cal psn S end of runway Rebel 36 & Gangbuster engaging.	F		
58.	0343	Rebel 36 coming back for refuel.	F		
59.	0344	(1/2) Still rec sparodic S/A fire from all around	F		
60.	0346	Rebel 36 got 1 mortar psn.	F		
61.	0348	Rebel 36 reports the 350 cla psn loc same area as last week.	F		
62.	0348	(1/28) cas 4 WHA slight no Dust Off req. Arty O, SF rec 4 US WHA Dust Off on way.	F, DTOC		
63.	0355	(1/2) Estimate 50 VC KIA all quiet this time.	F, DTOC		
64.	0400	(1/2) Est 2 Co VC hit position at least.	F, DTOC		
65.	0400	(1/2) Cas for 1/2 is 4 KHA, 11 WHA & 1 MIA.	F		
66.	0402	(1/2) Rec sparodic sniper fire from all directions.	F, DTOC		
67.	0406	(Arty) Reports at BU DOP SF 2 WIA & 1 Arty WIA (Digger)	F		
68.	0406	(1/28) Reports 50 cal psn on air strip Grid XU9828.	F, DTOC		
69.	0408	(1/2) Still rec sparodic A/S sniper fire.	F, DTOC		
70.	0413	(1/28) Dust Off complete at S/F compound for 4 WHA.	F, DTOC		
71.	0416	(1/28) SF compound had rec 3-4 rounds mortar.	F		
72.	0416	(1/28) Dust Off complete (ARVN) at Dist HQ 4 WHA.	F, DTOC		
73.	0420	(1/2) Req Dust Off for 0600H.	F		
74.	0418	Heavy Arty warning: XT425669 avoid by 5naut miles until 0600H.	F, All Units		
75.	0455	(1/2) Revised cas list, 2 KIA, 15 WHA, & 1 MIA.	F, DTOC		
76.	0502	Dist HQ rec mortars this time.	F, DTOC		
77.	0505	(1/28) sent LFT to Dist HQ for support.	F, DTOC		
78.	0506	Dist HQ rec 15-20 rounds of mortars and now only sparodic rounds incoming unk type.	F, DTOC		
79.	0517	(1/28) mortars stopped this time came in from the West.	F, DTOC		







## Chapter Seventeen, San Antonio, Texas

We were all medevaced to the 24th Evacuation Hospital in Long Binh for emergency treatment (see copy of emissions report on next page). I can remember going into the triage room (place where the doctors made decisions as to what to do and how serious the injuries were) and answering a few questions but then my memory starts to get fuzzy. Probably by that time shock was setting in as the next several days were very disjointed and what I can remember is only a few images and feelings. At some point I remember being loaded on a medical transport and then being moved to the 106th army hospital in Japan on 9 December 1967. Below is a copy of the telegram that was sent to my parents and a similar one was sent to my wife.

### Telegram to my Parents

SB MSNGR STA

SB CLAD057 GOVT XV PD FAX WASHINGTON DC 9 906A EST

MR AND MRS JOSEPH PRISTASH, REPORT DELIVERY DONT FONE

DONT DLR BETWN 10PM AND 6AM

4411 ROADMAN RD BROOKLYN OHIO

THE SECRETARY OF THE ARMY HAS ASKED ME TO EXPRESS HIS DEEP REGRET THAT YOUR SON, FRIST LIEUTENANT DAVID J PRISTASH WAS PLACED ON THE VERY SERIOUSLY ILL LIST IN VIETNAM ON 8 DEC 67 AS THE RESULT OF 2ND & 3RD DEGREE BURNS TO 55 TO 60 PERCENT OF HIS BODY RECEIVED WHILE RETURNING AMMUNITION TO MORTAR PIT WHEN FLASH FIRE ERUPTED.

IN THE JUDGEMENT OF THE ATTENDING PHYSICIAN HIS CONDITION IS OF SUCH SEVERITY THAT THERE IS CAUSE FOR CONCERN. PLEASE BE ASSURED THAT THE BEST MEDICAL FACILITIES AND DOCTORS HAVE BEEN MADE AVAILABLE AND EVERY MEASURE IS BEING TAKEN TO AID HIM. YOU WILL BE KEPT INFORMED OF ANY SIGNIFICANT CHANGES IN HIS CONDITION. ADDRESS MAIL TO HIM AT 24 EVACUATION HOSPITAL, APO SF 96491

KENNETH G WICKHAM MAJOR GENERAL USA THE ADJUTANT GENERAL

1037A.



# Copy Emissions Report, 24th Evac.

CLINICAL RECORD COVER SHEET (AR 40-400)												
1. ADMISSION NOTES 0915 Hours No Blvd of A or R		2. WARD Bldg 10		3. TYPE OF CASE <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Dis <input type="checkbox"/> Inj <input type="checkbox"/> MA		4. LAST NAME—FIRST NAME—MIDDLE INITIAL PRISTASH, DAVID J.						
5. SEX M		6. RELIGION P		7. PREV. ADM. <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO		8. REGISTER NO. 7596		9. SERVICE NO. 09331789		10. GRADE 1LT		
11. RATING OR DEGR -		12. DEPARTMENT Army		13. ORGANIZATION AND BRANCH OF SERVICE 5 Spec Forces Co A (20)				14. FLYING STATUS -				
15. NAME AND ADDRESS OF EMERGENCY ADDRESSEE Barlene Pristash (J) 2301 Alamo Road Bricksville, Ohio				16. AGE 27		17. RACE CAU		18. LENGTH OF SERVICE 2 6/12		19. DATE OF ADMISSION 8 Dec 67		
21. ADMITTING OFFICER W.S. BRAZLEY, CPT, MC				22. CONTINUATION OF ITEMS 18 AND 20 (13) APC 96277 31542								
23. DIAGNOSES (See instructions for recording as shown on reverse side. Include all required related data)  IC # 1 (9480) Burns, 2 <sup>o</sup> and 3 <sup>o</sup> , face, trunk and extremities. (50-70% Total) All: Patient sustained injuries 0215, 8 Dec 67 during a mortar attack. LD: YES												
24. OPERATIONS AND SPECIAL THERAPEUTIC PROCEDURES (Show date for each; show anesthetic for each operation)  8 Dec 67 Debridement and debridement of burns, general anesthetic: Nitrous oxide, Oxygen, Pentothal and Fluothane.												
25. SELECTED ADMINISTRATIVE DATA (Show nature of and dates for board proceedings; show fact of and dates for leave, AWOL, subsisting elsewhere, detached service, etc.)  No x-rays accompanying Patient. Placed on VSI List 1355, 8 Dec 67, reported to SP/4 White. TRFD on VSI List 9 Dec 67.												
26. PHYSICAL PROFILE												
TYPE	SERIAL						SUFFIX					<input type="checkbox"/> PROFILE IS UNCHANGED
	P	U	L	H	E	S	R	T	D	O	N	
PREVIOUS												
REVISED												
27. DAYS DURATION THIS FACILITY ALL 1 IN HOSPITAL OR INFIRMARY 1 SUBSISTING ELSEWHERE 1 QUARTERS OR DISPENSARY LEAVE OTHER												
28. NATURE OF DISPOSITION TRFD to 106th General Hospital APO 96502										29. DATE OF DISPOSITION 9 Dec 67		
30. SIGNATURE OF ATTENDING PHYSICIAN /s/ W. S. BRAZLEY, CPT, MC						31. SIGNATURE OF REGISTRAR OR MEDICAL RECORDS OFFICER HENRY W. POWERS, JR., CPT, MC Registrar						
32. NAME AND LOCATION OF MEDICAL TREATMENT FACILITY 24TH EVACUATION HOSPITAL (SMIL) LONG BEACH, WVA APO 9491										33. REGISTER NUMBER 7596		

DA FORM 1 JUL 62 8-275-3 (4 PART)

REPLACES DD FORM 481-3, 1 SEP 52, EXISTING SUPPLIES OF WHICH WILL BE ISSUED AND USED UNTIL 1 JUL 68 UNLESS SOONER EXHAUSTED.



I spent several days in Japan, of which I remember almost nothing but a few images of being in a hospital ward that I remember as being dark (however, I was experiencing shock by this time and so I can't really rely on anything I remember as being absolutely true). Then all three of us were placed on a military hospital plane (we were all on stretchers, stacked maybe three high and on both sides of the plane, in any case there were a lot of us, but I don't think we were all burn patients) and flown back to the states. The ride back was one of constantly dropping in and out of consciousness and blurred images of patients, nurses IV's and being very cold. I think there was a plane transfer somewhere in this process (in Hawaii or maybe California) and then we (the three of us from Bu Dop) were taken to the Brooke Army Medical Center in San Antonio, Texas. I remember very little of that plane ride from Japan but I do remember the airfield in the states and the ambulance ride to the hospital when we arrived there on 11 December 1967. This was the last planeload out before Christmas that year (I was told that later by my wife). If I had missed that plane I would not have gotten to Brooke until sometime in January and by then I may not have been alive.

### Telegram telling Darlene I was at Brooke Army Medical Center

<b>CLASS OF SERVICE</b> This is a fast message unless its deferred character is indicated by the proper symbol.	<b>WESTERN UNION</b> W. P. MARSHALL CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD	<b>TELEGRAM</b> R. W. McFALL PRESIDENT	<b>SYMBOLS</b> DL = Day Letter NL = Night Letter LT = International Letter Telegram
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The filing time shown in the date line on domestic telegrams is LOCAL TIME at point of origin. Time of receipt is LOCAL TIME at point of destination

240A EST DEC 12 67 CTA067

CL CT WAQ18 XV GOVT PD 3 EXTRA FAX WASHINGTON DC 12 138A EST

MRS BARLENE PRITASH, DONT PHONE DELY PAID 1967 DEC 12 AM 2 43

2301 AKINS ST CLEVE BROADVIEW HEIGHTS 0

YOUR HUSBAND, LIEUTENANT DAVID J PRISTASH HAS BEEN EVACUATED TO THE BROOKE GENERAL

HOSPITAL, FORT SAM HOUSTON, TEXAS. HE DEPARTED JAPAN ON 11 DEC 67. YOU WILL BE NOTIFIED OF HIS ARRIVAL BY THE COMMANDING OFFICER OF THAT HOSPITAL

KENNETH G WICKHAM MAJOR GENERAL USA THE ADJUTANT GENERAL (20).

SF1201(R2-65)



Brooke Medical Center was then (I think it still is) the premier center, in the world, for treatment of burns, so if you were going to be burned this was where to be. I had 3rd degree burns (all skin burned away) on my legs (23% of body area) and 2nd degree burns on my arms, back, neck and face (44% of body area). I had also inhaled hot burning gases in the pit when the fire balls rolled over me which had burned the inside of my mouth, tongue and my lungs. Besides that I had some shrapnel wounds and was experiencing a sever loss of body fluids. Generally I was in very very bad shape

Later, when I was discharged from Brooke Medical Center, the Doctors told me that when I reached the hospital in December they had given me only a 10% chance of living through this trauma. There had been so much physical damage to my body that they just didn't think I would be strong enough to make it. However, I'm certainly glad they didn't give up and that they did still tried to save me despite their doubts. As I contemplated this brush with death a few years later I came to the conclusion that my life after 1968 was a gift and that since I should have died then, but instead I had lived, that I would do something before I died to justify my existence. As a result I have been driven to accomplish something ever since and what I'll do if I'm ever successful I don't know.

Being burned extensively is not pleasant and the burned person's body reacts to this, in part, by allowing the mind to hallucinate. I guess the hallucinations allow time to pass without direct knowledge of the pain the body is going through. I was no exception to this developing situation even when I knew what was happening to me. However, to me going into the hallucinatory state was a very frightening situation, much more so than the burns and associated pain (most people would not understand this nor agree with me). The pain, I could control mentally to the point of being the only patient (during that period) in the ward that didn't scream or in any way get violent during the treatments. That's not to say that I in any way enjoyed it but only that between the two at least the pain was real. The real I could deal with but the lose of reality was frightening to me. I'll write more on this later in this chapter, but now I'm talking more about the treatment.

For example, there was a daily treatment where the burned patient taken to a special room and was placed in a tank of water with cleansing and disinfectant soaps. This treatment was given each and every morning whether you wanted it or not. A doctor would then proceed to scrape away all the dead skin with a scalpel. In effect a person was being skinned alive and I can tell you with a great deal of certainty that it did hurt. I was always able to bear this without any screaming or hollering. Also, since everyone could not be treated at once, you could hear the ones that went before you hollering and screening as they got their daily skinning treatment. That preconditioning was almost as bad as the treatment itself for you knew your turn was coming. After the "TANK" (see picture I found from a manufacturers catalog on the next page) we were moved back to our circle beds (see picture on Page 133) and then coated with a white cream. In 1967/68 this was a new treatment and it prevented infections from getting into the large open areas of the body. Unfortunately, it had a side effect in that it burned worse (at least it seemed that way at the time) than the original burns when placed on the raw flesh of the burned areas. Since this one two punch was given to us each morning we didn't have a lot to look forward to when waking up each day.



## Skinning Tank

### HUBBARD TANK

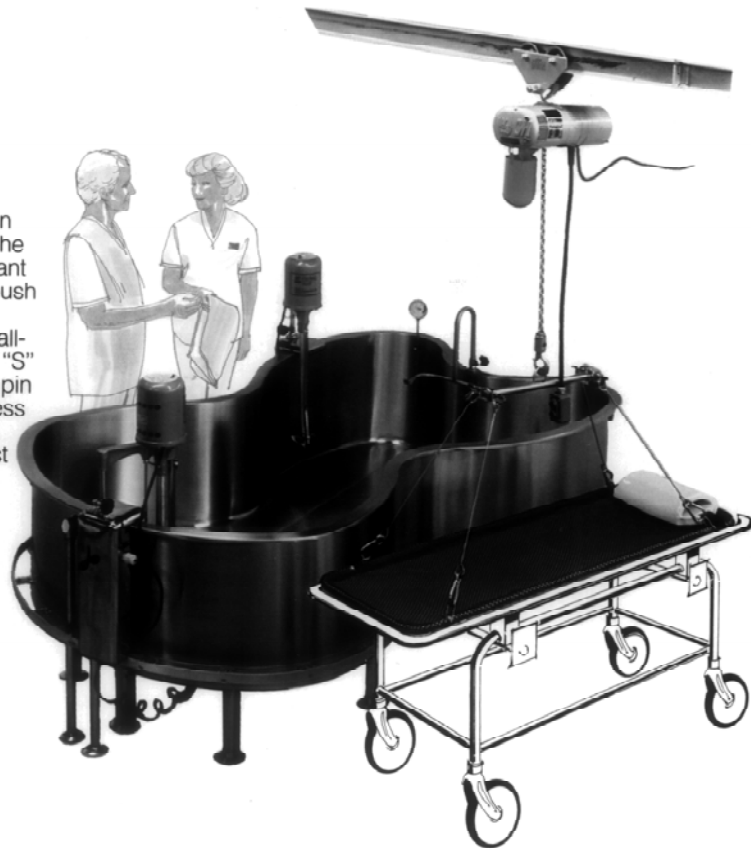
Model 851

### WITH ACCESS BY OVERHEAD CARRIER AND HOIST

Model 704

This system gently lifts patient from wheeled stretcher into full body immersion tank, and back onto the stretcher. When the patient is securely positioned, the attendant controls the lift with a moisture-resistant push button control.

The system consists of a hoist and a ball-bearing trolley for attachment to a ceiling "S" beam (beam not included). Included are pin stretcher of nylon mesh fabric over stainless steel frame, with snap-lock connection to overhead lift unit, and adjustable headrest designed to elevate upper torso.



I had always prided myself in being in control of my internal self (I recognized that I could not control the external world in any way) to the point that I really never allowed myself to even get drunk (I could act totally rational even after quite a bit to drink). This pain and shock induced hallucinatory state beat me, however, and as I would go in and out of this dream world I found that I could not stop it from happening nor recognize that I was in this state after it happened (Very different from being drunk and at least knowing you were high). While in these dream states I actually believed that what was happening to me was real no matter how bizarre the situation that I was experiencing. After this hallucinatory state had happened to me a few times I could sense it was coming on but it was too powerful a force to fight, as much as I tried to stop it from happening, it would take control of me at will.

*Note hospital policy (at Brooke in 1968) in regards to burn patients is that no painkillers are given. The logic was that since the time of treatment was so long, no matter what painkiller was given or what the dose was the person would become addicted.*



### **In a Circle Bed at Brooke**



I can remember lying in the circle bed and feeling reality shifting and changing on me. As I was watching the room or something in it, my perception would blur and I would lose focus then I would be somewhere else. Kind of like a dream or maybe what it is to experience drugs like LSD (I have never taken any drugs nor smoked any marijuana so I have no direct knowledge) as we have all seen in movies or as we have read about in books. It's very strange to be one place and then all of a sudden somewhere else. I guess these spells lasted from a few minutes to several hours (I'm really not sure and I was in no state to time them) and they would center on some situation. Sometimes they seemed to relate to experiences that I had in Vietnam and other times they related to what I was currently experiencing in the hospital. The specifics are now vague and so I can't relate any of the situations except that as I remember it they were quasi real like animation characters (The Disney film of a few years ago "Roger Rabbit" might be a



good example). I do remember that as I came back into this reality I knew what had happened. I could remember being in the state when I was out but I could not tell when I was in one of these states that it was not real.

*Later after leaving the hospital and thinking about what had happened I realized how dependent our beliefs and actions are on what our sensory input tells our brain. If the input says one thing no amount of logic and intelligence can overcome that for long. We are therefore captives of what we perceive, whether it is right or wrong or whether it is true or not. This taught me the importance of analyzing a situation for the root causes and even to question supposed facts. However, I will never forget how when I was in this state I was fooled into believing something that was not true.*

During the initial period of my treatment at Brooke I dropped from over 180 pounds to under 100 pounds (98 pounds if I remember correctly). As I started my recover (probably in mid January) I started to gain weight back and also to have fewer and fewer hallucinatory states. After getting skin grafts from my chest to my legs where the skin had been completely burned off and healing some from those operations I had to learn to walk again. That was a task, as the grafted areas would quickly swell up when standing as well as be very uncomfortable. It was probably five or six years later before I really felt comfortable walking and I was never able to run again for any length of time. Now, thirty three years later I probably could start running again if I tried as I can still feel my body recovering from that period, and I no-longer need support socks to keep my legs from swelling up with fluids.

While I was recovering from one of my many operations I was interviewed by a military person (I don't remember his name or rank) on the subject of flame warfare and the effects on the individual soldier. The military was interviewing troopers that had been burned to see if flames/fire was an effective means of stopping a military unit. Flame warfare unlike explosive warfare does not necessarily render you immediately incapable of fighting even though you may be fatally wounded. It was my personal opinion that I could have fought on for a short while (1/2 to 1 hour) after I was burned, which would mean that flame warfare might not be effective in a personal combat situation. I relayed this personal opinion to the person taking the survey, but what the results of the survey were I never found out.

My wife, Darlene, flew to San Antonio to be with me and I attribute my recovery solely to her presence there. She was there the entire time I was, and I believe that this gave me enough of an anchor to reality to hold on to life. My brother also visited me while I was in the hospital during December 1967, around Christmas, if I remember correctly. There was one good experience later on, which was I think in February, when I received a phone call from Martha Ray (the famous entertainer) she wished me a speedy recovery from my wounds. This call was a real surprise and resulted from a request from my parent's neighbor's daughter, Susan McCollum. She was a dancer and with Martha Ray's troop in Vietnam in 1967/1968 when she heard about my being wounded, and she had Martha Ray call me.



### Darlene at Ft. Sam



## Brooklyn Officer Mends at Brooke

Army Lt. David Pristash, 27, son of Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Pristash, 4411 Roadan Rd., Brooklyn, is recovering at Brooke Medical Center, Tex., from wounds received in the explosion of ammunition in Vietnam Dec. 8.

His wife, the former Darlene Fill, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. John Fill, 2301 Akins Rd., Broadview Hts., has joined him in Texas.

Note: Martha Ray did a lot for Special Forces troopers such that she was later made an honorary Colonel in the Green Berets.

One other thing happened to me while at Brooke and that was that my left elbow froze to the point that I could not move it at all. When I was discharged from the hospital the doctors told me that after a year or so they could operate to free the joint (they also stated that I would not get back 100%). Prior to that length of time they said it would not have stabilized and could have reoccurred again. That meant that I would have no motion in my left arm until that operation could be performed. Along with that I had a lot of scar tissue from that gave me additional motion problems. That too would have to wait but could also be fixed. Since I knew that it would be 12 to 18 months before I would be done with all these corrective surgeries I elected to stay in the army and take a light duty assignment instead of getting a medical discharge, which was an option. I couldn't picture myself waiting around for a year or more waiting for these operations. It would be impossible to get a job and I would just be another unemployable vet until these operations were finished.

While I was in the hospital (over three months the first time) I received several operations and skin grafts to repair the massive burn and shrapnel damage I had received in Vietnam. SP4 Posey was also there but he was released well before me, since his wounds were of a much lesser nature. SP4 Posey ended up getting a medical discharge and went back to Columbus, Ohio his hometown. When he left the hospital he had a leg brace on since he had sustained some nerve



damage to his lower leg from deep burns. I don't know whether this was permanent or repairable damage. I talked to him once several years later after I left the service but he had developed a bitter attitude over his experiences and we never talked again. His was very common attitude for a lot of the Vietnam era Vet's.

Unfortunately, both SFC Broom and SP4 Schroeder died at Brook Army Medical Center while I was there. I was therefore the only one of the three wounded in the mortar pit at Bu Dop that made it. SFC Broom was very severely burned and there was probably never any chance that he could be saved. I was bad but he was even worse as he was the closest to the explosion when it went off. He may even have shielded Schroeder and I from some of the blast. SP4 Schroeder was only slightly burned and was actually on his way to being released. He had been transferred to a different, non critical, ward and then he developed a strange infection which ravaged his body with extremely high temperatures eventually killing him.

Fortunately for me I was not that aware of what was happening and so I didn't really comprehend that they were both gone until later when I was out of immediate danger. If I had realized what was happening to them it probably would have effected me to an extent and that may have been just enough to trip me over to the not make it category. In any case I didn't really know and I just made it through this experience. The following paragraph was something I wrote to summarize what happened to me that night in Vietnam.

On the night of December 7/8 1967 I was mortally wounded (all mortal wounds don't kill you immediately). I was medivaced and sent to a hospital in Texas where I met the grim reaper soon after arriving. He told me he was coming for me but I told him I wasn't ready, he laughed at me and said he was going to come anyway. I told him it didn't matter whether he came or not I just wasn't going with him. But he wasn't to be denied and so he visited me every night in the form of a large Bengal tiger and we battled all night for the rights to my soul. He was a very vicious and determined tiger and he tried his best to rip my soul from my body with his sharp teeth and claws but I was strong and stubborn and I would not let go. This battle lasted for two months and he chewed me down to 95 pounds but in the end I prevailed and he disappeared and I was not dead and he had to settle for taking the souls of the two men who were standing next to me in Vietnam.







## Chapter Eighteen, Assignment to Fort Campbell

I was in the hospital at Brooke until March 1968 than I was granted 30 days of convalescent leave (standard military practice after being severally wounded and it didn't count against your normal time off). Darlene and I flew back home to Cleveland where we stayed while I continued to heal. We didn't do a lot since I was not in the best of shape (couldn't walk very well or for very long) but we did meet with a lot of our family and relatives who were glad I was still alive. I do remember my one Aunt Betty and her husband Wally (WWII Viet from the Pacific) taking Darlene and I out to dinner at a nice restaurant. This is also when my dad showed me the picture that had appeared in the Cleveland Plain Dealer of me firing a mortar.

Even though we didn't do a lot except rest the time did pass all too quickly. Then when it was time to leave we decided to drive so we would have a car when we were there. Darlene's 1966 Chevrolet was the better of the two cars we had so we took that and made the trip to Texas in two days. After returning to the hospital in April I was given a complete medical check out and then given some options as to my future. One, a medical retirement from the military. Two, a return to duty but on a restricted duty basis. I was also told that I would require several more operations to complete my recovery but that they couldn't be done until 12 months had past. This was standard practice and done to give the body time to recover and stabilize. What this meant was that if I took the medical retirement I would not be able to find a job until after all the operations were completed. Since that could amount to a year or a year and a half I was reluctant to take this option. The limited duty assignment sounded a lot better since I would still have sometime to do during this period.

In the military there aren't a lot of real choices and so after deciding I would stay in I was assigned to a unit at Fort Campbell located in Kentucky. This new assignment was to be with the 6th Infantry Division, which was being formed to replace the 101st Airborne Division, which had recently been moved to Vietnam. I was given the assignment of air operations officer in the G-2 section of the 6th Division headquarters section.

Since I had unused leave time I decided to use it then figuring I both deserved it and that it would allow me some additional recovery time before my new assignment. Darlene and I decided to go to California, where I had a friend, and also to make a stop in Larado, Texas on the Mexican boarder where Darlene had a friend. We went first to Larado and spend a day or two with her friend and her husband with a side trip into Mexico for sight seeing. I remember that the Mexican towns were a lot like the Vietnamese villages and that if you didn't look real close you could be in one or the other there was no real difference. Maybe this was because there was such a big difference between the US and the rest of the world, I don't know other than to me the differences were small.

After leaving Larado we drove along the southern boarder of Texas and Mexico taking our time and seeing the sights. We crossed into New Mexico and than into Arizona where we turned North to see "Meteor Crater" and the "Grand Canyon." Our plan was than to see Las Vegas and than on to the LA area where my friend was. Unfortunately, after seeing the Grand Canon Dar-



lene had a tooth get severally infected and so she was in too much pain to continue. We decided to head back to Cleveland and after a stop over in Amarillo the next day, I think, we drove straight through to Cleveland without stopping. It was about 24 or 26 hours without a break but we made it.

**Picture taken in Cleveland while on Leave**





After another brief stay in Cleveland and after Darlene got her tooth fixed we packed up and drove to Ft. Campbell Kentucky. However, shortly after arriving there the Army made the decision to not form up the 6th Infantry Division after all. This created a lot of turmoil and there was a lot of movement of personnel then and over the next several months as people got reassigned to other units and posts. Fortunately, I didn't have to move and I ended up reassigned as the Deputy Post G-2 for Ft. Campbell. During the summer I made the decision to extend for a year and in September 1968 I was promoted to the rank of Captain.

In the summer of 1969 my high school class was having its 10-year reunion and Darlene and I decided to go. Ft. Campbell was about 450 miles from Cleveland so with the 70 MPH speed limits that were in place at the time it was under a seven hour drive (8 hours with potty stops). While at the reunion and without any prior knowledge by me my class gave me an award. The following article appeared in one of the local papers.

### Award From my High School Class

June 26, 1969  
Page 16  
Metro Newspapers include The West Side News, The West Parker, The Lakewood Ledger, The P...

## Brooklyn High Class of 1959 Reunites, Viet Hero Honored

Eighty-three classmates of the 1959 graduating class of Brooklyn High school renewed old friendships and brought each other up to date on happenings over the past 10 years at a reunion May 31st at the West Side Sachsenheim Club Hall, 7001 Denison Ave.

Wives and husbands were on hand to share the family-style dinner and enjoy the music provided by a four-piece band. Class flowers, blue-tipped white carnations, were presented to each graduate as he entered the club and prizes of all descriptions were distributed throughout the evening, having been donated by over 50 area merchants.

Mr. and Mrs. John Arelt and Mr. and Mrs. Henry Joy were guests of honor for the evening. Mrs. Arelt taught the class as sixth graders, and was honored for over 40 years of teaching.

Mr. Joy piloted many Brooklyn track teams to West County victories. The class of '59 dedicated its yearbook to Mrs. Joy and Mrs. Arelt.

A jitterbug contest was judged by Ann Joy with Mr. and Mrs. Dick Erhardt declared the winners. They were coincidentally the couple that has been married the longest of all those present. Patrolman Dick Balhier and his wife received a gift as the newest married couple while Pat and Luke Gallaher had the most children in school with three.

The oldest model car was John Mruk's 1940 Chevy truck and the newest parents-to-be are JoAnn Brown and her husband, Fred Jager sported the most mod outfit of the evening while Carolyn Quentmyer and John Gelardi vied for honors of having the most gray hair.

Marine Capt. David Pristash, a member of the class, was recognized for his efforts in the Vietnam war. Records pertaining to his actions are missing since the field office where they were kept was destroyed. However, as executive officer, Dave rallied his troops under enemy shelling, directed mortar fire knocking out enemy guns and mortars, and drove an ammunition truck to the outer perimeter of the camp, wired it to explode and there by saved Camp Du Dop on the Cambodian border. Later that day there was a fire in the mortar pit causing Dave to be severely burned. For his action, Dave was awarded a Purple Heart and the South Vietnamese equivalent of the U. S. Silver Star. Ron Pehotsky presented a silver dish given by the Fred Goertz Jewelers, to Dave on behalf of the class.

The evening came to a close with a promise by committee chairman Donna Berrill that there would be a family picnic later this year at Brooklyn Park. The picnic will be held on the grounds of the school.

**BROOKLYN HERO**—Capt. David Pristash (right) receives a silver dish from Ron Pehotsky in honor of his Vietnam heroism. It is inscribed "In appreciation of his courageous service to the United States and each of us."

**GUESTS OF HONOR**—Guests of honor at reunion were (left to right) John Arelt and wife Mary Margaret, a sixth grade teacher at Brookridge Elementary School and Henry and Ann J. Mr. Joy is athletic director of Brooklyn High School. His wife is head of the English department there.



This was a very turbulent time for the military and the country. Martin Luther King was assassinated, there was a severe and building opposition to the war effort in Vietnam and President Johnson decided not to run for a second term. The military was under a lot of pressure to find a way out of the war and also to be prepared to stop domestic violence. My assignment in G-2 operations (Military Intelligence) was very interesting as I got to see all the inside details of what was happening to the country during this turbulent period.

When I first started writing this account I did not include some of the more negative aspects of the war in what I wrote about; however, after rewriting it several times to clean it up and add the pictures and other documents I decided to change that policy. Starting after Tet there was a growing anti-war movement in the country that I have already mentioned. This movement contained various elements ranging from legitimate to manipulative. The legitimate portion of this movement contained people who honestly believed that war was bad and they were against the Vietnam War as a matter of conscience. Personally I felt these people were naive but in a land of freedoms they certainly had the right to express opposing opinion. Typifying the people in this portion of the movement was Joan Baez. I may not have agreed with her position but she conducted her protest in an honest and legitimate manner that I can respect and defend. I would give my life in the service of my country for people like her.

The other end of this anti-war movement contained those that were self-richous, self-seeking and manipulative and would use any means to promote their cause (which may not have been what was being said or spoken). This end of the movement contained fanatics that would both destroy and kill to promote their position. How much of these peoples motives were real and how much was they're bid for fame and power we'll never know. What we do know was that starting in the late 60s Henry Fonda's daughter became the spokesperson for this portion of the anti-war movement.

She started with simple campus protests and was quoted many times making radical statements such as "I would think that if you understood what communism was, you would hope, you would pray on your knees that we would someday become Communist" which was made at Michigan State University on November 22, 1969. Her statements got more and more vocal and condemning and they culminated in an act what will forever brand her as "Hanoi Jane". That act will never be forgiven by any of us who honestly served our country.

The unspeakable act, or should I say acts for they were many of them over a long period of time, I speak of occurred in July, 1972 when she visited North Vietnam to further the cause of communism. During that tour she made several statements and radio broadcasts such as. "very honored to be a guest in your country, and I loudly condemn the crimes that have been committed by the U.S. government in the name of the American people against your country. ... but we identify with the struggle of your people. We have understood that we have a common enemy - U.S. imperialism." and in a radio message beamed at U.S. ships from Hanoi she stated "those of you who load the bombs on the planes ... should know that those weapons are illegal ... and the use of those bombs or condoning the use of those bombs makes one a war criminal." Also at that time she was indirectly quoted as saying she had witnessed U.S. crimes in Hanoi, and wanted a complete victory for North Vietnam's late Communist leader, Ho Chi Minh.



During any other period of our history she would have been tried for treason and executed for what she did. The only reason she was able to get away with what she did do was that she had a very famous father and the money she had which was used over the years to try and put a different spin on what she did. The following picture was taken of her in Hanoi and is cut down to fit in the page in this book. In it's entirety it shows her manning an anti-aircraft gun with various North Vietnamese soldiers. To the right of the picture a hand can be seen holding a microphone and she is being recorded making some of her infamous statements.

### **"Hanoi Jane"**



Sixteen years after these treasonous acts and with her spin machine at work full time trying to undo or minimize her acts she appeared on TV in an interview with ABC's Barbara Walters. During this interview she tried to make it seem that she was sorry for what she did. Unfortunately, this was not a sincere act and to most of us she appeared to be doing this only because she was concerned over sales of her movies and work out tapes. She did not admit to doing anything wrong and basically denied making some of the statements that she did in fact make. On the following page is a copy of an article that appeared shortly after this TV show.



## Response to TV Apology

### **WE STILL AIN'T FONDA "HANOI JANE"** **And We Don't Believe Tom Hayden Has Changed His Stripes Either**

*An Aide-de-Memoire for Veteran Reunions*

*Mss. in Progress*

# Jane Fonda still doesn't get it

By Vincent Carroll

Sixteen years after she sat gleefully at an enemy anti-aircraft gun in Hanoi, described American soldiers as "war criminals," and charged POWs with lying about torture by the North Vietnamese, Jane Fonda has said she's sorry.

Sort of.

Maybe in another 16 years she will have matured enough to finish her apology.

Although she recently told ABC's Barbara Walters that she regretted her "thoughtless and careless" actions, Fonda's main concern seems to be that she hurt and angered U.S. soldiers. After all these years, she still doesn't understand that the problem with her personal anti-war crusade was not merely its tone or emphasis, but that it relied on obnoxious falsehoods.

There were always two defensible positions regarding the Vietnam War, and Fonda shared (and apparently still shares) neither.

The first was that the war was worth fighting as an attempt to save millions of Vietnamese, Cambodians and Laotians (and possibly Thais) from a form of government far more brutal and oppressive than anything they'd experienced — a government that furthermore would be allied with or in thrall to our principal enemy, the Soviet Union.

The other respectable position held that the war was not worth fighting because Indochina wasn't vital to American security, the cost in lives and treasure



would be huge, and the effort simply had to fail given the history of colonialism in Vietnam and its people's resolve to control their destiny. Moreover, any such effort would brutalize U.S. soldiers unable to distinguish friend from foe and wreak horrible, futile devastation on Vietnam itself.

There are many variants of these two themes, yet Fonda and a number of other anti-war activists took another tack. They viewed U.S. intervention as evil and the North Vietnamese and Viet Cong as heroic, gentle, far-seeing patriots.

When the North Vietnamese promised to create a humane society, their defend-

ers in America accepted their word. When the Communists insisted they waged a war free of retribution or terror, their friends here largely believed them. Hanoi's apologists had eyes only for U.S. atrocities, which never approached the routine magnitude or ferocity of those perpetrated by the other side.

In short, some anti-war activists, Fonda included, consistently suggested Ho Chi Minh led a noble cause, while in fact he was just another radical, anti-democratic nationalist thrown up by the collapse of colonialism in World War II.

Vietnam today survives as a living rebuttal of Fonda's romantic, mischievous notions about the morality of U.S. behavior. Its people are so miserable that thousands continue to flock onto boats in the South China Sea, braving storms, pirates and the prospect of months or years in refugee camps.

Even the country's leaders now admit they've bungled, that their party has suffocated freedom and economic progress.

Yet Jane Fonda still doesn't get it. "We all did what we felt we had to do," she told Walters in self-absolution. By traveling to Hanoi, she argues, she and others brought back damning information that hastened the end of the war.

In fact, they mainly lent moral support to a vicious totalitarian regime high-stepping its way to expansion. Most Americans, both for and against the war, understood that Fonda had gone too far at the time. But Fonda, always a slow learner, even now requires more time.

Newspaper Enterprise Association

This was only one of many negative articles and responses to Hanoi Jane's weak and pathetic attempt at getting Vietnam Vets to forgive her. I could go on talking about her, negatively, for quite a few pages here but it's not necessary as the above article pretty much says what I and so many others feel. We didn't buy her bull in 1972 and for sure we didn't buy it when it was repackaged in 1988 when this "apology" occurred. Unfortunately, money talks and so since the 70s she has gone on to become very rich and famous but to those of us she dishonored in the 70s she will never be respected.

While at Ft. Campbell I received several more operations and was returned to about 90% functionality. On 13 September 1969 I left the military service since I felt my wounds would



prevent my obtaining the duty assignments that would lead to a higher rank and I would probably not be able to get back into either Special Forces or an Airborne Division. After being in an elite unit it would have been hard to go back to a regular assignment and that was a heavy influence on me leaving the military.

After doing all the research for this book and reviewing all these documents as well as my own communications with the 5th Group when I was in the hospital in San Antonio, Texas I formed some opinions on what happened at Bu Dop after I was wounded. I include them here as Appendix M. Lastly I can't end this book on a negative subject and so I have included a Parable in Appendix N and on the thoughts contained in that parable I will end this book.







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## Appendix A, A team organization

The following was the A team structure in the 1960's according to Department of the Army TOE 31-107E. There were two of each function so the 12 man team could be split into two 6 man sub-teams.

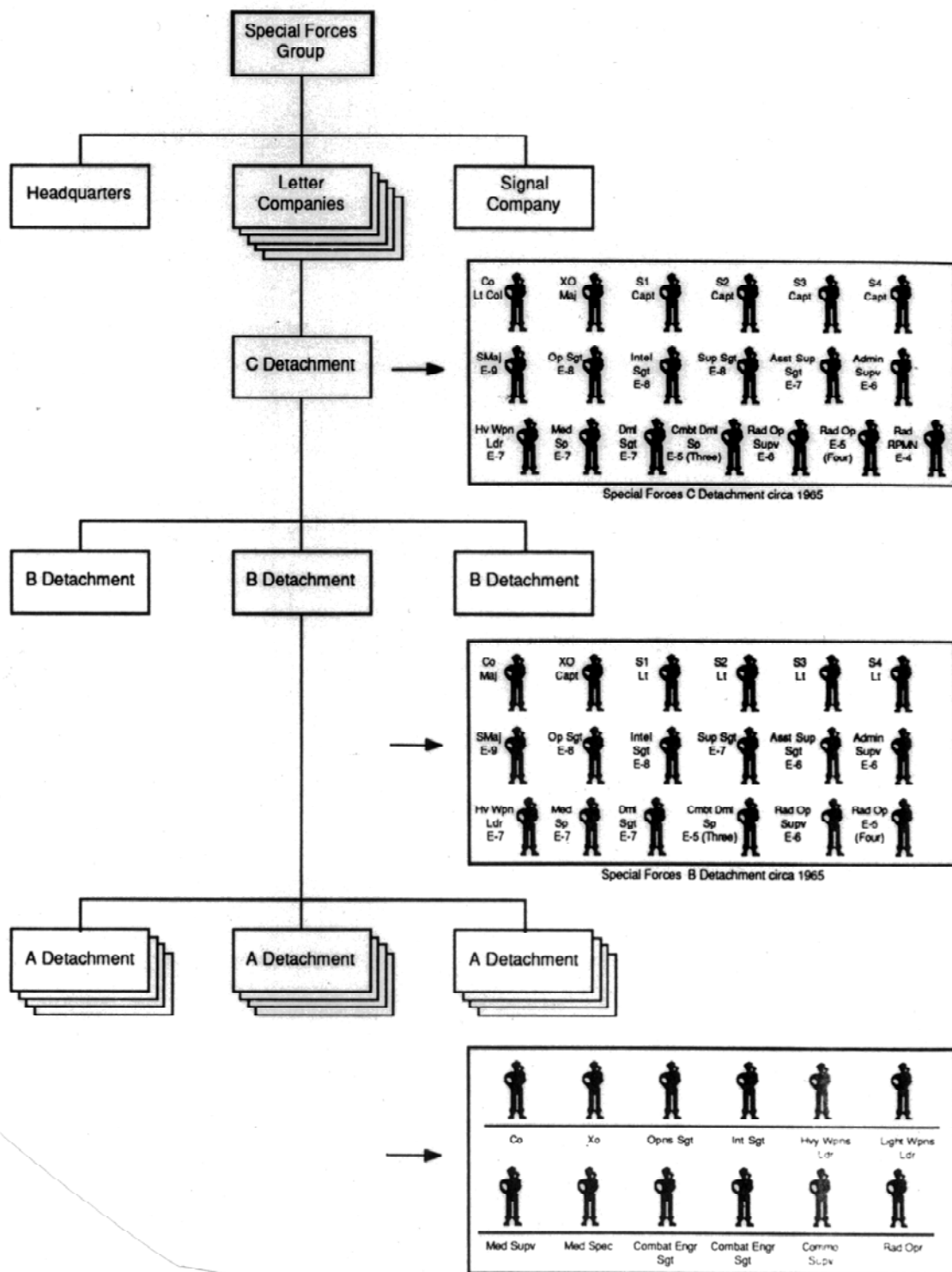
1	Team leader (CO)	Captain
2	Executive Office (XO)	1st Lieutenant
3	Operations Sergeant	E-8
4	Heavy Weapon Leader	E-7
5	Intelligence Sergeant	E-7
6	Light Weapons Leader	E-7
7	Medical Specialist	E-7
8	Radio Operator Supervisor	E-7
9	Assistant Medical Specialist	E-6
10	Engineer/Demolitions Sergeant	E-6
11	Radio Operator	E-5
12	Demolition's Sergeant	E-5







The following chart shows the Group structure in the 1960's according to the same Department of the Army TOE 31-107E directive.









On the following pages is a summary of the schooling required to become SF qualified. This write up was paraphrased from work done by LTC Ian D. W. Sutherland (Ret.) in his book ***Special Forces of the United States Army***, Chapter Titled *Special Forces Selection and Training* starting on page 120.







# **SPECIAL FORCES QUALIFICATION COURSE**

To be considered for Special Forces (SF) training individuals must meet certain core requirements. The specifics have changed over time but center around several aspects. Firstly, the individual must be qualified in his Military Occupational Specialty (MOS), the SF training programs do not include basic military operations, and SF training is advanced training. Secondly, the individual must be Airborne qualified. Thirdly, all personnel must meet the medical standards for airborne training, be able to swim with clothing and equipment, pass a physical readiness test, and be eligible for a secret security clearance.

Lastly there is a three-week course designed to assess a soldier's potential to complete the Special Forces Qualification course. This course is called the Special Forces Assessment and Selection, or SFAS, course. Soldiers attend the assessment course in a temporary duty status and then return to their current unit. If they successfully complete the course, they will be scheduled for a qualification course, which will in turn make them eligible for assignment to a Special Forces unit. The individuals who complete the extensive SF training are: highly personally motivated, in top physical condition, and with above average mental abilities, in short they are simply the best troops in the world.

## **SF Qualification Phase I**

Special Forces qualification has been a somewhat nebulous term from almost the very beginning. An individual was required to complete a training course, participate in a specified number of unconventional warfare (UW) exercises and serve in an operational unit for a given period of time at one point before SF qualification was conferred in the form of a "3" prefix or suffix to the Military Occupational Specialty (MOS). In the original 10th SF Group, the entire unit was being trained operationally, consequently individual qualification was quite incidental beyond its contribution to the readiness of the organization. As a matter of fact, the "3" prefix to the enlisted MOS was simply placed on the individual's record at the end of the summer of 1953. Standardization of the criteria for the award of the SF qualification indicator has been a fairly recent occurrence and, generally, has been based upon the successful completion of the SF qualification training. The current indicator for SF qualification is "5G" for officers and "S" for enlisted personnel.

Traditionally, there have been separate courses for officers and enlisted personnel, but Colonel James Morris, director of the Special Forces school (SFS) in 1982 changed this 30-year tradition by combining the SF Officers Course (SFOC) and the SF "Q" Course into the SF Qualification Course for operational personnel. In the past, SF qualifications training for officers made no distinction between operational and non-operational individuals. Assignment to an operational detachment was open to almost all officers regardless of branch, and those normally not assigned such as officers of the Army Medical and Chaplains Corps attended SFOC anyway. The basic eligibility consideration for officer training was an actual or projected assignment to an SF unit or to a position requiring knowledge of SF operations. The same training was provided regard-



less of the rank and assignment of the officer so second lieutenants and lieutenant colonels found themselves receiving instruction focused on the activities of the "A" Detachment. Enlisted qualification training has, from the very beginning, been considerably more elaborate than that for the officers and is designed to produce individuals highly trained in each of the basic core SF skills.

The modern SFQC prepares officers and enlisted men for assignment as members of SF operational detachments. It is exclusively for male lieutenants or captains of the combat arms (Infantry, Armor, and Artillery) and for the training of enlisted men with demonstrated leadership potential who have volunteered for SF training. It provides entry-level training for officers assigned as "A" Detachment commanders and executive officers as well as entry level training for SF medical, light weapons, indirect fire, communication electronics, and combat engineer non-commissioned officers. All must be parachute qualified, meet the medical standards for airborne training, pass the Army Physical Readiness Test (APRT), and successfully complete the Combat Water Survival Test (CWST). These tests are physically demanding, and the inability to fulfill these requirements is grounds for relief from the course. There has been considerable variation in the application of physical standards over the years. At one point we half seriously concluded a student could remain in the training program if the sum of his last three PT tests equaled or surpassed the required score. The physical standards may be lowered at times, but invariably are returned to the higher level because the SF soldier must be a military athlete in every sense of the word to be more than marginally effective.

The class is organized into TO/E (Table of Organization and Equipment, the military bible of who and what you are authorized to have) "A" Detachments as far as practicable and remain together through the course except during the individual skill training. This constructs a realistic simulation of an operational A Detachment in a variety of situations and is an invaluable training experience in itself. When officers and EM were trained separated, they were still organized into "A" Detachments, but individuals were appointed to the positions irrespective of their lack of skill. The only exposure the officer student got to EM was during the major FTX, when communications and medical personnel from the SF groups were assigned to each student detachment to provide these functions. Generally, the leadership positions are based upon seniority, but in the field they are rotated to provide the individual leadership experience. It also allows the Faculty Advisor (FAC Advisor) the opportunity to evaluate the individual performance in a leadership role. The FAC Advisor was, and is, a key component in the training program. He applies the standards against which everyone is measured and is a major influence in the overall training process. He not only must be tactically and technically proficient, but also must set an impeccable example for the students to emulate.

The initial phase of the course is oriented toward developing proficiency in skills common to all SF soldiers. Physical training, map reading, land navigation, airborne refresher training, and rappelling bring each class member to a comparable level of expertise. The practical exercises initiates teamwork and a sense of team identity. During the first four weeks the student is challenged physically and, at times, this demand approaches the intensity of a prolonged "hell week." Colonel Charles Beckwith imbedded some of the aspects of the British Special Air Services (SAS) assessment process in the graded Land Navigation Practical Exercise when he was the SF School Director. Moving long distances cross-country at night through the uncompromising terrain of North Carolina has never been easy. The imposition of the necessity for speed and preci-



sion greatly increases the inherent difficulty. To increase the psychological pressure on a class, one instructor circulated the story that the area was inhabited by a type of rattlesnake so poisonous it bit the corner of a local schoolhouse and 13 children died as a result. Survival, an inseparable element of living and moving in a primitive environment, is a basic skill for all SF soldiers who may be called upon to "live off the land" for extended periods. As the United States becomes more urbanized, this type of training takes on a much greater importance because the young men are losing or have lost touch with the land.

The most probable method of infiltration into a UWOA is by parachute, consequently considerable attention is given to airborne operations. Infiltration by parachute is not always as simple as depicted earlier in this book, or by the popular press. The rapid assembly of personnel and equipment after the jump can be difficult during daylight hours if the people and equipment are scattered over rough terrain. Conducted during darkness with an increased concern for security, assembly of people and equipment after a parachute infiltration can take days! The recovery of parachutes from trees and the discovery of lost equipment just takes time, but experience can improve the detachment's performance. During the course airborne operations progress from non-tactical parachute jumps without equipment on the large DZs of Camp Mackall, to infiltration into very realistic DZs, laden like pack animals during the final FTX. Most individuals never completely lose the "butterflies" prior to a jump, but with repetition they become seasoned and proficient. The blind stampede of the young jumper to exit the aircraft quickly gives way to a measured approach to the exit. Assembly in the air becomes a practical technique that has been greatly improved by the MC1-IB Tactical Parachute System with the maneuverable T-10 canopy. The feeling of having cheated death again after a jump may persist in most people, but the parachuting experience gained during the course effectively converts the airborne operation from a wild roller-coaster ride to a useful means of transportation.

There is an assumption in the Army that you do not need to train to be miserable, but you do! In Phase I of the qualification course misery takes on many forms, but the well motivated, successful student quickly becomes conditioned to it. The initial rucksack marches are quite painful, but the body soon adjusts. Sore muscles, tender feet, and other physical discomforts disappear as the individual conditions himself to the strenuous effort. The ability to withstand personal discomfort insulates the individual against demoralization, which cripples more soldiers than enemy action in the guerrilla warfare arena. Most find they can tolerate much more than they thought possible and still have a considerable reserve. Misery and exhaustion bring demoralization, which makes cowards of us all, and Phase I gives the individual the opportunity to come to grips with this reality.



## **SF QUALIFICATION PHASE II**

The second phase of the SF qualification course is eight weeks in length and qualifies the detachment: officers, medical, light weapons, indirect fire (heavy weapons), communication-electronics, and combat engineer NCOs for assignment to an operational detachment. During this phase of the training the student "A" Detachment is broken down into the following specialty groupings for function specific training. Again it can't be stressed enough that all the individuals taking this training are already qualified troopers. They are taking specific training for UW operations.

### **Detachment Officers**

The instruction in Phase II for the commissioned officers will be somewhat repetitious to that received in their basic and advanced branch courses. It is oriented toward the role of the detachment commander and executive officer of an operational detachment in the Unconventional Warfare, Foreign Internal Defense, and Special Operations Mission. Emphasis is placed on the analytical, planning, and leadership functions of the officers; in excess of 50% of the instruction is a thorough summary of the duties of the SF NCOs for the operational detachment. The SF officer must lead the members of the operational detachment in every sense of the word and, at the same time, orchestrate the employment of their technical expertise to best advantage. Phase II training exposes the officer student to case studies, seminars, and research that provides him the analytical tools for the decision-making process and establishes a frame of reference for future decisions. In most operational environments the detachment will be beyond the reach of normal command supervision, so an underlying purpose of the training is to promote initiative and self-sufficiency. The detachment officers will most likely be the senior US representatives in an operational area and will be required to deal with a resistance organization, "host" government civil and military officials, and, certainly, the indigenous population in a wide variety of projects. In sum, the officers must be physically able to endure the rigors of the duty, whatever it may be, and possess the intellect and flexibility to skillfully use whatever is available to achieve the overall objectives of the operation. Phase II training is no substitute for actual experience, but it does begin the process on a firm foundation.

### **Special Forces Medical Non-Commissioned Officer**

The Special Forces medical training program is one of the most elaborate, comprehensive, and difficult skill development courses in the training process. It produces SF medical personnel of exceptionally high quality. The SF medical NCO can perform complex and sophisticated medical procedures in the absence of a physician, and train indigenous medical personnel to provide relatively advanced medical services for their organizations. Prior to attending the SF Qualification Course the medical student has achieved the MOS 91B (Medical Aidman). This provides the basis upon which Phase II medical training can be built. Seventy percent of the Program of Instruction (POI) addresses general medical, surgical, and laboratory procedures. There is heavy emphasis on the management of wounds, emergency surgery, and medical complications in the



UW environment. The Combat Casualty Practical Exercise requires the student to save the life of a wounded laboratory animal in a controlled but realistic setting. In excess of 20% of the training time is spent in examinations, presentations, and critiques. The SF medical student literally "stands" for written and oral board examinations before he is certified SF medical qualified. Most SF medics could become doctors if they choose to leave the military and go to medical school to become civilian qualified doctors. Their military training almost guarantees that they could complete the course with ease.

The original medical training process was not this elaborate. Some of the original medical personnel having had combat experience in World War II and Korea were not amateurs, but for the SF medical volunteers formal training consisted of the Medical Aidman Advanced Course conducted at Brook Army Medical Center, Fort Sam Houston, Texas, at the Medical Field Service School.

Practical medical experience was gained on the job at Womack Army Hospital at Fort Bragg, the SF troop dispensary, and with the operational elements in the field. Each operational detachment had an assigned medic when it went to the field. During Exercise CLEO in North Georgia, Master Sergeant "Pappy" Bowen and Sergeant Thomas P. "Mother" Lundgren operated the base camp aid station throughout the summer of 1953. These two SF medical NCOs conducted sick-call, checked the local hospitals and clinics for sick or injured SF operational people, provided medical coverage for all parachute drops, and did a lively business with the "sick, lame, and lazy" indigenous population of the operational area. When five SF soldiers were seriously injured in a truck accident near Blue Ridge, Georgia, SF medics pitched-in, impresses the hospital staff with their skill and professionalism. Given the choice, a sick or injured SF trooper prefers to be treated by an SF medic because of their reputation for competence and a feeling they are "our doctors."

The Army Medical Service has encouraged and assisted the development of this progressive training program from the beginning. Doctors (Captains) Hall and Freeland were instrumental in the initiation of the first training cycles, and innumerable medical officers have contributed to its refinement and expansion. SF medical personnel performance in Vietnam exceeded even the highest expectations, justifying the high training standards and considerable expense. For all practical purposes, the SF medical NCOs may be the only US medical presence in the Area of Operation (AO). The training of the selected few preparing for this important and highly responsible position must, unquestionably, be comprehensive and of the best quality because arbitrary limits based upon peacetime considerations become irrelevant when the SF medic is the "only game in town."

### **Special Forces Light Weapons Non-Commissioned Officer**

Guerrilla forces, at least initially, acquire weapons from any source available to them. The purpose of many of their early operations is to capture arms from the enemy. The advent of US sponsorship of a resistance movement, or assistance to a "host" government in internal defense, invariably brings the infusion of weapons and ammunition. It cannot be safely assumed that any indigenous force will be proficient at arms or familiar with US weapons; therefore, one of the



basic tasks of an operational detachment is to conduct a thorough training program for the weapons available to the force.

In the OSS during World War II, all of the members of the JEDBURG Teams and Operational Groups (OG) receive extensive familiarization with Allied and German weapons as an important element of their operational training. Colonel Bank and members of the Office of the Chief of Psychological Warfare (OCPW), based upon this practice, proposed the bulk of the Operational Detachment FA (Regiment) members, with the exception of communications and medical NCOs, be broadly "cross-trained" UW generalists--a Special Forces operative. The light and heavy weapons specialists were developed because the rigid Army MOS classification system could not accept this approach and required the classification of positions according to the existing system.

Seventy percent of Phase II light weapons training is directed toward expanding the knowledge the student already has about the mechanics, operation, and employment of military light weapons—from the handgun to the heavy machine gun. Typical examples of each class of weapons are studied in detail, and several representatives of the weapons class are fired on the range. The student is given a fairly extensive survey of heavy weapons including considerable time on the range in live-fire exercises with a variety of mortars and anti-tank weapons. Requiring a student to reassemble a weapon blind folded is a neat way to keep him on his toes, but during the course of Phase II training he will be put through 16 hours of examinations and proficiency tests that demand a whole lot more from him than being able to identify a trigger housing group by feel!

### **Special Forces Indirect Fire Non-Commissioned Officer**

The use of indirect-fire weapons by a guerrilla force would appear to be limited by their weight and bulk, but the Viet Cong and North Vietnamese Army forged a very effective psychological operation using the mortar, recoilless rifle, and rockets. Hardly any permanent or semi-permanent installation was safe from attack. The weapons were employed in a conventional manner and, to frustrate counter action. Mortars and recoilless rifles were mounted on flatbed trucks and moved quickly after firing, while 107 and 122 mm rockets were placed on improvised launchers and fired by timing devices. Further, the VC/NVA caused extraordinary confusion and damage with the RPG-2 (B-40) Rocket Propelled Grenade. They effectively engaged nearly every imaginable target with these rather primitive grenade launchers. The net effect of this continual harassment was the impression they could attack any target in the country with impunity—something they and the ever-present press consistently reiterated! Today, sophisticated anti-tank and anti-aircraft weapons like the TOW (Tube-Launched, Optically-Tracked, Wire Guided Missile) and the Soviet SA-7 Shoulder Fired Anti-Aircraft Missile in the hands of guerrillas could develop a new dimension in guerrilla warfare.

Phase II training for the indirect fire NCO builds upon his familiarity with modern heavy weapons by reviewing the mechanics, operation and employment of each class of weapons. Twenty-five percent of the training time is concentrated in fire direction and advanced Forward Observer (FO) procedures for the 81 and 107 mm (previously called the 4.2 inch) mortars. The



student receives practical experience in firing the mortars, operating a Fire Direction Center (FDC), and observing and adjusting indirect fire. Live fire exercises are also conducted with the 60 mm mortar and several anti-tank weapons. Phase II training includes a brief survey of foreign heavy weapons and a thorough familiarization with light military weapons, many of which are fired on the range. There are 26 hours of proficiency tests and examinations, which rival the Medical Board examinations for their exhaustive coverage of the subject material. Of course, the academic and proficiency examinations are designed not only to test the student's retention of the material, but also to serve as a comprehensive recapitulation of the training phase.

In the main, the POI for Phase II training is a straightforward and hands-on approach to teaching the particular skills. Implicitly, it is also an extensive introduction to training methods, administration, support requirements, and management. The indirect fire NCO may at times be required to put these skills directly to work as was common in the "A" Camps in Vietnam. However, it is more likely he will be responsible for developing and conducting training programs for indigenous forces in the use of indirect fire. Whatever the requirement, Phase II training for the indirect fire NCO, in common with all Phase II training programs, provides the necessary skills for initial assignment to an SF operational detachment which could be deployed on an MTT requiring heavy weapons skills.

### **Special Forces Communication-Electronics Non-Commissioned Officer**

The radio operator/communications-electronics NCO provides the vital link between the deployed operational detachment and the operational base. The OSS JEDBURG Teams of the Second World War always had one and sometimes two radio operators assigned to provide communications with their operational bases in either Algiers in North Africa or London. The modern SF operational detachment, like its JEDBURG predecessor, is an element of a larger organization, which has an insatiable appetite for information. Situation Reports (SITREP), Intelligence Reports (INTEL Report), and Drop Zone Reports are but a few of the necessary reports required by the SF Operational Base (SFOB) commander to allow him to make informed decisions about the operation and to support the operational detachment in the field. For an operational detachment in the UWOA there are few alternatives to radio communications, and detachments assigned to remote areas in a foreign internal defense role will find essentially the same options.

Communications intelligence activities and Radio Direction Finding (RDF) equipment pose a very serious threat to an operational detachment in the UW environment. For example, German Counterintelligence (CI) activities, using primitive RDF equipment by present standards, successfully located and destroyed several networks of the Rote Kapella (The Red Orchestra, a Soviet sponsored espionage organization) operating in Belgium and the Netherlands. In addition, if captured, radio operators become a potential conduit through which the enemy can mount a Funkspiel in the pattern of Operation NORTH POLE. By the time NORTH POLE was terminated, the German Intelligence Service was "playing-back" 18 radio operators, and had captured 53 Allied operatives infiltrated to assist a national Dutch Resistance organization. They also received vast quantities of arms, ammunition and other military materiel in supply drops from SOE in Britain. Radio equipment now in the inventory and operational techniques available to the SF operational detachment reduces (but does not eliminate) the danger inherent in radio communica-



tions. Intensive training in Communications Security (COMSEC) is added insurance against compromise.

The thrust of Phase II communication-electronics training is the use of SF communications equipment and operational techniques to establish and maintain a secure communications link between the deployed operational detachment and the SFOB. More than 65 percent of the training time is spent on practical exercises and on the Field Performance Examination actually performing the functions of a SF communicator. Antenna construction is given serious attention because it is fundamental to effective communications. Everyone spends long hours in the International Morse Code (IMC) Learning Lab to develop the skill to send and receive IMC at the rate of 18 groups per minute. The training schedule includes class work and practical experience in placing SF "commo" equipment into operation, transmitting and receiving message traffic, and operating the SF "commo" systems properly, using prescribed security measures. In connection with the instruction on antenna construction there is a reduced range "commo" exercise that precedes the long range Communications Practical Exercise (COMMEX) in western North Carolina. Teams are formed and parachuted into the Pisgah National Forest where they spend several days under conditions, which closely approximate the operational environment meeting scheduled "commo" contact with the SF base station at Fort Bragg. A whopping 40 percent of the time is spent in some type of examination. The Field Performance Examination is the most extensive, testing the student's ability, over several days, on a wide range of subjects in a realistic setting.

The SF "commo" man has always had a training capability in addition to his communications responsibilities. He can develop a basic POI for the use of tactical radios, field telephones, and other "commo" equipment, and he can advise and assist his counterparts in an indigenous organization in establishing proper security and operational procedures to protect their communications. After a detailed assessment of the indigenous "commo;" systems, he would work with the signal staff officer to rectify any deficiencies. He would normally assist in the organization of an internal courier system, the use of codes and ciphers, and the standardization of the CEOI (Communication Electronic Operating Instructions) if it were necessary. Good communications are a fundamental ingredient to successful operations.

At the completion of Phase II communications training, the student has satisfactorily performed the duties of a SF "commo" man in a realistic operational environment. He has also demonstrated his knowledge of the subject material in three demanding written examinations. The intensive training and rigorous testing of the student "commo" man is essential because of the critical role he will play in the "real world" operations of the SF detachment.

### **Special Forces Combat Engineer Non-Commissioned Officer**

As the spearhead of the 1940 German offensive through Belgium, the planners chose forces from Fallschirmjager Regiment 1 (1st Parachute Regiment) to capture or neutralize critical bridges and fortifications on the Belgian frontier along the Albert Canal. Fort Eban Emael, considered by most European military authorities to be impregnable, was assigned to First Lieutenant Rudolf Witzig and his Fallschirm Pioneerzag (Parachute Engineer Platoon). The surprise attack launched at dawn by approximately 85 men of this engineer platoon overran several of the



main positions through daring and the adroit employment of explosives including the new Hohl-ladungen (shaped charge) to breach the concrete and steel casements to gain access to the defensive positions and to destroy the defenders. From the captured positions the attackers took the battle to other gun emplacements and repulsed several counterattacks until the German invasion forces arrived the next day. The key to success of this attack was surprise and the use of explosives to penetrate the heavily armored cupolas of the gun emplacements.

In October 1942 a British demolition party of 12 men was parachuted into occupied Greece with the mission of destroying the Papadhia, the Asopos, or the Gorgopotamous railroad bridge, interdicting the only rail line carrying supplies for the Panzerarmee Afrika from Europe to the ports of Greece. In late November 1942 the demolition party and approximately 150 guerrillas attacked the Gorgopotamous Bridge and damaged one pier sufficiently with demolition charges to close this main supply route for a period of six weeks.

While these operations are not illustrative of US Special Forces employment, they dramatically demonstrate the effectiveness of the use of explosives. Recent history further confirms the devastating effect explosives properly placed can have upon structures and personnel. Modern explosives in the hands of a well-trained demolitionists are indescribably dangerous and destructive. Terrorists have devised a relatively new use for explosives and rationalized it as essentially no different in effect from aerial bombardment by their more powerful adversaries. The use of plastique by the Front de Liberation Nationale (FLN) and the Organization de l'Armee Secrete (OAS) reduced many popular department stores, restaurants, and theaters of Algiers and other major cities of Algeria to rubble while indiscriminately killing or maiming countless "innocent" bystanders. Of course, the objective of the festival de plastique during the final stages of the bloody Algerian conflict, in common with most terrorist attacks, was to intimidate the population and dramatically demonstrate the inability of the authorities to protect them—an objective shared by virtually all resistance and revolutionary organizations at some time during their struggle with their opposition. Recent history amply supports the conclusion terrorist tactics are an effective and, from the perspective of the weak, a legitimate weapon of war which can tear at the fabric of enemy control.

The broader function of the combat engineer was established in the Special Forces organization with the introduction of the counterinsurgency mission in the early 1960s. Previous SF organizations had positions for demolitionists with the primary purpose of training guerrilla forces in the use of explosives as had been done by the OSS in World War II. Working with indigenous organizations in the foreign internal defense role required the SF "demo" man to be able to assist and advise them in construction, road building, development of water supplies, and myriad other engineering tasks, of course, including the use of explosives. Phase II demolition's training concentrates over 80% of the instruction on SF-oriented demolitions because the individual would not have received more than a brief survey at the Engineer School at Fort Belvoir, Virginia in the basic course. Heavy emphasis is placed on calculation and placement of charges, preparation for, and conduct of, demolition missions and improvised munitions. Phase II demolition training, like all of the other skill development programs, spends a significant period of the time in practical application of the learned material under simulated combat conditions. In almost every case other military skills—such as land navigation, field craft, survival and tactical movement—are integrated into the FTX or PE to expand the learning experience. Finally, the student is subjected to



extensive and difficult written, practical, and performance examinations before he completes Phase II training.

The innocuous appearance of explosive is misleading because demolition training is probably one of the most inherently dangerous activities in the training program. In the early 1970s eight members of a class were killed in an accident on Coleman Demolition Range at Fort Bragg. In this particular incident all of the charges on the ring main (A method of firing explosive charges where the "det" cord makes a loop so that the charges are ignited from both ends) detonated in the hands of the students when the electric blasting cap was attached to a hot firing wire. Other training and operational accidents have claimed the lives of several SF soldiers. Of course, every safety precaution possible is taken, but the nature of the activity is such that mistakes are just not forgiven! Explosives are exceptionally effective, but if improperly handled and used, they pose a danger to friend and foe alike.

The function of the "demo" man has evolved from that of a demolitionists to a widely skilled combat engineer. He can be expected to assist indigenous organizations in building a school, airfield, or a road and be able to cut timber, establish a water source and blow up anything that gets in the way. In Vietnam he was involved in the placement, charting, and reporting of minefields as well as constructing fighting positions and bunkers for the defensive positions of the camp. Phase II training provides the SF student with a fairly comprehensive coverage of standard and improvised demolition's. He is also given an overview of the other engineering techniques and skills the SF combat engineer is expected to master. There are brief excursions into the sinister world of sabotage and terrorism because he will assist, advise, and train the resistance organization in the use of incendiaries, booby-traps, and other explosive devices for these purposes. His experience as a member of an operational detachment will ultimately shape his capabilities but Phase II prepares him to "carry his share of the load."



## SF Qualification Phase III

In 1953, Field Training Exercises FREE LEGION and LEGIONAIRE RALLY played out Special Forces assistance to the partisans of Erehwon (name given to simulate a mythical country). A Detachments were parachuted into a Guerrilla Warfare Operational Area (GWOA) to assist the partisans in operations against the Erehwonian Army. The detachment made contact with the reception committee on the infiltration DZ and moved to a base area from which raids and ambushes could be mounted against lucrative targets. Only a limited supply of food could be carried with the members of the detachment during infiltration, so the ambush of a convoy carrying food was high on the list of priority operations. "C" rations, live chickens, rabbits and occasionally even a goat showed up in the vehicles of the convoy. The "C" rations were quickly devoured, but the animals often became protected mascots that even the hardest heart could not bring himself to stuff into a pot.

Reconnaissance patrols were sent to bring back information about a major target selected by the SFOB for destruction. One patrol masqueraded as a work party from the Erehwonian Army (in reality a unit from the 505th Airborne Infantry Regiment, 82nd Airborne Division also at Ft. Bragg) and spent a considerable period of time working around the radar site before they were recognized. Patrols returned with memory sketches, details of the security system, and enemy routine at the site, which was used, in the planning phase of the final raid. Excitement mounted as the raid force stealthily approached the target, apparently taking the enemy completely by surprise. Suddenly, a whistle broke the silence and the attack is on. Rifle and machine gun fire swept the area while shadowy figures moved through the outer defense positions to secure the target. Simulated demolitions were placed on the structure and, at a signal; everyone withdrew leaving the Erehwonians cursing the overzealous guerrilla who threw the grenade simulators (basically a large firecracker with a four second fuse that would definitely make a "loud" noise in a closed area) in the main bunker!

These early FTXs set the pattern for future training exercises in guerrilla offensive operations even though very quickly the partisan forces were omitted. Many a convoy was ambushed and rocket launch sites, radar installations, and other facilities attacked in the training areas of Camp Mackall and Fort Bragg until the late 1970s. Air exfiltration of the student detachments from Camp Mackall put their knowledge of LZ marking and operations to use, and the tight departure schedule tested their ability to cover long distances quickly. To complicate this forced march, one faculty advisor designated the heaviest man in the detachment as a non-ambulatory casualty. After several attempts to fashion an improvised litter and to carry the wounded man in a fireman's carry, the detachment commander explained they would just have to shoot him because they would never make the aircraft at this rate!

Changes in this basic scheme occurred in the late 1970s when the FTX became exclusively a raid. The Pizer Chemical Plant and the radar site at Fort Fisher in the Wilmington, North Carolina area along the Cape Fear River took the brunt of the student attack. Moving by IRB-15 (15-man Inflatable Rubber Boat), the raiders penetrated the defenses of the target, placed simulated demolition charges on the critical mechanisms, and faded away into the darkness to small islands in the middle of the river for air exfiltration. A personnel recovery operation mounted from a



"mother craft" anchored off shore was another iteration of the early "raid and ambush" FTXs. Using the patrol as the training vehicle, the present SF Qualification Course Phase III student is introduced to the fundamentals of patrol planning and patrol orders patrolling techniques, reconnaissance and ambush patrols and other types of combat operations. The instruction is quickly moved from the classroom to the field where practical experience is gained during cadre-led patrolling exercises. Individual performance is evaluated during student-led patrols as a part of the student grading process. Problems such as transporting a wounded man or carrying an uninflated IRB-15 through several miles of swamp can challenge the patrol leader to devise solutions and provide the leadership to make them work. Every student will be evaluated in a leadership position so "cooperation and graduation" is the name of the game.

Isolation is the period an operational detachment spends secluded from outside contact and influences prior to deployment (prevents distractions and aids in concentration and unifying the team). Mission analysis, an in-depth estimate of the enemy capabilities and limitations, a thorough study of the area of operation, and the group commander's guidance form the basis and substance of the detachment's operational plans and orders which are formulated during this time. To fulfill all the planning requirements, the detachment must organize into a command and staff configuration as well as the normal detachment organization. For example, the executive officer assumes the S-1 (Administration) and S-4 (Logistics) staff responsibilities, while the operations sergeant takes on the functions of the S-3 (Operations). Phase III provides the opportunity in a Command Post Exercise (CPX) for the student detachment to systematically organize, plan, and prepare for deployment into a UWOA. The process will soon be repeated when the student detachment prepares for the final FTX.

The Uwharrie National Forest and surrounding counties of central North Carolina have been the location for a great number of Guerrilla Warfare Field Training Exercises for the past 20 years or so. At one time the maneuver area stretched from Ashboro in the north to the South Carolina state line in the south, and from Camp Mackall in the east to Albemarle in the west. As many as 15 Student SF "A" Detachments trained and assisted guerrilla bands from Patton's Liberation Forces in opposition to the Canteath regime in this mythical nation of Pineland. The Pineland Army (normally elements of the 82nd Airborne Division) augmented by civil affairs, psychological operations, and other specialists waged relentless counter-guerrilla warfare while attempting to extinguish the flames of insurgency in the countryside.

After a lengthy preparation in isolation the student detachment was infiltrated by air into a DZ operated by a reception committee from the guerrilla band, launching the major FTX of the course. The DZs in Uwharrie are notoriously small, so usually the immediate problem facing the student detachment commander was assembly of his people. One lieutenant greatly delayed this process and generated much "beating of the bushes" by falling asleep waiting for assistance to remove his parachute from the trees. Another man remained unaccounted for until the furious barking of a large dog at a nearby barn attracted attention. The individual was perched on the barn roof, held at bay by a thoroughly aroused dog whose sleep was disturbed by this unwelcome intruder! At times local citizens took part in the festivities reminiscent of some infiltrations into occupied France during the Second World War. With flashing lights, shouted instructions, and much hubbub, student detachment members were located and brought to the assembly point by



the enthusiastic auxiliary. After the personnel and equipment were tallied, the detachment and guerrilla guides began the long march to the base area.

The purpose of the long march, sometimes taking a couple of days, was to emphasize march discipline, operational security, and to provide the detachment with the opportunity to collect area information for the area assessment. Sooner or later they reached the designated base area and had the initial meeting with the guerrilla chief. As has already been explained, guerrilla chiefs are infamously difficult people who shamelessly demand cultivation, persuasion, and a skillful use of the carrot and the stick. The guerrilla chief is also in a position to dramatize situations highlighting operational errors as an object lesson to the detachment. During one leisurely breakfast a student detachment was startled into headlong flight by a sudden outburst of machine gun fire. The fire, ostensibly from a strong force of the Pineland Army, was in reality, instigated by the guerrilla chief who observed the lack of preparation for rapid movement and brought this deficiency to their attention in a memorable fashion. The detachment can often be enticed into a compromising position by a "Mutt and Jeff" routine with the assistant guerrilla chief posing as a much more agreeable character. It does not take much finesse to maneuver the detachment into a plot to depose the guerrilla chief to remove the obstacle to smooth operations. All of this sparring is under the watchful eye of the faculty advisor (FAC Advisor) who could-and-would nudge the process at the appropriate time to avoid it bogging down into a pointless personality conflict.

The guerrilla band, often quite unfamiliar with their expected role, tends to establish relatively quick bonds with the training detachment. Some even felt pangs of sympathy when one detachment was given a traditional Pineland feast of Opla (Alpo spelled backwards), and another was required to participate in a "Blood Ritual to Victory." The non-participants blanched and their stomachs tightened when the cup containing the blood of a freshly slaughtered calf (really just a mixture of milk, red food dye, and gelatin) was passed to the SF detachment members. Everyone was exposed to these contrived rituals because in the areas of the world where Special Forces serves, stranger customs exist. It would be offensive to the Stieng Montagnard (Highland people indigenous to Vietnam) for his offer of a roasted rat on a stick, jokingly called "rat-cicles" by the Americans, to be refused, and it would limit the effectiveness of the SF soldier to be unable to participate in a traditional feast because of the unappetizing nature or appearance of the food.

There are differences in approach, but by this time the student detachment should have begun training the guerrilla force, organizing the area command and working with the auxiliary to establish the Escape and Evasion (E&E) mechanism. An unguarded bridge or microwave tower is an ideal training target to work out the details of the preparation for and conduct of the attack. The detachment commander the guerrilla chief, and several prominent members of the Resistance meet and establish the area command while landing zones (LZ) are selected and a safe-house keeper is trained in taking fingerprints to identify individuals in the E&E system.

Intelligence play is extensive in the FTX because the same requirements exist here as in the actual real life situation. Order of Battle (OB) operational, and tactical information is necessary for both sides. Each establishes intelligence "nets," develop a series of informers, and infiltrate "agents" into the other areas of activity. One ambitious guerrilla band attacked a Night Defensive Position (NDP) of the Pineland Army forces and left several "G"s behind as POWs. Intensive



interrogation while the POWs assumed the position of the "dying cockroach" (laying on your back with your legs and arms extended up in the air) extracted base camp locations, personality information, and auxiliary contacts with ease. The more subtle technique of a "Red Cross representative" interrupting the hostile interrogation but continuing the questioning more gently was just as effective.

SF student detachment members in the hands of the Pineland Army were subjected to even more subtle ploys to extract information. One man was jailed with a Pineland Army Military intelligence (MI) agent posing as a guerrilla officer from another area, while another was "turned over" to the civil authorities for allegedly raping a local girl. The MI agent gave himself away by being unfamiliar with the guerrilla environment but the "rapist" cooperated to clear himself, seeing nothing unusual in the "police" interest in his associates, their location, and civilian contacts in the area. One member of the Pineland Army, dubbed "Lurch," in a more direct approach, placed a waterproof bag over the head of the uncooperative POW to loosen his tongue. When threatened with capture, an SF student risked his life by swimming the flooded Pee-Dee River rather than face "Lurch" and his waterproof bag! Each individual was instructed to protect information of immediate tactical value for at least 24 hours to give the guerrilla band an opportunity to react to his capture.

The Pineland Army accommodatingly ran truck convoys throughout the area to support their forces and as the FTX progressed they became very attractive targets. The guerrilla unit near the little town of Morven positioned a school bus, a wrecker, and a police car along the convoy route in a simulated school bus accident. A detachment member in a towing company uniform halted the convoy directly beneath an overhanging bank where the main ambush forces were located. When he realized the situation the convoy commander just shook his head in utter disbelief. However, not all ambushes went as well, and at times, the Pineland Army would turn the tables on the guerrillas as General DePuy did on the Minh Thanh Road.

In all of these activities the local auxiliary provided invaluable assistance by furnishing transportation, manpower to operate DZs and LZs; and generally becoming involved in the exercise when they were needed. In the best sense of becoming involved, John Chuning, the auxiliary chief from Anson County, disregarded his own injuries and went to the assistance of an SF student who had been knocked unconscious during a night water exfiltration when the boat they both occupied was struck by the aircraft. However, not all of the civilian population supported the guerrillas, and there was lively competition between the rival camps. Girl friends were lost, front teeth loosened, and previous associations shunned over differences in loyalties among the school aged participants, which occasionally carried over to the adults. The realism of the FTX was immeasurably enhanced by the participation of the local civilian population. Their incorporation in the play of the exercise is a unique aspect of SF training.

As the guerrillas increased their operational activity, the Pineland Army intensified its efforts to destroy the bands. Because it was, after all, a training exercise individuals were released after 24 hours and the number captured—the body count—was the primary indication of the success of the counter-guerrilla campaign. Physical contact between the opposing forces was, and for that matter still is, prohibited, but in the heat of "battle" rules sometimes are ignored. The flurry of guerrilla attacks was aimed at interdicting the lines of communications while preparations



were begun to destroy a major target in a final raid. In some exercises several guerrilla bands would assemble and attack a large facility like the hydroelectric plant near Mount Gilead. In any event however, the target would be placed under surveillance for several days and other intelligence assets directed to provide Essential Elements of Information (EEI) for the operations plan. Just prior to the attack the guerrilla force moved to a Mission Support Site (MSS) in the immediate vicinity, made the necessary adjustments in the plan, and at the designated moment launched the big attack. Of course, the Pineland Army was always at the target in force so all the remaining ammunition, pyrotechnics, and explosives were expended in the FTX equivalent of the Battle of Armageddon!

With the destruction of the final target the FTX was concluded for all practical purposes, and some form of celebration usually preceded the departure of the "A" detachment for Fort Bragg. The auxiliary north of Rockingham prepared an elaborate breakfast for all the participants while a pig was roasted in Anson County to celebrate the "victory." Everyone savored these last moments together before the liberation forces disbanded and everyone returned back to their normal lives.

The FTXs from CLEO in 1953, to the ones presently conducted for SFQC Student or Operational Detachment Unconventional Warfare Training, follow the same pattern as described here. There has been endless variation played off the basic schemes, reflecting the personalities involved, budgetary constraints, or emphasis on a particular aspect of the current UW mission. The once very elaborate School FTX control and support organization has become more austere in the past few years, but some form of an SFOB is present to handle the support and coordination.

The final few days of the SF Qualification Course are spend Turning in equipment, completing administrative details and preparing for graduation. In the past graduates were awarded the Green Beret and/or a full unit flash to signify SF qualification. Recently, the Department of the Army has approved the Special Forces tab worn on the left shoulder to indicate completion of SF qualification. Regardless of the trappings, SF qualification prepares an individual to take his place in this very special organization and begin the challenging profession of the Special Forces Soldier.





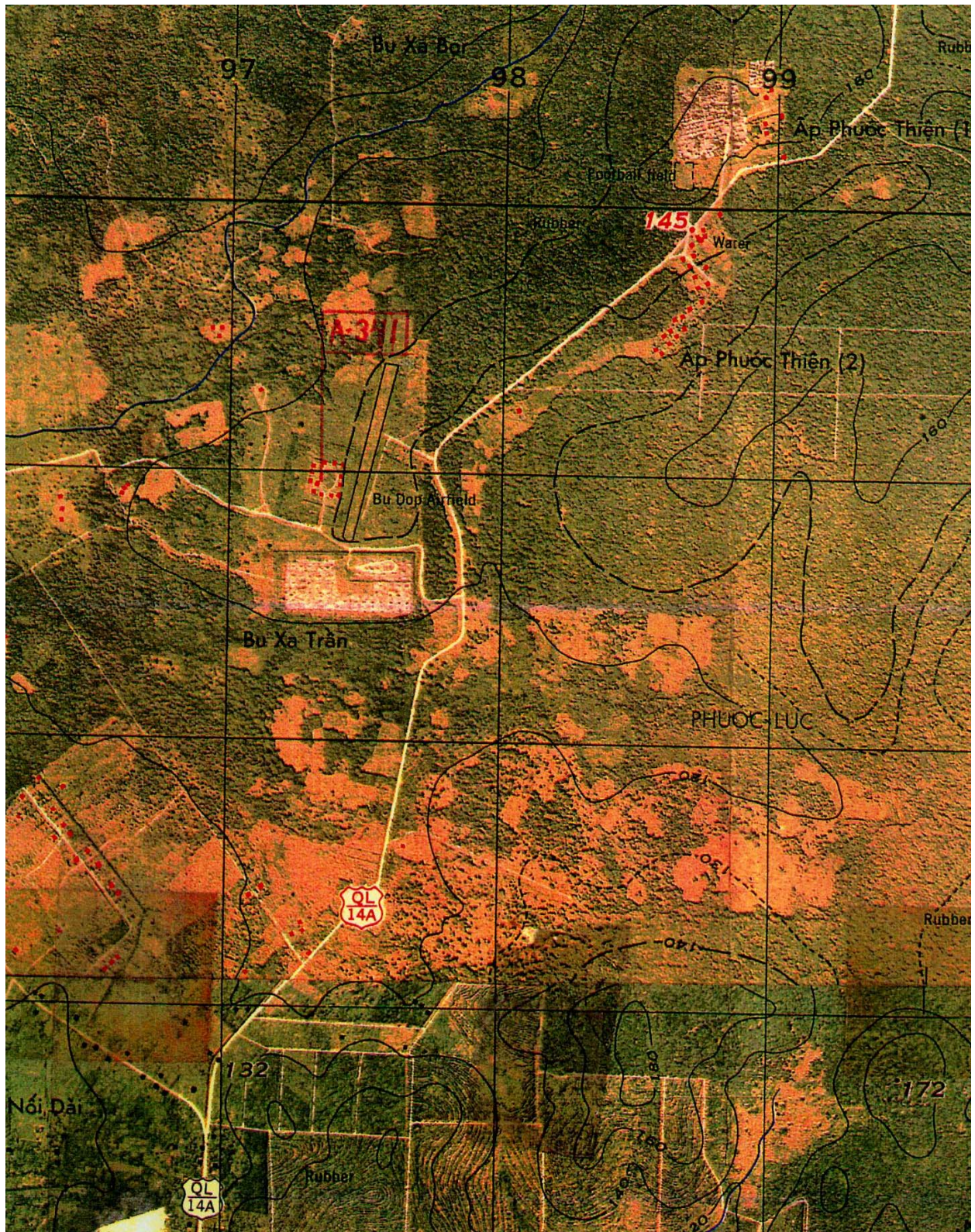


## **Appendix B, Maps**





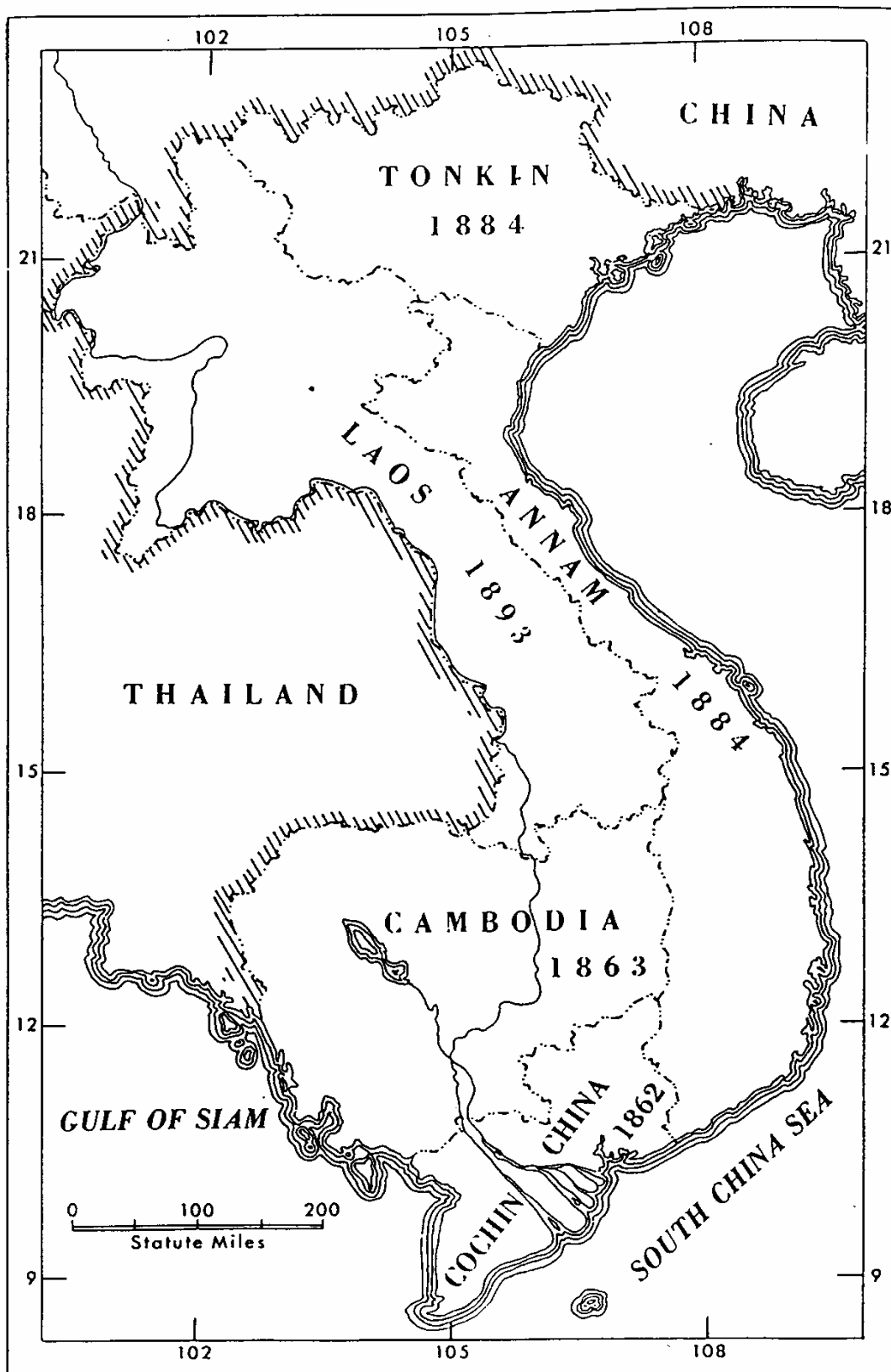










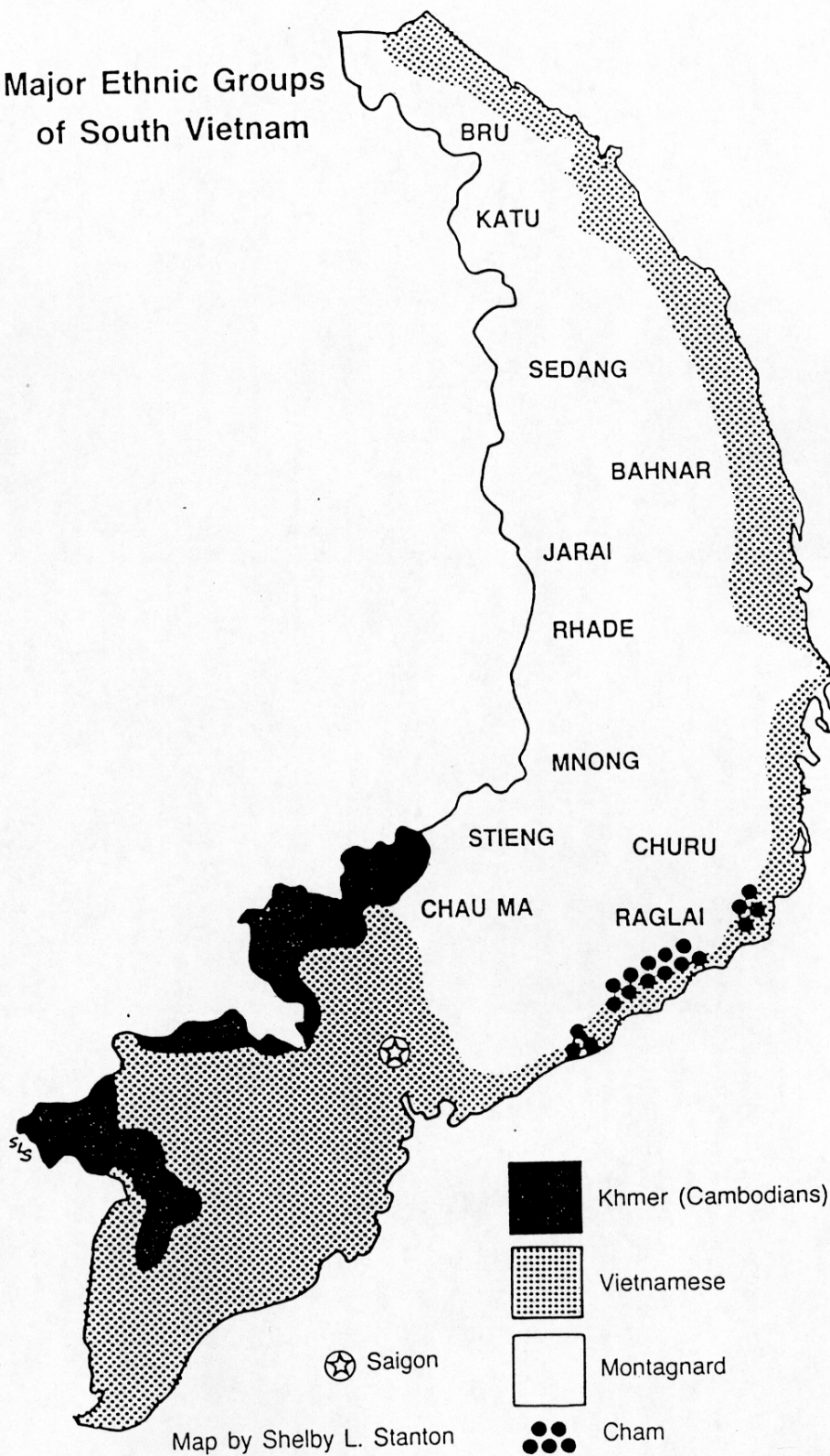








# Major Ethnic Groups of South Vietnam

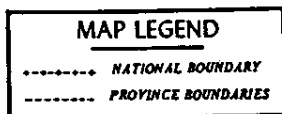




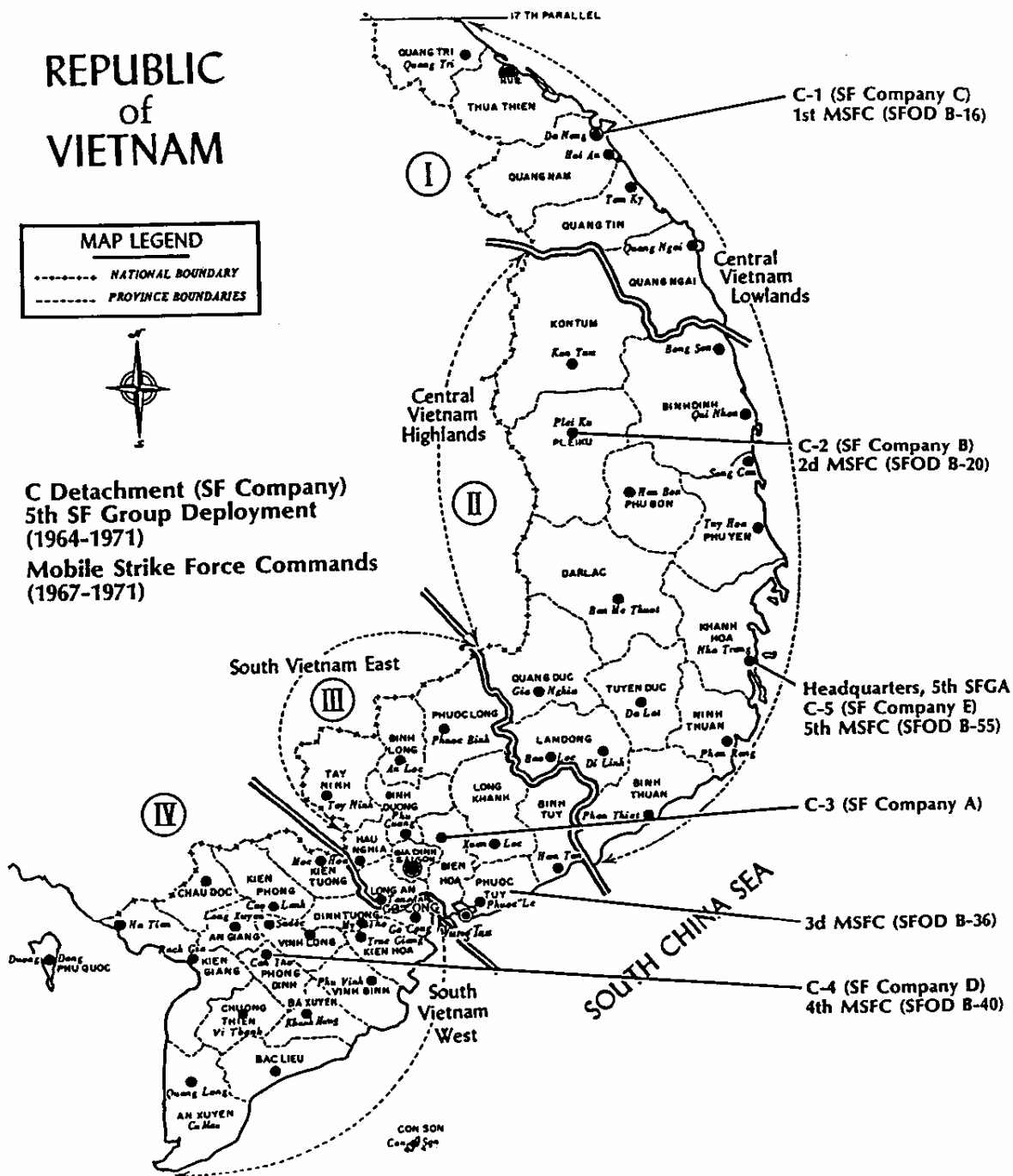




# REPUBLIC of VIETNAM



**C Detachment (SF Company)  
5th SF Group Deployment  
(1964-1971)  
Mobile Strike Force Commands  
(1967-1971)**



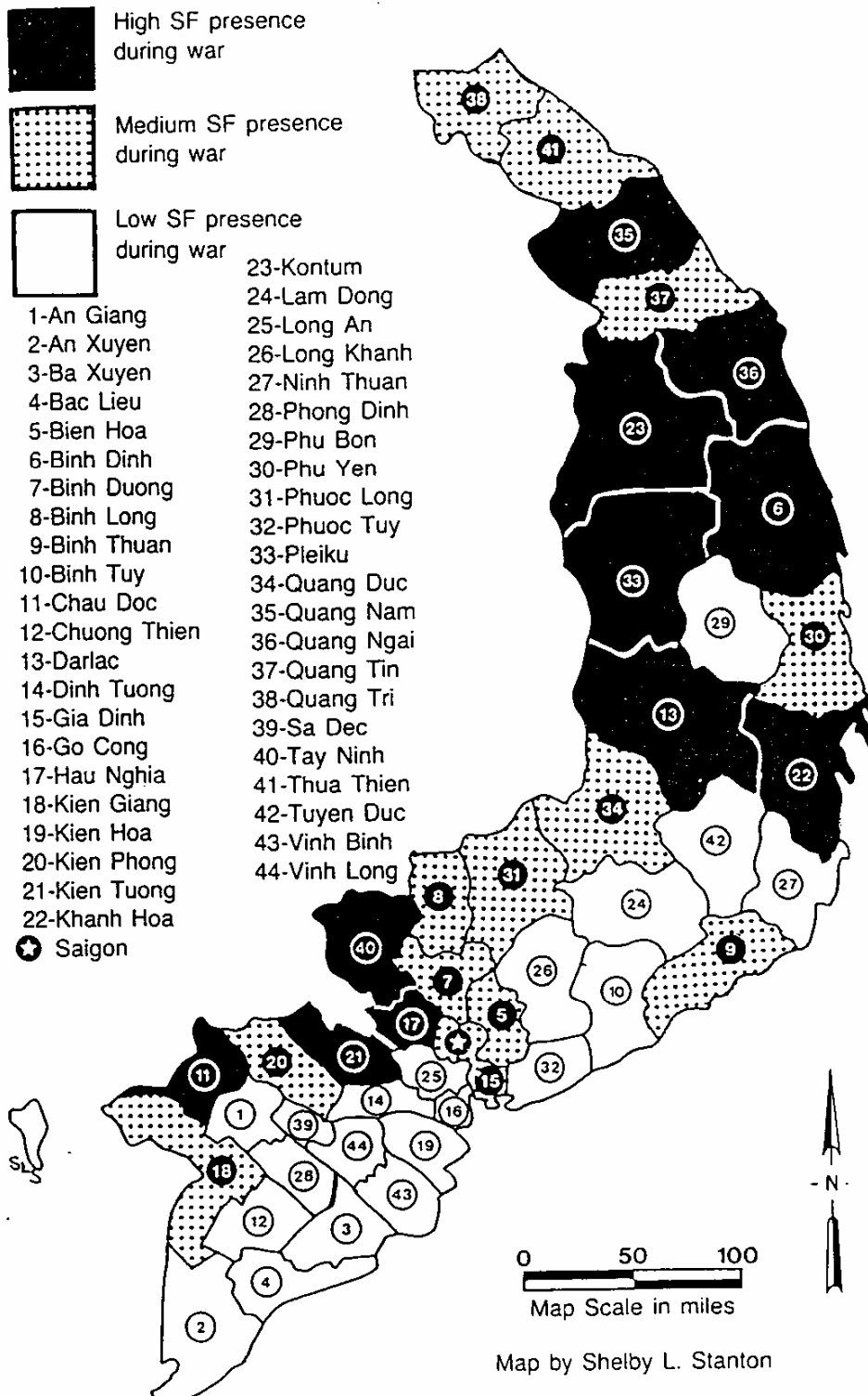
The Republic of Vietnam was divided into four Corps Tactical Zones. I CTZ was in the extreme north centered more or less on Quang Nam Province, II CTZ, the largest, covered the central highlands, III CTZ consisted of the provinces around Saigon while IV CTZ covered the "Delta" region.







## Army Special Forces Presence in Vietnam



Provinces with three or fewer SF camps are considered to have low SF presence; provinces containing from 4-9 SF camps have medium presence; and high presence provinces have ten or more SF camps or their manpower equivalent.



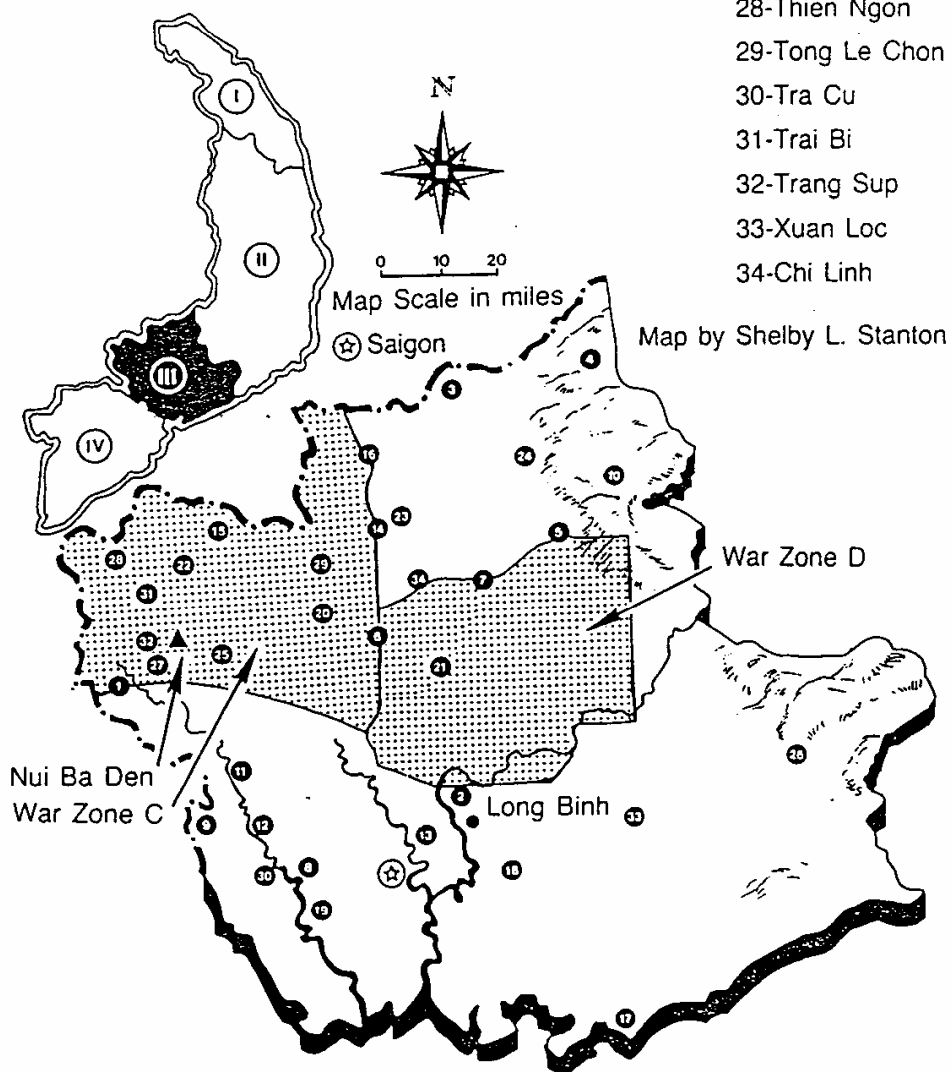




### III Corps Tactical Zone, 1964–1971

#### U.S. Army Special Forces Camps in III CTZ, Vietnam, 1964–1971

- |               |                       |                 |
|---------------|-----------------------|-----------------|
| 1-Ben Soi     | 10-Duc Phong          | 19-Luong Hoa    |
| 2-Bien Hoa    | 11-Go Dau Ha          | 20-Minh Thanh   |
| 3-Bu Dop      | 12-Hiep Hoa           | 21-Phuoc Vinh   |
| 4-Bu Ghia Map | 13-Ho Ngoc Tao-Tu Duc | 22-Prek Klok    |
| 5-Bunard      | 14-Hon Quan           | 23-Quan Loi     |
| 6-Chon Thanh  | 15-Katum              | 24-Song Be      |
| 7-Dong Xoai   | 16-Loc Ninh           | 25-Soui Da      |
| 8-Duc Hoa     | 17-Long Hai           | 26-Tanh Linh    |
| 9-Duc Hue     | 18-Long Thanh         | 27-Tay Ninh     |
|               |                       | 28-Thien Ngon   |
|               |                       | 29-Tong Le Chon |
|               |                       | 30-Tra Cu       |
|               |                       | 31-Trai Bi      |
|               |                       | 32-Trang Sup    |
|               |                       | 33-Xuan Loc     |
|               |                       | 34-Chi Linh     |



Note: Not all SF camps in this CTZ are shown on this map, only those mentioned in the text are depicted.







## **Appendix C, Orders and Letters**







DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY  
HEADQUARTERS, FORT JACKSON  
FORT JACKSON, SOUTH CAROLINA 29207

SPECIAL ORDERS  
NUMBER 69

EXTRACT

23 March 1966

197. TC 221. Fol REASSIGNMENT Dir. WP OA 24 Mar 66 TDN 2162010 01-1151-1143 P1311 S99-999

ROGERS, HENRY A US52633327 PVT E2 11B10. Trne Co E 2d Bn 1st Tng Bde USATC Inf (3A-3170-03) Ft Jackson SC  
Asg to: US Army Engineer Sch (2420) Ft Belvoir Va  
Alloc: NA  
Rept date: 28 Mar 66  
Maj comd/agcy: Third US Army  
Scty Clnc: Conf  
Lv Data: THREE (3) DDALV  
PCS (MDC): 2A  
Auth: Ltr Hq 3d USA (AJAAG-PC) dtd 10 Mar 66 Subj: Army Officer Cand Crs  
PPSC: A DEPN: 0  
ADC: 24 mos  
BASD & BPED: Oct 65  
ETS: Oct 67  
EDCSA: 1 Apr 66  
Sp Instr: EM selected applicant to attend Engineer OC C1 105-66 UP Para 2-20 AR 600-200 & upon successful compl of tng on 4 Mar 66 EM awd & dsg PMOS inde.  
Lv Address: 612 Coventry Circle Moultrie Ga

198. TC 221. Fol REASSIGNMENT Dir. WP OA: 1 Apr 66 TDN 2162010 01-1151-1153 P1311 S99-999

PRISTASH, DAVID J RA15741581 PVT E2 11B10. Trne Co A 12th Bn 3d Tng Bde USATC Inf (3A-3170-03) Ft Jackson SC.  
Asg to: USA Inf Ctr (3151) Ft Benning Ga  
Alloc: NA  
Rept date: 3 Apr 66  
Maj comd/agcy: Third US Army  
Scty Clnc: Conf  
Lv Data: NA  
PCS (MDC): 2A  
Auth: AR 602-210 & USCONARC Reg 601-206  
PPSC: A DEPN: 0  
ADC: RA 2 yrs  
BASD & BPED: Nov 65  
ETS: Nov 67  
EDCSA: 3 Apr 66  
Sp Instr: EM selected applicant to attend Inf OC C1 13-66 at Ft Benning Ga oa 3 Apr 66. UP Para 2-20 AR 600-200 & upon successful compl of tng on 31 Mar 66 EM awd & dsg PMOS inde. UP JTR TO will furn trans & meal tickets.  
AIR TVL LB BAG AUTH: 66+20 excess. GP TVL DIR.

199. TC 221. Fol REASSIGNMENT Dir. WP OA 14 Apr 66 TDN 2162010 01-1151-1153 P1311 S99-999

BOUCHER, ROBERT C RA13891668 PVT E2 11B10. Trne Co C 11th Bn 3d Tng Bde USATC Inf (3A-3170-03) Ft Jackson SC.  
Asg to: US Army Armor Sch (2018) Ft Knox Ky  
Alloc: NA  
Rept date: 25 Apr 66  
Maj comd/agcy: Third US Army  
Scty Clnc: Conf  
Lv Data: TEN (10) DDALV  
PCS (MDC): 2A  
Auth: Ltr Hq 3d USA (AJAAG-PC) dtd 2 Mar 66 Subj: Army Officer Cand Crs  
PPSC: A DEPN: 0  
ADC: 3 yrs  
BASD & BPED: Oct 65  
ETS: Oct 68  
EDCSA: 25 Apr 66







(Para 38 SO 211 DA HQ USAIC 13 Sep 66)(Cont)

PRISTASH, DAVID J 05331798 2LT INF (USAR) P1542 (31542) 71st Co (OC) 7th Stu Bn (OC) The Stu Bde USAIS (3A-3151-01) Ft Benning Ga

TDY enr to: 4th Stu Bn (Abn) The Stu Bde USAIS (3A-3151-01) Ft Benning Ga; thence to USA Sp Warfare Sch Ft Bragg NC 28307

Rept date (TDY): 14 Sep 66 for crs beginning 18 Sep 66 and 24 Oct 66 respectively

DOR: 14 Sep 66

Pd (TDY): Approx 3 wks and 11 wks and 5 days respectively

Crs: Abn (2E-F1) & Sp Forces Off (2E-F8)

C1 No: Abn #10 (OS 09B) & Sp Forces Off #2 (OS 11B)

Asg to: HQ USA JFK Cen for Sp Warfare (CA-2001-00) Ft Bragg NC 28307

Aloc: SEP-M-484

Rept date: NA

Maj cmd/agcy: NA

Scty clac: SECRET (final) clnc rqr. Resp Comdr will comply with AR 604-5.

Lv data: 13 DDALV upon compl of Abn TDY

PGS (MDC): 1C

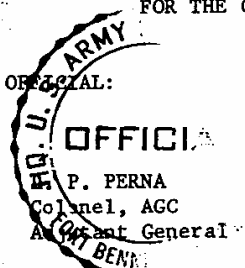
Auth: Fonecon Lt Col Abt OPO OPD-INF DA and Mrs Jones Ofc of Dir of Pers this HQ 25 Aug 66

EDCSA: 17 Sep 66

Sp instr: PPSIA. Movement of depn or household goods to temporary sta are not auth at Govt expense except as prescribed in Part D Chapter 8 JTR. Indiv will rept between 0800-1700 hrs. 5 copies of amendments to this order by any Headquarters or agency will be furnished HQ Third USA, ATTN: AG DPC. Indiv svc to be utilized by Comdt USAIS Ft Benning Ga prior to beginning of Abn TDY.

FOR THE COMMANDER:

OFFICIAL:



H. S. CUNNINGHAM  
Colonel, GS  
Chief of Staff

DISTRIBUTION:

- 50 - Consolidated Orders
- 1 - AG Orders Br
- 1 - AG Records
- 2 - Svc Sec
- 235 - The Stu Bde
- 5 - HQ Third USA ATTN: AG DPC
- 6 - HQ Third USA
- 5 - HQ USAJFKCENSPWAR (CA-2001-00) Ft Bragg NC 28307 (For MR purposes)
- 1 - Postal Off Ft Bragg NC 28307
- 1 - Secy USAIS
- 1 - Dir of Pers - PMD
- 1 - Dir of Intel

SPECIAL DISTRIBUTION:

- 3-Dir OPD OPO INF
- 3-TAGO ATTN: AGRZ-C
- 3-TAGO ATTN: AGPF-O







DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY  
HEADQUARTERS  
UNITED STATES ARMY SPECIAL WARFARE SCHOOL  
Fort Bragg, North Carolina 28307

ATSWS-SAR

17 December 1966

SUBJECT: Final Academic Standing

TO: 2LT David J. Pristash, 05331798, Inf

This is to inform you that you ranked number 71 among 158  
students of the Modified SFOC  
conducted during the period 24 Oct - 17 Dec 66  
at Fort Bragg, North Carolina.

FOR THE COMMANDANT:

  
RICHARD M. COUPLAND  
LTC, Infantry  
Secretary

FB FL 643-R  
11 Oct 65







HEADQUARTERS  
UNITED STATES ARMY  
JOHN F. KENNEDY CENTER FOR SPECIAL WARFARE (AIRBORNE)  
Fort Bragg, North Carolina 28307

ATCSH-AG-A

20 July 1967

LETTER ORDERS NUMBER 7-730

SUBJECT: TEMPORARY DUTY - CONUS

TO: Indiv Concerned

TC 200. Indiv this sta placed on TDY as indic. RPSCTDY. TDN.

PRISTASH, DAVID J	C5331798	2LT INF Co A 7th SF Gp (Abn) 1st SF	(S)
FLEMING, ALLAN F JR	C5336489	2LT INF	do (TS)
PARMENTIER, ALBERT C	RA24979713	SFC E7 11F4S	do (S)
SILLS, WILLIAM R II	RA16344852	SP4 E4 11C2S	do (S)
HART, ROBERT J SR	RA52224496	SSG E6 11F4S	do (S)
WALKER, BOBBY H	RA14C14431	SSG E6 11B4S	do (S)
HLXSON, STEPHEN R	RA19719494	SGT E5 91B4S	do (S)
MUSSELMAN, GALEN L	US52334C50	SGT E5 C5B4S	do (S)
SCHMITTOW, VAN M	RA10C20773	SP4 E4 91B2S	do (S)
KING, FRED L	RA53341094	SGT E5 12B4S	do (S)
AKINS, JERRY C	UG53412569	SP4 E4 05B2S	do (S)
LOVEJOY, DOUGLAS N	RA15846840	SP5 E5 12B2S	do (S)
BROOKS, ARTHUR	RA13723331	SSG E6 11C4S	do (S)
EDWARDS, RICHARD R	RA14544895	SSG E6 11C4S	do (S)
DUGGER, FREDDIE	RA16502479	SSG E6 11F4S	do (S)

TDY to: Eglin AFB Fla

WP date: 0A 25 Jul 67

Pd: Approx 4 days

Scty clnc: Indic In SNL

Purpose: Spt of Sp Air Warfare Center Dmst

Tvl data: TBMAA, gp tvl dir

Acct clas: 2182020 53-6810 P2000-21 S31001 CDAC 0111 BVN 1125

Sp instr: Prov JTR apply. Req claims for reimb for TDY be sbm wi 72 hrs upon rtn to instl. EM in receipt of SR should not pay for meals obtn in Govt mess fac while on TDY status. SR WB wd during TDY pd. Auth to mess sep at TDY pt WB depn upon orders iss by commander at TDY pt, para 10422, AR 37-104. Itinerary: Fr Ft Bragg NC to Eglin AFB Fla & rtn.







SPECIAL ORDERS NO.	DATE	DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY WASHINGTON, D. C. 20310
77	20 Apr 67	LCC/ny EXTRACT

108. TC 240. Fol rsg dir. PRAP AR 55-28. WP TDN. 1 div will send msg ntly to CGUSARV advising of ch in ETA when trans sea are ch at thmshpmt or stopover pt fol dprt fr CONUS. Such msg wb given to CO of mil instl enr for xmsn. An ex bag alw of 134 lbs, personal eff, auth to acmp each indiv while tvi by acft. Cntr tvi of depn and shpmt of POV not auth. Indiv will arr in Vietnam wearing khaki trousers and short sleeve shirt, and will have in poss basic rqr khaki unif, fatigues, and cdt boots. Army tan and green unif opt for officers only. Dress unif not rqr. Summer civ clo desirable for off-duty wear. WP para 11, AR 40-562 plague itm are rqr; tvi need not be delayed except for the first vaccine dose. Indiv needing corr eye lenses wb equip with mask protective fld M17 and nbc corr eye lenses prior to dprt from CONUS. The introduction, pur and poss of privately owned wpn is prohibited in the RVN. 2172010 01-4411-4412-4413-4414-4415-4416-4417 P1444 S99999. 2182010 01-4411-4412-4413-4414-4415-4416-4417 P1444 S99999. CIC 271A01. 281A01.

FNO rel fr: USAJFKCENGPWAR (CA-2G01) Ft Bragg, NC 28307

Asg to: USARV Transient Det APO San Francisco 96307 for fur asg 5th SFG APO San Francisco 96240

Aloc: As indic (IDC-2). Scty clnc: SECRET rqr. Resp cdr comply w/AR 604-5

Lv data: 30 DDALVAMP. PCS (MDC): ZZ

AUBURN, PARKER K 05331852 2LT INF 31542. Aloc: SEP-1301. Aval date: 20 Sep 67. EDCSA: 23 Sep 67. 7th SF Gp (Abn) 1st SF

JOHNSON, GEORGE R JR 02319884 2LT INF 31542. Aloc: OCT-1193. Aval date: 26 Sep 67. EDCSA: 26 Sep 67. 6th SF Gp (Abn) 1st SF

LINGO, RUSSELL H 05331914 2LT INF 31542. Aloc: OCT-1220. Aval date: 13 Oct 67. EDCSA: 16 Oct 67. 6th SF Gp (Abn) 1st SF

CARR, DAVID J 05333877 2LT INF 31542. Aloc: SEP-1310. Aval date: 10 Sep 67. EDCSA: 13 Sep 67. 6th SF Gp (Abn) 1st SF

DENNINGTON, NEIL A 05333897 2LT INF 31542. Aloc: SEP-2758. Aval date: 10 Sep 67. EDCSA: 13 Sep 67. 3d SF Gp (Abn) 1st SF

JOHNSON, PETER W 05331906 2LT INF 31542. Aloc: SEP-1302. Aval date: 10 Sep 67. EDCSA: 13 Sep 67. 6th SF Gp (Abn) 1st SF

MC ARDIE, BILLY R 05333789 2LT INF 31542. Aloc: SEP-1309. Aval date: 10 Sep 67. EDCSA: 13 Sep 67. 3d SF Gp (Abn) 1st SF

MC BROOM, CLAUDE O 05333790 2LT INF 31542. Aloc: SEP-1308. Aval date: 10 Sep 67. EDCSA: 13 Sep 67. USA SF Tng Gp (Abn) (2002).

NEUBAUER, RONALD G 05332053 2LT INF 31542. Aloc: SEP-1303. Aval date: 10 Sep 67. EDCSA: 13 Sep 67. 7th SF Gp (Abn) 1st SF

PHARAOH, JOHNIE L 05331791 2LT INF 31542. Aloc: SEP-1299. Aval date: 10 Sep 67. ✓ EDCSA: 13 Sep 67. 7th SF Gp (Abn) 1st SF

PISTONE, LEON J JR 05331935 2LT INF 31542. Aloc: SEP-1305. Aval date: 10 Sep 67. EDCSA: 13 Sep 67. 3d SF Gp (Abn) 1st SF

PRISTASH, DAVID J 05331798 2LT INF 31542. Aloc: SEP-1298. Aval date: 10 Sep 67. ✓ EDCSA: 13 Sep 67. 7th SF Gp (Abn) 1st SF

SCHLIERF, GARY A 05332082 2LT INF 31542. Aloc: SEP-1304. Aval date: 10 Sep 67. ✓ EDCSA: 13 Sep 67. 7th SF Gp (Abn) 1st SF

THRASHER, MAX E 05333828 2LT INF 31542. Aloc: SEP-1307. Aval date: 10 Sep 67. EDCSA: 13 Sep 67. 3d SF Gp (Abn) 1st SF

THURSTON, DANIEL G 05333828 2LT INF 31542. Aloc: SEP-1306. Aval date: 10 Sep 67. EDCSA: 13 Sep 67. 7th SF Gp (Abn) 1st SF

SCHRAM, JOHN L.A. 05332083 2LT INF 31542. Aloc: OCT-1190. Aval date: 5 Oct 67. EDCSA: 8 Oct 67. 6th SF Gp (Abn) 1st SF

WATSON, FLOYD E JR 05334183 2LT INF 31542. Aloc: OCT-1187. Aval date: 5 Oct 67. EDCSA: 8 Oct 67. 3d SF Gp (Abn) 1st SF

WHITESIDE, RICHARD J 05420540 2LT INF 31542. Aloc: OCT-1192. Aval date: 5 Oct 67. EDCSA: 8 Oct 67. 7th SF Gp (Abn) 1st SF







FOR IMMEDIATE DISTRIBUTION TO \_\_\_\_\_

HEADQUARTERS  
UNITED STATES ARMY VIETNAM  
APO San Francisco 96375

SPECIAL ORDERS  
NUMBER 351

E X T R A C T

17 December 1967

21. TC 258. UP AR 614-60 and USARPAC Msg GPAG-PE, 18475, 16 Aug 66, fol indiv rel fr asg USARV PNT CASUAL CO APO 96375 and reg to MHD as indic. Units indic are indiv former RVN org. All indiv pers rec w/aprop reg remarks WB fwd to Hq USARV ATTN: AVHAG-CM w/ 5 days after rec of these orders. Indiv clo and pers effects WB fwd to gaining org IAW App II, USARV Reg 600-40. Pers effects exceeding ptl wt and size limitation WB shipped thru TO using fol fund cite: 2182010 01-4513(FG&GO)4523(CO)4533 (WO)4543(E4-9)4553(E1-3) P-1445 S99-999.

Rsg to: As indic below

Date Hosp: 9 December 1967 UNOINDC

Maj Comd/agcy: Hq, USARPAC

COA: NA

EDCSA: 24 December 1967

Sp instr: If pnt is rtn to dy in RVN: a. Asg to USARV TRANSIENT DETACHMENT, APO 96307. Incl one of fol stmt in orders: "Indiv is phys qual to fully perf dy in PMOS" or "Indiv is not phys qual to immed perf full cbt dy". b. Incl in orders: "Rept to CO 90th Repl Bn, APO 96491 immed upon arrival in RVN."

MHD 7TH FLD HOSP APO 96594 Date Hosp: 15 December 1967

BAIN, ROBERT E. JR. US53840117 SGT E5 CO B 1ST BN 50TH INF APO 96490

BARBEE, WILLIAM J. II US56585957 PFC E3 CO A 1ST BN 35TH INF APO 96355

BORDAS, CARL MN5242677 1LT ANC 67TH EVAC HOSP APO 96238

KLINE, ROBERT M. US51613173 PFC E3 CO A 1ST BN 50TH INF APO 96490

Date Hosp: 11 December 1967

COLICCHIO, MICHAEL US52689089 SP4 E4 TRP C 1ST ARMD SQDN 1ST CAV APO 96374

MHD 106TH GEN HOSP APO 96503

BIGG, ROSCELL L. US52757270 SP4 E4 CO A 2D BN 12TH CAV APO 96490

BROOM, ERNEST O. RA15293808 SFC E7 CO A 5TH SF GP APO 96240

BROWN, WAYNE US56609246 PFC E3 TRP D 17TH CAV APO 96279

CARY, MARVIN L. RA15978088 SP4 E4 CO D 1ST BN 16TH INF APO 96345

GERNER, FRED F. US52747547 SP4 E4 CO A 4TH BN 12TH INF APO 96279

GOINS, LAYMON J. US51797388 SP4 E4 CO C 1ST BN 28TH INF APO 96345

KING, ROBERT J. US52687961 PFC E3 TRP D 3D SQDN 17TH CAV APO 96289

LA GRANGE, GARY L. O5239863 1LT ORD CO B 9TH SPT BN APO 96219

MAHONE, JOHN P. RA52629272 SGT E5 CO A 1ST BN 52D INF APO 96219

MURRIN, JAMES E. JR. RA16812912 SGT E5 TRP D 17TH CAV APO 96279

OBRYANT, STANLEY R. US51643722 PFC E3 CO A 1ST BN 2D INF APO 96345

~~PRISTASH, DAVID J. O5331789 1LT INF CO A 5TH SF GP APO 96240~~

SCHROEDER, GERRY D. RA19895737 SP4 E4 CO A 5TH SF GP APO 96240

SHOWS, KENNETH A. US67137622 SP4 E4 CO C 1ST BN 35TH INF APO 96355

SIMMONS, MICHAEL K. RA15747846 PVT E2 HHC 5TH MAINT BN APO 96238







DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY  
HEADQUARTERS, 24TH EVACUATION HOSPITAL  
APO 96491

GENERAL ORDERS  
NUMBER 29

13 February 1966

1. TC 320. The following AWARDS are announced.  
Awarded: Purple Heart SECTION I  
Purple Heart (First Oak Leaf Cluster) - SECTION II  
Purple Heart (Second Oak Leaf Cluster) - SECTION III  
Effective Month: February 1968  
Dates of Action: 3-12 February 1968  
Theater: Vietnam  
Reason: Wound Received In Action  
Authority: By direction of the President and under the provisions  
of AR 672-5-1

SECTION I  
PURPLE HEART

SABATIER, Charles., US54386266, (SSAN: UNK), SGT E-5, USA  
Co B 2 Bn 23 Inf 25 Div, APO 96225, 3 February 1968  
NICHOLAS, Dennis J., RA31513045, (SSAN: 006-20-3510), SSG E-6, USA  
HHC 1 Engr Bn 1 Div, APO 96345, 8 February 1968  
JARMAN, Kenneth., RA16916142, (SSAN: UNK), SP4 E-4, USA  
Co C 1 Bn 16 Inf 1 Div, APO 96345, 8 February 1968  
HAMILTON, James P. Jr., RA15606987, (SSAN: UNK), SSG E-6, USA  
B Trp 3 Sqdn 4 Cav 25 Div, APO 96225, 9 February 1968  
DEAN, Raymond H., US52913862, (SSAN: UNK), PFC E-3, USA  
Co C 2 Bn 47 Inf 9 Div, APO 96372, 9 February 1968  
ANDREWS, Kenneth W., RA19858176, (SSAN: UNK), SP4 E-4, USA  
C Trp 1 Sqdn 4 Cav 1 Div, APO 96345, 9 February 1968  
COTTELL, Glenn D., RA18703394, (SSAN: UNK), SGT E-5, USA  
C Trp 1 Sqdn 4 Cav 1 Div, APO 96345, 9 February 1968  
SHERIDAN, John P., RA16837208, (SSAN: UNK), SP4 E-4, USA  
A Btry 2 Bn 33 Arty 1 Div, APO 96345, 9 February 1968  
RAVEN, William D., RA16957851, (SSAN: UNK), SP4 E-4, USA  
HHC 588 Engr Bn 79 Gp, APO 96216, 10 February 1968  
PRISTASH, David L., 05331798, (SSAN: UNK), 1LT, USA  
Co A 5 Spec Forces Gp 1st Special Forces, APO 96240, 9 December 1967  
TILLMAN, Bruce J., RA18851526, (SSAN: UNK), PFC E-3, USA  
HHC 3 Bde 9 Div, APO 96373, 10 February 1968  
TEANAW, Roy L., US56703919, (SSAN: UNK), PFC E-3, USA  
Co A 5 Bn 60 Inf 9 Div, APO 96225, 10 February 1968  
WALKER, John W., US56704261, (SSAN: 546-58-7866), SP4 E-4, USA  
Co D 3 Bn 22 Inf 25 Div, APO 96225, 11 February 1968  
POE, Carroll D., US54493302, (SSAN: UNK), PFC E-3, USA  
Co B 3 Bn 7 Inf 199 Bde, APO 96279, 11 February 1968  
FRAHM, Richard E., US56823981, (SSAN: UNK), PFC E-3, USA  
Co A 4 Bn 39 Inf 9 Div, APO 96371, 11 February 1968







DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY  
COMPANY A  
5TH SPECIAL FORCES GROUP (AIRBORNE), 1ST SPECIAL FORCES  
APO San Francisco 96227

AVGB-SFA

9 December 1968

SUBJECT: Inquiry on Destroyed Records

CPT David J. Pristash  
HQ, Fort Campbell  
Ft Campbell, Kentucky 42223

1. The attached USARV Form 131, pertaining to your Air Medal Award, is being sent to you for signature. This must be accomplished before the award can be processed.
2. In reference to your letter you stated that in May you had written to the "C" and "A" Detachments on several occasions and that none of these letters were answered. I request to know who specifically did you address that correspondence too. This matter is being asked to determine why these letters were not answered.
3. In reference to your letter concerning the former members of your detachment who are deserving of awards and decorations, you were Det XO, and as such can verify the past awards statements and resubmit recommendations. The eyewitness statement is not necessary if you were also an eyewitness.
4. If I can be of further assistance to you, do not hesitate to write.

FOR THE COMMANDER:

  
CORBETT THORNTON  
1LT, INF  
Asst Adj.







DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY  
COMPANY A  
5TH SPECIAL FORCES GROUP (AIRBORNE), 1ST SPECIAL FORCES  
APO San Francisco 96227

AVGB-SFA


26 February 1969

SUBJECT: Inquiry on Awards

CPT David J. Pristash  
Headquarters, Ft Campbell  
Fort Campbell, Kentucky 42223

1. This is to answer your letter dated 20 January 1969. I apologize for taking so long to answer your letter. I hope I can answer some of your questions. However if I have left something unanswered please write and I'll try to get it answered for you.
2. In reference to SSG Millner's award of the Silver Star. As you know, he was awarded this medal posthumously for his action during the period of 26 to 29 November 1967. As to the status of his first award of the Silver Star, I can only say that we have no record of it at this headquarters of ever being submitted. This award can be submitted and awarded to SSG Millner if there was an eyewitness statement.
3. CPT Fino was not KIA. However, he was medevaced to the United States about six (6) months ago from a wound received when he picked up a supposedly dud fuse from an M-79 round. It went off in his hand taking a few fingers with it. His present address is: 120-A Arrowhead Rd, Ft Benning, Ga 31905.
4. Out of the list you attached to your letter, the only person submitted for an award was SP4 Fass. He was awarded the BSM"V" for action on 20 Nov 67.
5. Concerning the status of your awards, I'm sorry to say it was never submitted to us. Sir, I was not here when all this action took place. What I've heard about CPT Hasko and his submitting awards on other people was not too good. It has been said he was always thinking of himself and not of other people involved. I don't know if there is any truth in this or not, for I never knew the man personally.
6. I hope I have clarified some of your questions. If not, please write.

FOR THE COMMANDER:



CORBETT THORNTON  
1LT, INF  
Asst Adj.







DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY  
COMPANY A  
5TH SPECIAL FORCES GROUP (AIRBORNE), 1ST SPECIAL FORCES  
APO San Francisco 96227

AVGB-SFA

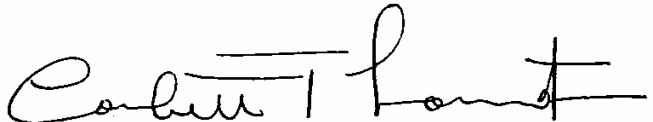
10 May 1969

SUBJECT: Inquiry on Awards

Commanding General  
Headquarters Fort Campbell  
ATTN: ASCGB, CPT David J. Bristash  
Fort Campbell, Kentucky 42223

1. This is to answer your letter dated 16 April 1969, concerning your inquiry of awards pertaining to LT Berry, SP4 Posey, MSG White and PFC Fitzgerald.
2. The recommendations for awards pertaining to MSG White, SP4 Posey and PFC Fitzgerald were completed in final form and forwarded to Group Headquarters for approval.
3. The recommendation for a SS for LT Berry was not forwarded to Gp Hqs. Attached as inclosure 1 is LT Berry's award for this same action. Although the award is for an ARCOM"V" rather than a SS, we cannot revoke these orders and put him in for the SS. The ARCOM"V" will have to stand as is for this action. This award was submitted as a BSM"V", but was downgraded to an ARCOM"V".
4. Concerning your request to initiate action for a Valorous Unit Citation, the only available information that could possibly be used is that information contained within the MOPSUMs for the subject period of time. This Hqs does not maintain MOPSUMs on file. Hqs, 5th SFGA keeps the MOPSUM on file for only one year. The MOPSUMs are then retured at a Records Holding Det in the States. The regulation states that this process must be initiated immediately after the action as a reasonable period of time. I hope I have been helpful to you in this letter and the past. Any further information you need in this matter, please address to 1LT Caldwell, my replacement. I'm going back to the land of the big PX.

FOR THE COMMANDER:



CORBETT THORNTON  
1LT, INF  
Asst Adj.







DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY  
HQ, 5TH SPECIAL FORCES GROUP (AIRBORNE), 1ST SPECIAL FORCES  
APO San Francisco 96240

GENERAL ORDERS  
NUMBER 446

8 APRIL 1968

AWARD OF THE ARMY COMMENDATION MEDAL FOR HEROISM

1. TC 320. The following AWARD is announced.

BERRY, WOODSON L 05333860 (SSAN 448-42-2679) FIRST LIEUTENANT, INFANTRY,  
UNITED STATES ARMY, Detachment A-341, Company A, APO 96227, 5th Special Forces  
Group (Airborne), 1st Special Forces, APO 96240

Awarded: Army Commendation Medal with "V" Device

Date action: 28 November 1967

Theater: Republic of Vietnam

Reason: For heroism in connection with military operations against a hostile force in the Republic of Vietnam: Lieutenant Berry distinguished himself by valorous actions on 28 November 1967 while serving as executive officer of Detachment A-341 on a camp defense mission. During an extremely heavy rocket and mortar attack against Camp Bu Dop, Lieutenant Berry was called upon to direct supporting fires. In so doing he exposed himself to heavy mortar and automatic weapons fire. Time and again he could be seen running from one position to another in order to gain a better view of the situation. During a period in the attack the camp's main ammunition bunker took a direct hit from an enemy mortar round. Even though there were secondary explosions and the area surrounding the bunker was still burning, Lieutenant Berry located a 2½ ton truck loaded with ammunition parked next to the exploding bunker and drove it away from the danger area. Through this heroic action another large explosion was avoided and the lives of many of the Civilian Irregular Defense Group Soldiers, who had taken up position around the truck, were saved. Throughout the attack on Camp Bu Dop Lieutenant Berry was available to assist and direct Civilian Irregular Defense Group soldiers in accurate defense of the camp. Lieutenant Berry's personal bravery and devotion to duty were in keeping with the highest traditions of the military service and reflect great credit upon himself, the 5th Special Forces Group and the United States Army.

Authority: By direction of the Secretary of the Army under the provisions of Army Regulation AR 672-5-1 and DA Message 848132 dated 19 January 1968.







DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY  
HQ, 5TH SPECIAL FORCES GROUP (AIRBORNE), 1ST SPECIAL FORCES  
APO San Francisco 96240

GENERAL ORDERS  
NUMBER 639

14 May 1969

AWARD OF THE BRONZE STAR MEDAL FOR HEROISM

1. TC 320. The following AWARD is announced.

FITZGERALD, ROBERT S. RA14918177 (SSAN 261-16-1374) SPECIALIST FOUR,  
UNITED STATES ARMY, Company A, APO 96227, 5th Special Forces Group  
(Airborne), 1st Special Forces, APO 96240

Awarded: Bronze Star Medal with "V" Device

Date action: 28 November 1967

Theater: Republic of Vietnam

Reason: For heroism in connection with ground operations against a hostile force in the Republic of Vietnam: Specialist Four Fitzgerald, distinguished himself by valorous actions on 28 November 1967, during an attack on camp Bu Dop, Detachment A-341, by an estimated VC/NVA regiment. The attack was begun with mortar and rocket barrages on the camp, and ignited the trucks of ammunition, ammunition storage areas and unloaded ammunition. Specialist Fitzgerald, the team's radio operator, was in Bien Hoa recovering from pneumonia when the VC/NVA attacked Bu Dop. He immediately contacted the A Company's Operations Officer and requested he be flown back to Bu Dop. The Operations Officer not knowing that Specialist Fitzgerald had pneumonia, arranged for him to be on the first medevac helicopter going to Bu Dop. When Specialist Fitzgerald arrived at Bu Dop, the fighting was still intense and within a matter of minutes after his arrival, the communication bunker was hit by rocket fire and destroyed. Specialist Fitzgerald, with great risk to his life from the flames and explosions, went into the burning bunker and salvaged radio equipment, antennas, and batteries to build up a new communication system in a nearby burned out machinegun bunker. Specialist Fitzgerald was able to assemble part of a 292 antenna to a PRC-25 radio while under intense fire. Specialist Fitzgerald's efforts were rewarded when, after numerous tries, he succeeded in contacting the higher headquarters (Det B-34). Without this communication the camp would have been lost. Specialist Fitzgerald's valorous actions and devotion to duty were in keeping with the highest traditions of the military service and reflect great credit upon himself, Special Forces, and the United States Army.

Authority: By direction of the President under the provisions of Executive Order 11046, 24 August 1962







INFO COPY

INFO COPY

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY  
HQ 5TH SPECIAL FORCES GROUP (AIRBORNE), 1ST SPECIAL FORCES  
APO San Francisco 96240

GENERAL ORDERS  
NUMBER 638

14 May 1969

AWARD OF THE BRONZE STAR MEDAL FOR HEROISM

1. TC 320. The following AWARD is announced.

WHITE, JAMES O. RA7081206 (SSAN NVAL) MASTER SERGEANT, UNITED STATES ARMY, Company A, APO 96227, 5th Special Forces Group (Airborne), 1st Special Forces, APO 96240

Awarded: Bronze Star Medal with "V" Device

Date action: 28 November 1967

Theater: Republic of Vietnam

Reason: For heroism in connection with ground operations against a hostile force in the Republic of Vietnam: Master Sergeant White distinguished himself by valorous actions on 28 November 1967, during an attack on Camp Bu Dop, Detachment A-341, by an estimated VC/NVA regiment. The attack began with a mortar/rocket barrage on the camp, and ignited the trucks of ammunition, ammunition storage areas and unloaded ammunition. As the first incoming rounds struck the camp, Sergeant White, the team sergeant, immediately left his office and while clearing the building, a series of 4 or 5 mortar rounds struck the office practically leveling the building. Sergeant White was struck by several pieces of shrapnel knocking him to the ground. Although bleeding from several wounds, he refused any aid and continued on to his alert position in the mortar pit. During the ground assaults on the camp Sergeant White kept the camp fields of fire open by accurate illumination from his mortar. This accurate fire was instrumental in the repulsion of the VC/NVA attacks. While Sergeant White was keeping the battlefield illuminated, the VC/NVA continued their mortar fire; many of these rounds landed near Sergeant White's position wounding him several times. Although severely wounded by an 82mm mortar round, Sergeant White was able to aid in the caring of the other wounded members of the team that were at the same position with him. Sergeant White's valorous actions and devotion to duty were in keeping with the highest traditions of the military service and reflect great credit upon himself, Special Forces and the United States Army.

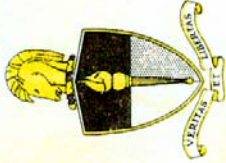
Authority: By direction of the President under the provisions of Executive Order 1046, 24 August 1962.







United States Army  
Special Warfare School



TO ALL WHO SHALL SEE THESE PRESENTS GREETING

BE IT KNOWN THAT Second Lieutenant David J. Pristash, 05331798, Infantry \_\_\_\_\_ IS A

Graduate

OF THE

Special Forces Officer Course (Modified)

United States Army Special Warfare School

IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF, AND BY AUTHORITY VESTED IN US, WE DO CONFER UPON HIM THIS

*diploma*

GIVEN AT FORT BRAGG, NORTH CAROLINA, THIS 17th DAY OF December, 1966

*Carlyle P. ...*  
ASSISTANT COMMANDANT

*H. ...*  
COMMANDANT

SECRETARY







VIỆT = NAM CỘNG = HOA

BỘ QUỐC - PHÒNG

BỘ TỔNG THAM - MƯU

# BẢNG NHẢY - DÙ LỰC LƯỢNG ĐẶC-BIỆT

Số; 11.918 /LLĐB/P3IQH

CẤP CHODAVI D J. PRISTASH CẤP-BẬC I LT SỐ QUÂN 05331789

THUỘC **USSF**

BẢNG NHẢY DÙ LỰC - LƯỢNG ĐẶC - BIỆT

VIỆT - NAM

KBC. 3420 Ngày

09/04/1968

*chiều hướng đơn vào Quãng*

TƯ - LỆNH LỰC - LƯỢNG ĐẶC - BIỆT









# THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

TO ALL WHO SHALL SEE THESE PRESENTS, GREETING:

THIS IS TO CERTIFY THAT  
THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA  
HAS AWARDED THE

## PURPLE HEART

ESTABLISHED BY GENERAL GEORGE WASHINGTON  
AT NEWBURGH, NEW YORK, AUGUST 7, 1782  
TO

FIRST LIEUTENANT, DAVID J. PRISTASH, 05331798, UNITED STATES ARMY

FOR WOUNDS RECEIVED  
IN ACTION

ON 9 DECEMBER 1967 IN THE REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM

GIVEN UNDER MY HAND IN THE CITY OF WASHINGTON  
THIS FOURTEENTH DAY OF FEBRUARY 1968



*Robert C. Leaver*  
ROBERT C. LEAVER  
LTC, MC  
Commanding

*Stanley R. Rarr*  
SECRETARY OF THE ARMY

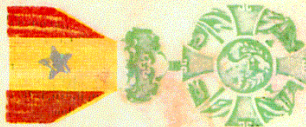






VIỆT-NAM CỘNG-HOÀ

Anh-Hùng



Bội-Đinh

*Nguyên-Dương Công-Trang*

trước SU - ĐOÀN

- PRISTASH, DAVID J. - LLt. - 05331718 - USSF/C3 (HTH k/t ngày 19.6.1968)  
Sĩ-Quan Cơ-Vận can-đảm.

Đặc biệt trong cuộc Việt-Cộng, pháo, kích cấn cũ Bù-Đốp đêm 19 rạng  
20.11.1967, Sĩ-Quan đương sự đã sát cánh với cán bộ Lực-Lượng Đặc-Biệt/  
Việt-Nam diều khiển súng cối phản pháo một cách mau lẹ và chính xác, chặn  
đứng các họng súng của địch, bảo vệ cán cừ được an-toàn.

Kiểm-nhận dưới số :

Thiếu-Tá PHẠM-SINH-TRƯỜNG  
Trưởng Phòng TQT

(1/005)

Tuyên-dương công-trạng này có kèm  
« Anh-Dũng Bội-Tinh » với

NGÔI SAO BẠC

số 82/LLDB/CL

Công-Lệnh

ngày 27.6.1968

KBC. 3.420 Ngày 27 tháng 06 năm 1968

Thiếu-Tướng ĐOÀN-VĂN-QUANG  
Tu-Lệnh Lực-Lượng Đặc-Biệt

ẤN

1.66.TTALAP. O. 1002









# THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

TO ALL WHO SHALL SEE THESE PRESENTS, GREETING:

THIS IS TO CERTIFY THAT  
THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA  
AUTHORIZED BY EXECUTIVE ORDER, MAY 11, 1942  
HAS AWARDED

## THE AIR MEDAL

TO

FIRST LIEUTENANT DAVID J. PRISTASH, 05331798, INFANTRY  
UNITED STATES ARMY

FOR

MERITORIOUS ACHIEVEMENT  
WHILE PARTICIPATING IN AERIAL FLIGHT

IN THE REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM DURING THE PERIOD 23 SEP 67 TO 6 DEC 67

GIVEN UNDER MY HAND IN THE CITY OF WASHINGTON

THIS 14TH DAY OF FEBRUARY 1969



*Harold R. Aaron*

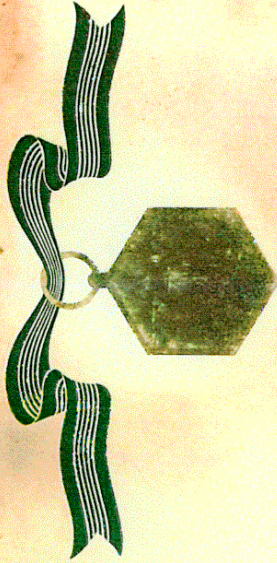
HAROLD R. AARON  
Colonel, Infantry  
Commanding

*Stanley R. Reer*  
SECRETARY OF THE ARMY









# DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY

THIS IS TO CERTIFY THAT  
THE SECRETARY OF THE ARMY HAS AWARDED  
THE ARMY COMMENDATION MEDAL

TO

CAPTAIN DAVID J. PRISTASH 296-34-7963 INFANTRY UNITED STATES ARMY

FOR

MERITORIOUS SERVICE FROM MAY 1968 THROUGH SEPTEMBER 1969

AWARDED AT FORT CAMPBELL, KENTUCKY

GIVEN UNDER MY HAND IN THE CITY OF WASHINGTON  
THIS DAY OF 19



*John S. Lekson*  
JOHN S. LEKSON  
Brigadier General, USA  
Commanding

*Stanley R. Roer*  
SECRETARY OF THE ARMY



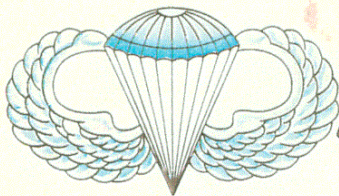






Be it known that  
DAVID J. PRISTASH  
has successfully completed the  
**Airborne Course**  
at this institution and that in testimony  
thereof he is awarded this  
Diploma

Given at Fort Benning, Georgia, on this the  
7TH day of OCTOBER, nineteen hundred and SIXTY SIX



*Robt. N. York*

Major General, U.S. Army  
Commandant



*Wilecio J. Winterclaus*

Colonel of Infantry  
Secretary

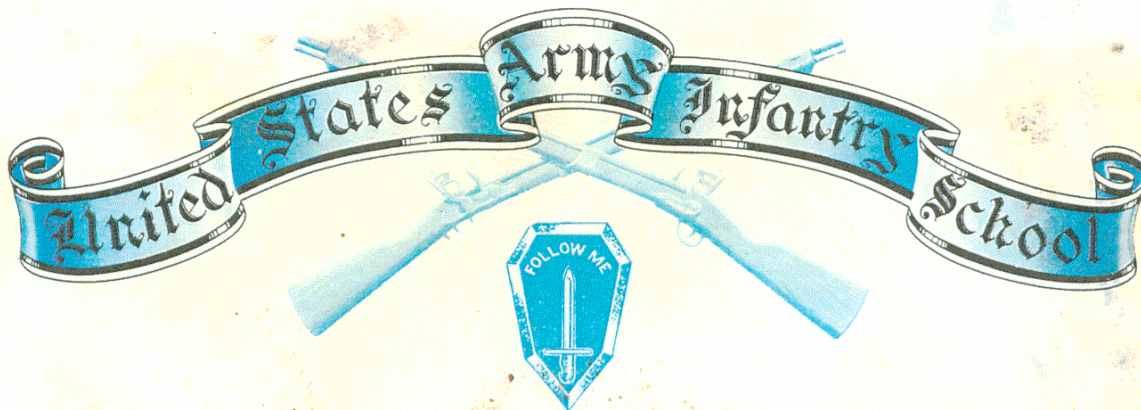
*Ellis W. Williamson*

Brigadier General, U.S. Army  
Assistant Commandant









Be it known that  
Second Lieutenant David J. Pristash  
has successfully completed the  
Infantry Officer Candidate Course  
at this institution and that in testimony  
thereof he is awarded this

## Diploma

Given at Fort Benning, Georgia, on this the  
14th day of September, nineteen hundred and sixty-six

*Robt. H. York*

Major General, U.S. Army  
Commandant

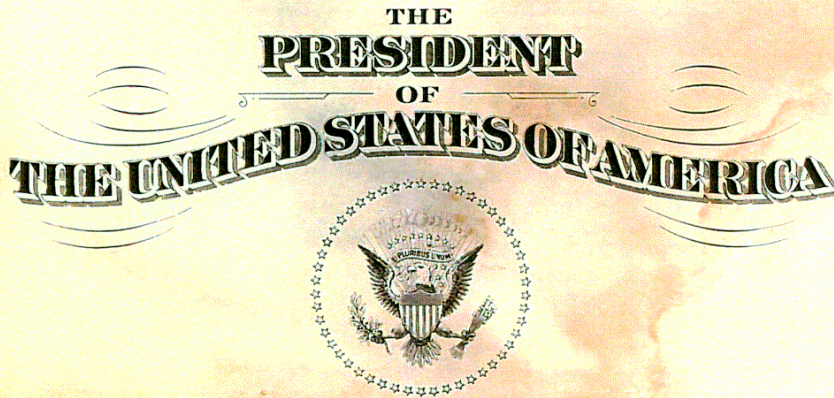
*Melicio J. Monteclaus*  
Colonel of Infantry  
Secretary

*Elvis W. Williamson*  
Brigadier General, U.S. Army  
Assistant Commandant









To all who shall see these presents, greeting:  
Know Ye, that reposing special trust and confidence in the patriotism, valor, fidelity  
and abilities of **DAVID JOHN PRISTASH**, I do  
appoint him a Reserve Commissioned Officer in the

## Army of the United States

to date as such from the **fourteenth** day of **September**, **nineteen**  
**hundred and sixty-six**. This Officer will therefore carefully and diligently  
discharge the duties of the office to which appointed by doing and performing all  
manner of things thereunto belonging.

And I do strictly charge and require these Officers and other personnel of lesser  
rank to render such obedience as is due an officer of this grade and position. And  
this Officer is to observe and follow such orders and directions, from time to time, as  
may be given by me, or the future President of the United States of America, or other  
Superior Officers acting in accordance with the laws of the United States of America.

This commission is to continue in force during the pleasure of the President of  
the United States of America, for the time being, under the provisions of these Public  
Laws relating to Officers of the Armed Forces of the United States of America  
and the component thereof in which this appointment is made.

Done at the City of Washington, this **fourteenth** day of **September**,  
in the year of our Lord one thousand nine hundred and **sixty-six**, and of the  
Independence of the United States of America the one hundred and **ninety-one**.

By the President:

*Kenneth G. Nickham*  
Major General  
The Adjutant General.



*Stanley R. Reor*  
Secretary of the Army







## **Appendix D, Directive on Briefings**







UNCLASSIFIED

ROUTINE  
ROUTINE

CO, 5TH SFGA, NHA TRANG

CO, CO A, 5TH SFGA, HIEN HOA  
CO, CO B, 5TH SFGA, PLEIKU  
CO, CO C, 5TH SFGA, DANANG  
CO, CO D, 5TH SFGA, CAN THO  
CO, DET B-50, 5TH SFGA, NHA TRANG (COURIER)  
CO, DET B-51, 5TH SFGA, DONG BA THIN  
CO, DET B-52, 5TH SFGA, NHA TRANG, (COURIER)  
CO, DET B-55, 5TH SFGA, SAIGON

UNCLAS/AVGB-C

SUBJECT: VIP Briefings

1. Recently several VIP's have visited "A" detachment camps for the purpose of receiving informative operational and intelligence briefings. In the majority of cases, the results of such briefings have been very beneficial in terms of presenting a clear straightforward picture of the facts.

2. Attention is directed to the "A Detachment Handbook" pages 24 & 25 which prescribes how visitors are to be met and the desired content of the briefing. Material to be presented will be assembled prior to the briefing and placed on 3x5 inch cards.

3. Since in some cases it may be the second or third visit by the VIP to the selected camp, the introduction of the briefing should indicate subject areas to be covered and ask the visitor if there are any portions the visitor desires omitted or expanded.

By employing this technique, valuable time will often be saved by addressing the main points of interest of the VIP.

October 1967

1

2

3153

HAROLD E. JOHNSON, MAJ, INF, OPNS OFF

UNCLASSIFIED







UNCLASSIFIED

4. Additionally all detachments will prepare as a part of their briefing a short narrative history of their camp to include information such as, origin, displacements, past accomplishments and/or past enemy activity.

5. Dissemination of the contents of this message to the lowest level is desired.

MFR: BACKGROUND: It was pointed out by DCO that recently briefings at the "A" sites leave something to be desired.

ACTION TAKEN: Search of files to find former guidance on subject which had been passed to field detachments. The "A" Detachment Handbook lists specifically how visitors will be handled and briefed.

FUTURE ACTION: Continue staff supervision.

COORDINATION: DCO, S3.

HARDLD E. JOHNSON  
Major, Infantry  
Operations Officer







## **Appendix E, After Action Reports A-341**







DETACHMENT A-341  
5TH SPECIAL FORCES GROUP (AIRBORNE), 1ST SPECIAL FORCES  
APO US Forces 96227

18 Sep 1967

SUBJECT: After Action Report Opn Bu 3/9

TO: Commanding Officer  
Company A, 5th SFGA  
APO US Forces 96227  
ATTN: S-3

1. Size and Composition of patrol:

140 men (1 CIDG Co., 1 LLDB, + 2 USSF)

2. Mission:

Gather intelligence and locate enemy in North and Western portion of TAOR.

3. Time of departure/time of return:

Departure - 110900 Sept 67  
Return - 140600 Sept 67

4. Conduct of patrol:

a. Patrol route - See Annex "A"

b. Terrain - Flat with sparse hardwood trees on the North side of the river, with very little under brush. Moderate bamboo along North bank of river. Large deposits of rock in the ground. Thick underbrush around the lake for about 20 meters. Elephant grass in the lake is about 4 ft. high, and the water about 4 ft. in depth. One truck type trail going North + South and one well used trail going North + South. Many trails going East and West. South of the river the terrain is relatively flat with some gentle hills. Vegetation is thick with both secondary and primary growth, with a lot of underbrush. Further South swamps increase with thick Bamboo and elephant grass. Rock deposits are very sparse to none moving South. Some trails in the area.







SUBJECT: After Action Report Opn Bu 3/9 (Con't)

18 Sep 1967

c. Obstacles:

River on Cambodian - VN. Border.

d. Mine and/or booby traps - none noted

e. Action upon encounter with enemy force:

Initial contact was made by the LLDE (Lt. Dung) as the patrol crossed a trail he turned to the right and yelled at a man he saw on the trail 30 meters away, and then fired on the man. The man dropped to the ground. Lt Dung then put the patrol on line and sent some man forward, at that time the man jumped up and started to run in a Northerly. Direction, at which time SSG. Sammon's fired two quick rounds. The man dropped again and SP/4 Lawson went toward his position the man jumped up and SP/4 Lawson fired three rounds, the man flinched but continued to run off the trail and disappeared. A sweep of the area was made for about 100 meters from where the man was last seen nothing was found except a bag with clothes in it the patrol then proceeded South.

5. Enemy information:

a. Location: XU 970369

b. Strength: One man

c. Composition: Unk

d. Activity: Walking on a trail

e. Equipment: 3 sets of khaki uniforms, 1 green shirt, 1 green pullover shirt, 1 grey/green pants, 1 black shorts, 1 poncho plastic, 1 mosquito bar. (white civilian), and one light green plastic bag.

f. Uniform: Blue shirt, khaki pants, tennis shoes and a camouflage hat.

6. Results of inccunter with enemy:

a. Friendly losses:

1. KIA - 0

2. WIA - 0

3. CIA - 0

4. Equipment - 0







18 Sep 1967

b. Enemy losses:

1. KIA - 0
2. WIA - 1 possible
3. CIA - 0
4. Equipment - 3 sets of khaki uniforms, 1 green shirt, 1 green pullover shirt, 1 grey/green pants, 1 black shorts, 1 poncho (plastic), 1 mosquito bar (white civilian), 13½ ft. of 110V wire (civilian) 1 plastic (light green) bag.

7. Significant activities:

- a. Propaganda activities: None noted
- b. Hamlets encountered: None noted
- c. Change of tactic: None noted
- d. Suspected infiltration routes: See annex "A"
- e. Miscellaneous: All trail and the road are well used.

8. Was mission accomplished: Yes

9. Conclusions and recommendations:

-Conclusions:

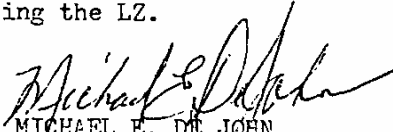
North of the river the enemy is continually moving sizable amounts of equipments and personnel. The roads and trails have all weather capability.

-Recommendations:

Recommend increased use of reconnaissance aircraft flying parallel to the border. Also recommend higher HQ's consider sending special recon. Units into the area

Lesson learned:

When conducting airmobile operations in the vicinity of an international border, thorough reconnaissance must be made to pinpoint the LZ. and nearby targets. The need for positively identifying the LZ. must be filled, even at the risk of possibly compromising the LZ.

  
MICHAEL E. DE JOHN  
Captain, Infantry  
Commanding







DETACHMENT A-341  
5TH SPECIAL FORCES GROUP (AIRBORNE), 1ST SPECIAL FORCES  
APO US Forces 96227

25 Sept 1967

SUBJECT: After Action Report - Bu 7/9

TO: Commanding Officer  
Detachment B-34  
5th Special Forces Group (Abn)  
ATTN: S-3  
APO US Forces 96227

1. Size and Composition of Patrol: 90 men, (1-CIDG Co, 1-LLDB, and 2 USSF).
2. Mission of Patrol:  
Collection of intelligence and search and destroy.
3. Time of departure/Time of return  
Departure - 210530  
Return - 231000
4. Conduct of Patrol:
  - a. Patrol route - See annex "A"
  - b. Terrain - Primary growth with bamboo and secondary growth from medium to heavy density. Several trails throughout the area. Savanna areas with water from 3 to 8 inches, and elephant grass from 1 foot to six feet. One small creek with 6 foot banks about 12 feet wide. Some rolling hills and some small lakes scattered throughout the northeastern portion of patrol route.
  - c. Obstacles - Creek on Cambodian/VN border, 20 feet wide; 7 feet in depth, w/banks 6 ft high.
  - d. Mines or booby traps: 1 hand grenade booby trap found at YU 032331. Trip type w/US. M-26 grenade. See annex b for diagram of booby trap.
  - e. Action upon encounter with enemy forces:

The patrol was moving east when the forward elements spotted two NVA soldiers on a hill north of the patrol. The patrol immediately formed an assault line and moved to the top of the hill. On top of the hill there enough trenches and bunkers to accomodate at least a rifle squad. Several items of equipment were captured which were left by the NVA troops. While the captured equipment was being examined, the point element opened fire on several NVA troops located in a tree line southeast of the patrol position. CAPT. DE JOHN and Sgt DE LONG immediately moved in the direction of the firing to asses the situation. Approximately one plt of CIDG was on line and firing at one squad of NVA in a trench and bunker line. An assault line was formed







SUBJECT: After Action Report - Bu 7/9 (Con't)

and the NVA positions overrun. The NVA troops withdrew southeast and left one dead body behind. The CIDG Co. consolidated their position and reorganized. While the CIDG unit was consolidating the position, the NVA unit counterattacked. The counterattack was repulsed and the NVA troops withdrew again. The CIDG Company then withdrew to the west and called in an airstrike on the bunker line.

5. Enemy information:
  - a. Location: YU 059342
  - b. Strength: Two squads
  - c. Composition: NVA
  - d. Activity: Enemy was engaged in surveillance of LZ and acting as a screening force for a larger enemy force believed to be in Cambodia.
  - e. Equipment: Armed with AK-56's and grenades
  - f. Uniforms: Light brown uniforms, black rubber sandals, and brown leather belts with large brass buckles.
6. Results of encounter with enemy:
  - a. Friendly losses:
    1. KIA - 0
    2. WIA - 1
    3. MIA - 0
    4. Equipment - 0
  - b. Enemy losses:
    1. KIA - 1 (USBC)
    2. WIA - 0
    3. CIA - 0
    4. Equipment - 1 AK-56, 4 magazines with pouch and oiler, 2 hand grenades, 2 grenade carriers, 2 canteens and carrier, 2 brown leather belts, 1 pouncho, 1 hammock, 1 large piece of canvas duck 4' x 6", 1 first aid kit, and one pocket knife.
7. Significant activities:
  - a. Propaganda activities - None noted
  - b. Hamlets encountered - None
  - c. Change in tactics: None noted
  - d. Suspected infiltration routes - None
  - e. Miscellaneous - The bridge on Hwy #14 crossing the VN and Cambodian border found intact and capable of heavy traffic if vines and brush are cleared away. One bridge was found at YU 035333. Made of two logs 18 to 14 inches in DIA, and flattened on top, about 12 inches wide.
8. Was mission accomplished ? Yes
9. Conclusions and recommendations:

Conclusions - There is a large NVA unit across the border in Cambodia.

Recommendations: Recommend increased operations and patrols in that area to maintain contact with that unit and learn its identity lesson learned. When a kill has been made the body should be staked out immediately; there's a good chance the enemy will return to get the body.







SUBJECT: After Action Report (Con't)

Annex A:  
Overlay route of march  
Annex B:  
Diagram booby trap

CLINTON O. HYDE  
CPT, Infantry  
S-3







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- A. NAME OF CAMP: BU DOP Place: XU973290, Bo Duc District Det No. A-341
- B. PROVINCE IN WHICH LOCATED: Phuoc Long.
- C. DATE CAMP WAS OPENED: 1963 October
- D. USASF CAMP COMMANDERS:

CPT JAMES H. JOHNSON JR.	Oct 63	-	
CPT LEN M. HANAWOLD	26 Jul 65	-	Dec 65
LT JACINTO E. OLIVAZ	Dec 65	-	Jan 66
CPT PHILLIP G. STANAGE	Jan 66	-	Jun 66
CPT JOHN R. COX	Jun 66	-	Sep 66
CPT EDWARD W. TYRRELL	Sep 66	-	8 Nov 66
CPT CHESTER GARRETT	9 Nov 66	-	12 May 67
CPT GEORGE F. AIKEN	13 May 67	-	25 Jun 67
CPT MICHAEL F. DEJOHN	26 Jun 67	-	24 Sep 67
1LT JAMES H. CARTER INF	25 Sep 67	-	Present.

E. BACKGROUND.

(1) In October 1963, Bu Dop Special Forces Camp was opened in Bo Duc District, Phuoc Long Province. Originally designated operational detachment A-30, the detachment designation was later changed to A-301 and is now A-341. The detachment was infiltrated into this area to deny Communist forces access to what had previously been a major supply Artery into SVN from Cambodia. Bu Dop was the first camp in Phuoc Long Province to be successfully located along the Cambodian border on a permanent basis. However, the cost was high, claiming the life of its first detachment commander Captain James H. Johnson Jr. of Milford, Delaware.

(2) The original mission of SF operational Detachment A-341 was to conduct border surveillance, Advise their LLDB counterparts on the conduct of search & destroy combat operations in their Tactical Area of Operations and SubSector Advisory. The mission of Operational Detachment A-341 has remained the same throughout the camp's history.

(3) Enemy contacts, camp operations and activities.

(a). In 1965, because of a lack of USASF/LLDB personnel, the detachment manning the camp at Bu Gia Map was relieved to form a new camp. Half of Det A-341 assumed responsibility for camp Bu Gia Map following this on 20 July 1965, Bu Dop was attacked by Q763 now called the 273d Regt. This attack began with a

HISTORICAL DOCUMENT - Place in PERMANENT FILE

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Nr's 2-01, 2-04, 2-05, 2-06, 2-07, 2-08, 2-09, or 2-10







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mortar barrage at 200050 and lasted until 200630. The VC were successful in breaching the NW & SW corners of the camp. From 0200 until 0630 the battle was fought at close range within the compound. The gates were opened from the inside, and the after action report states that many of the camp's occupants were shot in the back. The VC withdrew through the rubber plantation east of the camp along trails marked by WD-1 communication wire. The wire led them to their assembly areas where they had positioned trucks, which were taken from the manager of the rubber plantation. These vehicles were used to facilitate moving the dead and wounded back up highway 14 A to Cambodia and east to the Dak Huyt River. The result of the attack was 2 USASF KIA, 4 USASF WIA, 2 LLDB WIA, 2 LLDB MIA, 47 CIDG KIA, 26 CIDG WIA, 80 CIDG MIA & 1 Interpreter MIA. Enemy losses were 161 VC KIA.

(b) Bu Dop has had a history of successful contacts & operations. Following is a compilation of the most significant ones.

1. August 1966. Two major road clearing operations were conducted during this month. The first one went to Phuoc Bien Prov on the Loc Ninh road. In conjunction with the District Chief and his company of Regional Force Troops Bu Dop SF Camp, cleared the road to approximately 4 km inside Phuoc Bien Prov, destroyed road blocks & allowed traffic to move freely from Bo Duc to Loc Ninh. On 27 - 28 August all available troops from District, Province and the Bu Dop SF opened the road to the Province Headquarters at Song Be. Included in this operation were 2 heliborne assaults on 27 August by 8 platoons from Bu Dop camp. All elements of the CIDG force had secured their portion of the road by 0800 even though one element made 4 contacts with the VC. Because of this action rice, Artillery, vehicles and ammunition were transported between these two cities without incident or contact.

2. On 7 October 1966 while on a road clearing operation near the NGUYEN TAN Rubber Plantation the CIDG force made contact with one squad VC, which resulted in 1 VC KIA, 2 VC WIA, No friendly casualties.

3. During the month of December 1966, two significant contacts were made with the VC. In the first contact 8 VC KIA & 9 estimated KBA. On 9 Dec 1966 the Reconnaissance platoon made contact with elements of the 52 Regt, 320th NVA Div. This contact killed or wounded over 15 VC. Documents captured substantiated that elements of the 101st Regt, 141st Regt, and 250th Regt of the 320th NVA Div are either operating or are located in Phuoc Long Province.

4. Operation 13/1 during the month of January 1967 contact was made with the 312 NVA Division. This was the best CIDG contact up to this time. The strike force hit elements identified as Q12, Q14, Q17 AKA 165th NVA Regt, 141st NVA Regt & 52nd NVA Regt. 11 Airstrikes were called and 22 sorties were flown while the elements were in contact. There were 56 VC KIA USASF PC and an additional 160 est KBA.

5. On 3 Feb 67 CPT Chester Garrett the USASF Det Cmdr & Lt Hau, the camp Commander took 2 CIDG companies NE of camp where they made contact with the 141st NVA Regt. The ensuing battle left at least 120 Communists dead on the battlefield, but cost the life of Lt Hau who was killed while leading his men in an assault against fortified positions.

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6. During the month of March an operation from Bu Dop made contact with an NVA Co in bunkers and supported by mortars. In this action 20 NVA KIA USASFBC and 6 NVA KIA USASFBC. The following day a Mike Force & elements from Bu Dop conducted a heliborne Operation into the contact area. The results of this operation against an estimated 2 En of NVA were 98 KIA & 17 OKBA.

7. During the period October 1966 to March 1967 there was one contact for every four (4) Company size operations.

(4) In the past Bu Dop worked in conjunction with and has been supported by several conventional units including the 173rd Airborne Brigade (Sep), 25th Infantry Division, and the 1st Infantry Division.

(5) The major conventional Artillery support in Bu Dop's TAOR come from 6th En 27th Artillery, 24th Arty Group 175mm located in Phuoc Binh. A very small portion of the Southwest corner of the TAOR is also covered by the 175mm guns from Quan Loi. Most of camps immediate Artillery support comes from two 105mm Howitzers located at the camp. These howitzers are manned by personnel from the 5th ARVN Division.

(6) Significant contributions and sacrifices have been made by many of the men serving at Bu Dop. A partial list for outstanding awards for valor follows.

N. ME	RANK	AWARD	DATE	ACTION/EVENT
BOONMAN, EDWARD J.	SFC	SS	14 Jan 67	Gallantry Against A NVA Unit
GARRETT, CHESTER	CPT	SS	9 Dec 66	"
SMITH, WILLIAM F. III	SSG	SS	3 Feb 67	Gallantry against hostile force
WILLIAMS, JACK L.	SFC	SS	14 Jan 67	Sustained ATK on NVA position.
WILLIAMS, JACK L.	SFC	1 OLC BSM (V)	28 Nov 66	Gallantry against a hostile force
BERRY, RONALD G.	SGT	BSM (V)	19 Feb 67	"
BLUE, RICHARD E.	SSG	BSM (V)	4 Jan 67	"
" " "	"	BSM (V)	4 Aug 67	"
DEJOHN, MICHAEL F.	CPT	1 OLC BSM (V)	22 Sep 67	"
DELONG, RICHARD J.	SGT	BSM (V)	22 Sep 67	"







SfB

OPERATIONAL DETACHMENT A-341  
5TH SPECIAL FORCES GROUP (AIRBORNE)  
1ST SPECIAL FORCES  
APO US FORCES 96227

16 Oct 67

SUBJECT: Combat Operation After Action Report

THRU: Commanding Officer  
Det B-34, 5th SFGA, 1st SF  
APO US FORCES 96227  
ATTN: S-3

TO: Commanding Officer  
Co.A, 5th SFGA, 1st SF  
APO US FORCES 96227  
ATTN: S-3

1. SIZE & COMPOSITION: 1 CIDG company, 1 Combat Recon platoon, 1 MLDB, 2USSF.
2. MISSION: To search the area bounded by XU 0230, XU 0013, XU 9214, & XU 8523; to destroy & or confiscate any enemy supplies, or documents, & to kill or capture any enemy encountered, in the process.
3. TIME of DEPARTURE: 120430 October 67  
TIME of RETURN: 151930 October 67
4. CONDUCT of PATROL:

A. Patrol Route

The patrol moved from the base camp, by vehicle, to XU 9622. An abandoned VC base camp was discovered at XU 9316, after which the patrol moved to XU 9317, where RON was established.

On 13 October, the patrol moved south, from RON to XU 925160, where a recon of an east to west trail was conducted by the recon element. After the completion of the recon, and following the establishment of a "safety" ambush to insure the security of the patrol's return route, the patrol moved southeast along a trail to XU 930158. Where a second VC base camp was discovered (also abandoned). The patrol then moved south to XU 930150, where contact with the enemy was made.

Following a 35-minute firefight, the patrol moved northwest, when the safety ambush came under fire by an enemy unit of undetermined size, which was employing automatic weapons. Contact was broken almost immediately, & the patrol moved west, to XU 918162, where an air strike was called in on the location of the 1st enemy contact.

The patrol then moved north, to an LZ, located at coord: XU 925180, where a helicopter (call sign: Tomohawk 23) landed with a resupply of carbine & BAR ammunition, & took the intelligence data that had been captured in the 1st contact. The patrol then moved to XU 924180, where RON was established.

(1)



16 Oct 67

SUBJECT: Combat Operation After Action Report

Patrol Route (cont'd)

On 14 Oct, the patrol moved west, from the MON site, to XU 879187, then north to a horseshoe-shaped trail, then west to a trail running from Hiway 14-A, north to the Cambodia-Vietnam border. The Patrol didn't follow the trail all the way to its point of termination, due to imminent darkness, but moved, instead, back down the trail, to its point of origin, then moved east, to XU 890189, where MON was established.

At 0200, on 15 Oct, the patrol moved east, to XU 960220, where an ambush was planned for any VC that might have been following the patrol. However, the enemy anticipated this, & detonated an anti-personnel mine at XU 960220, then fled to the east. The ambush was set up at the planned location, but with negative results. At 1900, the patrol moved east, to the truck pick-up point at XU 961222, where it entrucked and moved to the base camp, where it was officially terminated at 1930 hours.

B. Terrain

The terrain features varied from slightly rolling, with tall trees, to steep with heavy jungle (interspersed with bamboo groves), to scattered marshland.

C. Obstacles

None.

D. Mine & Booby Traps

1 DH/10 Chinese, claymore-type mine.

E. Action Upon Encounter With the Enemy

I At 131130, the patrol attacked an estimated 1 to 2 platoons, who were engaged, in bunker construction. The attack was made with surprise & speed, in vicinity of XU 930150, using an on-line assault, augmented with fire & movement tactics, & employing the maximum fire power at its command. Following the 35-minute fight, the patrol withdrew to the west, while the enemy withdrew to the east. Immediately, artillery was requested, & working with the utmost professional ability, the FAC (call sign: Aloft 12) & the artillery (Song Be) combined their talents to relieve the threat of a possible counter attack by attacking the area with 175mm H E.

II The ambush left at XU 925160, made contact with an enemy of unknown size, which (the enemy) attacked with heavy, albeit automatic weapons fire. The ambush personnel returned the fire with M-79 & automatic weapons fire, causing the enemy to flee to the east.

III The DH/10 mine that was detonated at XU 960220, drew a fusillade of M-79 & automatic weapons fire from the patrol, as they swept through the area on both sides of the road for approximately 1 Kilometer. However, the enemy withdrew to the south, thus eluding the patrol.

(2)







SUBJECT: Combat Operation After Action Report

Action Upon Encounter With the Enemy (cont'd)

5 ENEMY INFORMATION

<u>I</u>	<u>II</u>	<u>III</u>
A. Location: XU 930150	XU 925160	XU 960220
B. Strength: 1-2 platoons	UNK	UNK
C. Composition: Automatic weapons; hand grenades.	Automatic weapons	1 DH/10 mine
D. Activity: Returned fire & with- drew to the east.	Initiated contact; withdrew to the east.	Detonated the mine; withdrew to the sou
E. Equipment: Hand grenades, AK-47's, & 30 cal. carbines.	AK-47's	1 DH/10 mine
F. Enemy Uniforms: Black PJ's with shorts	Black PJ's with shorts	UNK

6. RESULTS of ENEMY ENCOUNTERS:

<u>I</u>	<u>II</u>	<u>III</u>
A. Friendly Losses: 1 USSF WIA	0	0
B. Enemy Losses: 5 KIA, 4 WIA, 0 CIA	NEG	NEG

7. SIGNIFICANT ACTIVITIES:

A. Propaganda Analysis: None  
B. Change In Tactics: None  
C. Hamlets Encountered: None

D. Suspected Infiltration Routes:

A heavily travelled trail, running north to south, beginning at XU 861187, & extending to the Cambodia-Vietnam border.

8. WAS THE MISSION ACCOMPLISHED? Yes

9. LESSONS LEARNED:

A technique that we have used successfully, when coming to a trail junction, is to leave a squad in ambush while we recon the trail. if the enemy is following the operation, the ambush will pick them up, while the recon continues. Also, if an enemy patrol ventures along any of the trails running through the intersection, they are denied

(3)



16 Oct 67

SUBJECT: Combat Operation After Action Report

LESSONS LEARNED: (cont'd)

Information as to the direction of movement of the operation.

This tactic is especially useful if one is going into a restricted, or confined, area & the operation wishes to return along the same route.

JAMES H. CARTER  
1/LT, Infantry  
Commanding







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OPERATIONAL DETACHMENT A-341  
5TH SPECIAL FORCES GROUP (ABN), 1ST SPECIAL FORCES  
APO U.S. FORCES, 96227

29 October 67

SUBJECT: AFTER ACTION REPORT

THRU: COMMANDING OFFICER  
Det B-34, 5th SFGA, 1st SF  
APO US Forces 96227  
ATTN: S-3

TO: COMMANDING OFFICER  
Co A, 5th SFGA, 1st SF  
APO US Forces 96227  
ATTN: S-3

1. SIZE AND COMPOSITION: 1 CIDG company and 1 combat recon platoon, 2 LLDB, 3 USSF.
2. MISSION: To search the area bounded by XU 9830 - 9817 - 9114 - 8522; to destroy and/or confiscate any enemy supplies, or documents, and to kill or capture any enemy encountered in the process, and BDA.
3. TIME OF DEPARTURE: 240830 October 67.  
TIME OF RETURN: 271300 October 67.

4. CONDUCT OF PATROL:

A. PATROL ROUTE

Opn Fish was planned to be a joint operation combining the capabilities of USSF, LLDB, CIDG, ARVN ARTY, AMERICAN ARTY, RF/PF and USAF.

On 240830, 11 HULD helicopters were loaded at Camp Bu Dop to move the first assault group to the primary IZ at XU 877199. 80 men were successfully airlanded and secured the IZ for the second lift of 80 which joined the first without incident. We moved from the IZ to a heavily used trail running North - South and linking the Cambodian border with highway 14 -A. The trail had been reconned previously yielding firm intelligence that a large unit was in the area. Based on this intell a B-52 strike was conducted at 240110. Our mission was to conduct a BDA of the area.

We reached the trail at 240945 and at 241000 we made contact with

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an estimated VC squad moving North along the trail. We captured 1 VC who was severely wounded at XU 872203 and attempted to have him evacuated, but he died enroute to the LZ.

We disposed of the body and returned to the trail after having called in blocking fires along the trail to our South. These fires were furnished by 2/105 mm howitzers which had displaced from Camp Bu Dop and relocated in Bo Duc district to provide the operation with arty support until 2 each 155 mm howitzers could be air lifted from Song Be.

We moved North along the trail for approximately 400 meters. The trail began to turn West; we had to move North to hit the area bombed so we left the trail and proceeded North for about 600 meters before we came across the strike zone in the vicinity of XU 873208. The strike was from East to West so we began to move West checking in and around each crater. There was extensive damage to the jungle but no evidence of any kills. We continued our search West for about 700 meters when we again made contact with a VC squad at XU 868209. We took positions in the craters and called for the 155 support which we placed to their rear. We assaulted their positions and found that they had withdrawn South along the same trail we had left earlier. They left behind 35 pounds of VN cigarettes and dried fish, were dressed in black PJ, and carried AK 47's. Having broken contact at 1300 and placed blocking fires along their anticipated withdrawal route, we continued West to the limit of the B-52 strike which was in vicinity XU 855215. We found nothing and turned North to hit the trail again. We moved approximately 300 meters before hitting the trail and began to move West along the trail again. After moving about 300 meters we made contact with another VC squad dressed in black PJ and carrying AK 47's. We killed one, captured 1 AK 47 and had one CIDG slightly wounded. The third contact was at 1415 hours at XU 858213 and lasted 5 minutes. We were moving North to a position coordinates XU 860220 to get resupplied when we made contact with an estimated company at coordinates XU 860217. This contact was around 1600 hours and lasted approximately 25 minutes. We killed 2 VC and wounded at least two others. We had 2 CIDG seriously wounded and were administering medical aid when a unit hit us from the rear and another from the left flank. We used a FAC to direct us to a clearing but it was under water and we called for an air drop of ammo and an extraction device for the two wounded. We found a small clearing at coordinated XU 864219 and completed the resupply and evacuation at 1900 hours. As it was dark, we moved Southeast for about 300 meters and spent the night on the ground at XU 915205. The next morning we received orders to remain in position, which we did. We picked a RON position for the following night about 500 meters from our last one, and established a relay radio point for China Boy who had landed that morning at XU 866205 and made contact with a large VC unit. During the day they attempted to extract some wounded CIDG but the extraction device hung in a tree and the helicopter crashed killing the XO of B-34, the

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medic who was attached to my camp and my assistant intell sgt. China Boy could not marry up with us because they spent the day getting the bodies away from the crash. It was necessary for my weapons sgt., Sgt Millner, to land on the LZ used to insert China Boy and carry tools to free the bodies from the wreckage. Sgt Millner remained with China Boy that night and helped fight off NVA attacks. On the morning of 26 Oct. 67, the remaining of the helicopter was destroyed by rockets from a gun ship and we received orders to marry up with China Boy and return to base. This was accomplished without incident and the operation was closed at 271300.

B. TERRAIN

The terrain features varied from slightly rolling, with tall trees, to steep with heavy jungle, to scattered marshland.

C. OBSTACLES

Only water.

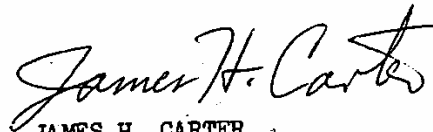
D. MINES AND BOOBY TRAPS

None.

5. Was the mission accomplished? Yes.

6. LESSON LEARNED:

There should be a forest penetration device at every B-Det for A team extraction and resupply.



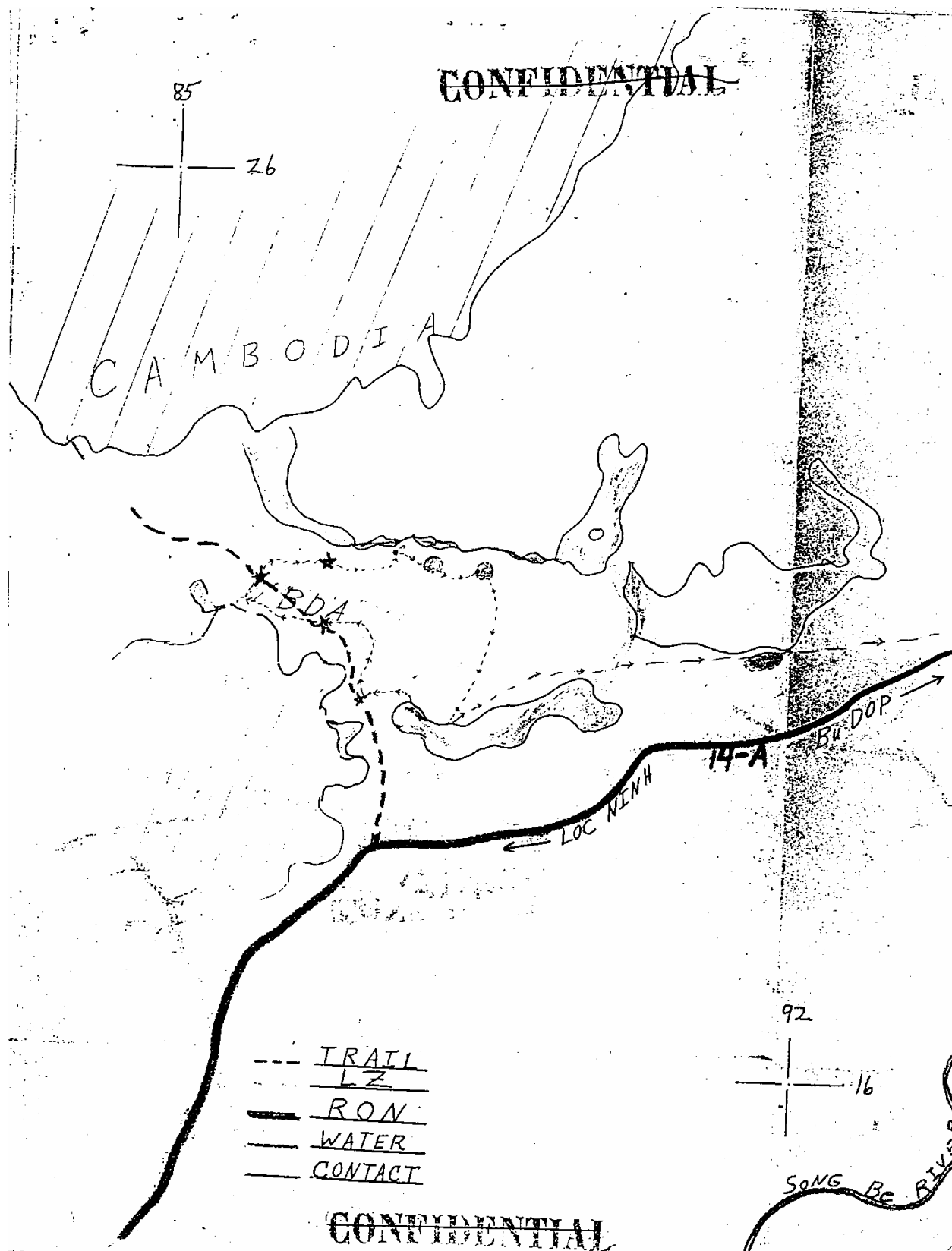
JAMES H. CARTER  
1LT INF  
Commanding

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## **Appendix F, After Action Report B-34**

This is the after action report on Captain Hasko's Patrol. It was written by Captain Gordon R. Lee the B-34 Adjutant.







DETACHMENT B-34  
5th Special Forces Group (Airborne), 1st Special Forces  
APO 96227

9 December 1967

SUBJECT: After Action Report (U).

TO: Commanding Officer  
Company A, 5th SF Gp (Abn), 1st SF  
ATTN: S3  
APO 96227

1. (U) Camp Bu Dop, Detachment A341, Operation Bu 10/11.
2. (C) Task Organization:
  - a. TF Bu - 2 CIDG companies from A341, 4 VNSF, 4 USASF,  
2 US FO's.
  - b. TF Duc/Dong:
    - (1) 1 CIDG Company from A342, Dong Xoai, 2 VNSF, 2 USASF.
    - (2) 1 CIDG Company from A343, Duc Phong, 2 VNSF, 2 USASF.
  - c. Total size:
    - (1) 396 CIDG.
    - (2) 8 VNSF.
    - (3) 8 USASF.
    - (4) 2 US FO's.
  - d. US personnel:
    - (1) GPT Matthew J. Hasko, A341.
    - (2) SFC Nicholas DeFabrizio, A341.
    - (3) SSG Michael Millner, A341.
    - (4) SP4 Robert H. Fass, A341.

PAGE 1 OF 6 PAGES

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NNQ 923697 AFTER 12 YEARS. DOD DIR 5200







- (5) SFC Herman A. McBride, A342.
- (6) SP4 James D. Bennett, A342.
- (7) SFC Charles E. Oakley, A343.
- (8) SP5 Oscar J. DuPlantis, A343.

3. (U) Mission - Conduct search and destroy operation in assigned AO.

4. (C) The operation was successful in searching the AO sufficiently to confirm suspected enemy activity and base camps; however, destruction of enemy base camps and enemy forces was not realized due to poor reaction of friendly troops at enemy encounters.

5. (U) 261020 Nov/292010 Nov.

6. (U) Intelligence:

a. General - Visual reconnaissance and agent reports indicated heavy enemy infiltration activity in area.

b. Specific:

PRU patrol with US advisor in area between 19 and 21 Nov observed the following:

(1) 2 VC platoons moving west on road vicinity of YU055-295.

(2) Heavily traveled trail vicinity of YU088306. Trail was 10 to 15 feet wide running east-west and concealed under bamboo canopy. Trail showed recent use by personnel wearing bata boots and wheel tracks from HMC mount.

7. (C) Conduct of Operation.

a. Route (See overlay at Inclosure 1).

b. Normal complement of weapons, radios and ammunition were carried on operation. No 60mm mortars were carried on operation.

c. Supporting forces available.

(1) Reaction force - 1 CIDG company on standby at Duc Phong.

(2) 2-105mm Howitzers (ARVN) at Bu Dop.

(3) 2-155mm Howitzers (US) at Bu Dop.

(4) 2-175mm Guns (US) at Song Be.

(5) 1-Assault Helicopter Company.

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d. Terrain - Slightly rolling in west ranging to hilly in east of AO. Triple canopy jungle, bamboo and open forest.

e. Weather - Clear and humid.

f. Obstacles - None.

g. Mines or booby traps encountered - None.

8. (C) Action Upon Encounter with Enemy Forces.

a. Operation Bu 10/11 was inserted at 261020 Nov on LZ Blue YU102305. The LZ was cold, and the operation moved northeast to vicinity of YU103308 where contact was made with an estimated reinforced VC platoon. The enemy initiated contact with small arms and automatic weapons fire from a trench system on north and west of friendly column. The friendly force deployed, returned fire and advanced over the northern portion of the trench system killing 2 VC. The enemy withdrew farther west and continued placing a heavy volume of fire on the friendly force. The CIDG company pulled back and called for airstrikes from aircraft which were on station. After the strikes, the friendly elements advanced through the strike zone still receiving sporadic small arms fire. An additional VC KBA was discovered and blood trails indicating several casualties had been sustained.

b. After the initial contact, the ground commander committed a second CIDG company which was on standby at Bu Dop airstrip. The planned action was to insert this reaction force on LZ Blue and then to use it to envelop the enemy force from the south and west. However, the reaction force received small arms and automatic weapons fire from the west side of the LZ as it debarked causing the reaction force to assemble and reorganize on the east side of the LZ. Link up with the initial assault force was effected by this movement and a plan was developed for the 2-company force to envelop the enemy from the north and east. Movement to the northeast was commenced to break contact, but the senior advisor's counterpart never changed direction of movement to effect envelopment. The 2-company force continued northeast on separate parallel axes. The friendly force sustained one additional CIDG WIA before contact was broken.

c. At 261530 Nov, the western column of the 2-company force was ambushed by an estimated VC squad vicinity of YU104327. VC initiated contact with small arms, 1 automatic weapon and hand grenades against the rear of the first platoon in column. Friendly troops in the immediate area deployed, returned fire and assaulted the enemy position killing 2 VC. VC withdrew to the northwest. 1 USASF was wounded slightly with grenade fragments in left elbow. VC were wearing blue uniforms.

d. Operation Bu 10/11 continued movement northeast on 27 Nov with negative further contact. A plan was developed to insert 2 more CIDG companies on 28 Nov to exploit evidence that all enemy forces in contacts on 26 Nov had withdrawn northwest. (See overlay at Inclosure 2)







e. Administrative movement of 1-CIDG company from Duc Phong and 1-CIDG company from Dong Xoai to Bu Dop airstrip was completed during early morning hours of 28 Nov. The two companies from Bu Dop presently in the field were designated TF Bu and the other two elements were designated TF Duc/Dong. TF Duc/Dong was airlanded without incident on LZ Black vicinity YU058319. The friendly force proceeded as planned northeast on two parallel axes after assembly. At 281500 Nov, TF Duc/Dong was ambushed by an estimated VC company vicinity of YU065331. VC initiated contact with small arms and light machine guns. The friendly force deployed and assaulted the ambush forcing the VC to withdraw northwest. 10 VC were killed and 3 Russian LMG's were captured by this initial assault. While TF Duc/Dong was reorganizing, a stronger VC force counterattacked from the north, west and southwest forcing the friendly units to withdraw southeast. Withdrawal was rapid enough to break contact temporarily, but the VC pursued and counterattacked again while the unit was still disorganized. The CIDG troops began to break and run under this second counterattack. The 4 USASF advisors managed to link up attempting to rally the CIDG. The advisors were finally left with only 3 CIDG. This group withdrew farther southeast and was extracted by helicopter. 1 USASF and 1 VNSF were WIA in this action. The captured weapons mentioned above were lost during the counterattack.

f. TF Bu had commenced movement on 28 Nov back to the northwest to participate in a pincer type movement as indicated by the overlay at Inclosure 2. After the forces of TF Duc/Dong were scattered, TF Bu was diverted to a westerly movement to attempt to reassemble the scattered forces. After RON vicinity of YU102322 on night of 28/29 Nov, TF Bu proceeded to vicinity YU069309 where the VNSF commander stopped his troops for chow against the advice of the senior advisor. An estimated VC company attacked TF Bu at this position with small arms, automatic weapons and 82mm mortars at 291210. Attempts were made to consolidate a perimeter, but the CIDG were difficult to control. Approximately 5 minutes after contact was initiated from the northwest, additional fire of the same type began from the east. The CIDG became completely disorganized and began to break and run to the west. Results of this contact were: 2 USASF WIA (SFC DeFabrizio and SP4 Fass), 1 VNSF WIA, 1 USASF MIA (SSG Millner), 8 CIDG WIA and 1 VN Interpreter MIA. USASF called for artillery and airstrikes to break contact and withdrew west bringing up the rear of the CIDG force and carrying wounded. 9 VC were KIA by USBC. The friendly force proceeded southwest to an LZ vicinity of YU051300 where link up was effected with forces from TF Duc/Dong and all wounded were evacuated. 3 USASF who had been extracted after TF Duc/Dong had scattered on 28 Nov were reinserted at this time to assist in controlling the force and getting them back to camp.

g. From the time of link up, neither USASF or VNSF could exert any control over the CIDG. They proceeded rapidly west on Route 307 until they were finally persuaded to leave the road and head toward camp on an azimuth of 260 degrees.

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h. At 291800 Nov, the friendly force spotted a large group of VC moving south on a trail vicinity of YU012304. Friendly force threw smoke to mark location for airstrikes. As soon as the smoke was visible, an estimated company size VC force attacked the friendly force from the south. Due to lack of control, the CIDG force split in two and one element moved north while the other moved south with 3 USASF. SFC McBride was seen moving with the northern force. 4 VC were KIA. The first elements of the force reached Camp Bu Dop at 292010 Nov and continued to straggle in for the next two days. SFC McBride's body was found the next day.

9. (C) Results.

a. Friendly losses:

(1) 1-USASF KIA, 1-USASF MIA, 3-USASF WIA (all evacuated with minor wounds).

(2) 1-VNSF MIA, 1-VNSF WIA.

(3) 9-CIDG KIA, 21-CIDG MIA, 20-CIDG WIA.

(4) Equipment losses:

1 CAR-15.  
30 Carbines  
8 M1's  
6 BAR's  
1 LMG  
3 SMG  
8 PRC-25  
11 HT-1

b. Enemy losses - 25 VC KIA, 1 VC KBA (USBC).

10. (U) CA/PsyOps - None.

11. (U) Intelligence gained from the operation.

a. Base complex at YU114312 consisting of two filtered wells, two kitchen buildings each having three fireplaces and 25 sleeping huts. Entire complex was surrounded by trench system and bunkers.

b. Entire eastern side of LZ at YU002305 is honeycombed with bunkers and trenches.

c. Base complex at YU105316 with 1 kitchen hut with 3 fireplaces and a filtered well. Base area did not appear to have been used in approximately six months.

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DECLASSIFIED PER EXECUTIVE ORDER 12356, SECTION 3.3, NND PROJECT  
NUMBER 923597, BY RB/BW, DATE 3-95

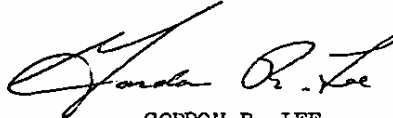






12. (U) Remarks: As stated in paragraph 4, this operation did not gain success due to the poor reaction of indigenous troops. The troops which reacted poorest were from Duc Phong and Dong Xoai. These areas have been without significant enemy activity or contact for the past 12 months. The Bu Dop troops who are accustomed to heavy enemy contacts reacted well until they were joined by the forces from Duc Phong and Dong Xoai. Although lack of enemy activity is no excuse for such poor reactions, it is an indication that training must be intensified during periods of enemy inactivity to insure proper reaction from friendly forces when the enemy is encountered in superior numbers.

FOR THE COMMANDER:



GORDON R. LEE  
Captain, Infantry  
Adjutant

2 Incl:  
as

PAGE 6 OF 6 PAGES

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INCL. 2

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DOD DIR 5200.10

Hand-drawn map showing a flight path with various locations and dates. The path starts at the bottom left, goes up to "LE BLACK", then to "4 USASF EXTRACTED 281800 NOV", then to "RON 28 NOV", then to "LE BLUE", then to "RON 27 NOV", and finally to "RON 26 NOV". A vertical line on the right is labeled "28" and "11".





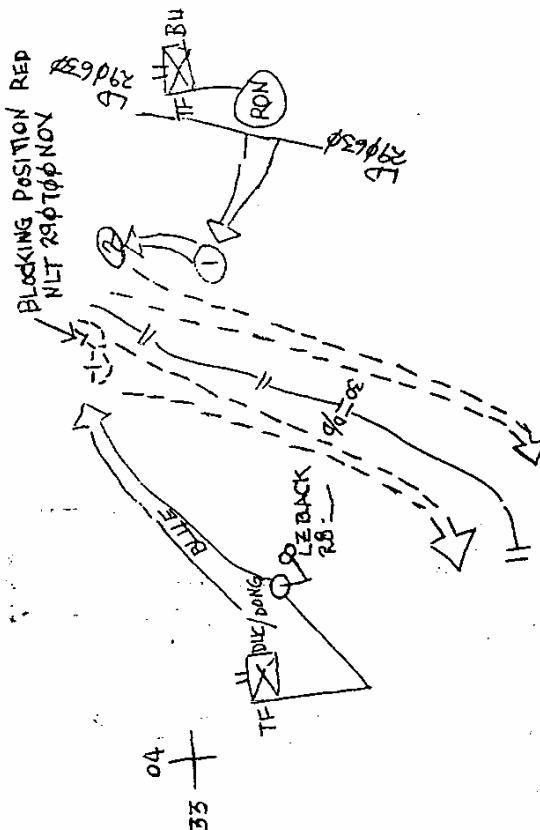


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OPORD 1-68  
Reference: Map VIETNAM 1:50,000, SHEET 6333 II

TASK ORG:  
TF DUC/DONG  
1-CO CIDG (DUC PHONG)  
1-CO CIDG (DONG XOI)  
2-VN SF  
4-USASF

TF BU  
2-CO CIDG (BU DOP)  
2-VN SF  
4-USASF



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DDO DIR 5200.10

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INCL 2







## **Appendix G, 5th Group Weekly Summaries**

Weekly Report dated October 1, 1967

Weekly Report dated October 8, 1967

Weekly Report dated October 15, 1967

Weekly Report dated October 22, 1967

Weekly Report dated October 29, 1967

Weekly Report dated November 5, 1967

Weekly Report dated November 12, 1967

Weekly Report dated November 19, 1967

Weekly Report dated November 26, 1967

Weekly Report dated December 4, 1967

Weekly Report dated December 10, 1967







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HEADQUARTERS  
5TH SPECIAL FORCES GROUP (AIRBORNE), 1ST SPECIAL FORCES  
APO 96240

AVGB-C

1 October 1967

SUBJECT: Weekly Summary 231601Z September to 301600Z September 1967 (U)

TO: Deputy Chief of Staff for Military Operations, ATTN: Special Operations  
Directorate, Department of Army, Washington, D. C.  
Commanding General, US Army Pacific, ATTN: Special Warfare Branch  
APO San Francisco, 96558  
Commanding General, US Military Assistance Command, Vietnam,  
ATTN: MACJ3, APO San Francisco, 96222

1. (C) In I CTZ, CIDG and RF/PF advised by USASF conducted 123 operations, and engaged in 10 contacts during the week. Enemy losses were four killed, seven suspects detained; two weapons and one chicom mine seized. Friendly losses were two CIDG killed and two wounded. On 28 September, a patrol from Tien Phuoc, A-102, Quang Nam Province, destroyed ten huts, detained one VC suspect, and returned seven refugees to GVN control. During the night of 27 September, an operation from Tien Phuoc, A-102, Quang Nam Province, received mortar fire on their position. Two CIDG were killed and one wounded.

2. (C) In II CTZ, CIDG and RF/PF advised by USASF conducted 1,838 operations, and engaged in 21 contacts during the week. Enemy losses were 32 killed, one captured, four suspects detained, and four weapons seized. Friendly losses were one CIDG killed, two USASF and three CIDG wounded. On 25 September, a search and destroy operation from Mang Buk, A-246, Kontum Province, consisting of two USASF, one VNSF, and 120 CIDG made contact with an estimated 200 NVA, 65 kilometers north northeast of Kontum. On the 26th, eight USASF, two VNSF, and 114 CIDG from the Fleiku Mike Force linked up with the Mang Buk operation. The operation continued on the 27th and contact was made with the NVA at a range of 150 meters. Air strikes were called throughout the day. On the 28th a sweep of the area was made and numerous blood trails were found. The NVA had withdrawn to the northwest. The operation continues. On 27 September, a search and destroy operation from Trang Phuoc, A-233, Darlac Province, consisting of two USASF, one VNSF, and one company of CIDG made contact with a company of NVA attempting to cross a rope bridge 40 kilometers north northwest of Ban Me Thout. The NVA were taken under fire at a range of 15 meters. Three NVA were killed instantly. The NVA withdrew with the CIDG in pursuit. A sweep of the area revealed that it had been used as a base camp. Thirteen caves were found along with one SKS carbine, four bags of rice, eight field packs, two grenades, 200 rounds of assorted small arms ammunition, 1235 pounds of TNT and a quantity of medical supplies. The operation withdrew across

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1 October 1967

SUBJECT: Weekly Summary 231601Z September to 301600Z September 1967 (U)

the bridge and set up an ambush. On the morning of 28 September, a platoon of NVA again attempted to cross the bridge. The CIDG opened fire and three NVA were killed. The CIDG crossed the bridge in pursuit and swept the area to reestablish contact. Eight graves were found. The graves contained eight enemy bodies. There were no friendly casualties.

3. (C) In III CTZ, the USASF advised CIDG and RF/PT units conducted 179 operations and engaged in 20 contacts during the period 23-30 September. One VC was captured. In addition, three small arms, various items of equipment, munitions, and a quantity of food was captured; 15 bunkers, four sampans, and seven huts (three of which had built-in bunkers) were destroyed. Friendly losses were one USASF, 11 CIDG wounded, one USASF missing. During this reporting period, the following camps have been mortared; Camp Prek Klok, A-322, Tay Ninh Province, 40 rounds of 60 and 82mm mortar on 23 September, 16 rounds of 60mm mortar on 25 September; Camp Loc Ninh, A-331, Binh Long Province, 20 rounds of 81mm mortar on 23 September; Camp Tong Le Chon, A-334, Tay Ninh Province, three rounds of 82mm mortar on the 23d of September and one rifle grenade on 25 September. There was no damage as a result of the mortar attacks, however one USASF was wounded by the rifle grenade at Camp Tong Le Chon. On 26 September, an Army observer aircraft flying visual recons for Camp Minh Thanh, A-332, Binh Long Province, with one USASF from Minh Thanh on board, was reported missing. A detailed search was conducted of the area with negative results. As of this report, the search for the aircraft and crew of two continues.

4. (C) In IV CTZ, CIDG and RF/PT advised by USASF conducted 2332 operations and engaged in 18 contacts during the past week. Enemy losses were five killed and eight captured. Friendly losses were two CIDG killed and one wounded; one RF/PT killed and four wounded. In addition to the five VC killed (confirmed), there were 35 VC killed (probable). On 18 September at 1700 hours, an operation consisting of one company of CIDG from My Da, A-433, Kien Phong Province, began a search and destroy operation to the northwest of camp. The operation reported contact with VC forces of squad and platoon size. The operation terminated on 22 September. Results were no friendly casualties, 22 VC killed (unconfirmed), two sampans and six hand grenades destroyed.

FOR THE COMMANDER:

D. E. BROCK  
Major, Infantry  
Adjutant

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HEADQUARTERS  
5TH SPECIAL FORCES GROUP (AIRBORNE), 1ST SPECIAL FORCES  
APO San Francisco, 96240

AVGB-C

8 October 1967

SUBJECT: Weekly Summary 301601Z September to 071600Z October 1967 (U)

TO: Deputy Chief of Staff for Military Operations, ATTN: Special Operations  
Directorate, Department of Army, Washington, D.C.  
Commanding General, US Army Pacific, ATTN: Special Warfare Branch  
APO San Francisco, 96558  
Commanding General, US Military Assistance Advisory Command, Vietnam  
ATTN: MACJ3, APO San Francisco, 96222

1. (C) In I CTZ, CIDG and RF/PF advised by USASF conducted 127 operations and engaged in nine contacts during the week. Enemy losses were four killed, seven captured, five suspects detained, and one weapon seized. There were no friendly losses. On 6 October, an operation from Ha Thanh, A-104, Quang Ngai Province, consisting of two USASF, one VNSF, and 80 CIDG made contact with one VC platoon. Results of the encounter were three VC killed and one US carbine captured. There were no friendly casualties.

2. (C) In II CTZ, CIDG and RF/PF advised by USASF conducted 1,996 operations and engaged in 16 contacts during the week. Enemy losses were 10 VC killed, one captured, five suspects detained and two weapons captured. Friendly losses were five CIDG killed, seven CIDG wounded and eight weapons lost. On 6 October a search and destroy operation from Camp Trung Dung, A-502, Khanh Hoa Province, consisting of one Camp Strike Force Company (CSF) made contact with an estimated squad of NVA seven kilometers west of Nha Trang. The CSF engaged the NVA at a range of 60 meters. The NVA broke contact and withdrew south. Results of this contact were two CIDG wounded; enemy casualties unknown. On 4 October a CIDG outpost from Camp Vinh Thanh, A-228, Binh Dinh Province, was attacked by two platoons of NVA, 40 kilometers north northwest of Qui Nhon. The CIDG returned fire when the NVA set off the attack, using hand grenades and automatic weapons. Artillery was fired on the suspected avenues of withdrawal when the NVA broke contact. Results were four NVA killed; four CIDG killed; three civilians wounded; seven carbines, one BAR, one HT-1 radio, one pair of binoculars, and one compass lost. On 5 October, a 59 man pathfinder team made a parachute assault 70 kilometers west southwest of Ban Me Thuot. The pathfinder team secured the area and 30 minutes later a mass jump was made by the Pleiku Mobile Strike Force (MSF) consisting of 296 MSF personnel and their USASF and VNSF advisors. No enemy contact was made. Two companies of Camp Strike Force (CSF) personnel were brought into the area by CH-47 helicopters to start construction on a new Special Forces fighting camp. The new

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DECLASSIFIED AFTER 12 YEARS  
DOD DIR 5200.12

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8 October 1967

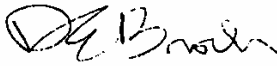
SUBJECT: Weekly Summary 301601Z September to 071600Z October 1967 (U)

camp will be named Camp Bu Prang, A-236. Local civilians from a nearby village were detained for questioning. The civilians stated that they knew nothing of the airborne assault, and that they feel safe knowing that a camp is being constructed in their area.

3. (C) In III CTZ, the USASF advised CIDG and RF/PF units conducted 199 operations and engaged in 12 contacts during the period 30 September - 7 October. Seven VC were killed and two small arms captured. In addition, 15,000 kilograms of rice, and two huts were destroyed; various items of equipment and munitions captured. Friendly losses were three CIDG killed; one USASF, two VNSF, 19 CIDG and three RF/PF wounded. On 4 October a search and destroy operation consisting of two USASF, two VNSF and one Camp Strike Force company from Camp Tra Cu, A-352, Hau Nghia Province, made contact with one platoon of VC, 19 kilometers north of camp. Friendly elements initiated fire at 100 meters. After a five minute firefight, the VC broke contact and withdrew. Results of this contact were four CIDG, one VNSF and one USASF wounded; one VC killed, one US M-1 carbine, four rifle grenades, two Chicom grenades, assorted ammunition, web gear and ammunition magazines captured. On 4 October Camp Tra Cu, A-352, Hau Nghia Province was probed by a company of VC. Mortar and small arms fire was directed against the camp. Ten rounds of 82mm mortar landed inside the inner perimeter. After 20 minutes the VC broke contact and withdrew. Results of this probe were two CIDG killed, five CIDG wounded and two bunkers destroyed.

4. (C) In IV CTZ, CIDG and RF/PF units advised by USASF conducted 2,829 operations and engaged in nine contacts during the week. Enemy losses were four killed, and four captured. Friendly losses were two CIDG killed; three CIDG and one RF/PF wounded. Two weapons were lost by friendly forces. On 2 October, an operation consisting of two Camp Strike Force (CSF) companies, two Combat Reconnaissance Platoons (CRP), one airboat section, three VNSF, and four USASF, departed from Camp Cai Cai, A-431, Kien Phong Province on a search and destroy operation. The operation continued for two days. During the operation, the friendly elements were in contact with enemy forces of squad and platoon size. Results of the operation were one CIDG killed and one wounded; two carbines lost; three VC killed and two captured; 45 mines, five sampans, and one kilogram of medical supplies seized; 20 sampans, 43 huts, 20 bunkers, and one mine factory destroyed.

FOR THE COMMANDER:

  
D. E. BROCK  
Major, Infantry  
Adjutant

2

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HEADQUARTERS  
5TH SPECIAL FORCES GROUP (AIRBORNE), 1ST SPECIAL FORCES  
APO 96240

AVGB-C

15 October 1967

SUBJECT: Weekly Summary 071601 Z October to 141600Z October 1967 (U)

TO: Deputy Chief of Staff for Military Operations, ATTN: Special Operations  
Directorate, Department of Army, Washington, D. C.  
Commanding General, US Army Pacific, ATTN: Special Warfare Branch  
APO San Francisco, 96558  
Commanding General, US Military Assistance Command, Vietnam,  
ATTN: MACJ3, APO San Francisco, 96222

1. (C) In I CTZ, CIDG and RF/PF advised by USASF conducted 113 operations and engaged in one contact during the week. Four VC suspects were detained. There were no friendly or enemy casualties during the week.

2. (C) In II CTZ, CIDG and RF/PF advised by USASF conducted 1,988 operations and engaged in 22 contacts during the week. Enemy losses were 16 killed, 11 captured, 1 suspect detained, and ten weapons seized. Friendly losses were one CIDG killed, one USASF and eight CIDG wounded. There were no weapons lost by friendly forces. On 10 October the Special Forces Operational Base in Nha Trang came under 82mm mortar attack fired from 2,000 meters east of the SFOB by an unknown number of VC. Nine mortar rounds landed inside the SFOB compound causing slight damage to the supply storage area. There were no casualties. On 8 October, a search and destroy operation from Camp Luong Son, A-237, Binh Thuan Province, consisting of one Camp Strike Force platoon, made contact with two squads of VC, 63 kilometers southwest of Phan Rang. A brief fire fight ensued from a range of 50 meters. The VC broke contact, leaving behind ten dead. A reaction force from Camp Luong Son reinforced the operation with two USASF and one Camp Strike Force platoon. A sweep of the area revealed four small arms and the 10 VC dead. On 12 October a search and destroy operation consisting of five USASF, and one Mobile Strike Force Company, operating at Camp Bu Prang, A-236, Quang Duc Province, made contact with an unknown number of NVA, 10 kilometers north-east of Camp Bu Prang after a short firefight at close range the NVA broke contact and withdrew in an unknown direction. Four NVA were captured and one killed in the action. There were no friendly casualties.

3. (C) In III CTZ, the USASF advised CIDG and RF/PF units conducted 130 operations and engaged in 18 contacts during the period 7-14 October. Enemy losses were 21 VC killed, seven small arms and assorted items of equipment captured. Friendly losses were four RF/PF killed, one USASF, two CIDG and 14 RF/PF wounded; six RF/PF missing and seven small arms lost.

DOWNGRADE AT THREE YEAR INTERVALS  
DECLASSIFIED AFTER 12 YEARS  
DOD DIR 5200.10

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15 October 1967

SUBJECT: Weekly Summary 071601Z October to 141600Z October 1967 (U)

On 7 October an RF/PF platoon from Song Be, B-34, Phuoc Long Province, ambushed a platoon of VC 10 kilometers south-southwest of Song Be. After a short fire fight the VC withdrew. Results of this contact were 10 RF/PF wounded; five VC killed; one US submachine gun, four hand grenades and one pound of documents captured. On 13 October, a search and destroy operation from Camp Bu Dop, A-341 Phuoc Long Province, consisting of two USASF, one VNSF, and one Camp Strike Force company established contact with two platoons of VC, emplaced in dug-in positions 12 kilometers south-southwest of camp Bu Dop. Friendly elements initiated contact at 200 meters. A one hour fire fight ensued after which the VC broke contact and withdrew. Results were one USASF wounded; five VC killed; and estimated four VC wounded; five carbines, six pounds of documents, assorted equipment and rice captured. On 14 October, an unknown number of VC opened fire with small arms on a search and destroy operation consisting of two USASF, one VNSF and 72 Camp Strike Force troops from Camp Minh Thanh, A-332, Binh Long Province, five kilometers northeast of camp. Friendly element returned fire and called artillery in support. After a five minute fire fight the VC broke contact and withdrew. Results were four VC killed. In addition to the above, Detachment B-56, Ho Ngoc Tao, Bien Hoa Province, conducted two company, three platoon, and three recon team operations and engaged in two contacts. Results were three mobile strike force wounded; eleven VC killed; four weapons captured; and one enemy 2½ ton truck destroyed.

4. (C) In IV CTZ, USAF advised CIDG and RF/PF units conducted 2,274 operations and engaged in 13 contacts during the week of 7-14 October. Enemy losses were 24 killed, 7 captured, 18 suspects detained, and 19 weapons seized. Friendly losses were two CIDG and five RF/PF killed; five USASF, four CIDG and five RF/PF wounded. Four weapons were lost by friendly forces. On 7 October at 1150 hours an RF outpost approximately ten kilometers northwest of Cao Lanh, Detachment B-43, Kien Phong Province, initiated contact with an estimated platoon of VC from a distance of 200 meters. Results of the contact were: Three RF wounded; 27 VC killed (14 of which were USASF confirmed) five VC and eight small arms captured; and three sampans destroyed. On 12 October at 0145 hours an estimated two companies of VC attacked the Chau Doc, B-42 compound, Chau Doc Province. The VC were armed with 57mm RR, B-40 rockets, 60mm mortars, and small arms. The fire came from 250 meters northeast of the compound. Air support was requested and arrived at 0215 hours. Results of the attack were: One US killed (from the 52d Signal Battalion), nine US wounded (five of which were USASF); two RF and two PF killed; three RF wounded; one VC captured.

FOR THE COMMANDER:

*for E. S. Brock, CPT*  
D. E. BROCK

Major, Infantry  
Adjutant

2

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HEADQUARTERS  
5TH SPECIAL FORCES GROUP (AIRBORNE), 1ST SPECIAL FORCES  
APO 96240

22 October 1967

AVGB-C

SUBJECT: Weekly Summary 141601Z October to 211600Z October 1967 (U)

TO: Deputy Chief of Staff for Military Operations, ATTN: Special Operations  
Directorate, Department of Army, Washington, D.C.  
Commanding General, US Army Pacific, ATTN: Special Warfare Branch  
APO San Francisco, 96558  
Commanding General, US Military Assistance Command, Vietnam,  
ATTN: MACJ3, APO San Francisco, 96222

1. (C) In I CTZ, CIDG and RF/PF advised by USASF conducted 113 operations and engaged in 15 contacts during the week. Enemy losses were 15 killed, five captured, seven suspects detained, and three weapons seized. Friendly losses were six CIDG killed and seven CIDG wounded. There were no weapons lost by friendly forces. On 15 October a security operation from Camp Tien Phuoc, A-102, Quang Tin Province, consisting of two USASF, one VNSF, and 75 Camp Strike Force personnel were providing security for elements of the 101st Airborne Division when they came under attack by an unknown number of VC. The VC were firing 81mm mortars, 57mm recoilless rifles, and throwing satchel charges. After a brief fire fight the VC broke contact and withdrew, leaving behind six VC killed, one pistol, one AK-47, and 30 Chicom grenades. Friendly losses were six Camp Strike Force personnel killed and five wounded. On 19 October a recon operation from Camp Thuong Duc, A-109, Quang Nam Province, consisting of two VNSF and 40 Camp Strike Force troops initiated contact against 20 VC. A short fire fight followed and the VC broke contact. The friendly element called in artillery on the suspected withdrawal route. The patrol lifted the fire and made an immediate sweep of the area. Results of the encounter were two VC killed, two separate blood trails were found along with two grenades and one anti-personnel mine. There were no friendly casualties. On 20 October a search and destroy operation from Camp Gia Vuc, A-103, Quang Ngai Province, consisting of two USASF and 85 Camp Strike Force personnel initiated contact against 30 heavily armed VC. TAC air was called and upon completion of the air strike the patrol made an immediate sweep of the area. Results of the action were six VC killed and two bolt action rifles captured. One Camp Strike Force soldier was wounded. On 20 October, an operation from Camp Tra Bong, A-107, Quang Ngai Province, consisting of four USASF, 50 Camp Strike Force personnel and 25 Popular Force made contact with four VC who immediately withdrew to a cave and bunker complex. The patrol assaulted the complex but was unable to regain contact. Results of the contact were two bunkers, eight structures, 350 kilos of salt and 30 kilos of rice destroyed. There were no friendly casualties.

DOWNGRADE AT 3 YEAR INTERVALS  
DECLASSIFIED AFTER 12 YEARS  
DOD DIR 5200.10

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22 October 1967

SUBJECT: Weekly Summary 141601Z October to 211600Z October 1967 (U)

2. (C) In II CTZ, CIDG and RF/PF units advised by USASF conducted 2,142 operations and engaged in 14 contacts during the week. Enemy losses were nine killed, one captured, 11 suspects detained, and two weapons seized. Friendly losses were one USASF and 11 CIDG wounded. There were no weapons lost by friendly forces. On 15 October a search and destroy operation consisting of one platoon of Camp Strike Force from Camp Ha Tay, A-227, Binh Dinh Province, made contact with a company of VC 35 kilometers north, northwest of Phu Cat. The Camp Strike Force engaged the VC at a range of 500 meters. The VC attempted to maneuver around the Camp Strike Force to disorganize the friendly operation. Camp Ha Tay supported the operation with 4.2 inch mortar fire causing the VC to break contact. A search of the area of contact revealed two VC killed, one pistol, assorted documents and a quantity of equipment, left behind by the fleeing VC force. On the 19th of October, Camp Duc Lap, A-239, Quang Duc Province, came under mortar attack by an unknown number of VC, using an estimated three 60mm mortars. The VC fired 20 rounds into the camp perimeter, wounding one USASF. Camp Duc Lap fired counter mortar on the suspected enemy mortar positions causing the enemy to cease fire and withdraw. A reaction force was immediately dispatched. The reaction force swept the enemy mortar positions without contact.

3. (C) In III CTZ, the USASF advised CIDG and RF/PF units conducted 200 operations and engaged in 20 contacts during the week of 14-21 October. Enemy losses were 33 killed, four captured, 12 wounded, 12 weapons seized, assorted items of equipment and food captured. Friendly losses were four CIDG killed; nine CIDG, two USASF wounded; and two small arms lost. On 18 October a search and destroy operation consisting of two USASF, one VNSF and two Camp Strike Force companies from Hiep Hoa, A-351, Hau Nghia Province, opened fire from ambush on an estimated company of VC. After a seven minute fire fight the enemy broke contact and withdrew east. Results of this contact were seven VC killed, 10 VC wounded, one M-16 rifle, one .45 caliber pistol, one M-26 grenade, four loaded AK-47 magazines, one pistol belt, assorted uniforms and five pounds of documents captured. On 20 October at 1130 hours a search and destroy operation consisting of two USASF, three VNSF, and one company of Camp Strike Force personnel from Tra Cu, A-352, Hau Nghia Province, found a cache of five new rockets (similar to the 3.5 inch US type rocket) OD in color, with Chinese markings, and six sealed 360 round containers of type M43, 7.62mm ammunition. At 1318 hours the operation sighted 20 VC southeast of the camp. The friendly element opened fire and the VC withdrew. Results were five VC killed, and two AK-47 rifles captured. At 1550 hours an additional 20 VC were sighted hiding in a tree line and under water breathing through bamboo. The friendly element engaged the enemy at a distance of 200 meters. A short fire fight followed, after which the enemy broke contact and fled northeast. Results of this contact were 10 VC killed, two AK-47 rifles and one US carbine captured.

4. (C) In IV CTZ, USASF advised CIDG and RF/PF units conducted 2,982 operations and engaged in 24 contacts during the week. Enemy losses were 88 killed, five captured, four suspects detained, and 21 weapons seized. Friendly losses were two VNSF, 14 CIDG and one RF/PF wounded. There were no weapons lost by friendly forces. On 16 October at 0600 hours a combined operation from

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SUBJECT: Weekly Summary 141601Z October to 211600Z October 1967 (U)

Detachment B-43, Cao Lanh, Kien Phong Province was initiated. At 1230 hours the friendly element captured one VC in a sampan with one hand grenade and one Chicom claymore type mine. At 1415 hours the Camp Strike Force element initiated contact with two VC from a distance of 100 meters, resulting in two VC killed. At 1500 hours the airboat element while making a sweep, initiated contact with an unknown number of VC, resulting in four VC killed, 40 sampans destroyed, assorted ammo, three ponchos, 20 kilos of rice, cooking utensils, a gas stove, and assorted documents captured. On 17 October at 0630 hours, the RF element initiated contact with an estimated 30 VC. After a 30 minute fire fight the VC broke contact and withdrew northeast. Results were one RF wounded, four VC killed, one VC wounded, one .45 caliber pistol captured, and one sampan destroyed. At 0915 hours the gunships that were supporting the operation initiated contact with an unknown number of VC resulting in four VC killed, 26 sampans and nine structures destroyed. At 1100 hours the airboat element received sporadic fire and called in the gunships. Gunships made a sweep of the area and the RF element was sent in to assess the strike. Results of the sweep were 10 VC killed, three sampans and five structures destroyed. At 1350 hours the gunships again made a sweep of the area with the following results: seven VC killed; 15 sampans and 20 structures destroyed. A total of 31 VC were reported killed by air during the operation. The overall results of the two day operation were one RF wounded; 62 VC killed; three VC captured; one sampan, six weapons captured; and a quantity of equipment and documents captured; 58 sampans and 34 structures destroyed.

FOR THE COMMANDER:

*D. E. Brock, CPT*  
D. E. BROCK  
Major, Infantry  
Adjutant

3

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HEADQUARTERS  
5TH SPECIAL FORCES GROUP (AIRBORNE), 1ST SPECIAL FORCES  
APO San Francisco 96240

AVGB-C

29 October 1967

SUBJECT: Weekly Summary 211601Z October to 281600Z October 1967 (U)

TO: Deputy Chief of Staff for Military Operations, ATTN: Special Operations  
Directorate, Department of Army, Washington, D.C.  
Commanding General, US Army Pacific, ATTN: Special Warfare Branch,  
APO San Francisco, 96558  
Commanding General, United States Military Assistance Command, Vietnam,  
ATTN: MACJ3, APO San Francisco, 96222

1. (C) In I CTZ, CIDG and RF/PF advised by USASF conducted 124 operations and engaged in 15 contacts during the week. Enemy losses were 82 killed, two captured, 17 suspects detained, and two weapons captured. Friendly losses were two CIDG killed. There were no weapons lost by friendly forces. On 23 October a search and destroy operation from Camp Tien Phuoc, A-102, Quang Tin Province, consisting of two USASF, two VNSF, and 85 Camp Strike Force personnel ambushed 30 VC. Results of the ambush were two VC killed and 16 VC suspects detained. There were no friendly casualties. On 23 October a search and destroy operation from Camp Gia Vuc, A-103, Quang Ngai Province, initiated contact with two squads of VC. One VC was wounded and 50 rounds of 5.56mm ammo, 800 rounds of carbine ammo and five cases of soap were captured. There were no friendly casualties. On 24 October a recon operation from Camp Ba To, A-106, Quang Ngai Province, consisting of two USASF, 25 Camp Strike Force personnel and 25 PF initiated contact with seven VC. Results of the action were four VC killed, three VC wounded, one MAS 36 rifle and one Chicom grenade captured. There were no friendly casualties. On 26 October a recon operation from Camp Tien Phuoc, A-102, Quang Tin Province, consisting of two VNSF, and 85 Camp Strike Force personnel received light sniper fire. There were no casualties. At 1300 hours on the 26th the patrol observed 300 VC moving in a southwesterly direction. The patrol immediately called in 450 rounds of 155mm artillery from elements of the 101st Airborne Brigade located in the camp. A FAC was on station and directed airstrikes into the area. There were 71 VC killed by the airstrikes and artillery. There were no friendly casualties. At 1400 hours the patrol received two rounds of 60mm mortar fire which resulted in no friendly casualties. On 27 October the patrol was ambushed by an enemy force of undetermined size resulting in one Camp Strike Force soldier killed. Enemy casualties for this contact are unknown. The patrol has been reinforced and is continuing the search and destroy operation. On 26 October a recon patrol from Camp Thung Duc, A-109, Quang Nam Province, consisting of two USASF, one VNSF and 40 Camp Strike Force personnel made chance contact with two VC. The patrol opened fire on the VC at a range of 100 meters. Results of the contact were one VC killed, one VC captured, and one AK-47 seized. There were no friendly casualties.

DOWNGRADE AT 3 YEAR INTERVALS  
DECLASSIFIED AFTER 12 YEARS  
DOD DIR 5200.10

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29 October 1967

SUBJECT: Weekly Summary 211601Z October to 281600Z October 1967 (U)

2. (C) In II CTZ, CIDG and RF/PF units advised by USASF conducted 2,018 operations and engaged in 26 contacts during the week. Enemy losses were 34 killed, two captured, one VC wounded and 30 weapons seized. Friendly losses were six CIDG killed, one USASF, 23 CIDG wounded, and one CIDG missing. A total of four weapons were lost by friendly forces. On 25 October a local security operation consisting of one squad of Camp Strike Force troops from Camp Dak Seang, A-245, Kontum Province, was ambushed by an estimated platoon of NVA 22 kilometers northwest of Dak To. The Camp Strike Force returned fire on the NVA at a range of 50 meters. The NVA broke contact when a FAC arrived in the area to support the operation. Three CSF personnel were killed, nine wounded, one is missing and four carbines were lost. NVA casualties are unknown. On 25 October a search and destroy operation from Camp Phu Tuc, A-224, Phu Bon Province, consisting of one platoon of CSF on a joint operation with the 173d Airborne Brigade made contact with an estimated platoon of NVA 17 kilometers west of Tuy Hoa. A brief fire fight ensued from a range of 75 meters, after which the NVA broke contact and fled east. Three NVA were killed; two SKS carbines, three 60mm mortar rounds and miscellaneous equipment was captured. There were no friendly casualties. On 25 October a search and destroy operation from Cung Son, A-221, Phu Yen Province, consisting of one platoon of CSF made contact with an estimated squad of VC 30 kilometers southwest of Tuy Hoa. A fire fight ensued from a range of 50 meters, after which the VC fled west. Eight VC were killed; two Mauser rifles, one US Carbine and one VC flag was captured. There were no friendly casualties. On 25 October a combat recon platoon from Camp Trung Dung, A-502, Khanh Hoa Province, ambushed 30 VC 12 kilometers west of Nha Trang. After a short fire fight from a range of 15 meters the VC broke contact. A search of the area revealed 13 VC killed; one VC wounded; one VC captured along with 12 small arms, seven hand grenades, 21 AK-47 magazines and 300 pounds of rice. There were no friendly casualties. On 25 October a search and destroy operation from Camp Poley Kleng, A-241, Kontum Province consisting of two USASF, one VNSF and 30 CSF troops made contact with an estimated company of NVA 20 kilometers northwest of Kontum. A fire fight ensued and the USASF directed two airstrikes on the NVA positions. The operation was reinforced by two USASF, one VNSF and 75 CSF troops from the camp. When the reinforcing element linked up with the element in contact, a sweep was conducted to assess the area. Four NVA were killed and two SKS carbines captured. There were no friendly casualties.

3. (C) In III CTZ, the USASF advised CIDG and RF/PF units conducted 169 operations and engaged in 28 contacts during the week of 21-28 October. Enemy losses were 19 killed; two captured; 21 suspects detained; nine weapons, eight grenades, one sampan with motor, 6,000 piasters, assorted equipment and munitions captured; and three structures destroyed. Friendly losses were three USASF, four CIDG, two RF/PF killed; eight USASF, 29 CIDG and ten RF/PF wounded. On 24 October a search and destroy operation from Trai Bi, A-323, Tay Ninh Province, consisting of two USASF, two VNSF and two Camp Strike Force companies, while conducting a sweep, sighted a force of 20 VC armed with AK-47's. The friendly element engaged the enemy who immediately took up defensive positions and returned fire. The friendly element assaulted the enemy positions, using fire and maneuver which







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caused the enemy to break contact and withdraw. This contact resulted in five VC killed and three small arms captured. On 25 October a search and destroy operation in ambush position, consisting of two USASF, two VNSF and one Camp Strike Force company from Tra Cu, A-352, Hau Nghia Province, opened fire on three VC sampans moving on a canal at a distance of 20 meters. After a five minute fire fight, the enemy broke contact and withdrew. This contact resulted in one VC killed; one VC captured; one sampan with motor, one small arm, and assorted supplies, munitions and medicine captured. On 25 October, a search and destroy operation from Bu Dop, A-341, Phouc Long Province, consisting of two USASF, two VNSF, and one Camp Strike Force company, made contact with a VC squad. After a ten minute fire fight, the enemy broke contact and withdrew. This contact resulted in two VC killed. Later in the day, this same element, while searching for a VC base camp, made contact with another VC squad which later increased to a larger force of unknown size. The VC attempted encirclement but the friendly element managed to break through with artillery support from their camp. Two VC were killed as a result of this action. Shortly thereafter, the same element was surrounded by a VC force of company plus size and was engaged at a distance of 50 to 100 meters. Mobile Strike Forces and helicopter support were requested. Two companies of Mobile Strike Forces began arriving on 26 October and made contact with a VC company. After a 15 minute fire fight, the VC broke contact and withdrew. This contact resulted in four VC killed, three small arms, two grenades and one 105mm round captured. During that operation, a helicopter, with three USASF aboard, crashed while attempting to pick up a wounded Camp Strike Force soldier. The three USASF were killed as a result of this crash and all members of the crew were seriously injured. On 27 October, Camp Song Be, B-34, Phouc Long Province, came under mortar attack from three VC mortar squads. The camp returned mortar fire and after nearly three hours, the enemy broke contact and withdrew. This attack on Camp Song Be resulted in three USASF and three Camp Strike Force personnel wounded. On 21 October Camp Tong Le Chon, A-334, Binh Long Province, came under mortar attack from an unknown size VC force. The camp returned 105mm artillery fire and called for tactical air support. During the 20 minute attack, the camp received 30 rounds of 81mm and 82mm mortar rounds. Tactical air support started dropping napalm and CBU's on the suspected enemy positions which caused the VC to break contact and withdraw. This attack resulted in five USASF, two US engineers, eight CIDG and two ARVN wounded.

4. (C) In IV CTZ, the USASF advised CIDG and RF/PF units conducted 3,399 operations and engaged in 24 contacts during the week of 21-28 October 1967. Enemy losses were 23 killed; one captured, and eight weapons seized. Friendly losses were nine CIDG, six RF/PF killed; one USASF, 37 CIDG, and 25 RF/PF wounded. Two weapons were lost by friendly forces. On 22 October at 0800 hours an operation from Det A-401, Don Phuoc, Kien Phong Province, consisting of one airboat section and four USASF departed on a search and destroy operation. On 23 October the friendly element called in gunships in support of the operation. A sweep of the area revealed ten VC killed and six sampans destroyed. At 1130 hours the airboat element initiated contact with two VC with the following results: two VC killed, and two Chicom carbines captured. One airboat was

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slightly damaged from small arms fire. At 1230 hours the airboat element again initiated contact with ten VC in four sampans. After a five minute fire fight the VC broke contact and fled. Results were two VC killed; two sub-machine guns, one carbine, one home made pistol belt captured; and four sampans destroyed. One airboat was damaged from a mine however it remained operational.

FOR THE COMMANDER:

*[Signature]*  
D. E. BROCK  
Major, Infantry  
Adjutant

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HEADQUARTERS  
5TH SPECIAL FORCES GROUP (AIRBORNE), 1ST SPECIAL FORCES  
APO San Francisco, 96240

AVGB-C

5 November 1967

SUBJECT: Weekly Summary 281601Z October 1967 to 041600Z November 1967 (U)

TO: Deputy Chief of Staff for Military Operations, ATTN: Special Operations  
Directorate, Department of Army, Washington, D.C.  
Commanding General, US Army Pacific, ATTN: Special Warfare Branch,  
APO San Francisco, 96558  
Commanding General, United States Military Assistance Command, Vietnam,  
ATTN: MACJ3, APO San Francisco, 96222

1. (C) In I CTZ, CIDG and RF/PF advised by USASF conducted 135 operations and engaged in ten contacts during the week. Enemy losses were five killed, one captured, and 16 suspects detained. Friendly losses were one USASF killed, one USASF wounded, and one CIDG killed. There were no weapons lost by friendly forces. On 2 November a recon operation from Camp Minh Long, A-108, Quang Ngai Province, consisting of two USASF and 50 Camp Strike Force personnel, made contact with an estimated platoon of VC. There were no friendly casualties. Enemy losses were one VC killed and 26 houses destroyed. On 4 November a recon operation from Camp Thuong Duc, A-109, Quang Nam Province, consisting of two USASF, one VNSF and 30 Camp Strike Force personnel made contact with an estimated battalion size enemy element. One USASF was wounded in the initial contact and died before a medevac could be completed. One USASF was wounded while a passenger in a helicopter which was flying in support of the operation. One CSF soldier, one NVA, and one VC were also killed in the contact. The friendly element captured one new green NVA uniform, 25 feet of number 18 electrical commo wire, one belt, two Chicom batteries, two mosquito nets, one rice sack, one VC poncho, one cloth carrying bag, one GV-58 US generator with cable, one generator operators seat, one hammock, one commercial portable radio, one canteen, one set of fatigues, four rucksacks, one antenna, one full AK-47 magazine, 40 rounds of 7.62mm ammunition, and assorted documents. This operation continues.

2. (C) In II CTZ, CIDG and RF/PF units advised by USASF conducted 1,165 operations and engaged in 33 contacts during the week. Enemy losses were 37 killed, four captured, 11 suspects detained and ten weapons captured. Friendly losses were one USASF and eight CIDG killed, one USASF and 25 CIDG wounded. On 29 October a hamlet security operation from Camp Trung Dung, A-502, Khanh Hoa Province, consisting of one company of CSF ambushed an estimated 20 VC, 12 kilometers from Nha Trang. A fire fight ensued from a range of ten meters. The VC broke contact and withdrew northwest. A sweep of the area of contact was made, revealing six VC killed. Six small arms were captured. On 3 November a search

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DECLASSIFIED AFTER 12 YEARS  
DOD DIR 5200.10

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and destroy operation from Trung Dung, A-502, consisting of two USASF, one company of CSF and two combat reconnaissance platoons made contact with a company of VC in defensive positions, including machine gun positions, in a school house 11 kilometers north of Nha Trang. A fire fight ensued from a range of 100 meters. The operation directed airstrikes and artillery on the VC positions. The Mobile Strike Forces, Nha Trang, A-503, Khanh Hoa Province, reinforced the operation with one company of MSF and two combat reconnaissance platoons. Throughout the day, and into the evening, airstrikes, artillery and small arms fire was placed on the VC positions. A sweep of the area was conducted revealing 23 VC killed. One heavy machine gun, 13 small arms and four VC were captured in the sweep. Friendly losses were four CIDG killed, one USASF, and 13 CIDG wounded.

3. (C) In III CTZ, the USASF advised CIDG and RF/PF units conducted 134 operations and engaged in 25 contacts during the week of 28 October to 4 November. Enemy losses were 254 killed; two captured; four small arms, five crew served weapons, ten RPG-7 rockets, 20 B-40 rockets, 52 hand grenades, 500 rounds of .50 caliber ammunition, and numerous items of webbing captured. Friendly losses were 15 CIDG killed; six USASF, 92 CIDG and five RF/PF wounded. There were no weapons lost by friendly forces. On 29 October a search and destroy operation from Camp Tong Le Chon, A-334, Binh Long Province, consisting of two USASF, two VNSF and one Camp Strike Force company made contact with an estimated VC company. The friendly elements opened fire with small arms, and called artillery and air strikes in support. The enemy returned fire and after a two hour fire fight, the enemy broke contact and withdrew. This contact resulted in one CIDG wounded and seven VC killed. During the reporting period Camp Loc Ninh, A-331, Binh Long Province, came under three attacks. On 29 October at 0125 hours, heavy mortar, small arms and .50 caliber machine gun suppressing fire was placed on the camp, in support of an estimated two battalion attack on the RF/PF and district compound. At 0645 hours, Camp Loc Ninh launched a Camp Strike Force company operation to relieve the district compound, at which time the enemy withdrew, leaving an estimated 20 VC in the district compound. At 1000 hours, a reinforced infantry battalion of the 1st US Infantry Division was committed to assist in the clearing of the district compound, and the final contact was broken at 1150 hours. On 31 October at 0045 hours, Det A-331, the district headquarters, and elements of the 1st US Infantry Division, at Loc Ninh came under heavy mortar and rocket attack. At 0100 hours, small arms fire increased in a coordinated attack on all three friendly locations. At 0145 hours, the joint employment of fire from all three locations suppressed the attack. Sporadic small arms fire was received until 0515 hours when another coordinated attack commenced on all three friendly unit locations. The friendly elements jointly returned fire and at 0730 hours, the VC broke contact and withdrew. On 2 November, at 0045 hours, all three unit locations again began receiving heavy mortar and small arms fire. Between 0130 and 0600 hours, the enemy force, estimated at three battalions, probably of the 273d Regiment, made repeated attempts to mass their troops and assault friendly positions. The effective use of light fire teams, flare ships, tactical air and friendly ground units broke the attack. At 0600 hours the enemy broke

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SUBJECT: Weekly Summary 281601Z October 1967 to 041600Z November 1967 (U)

contact and withdrew. During the three attacks, Camp Loc Ninh received 24 rounds of 122mm rocket fire, 22 rounds of 120mm mortar, 370 rounds of 82mm mortar, 50 rounds of B-40 rockets and 50 rounds of RPG-7 rockets. As a result of all three attacks, eight CIDG were killed; four USASF and 68 CIDG were wounded; 238 VC were killed. In addition, 95 VC were killed which were not accredited to USASF, VNSF or CIDG. Four small arms, five crew served weapons, ten RPG-7 rockets, 20 B-40 rockets, 50 hand grenades and assorted munitions were captured.

4. (C) In IV CTZ, the USASF advised CIDG and RF/PF units conducted 802 operations and engaged in 13 contacts during the week of 28 October - 4 November. Six enemy weapons were seized. Friendly losses were one USASF killed, one wounded; one CIDG killed, one wounded; nine RF/PF killed, eight wounded and 14 missing in action. A total of 33 weapons were lost by friendly forces. There were no significant activities reported during this period in the corps area.

FOR THE COMMANDER:



D. E. BROCK  
Major, Infantry  
Adjutant

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HEADQUARTERS  
5TH SPECIAL FORCES GROUP (AIRBORNE), 1ST SPECIAL FORCES  
APO San Francisco, 96240

AVGB-C

12 November 1967

SUBJECT: Weekly Summary 041601Z November 1967 to 111600Z November 1967 (U)

TO: Deputy Chief of Staff for Military Operations, ATTN: Special Operations  
Directorate, Department of Army, Washington, D.C.  
Commanding General, US Army Pacific, ATTN: Special Warfare Branch,  
APO San Francisco, 96558  
Commanding General, United States Military Assistance Command, Vietnam,  
ATTN: MACJ 3, APO San Francisco, 96222

1. (C) In I CTZ, CIDG and RF/PF advised by USASF conducted 145 operations and engaged in eight contacts during the week. Enemy losses were seven killed and four wounded. Three weapons were captured. Friendly losses were three Camp Strike Force personnel wounded. There were no weapons lost by friendly forces. On 7 November, a recon patrol from Camp Ba To, A-106, Quang Ngai Province, consisting of two USASF, 25 Camp Strike Force personnel and 25 Popular Force troops initiated contact with five VC. After a brief firefight the friendly element assaulted the enemy position wounding two VC and capturing one US carbine, two 30 round magazines, six chicom grenades, one rucksack, one poncho, one hammock, and a small amount of documents. On 7 November a recon patrol from Camp Ha Thanh, A-104, Quang Ngai Province, consisting of two USASF, one VNSF, and 90 Strike Force personnel was probed by a VC platoon. The VC moved to within 75 meters of the patrol defensive position and opened fire. The patrol reacted by immediately returning a heavy volume of fire which caused the VC to withdraw. During the action two CIDG were wounded. Enemy losses were one VC killed, two wounded; one MAS 36, a small amount of .45 cal ammo and one pistol belt captured. On 9 November, Camp Lang Vei, A-101, Quang Tri Province received ten rounds of 120 mortar fire in a ten minute period. The camp immediately initiated counter mortar fire with unknown results. There were no friendly casualties. On 10 November a search and destroy operation from Camp Tien Phuoc, A-102, Quang Tin Province, consisting of two USASF, one VNSF, and 40 Camp Strike Force personnel, initiated contact with a VC squad. The VC fled under the intense volume of fire from the friendly element, leaving behind two VC killed, one US shotgun, one M16 mine, and five Chicom grenades. There were no friendly casualties.

2. (C) In II CTZ, CIDG and RF/PF units advised by USASF conducted 1,416 operations and engaged in 32 contacts during the week. Enemy losses were 11 killed, one captured, 21 suspects detained and 11 weapons captured. Friendly losses were one VNSF and seven CIDG killed; two USASF, one VNSF and seven CIDG wounded. One CIDG was reported missing in action. There was one weapon lost by friendly forces. On 4 November a search and destroy operation from Camp Cung Son, A-221, Phu Yen Province, consisting of two USASF and two companies of Camp Strike Force personnel

DOWNGRADE AT 3 YEAR INTERVALS  
DECLASSIFIED AFTER 12 YEARS  
DOD DIR 5200.10

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12 November 1967

SUBJECT: Weekly Summary 041601Z November 1967 to 111600Z November 1967 (U)

initiated contact with two NVA ten kilometers northeast of Cung Son. A brief fire fight ensued, which resulted in one NVA killed, and one AK47 captured. On 5 November a search and destroy operation from Camp Luong Son, A-237, Binh Thuan Province, consisting of two USASF, two VNSF, one CRP and one company of CSF fired on four VC 20 kilometers southwest of Phan Rang. A brief fire fight ensued, which resulted in two VC killed, one caliber 45 pistol and one AK 50 captured. On 6 November a search and destroy operation from Camp Plateau Gi, A-243, Kontum Province, consisting of four USASF, two VNSF, and 150 CSF soldiers conducted a bomb damage assessment of an air strike conducted in support of a previous contact 16 kilometers south of Plateau Gi. Results were three VC killed and six huts destroyed. On 8 November a bridge security operation from Camp Dak Seang, A-245, Kontum Province, consisting of two USASF, one VNSF, and 30 CSF soldiers made contact with an estimated seven VC ten kilometers north of Camp Dak Seang. A 20 minute fire fight ensued, which resulted in one VC killed and two AK 47's captured.

3. (C) In III CTZ, the USASF advised CIDG and RF/PF units conducted 163 operations and engaged in 17 contacts during the week. Enemy losses were four homemade hand grenades, one ton of rice, new battle dressings and propaganda leaflets captured. Friendly losses were six Camp Strike Force personnel wounded. There were no weapons lost by friendly forces. During the reporting period, five camps came under mortar attack. On 5 November, Camp Chien Thang I, A-302, and Camp Chien Thang II, B-36, Phuoc Tuy Province, received a total of nine 60mm mortar rounds. There was no damage or casualties at either camp. On 9 November, Hon Quan, B-33, Tong Le Chon, A-334, Binh Long Province; and Bunard, A-344, Phuoc Long Province came under mortar and rocket attacks. Hon Quan received a total of 200 rounds of 82mm mortar and rocket fire, 20 of which landed in the sector headquarters. Tong Le Chon received a total of 33 rounds of 82mm mortar during two attacks in which two Camp Strike Force personnel were wounded. Bunard received 10 rounds of 60mm and 81mm mortar which landed south of the camp perimeter. All three camps fired defensive concentrations and counter mortar fire. Air Support consisting of light fire teams, AC-47 gunships and TAC Air support caused the enemy to break contact and withdraw.

4. (C) In IV CTZ the USASF advised CIDG and RF/PF units conducted 1,469 operations and engaged in 22 contacts during the week. Results were 28 VC killed, four VC captured, 35 suspects detained and a total of 24 weapons seized. Friendly losses were one VNSF killed, three wounded; two CIDG killed and 11 wounded; 45 RF/PF wounded; and one weapon lost. On the 8th at 0130 hours an estimated reinforced company of VC armed with small arms, 60mm mortars, 82mm mortars, B-40 rockets, and 57mm RR attacked the Cao Lanh City Prison from a distance of 75 meters. Detachment B-43 supported with 4.2 and 81mm illumination. A reaction force from B-43 2/16 ARVN battalion, and four armored cars was dispatched to counter the ground attack. A portion of the reaction force overran a VC sapper squad, secured the road and took up positions in the prison perimeter. The fire fight lasted until 0500 hours at which time the VC broke contact and withdrew in an unknown direction.

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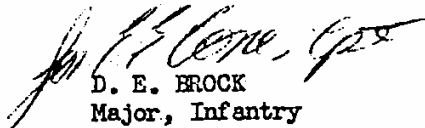
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SUBJECT: Weekly Summary 041601Z November 1967 to 111600Z November 1967 (U)

Results of the attack were: one RF, one ARVN, and two civilians killed; 29 RF, one PF, 26 ARVN, and 42 civilians wounded. Enemy losses were 22 VC killed (13 of which were USASF confirmed). The friendly element captured the following items: four AK 47's, one chicom rifle, one Russian carbine, one US M-1 carbine, one home-made B-40 rocket launcher, homemade grenades, two concussion grenades, an undetermined amount of propaganda leaflets, and assorted web gear.

FOR THE COMMANDER:

  
D. E. BROCK  
Major, Infantry  
Adjutant

3

**CONFIDENTIAL**







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HEADQUARTERS

5TH SPECIAL FORCES GROUP (AIRBORNE), 1ST SPECIAL FORCES  
APO San Francisco, 96240

AVGB-C

19 November 1967

SUBJECT: Weekly Summary 111601Z November to 181600Z November 1967 (U)

TO: Deputy Chief of Staff for Military Operations, ATTN: Special Operations  
Directorate, Department of Army, Washington, D.C.  
Commanding General, US Army Pacific, ATTN: Special Warfare Branch,  
APO San Francisco, 96558  
Commanding General, United States Military Assistance Command, Vietnam,  
ATTN: MACJ 3, APO San Francisco, 96222

1. (C) In I CTZ, CIDG and RF/PF advised by USASF conducted 127 operations and engaged in 14 contacts during the week. Enemy losses were eight killed, one wounded, seven captured, and two suspects detained. Two weapons were captured. Friendly losses were one camp strike force soldier killed and two wounded. There were no weapons lost by the friendly forces. On 13 November a local security operation from Camp Thuong Duc, A-109, Quang Nam Province, initiated contact with three VC. After an exchange of fire the VC withdrew with one VC killed. The patrol also detained two VC suspects and captured one sniper rifle. There were no friendly losses. On 16 November a recon operation from Camp Tra Bong, A-107, Quang Ngai Province, consisting of two USASF and 30 camp strike force personnel made chance contact with two squads of VC. After a brief fire fight the VC broke contact and withdrew. The friendly element suffered no casualties, although they captured three VC and detained four suspects. The three VC that were captured were killed on the 17th while trying to escape. On 17 November a search and destroy operation from Camp Tien Phuoc, A-102, Quang Tin Province, consisting of two USASF, two VNSF, and 50 camp strike force personnel ambushed one squad of VC, killing one VC and capturing three. The friendly operation suffered no casualties. On 17 November a search and destroy operation from Camp Gia Vuc, A-103, Quang Ngai Province, consisting of two USASF, one VNSF, and 100 camp strike force personnel ambushed one VC resulting in one VC killed. There were no friendly casualties. The friendly element then dispatched a squad to recover the enemy weapon and search the body. The squad came under fire and was forced to return to the main body. The operation again came under fire in their night location, but suffered no casualties. On 17 November, a recon operation from Camp Tra Bong, A-107, Quang Ngai Province, consisting of two USASF, one VNSF and 30 camp strike force personnel made chance contact with seven VC. The patrol delivered a heavy volume of fire, and the VC withdrew. The friendly element lost one HT-1 radio and one M1 rifle. This equipment was lost while the patrol was crossing a river. Enemy losses were one political book captured; two houses, four bunkers, one tunnel system (35 feet long), 700 pounds of rice and miscellaneous bunker material destroyed.

DOWNGRADE AT 3 YEAR INTERVALS  
DECLASSIFIED AFTER 12 YEARS  
DOD DIR 5200.10

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19 November 1967

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2. (C) In II CTZ, CIDG and RF/PF units advised by USASF conducted 1,482 operations and engaged in 26 contacts during the week. Enemy losses were 20 killed, eight captured, 19 suspects detained and 20 weapons captured. Friendly losses were one USASF and four CIDG killed; four USASF, six CIDG and three MSF personnel wounded. Seven mortar attacks were conducted on special forces camps during the reporting period. On 13 November, a search and destroy operation from Plei Mrong, A-113, Pleiku Province, consisting of one VNSF and two companies of CSF personnel initiated contact with an estimated platoon of NVA 20 kilometers northwest of Pleiku. A brief fire fight ensued, which resulted in three NVA killed and one Chicom automatic rifle captured. On 14 November, a recon patrol from Cung Son, A-221, Phu Yen Province, consisting of one squad of CSF soldiers made contact with one squad of VC, 17 kilometers southwest of Cung Son. A fire fight ensued, which resulted in four VC killed, five Mauser and three Springfield rifles captured. On 15 and 16 November, Dak To, A-244, Kontum Province, received an estimated 50 rounds of 82mm mortar fire. The camp immediately initiated countermortar fire with unknown results. There were three USAF aircraft destroyed and two USASF slightly wounded. On 15 November, Mobile Strike Force Company 22 (-), consisting of two USASF, one Australian and 39 MSF soldiers on a training mission initiated contact with two VC. A brief fire fight ensued, which resulted in two VC killed and two US carbines captured.

3. (C) In III CTZ, the USASF advised CIDG and RF/PF units conducted 129 operations and engaged in 14 contacts during the week. Enemy losses were four killed; one wounded; one captured; nine suspects detained; 14 CBU's, two hand grenades, assorted munitions and 12 pounds of documents captured. Friendly losses were one camp strike force soldier killed, one USASF, one VNSF, three camp strike force soldiers wounded; and two weapons lost. During the reporting period two camps came under mortar attack. On 14 November, Loc Ninh, A-331, Binh Long Province, received several 82mm mortar rounds from an unknown size enemy force. The camp responded with 105mm artillery defensive concentrations and 81mm countermortar fires, which caused the enemy to break contact and withdraw. On 15 November, Loc Ninh again received several 82mm mortar rounds and one B-40 rocket. The camp responded with defensive concentrations and countermortar fire, causing the enemy to break contact and withdraw. The camp suffered no casualties during both attacks. On 18 November, Tong Le Chon, A-334, Binh Long Province, received approximately 50-82mm mortar rounds from an unknown size VC force. All enemy rounds landed in the outer defensive wire. The camp responded with 105mm and 175mm defensive concentrations and called light fire teams in support, causing the enemy to break contact and withdraw. There were no friendly casualties resulting from this attack. On 18 November a forward element of a search and destroy operation from Bu Dop, A-341, Phuoc Long Province, consisting of two USASF, one VNSF and 100 camp strike force personnel, sighted an NVA company, wearing khaki uniforms, in bunkers, in the vicinity of YU043314. The friendly element deployed, and assaulted the enemy positions, opening fire from a distance of 50 meters. The enemy returned fire and due to their superior firepower,

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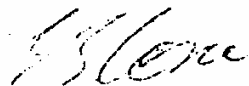
19 November 1967

SUBJECT: Weekly Summary 111601Z November to 181600Z November 1967 (U)

caused the friendly unit to break contact and withdraw. After regrouping, the friendly unit called airstrikes on the enemy position. At the completion of the airstrikes, the enemy flanked the friendly unit and opened fire. The friendly unit returned fire but again had to break contact and withdraw. Results of this contact were one camp strike force soldier killed, two wounded, and two weapons lost. Enemy losses were four killed and one wounded.

4. (C) The USASF advised CIDG and RF/PF units in IV CTZ conducted 2,041 operations and engaged in 16 contacts resulting in 13 VC killed, 28 suspects detained, and 15 enemy weapons seized. Friendly losses were one USASF wounded, one VNSF wounded, five CIDG killed, 21 CIDG wounded, three RF/PF killed, two RF/PF wounded and 13 weapons lost. On 11 November at 0800 hours an operation consisting of one company of CSF, two VNSF, and two USASF departed My Da, A-433, Kien Phong Province on a search and destroy operation. On the 12th at 0700 hours the friendly element initiated contact with an estimated squad of VC approximately three kilometers east of the camp. After a five minute fire fight the VC broke contact and withdrew north. Results of the contact were two VC killed; two sampans, one Chicom rifle, and assorted ammunition captured.

FOR THE COMMANDER:



E. E. CONE  
Captain, Infantry  
Asst Adjutant

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HEADQUARTERS  
5TH SPECIAL FORCES GROUP (AIRBORNE), 1ST SPECIAL FORCES  
APO San Francisco, 96240

AVGB-C

26 November 1967

SUBJECT: Weekly Summary 181601Z November to 251600Z November 1967 (U)

TO: Deputy Chief of Staff for Military Operations, ATTN: Special Operations  
Directorate, Department of Army, Washington, D. C.  
Commanding General, US Army Pacific, ATTN: Special Warfare Branch,  
APO San Francisco, 96558  
Commanding General, United States Military Assistance Command, Vietnam,  
ATTN: MACJ 3, APO San Francisco, 96222

1. (C) In I CTZ, CIDG and RF/PF advised by USASF conducted 134 operations and engaged in 12 contacts during the week. Enemy losses were four killed, two captured and four wounded. Three weapons were captured. Friendly losses were two CSF soldiers wounded. There were no weapons lost by friendly forces. On 21 October a search and destroy operation from Camp Tien Phuoc, A-102 Quang Tin Province, consisting of two USASF, two VNSF, and 50 CSF soldiers initiated contact with four VC at a distance of 80 meters. The VC immediately withdrew leaving behind one VC killed; 10,000 piastres; four documents; a passport; school papers; and a tax list. There were no friendly casualties. On 21 October a search and destroy operation from Camp Gia Vuc, A-103, Quang Ngai Province, consisting of two USASF, one VNSF, and 100 CSF soldiers fired at 40 NVA and ten montagnards at a distance of 700 meters. After a brief exchange of fire the enemy withdrew leaving behind two of their dead. There were 20 killed by gunships that were not confirmed by USASF body count.

2. (C) In II CTZ, CIDG and RF/PF units advised by USASF conducted 1,456 operations and engaged in 29 contacts during the week. Enemy losses were 19 killed, four captured, two suspects detained and 18 weapons captured. Friendly losses were five CIDG killed; three USASF, one VNSF and 23 CIDG wounded. Two CIDG were reported missing in action and four weapons lost. On 19 November, Mobile Strike Force Company 26, on a search and destroy operation 24 kilometers southwest of Dak To initiated contact from 20 meters against three NVA. A brief fire fight ensued, which resulted in three NVA killed, two AK 47's and one SKS rifle captured. On 20 November, a search and destroy operation from Trang Phuc, A-233, Darlac Province, consisting of four USASF, four VNSF and 160 CSF soldiers made contact with an estimated company of NVA 35 kilometers northwest of Trang Phuc. A fire fight ensued for one hour resulting in two NVA killed; one NVA, two AK50's two SKS rifles and one RPD captured. On 21 November, a search and

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DECLASSIFIED AFTER 12 YEARS  
DOD DIR 5200.10

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destroy operation from Trang Phuc, A-233, Derlac Province, consisting of four USASF, four VNSF and 160 CSF soldiers initiated contact from 50 meters against an estimated platoon of NVA 35 kilometers northwest of Trang Phuc. A 15 minute fire fight ensued resulting in four NVA killed; two SKS rifles and one RPD captured. On 21 November, a reconnaissance patrol from Cung Son, A-221, Phu Yen Province, consisting of one squad of CSF soldiers initiated contact from 50 meters on three VC 25 kilometers northwest of Cung Son. A brief fire fight ensued resulting in three VC killed, one Mauser rifle captured and one CSF soldier wounded.

3. (C) In III CTZ, the USASF advised CIDG and RF/PF units conducted 125 operations and engaged in 28 contacts during the week. Enemy losses were 13 killed, 13 captured, and three weapons seized. Friendly losses were one VNSF, five CIDG, and two RF/PF killed; two USASF, one VNSF, 30 CIDG, 10 RF/PF wounded; and five weapons lost. On 25 November a search and destroy operation in Hau Nghia Province consisting of three USASF and 157 Mobile Strike Force personnel made contact with an estimated 15 VC armed with automatic and semi automatic weapons 10 kilometers west of Duc Hoa. The VC were hiding in houses and directed sniper fire on the Mobile Strike Force at a distance of 300 meters. The Mobile Strike Force assualted the VC positions. A brief fire fight ensued, which resulted in nine VC killed, 13 VC captured, three sampans and two houses destroyed.

4. (C) In IV CTZ the USASF advised CIDG and RF/PF units in IV CTZ conducted 1,405 operations and engaged in 11 contacts during the week. Results were 26 VC killed, 6 captured, 4 suspects detained and 28 enemy weapons seized. Friendly losses were three VNSF, 15 CIDG, 6 RF/PF wounded; one RF/PF killed and six weapons lost. On 21 November at 1600 hours an operation from Det A-413, Binh Thanh Thon, Kien Toung Province, consisting of two companies of CSF, and two USASF initiated contact with 6 VC from a distance of 50 meters. After a five minute fire fight the VC broke contact and withdrew. Results were: no friendly losses, 1 VC killed, 1 VC and 1 weapon captured. At 1700 hours the friendly element made contact with an estimated platoon of VC. After a 15 minute fire fight the VC withdrew resulting in; 1 CSF soldier wounded, 29 VC killed (8 of which were confirmed by USASF), 3 VC suspects detained, 13 weapons and 2 kilos of enemy documents captured. At 1940 hours, another contact was made with an estimated VC platoon. After a 30 minute fire fight, the VC broke contact and withdrew north. Results were: 1 CSF soldier wounded, 10 VC killed, 4 VC and 11 enemy weapons captured.

FOR THE COMMANDER:

*E. E. Cone*  
E. E. CONE  
Captain, Infantry  
Asst Adjutant

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HEADQUARTERS  
5TH SPECIAL FORCES GROUP (AIRBORNE), 1ST SPECIAL FORCES  
APO San Francisco, 96240

AVGB-C

4 December 1967

SUBJECT: Weekly Summary 251601Z November to 021600Z December 1967 (U)

TO: Deputy Chief of Staff for Military Operations, ATTN: Special Operations  
Directorate, Department of Army, Washington, D.C.  
Commanding General, US Army Pacific, ATTN: Special Warfare Branch,  
APO San Francisco, 96558  
Commanding General, United States Military Assistance Command, Vietnam,  
ATTN: MACJ 3, APO San Francisco, 96222

1. (C) In I CTZ, CIDG and RF/PF advised by USASF conducted 128 operations and engaged in 14 contacts during the week. Enemy losses were 25 killed, 24 captured and 18 wounded. Six weapons were captured. Friendly losses were three CSF killed and 12 wounded. There were no weapons lost by friendly forces. On 26 November a search and destroy operation from Thuong Duc, A-109, Quang Nam Province, consisting of two USASF, two VNSF, 100 CSF soldiers and 30 PF troops ambushed a VC squad resulting in one VC killed, and three wounded. At 1435 hours the patrol observed a VC platoon with a carrying party of 100. Contact was established and maintained. Results of this encounter were 12 VC killed, 12 VC wounded; 800 kilos of rice, salt, and corn destroyed; 120 rucksacks with miscellaneous equipment, personal belongings, and one red flag with a yellow hammer and sickle and VC banners attached to it captured. The operation found and destroyed two caches of 3,000 kilos of rice, 1,000 kilos of corn, and 500 pounds of salt. At 1530 hours the operation was ambushed by a reinforced VC company. The patrol immediately returned a heavy volume of fire and directed air strikes on the VC position. Results of this encounter were one CSF soldier killed, and one wounded. Enemy losses were eight VC killed by air strikes and numerous blood trails found in the area. At 1630 hours the patrol overran a VC outpost, killed the VC guard, and captured one rucksack. The patrol returned to camp at 1000 hours 28 November with the over-all following results: Friendly losses were one CSF soldier killed and one wounded. Enemy losses were 22 killed, 15 wounded; one unknown type weapon, 122 rucksacks, one Russian flag captured; 800 kilos of rice, salt, and corn destroyed at one location and 3,000 kilos of rice, 1,000 kilos of corn and 500 pounds of salt destroyed at another location.

2. (C) In II CTZ, CIDG and RF/PF units advised by USASF conducted 1,391 operations and engaged in 40 contacts during the week. Enemy losses were 62 killed, 11 captured, six suspects detained, 24 small arms and two crew served weapons captured. Friendly losses were two USASF and 30 CIDG killed; 29 USASF

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DOD DIR 5200.10

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SUBJECT: Weekly Summary 251601Z November to 021600Z December 1967 (U)

one VNSF, 66 CIDG and one RF/PF wounded. A total of seven small arms were lost. During the reporting period three Special Forces camps came under mortar attacks. On 25 November, a reconnaissance patrol from Cung Son, A-221, Phay Yen Province, consisting of one CRP squad initiated contact from 25 meters with three VC, 10 kilometers northeast of Cung Son. A brief fire fight ensued resulting in three VC killed and one weapon captured. On 27 November, a search and destroy operation from Ha Tay, A-227, Binh Dinh Province, consisting of two USASF, two VNSF, one CRP and one CSF company initiated contact from a distance of 25 meters on an unknown size VC unit, five kilometers west of Ha Tay. A fire fight ensued resulting in four VC killed and one captured. Friendly losses were two CSF soldiers killed and two wounded. On 30 November, a search and destroy operation from Trang Phuc, A-233, Darlac Province, ambushed an estimated platoon of NVA from a distance of 50 meters, 35 kilometers northwest of Ban Don. A fire fight ensued resulting in two NVA killed and one CSF soldier wounded. On 1 December, a search and destroy operation from Trang Phuc, A-233, Darlac Province, initiated contact with one company of NVA, 34 kilometers northwest of Ban Don. A fire fight lasting for one and a half hours resulted in nine NVA killed and four small arms captured. Friendly losses were two USASF, one VNSF, three CSF soldiers wounded and one CSF soldier killed. On 1 December a search and destroy operation from Phu Tuc, A-224, Phu Bon Province, initiated contact with an estimated 30 NVA guarding a rice field, 18 kilometers southwest of Phu Tuc. A brief fire fight ensued resulting in two NVA killed and five small arms captured. ...

3. (C) In III CTZ, the USASF advised CIDG and RF/PF units conducted 143 operations and engaged in 23 contacts during the week. Enemy losses were 59 killed; two captured; 13 weapons, one radio, 30 pounds of TNT, two rockets, two rocket boosters, two mortar rounds, two mortar base plates, one mortar sight, one .50 caliber machine gun mount, one hand grenade, four aiming stakes, seven shovels, seven pounds of documents, 10 boxes of shotgun shells, assorted small arms ammunition, web equipment and clothing captured; four structures, three sampans and 50 pounds of rice destroyed. Friendly losses were two USASF, 14 CIDG and two RF/PF killed; four USASF, one VNSF, 34 CIDG and one RF/PF wounded; one USASF, one VNSF and 32 CIDG missing in action; 32 weapons lost. On 26 November, a company search and destroy operation from Tra Cu, A-352, Hau Nghia Province, was engaged by a platoon of VC eight kilometers west of Duc Hoa. A two hour fire fight ensued resulting in three CIDG killed, one wounded; 16 VC killed and two weapons captured. On 26 November, a company search and destroy operation from Bu Dop, A-341, Phuoc Long Province, was engaged by an estimated company of VC, 20 kilometers north northwest of Song Be. A 90 minute fire fight ensued resulting in one USASF, four CIDG wounded; two VC killed. During the period 27 to 29 November, a company search and destroy operation from Bu Dop, A-341, reinforced by one company from Dong Xoai, A-342, and one company from Duc Phong, A-343, Phuoc Long Province, operating 10 kilometers northwest of Song Be, were engaged by numerically superior NVA forces, resulting in the friendly units being out maneuvered and causing them to split. Results were one USASF, nine CIDG killed; three USASF, one VNSF, and 20 CIDG wounded; one USASF, one VNSF and 32 CIDG missing; and 32 weapons lost. On 30 November,

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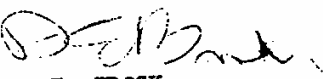
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SUBJECT: Weekly Summary 251601Z November to 021600Z December 1967 (U)

friendly elements were sent out to attempt to relocate the missing personnel. The search continues. On 27 November, a company search and destroy operation from Bunard, A-344, Phuoc Long Province, was ambushed by a company of VC, 23 kilometers southeast of Song Be. A 20 minute fire fight ensued resulting in one USASF, one CIDG killed; one VNSF and one CIDG wounded; 15 VC killed. On 28 November, a company search and destroy operation from Tra Cu, A-352, Hau Nghia Province, was engaged by an estimated platoon of VC, 15 kilometers west of Duc Hoa. A brief fire fight ensued resulting in four VC killed, one VC and two weapons captured. On 29 November, a Mobile Strike Force Company search and destroy operation supporting Duc Hoa, B-35, Hau Nghia Province, was engaged by one squad of VC, 30 miles northwest of Duc Hoa. A 45 minute fire fight ensued, resulting in one CIDG wounded; five VC killed. On 29 November, Bu Dop, A-344, Phuoc Long Province, received an estimated 15-122mm rocket rounds, in conjunction with the attack on Bo Duc District Headquarters. Rocket fire was inaccurate and caused no damage or casualties to the camp.

4. (C) In IV CTZ, the USASF advised CIDG and RF/PF units conducted 1,403 operations and engaged in 29 contacts during the week. Results were 16 VC killed, one VC captured, seven VC suspects detained and 11 weapons captured. Friendly losses were four CIDG killed, six CIDG wounded, 22 RF/PF killed, 36 RF/PF wounded, six RF/PF missing and a total of 10 weapons lost. On 2 December at 0105 hours, an estimated reinforced company of VC armed with 82mm mortars, 75mm recoilless rifles, and B-40 rockets attacked the Kien Van District Headquarters. The friendly element returned the fire and requested air support. An armed AC-47 arrived on station at 0120 hours and placed fire on the VC positions. In total, the District Headquarters received 50 rounds of mortar and recoilless rifle fire. All firing stopped at 0230 hours with the following results: 11 RF/PF killed, and seven RF/PF wounded; VC losses are unknown.

FOR THE COMMANDER:

  
D. E. BROCK  
Major, Infantry  
Adjutant

3

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HEADQUARTERS  
5TH SPECIAL FORCES GROUP (AIRBORNE), 1ST SPECIAL FORCES  
APO San Francisco, 96240

AVGB -C

10 December 1967

SUBJECT: Weekly Summary 021601Z December to 091600Z December 1967 (U)

TO: Deputy Chief of Staff for Military Operations, ATTN: Special Operations  
Directorate, Department of Army, Washington, D. C.  
Commanding General, US Army Pacific, ATTN: Special Warfare Branch  
APO San Francisco, 96558  
Commanding General, United States Military Assistance Command, Vietnam,  
ATTN: MACJ 3, APO San Francisco, 96222

1. (C) In I CTZ, CIDG and RF/PF advised by USASF conducted 132 operations and engaged in nine contacts during the week. Enemy losses were 12 killed, eight captured and two wounded. Six weapons were captured. Friendly losses were five CSF troops killed and fifteen wounded; one USASF killed, one wounded; and one AATTW wounded. There were no weapons lost by friendly forces. On 7 December at 1025 hours a search and destroy operation from camp Thong Duc, A-109, Quang Nam Province, consisting of six USASF and 169 MSF ambushed a VC platoon. The VC platoon returned fire and fled south with the friendly forces in pursuit. During the pursuit the friendly forces were ambushed by an estimated NVA battalion. The battalion was armed with machine guns, and mortars. On the initial contact with the NVA battalion friendly forces sustained one USASF killed, three MSF killed and four MSF wounded. Due to bad weather close air support could not be provided. Artillery was fired from Camp Thong Duc with unreported results. A search and destroy operation also from Camp Thong Duc, consisting of three USASF and 220 CSF troops, moved from their planned route to a blocking and reinforcing position to assist the MSF operation. At 1350 hours the MSF broke contact and moved to an LZ to medevac the 4 MSF wounded. On the 8th at 1050 hours the bodies of the USASF and MSF troops were recovered and evacuated to Camp Thong Duc. At 1715 hours the MSF attacked an unknown size VC force in well dug in emplacements from a distance of 50 meters. After a brief fire fight the VC broke contact and fled in an unknown direction. Results of this contact were one MSF killed, one USASF and two MSF wounded. Enemy losses are unknown. A breakdown of captured items are one AK-47; 12 packs; one mortar sight in carrying case complete with accessories, including night light device; one medical kit packed inside a rucksack marked with a red cross. The kit contained a wide variety of medicines including antibiotics, chloroquine, quinine, antispasmodics, morphine, atropine, and battle dressings. Items were of varied origin including North Vietnam, Russia, China and Poland. Co C Surgeon judged the medical kit to be quite sophisticated and capable of treating 100 troops for two or three months. Documents included unidentified unit rosters, personal

DOWNGRADE AT THREE YEAR INTERVALS  
DECLASSIFIED AFTER 12 YEARS  
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10 December 1967

SUBJECT: Weekly Summary 021601Z December to 091600Z December 1967 (U)

papers, letters, publications and what appeared to be weapon firing tables. Clippings from a Hanoi newspaper were less than six months old. On the 8th at 1245 hours a search and destroy operation from Camp Minh Long, A-108, Quang Ngai Province, consisting of two USASF, one VNSF and 50 CSF troops ambushed 10 VC washing in a stream from a distance of 35 meters; the VC returned fire and withdrew in a northeasterly direction. There were no friendly casualties. Enemy losses were three VC killed, one VC wounded and one M2 carbine captured.

2. (C) In II CTZ, CIDG and RF/PF units advised by USASF conducted 1,447 operations and engaged in 30 contacts during the week. Enemy losses were 26 killed, one captured, three suspects detained and 22 weapons captured. Friendly losses were 17 CIDG killed, 27 wounded and one weapon lost. A total of two mining incidents were reported during the week. On 4 December, a search and destroy operation from Vinh Thanh, A-228, Binh Dinh Province, consisting of two USASF, one VNSF and one CSF company initiated contact from 50 meters with three VC, 26 kilometers northeast of An Khe. A fire fight ensued resulting in two VC killed. On 5 December, a reaction force from Vinh Thanh, A-228, Binh Dinh Province, consisting of one CRP, was fired on by an estimated platoon of VC, 20 kilometers northeast of An Khe. A fire fight ensued, and artillery was called. The results of this contact were one CSF soldier killed, two wounded; six VC killed and five weapons captured. On 6 December, a saturation patrol from Vinh Thanh, A-228, Binh Dinh Province, consisting of one VNSF and one CSF platoon made contact with one VC squad 15 kilometers east of An Khe. A brief fire fight ensued resulting in two VC killed and one weapon captured. On 8 December, a search and destroy operation from Vinh Thanh, A-228, Binh Dinh Province, consisting of one CSF platoon fired at one VC squad 23 kilometers northeast of An Khe. A fire fight ensued and artillery from Camp Vinh Thanh fired in support, the results of this contact were two VC killed and two weapons captured.

3. (C) In III CTZ, the USASF advised CIDG and RF/PF units conducted 146 operations and engaged in 40 contacts during the week. Enemy losses were two killed; two weapons, two sampan motors, two rucksacks, documents and assorted munitions captured; two sampans, seven dwellings and 100 kilograms of rice destroyed. Friendly losses were four camp strike force soldiers killed; 13 USASF, one VNSF and 29 camp strike force soldiers wounded. There were no weapons lost by friendly forces. During the reporting period eight Special Forces camps came under mortar, rocket, or small arms fire attack. From 2 to 8 December, Camp Bu Dop, A-341, Phuoc Long Province, received approximately 130 mortar rounds and 12 rocket rounds, resulting in 11 USASF and nine camp strike force soldiers wounded; USASF living quarters, communications and ammunition storage facilities destroyed and two 155mm howitzers damaged. From 3 to 7 December, Camps Trai Bi, A-323, Tay Ninh Province; Hon Quan, B-33, Binh Long Province; Tong Le Chon, A-334, Tay Ninh Province; Song Be, B-34, Phuoc Long Province and Bunard, A-344, Phuoc Long Province received light mortar, rocket or small arms fire, resulting in negative damage or casualties. On 5 December, Camp Prek Klok, A-322, Tay Ninh Province, received 12 mortar

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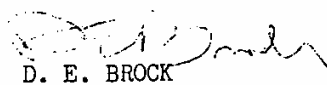
10 December 1967

SUBJECT: Weekly Summary 021601Z December to 091600Z December 1967 (U)

rounds, one rifle grenade and small arms fire resulting in one VNSF and three camp strike force soldiers wounded. On 6 December, Camp Duc Hue, A-351A, Hau Nghia Province, received 20 mortar rounds resulting in one camp strike force soldier killed; one USASF and one camp strike force soldier wounded. On 6 December, Camp Tong Le Chon, A-344, Tay Ninh Province, came under ground attack by an unknown size VC force. The enemy triggered trip flares while attempting to cut through the defensive wire. The camp strike force immediately opened fire with small arms, mortar and artillery, and called light fire teams in support, causing the enemy force to break contact and withdraw. Results of this attack were negative friendly and unknown enemy casualties. On 8 December, mobile strike force elements from Chien Thang I, A-302, Phuoc Tuy Province, operating 35 kilometers northwest of Tay Ninh, Tay Ninh Province, were ambushed by an estimated platoon of VC from a distance of 25 meters. The friendly elements returned fire and called FAC and light fire teams in support, causing the enemy force to break contact and withdraw. Results of this action were one mobile strike force soldier killed and 13 mobile strike force soldiers wounded. Enemy casualties are unknown. A search operation, attempting to locate one USASF, one VNSF and 21 camp strike force soldiers reported missing in action during the last reporting period continues.

4. (C) In IV CTZ, the USASF advised CIDG and RF/PF units conducted 1,625 operations and engaged in 16 contacts during the week. Enemy losses were 17 killed, 12 captured, seven suspects detained and two weapons captured. Friendly losses were two CIDG and five RF/PF killed; one USASF, one VNSF, seven CIDG, five RF/PF wounded and one RF/PF missing. A total of 10 weapons were lost by friendly forces. On 5 December at 0100 hours, two VC platoons attacked an RF search and destroy operation supporting Kinh Quan II, A-412, Kien Tuong Province. A fire fight ensued resulting in two VC killed and two VC captured. There were no friendly casualties. At 0015 hours on 5 December, an unknown size VC force attacked an RF outpost three kilometers east of Moc Hoa, Kien Tuong Province, and destroyed two bridges in the area. The action resulted in two RF killed, two RF wounded, one RF missing, and 10 weapons lost. Enemy casualties were unknown. At 1430 hours on 6 December, an element of the MSF on an operation in the vicinity of Ba Xoai, Chau Doc Province, initiated contact with a VC platoon armed with small arms and a .50 caliber machine gun. A 30 minute fire fight ensued, resulting in three VC killed and one VC wounded.

FOR THE COMMANDER:

  
D. E. BROCK  
MAJ, Infantry  
Adjutant

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## **Appendix H, 5th Group Monthly Summaries**

Selected pages from report for October, 1967

Selected pages from report for November, 1967







HEADQUARTERS  
5TH SPECIAL FORCES GROUP (AIRBORNE), 1ST SPECIAL FORCES  
APO San Francisco 96240

AVGB-C

8 November 1967

SUBJECT: Monthly Operational Summary for Period 1-31 October 1967 (U)

TO: SEE DISTRIBUTION

The attached report contains a summary of activities, troop disposition, and statistical data of the 5th Special Forces Group (Airborne), for the month of October 1967.

FOR THE COMMANDER:

5 Incl:

1. Monthly Opnl Data I CTZ
2. Monthly Opnl Data II CTZ
3. Monthly Opnl Data III CTZ
4. Monthly Opnl Data IV CTZ
5. Statistical Recapitulation

*[Signature]*  
D. E. BROCK  
Major, Infantry  
Adjutant

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- 1 - MACV Combined Studies Division
- 1 - Opn Sec, Joint Opns Div, COG, MACV
- 5 - CG, USARV
- 1 - ACTIV, Ground Combat Div
- 1 - USAID, Rural Construction Directorate
- 1 - Senior Advisor, RF/PF, Cholon
- 1 - SA each CTZ, AST ea CTZ
- 1 - LNO, 5TH SFGA
- 1 - G3, IFForceV
- 12 - 5th SFGA SFOB (S1,S2,S4,S5,Compt,Hist,Engr,Sig O, Surgeon)
- 1 - ea Special Forces Company, 5th SFGA
- 1 - ea "B" and "A" detachment

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- 1 - USA Intel School, ATTN: AHBQ-DL, Ft Holabird, Md., 21219

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### MONTHLY HIGHLIGHTS - III CTZ (CONT'D)

of 20 meters. After a five minute fire fight, the enemy broke contact and withdrew. This contact resulted in one VC killed; one VC captured; one sampan with motor, one small arm, and assorted supplies, munitions and medicine captured. On 25 October, a search and destroy operation from Bu Dop, A-341, Phuoc Long Province, consisting of two USASF, two VNSF, and one Camp Strike Force company, made contact with a VC squad. After a ten minute fire fight, the enemy broke contact and withdrew. This contact resulted in two VC killed. Later in the day, this same element, while searching for a VC base camp, made contact with another VC squad which later increased to a larger force of unknown size. The VC attempted encirclement but the friendly element managed to break through with artillery support from their camp. Two VC were killed as a result of this action. Shortly thereafter, the same element was surrounded by a VC force of company plus size and was engaged at a distance of 50 to 100 meters. Mobile Strike Forces and helicopter support were requested. Two companies of Mobile Strike Force began arriving on 26 October and made contact with a VC company. After a 15 minute fire fight, the VC broke contact and withdrew. This contact resulted in four VC killed, three small arms, two grenades and one 105mm round captured. During that operation, a helicopter, with three USASF aboard, crashed while attempting to pick up a wounded Camp Strike Force soldier. The three USASF were killed as a result of this crash and all members of the crew were seriously injured. On 27 October, Camp Song Be, B-34, Phuoc Long Province, came under mortar attack from three VC mortar squads. The camp returned mortar fire and after nearly three hours, the enemy broke contact and withdrew. This attack on Camp Song Be resulted in three USASF and three Camp Strike Force personnel wounded. On 21 October Camp Tong Le Chon, A-334, Binh Long Province, came under mortar attack from an unknown size VC force. The camp returned 105mm artillery fire and called for tactical air support. During the 20 minute attack, the camp received 30 rounds of 81mm and 82mm mortar rounds. Tactical air support started dropping napalm and CBU's on the suspected enemy positions which caused the VC to break contact and withdraw. This attack resulted in five USASF, two US engineers, eight CIDG and two ARVN wounded. On 29 October a search and destroy operation from Camp Tong Le Chon, A-334, Binh Long Province, consisting of two USASF, two VNSF and one Camp Strike Force Company made contact with an estimated VC company. The friendly elements opened fire with small arms, and called artillery and air strikes in support. The enemy returned fire and after a two hour fire fight, the enemy broke contact and withdrew. This contact resulted in one CIDG wounded and seven VC killed.

**REVOLUTIONARY DEVELOPMENT SUPPORT ACTIVITIES.** Throughout III Corps this month civic action centered on the construction of CIDG dependent housing, hospitals, bridges and schools. In Duc Phong, the fourth school house in four months was completed. The children of the area are now able to attend classes and receive an education. Approximately 100 migrant Montagnard families residing under VC control in the Chi Linh AO have expressed desire to be relocated near the Chi Linh Special Forces camp to escape harassment from the VC. Coordination is being conducted and plans are being made for the arrival of the refugees. In Ben Soi, 100 families were forced to leave their homes because of rising water. Plans were immediately made to establish temporary living quarters on dry ground. Most of the families lost what food they had from water damage. A rice distribution point was established and food and health kits were distributed. In Minh Thanh a program has been underway to train nurses to work throughout the "A" camps in III Corps. Medical personnel are needed in this area, and the program will help to supplement the efforts of the overburdened medics.

**PSYCHOLOGICAL OPERATIONS.** The first class of Co A's new CIDG POLWAR teams graduated this month. The student body was composed of three CIDG from the formerly established CAPO squads at each "A" camp. The POLWAR course emphasizes a more inclusive concept than just CA and PSYOPS activities. The







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### MONTHLY HIGHLIGHTS - III CTZ (CONT'D)

POIWAR concept incorporates motivation and indoctrination into the overall program with the CIDG striker receiving training priority in welfare, education, vocational training and PSYOPS efforts. It is presently planned that this school will continue until all personnel are retrained under the POIWAR concept. The course is six weeks in duration. The entire III CTZ area received an intensified PSYOPS campaign. Leaflets, loudspeaker appeals, and face-to-face communication resulted in 41 Chieu Hoi coming over to the GVN cause. MEDCAPS were the primary means utilized for face-to-face communication.

**TIPS OF THE TRADE.** One day heliborne operations have proven more successful than the three day operations that have been run in the past few months. It is recommended that more of these short operations be conducted to enhance the element of surprise. A technique that is used successfully when approaching a trail junction is to leave a squad in ambush while preselected elements recon the trail network. If the enemy is following the operation, the ambush will pick them up, while the recon continues. Additionally, if an enemy patrol ventures along any of the trails running through the intersection, they are denied information as to the direction of movement of the operation.

The use of dogs as a means of tracking down the VC should be utilized to the utmost. Contrary to popular belief, scout dogs do have a "staying power" for more than 4 days providing they adhere to the rotation system and proper diet.

When conducting small boat river operations, likely VC ambush sites should be reconned by fire. It is most desirable that small boat river operations be accompanied by either an overhead FAC or a light fire team.

Reluctance to pursue, and the continuance of offensive action against the VC once contact has been initiated, has been noted on the part of the CIDG company size operation. When significant contact is made, often LDB counterparts immediately request air and artillery support against squad size VC elements instead of employing fire and maneuver tactics. Often the immediate employment of air and artillery support allows the VC ample time to break contact and withdraw. It is believed that more aggressive pursuit and less reliance on artillery and air support, would result in more VC confirmed kills; especially in squad size contacts. If the USASF advisors determine that close air or artillery is necessary they must insure that immediately after employment, the CIDG continue pursuit of the VC force.

Company A's FSP utilizes an automatic resupply system which has proven to be an effective time saver and has reduced considerably the requisition requirement. A chart is maintained by the FSP, and posted daily, reflecting the on-hand balance of rice, mogas, diesel, butane, and oil for each camp. We receive information from the daily admin reports. Each camp has a numerical reorder point. When their on-hand balance falls below this point, the FSP programs aircraft to deliver the needed supplies. It is, however, required that all detachments forward an accurate admin report. In order to attain maximum effectiveness and insure proper aircraft utilization, all detachments must insure that items on automatic resupply are properly distributed. Several detachments have used rice to pay laborers and often come up with a low rice balance, necessitating continual resupply. The effect of this practice on our supply system is disastrous; as aircraft must be continually diverted to meet the needs of any camp experiencing a shortage. Effective 20 Oct Company A commenced monitoring all admin reports for indications of excessive use in an attempt to eliminate any misuse of the automatic resupply system.

Company A receives about 10 aircraft requests weekly. This is a routine matter and should take no more than one hour per request. Our major problem, until recently, was that the FSP received incomplete information regarding aircraft usage. Upon receipt of the proper paperwork a request is initiated and







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### MONTHLY HIGHLIGHTS - III CTZ (CONT'D)

submitted through channels. At General Staff level, II FFV, a decision is made indicating approval, type of aircraft, and number of sorties. Many requests previously received did not contain the necessary required information to effect a request from the FSP. Responses on recent requests have improved considerably and prompt airlift service will result if proper requesting formats are followed.

It is possible to double the life of generators by following a few simple tips. It is necessary to keep any generator elevated so as to keep its carriage off the ground. If two generators are being used it is recommended that they be alternated on a regular basis. Any mechanical repair which appears complicated and beyond the capabilities of mechanics at the location is either checked by a B detachment Tech Rep or forwarded to Company A's FSP to be repaired.

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2. (C) TROOP DISPOSITION LIST - III CTZ.

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DET	LOCATION	COORD	DATE OPENED	NR VNSF**	NR NR	NR NR	CA/PO SQDS	MSF CO	AIRBOAT FLT.	RP CO	PF PLT	MISSION
Company A												
C-3	Bien Hoa	YT00901270	Nov 64	19/59	18/61	3/382	1/34					C&C
A-301	Trang Sup	XT16655540	Jan 63	5/11	2/10							CSF/TC
A-302	Chien Thang I	YS43965104	Sep 67	9/9	2/15			6/1022				MSF
A-311	Tanhi Linh**	YT92872617	May 65	2/3	1/6	4/272	1/14					CSF
B-32	Tay Ninh	XT20305025	Dec 64	6/12	7/17	1/117	1/32					C&C
A-321	Ben Sol	XT09204757	Mar 65	3/10	2/8	4/446	2/68		1/36	3/396	1/32	CSF/BS/SS
A-322	Prek Klok	XT27827856	Mar 67	3/10	2/11	6/653	2/66		1/12			CSF/BS
A-323	Trai Bai	XT11766947	Jun 66	3/8	2/10	5/631	2/68					CSF/BS
A-324	Nui Ba Den	XT28105820	Jul 64	1/1	1/6	1/118						Radio Relay
B-33	Hon Quan	XT73858770	Jul 65	7/13	8/18	1/38	1/34					C&C
A-331	Loc Minh	XT73140823	Dec 66	3/10	2/10	5/459	2/63		1/12			CSF/BS
A-332	Minh Thanh	XT64356682	Feb 64	2/9	2/9	4/288	1/25					CSF
A-333	Chi Linh	XT91507350	Jan 67	2/9	2/9	4/205	2/56					CSF
A-334	Tong Le Chon	XT62228103	Mar 67	2/8	2/11	3/106						CSF/BS
B-34	Song Be	YT17971132	Apr 65	6/13	8/23	1/34				6/620	30/1019	C&C/S/SS
A-341	Bu Dop	YT97452909	Nov 63	3/8	3/11	4/357	1/59			1/77	9/305	CSF/BS/SS
A-342	Dong Yoi	YT07647597	Jun 65	2/6	2/8	5/388	2/60			1/22	8/220	CSF/SS
A-343	Duc Phong	YT43750499	Apr 66	2/8	5/19	4/471	2/68			1/104	6/217	CSF/SS
A-344	Bunard	YT27018877	Apr 67	2/9	2/10	5/315	1/27					CSF
B-35	Duc Hoa	XS6007625	Dec 66	8/9	7/20	1/77	1/34					C&C
A-351	Hiep Hoa	XT43000717	May 66	2/8	5/10	4/429	2/68		1/16			CSF/BS/SS
A-352	Tre Cu	XS47759846	Jan 67	2/7	3/11	6/436	2/64		1/16			CSF/BS
A-353	Luong Hoa***	XS58108555	May 67	2/7	2/7	4/284	2/57		1/16			CSF/BS
B-36	Chien Thang II	YT43845122	Sep 67	2/7	9/23			1/139				C&C
A-361	Chien Thang II	YT43845122	Sep 67	2/7	9/23			1/169				MSF
A-362	Chien Thang II	YT43845122	Sep 67	2/7	9/23			1/169				MSF
B-55	Saigon				8/34	1/212		4/455				LNO
B-56	Ho Ngoc Tao	XT95810010	Aug 66		8/52							SIGMA
TOTAL:				95/247	111/419	71/6671	32/1037	8/105 12/1785	4/84	13/1604	54/1793	

LEGEND: C&C - Command and Control

BS - Border Surveillance

S/SS - Sector/Subsector

RP - Regional Force (Province Level)

PF - Popular Force (District Level)

CRP - Combat Reconnaissance Platoon

CA/PO - Civic Action/Psychological Operations

TC - Training Center

CSF - Camp Strike Force (Formerly CIDG)

MSF - Mobile Strike Force (Formerly Mike Force)

CIDG - Civilian Irregular Defense Group are MSF, CSF, CRP and CA/PO Sqds

\* - VNSF & USASF strengths - Off/EM, all other strengths Nr Units/Nr Perso

\*\* - Tanh Linh converted to RP/PR eff 31 Oct 67 (District Control)

\*\*\* - Luong Hoa, A-353 closed out eff 25 Oct 67

\*\*\*\* - Camps redesignated Chien Thang I & Chien Thang II eff Oct 67

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## RECAPITULATION

1. Personnel Assigned				60,832
a. USASF				2,559
b. VNSF				1,628
c. CIDG				35,672
d. Mobile Strike Force				6,371
e. Regional Force				6,791
f. Popular Force				7,811
2. Operations				
a. Squad				11,522
b. Platoon				6,633
c. Company or Larger				1,568
d. Total Operations				19,723
3. Contacts				
a. Contacts resulting from friendly offensive action				266
b. VC attacks on installations and convoys				177
c. Incidents (mines, booby traps, assassinations, etc.)				67
4. Confirmed VC Losses				
a. KIA				764
b. WIA				36
c. Captured				116
d. Weapons				202
5. Friendly Losses	<u>USASF</u>	<u>VNSF</u>	<u>CIDG</u>	<u>RF/PF</u>
a. KIA	5	Ø	82	15
b. WIA	32	5	384	74
c. MIA	Ø	Ø	8	Ø
d. Total Weapons Lost:	53			
6. Personnel Recruited During Period:				1,792

INCL 5







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HEADQUARTERS  
5TH SPECIAL FORCES GROUP (AIRBORNE), 1ST SPECIAL FORCES  
APO San Francisco 96240

AVGB-C

11 December 1967

SUBJECT: Monthly Operational Summary for the period 1-30 November 1967 (U)

TO: SEE DISTRIBUTION

1. Attached as inclosures are summaries of the activities, troop disposition, and statistical data of the 5th Special Forces Group (Airborne), for the month of November 1967.

2. Comments are requested from addresses in order to improve the MOPSUM. For your convenience, a questionnaire is attached. Request comments and your requirements for distribution of this report NLT 5 January 1968.

FOR THE COMMANDER:

5 Incl:

1. Monthly Opnl Data I CTZ
2. Monthly Opnl Data II CTZ
3. Monthly Opnl Data III CTZ
4. Monthly Opnl Data IV CTZ
5. Statistical Recapitulation

*Paul J. McCarthy*  
PAUL J. MC CARTHY  
Captain, JOC  
Assistant Adjutant

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### 1. (C) MONTHLY HIGHLIGHTS - III CTZ.

OPERATIONS. During the period 29 October - 2 November, Loc Ninh, A-331, Binh Long Province came under heavy ground and mortar attack. On 29 October at 0125 hours, heavy mortar, small arms and .50 caliber machine gun suppressing fire was placed on the camp in support of an estimated two battalion attack on the RF/PF and district compound. At 0645 hours, Camp Loc Ninh launched a Camp Strike Force company operation to relieve the district compound. At 1000 hours, a reinforced infantry battalion of the 1st US Infantry Division was committed to assist in the clearing of the district compound, and the final contact was broken at 1150 hours. On 31 October at 0045 hours, Det A-331, the district headquarters, and elements of the 1st US Infantry Division at Loc Ninh came under heavy mortar and rocket attack. At 0100 hours, small arms fire increased in a coordinated attack on all three friendly locations. At 0145 hours, the joint employment of fire from all three locations suppressed the attack. Sporadic small arms fire was received until 0515 hours when another coordinated attack commenced on all three friendly unit locations. The friendly elements jointly returned fire and at 0730 hours, the VC broke contact and withdrew. On 2 November, at 0045 hours, all three unit locations again began receiving heavy mortar and small arms fire. Between 0130 and 0600 hours, the enemy force, estimated at three battalions, probably of the 273d Regiment, made repeated attempts to mass their troops and assault friendly positions. The effective use of light fire teams, flare ships, tactical air and friendly ground units broke the attack. At 0600 hours the enemy broke contact and withdrew. During the three attacks, Camp Loc Ninh received 24 rounds of 122mm rocket fire, 22 rounds of 120mm mortar, 370 rounds of 82mm mortar, 50 B-40 rockets and 50 RPG-7 rockets. As a result of all three attacks, eight CIDG were killed; four USASF and 68 CIDG were wounded; 184 VC were killed. In addition, 95 VC were killed which were not accredited to USASF, VNSF or CIDG. Four small arms, five crew served weapons, ten RPG-7 rockets, 20 B-40 rockets, 50 hand grenades and assorted munitions were captured. On 5 November, Camp Chien Thang I, A-302, and Camp Chien Thang II, B-36, Phuoc Tuy Province, received a total of nine 60mm mortar rounds. There was no damage or casualties at either camp. On 9 November, Hon Quan, B-33, Tong Le Chon, A-334, Binh Long Province; and Bunard, A-344, Phuoc Long Province came under mortar and rocket attacks. Hon Quan received a total of 200 rounds of 82mm mortar and rocket fire, 20 of which landed in the sector headquarters. Tong Le Chon received a total of 33 rounds of 82mm mortar during two attacks in which two Camp Strike Force personnel were wounded. Bunard received 10 rounds of 60mm and 81mm mortar which landed south of the camp perimeter. All three camps fired defensive concentrations and counter mortar fire. Air support consisting of light fire teams, AC-47 gunships and TAC Air caused the enemy to break contact and withdraw. On 14 November, Loc Ninh, A-331, Binh Long Province, received several 82mm mortar rounds from an unknown enemy force. The camp responded with 105mm artillery defensive concentrations and 81mm countermortar fires, which caused the enemy to break contact and withdraw. On 15 November, Loc Ninh again received 82mm mortar rounds and one B-40 rocket. The camp responded with defensive concentrations and countermortar fire, causing the enemy to break contact and withdraw. The camp suffered no casualties during both attacks. On 18 November, Tong Le Chon, A-334, Binh Long Province, received approximately 50-82mm mortar rounds from an unknown size VC force. All enemy rounds landed in the outer defensive wire. The camp responded with 105mm and 175mm defensive concentrations and called light fire teams in support, causing the enemy to break contact and withdraw. There were no friendly casualties resulting from this attack. On 18 November, a forward element of a search and destroy operation from Bu Dop, A-341, Phuoc Long Province, consisting of two USASF, one VNSF and 100 camp strike force personnel, sighted an NVA company, wearing khaki uniforms, in bunkers, in the vicinity of Bu Dop. The friendly element deployed, and assaulted the enemy positions, opening fire from a distance of 50 meters. The enemy returned fire and due to their superior firepower, caused the friendly unit to break contact and withdraw. After regrouping, the friendly unit called airstrikes on the enemy position. At the completion of the airstrikes, the enemy flanked the friendly unit and opened fire. The friendly unit

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### MONTHLY HIGHLIGHTS - III CTZ (CONT'D)

returned fire but again had to break contact and withdraw. Results of this contact were one camp strike force soldier killed, two wounded, and two weapons lost. Enemy losses were four killed and one wounded. On 25 November a search and destroy operation in Hau Nghia Province consisting of three USASF and 157 Mobile Strike Force personnel made contact with an estimated 25 VC armed with automatic and semi automatic weapons 10 kilometers west of Duc Hoa. The VC were hiding in houses and directed sniper fire on the Mobile Strike Force at a distance of 300 meters. The Mobile Strike Force assaulted the VC positions. A brief fire fight ensued, which resulted in nine VC killed, 13 VC captured, three sampans and two houses destroyed. On 26 November, a company search and destroy operation from Tra Cu, A-352, Hau Nghia Province, was engaged by a platoon of VC eight kilometers west of Duc Hoa. A two hour fire fight ensued resulting in three CIDG killed, one wounded; 16 VC killed and two weapons captured. On 26 November, a company search and destroy operation from Bu Dop, A-341, Phuoc Long Province, was engaged by an estimated company of VC, 20 kilometers north northwest of Song Be. A 90 minute fire fight ensued resulting in one USASF, four CIDG wounded; two VC killed. During the period 27 to 29 November, a company search and destroy operation from Bu Dop, A-341, reinforced by one company from Dong Xoai, A-342, and one company from Duc Phong, A-343, Phuoc Long Province, operating 10 kilometers northwest of Song Be, were engaged by numerically superior NVA forces. The friendly units were out maneuvered causing them to split. Results were one USASF, nine CIDG killed; three USASF, one VNSF, and 20 CIDG wounded; one USASF, one VNSF and 32 CIDG missing; and 32 weapons lost. On 30 November, friendly elements were sent out to attempt to relocate the missing personnel. The search continues. On 27 November, a company search and destroy operation from Bunard, A-344, Phuoc Long Province, was ambushed by a company of VC, 23 kilometers southeast of Song Be. A 20 minute fire fight ensued resulting in one USASF, one CIDG killed; one VNSF and one CIDG wounded; 15 VC killed. On 28 November, a company search and destroy operation from Tra Cu, A-352, Hau Nghia Province, was engaged by an estimated platoon of VC, 15 kilometers west of Duc Hoa. A brief fire fight ensued resulting in four VC killed, one VC and two weapons captured. On 29 November, a Mobile Strike Force Company search and destroy operation supporting Duc Hoa, B-35, Hau Nghia Province, was engaged by one squad of VC, 30 miles northwest of Duc Hoa. A 45 minute fire fight ensued, resulting in one CIDG wounded; five VC killed. On 29 November, Bu Dop, A-341, Phuoc Long Province, received an estimated 15-122mm rocket rounds in conjunction with the attack on Bo Duc District Headquarters. Rocket fire was inaccurate and caused no damage or casualties to the camp.

REVOLUTIONARY DEVELOPMENT SUPPORT ACTIVITIES. At Hiep Hoa, A-351, the CA effort this month was on MEDCAP's. Detachment A-351 in coordination with the 2/27 Infantry, 25th Infantry Division, treated 450 patients during four (4) joint MEDCAP's. The MEDCAP's were conducted to allow the doctors and medics to examine the patients on a weekly basis. Trang Sup, A-301, is presently in the planning stage for construction of 3 classrooms, a hamlet chief's office, and wells for the village and market place. Their civic action program in gaining tremendous local support, especially after the completion of the Trang Sup market-place. The local villagers are enthusiastic about the CA team and are offering a variety of ideas for social and economic improvement. At Loc Ninh, A-331, CIDG dependents were evacuated by C-130 aircraft to Bien Hoa to protect them from exploitation by enemy forces in the Loc Ninh area. As a result of the attack at Loc Ninh, many refugees went to Hon Quan, B-33. They were welcomed by Hon Quan district representatives and their basic needs were provided for through all agencies concerned. The morale of the people in and around Hon Quan remained high throughout the build-up of enemy and friendly forces. High morale is attributed to properly employed CA PSYOP techniques. At Chi Lang, B-32, the recently trained CIDG POLWAR Squads are being used to conduct POLWAR and Civic Action activities at all the A camps. A band is also being sent to accompany all MEDCAP's to promote interest and capture the villager's attention.







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### MONTHLY HIGHLIGHTS - III CTZ (CONT'D)

The band is being furnished by B-32. On 22 November 1967, LTC Vance, CO, 1Lt McAfee, S5, and SGM Bowen, all of B-32, were presented with honorary Philippine Master Parachutists wings by the Commanding General, 1st PHILCAGV. These awards were presented in recognition of the CIVAC support these individuals rendered to 1st PHILCAGV civic action programs in Tay Ninh Province.

**PSYCHOLOGICAL OPERATIONS.** On 15 November four local Montagnard Viet Cong, including a squad leader rallied to district headquarters. The Hoi Chanh brought their rifles with them. The squad leader agreed to make a tape asking the rest of his squad to rally. The tape was played from U-10 aircraft. **Lessons Learned:** When used with imagination, photography will enhance the effect of a leaflet. Pictures inform at a glance, illustrate the action, and bring the reader close to the stories theme. When utilizing photographs, three steps should be kept in mind: a. The subject should be determined by the theme of the leaflet.

b. The layout of the leaflet should direct the viewers attention to the subject.

c. Careful study of the target audience and proper pretest techniques will assist in the choice of a successful theme. The use of local "Armed Propaganda Teams" will increase your face-to-face communications. They can be used to disseminate handouts and gather information in areas the CSF POLWAR team would not reach

**TIPS OF THE TRADE.** It was determined that an effective Motor Stables Program placed into effect at the A det level can reduce backloading and C det level maintenance by as much as 50%. Each A det should insure that one of the USAF personnel on the teams is given the responsibility of equipment maintenance. Motor stables must be conducted daily and all deficiencies corrected. When a vehicle is deadlined for repair it is imperative that it not be cannibalized as this leads to increased deterioration and repair difficulties. Defective equipment must be inspected and readied for repair. Properly maintained equipment is a must for effective team operation and it is strongly recommended that USAF personnel be directly responsible for this maintenance.

"A" dets can considerably cut unloading time and aircraft ground time by installing skate roller conveyors on their 2½ ton trucks. These conveyors may be requisitioned through channels. The conveyors need not be welded to the truck bed but only laid on the bed itself. After an aircraft arrives it is necessary that the 2½ ton truck pull up even with the lowered ramp. The cargo is then pushed from the aircraft onto the 2½ ton truck. It should take approximately five minutes to offload C7A aircraft. This would save about twenty minutes and would enable us to increase our usage of C7A aircraft. Through the use of skate roller conveyors, it is possible to move cargo directly from the aircraft onto trucks. It can then be moved to the proper storage facility and broken down. Without conveyors it is necessary to unload the aircraft on the ground and then break down the cargo. It is then loaded on trucks and moved into camp.

In order to provide a more thorough recon of an area, it has proven advantageous to set up a base of operations in a thick area which offers cover and concealment and send patrols along trails running through the area. The dispersion of troops facilitates complete and rapid coverage of a specific area and decreases the chance of the patrols being trailed by the VC.

Another good tip being used successfully throughout III CTZ involves a systematic employment of supporting fires. It has been found that a good countermeasure to VC small unit infiltration is to increase the number of friendly patrols going into the area and "walk" the artillery in front of the patrols.

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MONTHLY HIGHLIGHTS - III CTZ (CONT'D)

Significant benefits can be derived from a lesson learned on Opn Whirlwind IX, an airmobile operation which originated at Camp Tra Cu on 19 Oct 67. They found that an extended smoke screen covering approximately 1000 meters thoroughly confused the enemy as to the exact LZ and intentions of the friendly unit. The enemy is denied line of sight fire; any hostile fire is searching fire and serves only to reveal the exact location of enemy small arms and automatic weapons.

Operations in the same area have yielded impressive results by placing hasty dams across the more frequently used canals. VC infiltrators run head long into the hasty ambushes and in many instances important document and other EEI have been captured before the VC had time to destroy them.

A small tip, well worth the effort is to record items of intelligence value on film. It should be remembered that each A det is authorized a polaroid camera and its instant picture capability can often save a lot of writing.

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2. (C) TROOP DISPOSITION LIST - III CTZ

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DET	LOCATION	COORD	DATE OPENED	NR VNSF*	NR USASF*	NR NR CO/CSF CRP	CA/PO SONS	MSF CO	AIRBOAT PLT	RF CO	PF PLT	MISSION
Company A												
C-3	Bien Hoa	YT00711230	Nov 64	15/43	23/77	37						C&C
A-301	Trang Sup	XT16655540	Jan 63	5/9	2/9	3/380						CSF/TC
A-302	Chien Thang I	YS43965104	Sep 67	8/9	2/15			5/1036				MSF
B-32	Tay Ninh	XT20305025	Dec 64	6/14	10/21	2/270	1/34					C&C
A-321	Ben Soi	XT09204757	Mar 65	3/10	2/9	4/528	2/68		1/36	3/396	1/32	CSF/BS/SS
A-322	Prek Klok	XT27327856	Mar 67	3/10	2/9	6/616	2/66					CSF/BS
A-323	Trai Bi	XT11766947	Jun 66	3/8	3/11	5/634	2/66					CSF/BS
A-324	Nui Ba Den	XT28105820	Jul 64	1/1	7/7							Radio Rela
B-33	Hon Quan	XT73858770	Jul 65	5/12	11/18	38	1/34					C&C
A-331	Loc Ninh	XU73140823	Dec 66	3/10	2/10	5/405	2/62					CSF/BS
A-332	Minh Thanh	XU764356882	Feb 64	2/11	1/9	4/274	1/23					CSF
A-333	Chi Linh	XT91507350	Jan 67	2/9	2/11	5/247	2/51					CSF
A-334	Tong Le Chon	XT62228103	Mar 67	2/11	2/11	2/254	2/57					CSF/BS
B-34	Song Be	XU17971132	Apr 65	6/13	8/23	51	1/34					C&C
A-341	Bu Dop	XU97452909	Nov 63	3/8	3/11	4/330	1/57					CSF/BS/SS
A-342	Dong Xoai	YT07647597	Jun 65	2/9	3/10	4/375	2/61					CSF/SS
A-343	Duc Phong	YU43750499	Apr 66	2/8	3/11	4/469	2/68					CSF/SS
A-344	Bunard	YT27018877	Apr 67	2/9	3/11	5/297	1/34					CSF
B-35	Duc Hoa	XS60007625	Dec 66	4/11	9/19	1/77	1/34					C&C
A-351	Hiep Hoa	XT43000717	May 66	1/3	2/9	3/193	2/24		1/8	1/440		CSF/BS/SS
A-352	Tra Cu	XS47759846	Jan 67	2/9	2/11	5/378	2/64		1/16			CSF/BS
A-351a	Duc Hue	XT32100900	Nov 67	2/11	2/11	5/529	2/68		1/16			CSF/BS
B-36**	Chien Thang	IIV43845122	Sep 67	8/27**	8/41			2/441				C&C
B-55	Saigon											
TOTAL:				31/238	113/402	67/6382	29/905	7/94	7/1477	4/76	7/1137	25/854

LEGEND: C&C - Command and Control  
 BS - Border Surveillance  
 S/SS - Sector/Subsector  
 RF - Regional Force (Province Level)  
 PF - Popular Force (District Level)  
 CRP - Combat Reconnaissance Platoon  
 CA/PO - Civic Action/Psychological Operations  
 TC - Training Center

NOTE: \* VNSF & USASF strengths-Off/EM, all other strengths Nr Units/Nr Person  
 \*\* Strength Figures include all USASF and CIDG assigned to B-36, A-361, A-362. 17 US LRRP attached are not included in total

CSF - Camp Strike Force (Formerly CIDG)  
 MSF - Mobile Strike Force (Formerly Mike Force)  
 CIDG - Civilian Irregular Defense Group are MSF, CSF, CRP and CA/PO Eqd

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3. DETACHMENT STATISTICAL DATA: III CTZ OPERATIONS

DET	VNSF CO	USASF CO	CO	PFT	SDQ	CONTACTS:	FOA	VCA	INC	KIA	FRIENDLY LOSSES:	KIA	WIA	OPTR	WENS
Company A															
C-3	LTC Can	LTC Hayes	1	24	185	1	1	5			0/0/1/0				
A-301	1Lt Lan	CPT Ford	9	3	25	1	1				0/1/3/0 0/0/10/0	16			1
A-302	CPT Lac	CPT Pino	2	33		1	1				0/0/1/0 3/0/6/0				
B-32	CPT Hanh	LTC Vance	14	11	92	1	1								
A-321	CPT Hai	CPT Phillips	10	31	94	3	3				0/0/1/0 0/0/7/0				
A-322	CPT Thanh	CPT Winton	8	155		2	3	9			0/0/8/0 1/0/35/0		1		
A-323	1Lt Chan	CPT Lopez													
A-324	MSG Ba	MSG Johnson													
B-33	MAJ Tuu	MAJ Husar	6			7	5				0/0/6/0 5/0/45/0	197	1		22
A-331	1Lt Hanh	CPT Bohannon	9												
A-332	1Lt Nghia	CPT Carmack	7			1									
A-333	1Lt Hoang	CPT Jackson	8			5	11				0/0/1/0	3	6		
A-334	1Lt Thien	CPT Pedigo	10	129	266	6	12				2/0/0/0 2/0/2/0	6	5		
B-34	MAJ Blier	MAJ Miller	14	7	213	2	2				1/0/1/1 0/2/9/2	24	18	1	
A-341	1Lt Treiu	CPT Hasko	8	12	12	1	1				0/0/2/0 0/0/13/0				
A-342	1Lt Te	CPT Drollinger	5	1	2										
A-343	CPT Kien	CPT Peters	55	150							0/0/1/0				
A-344	1Lt Phuong	CPT Olivera	13	1		4	2				0/0/0/2 0/0/3/0	6		1	
B-35	MAJ Tien	MAJ Mendoza	2								0/0/3/0 0/0/3/0				
A-351	1Lt Lam	1Lt Mayer	1	19	20	12	1				0/0/3/0	21	7		7
A-352	1Lt Thoi	CPT Williams													
A-351(A)	1Lt Luc	CPT Helvin													
B-36	MAJ Gritz	MAJ Ranger													
B-55															
TOTAL:			189	415	1339	39	49	16	7	1/26/3	18/2/158/2 1/1/32/0	273	38	6	32

NOTE: Friendly casualties are listed - USASF/VNSF/CIDG/RF & PF

LEGEND: FOA - Contacts resulting from friendly offensive action.

VCA - VC attacks on installations and convoys.

INC - Incidents (mines, boobytraps, assassinations, etc).

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## RECAPITULATION

1. Personnel Assigned:				54,501
a. USASF				2,633
b. VNSF				1,779
c. CIDG				
(1) Camp Strike Force (CSF)				29,554
(2) Mobile Strike Force (MSF)				6,174
(3) Combat Recon Platoon (CRP)				3,781
(4) Other (CA/PO, Arty, 106 Sec, Boat Plt)				808
			Total	40,317
d. Regional Force				5,129
e. Popular Force				4,643
2. Operations.				
a. Squad				8,429
b. Platoon				4,870
c. Company or Larger				1,670
d. Total Operations				14,969
3. Contacts.				
a. Contacts resulting from friendly offensive action				283
b. VC attacks on installations and convoys				247
c. Incidents (mines, booby traps, assassinations, etc.)				77
4. Confirmed VC losses.				
a. KIA				681
b. WIA				85
c. Captured				58
d. Weapons				246
5. Friendly Losses				
	<u>USASF</u>	<u>VNSF</u>	<u>CIDG</u>	<u>RF/PF</u>
a. KIA	11	3	116	24
b. WIA	48	4	335	76
c. MIA	1	1	32	0
d. Total Weapons Lost:		<u>61</u>		
6. Total Number of Recruits recruited:				1,497

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## **Appendix I, 5th Group Quarterly Summary**

Selected pages see page 4 for description of action at Bu Dop.

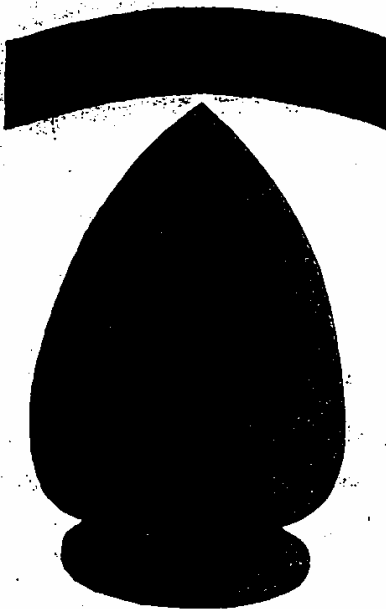
Also see CIDG analysis at end of group summary.







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**5th SPECIAL FORCES GROUP (AIRBORNE)**  
**1ST SPECIAL FORCES**



OPERATIONAL REPORT  
FOR QUARTERLY PERIOD  
ENDING 31 JAN 68

REGRADED UNCLASSIFIED  
WHEN SEPARATED FROM  
CLASSIFIED INCLOSURES

AVC-68-S 1571

SFZS 807 **68**

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DECLASSIFIED AFTER 12 YEARS  
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DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY  
HEADQUARTERS  
5TH SPECIAL FORCES GROUP (AIRBORNE), 1ST SPECIAL FORCES  
APO San Francisco, 96240

AVGB-C

15 February 1968

SUBJECT: Operational Report - Lessons Learned for Quarterly Period Ending  
31 January 1968 (RCS CSFOR-65) (U) (UIC #WALXAA)

THRU: Commanding General  
United States Army, Vietnam  
ATTN: AVHGC-DST  
APO San Francisco 96375

THRU: Commander-in-Chief  
United States Army Pacific  
APO San Francisco 96558

TO: Assistant Chief of Staff for Force Development  
Department of the Army  
Washington, D. C., 20310

## 1. (C) General:

a. During the quarter Special Forces detachments in all four Corps Tactical Zones experienced heavy contact with the enemy; and enemy activity in I and IV Corps Tactical Zones, in particular, showed a marked increase from the previous reporting period. As reflected in the statistical data found at inclosure 2, there was a substantial increase in enemy casualties in all Corps areas except III CTZ. However, Detachment A-331 (Loc Ninh) in III CTZ experienced the largest enemy attacks between 29 October and 2 November 1967. (See After Action Reports at Inclosures 8 and 9). In this battle the enemy

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AUTOMATICALLY DECLASSIFIED AFTER  
12 YEARS. DOD DIR 5200.10

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AVGB-C

15 February 1968

SUBJECT: Operational Report - Lessons Learned for Quarter Ending 31 Jan 68 (U)

again indicated their willingness to accept severe losses in order to achieve a significant victory. In I CTZ the center of interest lay in northwest Quang Tri Province where Special Forces Detachment A-101 (Lang Vei) and the Khe Sanh combat base were seriously threatened by a large enemy buildup. In II CTZ the heavy fighting that started on 5 November around Dak To developed into the longest engagement of the Vietnamese conflict. Detachments A-502 and A-503, the National Police, Vietnamese Rangers, and a ROK battalion jointly participated in the battle of Dien Khanh between 25 and 28 November 1967. The joint operation resulted in 69 enemy KIA. (See After Action Report at inclosure 10) In III CTZ Special Forces camps at My Da (A-433), My Phuoc Tay (A-411), and My Dien (A-416), which was just established in January, were under threat of attack by three enemy battalions. Camp My Phuoc Tay experienced the heaviest casualties in separate contacts with battalion sized forces in December and January. Large scale enemy attacks on major installations and cities throughout Vietnam were the center of Special Forces attention as the quarter ended.

b. Special operations conducted during the quarter included six search and destroy (Blackjack) operations in II CTZ. Reconnaissance operations Sultan I & II were also conducted in II CTZ by Detachment B-52 (Project Delta). Special operations Rapidfire III, IV, and V were completed in III CTZ by Detachment B-36. Operational control of Detachments B-50 (Project Omega) and B-56 (Project Sigma) transferred to COMUSMACV on 1 November 1967.

c. Four CIDG camps were closed, one camp was converted to RF/PF, and one camp was transferred to VNSF control during the reporting period.

d. Organizational structure and troop disposition are reflected at inclosure 1.

e. The command concept for employment of Civilian Irregular Defense Group forces is discussed in inclosure 5.

f. Civic Action Success during the reporting period are described in inclosure 6.

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15 February 1968

SUBJECT: Operational Report - Lessons Learned for Quarter Ending 31 Jan 68 (U)

2. (S) Intelligence.

a. A major contribution to the intelligence and counterintelligence effort of the Group has been made by the Military Intelligence Augmentation detachments assigned during the period April - June 1967. To date no orders have been received indicating assignment of replacement personnel to fill anticipated rotational losses. If replacement personnel to fill authorized spaces are not received a diminution of the intelligence effort is anticipated.

b. Detachment B-57 will move out of Saigon with the command and control element closing the SFOB by 29 Feb 68 and the Saigon facility closed by 31 Mar 68. The unit designation (B-57) will be dropped effective 1 Apr 68. Reference to B-57 activities subsequent to that date will be Cambodian Border Operations (S), short title COPS (U) with the activity functioning as a branch of the S2 Section.

c. Project OAK activities were terminated 31 Dec 67 after the collection activity was determined unproductive in terms of funds expended. Personnel assets have been reassigned to intelligence activities throughout the Group.

d. Order of Battle Workbooks for each Corps Tactical Zone were updated utilizing material from both Combined Intelligence Center Vietnam, and the Order of Battle branch, this Headquarters.

e. Summary of Enemy Activity by Corps Tactical Zones.

(1) I CTZ: Enemy activity in I CTZ increased from guerrilla type action and sporadic contacts during October and November to attacks by fire along the DMZ, a large enemy buildup in Northwest Quang Tri Province, and all out attacks on large installations and cities during January. Throughout the Corps the enemy suffered from food, logistical, and personnel shortages which initially staved his offensive capabilities. The Revolutionary Development Program initiated by the GVN moved a large majority of the population from VC/NVA controlled areas into relatively safe areas and therefore impeded the enemys' capability to tax the people for food and labor. The enemy recruiting program also suffered. It is probable that during November and December the enemy concentrated on building up his forces to combat effective strength and prepared for future offensives. During the month of January enemy activity increased significantly with evidence of a large enemy buildup consisting of three NVA divisions in NW Quang Tri Province. Large scale attacks against Special Forces Camp Lang Vei, Det A-101 and the Khe Sanh Combat base were expected at anytime. On 30 January, enemy forces launched all out attacks on installations and cities throughout I CTZ. Reports indicated that the enemy committed primarily VC units which indicate that a subsequent main enemy thrust will be launched by NVA forces if necessary. The enemy had the ability to initiate coordinated fire and ground attacks at anytime throughout the Corps as of the end of the reporting period.

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(2) II CTZ: Prior to the November enemy offensive near Special Forces Camp Dak To (Det A-244) the 32nd and 66th NVA Regiments moved into prepared positions to the southwest of the camp and the 24th NVA Regiment moved into the southern portion of the Tou Morong Valley. On the 5th of November, heavy fighting erupted to the SW of Dak To and the resulting battle developed into the longest engagement of the Vietnamese conflict. During the first two weeks of December the enemy launched a series of attacks on allied forces and installations that ranged from the Bong Lon Plains to Phu Cat District. The enemy suffered heavy losses but continued to make moderate contact in a vain attempt to extend its control over the rice-rich region of eastern Binh Dinh Province. The enemy offensive activity expected during the Christmas and New Year truce periods never materialized. Enemy activity throughout II CTZ was at a low level during the first part of January and was characterized by small scale attacks on lightly defended outposts. The new Special Forces camp, Ben Het, received mortar and rocket fire almost daily. The enemy stepped up his activity toward the end of January as all units redeployed for the TET offensive, which began on 30 January, with attacks on major cities and installations.

(3) III CTZ: During this quarter the enemy displayed a desire to score a major victory over allied forces with apparent little regard to the losses he would suffer. He launched his largest and some of his most successful attacks during the final two months of 1967 and first month of 1968. The enemy selected Loc Ninh District Headquarters to attack in an attempt to gain a major propaganda victory. The unit tasked with the mission was the 9th VC Division composed of the 271st, 272nd, and 273rd VC Main Force Regiments. Due to heavy losses suffered earlier in southern Binh Long Province by the US 1st Inf Div in Operation Enterprise, a third regiment was formed from elements of the 141st and 165th NVA Regiments to replace the 271st VC MF Regiment. The attacks on Loc Ninh, where Special Forces Detachment A-331 is located, took place on 29 October through 3 November. The enemy failed in their attempt to take the district headquarters and suffered extremely heavy casualties. After this engagement the enemy continued to concentrate his large actions in closer proximity to the Cambodian border when he could easily be resupplied or seek sanctuary. On 29 November, the enemy began harassing Special Forces Camp Bu Dop, A-341, and Bo Duc District Headquarters. On 29 November, the enemy launched a battalion sized ground attack against Bo Duc District Headquarters and Camp Bu Dop received heavy mortar and rocket fire. The enemy harassment continued until 8 December. Prior to December enemy activity had primarily been restricted to Military Region 10; however, during December the enemy attempted to force more action throughout the Corps area. In January installations in Tay Ninh and Gian Dinh Province were constantly harassed. Throughout the month Special Forces Camp Thien Ngon, A-323, continuously received mortar attacks by elements of the 69th VC Artillery Regiment. On 31 January, major US and GVN installations in Military Region 4 were hit by rockets, mortars, and ground attacks that extended into the next reporting period.

(4) IV CTZ: During November and December the enemy confined his activities to indiscriminate shellings of district towns, small scale attacks against lightly defended outposts and the interdiction of lines of communications, primarily along highway #4 between Can Tho and Saigon. Special Forces Camps; My Phuoc Tay A-411 located in Dinh Tuong Province, and My Da A-433 located in

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close proximity to the Dinh Tuong/Kien Phong Province border were continually under threat of attack by the 514 local force battalion and the 261st and 263rd main force battalions during the entire quarter. On 5 December, in Dinh Tuong Province friendly forces engaged in Operation Coronado IX captured a political advisor to Military Region II who infiltrated from North Vietnam. This was the first time that an indigenous North Vietnamese had been captured in IV Corps. During the insertion of SF camp My Dien A-416 in Dinh Tuong Province in January, documents were found indicating that the area had been a base area for the 514th local force battalion. Captured PWs revealed that the 261st and 263rd main force battalions were operating with the 514th. During January the enemy repositioned many of his units in preparation for the large TET offensive campaign. The 267th main force battalion moved from Dinh Tuong Province to III Corps and was identified in the attack against Tan Son Nhut airbase on 31 January. In Kien Phong Province the 502nd local force battalion moved into position and with the assistance of the local force companies in the area conducted a mortar and ground attack against Cao Lanh city and Special Forces Detachment B-43. The 504th local force battalion conducted a mortar and ground attack against Moc Hoa city and Detachment B-41. At the close of the reporting period the enemy was placing emphasis on the overrunning and holding of key installations and heavily populated areas. The harassment of SF camps had apparently become a secondary objective although SF camps My Phuoc Tay A-411, My Dien A-416, and My Da A-433 remained threatened by the three enemy battalions.

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(c) III CTZ: During the period 29 October thru 2 November, Loc Ninh, A-331, Binh Long Province came under heavy ground and mortar attack. On 29 October at 0125 hours, heavy mortar, small arms and .50 caliber machine gun suppressing fire was placed on the camp in support of an estimated two battalion attack on the RF/PF district compound. At 0645 hours, Camp Loc Ninh launched a Camp Strike Force company operation to relieve the district compound. At 1000 hours, a reinforced infantry battalion of the 1st US Infantry Division was committed to assist in the clearing of the district compound, and the final contact was broken at 1150 hours. On 31 October at 0045 hours, Det A-331, the district headquarters, and elements of the 1st US Infantry Division at Loc Ninh came under heavy mortar and rocket attack. At 0100 hours, small arms fire increased in a coordinated attack on all three friendly locations. At 0145 hours, the joint employment of fire from all three locations suppressed the attack. Sporadic small arms fire was received until 0515 hours when another coordinated attack commenced on all three friendly unit locations. The friendly elements jointly returned fire and at 0730 hours, the VC broke contact and withdrew. On 2 November at 0045 hours, all three unit locations again began receiving heavy mortar and small arms fire. Between 0130 and 0600 hours, the enemy force, estimated at three battalions, probably of the 273d Regiment, made repeated attempts to mass their troops and assault friendly positions. The effective use of light fire teams, flare ships, tactical air and friendly ground units broke the attack. At 0600 hours the enemy broke contact and withdrew. During the three attacks, Camp Loc Ninh received 24 rounds of 122mm rocket fire, 22 rounds of 120mm mortar, 370 rounds of 82mm mortar, 50 B-40 rockets and 50 PRG-7 rockets. As a result of all three attacks, eight CIDG were killed; four USASF and 68 CIDG were wounded; 184 VC were killed. In addition, 95 VC were killed which were not accredited to USASF, VNSF or CIDG. Four small arms, five crew served weapons, ten RPG-7 rockets, 20 B-40 rockets, 50 hand grenades and assorted munitions were captured. On 5 November, Camp Chien Thang I, A-302, and Camp Chien Thang II, B-36, Phuoc Tuy Province, received a total of nine 60mm mortar rounds. There were no damages or casualties at either camp. On 9 November, Hon Quan, B-33, Tong Le Chon, A-334, Binh Long Province; and Bunard, A-344, Phuoc Long Province came under mortar and rocket attacks. Hon Quan received a total of 200 rounds of 82mm mortar and rocket fire, 20 of which landed in the sector headquarters. Tong Le Chon received a total of 33 rounds of 82mm mortar during two attacks in which two Camp Strike Force personnel were wounded. Bunard received 10 rounds of 60mm and 81mm mortar which landed south of the camp perimeter. All three camps fired defensive concentrations and counter mortar fire. Air support which consisted of light fire teams, AC-47 gunships and TAC Air caused the enemy to break contact and withdraw. On 14 November, Loc Ninh, A-331, Binh Long Province, received several 82mm mortar rounds from an unknown enemy force. The camp responded with 105mm artillery defensive concentrations and 81mm counter-mortar fires, which caused the enemy to break and withdraw. On 15 November, Loc Ninh again received 82mm mortar rounds and one B-40 rocket. The camp responded with defensive concentrations and counter-mortar fire, causing the enemy to break contact and withdraw. The camp suffered no casualties during both attacks. On 18 November, Tong Le Chon, A-334, Binh Long Province, received approximately 50 82mm mortar rounds from an unknown size VC force. All enemy rounds landed in the outer defensive wire.

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The camp responded with 105mm and 175mm defensive concentrations and called light fire teams in support, causing the enemy to break and withdraw. There were no friendly casualties resulting from the attack. On 18 November, a forward element of a search and destroy operation from Bu Dop, A-341, Phuoc Long Province, consisting of two USASF, one VNSF and 100 camp strike force personnel, sighted an NVA company, wearing khaki uniforms, in bunkers, in the vicinity of Bu Dop. The friendly element deployed, and assaulted the enemy positions, opening fire from a distance of 50 meters. The enemy returned fire and due to their superior firepower, caused the friendly unit to break contact and withdraw. After regrouping, the friendly unit called airstrikes on the enemy position. At the completion of the airstrikes, the enemy flanked the friendly unit and opened fire. The friendly unit returned fire but again had to break contact and withdraw. Results of this contact were one camp strike force soldier killed, two wounded, and two weapons lost. Enemy losses were four killed and one wounded. On 25 November a search and destroy operation in Hau Nghia Province which consisted of three USASF and 157 Mobile Strike Force personnel made contact with an estimated 25 VC armed with automatic and semi automatic weapons 10 kilometers west of Duc Hoa. The VC were hiding in houses and directed sniper fire on the Mobile Strike Force at a distance of 300 meters. The Mobile Strike Force assaulted the VC positions. A brief fire fight ensued, which resulted in nine VC killed, 13 captured, three sampans and two houses destroyed. On 26 November, a search and destroy operation from Tra Cu, A-352, Hau Nghia Province, was engaged by a platoon of VC eight kilometers west of Duc Hoa. A two hour fire fight ensued resulting in three CIDG killed, one wounded, 16 VC killed and two weapons captured. On 26 November, a company search and destroy operation from Bu Dop, A-341, Phuoc Long Province, was engaged by an estimated company of VC, 20 kilometers northwest of Song Be. A 90 minute fire fight ensued which resulted in one USASF, four CIDG wounded; two VC killed. During the period 27 to 29 November, a company search and destroy operation from Bu Dop, A-341, reinforced by one company from Dong Xoai, A-342, and one company from Duc Phong, A-343, Phuoc Long Province, operating 10 kilometers northwest of Song Be, were engaged by numerically superior NVA forces. The friendly units were out maneuvered causing them to split. Results were one USASF, nine CIDG killed; three USASF, one VNSF, and 20 CIDG wounded; one USASF, one VNSF and 32 CIDG missing; and 32 weapons lost. On 30 November, friendly elements were sent out to attempt to relocate the missing personnel. On 27 November, a company search and destroy operation from Bunard, A-344, Phuoc Long Province, was ambushed by a company of VC, 23 kilometers southeast of Song Be. A 20 minute fire fight ensued resulting in one USASF, one CIDG killed; one VNSF and one CIDG wounded; 15 VC killed. On 28 November, a company search and destroy operation from Tra Cu, A-352, Hau Nghia Province, was engaged by an estimated platoon of VC, 15 kilometers west of Duc Hoa. A brief fire fight ensued which resulted in four VC killed, one VC and two weapons captured. On 29 November, a Mobile Strike Force company search and destroy operation supporting Duc Hoa, B-35, Hau Nghia Province, was engaged by one squad of VC, 30 miles northwest of Duc Hoa. A 45 minute fire fight ensued, resulting in one CIDG wounded; five VC killed. On 29 November, Bu Dop, A-341, Phuoc Long Province, received an estimated 15-122mm rocket rounds in conjunction with the attack on Bo Duc District Headquarters. Rocket fire was inaccurate and caused no damage or casualties to the camp.

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From 2 to 8 December, Camp Bu Dop, A-341, Phuoc Long Province, received approximately 130 mortar rounds and 12 rocket rounds, resulting in 11 USASF and nine camp strike force soldiers wounded; USASF living quarters, communications and ammunition storage facilities destroyed and two 155mm howitzers damaged. From 3 to 7 December, Camps Trai Bi, A-323, Tay Ninh Province; Hon Quan, B-33, Binh Long Province; Tong Le Chon, A-334, Tay Ninh Province; Song Be, B-34, Phuoc Long Province and Bunard, A-344, Phuoc Long Province received light mortar, rocket or small arms fire, resulting in negative damage or casualties. On 5 December, Camp Prok Klok, A-322, Tay Ninh Province, received 12 mortar rounds, one rifle grenade and small arms fire which resulted in one VNSF and three camp strike force soldiers wounded. On 6 December, Camp Duc Hue, A-351A, Hau Nghia Province, received 20 mortar rounds resulting in one camp strike force soldier killed; one USASF and one camp strike force soldier wounded. On 6 December, Camp Tong Le Chon, A-344, Tay Ninh Province, came under ground attack by an unknown size VC force. The enemy triggered trip flares while attempting to cut through the defensive wire. The camp strike force immediately opened fire with small arms, mortar and artillery, and called light fire teams in support, causing the enemy force to break contact and withdraw. Results of this attack were negative friendly and unknown enemy casualties. On 8 December, mobile strike force elements from Lonh Hai, A-302, Phuoc Tuy Province, operating 35 kilometers northwest of Tay Ninh, Tay Ninh Province, were ambushed by an estimated platoon of VC from a distance of 25 meters. The friendly elements returned fire and called FAC and light fire teams in support, causing the enemy force to break contact and withdraw. Results of this action were one mobile strike force soldier killed and 13 mobile strike force soldiers wounded. Enemy casualties are unknown. During the week of 9 thru 16 December, elements of Det A-323, with one attached US engineer company and three attached Mobile Strike Force companies establishing a new camp at Thien Ngon, 33 kilometers northwest of Tay Ninh Province, were continuously engaged by squad, platoon and company size VC units, culminating in a 200 round mortar attack, followed by a battalion size ground attack. The new camp site received an estimated 330 rounds of mortar and 30 rockets during the week. Results were one CSF soldier killed; one USASF, nine US engineers and 45 CSF soldiers wounded. Enemy losses were two killed. On 15 December, Camp Duc Hue, Detachment A-351A, Hau Nghia Province, 30 kilometers northwest of Duc Hoa, received an estimated 30 to 50 rounds of mixed mortar and recoilless rifle, resulting in one CSF soldier wounded. Also on 15 December, a company size search and destroy operation from Camp Duc Hue, operating west of the camp and approximately three kilometers from the Cambodian border, made contact with an estimated two battalions of VC. Air Force aircraft and Army gunships were immediately on station to support them. Three CSF companies from adjacent USASF camps were helilifted into the area to reinforce the friendly element in contact. After link-up, the friendly elements assaulted the enemy who were in defense positions. The friendly force continued to assault the enemy until dark, at which time they were ordered to break contact due to their inability to maintain continuity of the attack during darkness. The friendly forces began to withdraw east toward camp Duc Hue with the enemy in pursuit. Army gunships supported the withdrawal. Results of this action were one USASF, one VNSF, and 28 CSF soldiers killed; one VNSF and 22 CSF soldiers wounded; 49 CSF soldiers missing; 3 radios, 2 crew served and 64 individual weapons lost. Enemy losses were 14 killed. An estimated 50 VC were killed (US estimate by air). On 17 December, elements from camps Hiep Hoa, Det A-351 and Tra Cu, Det A-352,

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Hau Nghia Province, while conducting a company size joint search and destroy operation, made contact with a VC company, 17 kilometers northwest of Duc Hoa, Hau Nghia Province. The friendly elements surrounded the enemy and with the use of well coordinated firepower, maneuver and Tactical Air support, killed 42 of the enemy and captured 4 individual, two crew served weapons, numerous items of supplies, munitions and web equipment. Friendly losses during this engagement were two camp strike force soldiers killed and 12 wounded. During the week of 16 - 23 December Camp Thien Ngon, Detachment A-323, Tay Ninh Province, engaged in 19 contacts consisting of camp probes, mortar and ground attacks. During the week, the camp received approximately 600 rounds of mixed mortar and rocket and an undetermined number of rifle grenades. Friendly casualties during the week were one Camp Strike Force soldier killed and 54 wounded. Enemy casualties are unknown. On 18 December, Camp Trai Bi, Detachment A-323, Tay Ninh Province was officially closed. Assets from Camp Trai Bi have been moved to Thien Ngon. On 24 December, 12 CSF soldiers from Camp Duc Hue, A-351 (A), Hau Nghia Province, who were part of 49 personnel missing in action on 15 December, returned to Camp Duc Hue after being released by the VC. Four personnel required medical treatment and were medevaced. The remainder of the personnel were taken to Camp Duc Hoa, Detachment B-35, Hau Nghia Province, to be debriefed. On 28 December, a 12 man team from Camp Long Hai, Detachment B-36, Phuoc Tuy Province, on a training mission, operating from an FOB in Tay Ninh Province, were inserted into an area approximately 23 kilometers northwest of Tay Ninh City, Tay Ninh Province. Immediately after insertion, the team was engaged by an unknown number of VC. A fire fight ensued after which the enemy broke contact and withdrew. The team was extracted from the area of contact shortly thereafter. Results were six USASF personnel slightly wounded. Eleven VC were killed, two individual weapons and miscellaneous equipment were captured. On 30 December, a company size reaction force from Camp Tra Cu, A-352, Hau Nghia Province, was inserted into an area approximately 27 kilometers west of Duc Hoa, in response to an enemy sighting reported by a FAC aircraft. The friendly force was engaged by a platoon of VC, dug in bunkers and foxholes. A 75 minute fire fight ensued, culminating in an assault on enemy positions, causing the enemy to break contact and withdraw west. Results were four VC killed, two individual weapons, one claymore mine, seven hand grenades and miscellaneous webbing, equipment and munitions captured. During the period 30 December 1967 and 6 January 1968, CIDG and RF/FF advised by USASF conducted 176 operations and engaged in 15 contacts. Enemy losses were one killed, one wounded, one captured and four suspects detained; one weapon and 300 pounds of salt captured. Friendly losses were one CSF soldier killed; one USASF and seven CSF soldiers wounded; one weapon lost. On 1 January, an estimated VC squad attacked a security outpost from Camp Tay Ninh, Detachment B-32, Tay Ninh Province. A brief fire fight ensued resulting in one CSF soldier killed and one VC wounded, as evidenced by heavy blood trails found in the area. On 1 January, Camp Thien Ngon, Detachment A-323, Tay Ninh Province, sustained two brief mortar attacks and one rifle grenade attack which resulted in one USASF and four CSF soldiers wounded. The camp received a total of 22 mortar rounds and an undetermined number of rifle grenades. On 2 January, an estimated VC squad opened fire on a company size search and destroy operation from Camp Ben Soi, Detachment A-321, 13 kilometers south of Tay Ninh, Tay Ninh Province.

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A brief fire fight ensued, after which the enemy broke contact. One VC was killed and four suspects were detained. On 6 January, a search and destroy operation from Camp Loc Ninh, A-331, Binh Long Province, made contact with a reinforced VC company 16 kilometers northwest of Hon Quan. A fire fight ensued which resulted in two CSF soldiers wounded. Seventeen VC were killed but were not credited to Camp Loc Ninh. During the period 6 January thru 13 January 1968, CIDG and RF/PF units, advised by USASF conducted 165 operations and engaged in 26 contacts. Enemy losses were two USASF, one CSF and seven MSF soldiers killed, two USASF, six CSF and 36 MSF soldiers wounded; 10 MSF soldiers missing in action. On 9 January, a joint operation consisting of a CSF company from Camp Tong Le Chon, Detachment A-334, Tay Ninh Province, and elements of the 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment, were ambushed 32 kilometers northeast of Tay Ninh by an unknown size VC force, with RPG's from a distance of 50 meters. The 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment made a mounted assault on the enemy positions while the A-334 elements provided a base of fire. The enemy broke contact and withdrew. Results were one USASF killed and two CSF soldiers wounded. On 10 January, a company size search and destroy operation from Duc Hue, Detachment A-351, Hau Nghia Province, spotted 100 VC suspects, 22 kilometers northwest of Duc Hoa. The suspects split up and fled in all directions. The majority fleeing across the Cambodian border, 47 suspects were detained. Two identified as ARVN deserters. On 11 January, Camp Thien Ngon, Detachment A-323, Tay Ninh Province received 20 82mm mortar rounds. On 12 January, Camp Thien Ngon, received 15, 82mm mortar rounds. Both attacks were initiated from 2,000 meters northwest of the camp. Results were three US engineers and six MSF soldiers wounded. On 11 January, a MSF search and destroy operation, consisting of six USASF and 250 MSF soldiers, operating from Camp Tay Ninh Detachment B-32, Tay Ninh Province, were engaged by an estimated VC company, 40 kilometers north of Tay Ninh. The friendly element called artillery on the enemy, then assaulted their positions, causing the enemy to break contact and withdraw. Five minutes later, the enemy estimated to be at battalion strength, engaged the friendly element from the north, east and west. The friendly element called artillery on the enemy, again causing them to break contact and withdraw. The operation began to move toward an LZ approximately two kilometers west of the area of contact when they were hit again. The friendly elements secured the LZ and at 1830 hours the contact was broken by the enemy, and friendly forces were extracted. Results were one USASF and seven MSF soldiers killed; two USASF and 30 MSF soldiers wounded; 10 MSF soldiers were reported missing in action. Enemy casualties are unknown. On 12 January, a company search and destroy operation from Camp Tra Cu, Detachment A-352, Hau Nghia Province, was engaged by an estimated VC squad, with automatic weapons from a distance of 200 meters, 25 kilometers west of Duc Hoa, Hau Nghia Province. Friendly forces counterattacked, causing the enemy to break contact and withdraw. Results were two VC killed and two AK-47 rifles captured. During the period 13 January 1968 and 20 January 1968, CIDG and RF/PF units, advised by USASF conducted 162 operations and engaged in 23 contacts. Enemy losses were 12 killed and one suspect detained. Enemy equipment losses were seven small arms, two CBU, one radio, one kilogram of documents, assorted munitions and webbing captured; one sampan destroyed. Friendly losses were seven CSF soldiers wounded. No weapons were lost by friendly forces during the week. On 15 January,

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a company size search and destroy operation from Camp Tra Cu, Detachment A-352, Hau Nghia Province, assaulted an estimated VC platoon approximately 13 kilometers west of Duc Hoa. The enemy did not return fire and immediately broke contact and withdrew northwest. Results were one VC killed one small arm and two CBU's captured. On 16 January, a company size search and destroy operation from Camp Tra Cu, Detachment A-352, ambushed an estimated VC squad. The VC were moving across the Song Vam Co Dong River in sampans, approximately 10 kilometers west of Duc Hoa. The enemy broke contact and withdrew in an unknown direction. Results were four VC killed and one sampan destroyed. It was estimated that two small arms and approximately 20 grenades were lost in the river by the enemy. On 19 January, a company size search and destroy operation from Camp Ben Soi, Detachment A-321, Tay Ninh Province, 22 kilometers west of Tay Ninh, opened fire on an estimated VC platoon supplying a base camp which had facilities for a platoon size medical unit. The enemy returned fire then broke contact and withdrew northwest. Results were two CSF soldiers wounded, five VC killed, three small arms, one radio, one kilogram of documents, assorted webbing equipment and ammunition captured. During the period 20 January 1968 thru 27 January 1968, CIDG and RF/PF units advised by USASF conducted 142 operations and engaged in 30 contacts. During this period enemy losses were one VC killed, two wounded and six suspects detained. Two sampans, 3,200 pounds of rice, one bridge and one mine destroyed. Twenty bags of tear gas, 506 pounds of rice, one sampan motor, two aiming stakes, M-16 ammunition and one kilogram of documents captured. Friendly losses were one CSF soldier killed; two USASF, seven MSF soldiers, 14 CSF soldiers and three RF/PF soldiers wounded. No weapons were lost. On 22 January, a search and destroy operation from Camp Dunard, A-344, Phuoc Long Province, which consisted of two USASF, one VNSF and one CSF company was ambushed by an estimated VC platoon 28 kilometers southeast of Song Be. Friendly forces deployed and assaulted the enemy positions. A ten minute fire fight ensued, then the enemy broke contact and withdrew east with friendly forces in pursuit. Contact with the enemy was not regained. Results were one USASF and three CSF soldiers wounded. On 23 January, a search and destroy operation from Camp Ben Soi, A-321, Tay Ninh Province, which consisted of two USASF, two VNSF and two CSF companies were engaged by two VC squads 23 kilometers southeast of Tay Ninh. A brief fire fight ensued. The enemy broke contact and withdrew west. Results were one CSF soldier killed and two CSF soldiers wounded. On 23 January, a RF/PF outpost 22 kilometers southeast of Song Be, Phuoc Long Province, was attacked by an estimated VC squad. Camp Dunard, A-344, supported the outpost with mortar and artillery fire and sent out a reaction force which reached the area of contact after the enemy had withdrawn. Results were three RF/PF soldiers wounded. On 26 January, a search and destroy operation from Camp Thien Ngon, A-323, Tay Ninh Province, which consisted of three USASF, one VNSF and 114 MSF soldiers were ambushed by an estimated VC squad 38 kilometers northwest of Tay Ninh. A 15 minute fire fight ensued, then the enemy broke contact and withdrew west. Results were one VC killed and three MSF soldiers wounded. On 27 January, a search and destroy operation from Camp Trang Sup, A-301, Tay Ninh Province, which consisted of six VNSF, two CSF companies, one MSF company and one platoon of APC's engaged an estimated VC company eight kilometers northeast of Tay Ninh. A two hour fire fight

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ensued, then the enemy broke contact and withdrew into a large cave. Results were four CSF and four MSF soldiers wounded. During the period 27 January 1968 thru 3 February 1968, CIDG and RF/PF units advised by USASF conducted 74 operations and engaged in 39 contacts. Enemy losses were six VC killed, two wounded and two suspects detained. Enemy weapons and equipment captured were five small arms, three crew served weapons, six rockets and one Chicom grenade. Friendly losses were two RF/PF soldiers killed; two USASF, one VNSF, 16 CSF and three RF/PF soldiers wounded. Friendly losses were nine small arms, one PRC-25 radio, three HT-1 radios and nine syrettes of morphine. On 31 January, elements of the 274th MF VC Battalion launched a 122mm rocket and 60mm mortar attack on Co A, Detachment C3, Bien Hoa, Bien Hoa Province. A total of three rockets and 12 mortar rounds impacted in and around the compound which resulted in one USASF wounded and caused minor damage to the company headquarters building. On 31 January, ARVN and CSF elements from Camp Duc Hoa, Detachment B35, Hau Nghia Province, trapped an estimated VC platoon in the Duc Hoa market place. All exits from the market place were sealed off by friendly forces and contact was maintained throughout the day. Results were six VC killed and two captured. Five small arms, three crew served weapons and six rockets were captured. On 1 February, Camp Thien Ngon, Detachment A-323, Tay Ninh Province, received an estimated 105 rounds of 82mm mortar fire from an estimated VC company located approximately 1500 meters north of the camp. Results were five US engineers (attached) and two CSF soldiers wounded. On 2 February, Camp Bunard, Detachment A-344, Phuoc Long Province, received ten rounds of 82mm mortar fire from an unknown size enemy force. One round impacted on a CSF building which resulted in 15 CSF dependents wounded. On 3 February, a search and destroy operation from Camp Tra Cu, Detachment A-352, Hau Nghia Province, which consisted of two USASF, two VNSF and 120 CSF soldiers were engaged by an unknown size VC force 15 kilometers west of Duc Hoa. The enemy opened fire from a distance of 100 meters with automatic weapons. The friendly force returned fire until their position was overrun. Friendly forces broke contact and withdrew from the area. Results were one USASF, one VNSF and eight CSF soldiers wounded. An estimated 15 VC were killed.

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### 9. (C) Signal

a. The Group Signal Officer has developed and is presently evaluating a simple, continuous signal Agent Radio for use by friendly agents in villages near CIDG camps. (See paragraph 5, inclosure number 4). Paragraph 4 of the same inclosure discusses the airboat communications system developed by the 5th SFGA Signal maintenance facility.

b. Signal Company has placed the AN/TSC-26 in operation as the HCS in the Group Emergency Net. This \$450,000 radio set also acts as an emergency back-up to the Communications Center and has the capability of CW, voice, and Radio Teletype Transmissions. The radio also possesses the capability to receive burst transmission broadcasts and can handle up to 19 teams operating in a UW or clandestine role.

#### c. Company A.

(1) On two occasions during the quarter the Company A commo section reinforced "A" detachments with personnel and equipment when the camps came under heavy attack. Loc Ninh (A-331) was provided antenna equipment and personnel to assist in radio installation and operation, thus allowing camp radio operators to recuperate from the strain of the attack. The communications bunker at Bu Dop (A-341) was destroyed by fire and within three hours after the incident had occurred, Company A commo personnel had arrived by helicopter with a complete replacement issue of communications equipment. These personnel remained at Bu Dop until the communications equipment was installed and the camp radio operators were ready to assume normal duties several days later.

(2) To counter the VC threat to camp communications, all camps in III CTZ have been equipped with radios to provide 100 percent back up to single side band, CW, and FM radios in an emergency communications bunker. If a camp commo bunker is destroyed in the future, the camp has spare equipment available to operate until replacement items arrive.

(3) During the pre-deployment phase of Detachment A-351, Duc Hue, a communications facility was constructed in an empty AN/GRC-26 communication shelter. This system provided for all needed communication nets and simultaneously provided an easily transportable unit. Within hours after arriving at the new site, appropriate systems were constructed and the communications facility was in full operation.

#### d. Company D.

(1) Antenna Tower Construction: Erection of the AB-105 antenna tower was planned and commenced during December 67. Plans call for eventual construction of some 20 to 25 towers throughout Co D detachments. To date, three towers have been completed with construction on five additional towers underway. Depending on camp defense requirements, height of towers varies from 40 to 73 feet, the lower height being used to prevent masking camp defensive fire.

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DET	LOCATION	COORD	TROOPS				MISSION	ETHNIC GROUPS
			NR	CSF	NR	PF		
A-243	Plateau G1	RS08651555	307				CSF	VN/SED/BAH/MNO
A-244	Dak To	ZB01222150	631				CSF/BS	VN/SED/BAH/MNO
A-245	Dak Seang	YB89594051	1458				CSF/ES	VN/SED/BAH/MNO
A-246	Mang Buk	AS98411180	1468				CSF	VN/SED/BAH/MNO
A-251	Plei Djereng	YA87454590	530				CSF/BS	VN/SED/BAH/MNO
A-252	Plei Mrong	ZA11256700	558				CSF	VN/SED/BAH/MNO
A-253	Duc Co	YA81602493	600				CSF/BS	VN/SED/BAH/MNO
A-255	Plei Me	ZA16240592	1446				CSF	VN/SED/BAH/MNO
B-51	Dong Ba Thin	CP04002900	1440				TC	VN/SED/BAH/MNO
D-52	Nha Trang	CP03105180	168				DELTA	VN/SED/BAH/MNO
A-502	Trung Dung	BP93705571	1040		391		CSF/SS	VN/SED/BAH/MNO
A-503	Nha Trang	CP03105180	75				MSF	VN/SED/BAH/MNO
RECONDONha Trang		CP03105180	88				RS	VN/SED/BAH/MNO
Sig Co Nha Trang		CP03105180	13				SPT	VN/SED/BAH/MNO
HHC Nha Trang		CP03105180					SPT	VN/SED/BAH/MNO
VNSF Nha Trang		CP03805330					C&C	VN/SED/BAH/MNO
High Cmd								
TOTAL:			11868	900	807		1896	

## III CORPS

Co A	Location	COORD	DATE	NR	CSF	NR	PF	MISSION	ETHNIC GROUPS
A-301	Rien Hoa	YT00901270	Nov 64	51				C&C	CAM
A-302	Trang Sup	XT16595558	Jan 63	1413				CSF/TC	VN/CAM/CHI
B-32	Long Hai	YSL3965104	Sep 67					MSF	VN/CAM/CHI
A-321	Tay Ninh	XT20125087	Dec 64	298				C&C	VN/CAM/CHI/MONT
A-322	Ben Soi	XT09344748	Mar 65	648				CSF/BS	VN/CAM
A-323	Trang Sup	XT16595558	N/A	926				CSF	VN/CAM/BRA/RHA/BRU
A-324	Thien Ngon	XT08558166	Dec 67	537				CSF/BS	VN/CAM
B-33	Nui Ba Den	XT28105820	Jul 64					Radio R. Lay	VN/CAM
A-331	Hon Quan	XT73858770	Jul 65	181				C&C	VN/CAM/STEING
A-332	Loc Ninh	XU73140823	Dec 66	571				CSF/BS	VN/CAM/STEING
A-333	Minh Thanh	XT61356682	Feb 64	334				CSF	VN/CAM/MONT
A-334	Chi Linh	XT91607350	Jan 67	1415				CSF	VN/CAM/SEDANG
B-34	Tong Le Chon	XT62228103	Mar 67	592				CSF/BS	VN/CAM/CHAM
A-341	Song Be	YU17600910	Apr 65	186				C&C	VN/STEING
A-342	Bu Dop	XU97452909	Nov 63	366		89	242	CSF/BS/SS	VN/CAM/MONT
A-343	Dong Xoa1	YT07647597	Jun 65	370		119	200	CSF/SS	VN/CAM/STEING
A-344	Duc Phong	YU43750499	Apr 66	478		97	223	CSF/SS	VN/CAM/RHA/BAH/FUL
	Bunard	YT27018877	Apr 67	369				CSF	VN/CAM/MONT

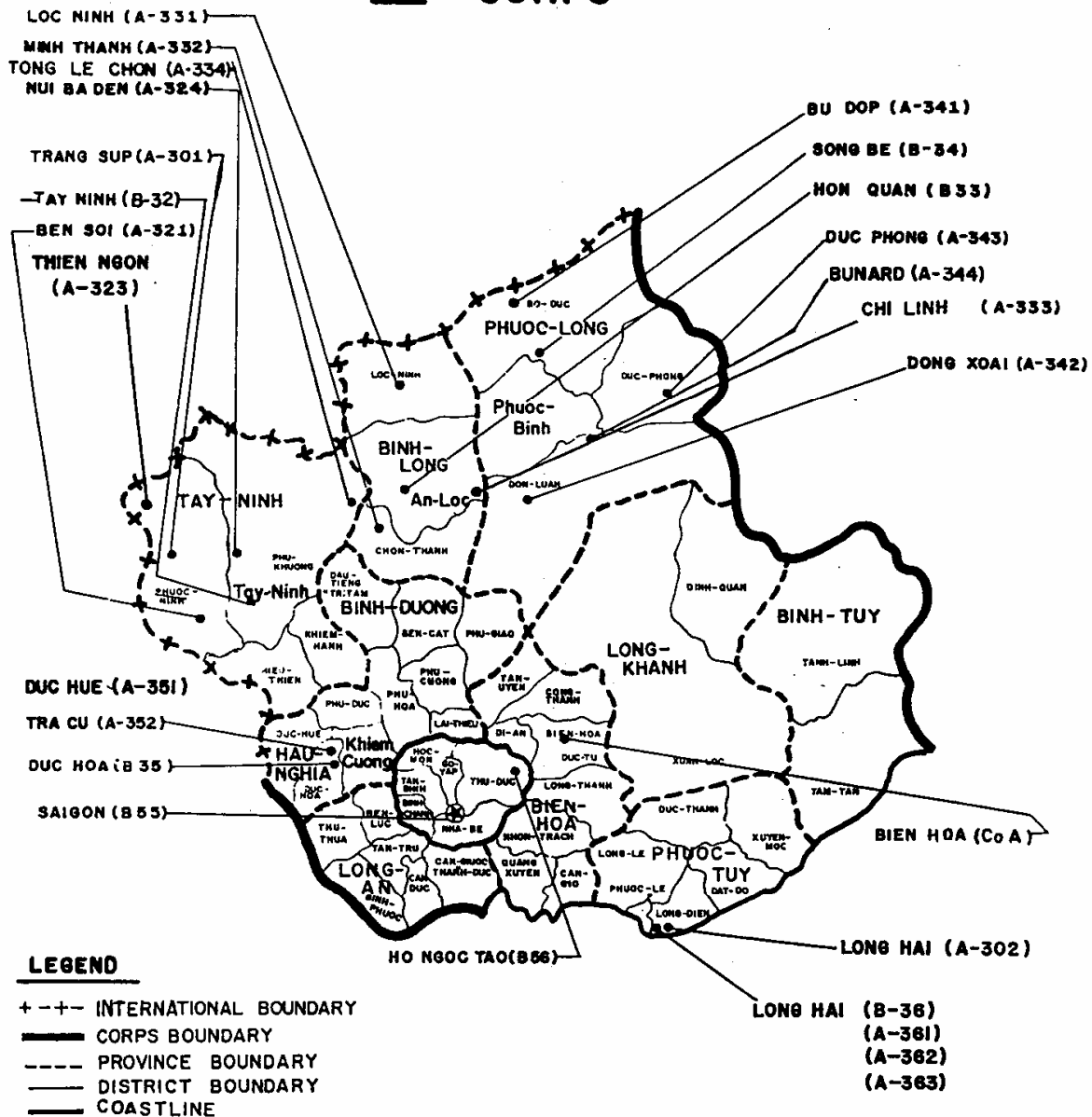
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# CONFIDENTIAL III CORPS



1-3-1

INCLOSURE 1 TO OPERATIONAL REPORT  
FOR QUARTERLY PERIOD ENDING 31 JAN 1968

1-7

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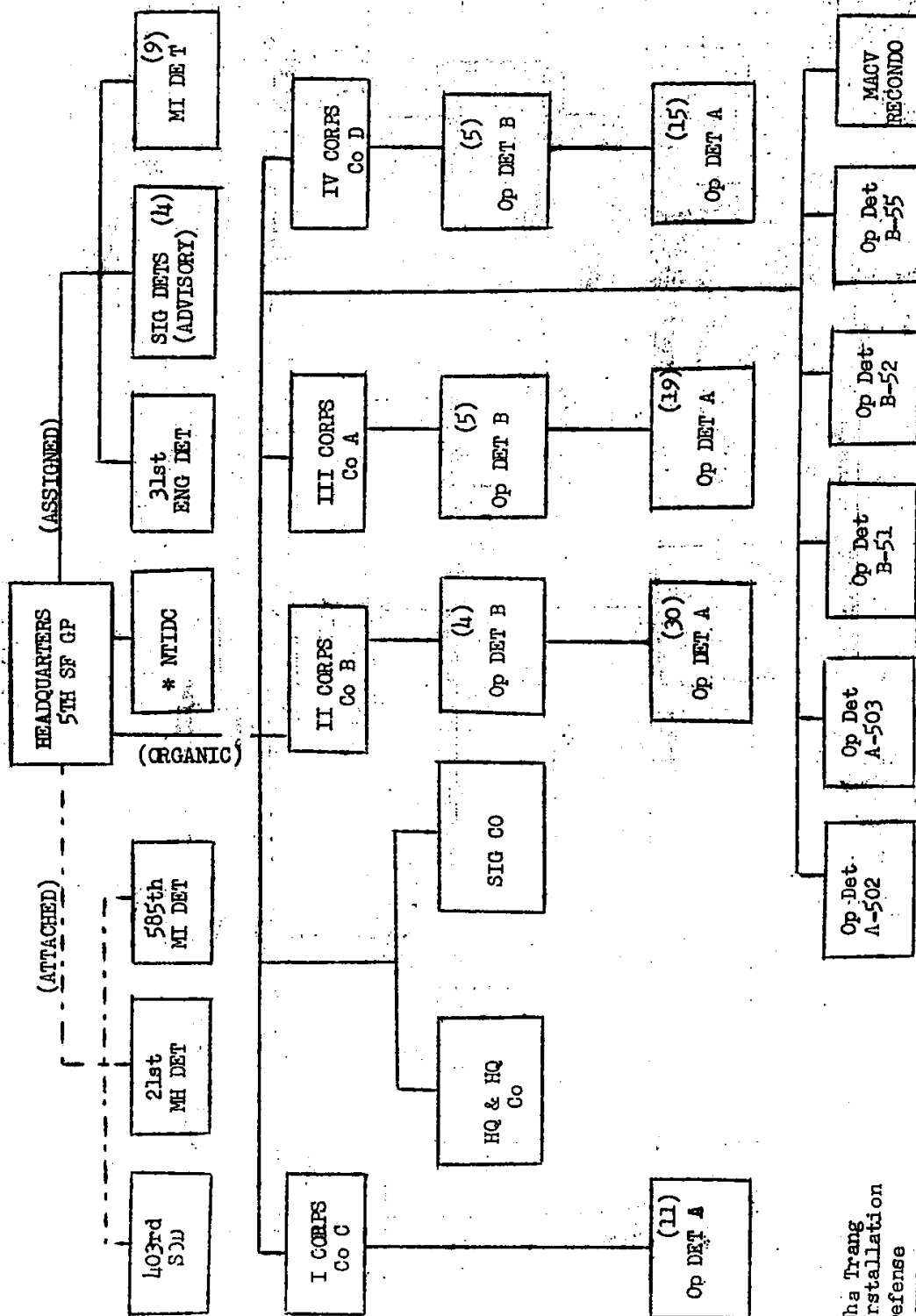
2-68 PRINTED BY 569th ENGR CO (TOPO) (CORPS)







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\* Nha Trang  
Installation  
Defense  
Command







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## STATISTICAL DATA

1. (C) Operations:	I	II	III	IV	TOTAL
	CTZ	CTZ	CTZ	CTZ	
a. Squad	3843	2738	2537	9484	18602
b. Platoon	1280	2463	1060	6618	11412
c. Company or Larger	181	1582	474	1386	3623
2. (C) Contacts:					
a. Contacts resulting from Friendly Offensive Action:	166	350	164	224	904
b. VC attacks on installations and convoys:	87	208	191	219	705
c. Incidents (booby traps, mines, assassinations, etc.):	19	40	45	121	225
3. (C) Confirmed VC Losses:					
a. KIA	339	752	553	397	2041
b. WIA	64	30	54	60	208
c. CPTR	32	127	9	60	228
d. Quarterly comparison of confirmed VC losses country-wide:					
	KIA	CPTR			
1st Quarter 67	1632	501			
2d Quarter 67	1931	361			
3d Quarter 67	1624	291			
4th Quarter 67	2041	255			
4. (C) USASF Losses:					
a. KIA	7	6	14	10	37
b. WIA	6	71	54	15	146
c. MIA	1	0	2	2	5
d. Quarterly comparison of USASF casualties country-wide:					
	KIA	WIA	MIA	TOTAL	
1st Quarter 67	19	80	3	102	
2d Quarter 67	24	25	2	51	
3d Quarter 67	16	92	1	109	
4th Quarter 67	37	146	5	188	
5. (C) VNSF Losses:					
a. KIA	0	2	2	3	7
b. WIA	0	8	12	6	26
c. MIA	0	0	2	0	2

Incl 2 to 5th SFGA ORLL for Quarter Ending  
31 January 1968

DOWNGRADE AT 3 YR INTERVALS  
DECLASSIFIED AFTER 12 YEARS  
DOD DIR 5200.10

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## STATISTICAL DATA (CONT'D)

	<u>I</u> <u>CTZ</u>	<u>II</u> <u>CTZ</u>	<u>III</u> <u>CTZ</u>	<u>IV</u> <u>CTZ</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
6. (C) CIDG Losses:					
a. KIA	32	128	120	141	421
b. WIA	63	401	547	243	1254
c. MIA	2	0	87	15	104
d. Quarterly comparison of CIDG casualties country-wide:					
	<u>KIA</u>	<u>WIA</u>	<u>MIA</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>	
1st Quarter 67	322	920	80	1322	
2d Quarter 67	436	1419	131	1986	
3d Quarter 67	260	1012	28	1300	
4th Quarter 67	421	1254	104	1779	
7. (C) RF/PF Losses:					
a. KIA	11	8	16	101	136
b. WIA	72	5	45	249	371
c. MIA	0	0	0	28	28
d. Quarterly comparison of RF/PF casualties country-wide:					
	<u>KIA</u>	<u>WIA</u>	<u>MIA</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>	
1st Quarter 67	94	164	29	287	
2d Quarter 67	101	178	26	305	
3d Quarter 67	56	167	1	224	
4th Quarter 67	136	371	28	535	
8. (C) Weapons:					
a. Friendly weapons lost:	11	43	173	248	475
b. Enemy Weapons lost:	158	430	74	139	801







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## STATISTICAL DATA

1. (C) Operations:	I	II	III	IV	TOTAL
	<u>CTZ</u>	<u>CTZ</u>	<u>CTZ</u>	<u>CTZ</u>	
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DOWNGRADE AT 3 YR INTERVALS  
DECLASSIFIED AFTER 12 YEARS  
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Incl 2 to 5th SFGA ORLL for Quarter Ending  
31 January 1968

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## STATISTICAL DATA (CONT'D)

	<u>I</u>	<u>II</u>	<u>III</u>	<u>IV</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
	<u>CTZ</u>	<u>CTZ</u>	<u>CTZ</u>	<u>CTZ</u>	
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HEADQUARTERS  
5TH SPECIAL FORCES GROUP (AIRBORNE), 1ST SPECIAL FORCES  
APO San Francisco, 96240

AVGB-C

15 November 1967

**SUBJECT:** Employment of Civilian Irregular Defense Group and Long Range  
Reconnaissance Projects (U)

**TO:** SEE DISTRIBUTION

1. (U) General: This letter presents this command's concept for the employment of CIDG Forces and Long Range Reconnaissance Projects in support of FVMAF deployed in Vietnam, the command relationship which should be established to effect optimum employment of assets, and the methods of effecting coordination and liaison between conventional units and supporting assets of this command. While procedures outlined herein may appear complex and time consuming, they are considered to be the only means of effectively coordinating operations between FVMAF, CIDG Forces and Long Range Reconnaissance Projects.

2. (C) Civilian Irregular Defense Group:

a. Background:

(1) The CIDG program was developed to provide a means of filling the vacuum existing in many remote and underpopulated areas where ARVN units can not effectively be employed and which are not under government control. Basically the camps deployed under this program have the mission of border surveillance and/or interdiction of enemy infiltration routes and conducting operations against enemy base areas. Ancillary missions of these camps are the gathering of intelligence, the execution of Civic Action programs and the conduct of Psychological Operations.

(2) Within the CIDG program there are basically two types of forces available to accomplish the mission. These forces are camp strike forces (CSF) and mobile strike forces (MSF). The capabilities, limitations, suitable missions and most effective concept of employment of each force will be analyzed in the following paragraphs.

(3) It is important to note at this time that the CIDG camps are under the command of the Vietnamese Special Forces (VNSF). The USAF personnel are present as advisors only and do not command the camps or assigned personnel.

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DECLASSIFIED AFTER 12 YEARS  
DOD DIR 5200.10

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This ltr supercedes ltr, Hq, 5th SFGA, subject: "Employment of Civilian Irregular Defense Group, Mike Force, Mobile Guerrilla Force, and Long Range Reconnaissance Projects" (U), dtd 19 Apr 67

Incl 5 to 5th SFGA ORLL for Quarter Ending 31 January 1968







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15 November 1967

SUBJECT: Employment of Civilian Irregular Defense Group and Long Range  
Reconnaissance Projects (U)

b. Capabilities and Limitations:

(1) Capabilities: Due to their organization and indigenous background the Camp Strike Force troops have certain advantages. These are:

(a) Familiarity with the area: Being locally recruited they are generally very familiar with the local terrain.

(b) Survivability: Their accustomed standard of living permits survival on local resources with less supplemental support than that required by conventional units. To a large extent they can live off the land.

(c) Mobility: Reflecting para b. (1) (b) above, they are capable of travelling with lighter loads. With their entire TOE they are foot mobile. They require fewer helicopters proportionally. At sea level one UH-1D aircraft can transport 11 fully armed and equipped Camp Strike Force troops with a two-hour fuel load.

(d) Language and ethnic origin: The Camp Strike Force has the capability to gain the support of the local populace to a greater degree than ethnic foreigners.

(e) Rapid reaction: Not being restricted by specific defensive missions as ARVN units are, they are free to react rapidly to changing situations. This is enhanced by the training of the VNSF commanders and the presence of U.S. advisors at a low level, not found in ARVN units.

(2) Limitations: As with any military force the Camp Strike Force has certain limitations which, of necessity, will dictate their method of employment. These limitations will vary in extent from Corps area to Corps area due to the difference in culture, language, education and motivation. They are:

(a) Training and discipline: The Camp Strike Force personnel are paramilitary employees recruited from the area in which the camp is located. The relative freedom with which they can terminate employment, their loss of motivation in proportion to the distance employed away from their "home" area, and corollary training and discipline factors limit their reliability or use in complex, highly sophisticated, long range, or long term operations.

(b) Fire discipline: The Camp Strike Force can provide a heavy volume of fire but because of communication and training limitations, this fire is often difficult to lift or shift. Further, they tend to react to enemy fire or suspected presence by uncontrolled, premature, and undesired fire; dis-closing, often completely, their own positions. This characteristic coincidentally poses special hazards in chance meetings of friendly units.

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SUBJECT: Employment of Civilian Irregular Defense Group and Long Range  
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(c) Physical limitations: The Camp Strike Force soldier is not generally as strong as the US soldier. As a result his endurance is limited. The period in which he can operate effectively on long term operations varies from approximately five days in IV CTZ to 15 days in II CTZ.

(d) Leadership: The leadership capabilities of the Camp Strike Force leaders varies from mediocre to good. In no case does it approach the standard of the US units.

(e) Absence of supporting weapons: The Camp Strike Force company does not possess the heavy fire power capability of the normal US rifle company. Seldom are more than one 60mm mortar and two .30 caliber machine guns deployed. There are three M-79 grenade launchers or 57mm recoilless rifles organic to their TOE.

(f) Force structure: The maximum size of a Camp Strike Force company is 132 personnel. Normal deployed strength is 100 to 115 troops.

(g) Transportation: The Camp Strike Force companies have no organic transportation.

c. Missions and capabilities: In view of the limitations and strengths of the Camp Strike Force companies there are very definite missions which they can be assigned and expected to execute in a highly effective manner. They are:

(1) Blocking missions: In view of their ground maneuverability they are capable of moving into relatively inaccessible areas to block the withdrawal of enemy elements.

(2) Screening force: For the same consideration as in (1) above they are able to screen the flanks of friendly units to prevent surprise attacks, and slow the withdrawal of enemy units to the flank.

(3) Light reconnaissance in force: The Camp Strike Forces are ideally suited to locate enemy forces for destruction by a conventional force. Their familiarity with the area and their ability to associate with the local populace enhances this capability. They have only a limited capability to fix the enemy for destruction by a conventional force, but if assured of a reaction force, they will usually attempt to accomplish this mission.

(4) Search and destroy: The Camp Strike Force has the capability of searching out and destroying small enemy units of company and smaller size. Larger forces they can not normally destroy without assistance from conventional forces, to include air and artillery support.

(5) Reconnoiter and secure LZ/DZ for larger more heavily armed units.

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SUBJECT: Employment of Civilian Irregular Defense Group and Long Range  
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(6) Combat operations against local VC and VC infrastructure to include control over indigenous personnel when such action is necessary.

d. Camp Strike Force Concept of Employment:

(1) The Camp Strike Force should be employed in a manner consistent with their capabilities, and assigned missions which they can normally be expected to perform satisfactorily. These missions should consider their fighting abilities, best exploit their knowledge of the area and exploit their maneuverability. Missions which they are not considered suited for include, but are not limited to, the following:

(a) Perimeter security: Due to their lack of supporting weapons and poor fire discipline they are not considered suitable for defensive missions.

(b) Guides to individual units: Fragmentation of the Camp Strike Force into small groups for use as guides, isolates them from their normal leadership and requires them to exercise a degree of initiative which they do not possess. They are not currently motivated to exercise this mission. A Camp Strike Force company with USASF advisors is the smallest unit which can perform this mission satisfactorily.

(c) Use as a reserve/reaction force: Their limitations preclude their employment in this manner with any reasonable assurance of success.

(2) The Camp Strike Force units should never be fragmented. This separates them from their VNSF commanders and USASF advisors and negates their entire training which has been centered around their employment as a cohesive unit.

(3) Communications from the Camp Strike Force to the supported unit will have to be through the USASF advisor. Accordingly, two advisors will of necessity, have to accompany each maneuver element.

(4) Transportation and fire support will have to be provided by the supported unit through the USASF advisor.

e. Liaison between Special Forces and conventional units:

(1) The Senior Advisor in each Corps is advised by the Special Forces company commander on the employment of Special Forces assets within the Corps Tactical Zone.

(2) When the area of interest of a major tactical commander (Division or Separate Brigade) encompasses all, or a portion of a CIDG Camp's TAOR the "B" detachment or USASF company exercising advisory control over that

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CIDG camp will provide a Liaison Officer to the Division/Separate Brigade. This individual will be a Major or senior Captain with considerable Special Forces experience. His duties will be as follows:

- (a) Advise the Division/Separate Brigade commander and staff on the capabilities, limitations and techniques of employment of the Camp Strike Force.
- (b) Assist the Division/Separate Brigade commander and staff in the preparation of plans and orders for the employment of Camp Strike Forces and other Special Forces assets in support of conventional units.
- (c) During the conduct of operations be physically located with the command and control element to advise the commander and his staff in changes in employment, exploitation of contacts, and to provide close and continuous liaison and coordination between the conventional forces and the Special Forces elements operating in support.
- (d) Provide fire support coordination between the deployed Camp Strike Force elements and the conventional fire support elements.
- (e) Insure that the operations of the pertinent CIDG camps are providing the support envisioned by the Division/Separate Brigade commander.
- (f) Keep the "A" detachment, "B" detachment and company commanders abreast of the overall tactical situation, operational requirements and future plans of the US forces.
- (g) Coordinate closely with the USASF company commander to gain information required by the Division/Separate brigade commander on mobile guerrilla force operations conducted within their area of interest and methods of employing these assets when available.

f. Command relations:

- (1) As stated above, when the area of interest of a conventional commander encompasses all or a portion of the TAOR of a CIDG camp, liaison will be provided to that command. At this stage there will be no command relationship between the forces, but rather a flow of information to the commander and his staff on friendly and enemy activity, area analysis and other specific items deemed necessary.
- (2) At such time as the AO of the conventional force encompasses all or a portion of the TAOR of the CIDG camp, the specific role that the Camp Strike Force is to play in the future operations in that area will have to be determined. Their specific method of employment will have to be coordinated with, and agreed upon by the Vietnamese Corps commander. If at this time it

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SUBJECT: Employment of Civilian Irregular Defense Group and Long Range  
Reconnaissance Projects (U)

is determined that the Camp Strike Forces from that camp will actively participate in coordinated operations with the Division/Separate Brigade then they will be placed under the OPCON of the conventional force. However, if it is determined that the Camp Strike Forces will only conduct separate supporting operations disassociated from the conventional force then the two forces will be considered to be in a mutual support role. In any case it is essential that the Corps commander agree to and direct the overall concept of employment.

(3) It is then necessary that the Corps commander task the Vietnamese Special Forces "C" detachment commander with the responsibility of making the specific camp available to execute missions within the overall concept of operations.

(4) Responsibility for coordinating the employment of the Camp Strike Forces with the conventional unit commander will be delegated to the Vietnamese and USASF "B" detachment commanders. Specific missions will be transmitted by the US major unit commander through the Liaison Officer and the US "B" detachment commander. He will then effect liaison with, and gain concurrence of his counterpart.

(5) The Vietnamese and USASF "B" detachment commanders will then inform their respective subordinates in the CIDG camp of the mission requirement and implementing instructions.

(6) It is essential that maximum coordination and planning consistent with the situation be effected prior to the execution of all missions. The Vietnamese at all levels must concur in the concept of operations and tasks to be assigned to the camps. The Camp Strike Forces will operate only under the command of the Vietnamese Special Forces chain-of-command. The USASF advisors will accompany the force and coordinate operations with the US forces, however, they are unable to exercise command.

### 3. (C) Mobile Strike Force:

a. Background: The Mobile Strike Force is organized as a multi-purpose reaction force to be located in each Corps area and the SFOB which is responsive to the needs of US Special Forces company commander and his VNSF counterpart. The mission of this force is to constitute a Corps reserve; conduct raids, ambushes and combat patrols; reinforce CIDG camps under construction or attack; search and seizure operations; and the conduct of small scale conventional combat operations to include airborne operations. An additional mission which this force is capable of is the conduct of mobile guerrilla operations into certain areas of South Vietnam in which the VC enjoy sanctuaries and freedom of movement. The execution of this mission denies the VC the use of these favored routes and base areas. While the number of Mobile Strike Force companies may vary from Corps area to Corps area the number of mobile guerrilla missions which can be adequately supported concurrently within a Corps area, should not exceed two.

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REF ID: A66240  
SUBJECT: Employment of Civilian Irregular Defense Group and Long Range  
Reconnaissance Projects (U)

b. Capabilities and Limitations:

(1) Because of their organization, background, and mission the Mobile Strike Force troops have certain advantages that differ from those of the Camp Strike Force troops. These are:

(a) Rapid reaction: The Mobile Strike Force rapid reaction capability is even greater than that of the Camp Strike Force in that they are not restricted by having to provide main force elements in camp defense.

(b) The turn-over rate for personnel is lower due to the higher wages and esprit-de-corps generally found in the Mobile Strike Force.

(c) The Mobile Strike Force is an airborne unit which enhances the means for employment under adverse and short reaction time conditions.

(d) Because of the size and general operational commitments of the Mobile Strike Force a better and more comprehensive training program is conducted which increases the professionalism of the Mobile Strike Force.

(e) A higher quality of leadership exists among the indigenous personnel due to the higher wages and other incentives.

(f) When conducting a mobile guerrilla mission the Mobile Strike Force is expected to operate as an independent unit with no mutual support for a period up to thirty days.

(2) Limitations: Due to the fact that the Mobile Strike Force represents the entire Corps area some short comings must be realized. These are:

(a) The Mobile Strike Force will not have an intimate knowledge of the area of operations and the people within the specific area of operation.

(b) In some cases, language and ethnic origin will be entirely different and will create local frictions, particularly between Mobile Strike Force and Camp Strike Force personnel.

(c) The logistical supply lines must of necessity be much longer in order to provide adequate resupply. This requires the use of aviation to a much greater extent. For example, all resupply during a mobile guerrilla mission must be made by air.

(d) The Mobile Strike Force is not organized as a battalion, but as separate companies.

c. Missions and Capabilities:

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SUBJECT: Employment of Civilian Irregular Defense Group and Long Range Reconnaissance Projects (U)

- (1) The Mobile Strike Force is the Special Forces company commanders reserve. By being located centrally in respect to the Corps, the Mobile Strike Force can be deployed by air rapidly enough to influence the outcome or further develop the situation of a major engagement by the Camp Strike Force.
- (2) The Mobile Strike Force is ideally suited to conduct raids, ambushes and combat patrols because of its airborne capability and greater degree of training.
- (3) By utilizing Mobile Strike Force troops to conduct combat operations in the vicinity of new camp construction sites more Camp Strike Force personnel can be diverted from security to construction tasks.
- (4) Because of the higher state of training and professionalism the Mobile Strike Force is able to perform more conventional combat missions on a limited scale to include coordinated joint US/Mobile Strike Force operations.
- (5) VC/NVA base camps located during mobile guerrilla missions are carefully observed and either raided or harassed as warranted by the situation. Lines of communications are cut by raids and ambushes and interdicted by mines and booby traps. Enemy supply caches are located and eliminated. Air strikes are directed and assessed.

d. Concept of Employment:

- (1) To facilitate rapid reaction and minimum delay, each of the USASF company commanders and the VNSF "C" detachment commanders can deploy the Mobile Strike Force in their Corps area without the prior approval of CO, 5th SFGA, and CG, VNSF.
- (2) CO, 5th SFGA and CG, VNSF or their designated representatives reserve the right to deploy the Mobile Strike Force from one Corps area to another on any type of mission.
- (3) The SFOB Mobile Strike Force companies will be under control of Detachment A-503 as well as a VNSF "A" detachment (minus). The decision to deploy the Mobile Strike Force at Nha Trang is at the discretion of CO, 5th SFGA, and CG, VNSF or their designated representatives.
- (4) Normally each Special Forces company will utilize its Mobile Strike Force as its Corps reserve.
- (5) The employment of the Mobile Strike Force on a mobile guerrilla mission is designed as an economy of force effort, intended to be projected into remote, isolated areas not under ARVN or FVMAF control or surveillance. The force is infiltrated into its assigned tactical area of operations by the most

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15 November 1967

WJGS-C

SUBJECT: Employment of Civilian Irregular Defense Group and Long Range Reconnaissance Projects (U)

unobtrusive means available. Upon arrival into its area the Mobile Strike Force becomes a true guerrilla force in every respect except that of living solely off the land. Any action that would disclose the location or presence of the Mobile Strike Force to include medical evacuation of personnel must be carefully executed with proper deceptive measures taken.

e. Liaison: The liaison necessary for coordination and control of the Mobile Strike Force in relation to US and Vietnamese Forces is essentially the same as exists for the Camp Strike Force except that the responsible coordination headquarters is always the company which is located in the Corps area of operation. For a mobile guerrilla mission, the Mobile Strike Force requires complete freedom of action within a specified area of operations in order to achieve success. For this reason, once an area of operations is designated for the conduct of a mobile guerrilla mission, the Mobile Strike Force must be assigned complete control of that area to include control of air support.

f. Command Relations: Command and control of the Mobile Strike Force is executed through a joint command between the VNSF/USASF. Either the VNSF "C" detachment commander or the USASF company commander for each Corps Mobile Strike Force and either the CG, VNSF or CO, 5th SFGA for SFOB Mobile Strike Force can employ the Mobile Strike Forces at their disposal. Upon assignment, training and evaluation, the VNSF will eventually take full command of the Mobile Strike Force companies with the USASF reverting to an advisory role.

#### 4. (C) Long Range Reconnaissance Projects:

a. Long range reconnaissance projects were developed to consolidate assets within VNSF, ARVN, and USASF to form a highly mobile reconnaissance force with an organic reaction force.

##### b. Capabilities and Limitations:

###### (1) Capabilities:

(a) Confirm VC units, installations and activity for subsequent exploitation.

(b) Teams can remain in the area for long periods with minimum outside support.

(c) Teams can destroy small targets.

###### (2) Limitations:

(a) Authorization for employment must be approved by multiple channels and therefore requires considerable lead time. When approved, employment is rapid.

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SUBJECT: Employment of Civilian Irregular Defense Group and Long Range  
Reconnaissance Projects (U)

(b) Teams have extremely limited fire power.

c. Liaison: Long range reconnaissance projects receive missions from one of three sources:

(1) From JGS and MACV through 5th SFGA and VNSF.

(2) Directly from MACV or CG, Field Forces, Vietnam in the case of a unilateral type operation.

(3) From the CG, VNSF and CO, 5th SFGA with concurrence of MACV and JGS.

d. Command and control relationships are identical with those found in the CIDG program.

e. The sensitive nature of missions and organization preclude further discussion in this document. Persons having "a need to know", may upon request, receive a complete briefing on this subject by contacting S3, 5th Special Forces Group (Airborne), 1st Special Forces.

FOR THE COMMANDER:

DISTRIBUTION:  
"A"

Copies furnished:  
MACV J322  
CG, VNSF High Command

*for Paul McCarthy*  
D. E. BROCK  
Major, Infantry  
Adjutant

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## **Appendix J, After Action Report 1-28th Infantry**







~~1ST BATTALION, 28TH INFANTRY~~  
~~Operations, 1st Infantry Division~~  
APO San Francisco 96345

File

ALRDI-F

12 January 1968

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report

TO: Commanding Officer  
1st Brigade, 1st Infantry Division  
APO San Francisco 96345

PREPARED  
BY: Commanding Officer  
1st Battalion, 28th Infantry  
APO San Francisco 96345

1. (C) NAME AND TYPE OF OPERATION: Contingency Operation, vicinity BU DOP Airstrip, a battalion-minus security and reinforcement mission.

2. (C) DATES OF OPERATION: 29 November to 10 December 1967.

3. (C) TASK ORGANIZATION:  
a. Reporting Officer: LTC James F. Cochran III  
b. HHC 1-28th Inf: 1Lt James A. Montgomery  
c. A 1-28th Inf: Cpt Jeffery L. Harvey  
d. B 1-28th Inf: Cpt Nelson E. Modrall  
e. C 1-28th Inf: Cpt John P. Scotnicki Jr.  
d. D 1-28th Inf: Cpt Thomas A. DeBlais  
e. Recon Plt 1-28th Inf: 2Lt Robert B. Marbert  
f. A Btry 1-33rd Arty: Cpt Walter Wills

4. (C) INTELLIGENCE:

a. On the night of 27-28 November 1967 an estimated two company VC force attacked and partially overran the District Headquarters at QUAN BO DUC, approximately 5 kilometers south of SAN BAY BU DOP Special Forces Camp. Estimates of enemy strengths and intentions suggested that the Special Forces camp at BU DOP might be subject to attack by either the 271st or 273rd VC regiments or elements of the 5th NVA Division reported to be massing in the area. In addition, the villages of NOI DAI and AP PHUOC THIEN were under VC domination. Of the courses of action available to the enemy, there was no question that he had full capability for attack.

b. Enemy action throughout the operation was characterized by an aggressive campaign of containment. Friendly units frequently made light contact within 500 meters of their NDP and numerous mortar and rocket attacks served to keep the American Forces fixed in a given area. As the operation progressed, intelligence agents reported major VC forces infiltrating south from Cambodia just east of BU DOP and travelling to the SONG BE area. Rockets for one VC rocket attack were believed to have been supplied from a location in Cambodia during this period.

c. Terrain and Weather: The 1st Battalion, 28th Infantry area of operation was rolling terrain covered with mature rubber trees. To the west, secondary jungle and swamplands extended to the Cambodian border. Nearly all enemy and friendly activity occurred in the rubber. The weather was good with no rain and very little cloud cover. Temperatures ranged from 62° to 93°F.

GROUP-4

3 YEAR







5. (C) MISSION: 1-28th Infantry conducts air assault on BU DOP airstrip and reinforces the ~~Special Forces camp at that location.~~

6. (C) CONCEPT OF OPERATION: 1-28th Infantry air lifts from QUAN LOI and air assaults into BU DOP airstrip vic XU 974293, constructs NDP and reinforces adjoining Special Forces camp in anticipation of a major attack upon that location.

7. (C) EXECUTION:

a. 29 November 1967: At 0400 hours the Bn received a warning order for a combat assault. Lift off from QUAN LOI was to commence at 290900 November 1967. Three companies plus the command group were in position at BU DOP at 1035 hours. Construction of the NDP and clearing of fields of fire commenced immediately upon arrival. At the same time the Recon platoon made a security sweep of the immediate area. At 1037 hours airlift of one 105mm battery into the NDP commenced. CIDG elements reported contact vic YU 068312 at 1730 hours and at 1930 hours CIDG elements entering the Bn perimeter reported VC following them. Heavy mortar and RPG fire against the perimeter began at 2200 hours. .50 caliber fire from the NE and SE was also received at this time along with 122mm rockets and small arms fire. AP's and LP's were called into the perimeter and air strikes requested. At 2215 hours direct 105mm fire commenced into the tree line across the airstrip to the east. When incoming fire ceased at 2300 hours the NDP had received 15 122mm rockets, 100-125 60mm mortar rounds and a large number of RPG rounds. At 2307 hours the NDP came under a VC ground attack, characterized by intense small arms and sporadic mortar fire. Charlie company's mortar platoon received a direct hit at 2310 hours. Emergency resupply and dustoff were requested at 2315 hours. An airstrike was placed on the east side of the airstrip at 2325 hours. At 2335 hours in the vicinity of the juncture of the 1-28th and Special Forces positions VC were reported approaching from the east in an attempt to penetrate the perimeter. They were taken under fire by small arms, direct fire artillery and air strikes. Incoming fire ceased. Air strikes were employed against suspected enemy .50 caliber positions at 2352 hours.

b. 30 November 1967: The Bn received its first emergency resupply at 0116 hours. Casualty figures now stood at 17 US WIA and 7 US KIA. An enemy .50 caliber position firing at aircraft vic XU 979301 was hit by an air strike at 0130 hours. The Bn perimeter began receiving heavy small arms fire from the east across the airstrip at 0150 hours. Illumination revealed VC policing up bodies. VC were taken under fire by small arms, M-79 and 81mm mortars. Emergency resupply was completed at 0204 hours. A combat patrol from Bravo company was sent out at 0240 hours and reported finding well-armed VC dressed in black shirts and khaki trousers. The combat patrol made contact shortly after leaving the perimeter and returned under covering fire from the NDP. Bravo company departed the perimeter at 0630 hours on a local security sweep and returned at 0950 hours. They reported finding 13 VC bodies. During the day Charlie company provided security for the Engineer element repairing the bridge vic XU 977278. At 1315 hours Delta company departed the NDP on a sweep and returned at 1518 hours reporting they had found 4 VC bodies. At 1935 hours an ambush was sprung on 3 persons, two of which fell. There were sporadic reports of movement around the NDP until 2400 hours. The total VC body count for the day which included finds by squad size security sweeps was 36.

c. 1 December 1967: At 0725 hours Charlie company departed the perimeter on a sweep and at 0815 hours made contact with 3 VC. Mortars were called into the area. At 0840 hours Charlie received fire from 2 VC in a trench. Charlie company returned small arms and 81mm mortar fire. Charlie company returned to the perimeter with 2 VC bodies. Air strikes were called in around the village of AP PHUOC THIEN, vic XU 987304, based upon a report of a VC meeting being held in the village. A CIDG patrol located 3 VC bodies







at the point of Charlie company's initial contact. Air reconnaissance reported numerous positions in the area, including L-shaped positions at XU 976296 and XU 963270, bunkers with overhead cover at YU 010290, mortar positions at XU 939290, and anti-aircraft positions at XU 997257. Delta company departed on a sweep in the afternoon and returned without making contact. During the night sporadic reports of movement were received on the eastern side of the perimeter.

d. 2 December 1967: Sporadic movement continued to the east of the perimeter during the early morning hours. An ambush was sprung and 1 VC was killed by a claymore. At 0640 hours the District Headquarters compound at BU DOP began receiving mortar rounds. Friendly casualties were 1 KIA and 10 WIA. Air reconnaissance reported a recently occupied base camp with 9 bunkers vic YU 007291, another base camp with 22 bunkers and 13 fighting positions at YU 008294, 20 fighting positions at YU 005307, and 3 anti-aircraft positions with 9 fighting positions at YU 001316. Bravo company departed on a sweep during the morning and located some enemy equipment. The Recon platoon made a sweep in the afternoon returning to the perimeter with more enemy equipment. At 1530 hours a C-123 aircraft on takeoff received .50 caliber fire from the NW. Fire was silenced by 81mm mortar fire. Afternoon air reconnaissance reported bunkers at XU 955243, a trail with parallel trench line at XU 957245, 2 mortar positions and 50 fighting positions at XU 957256, and numerous fighting positions at XU 961296. At 1853 hours an ambush patrol began receiving small arms fire from the NE and incoming mortar rounds. The NDP began receiving mortar rounds at 1900 hours. LP's and AP's were called in. The NDP received incoming small arms fire at 1910 hours. Small arms fire was silenced with organic weapons, direct fire artillery and gunships by 1933 hours. Incoming mortars were silenced by 81mm mortar fire and gunships by 1933 hours. The NDP had received approximately 300 60mm mortar rounds during the attack. US casualties were 2 WIA. Incoming mortar rounds ignited the ammo dump in the adjoining Special Forces camp. Explosions and fires continued throughout the night and gutted the camp. Exploding shells wounded 1 man in Bravo company. At 2144 hours the NDP received a barrage of 50-60 60mm mortar rounds. Fire was quickly silenced by counter-mortar fire, flare ships, and gunships. There were no friendly casualties. Sporadic movement was reported to the east until midnight.

e. 3 December 1967: The early morning hours were quiet. Medical assistance was provided to the Special Forces camp. Recon elements departed the perimeter at 0700 hours and found one VC body, a large supply of 60mm mortar ammunition, and a mortar position with blood trails all around the area at XU 977297. Also found were several bunkers at XU 979299. Intelligence reported a VC battalion digging in around the village of AP PHUOC THIEN, which is suspected to be the VC District Headquarters. Air strikes uncovered numerous positions in the area. At 0934 hours the Special Forces camp began receiving a rocket and mortar attack. The Bn NDP was hit by a heavy mortar attack from 1032 to 1037 hours. Charlie company's sweep was called back into the NDP. US casualties were 6 WIA. Dustoff was requested at 1035 hours. Air strikes were called in on suspected VC mortar positions. At 1224 hours air reconnaissance located 1 VC body. At 1315 hours Bravo company while on a security sweep encountered entrenched VC. Bravo withdrew after a heavy firefight to allow air strikes and light fire teams to enter the area. There were no US casualties. 1 VC body was found. At 1500 hours the NDP received 40 82mm mortar rounds and sniper fire was received from the W at 1550 hours. There were no US casualties. A two platoon reinforcement from Alpha company arrived at the NDP at 1555 hours. The NDP received 15 60mm mortar rounds from the W at 1800 hours. Throughout the afternoon and evening, air reconnaissance continued to report numerous positions to both the E and W of the NDP. Aircraft were receiving increased ground fire during this period. At 2207 hours the Special Forces camp received 30 82mm mortar rounds. During the night sporadic movement was reported to the NW and NE. Movement was silenced by 81mm mortar fire and air strikes. US casualties for the day totaled 32 WIA.

CDR-4







f. 4 December 1967: Sporadic movement and several sightings were reported during the morning hours of darkness. Sightings and movement were countered with 81mm mortar fire, air strikes and artillery. The NDP received 3 mortar rounds at 0554 hours and 8 more at 0556 hours. US casualties were 1 KIA and 2 WIA. At 0601 hours dustoff was requested. Air strikes continued throughout the morning. At 0720 hours the NDP received 30 82mm mortar rounds. There were no US casualties. The Bn continued to receive reports of VC movement and new positions. Delta company on a morning sweep encountered entrenched VC at XU 984304 and withdrew after a brief firefight to allow air strikes and artillery to enter the area. No friendly casualties were incurred. Delta claimed 2 VC killed by body count. At 1140 hours the Recon platoon departed the perimeter on a sweep and reported negative results. Air reconnaissance located 1 VC body. At 1333 hours Charlie company on a sweep received sniper fire at XU 967275. Sniper fire was silenced by light fire teams. At 1730 hours the NDP began receiving mortar rounds from the NE. A total of 30 82mm mortar rounds were received. Enemy mortars were silenced by counter-mortar fire. There were no US casualties. One platoon of armored cavalry reinforced the Bn NDP during the afternoon, the last cavalry elements closing the NDP at 1755 hours. All was quiet until 2400 hours.

g. 5 December 1967: The early morning hours were quiet. Bravo company while out on a sweep during the morning hours made contact with entrenched VC and received small arms fire and 15 60mm mortar rounds. 81mm mortars and air strikes were called into the area. Bravo company withdrew and linked up with a squad from Charlie company and two armored personnel carriers which were sent out to reinforce Bravo and help bring back the dead and the wounded. US casualties totaled 1 KIA and 4 WIA. 81mm mortars supported the evacuation. Air strikes and artillery were called into the area after Bravo company was extracted. At 1325 hours Delta company departed the perimeter on a sweep and reported 15 VC killed by body count at the site of Bravo's contact. 1 VC was killed during the afternoon by the armored cavalry. All was quiet until 2400 hours.

h. 6 December 1967: All remained quiet throughout the early morning hours. While out on a sweep during the morning Charlie company located 10 spider holes at XU 979287 and found some old mortar base plates at XU 982288. At 1000 hours Charlie received 1 82mm mortar round. US casualties were 2 WIA. The Recon platoon was sent out to reinforce Charlie and to help bring back the casualties. A dustoff was called for at 1048 hours. At 2235 hours Delta company reported movement and fired a claymore with negative results. All was quiet until 2400 hours.

i. 7 December 1967: The early morning hours were quiet. Delta company while out on a security sweep during the morning made contact at 0840 hours at XU 977288. Delta received small arms and AK-47 fire and returned small arms fire. Enemy fire ceased. At 1320 hours Charlie company departed the perimeter on a sweep returning with negative results. At 2021 hours the movement of approximately 5 persons was reported to the N of the perimeter moving SW. At 2034 hours a Delta AP had two claymores blown against them and returned claymore fire. The AP returned to the perimeter and claimed 5 VC killed with claymores. At 2108 hours Bravo company reported movement to the N, blew a claymore and saw 2 people fall. The remainder of the night was quiet.

j. 8 December 1967: At 0112 hours the Bn fired its counter-mortar plan in defense of the 1-2nd Infantry position. At 0130 hours the District Headquarters compound at BU DOP received 15 82mm mortar rounds. Friendly casualties were 4 WIA. At 0155 hours the NDP began receiving mortar rounds from the E and NE. US casualties were 5 WIA. At 0245 hours the District Headquarters compound again received mortar rounds. At 0255 hours light fire teams were requested and at 0307 hours dustoff was called. At 0316 hours the Special Forces camp began receiving mortar rounds. US casualties were 6 WIA. At 0318 hours the District Headquarters compound again began receiving mortar rounds. Friendly casualties at that location

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then totaled 1 KIA and 4 WIA. At 0500 hours the District Headquarters compound again began receiving mortar rounds and again at 0600 hours. At 0602 hours the Bn NDP received a heavy barrage of 122mm rockets. US casualties were 5 WIA and 1 KIA. At 0604 hours dustoff was requested. At 0605 hours a rocket position at YU 003315 was spotted by an AO. Gunships were called into the area. During the morning hours of darkness the Bn NDP received 140 60mm mortar rounds, 80 82mm mortar rounds and 10 122mm rockets. The Special Forces camp received 30 60mm mortar rounds. The District Headquarters compound received 90-100 82mm mortar rounds. At 0800 hours the Bn(-) with the armored cavalry departed the perimeter to seal the village of AP PHUOC THIEN. Charlie company located 2 spider holes, 2 huts, and destroyed 2 bunkers. At 1035 hours Charlie company made contact and after a light firefight claimed 3 VC killed. Delta company at the same time located 1 VC body and 1 AK-47. At 1049 hours the Bn cornered a VC company in the village and took them under fire. Some VC advanced and were cut down by the armored cavalry. At 1052 hours the Bn(-) was still receiving fire from the village and one squad from Charlie company was pinned down. Air strikes and artillery were called in on the withdrawing VC company. No US casualties were incurred. 13 VC were killed and 20 more possibly killed. A Delta company patrol was sent out in the afternoon to check the previous night's ambush site for bodies and returned with 2 VC bodies, 5 sets of VC web gear, two packs containing 80 60mm mortar rounds, 1 aiming stake and 1 AK-47. Bravo company departed the perimeter later in the afternoon and returned with negative results. Movement and enemy FO's signals were observed from around the perimeter throughout the night.

k. 9 December 1967: Reports of movement were received throughout the early morning hours. During the morning hours a Bn(-) S&D located 2 foxholes 3'x4' deep at XU 98/288, 5 prone positions at XU 99/290, and 30 prone positions, 15 on each side of the road, at XU 96/286. Reports of movement to the N and E were received until 2400 hours.

l. 10 December 1967: The early morning hours were quiet. Charlie company departed on a sweep during the morning and returned with negative results. At 1018 hours 1-28th Infantry began extracting to QUAN LOI. At 1240 hours an unknown type incoming round landed near the helicopters on the airstrip. There was 1 US WIA. At 1317 hours the extraction of 1-28th Infantry to its base camp at QUAN LOI was complete.

#### 8. (C) RESULTS:

a. During the operation the 1st Battalion, 28th Infantry killed 78 VC by body count and 183 additional VC were probably killed.

b. US casualties suffered by the 1st Battalion, 28th Infantry during the operation were 10 KIA and 99 WIA.

#### 9. (C) ADMINISTRATION AND LOGISTICS:

a. On 29 November 1967 the 1-28th Infantry moved to BU DOP in support of the Special Forces camp at that location. The insertion of Class I, II, IV, and V items was accomplished through the use of six sorties of CH-47 helicopters.

b. Daily resupply of Class I and V was handled by four sorties of CH-47 helicopters. Emergency resupply of Class V was called for on several occasions: 29 November, 1 December, 6 December, and 8 December 1967. On both 29 November and 1 December four sorties of UH1B helicopters were used to bring small arms ammunition and 81mm HE. These helicopters also aided in the extraction of wounded personnel from the forward area. On 6 December and 8 December resupply of large quantities of 81mm HE was accomplished through the use of C-123 aircraft from Long Binh. On 6 December 1760 rounds were airlifted and on 8 December 2476 rounds were brought into the battalion NDP.

GROUP-4  
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RECLASSIFIED







c. Extraction from the battalion NDP was accomplished through the use of five sorties of CH-47 helicopters.

d. Problems Encountered: During this operation only one major problem was encountered. A large quantity of 81mm HE ammunition, type C225, was found to be defective and was suspended. It was necessary to declare a combat emergency and bring in large quantities of 81mm HE by fixed wing aircraft from Long Binh.

e. Personnel Analysis:

<u>1st Battalion, 28th Infantry</u>	<u>Operation Initiated</u>	<u>Operation Terminated</u>
Battalion Authorized	888	888
Battalion Assigned	844	856
Battalion PDY	793	781
Personnel in Field (PIF)	497	399
Personnel in Base Camp (PBC)	296	382

<u>Company</u>	<u>PIF</u>	<u>PBC</u>	<u>PIF</u>	<u>PBC</u>
HHC	82	126	59	143
Co A	82	52	44	87
Co B	97	46	98	44
Co C	117	26	98	42
Co D	110	25	100	40
Co E	9	21	0	26

10. (C) LESSONS LEARNED:

a. Indications were of an increased willingness on the part of the VC to expend unusually large amounts of mortar and rocket ammunition on NDP's whether or not in conjunction with a ground attack.

b. In view of the above, experience has shown that bunkers and foxholes constructed with only two layers of sandbags for overhead cover are not adequate to withstand repeated heavy rocket and mortar attacks. Overhead cover should be composed of 4 or 5 layers of sandbags.

c. During attacks of this nature, communication trenches are a valuable adjunct, providing both a means of travel between installations and immediately available protection for exposed personnel.

d. In planning counter-rocket fires, particularly in areas adjacent to the Cambodian border, attention must be paid to road networks in order to guard against the employment of truck-mounted 122mm rockets.

e. The establishment of an NDP adjacent to an easily recognizable terrain feature, such as an airfield, greatly assists fire coordination, particularly in the employment of air strikes during the hours of darkness.

11. (C) COMMANDER'S ANALYSIS: The primary mission assigned to the 1-28th Infantry in this operation was accomplished in a successful manner. The reinforcement provided to the Special Forces camp at BU DOP during the assaults of 29-30 November 1967 and 2-3 December 1967 was necessary for its successful defense. This was particularly evident during the night of the 2-3 December when mortars and rockets ignited the ammo dump at the Special Forces camp, seriously lessening its defensive capability. A secondary, but no less important, mission was accomplished in the luring of three regiments and two division headquarters into a concentrated killing zone upon which the full fire power of air and artillery could be focused. The full extent of the casualties and loss of equipment incurred by the enemy is still not known, but it was sufficient to cause the enemy to abandon the field to US forces.

FOR THE COMMANDER:

GROUP-4  
 DOWNGRADED AT 3 YEAR INTERVALS;  
*Gary M. Harrison*  
 GARY M. HARRISON







## **Appendix K, II Field Force Vietnam Lessons**

Selected pages see report page 14 for description of action at By Dop.



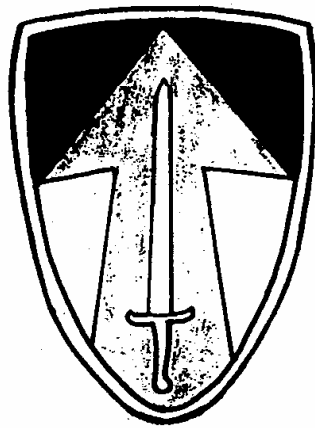




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II

# FIELD FORCE VIETNAM



DOWNGRADED AT 3 YEAR INTERVALS;  
DECLASSIFIED AFTER 12 YEARS  
DOD DIR 5200.10

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DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY  
HEADQUARTERS, II FIELD FORCE VIETNAM  
APO San Francisco 96266

AVFBC-RE-H

21 February 1968

SUBJECT: Operational Report-Lessons Learned for the Quarterly Period  
Ending 31 January 1968 (RCS CSFOR-65) (W-DHO-TO-A) (U)

TO: SEE DISTRIBUTION

SECTION I

SIGNIFICANT ACTIVITIES

1. (c) COMMAND:

a. During the quarter there were five major changes in the staff, II FFORCEV.

(1) On 20 January 1968, Major General Keith L. Ware became the Deputy Commanding General, II FFORCEV, replacing Major General George S. Eckhardt. General Ware had previously served as Deputy Commander I FFORCEV.

(2) On 2 November 1967, Colonel Joseph D. Mitchell became the Deputy Chief of Staff. Colonel Mitchell previously served as Commanding Officer, 2d Brigade, 101st Airborne Division. He replaced Colonel Robert H. Offley.

(3) On 24 January 1968, Colonel Julian H. LePage became the Provost Marshal, II FFORCEV, after an assignment as Commanding Officer, 89th Military Police Group. He replaced Colonel Paul B. Duruz.

(4) On 30 January 1968, Colonel Joseph A. Jansen became the Engineer, II FFORCEV. Before his present assignment he was Assistant Chief of Staff, P&O, US Army Engineer Command, Vietnam. He replaced Colonel Arthur T. Surkamp.

(5) On 22 January 1968, Lieutenant Colonel William V. Muroko became the Headquarters Commandant, II FFORCEV. Prior to his assignment he was an instructor supervisor at Fort Sill, Oklahoma. He replaced Lieutenant Colonel John P. Lamb.

b. The overall assigned/attached strength of II FFORCEV increased during this quarter. A comparison at the end of the last

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SUBJECT: Operational Report-Lessons Learned for the Quarterly Period  
Ending 31 January 1968 (RCS CSFOR-65) (W-DHO-TO-A) (U)

four reporting periods follows:

DATE	OFFICER	WARRANT OFFICER	ENLISTED MEN
30 April 67	359	36	3503
31 July 67	332	37	3248
31 Oct 67	323	34	2807
31 Jan 68	334	26	2915

c. II FFORCEV Order of Battle, to include location and the control headquarters is shown as Inclosure 1.

d. A sketch showing the III Corps Tactical Zone (CT2) with major unit CP locations is shown in Inclosure 2.

## 2. (FOUO) PERSONNEL, HEALTH, MORALE, SAFETY AND DISCIPLINE:

a. The personnel situation within units assigned, attached or under the operational control of II Field Force Vietnam remains satisfactory.

b. Vigorous implementation of the USARV infusion program has resulted in reduced rotational humps in all units within the command. Continued participation in this program will solve rotational hump problems in II FFORCEV units within six months.

c. The critical shortages in MOS 31M (Radio Relay and Carrier Attendant) and 13F (Automatic Weapons Crewman) reported in the last quarter's ORLL were eliminated by personnel replacements provided by higher headquarters.

d. The G1 and AG sections assisted newly arrived administrative elements of the 101st Airborne Division in establishing initial operations. Coordination visits were made, applicable publications were provided and limited duplicating and reproduction support rendered.

e. Since 1 November, the AG section published two AG Newsletters. These newsletters contained information in the personnel field of interest and included an index to all previous editions. It is anticipated that additional editions will be published in the forthcoming quarter.

f. During the period 1 November 1967 to 31 January 1968, the Awards and Decorations Division processed, approved and issued awards as follows:







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Ending 31 January 1968 (RCS CSFOR-65) (W-DHO-TO-A) (U)

Silver	17
Distinguished Flying Cross	0
Soldier's Medal	0
Bronze Star Medal	96
Air Medal	119
Army Commendation Medal	69
Purple Heart	42
TOTAL	343

g. Development of the II FFORCEV base camp continued satisfactorily. Status of significant projects as of 31 January 1968 follows:

- (1) Tropical Construction BOQ - completed.
- (2) EM Club - completed.
- (3) NCO Club - 80% completed.
- (4) Officers Club - 30% completed.

h. The health of the command continues to be excellent.

i. Morale of the troops continues to be at a high level.

During the reporting period a total of 2 USO shows visited the headquarters area.

### 3. (C) INTELLIGENCE AND COUNTERINTELLIGENCE:

a. Intelligence aspects of tactical operations conducted in the II FFORCEV area are discussed in ORLL submitted by units under operational control of this headquarters.







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of the regiment will be in the immediate future cannot be foreseen at this time.

(c) Throughout the period, the elements of the 7th NVA Division have remained in relatively static dispositions, and have assumed a primary support role in the conduct of the current Winter-Spring Campaign. Because of the recent increase of Allied activities near the "Fish Hook" area, Headquarters elements of the Division were forced to relocate to prepared bases in the central portion of Base Area 353 in northern War Zone "C". After the LOC NINH action, the 141st NVA Regiment returned to War Zone "C", leaving the area only once on 3 December, when the 1st and 2d Battalions were identified in contact in the attack against the 1st Battalion 18th Infantry, 1st Infantry Division Night Defensive Position at XT766737 in central BINH LONG Province. The battalions subsequently returned to War Zone "C", and the regiment was identified in contact on 20 December vicinity XT382857. Documents captured as a result of that contact indicated that the 141st NVA Regiment had been reinforced by an additional Battalion, and detached from the 7th NVA Division to operate independently in the BO TUC - KATUM area, directly subordinate to COSVN. A previous low level agent report indicated that the 1st Guard Battalion/COSVN had been put under operational control of elements of the 7th NVA Division to operate in northern TAY NINH Province. The 101st NVA Regiment moved from traditional base areas in War Zone "C" to the Michelin Plantation area in late November 1967, where the unit continues to be located with an apparent security mission. The 165th NVA Regiment, which took the most active part at LOC NINH, withdrew to a base area located approximately 10 km NW of CHONH THANH, where the unit remains with the apparent mission of providing security for southern BINH LONG Province border. It is probably in the area to secure supply lines, and to neutralize the political effect of local patrolling by the 1st US Division. The regiment is also in an excellent position to reinforce any multi-regimental VC operation in Military Region 10, eastern War Zone "C" or northern VC THU DAU MOT Province.

(d) Headquarters 9th VC Division remained in base areas along the BINH LONG - PHUOC LONG Province border, just south of Cambodia. The Division has apparently been assigned to be the primary COSVN maneuver element for the current Winter-Spring Campaign, taking the initiative in each phase of the operation. The 271st VC Regiment played a very minor role in the action at LOC NINH, but helped to launch the PHUOC LONG Province phase by conducting a coordinated ground and mortar attack against the 1st US Division NDP and the USSF Camp at BU DOP. That attack was in conjunction with the attack against the BO DUC District Headquarters by the 272d VC Regiment on 29 November 1967. The 271st was supported by the 122mm rockets of the 84A NVA Artillery Regiment in the attack at BU DOP. That marked the second time that 122mm rockets had been employed in support of ground attacks in the III CTZ. The 273d VC Regiment participated in the second phase by attacking the USSF and CIDG Camp at BU DOP on 8 December. Taking

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advantage of the lull in Allied activities during the Christmas cease-fire, the 271st and the 272d VC Regiments displaced to Cambodian territory in the vicinity of the "Fish Hook" area. On 1 January, during the New Year's Cease-fire, the 1st and 3d Battalions of the 271st Regiment, and the 2d and 3d Battalions of the 272d Regiment launched a coordinated mortar, RPG, and ground attack against the 3d Brigade 25th US Infantry Division base camp at FSPB BURT vicinity XT490850. The 2d Battalion, 271st VC Regiment, and the 1st Battalion, 272d VC Regiment provided logistical support and security for the action. A captured document indicated that the 272d VC Regiment had been assigned to the area of the contact until the end of January 1968, in order to interrupt Allied sweep operations. The 271st and 272d VC Regiments were believed to be located in the "Fish Hook" area. A rallier reported recently that the 273d VC Regiment, which had remained in Phuoc Long Province through December 1967, had crossed Interprovincial Route 13 east of Chi Linh on 19 January 1968. It was to have moved southwest for a planned attack against a city in the Phu Loi area. It was considered possible that the 273d VC Regiment might move into the "Catcher's Mitt" area.

(e) The 88th NVA Regiment, which infiltrated into III CTZ from II CTZ in September 1967, remained relatively inactive during the reporting period. The unit obviously avoided contact in order to replace heavy losses sustained in the attack against the 4/9th ARVN Infantry at PHUOC QUA (YU186035) in PHUOC LONG Province on 27 October 1967. A PW reported that elements of the 88th Regiment participated in the shelling of the refugee hamlet, DAK SON on 3 December 1967, but there was no evidence that the regiment was involved in the razing of the hamlet on 5 December. On 6 January 1968, vicinity XT580990, elements of the 11th ACR, while conducting Operation FARGO, made contact with elements of the 2d Battalion, 88th NVA Regiment in western BINH LONG Province. A PW captured as a result of that contact indicated that the 1st and 2d Battalions were expected to join the 3d Battalion in the "FISH HOOK" area of Cambodia, at the BINH LONG - PHUOC LONG Province border. Recent information, and the lack of contact with the regiment in the "FISH HOOK" area indicates that elements of the 88th NVA Regiment have displaced to southern BINH LONG Province, probably near the HICHELIN Plantation. Although various sources have indicated the subordination of the 88th NVA Regiment to the 5th VC Division, there has been no definite documentation to substantiate that fact.

(f) In the area formerly designated as MR IV and now split into Sub-regions as described in subparagraph c above, the nine battalions remained dispersed in the new sub-region areas in a relative defensive posture. Despite that posture, battalion sized offensive operations were conducted in December 1967 and January 1968. The attacks were made against US and ARVN forces and fixed positions in the north-western portion of Sub-region E1. Recently captured documents indicated that the VC are replenishing losses suffered during 1967. Replacements have been sent from NVN and IV CTZ and new weapons and equipment have been received from various areas.







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(g) The attacks which were initiated in the III CTZ on 31 January 1968 had been indicated, though the precise location and hour of the attacks was, of course, not known. As of the time this report was written, full details of the overall situation were not available and cannot be summarized properly. Among the many sites attacked during the early morning hours of 31 January 1968 were the following:

The American Embassy in Saigon  
The Presidential Palace, Saigon  
Officer BOQ's, Saigon  
TAM SON NHUT Air Base  
BIEN HOA Air Base  
HQ, II FFORCEV  
199th Infantry Brigade  
HQ, III Corps (ARVN), BIEN HOA

The attack on HQ, II FFORCEV area commenced at 310500H January 1968 with 122mm rockets. A ground attack commenced later and continued throughout the day. The enemy failed to penetrate the perimeter at any time and was engaged primarily by LFT's. The American Embassy compound in Saigon was penetrated, but Marine guards successfully defended the building until reinforcements from the 101st Airborne Division landed on the rooftop helipad. Nineteen VC were killed in the ensuing action. They were identified as members of the C10 VC MF Sapper Battalion. One PW reported that there were 21 battalions assembled in the Saigon - LONG BINH area. Another reported that 1000 VC were assembled east of LONG BINH military installations. These reports were fragmentary and preliminary, of course, but in view of the events which took place in the forenoon of 31 January 1968, they were considered to be possibly true. It can be reported at this time that the current attacks in the III CTZ represent the largest and best coordinated series of attacks ever perpetrated by the VC/NVA forces in this area. Preliminary document readouts and interrogations of PW indicated that the 274th and 275th VC Regiments together with several separate LF battalions were engaged in the attacks in the Saigon - BIEN HOA - LONG BINH areas.

e. VC/NVA Battle Losses:







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NOVEMBER 1967

VC/NVA KIA (BC)	PW	Returnees	Ind Wpns	Crew Served Wpns	Mil Struc Dest	Bunkers Dest	Tons Rice Cptrd/Dest
2461	447	216	895	98	372	2264	216.9

DECEMBER 1967

2182	251	162	534	128	167	1734	724.8
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JANUARY 1968

4177	528	83	697	220	209	2284	328.3
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TOTAL:

8820	1145	461	2126	446	748	6282	1270.0
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NOTE: The actual strength of Main Force units cannot be equated to battlefield losses for three reasons. First, supporting and Local Force personnel normally accompany Main Force units into battle and unit identification most often cannot be made. Second, it is impossible to assess accurately the number of enemy casualties resulting from air and artillery strikes. Though not as thoroughly in some instances as heretofore, the enemy continues to police the battlefield before Allied units can enter the area. Third, there is considerable variation in the time that particular units require to have their losses replaced. Trained invaders from NVN provide a high percentage of the replacements, but replacements are also drawn from local recruitment and by infiltration from other CTZ. Precise knowledge of the numbers of replacements and the time involved for their integration into the units is not available. Thus, the strength of individual units and the overall strength of the enemy in III CTZ must continue to be based in part on estimation.

f. Enemy Capabilities, Vulnerabilities and Relative Probability of Adoption at the End of the Quarter:

(NOTE: The following estimate is of necessity tentative due to the scope of the attacks initiated on 31 January 1968 and the preliminary and fragmentary nature of the intelligence as of the close of the reporting period. The capabilities and vulnerabilities of several major VC units will obviously be determined largely by the outcome of the series of battles now in progress. Indications at the close of the







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reporting period are that the 274th and 275th VC Regiments together with several RF and LF Battalions suffered heavy casualties and the estimate is based on the presumption that those early indications will be borne out).

(1) Capabilities:

(a) Attack:

1 The enemy is capable of continuing the attacks in the Saigon - BIEN HOA area with elements of the 7th NVA Division, the 9th VC Division, the VC DONG NAI Regiment, and LF Battalions.

2 The enemy is capable of attacking installations and LOC in TAY NINH, BINH LONG, and BINH DUONG Provinces with elements of the 7th NVA Division and the 88th NVA Regiment, supported by elements of the 69th VC Artillery Command.

3 The 84A NVA Artillery Regiment, which possesses a rocket capability, can be employed against targets throughout the III CTZ.

4 The battalions of Sub-regions E1 through E5 are capable of conducting limited attacks against Allied units, outposts, LOC and installations within their respective areas of operations.

5 The VC are capable of attacking in VC MY THO Province with elements of the DONG THAP I Regiment and the 514th VC LF Battalion.

(b) Defend:

1 The VC can defend in TAY NINH, and BINH LONG Provinces with elements of the 7th NVA and the 9th VC Divisions and the 88th NVA Regiment.

2 The VC can defend in War Zone "D" and VC BA BIEN Province with elements of the DONG NAI Regiment and Local Forces.

3 The VC can defend in PHUOC LONG Province with elements of the 9th VC Division supported by Local Forces.

4 Confronted with a superior force, the enemy is capable of breaking contact, dispersing into small groups, and withdrawing to safe positions.

(c) Reinforce: The enemy can reinforce his attack or defense in the northern III CTZ with 3 battalions from the II CTZ. In southern III CTZ he can reinforce with 2 battalions from IV CTZ. It

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is estimated that reinforcements could reach their destinations within three to ten days after movement commenced.

### (2) Vulnerabilities and Weaknesses:

(a) The enemy control over the populace is vulnerable to revolutionary development and psychological warfare activities, especially in areas where the infiltrated NVA troops have given rise to apprehension among the people. As the GVN continues to gain the confidence and support of the population, the enemy's influence weakens.

(b) Low morale in the enemy's ranks is vulnerable to exploitation by Allied psychological warfare operations.

(c) The enemy's extended and insecure LOC are becoming more vulnerable to Allied interdiction, except for those LOC in neutral countries. The interdiction of enemy LOC has restricted his movement and ability to establish tax collection stations throughout the III CTZ.

(d) The neutralization of VC/NVA Base Areas in III CTZ and the loss of caches has reduced the enemy's ability to resupply adequately his forces from within the III CTZ. This has forced the enemy to tax his supply system. An inability to resupply quickly has weakened his capability to maintain any extended offensive or defensive postures and also to hold any objective for an extended period.

(e) The enemy is vulnerable to reconnaissance in force missions of Allied mobile forces which are supported by artillery and close air support.

(f) There are increasing indications that the enemy's ability to obtain sound tactical intelligence is declining. This is possibly due to the forced dispersion of his units caused by aggressive Allied operations and in turn has resulted in his loss of LF and Irregular support.

(g) In any large scale offensive action, such as that initiated on 31 January 1968, the enemy is extremely vulnerable to Allied firepower and force mobility.

(3) Relative Probability of Adoption at the End of the Quarter: The intensity of the attacks increased at the end of the quarter and indications that the enemy does not intend to withdraw lend credence to the distinct possibility that the enemy has mounted his general offensive. He will continue attacks to seize and hold whatever terrain or population centers he can to place him in a position of power for any "peace talks".







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4. (C) OPERATIONS, PLANS AND TRAINING

a. Introduction:

(1) During the reporting period, II FFORCEV initiated the dry season campaign. Objectives of the operations included continued military pacification of the heavily populated provinces surrounding Saigon and security of the Allied base areas; neutralization of War Zone C and interdiction of main invasion routes into War Zone C; preemption of War Zone D; neutralization of VC main force capability and effective food resource control in the heavily populated Phuoc Long, Long Khanh, Binh Tuy, Phuoc Tuy, Bien Hoa, Binh Duong, Tay Ninh, Hau Nghia, Gia Dinh, Long An, Dinh Tuong, Kien Hoa, Go Cong and Kien Phong provinces.

(2) During November, military activity in III CTZ was highlighted by the enemy's unsuccessful attempts to achieve a victory in MR 10. On three occasions (Loc Ninh, Song Be and Bu Cop/ Bo Duc) main force units were committed against seemingly vulnerable and lightly defended targets. In each case, the continuing improvement in the effectiveness of ARVN and RF/PF units was evident as RVNAF units withstood heavy assaults until additional units could be committed. The dry season campaign was initiated. Major elements of the 101st Airborne Division commenced arrival in country.

(3) December was marked by a significant increase in enemy contacts and willingness of the enemy to engage in sustained combat. II FFORCEV increased the scope of dry season campaign operations when operations YELLOWSTONE, SARATOGA and FARGO were initiated. Additional combat power continued to arrive in III CTZ. The 3d Battalion, Royal Australian Regiment closed at Nui Dat on 27 December increasing the strength of the 1st Australian Task Force by 796 personnel. The 101st Airborne Division (-) closed in country. Both units commenced training immediately upon arrival.

(4) January was characterized by increased offensive operations against the enemy particularly in War Zone C, northern Binh Long and Phuoc Long provinces, northern Hau Nghia province and near the junction of Bien Hoa, Binh Duong and Long Khanh provinces. Enemy initiated activity increased significantly, characterized by repeated attacks against friendly installations and defensive positions. A major violation of the New Year's truce occurred on 1 January when elements of the 271st and 272d VC Regiments attacked Fire Support Patrol Base Burt twelve kilometers northeast of Suoi Tre. During the attack, US forces killed 386 of the enemy. An additional 20 enemy were killed as they attempted to flee the area. The 1st Brigade, 101st Airborne Division came under operational control of II FFORCEV on 13 January, except the 3d Battalion, 506th Infantry which remained under the operational control of I FFORCEV. The 3d Squadron 17th Air Cavalry commenced combat operations and has performed

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(10) Operations in the Bu Dop/Bo Duc are significant because they demonstrate the outstanding reaction capabilities of friendly forces and indicate improved ARVN effectiveness. Bo Duc District Headquarters, two kilometers south of Bu Dop, was attacked by enemy forces on 29 November. Friendly forces at the time of the attack consisted of elements of one Regional Force company, two Popular Force platoons and the 5th Reconnaissance Company (ARVN). At 0027 hours, an estimated reinforced Viet Cong battalion, 272d Regiment, 9th Viet Cong Division, attacked the district headquarters compound from three directions, supported by 82mm mortar and B40 rocket fire. By 0200 hours, the southern part of the compound was penetrated and friendly forces conducted a fighting withdrawal to the northern part of the compound. All available supporting fires were directed against the attacking force. Thirty four airstrikes, artillery and light fire teams assisted the friendly forces in containing the enemy penetration. By 0630 hours, the enemy was expelled from the compound. Enemy losses from this attack were 96 killed, one prisoner, nine small arms and five crew served weapons captured. Friendly losses were 15 killed and 57 wounded. In response to the attack at Bo Duc, two ARVN battalions were moved by helicopter to Bo Duc, and the US 1st Battalion, 28th Infantry, with one artillery battery, moved by helicopter from Quan Loi to Bu Dop closing at 1113 hours. The 1st Battalion, 28th Infantry established a night defensive position at the north end of the runway. Commencing at 2202 hours, enemy forces fired approximately 125 rounds of mixed mortar fire and an estimated 18 rounds of 122mm rockets into the position. At 2206 hours, a ground attack was launched by elements of the 271st VC Regiment, 9th VC Division and the 80A Replacement and Training Regiment. Close fighting occurred around the perimeter. At 2332 hours, a reinforced VC squad was repelled by small arms fire as it attempted to enter the perimeter. Friendly forces were supported by airstrikes, artillery, a light fire team, forward air controller and an air observer. At 2257 hours, the enemy broke contact. Searches of the battlefield during the next two days revealed 39 enemy dead. Seven US personnel were killed and 11 were wounded. This is the first known employment of 122mm rockets in III CTZ against other than fixed installations. From 1 December to 4 December, there were numerous light contacts with enemy forces. The enemy employed mortar and rockets against friendly positions while avoiding major contact. On 5 December, the 2d Battalion, 28th Infantry moved to positions approximately one kilometer northeast of Bu Dop. On 6 December, the 1st Battalion, 2d Infantry moved to the vicinity of Bu Dop. On 8 December, the 1st Battalion, 2d Infantry night defensive position, two kilometers southeast of Bu Dop, was attacked by an estimated battalion of the 273d VC Regiment, 9th VC Division. At 0105 hours, enemy forces commenced a mortar attack and 30 minutes later began firing small arms into the friendly positions. At 0212 hours, enemy forces initiated a ground attack from the east and northwest with small probes from the southeast and southwest. Friendly forces were supported by six airstrikes, four light fire teams, artillery, Spooky, an air observer and a forward air controller. After 48 minutes of fighting, the enemy withdrew. Friendly losses were

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four killed and 14 wounded while the enemy lost 48 killed, six prisoners and 25 weapons captured. The 1st Infantry Division maintained at least one infantry battalion in the Bu Dop area until 29 December. Cumulative casualties from US operations in the Bu Dop area from 29 November to 29 December were 16 US killed and 66 wounded. Enemy losses were 151 killed, 22 small arms and 11 crew served weapons captured. On 13 December, the 1st Battalion, 28th Infantry moved by helicopter from Quan Loi to Song Be. Until January, the 1st US Infantry Division conducted reconnaissance in force operations in the Song Be area with one battalion.

(11) Opening of Highway 13 (includes battle at FSPB CAISSON VI on 10 December). The 1st Infantry Division conducted operations to keep Highway 13 open during the reporting period. Semi-permanent night defensive positions and Fire Support Patrol Bases were constructed along this major north-south route. Construction included the clearing and leveling of fields of fire by bulldozers, installation of two triple bands of concertina around the perimeter and construction of minimum troop comfort facilities. This will permit more economical use of resources in carrying out the long term mission of maintaining Highway 13 open to the An Loc - Quan Loi area. Convoys have moved to Quan Loi since 3 November without significant incident. There has been a major increase in civilian traffic and economic activity along Highway 13. Allied forces conduct military operations by overland movement. The enemy once transported men and supplies along the highway and crossed it at will in movements between War Zone C and D. He has reacted violently to the loss of control of the road by attacking defensive positions and FSPB along the highway. One example is the attack on FSPB CAISSON VI, eight kilometers southwest of An Loc on 10 December. US forces at CAISSON VI consisted of Company A, 1st Battalion, 18th Infantry; 3d Platoon, Troop C, 1st Squadron, 4th Cavalry; Battery A, 6th Battalion, 15th Artillery and Battery C, 8th Battalion, 6th Artillery. At 0200 hours, elements of the 165th NVA Regiment launched a ground attack, supported by mortar and RPG fire, against the night defensive position. Enemy forces employed claymores and bangalore torpedoes on the north, east and west side of the perimeter to breach the defensive wire. Approximately 165 mortar rounds ranging from 60mm to 120mm were fired into friendly positions. Friendly forces were supported by four airstrikes, four light fire teams, Spooky, a forward air controller, an air observer, artillery and mortars. The attack was repulsed after a one hour and 20 minute contact. Enemy losses were 143 killed, two PW, 43 small arms and 21 crew served weapons captured. US losses were one killed and 17 wounded.

(12) 101st Airborne Division (-):

(a) On 2 August 1967, the 101st Airborne Division (-) was alerted for deployment to the RVN. Equipment and personnel readiness dates were changed from February 1968 to 1 December 1967 to permit early deployment of the division. An intensive training program was initiated to train new personnel; emphasis was placed on individual training, POR/POM requirements, quick-kill techniques, study of lessons

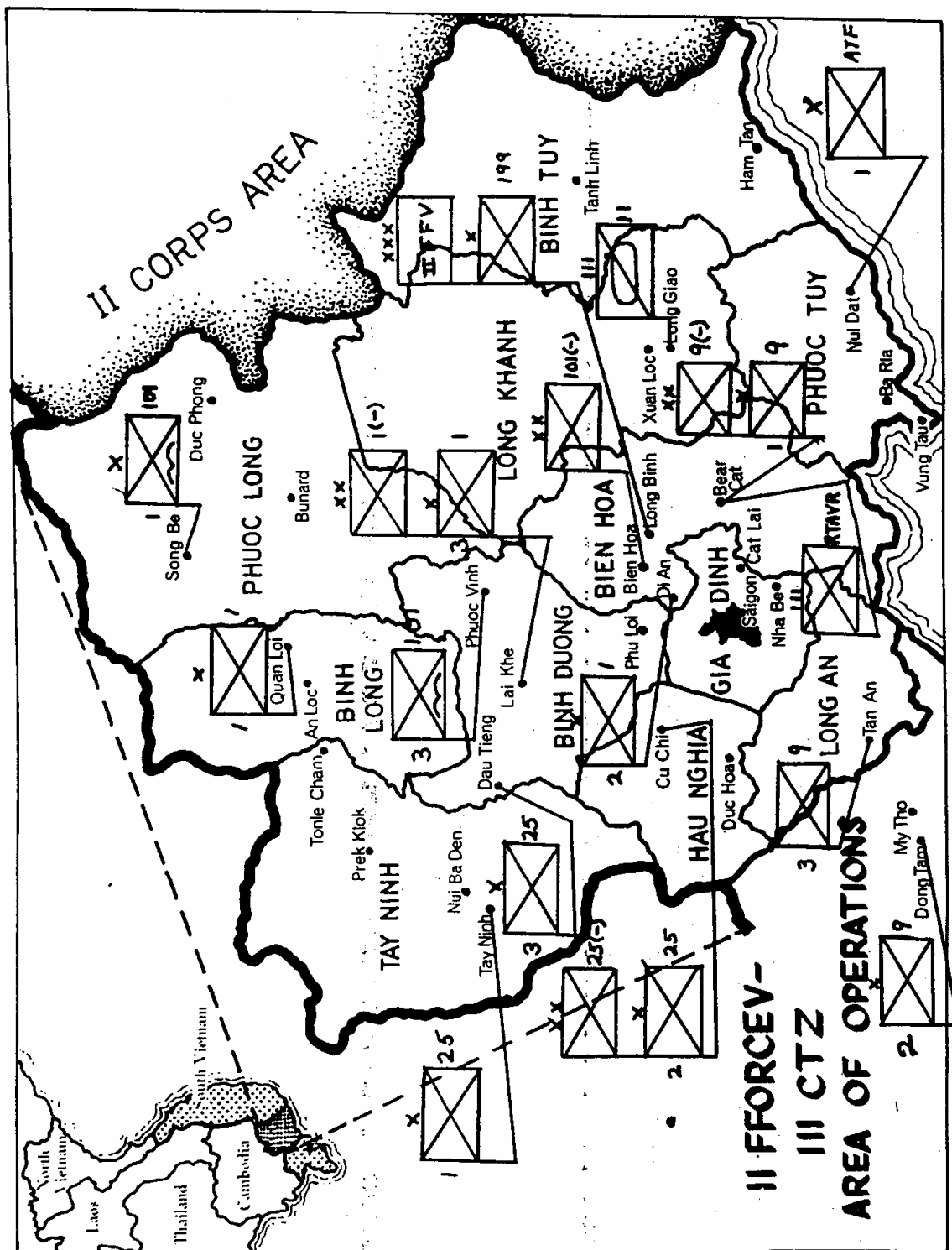
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# FFORCEV-

# III CTZ

## AREA OF OPERATIONS



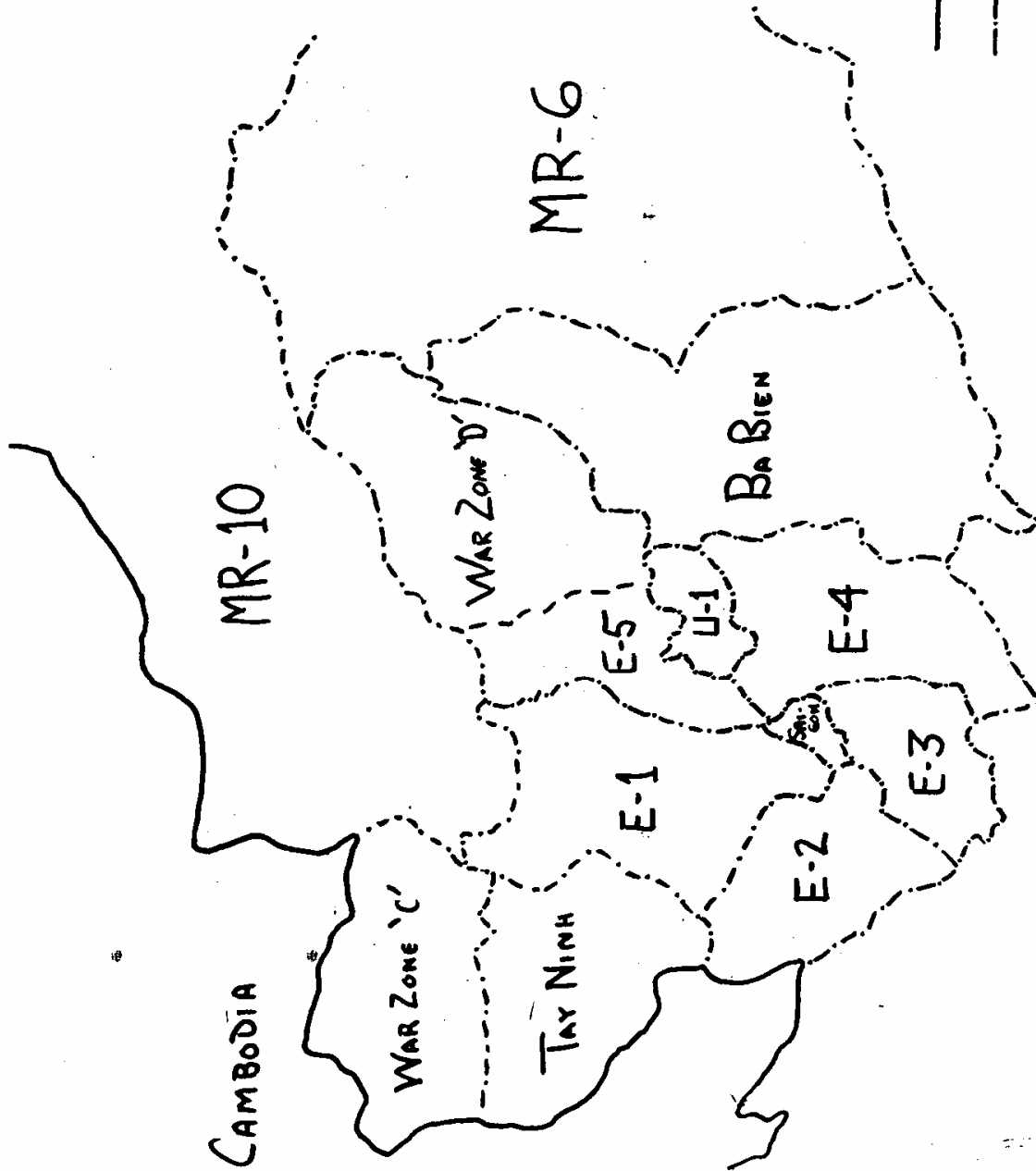




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EXISTING BOUNDARIES  
SHOWING INITIAL INTER-  
PRETATION OF RECENT  
REORGANIZATION.

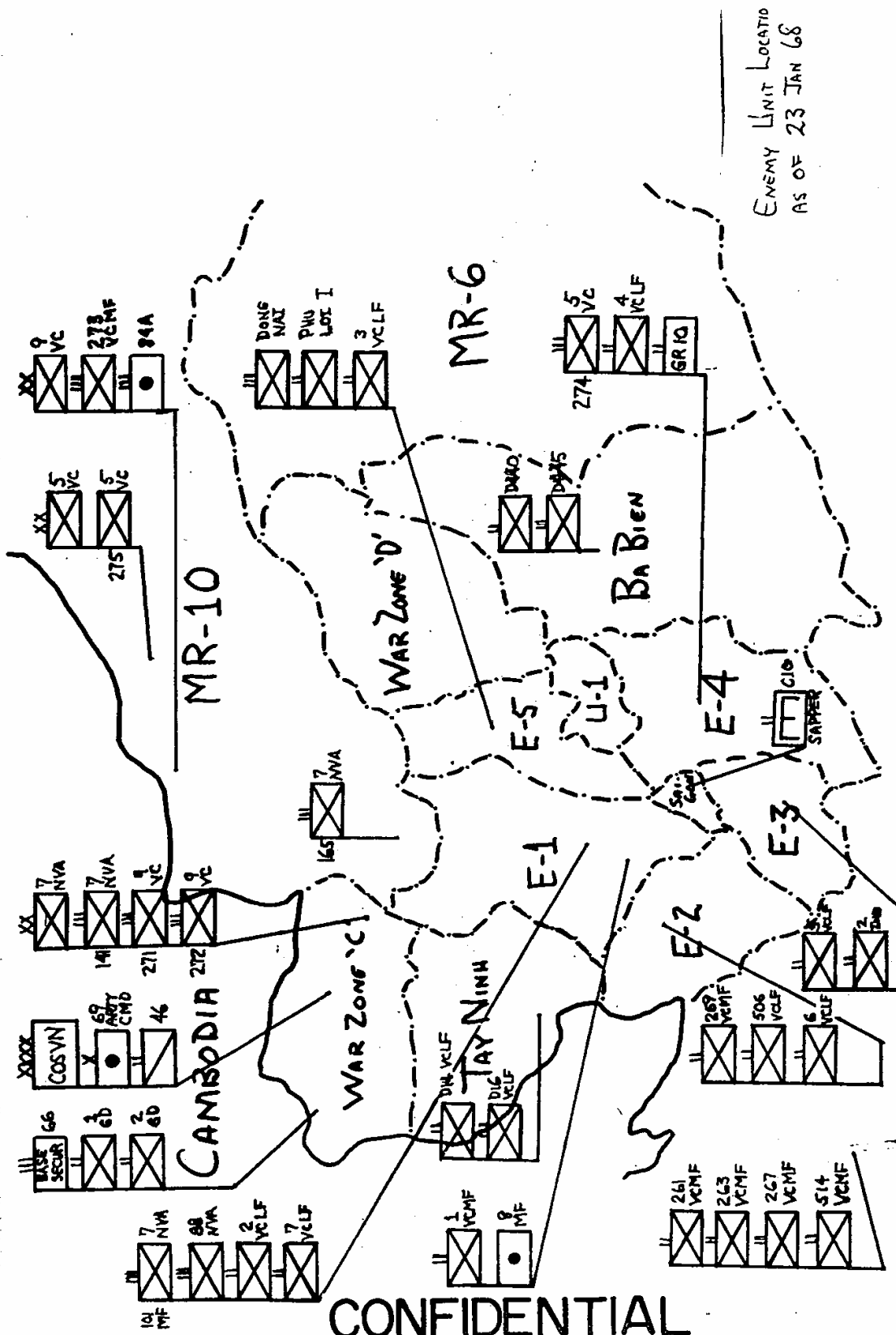
BOUNDARIES  
— INTERNATIONAL  
--- MR & SUBREGION











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## **Appendix L, II Field Force Vietnam Artillery Lessons**

Selected pages showing units and ranges of guns.



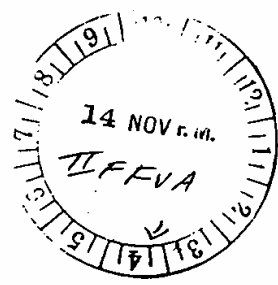
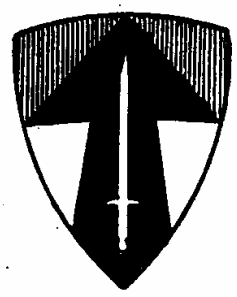




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DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY  
HEADQUARTERS II FIELD FORCE VIETNAM ARTILLERY  
APO SAN FRANCISCO 96266



AFFA  
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COPY No. *2 of 13*

OPERATIONAL REPORT-LESSONS LEARNED  
QUARTERLY FOR PERIOD ENDING 31 OCTOBER 1967  
(RCS CSFOR 65) (U)

*Downgraded  
7 Apr 71  
ak*

UNCLASSIFIED

~~SECRET~~

DOWNGRADED AT 3 YEAR INTERVALS  
DECLASSIFIED AFTER 12 YEARS.  
DOD DIR 5200.10

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~ AAVC-67-S *07918*







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## ORGANIZATION OF II FFORCEV ARTILLERY

1. The following units are attached to Hq, II FFORCEV Artillery:
  - a. Headquarters and Headquarters Battery, 8th Target Acquisition Battalion.
  - b. 19th AA Platoon, 2d Civil Affairs Company.
2. The following units are under the Operational Control of II FFORCEV Artillery:
  - a. 23d Artillery Group.
    - (1) 2d Battalion, 13th Artillery.
    - (2) 1st Battalion, 27th Artillery.
    - (3) 2d Battalion, 11th Artillery. (Presently attached Americal Div)
    - (4) 6th Battalion, 27th Artillery.
    - (5) 2d Battalion, 32d Artillery.
    - (6) 17th AA Platoon, 2d Civil Affairs Company.
  - b. 54th Artillery Group.
    - (1) 7th Battalion, 9th Artillery.
    - (2) 2d Battalion, 35th Artillery.
    - (3) 3d Battalion, 16th Artillery. (Presently attached Americal Div)
    - (4) 1st Battalion, 83d Artillery.
    - (5) 7th Battalion, 8th Artillery.
    - (6) 18th AA Platoon, 2d Civil Affairs Company.
  - c. 5th Battalion (AW) (SP), 2d Artillery.
    - (1) Battery D (MG), 71st Artillery.
    - (2) Battery I (SLT), 29th Artillery.

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Inclosure 1







UNIT

LOCATION AS OF 31  
JULY 67

LOCATION AS OF 31  
OCTOBER 67

HHB, II FFORCEV Arty	LONG BINH	LONG BINH	YT 051 111
HHB, 8th Bn, 25th Arty (TAB)	LONG BINH	LONG BINH	YT 053 112
HHB, 23d Arty Gp	PHU LOI	PHU LOI	XT 867 162
2nd Bn, 13th Arty (105mm T)	PHU LOI	PHU LOI	XT 847 152
HHB, SVC, Btry C, 1st Bn, 27th Arty (155mm SP)	DAU TIENG	DAU TIENG	XT 497 481
Btry A, 1st Bn, 27th Arty	PHU LOI	PHU LOI	XT 845 158
Btry B, 1st Bn, 27th Arty	TAY NINH	TAY NINH	XT 143 525
HHB, SVC, 2nd Bn, 32d Arty (8"/175mm SP)	TAY NINH	TAY NINH	XT 154 513
Btry A, 2nd Bn, 32d Arty	CU CHI	TAY NINH	XT 160 524
Btry B, 2nd Bn, 32d Arty	SOUI DA	SOUI DA	XT 338 578
Btry C, 2nd Bn, 32d Arty	TAY NINH	DAU TIENG	XT 496 486
HHB, SVC, Btry C, 6th Bn, 27th Arty (8"/175mm SP)	PHUOC VINH	PHUOC VINH	XT 965 493
Btry A, 6th Bn, 27th Arty	QUAN LOI	QUAN LOI	XT 809 903
Btry B, 6th Bn, 27th Arty	III MAF I CTZ	SONG BE	YU 138 063
HHB, 54th Arty Gp	XUAN LOC	XUAN LOC	YT 460 090
7th Bn, 9th Arty (105mm T)	BEAR CAT	BEAR CAT	YT 169 995
HHB, Btry B, 2d Bn, 35th Arty (155mm SP)	XUAN LOC	XUAN LOC	YT 470 097
Btry A, 2d Bn, 35th Arty	NUI DAT	NUI DAT	YS 428 665
Btry C, 2d Bn, 35th Arty	BIEN HOA	BIEN HOA	YT 025 147

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POSITIONING OF II FFORCE V ARTY

Inclosure 2







~~SECRET~~

MISSIONS OF II FFORCEV ARTILLERY UNITS

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1. 23d Artillery Group - General Support II FFORCEV and III ARVN Corps.

- a. 2d Bn, 13th Arty - GS-Reinf 1st Infantry Division Artillery.
- b. 2d Bn, 11th Arty - Attached Americal Division.
- c. 1st Bn, 27th Arty - GS.

Btry A - GS-Reinf 1st Infantry Division Artillery.

- d. 6th Bn, 27th Arty - GS.
- e. 2d Bn, 32d Arty - GS.

2. 54th Artillery Group - General Support II FFORCEV and III ARVN Corps.

- a. 7th Bn, 9th Arty - GS-Reinf 9th Infantry Division Artillery.
- b. 2d Bn, 35th Arty - GS.

(1) Btry A - GS-Reinf 1st Australian Task Force.

(2) Btry B - GS-Reinf 18th ARVN Division.

(3) Btry C - GS-Reinf 18th ARVN Division.

- c. 3d Bn, 16th Arty - Attached Americal Division.
- d. 1st Bn, 83d Arty - GS.

(1) Btry A - GS-Reinf 1st Royal Australian Artillery.

(2) Btry B - GS-Reinf 9th Infantry Division Artillery.

(3) Btry C - GS-Reinf 18th ARVN Division.

- e. 7th Bn, 8th Arty - GS.

(1) Btry A - GS-Reinf 9th Infantry Division Artillery, priority of fires to DONG NAI Sensitive Area.

(2) Btry B - GS-Reinf 9th Infantry Division Artillery, priority of fires to DONG NAI Sensitive Area.

(3) Btry C - GS-Reinf 9th Infantry Division Artillery

3. 5th Battalion (AW)(SP), 2d Artillery - General Support.

- Btry A - Attached 1st Infantry Division.
- Btry B - Attached 25th Infantry Division.
- Btry C - Attached 9th Infantry Division.
- Btry D - General Support.

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

~~SECRET~~

Inclosure 4

MISSIONS

DOWNGRADED AT 3 YEAR INTERVALS  
DECLASSIFIED AFTER 12 YEARS.  
DOD DIR 5200.10







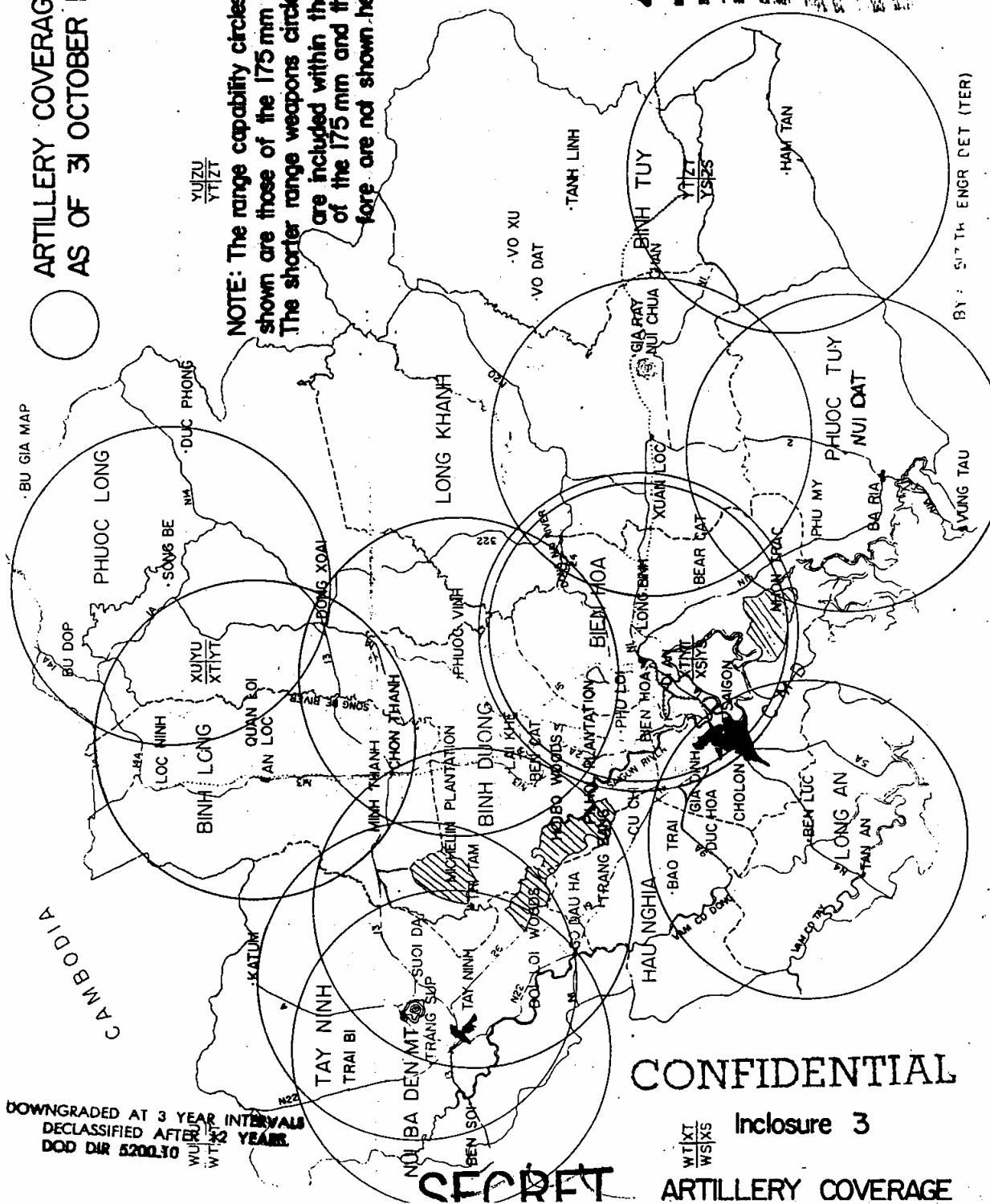
# ARTILLERY COVERAGE AS OF 31 OCTOBER 1967



YUJZU  
YHIZT

NOTE: The range capability circles shown are those of the 175 mm GUNS. The shorter range weapons circles are included within those of the 175 mm and therefore are not shown here.

## SECRET CONFIDENTIAL



BY : 5174 ENGR DET (TER)

## CONFIDENTIAL

Inclosure 3

WTXT  
WSIXS

## ARTILLERY COVERAGE

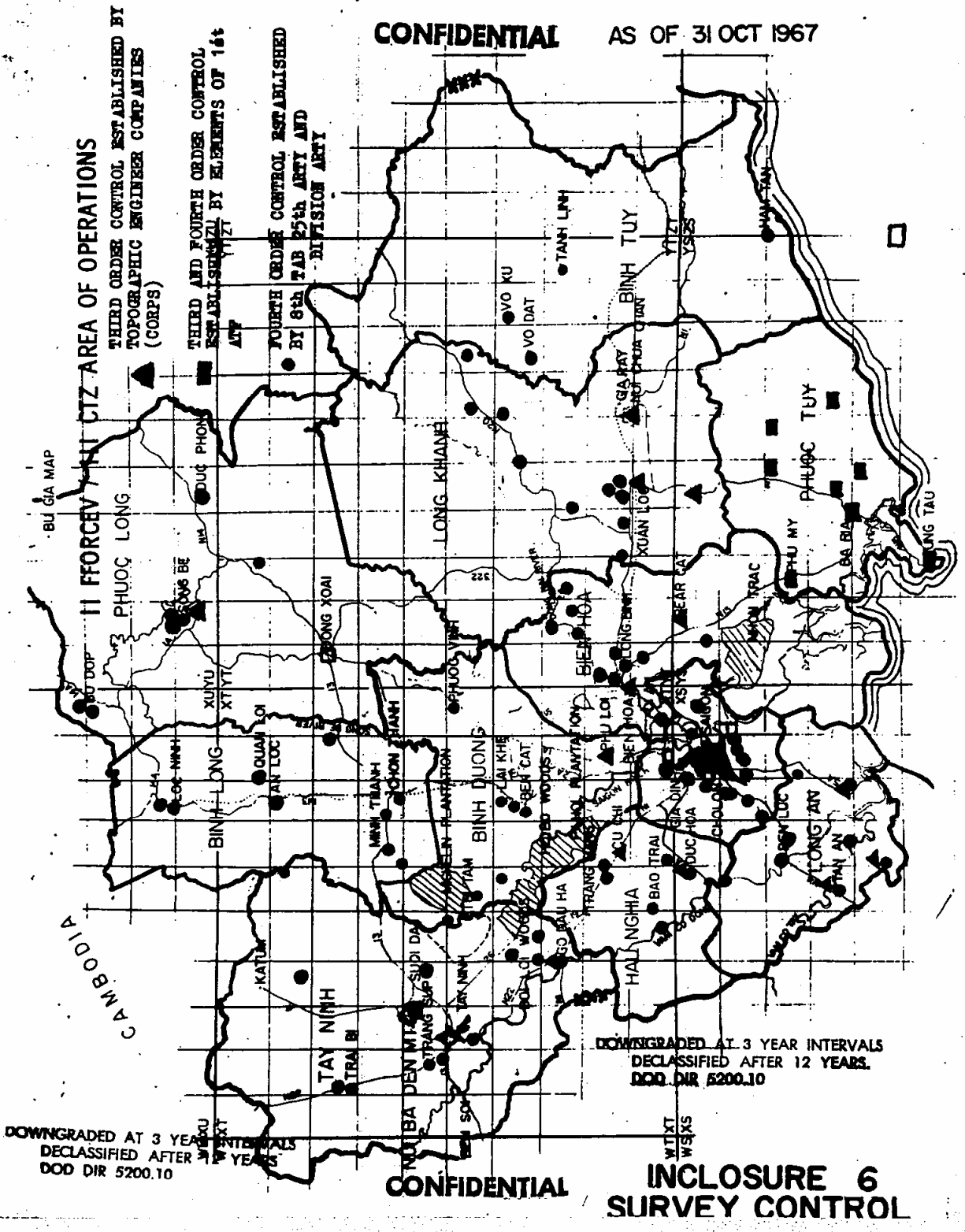
## SECRET

DOWNGRADED AT 3 YEAR INTERVALS  
DECLASSIFIED AFTER 32 YEARS  
DOD DIR 5200.10















## Appendix M, Discussion on Awards at Bu Dop

I attended the Special Forces Association Convention in Cleveland in 1994 and while I was there I met Steve Sherman, who was trying to put together a history of Special Forces, especially as relating to Vietnam. While talking to him about Bu Dop he looked in some of his reference books for the period I was there and found Bu Dop and saw that Captain Hasko had gotten a Silver Star for heroism at Bu Dop. He pulled out a copy of the award and showed it to me and after I read it I was very, very surprised.

When I was in the hospital in 1968 and later when I was stationed at Fort Campbell, I submitted paper work on various A-341 team members for awards that I thought they deserved. While doing this I had to try and remember all the actions we had been in and that was one of the reasons I had to finish writing the narrative I started thinking about when I was in the hospital on my experiences at Bu Dop. This was a difficult task since I had no reference material and was thousands of miles away from where all this had occurred.

After many letters to the 5th Special Forces Group one of the things I found out was that (then) 2nd Lieutenant Berry had put himself in for an award. This was not according to Army procedure but since I was going to do it anyway I let it pass. The 5th Group sent me a copy of his award and since he and I were the only witnesses to what was done he had to do it himself. I was in the hospital at the time it was written and turned in.

The other thing I found out was that Captain Hasko did not have a good reputation for taking care of his troops. Since I had not really known him prior to his assignment at Bu Dop and we were together for only a short time I could not make a judgment call on what I was told. I forgot about all this for 26 years until I met Sherman in Cleveland. See Appendix "D" for copy of letter from 5th Group.

After reading the Silver Star award that Captain Hasko got and looking up the award that 2nd Lieutenant Berry got after the convention (I still had the copy that 5th Group sent me in my records), I saw what had happened (at least my interpretation of what happened). Both awards were for action the night that we were attacked on 3 December 1967. During that attack I thought Captain Hasko was manning the east wall of the camp because that was where he was supposed to be. However, I never actually saw him there or anywhere else in Camp during that night. Yet the award that he got sounds amazingly like what I was doing in keeping the inner defenses intact. Since he wasn't there with me his award is not just an exaggeration but also a total fabrication. The question now is where actually was Captain Hasko when this was going on that night.

2nd Lieutenant Berry's award is closer to what really happened at Bu Dop since he was with me for several hours that night; however, it too is not completely true. 2nd Lieutenant Berry must have told Captain Hasko some of the things that we (Berry and I) did together that night and then Hasko put himself in for an award based on that information. It would appear therefore that he concocted a story around what he was told by 2nd Lieutenant Berry. Each than putting themselves in for actions they were not involved in. For example, in 2<sup>nd</sup> lieutenant



Berry's award he is listed as the XO of camp A-341. During that attack and up until I was flown out on 8 December 1967 after being wounded I was the XO of that camp and Lieutenant Berry was the PsyOp's Officer

After I was wounded and medevaced 2nd Lieutenant Berry was the only person in camp that could have known some of what was written in Captain Hasko award, since he was with me; which means it had to come from him. They probably both signed off as witness for each other's awards. This was not typical of what USSF troops would do and I am very disappointed in what they did. 2nd Lieutenant Berry could be excused somewhat since he was "green". Captain Hasko; however, was a seasoned officer and the CO of the camp there was no possible excuse for what he did in 1967.

What they did brings dishonor on them, and reflects poorly on the command structure in place at the time in Vietnam. It also degrades the medals that were honestly earned by most USSF troops in battle. Some have told me that I should not make reference to this and that the personal knowledge that each of these individuals carries that they did not deserve these awards is enough. I don't agree with this, since by keeping quiet it just perpetuates the situation.











## Appendix N, THE RANGER WAY VERSES THE GREEN BERET (SF) WAY

The Army Chief of Staff was recently asked by the President to form an elite counter-terrorist unit. The General went to his Sergeant Major, who was both Ranger and Special Forces qualified, and asked him which organization he would recommend to form this new counter-terrorist unit. The Sergeant Major thought about this for a few minutes and then responded to the General's question with this parable:

### SITUATION

Sir, If there were a hijacked Delta 747 being held by international terrorists along with its passengers and crew, and a counter-terrorists unit formed either by the Rangers or Special Forces were given the rescue/recovery mission, this is what you could expect to happen:

### RANGER OPERATION

**Forces/Equipment Committed:** If the Rangers went in, they would send a single Ranger Company of 120 men with standard U.S. Army issue equipment.

**Mission Preparation:** The Ranger company first sergeant would conduct a haircut, uniform and boots inspection.

**Infiltration Technique:** They would insist on double-timing, in company formation, wearing their full combat equipment, and singing Jody cadence all the way to the site of the hijacked aircraft.

**Actions in the Objective Area:** Once they arrive, the Ranger company would establish their objective rally point, put out security elements, conduct a leader's recon, reapply their face camouflage, and then conduct final preparations for actions on the objective.

**Results of Operation:** The rescue/recovery operation would be completed within the hour, all of the terrorists and most of the passengers would have been killed in the ensuing intense firefight, the Rangers would have sustained light casualties and the Delta 747 would be worthless to anyone except a scrap dealer.



## **SPECIAL FORCES OPTION**

**Forces/Equipment Committed:** If Special Forces went in, they would only send a 12 man team, (all SF units are divisible by 12 for some arcane historical reason), however, due to the exotic nature of their equipment the SF team would cost the same amount to deploy as the Ranger company.

**Mission Preparation:** The SF team sergeant would request relaxed grooming standards (long hair, and beards) for the team and uniforms would not be required.

**Infiltration Technique:** The team would insist on separate travel orders with max per diem, and each would get to the site of the hijacking by his own means. At least one-third of the team would insist on jumping in.

**Actions in the Objective Area:** Once they arrive, the SF team would cache their military uniforms, establish a team room, use their illegal team fund to stock the unauthorized team room bar, check out the situation by talking to the locals, and have a team meeting to discuss the merits of the terrorist's cause.

**Results of Operation:** The rescue/recovery operation would take two weeks to complete and by that time all of the terrorists would have been killed (and all would have signed confessions), most of the passengers would be ruined psychologically for the remainder of their lives, and all of the women passengers would be pregnant. The Delta 747 would be essentially be unharmed, the team would have taken no casualties, but, would have used up, lost, or stolen all the highly expensive exotic equipment issued to them.