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**DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY**  
**OFFICE OF THE ADJUTANT GENERAL**  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20310

IN REPLY REFER TO  
AGAM-P (M) (8 Nov 66) FOR OT

21 December 1966

**SUBJECT:** Combat After-Action Report - Operation Mastiff,  
from 1st Infantry Division

**TO:** SEE DISTRIBUTION

1. Forwarded as inclosure is a Combat After-Action Report. Information contained in this report is provided CDC as reference material for continuous evaluation of organization and doctrine in accordance with the provisions of AR 1-19.

2. Information contained in this report is provided to the Commandants of the Service Schools to insure appropriate benefits in the future from lessons learned during current operations, and may be adapted for use in developing training material.

BY ORDER OF THE SECRETARY OF THE ARMY:

*Kenneth G. Wickham*

KENNETH G. WICKHAM  
Major General, USA  
The Adjutant General

1 Incl  
Combat After-Action Report

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DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY  
HEADQUARTERS 1ST INFANTRY DIVISION  
APO San Francisco, California 96345

## COMBAT OPERATIONS AFTER ACTION REPORT OPERATION MASTIFF

1. NAME AND TYPE OF OPERATION: 1st Infantry Division Operation MASTIFF - Search and Destroy.
2. DATES OF OPERATION: 210645H February 1966 - 271600H February 1966.
3. GENERAL: On 210645H February 1966, MACV directed Operation MASTIFF commenced under control of the 1st Infantry Division. Division OPLAN 1-66 (OPORD 1-66) specified that the operation was to be conducted in TAY NINH and HAU NGHIA Provinces. The area of operation was bounded by coordinates XT4840 - XT4435 - XT5727 - XT5931 (Annex F, Operation Overlay). The two brigade (reinf) operation was launched to locate and destroy VC forces and base camps in the vicinity of the MICHELIN Rubber Plantation. The plan required two brigades to operate in assigned zones to destroy VC forces which were trapped by the SAIGON River to their rear. A forward division artillery fire support base would be established vicinity RUNG CAY (XT505260). The operation would be conducted in four phases, incorporating movements of assault units by helicopter and tactical motor convoys to the area of operations.
  - a. The reporting officer for this report is Commanding General, 1st Infantry Division, Jonathan O. Seaman.
  - b. Task Organization. Control of the operation was exercised by Headquarters, 1st Infantry Division. Command Group, 1st Infantry Division, comprised of Headquarters and Headquarters Company (-) operated from a tactical command post located vicinity DAU TIENG (XT493473).

### 2d Brigade Task Force

HHC 2d Bde (-)

2d Bn, 16th Inf

1st Bn, 18th Inf

2d Bn, 18th Inf

1st Bn, 7th Arty

### 3d Brigade Task Force

HHC 3d Bde (-)

2d Bn, 2d Inf

1st Bn, 16th Inf

2d Bn, 28th Inf

2d Bn, 33d Arty

1st Sqdn, 4th Cav (-B Trp)

1st Div Arty Forward Arty Base

1st Div Arty Tac CP

8th Bn, 6th Arty (-), Atch C/2d Bn, 32d Arty (8")

2d Bn, 32d Arty (-) GS (175mm Btries LAI KHE and CU CHI)

105th Field Btry, Royal Australian Artillery, GS, DS 1/2d Inf (-) on order

D Co, 1st Engr Bn (-)

1st Bn, 2d Inf (-)

Col Albert E. Milloy

Lt Col William S. Hathaway

Lt Col Karl R. Norton

Lt Col Herbert McChrystal

Lt Col John H. Fye III

Col William D. Brodbeck

Lt Col George M. Shuffer

Lt Col William S. Lober Jr.

Lt Col Kyle W. Bowie

Lt Col Frank R. Tims

Lt Col Paul Fisher

Col Roy L. Atteberry

Lt Col Anthony Petruzzi

Lt Col Leon L. Decorrvent

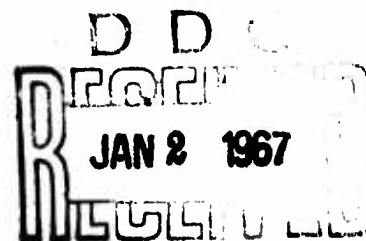
Major Peter Tedder

Capt Joe M. Cannon

Lt Col Steve F. Phillips

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4. INTELLIGENCE: a. Intelligence Prior to Operation: The central MICHELIN Rubber Plantation (XT5552) is located in the TRI TAM District of BINH DUONG Province. The plantations are the backbone of the economy in the northern and central portions of III Corps Tactical Zone. They offer obvious advantages in revenue, manpower, and future economic profit and thus appeal to the VC who have been engaged in organizing the workers in the French Plantations in III CTZ. Because of the heavy demands placed on the operators of the plantation, which they refused to meet, operations were suspended 10 October 1965.

The VC District of DAU TIENG is reportedly controlled by the District Chief and three assistant chiefs. The area west and north-west of MICHELIN has been under control of the VC since 1954. The area is heavily wooded and sparsely populated; only wood cutters pass through the area.

The VC attempted to run the plantation, but were unable to operate the rubber processing equipment. A system had to be devised to market raw latex. The fresh latex was collected from the trees and poured into holes in the ground where it coagulated into blocks. However, the VC were unsuccessful in gaining the cooperation of other managers to market VC latex. By 2 November the VC abandoned all efforts to operate the MICHELIN. Although their efforts at operating the plantation have been unsuccessful, they do control routes of access and the villages of the plantation. The main access roads into the plantation from DAU TIENG and the air strip have been cut. Mines are frequently used, enabling the VC to better control, ambush, or sabotage traffic.

The 1st Infantry Division has previously conducted operations in and near the plantation and significant contact with VC forces occurred in November and December 1965. Although the plantation had not suffered severe damage, VC interference continued to be the main obstacle to plantation operations.

By the middle of January 1966, three VC regiments were reported to be in the vicinity of MICHELIN with the intention of attacking the 8th ARVN Regiment, 5th Division, operating out of DAU TIENG. In addition to the three VC regiments (271, 272, 273) which have been operating in the area since the middle of November, the BOI LOI Woods area is known as a VC secret zone. (See Annex A for enemy order of battle).

Past engagements with VC in this area revealed that the enemy displayed good control over his units on the battlefield. He has rapidly and violently executed actions, fought well, and has delivered accurate small arms, automatic weapons, recoilless rifle and mortar fire. He fought in strength only at a time and place of his choosing in an orderly manner with little difficulty. He knows the area of operations and takes advantage of this knowledge. He can be expected to close rapidly with our forces to minimize our use of air and artillery. He habitually prepares positions along roads and trails and can be expected to use these positions for ambush sites. He habitually mines roads and trails throughout his base areas. He uses the night to conceal his movements and will withdraw under cover of darkness to break contact and avoid destruction by air and artillery. He makes extensive use of tunnels to facilitate his withdrawal.

b. Enemy situation during operation: There were no incidents of significant enemy contact and the identity of enemy forces engaged have not been confirmed, but are suspected as being local force units.

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Brigades encountered constant enemy small arms and automatic weapons fire from squad to platoon size guerrilla units. Pressure and command detonated mines and booby traps were encountered throughout the operational area. VC propaganda leaflets, written in English were discovered vic XT476261. 3d Brigade apprehended 40 VC suspects, but interrogation by IPW personnel revealed nothing of intelligence value. However, interrogation of 10 VCS and VCC by 2d Brigade revealed the following: One female and two males were assigned to a medical service team; one VCC (XT497371) was from the 320 unit and gave the location of a storage area and medical facility. Enemy installations included base camps ranging from company to regimental size, hospitals, training areas, and munitions factories.

c. Terrain and Weather: The SAIGON River flows generally north to south from XT5043 to XT5931 forming a natural barrier on the east of the area of operations. It is not fordable by foot troops except at prepared crossing sites. Reports indicated that several VC crossing sites existed along their main LOC vic XT5569, XT5673, XT4964, XT4960, and XT6283. One crossing site existed on the left boundary vic XT5237. The MICHELIN Plantation (XT5552) covers approximately 88 square kilometers and is the largest rubber plantation in RVN. The rubber trees are 12 to 50 feet tall, approximately one foot in diameter and 10 to 15 feet apart. They offer good concealment from air observation. The ground under the canopy is generally clear of undergrowth providing good mobility along existing roads and trails. The jungle is generally dense vegetation with trees 20 to 100 feet high providing a good canopy and allowing the enemy to move undetected from the air. Areas in which rice has been harvested offers good trafficability to armored vehicles. Drainage is generally good. In the flat, dry rice paddy areas, there was little cover and no concealment. Observation was good and avenues of approach for foot troops unlimited. However, paddy ditches would impede wheeled traffic. There was some heavy foliage along river banks and hedgerows. Only large streams and wells afforded water for troops.

Weather was dry, hot, and dusty due to the lack of precipitation. Temperatures ranged from minimum in the high 60's to maximums in the mid 90's. Humidity ranged from a high of above 90% in the early morning, dropping off to about 50% by mid afternoon. Winds were generally southerly and seldom strong.

d. Essential elements of information and other intelligence requirement:

(1) EEI:

(a) Will the enemy attack? If so, when, where, in what strength, with what weapons? What are designations of the units, and who will they engage (ARVN or U.S.)?

(b) Will the enemy reinforce or defend within the area of operations? If so when, where, in what strength, with what weapons, by what routes, and what are the designations of the units?

(2) OIR: Collection requirements existed for VC tunnels, VC command detonated mines, and reports of fire direction against aircraft. Locations, strengths, weapons and designations of enemy units within the area of interest were to be reported. It was important to anticipate VC withdrawals with complete information surrounding the withdrawal. Locations of VC strong points and facilities with the routes used to and from them were to be reported. Any use of by VC

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of special equipment or tactics was an item of intelligence that must be reported. Information was requested of enemy patrol activity and changes in civilian activity.

e. Counterintelligence: OPLAN 1-66 called for the development and execution of a deception plan (Annex C). Deputy Senior Advisor III CTZ introduced the deception FRAG Order 12-66, into ARVN channels on order (D-10). The deception scheme was employed to deceive the VC as to exact location and time of the operation. Attention was focused on the area southwest of the MICHELIN Rubber Plantation. Increased aerial surveillance was conducted over the area south of MICHELIN with reconnaissance of the actual area of operation held to an absolute minimum. ARVN forces were requested to conduct a limited objective attack to south of DAU TIENG on D-Day. The 2d Brigade, 1st Infantry Division was moved to DAU TIENG D-2. The deception plan was designed to produce the following results,

- (1) Deceive the VC as to the actual area of operation.
- (2) Cause VC forces to withdraw into an area west of SAIGON River where they would be blocked and destroyed.
- (3) Disorganize VC command and control with initial airmobile assaults.

f. Fortifications varied from simple foxholes to elaborate concrete bunkers. Numerous tunnels were discovered and destroyed.

g. CA/PSYOP: The mission called for an aggressive PSYOP program to encourage ralliers and gain information on VC locations, and to conduct Civic Action programs as required, with emphasis on MEDCAP II.

During the period 1145 to 1500, 21 February, 10,000 leaflets were dropped in the vicinity of the MICHELIN Plantation, urging personnel to rally or suffer B-52 strikes. 1,500 leaflets in support of the 969 reward program were distributed by 3d Brigade, in addition to 40,000 safe conduct passes. On 22 February, 2d Brigade dropped 10,000 "U.S. Power" leaflets in the operational area. A 3d Brigade refugee relief team established a collection point at XT562276. MEDCAP teams treated 30 villagers of LOC HUNG (XT518266), gave vitamins to 20 infants, and distributed soap.

1/2 Infantry held sick call in village vic XT4728 and treated 6 Vietnamese on 23 February. A 2d Brigade Psy War Team broadcasted CHIEU HOI tapes over the MASTIFF area on 24 February. 3d Brigade dropped 27,000 assorted leaflets along line XT506260, XT486200, XT505200, XT545260 using the themes: "denial of safe havens" "safe conduct" and "rewards for surrender." On 25 February, PSYOP teams broadcasted speeches of past ralliers over the MASTIFF area. Elements of the 1st Medical Battalion continued treating Vietnamese soldiers and civilians in DAU TIENG.

5. MISSION: COMUSMACV assigned the 1st Infantry Division (Reinf) the mission of locating and destroying VC forces and base camps in the vicinity of the MICHELIN Rubber Plantation.

6. CONCEPT OF OPERATION: Operation MASTIFF was to be conducted in IV Phases.

a. Phase I. The 2d Bde deployed to DAU TIENG by air and staged in preparation for further deployment to the area of operation. Phase I ends D-1.

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b. Phase II. During this phase 2d and 3d Bde conducted simultaneous airmobile assaults in the vicinity of assigned TAORS. The Cav Sqdn (-) moved overland to assigned blocking positions arriving at approximately the same time as the initial airmobile assaults. During this phase the 2d Bde attacked to the east from initial LZ's and blocked to the north. 3d Bde, with Cav Sqdn (-B Troop) blocked the VC escape routes to the south and east. The 1st Bn, 2d Inf occupied blocking positions to prevent VC escape to the southwest. Phase II ends when 2d Bde closed on Line GREYHOUND.

c. Phase III. During this phase, 2d and 3d Bdes conducted an attack to the northeast in TAOR's BULLDOG and COLLIE. The 2d Bde continued to block the northwest route of escape for the VC and 1/2 Inf continued to block and acted as division reserve. This phase ended when 2d and 3d Bdes closed on Line POODLE.

d. Phase IV. Bdes conducted a detailed search of the operational area to locate and destroy VC base camps and tunnel complexes. Detailed searches were made of houses and villages in the operational area.

e. Major emphasis during Phases II and III was to locate and destroy VC forces and prevent their escape from the area. Surveillance was maintained on the SAIGON River and over the operational area to locate and destroy VC forces attempting to escape. A deception plan was employed in conjunction with this operation.

f. Fire support: Artillery, TAC air, and armed helicopters were employed during the operation to prepare selected landing zones, support search and destroy operations, deny the use of the SAIGON River to the VC and to interdict VC concentrations and routes of withdrawal.

g. Overlay of MASTIFF operational area at Annex F.

h. Sequence of events at Annex B.

7. EXECUTION: Commanding General, 1st Infantry Division, received a directive in mid January to conduct an operation in the vicinity MICHELIN Rubber Plantation during February. Estimates and plans were prepared for Operation MASTIFF north of the plantation, based on the current intelligence information. About 1 February, the revised intelligence estimate indicated that an area known as BOI LOI Woods (XT4936) contained major VC base camps. Based on the very best intelligence available, this area was given the number one priority by USMACV for operations in III CTZ. Plans were revised and OPLAN 1-66 was published on 5 February 1966 (D-15). The two-week period before the actual start of the operation allowed the brigades to carefully prepare plans and orders for their portion of the operation and to thoroughly coordinate with all agencies that would be involved. On D-10, the deception order (FRAG Order 12-66) was issued and from D-10 until D-1 the following events occurred.

VR, SLAR, IR flights were conducted over the deception plan area.

Preplanned air strikes were requested.

Operation orders from subordinate units were received for both operations.

Artillery fire plans and preparatory fires were planned.

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OPLAN 1-66 became OPORD 1-66 on D-6.

D-2. 2d Brigade (-) commenced movement to DAU TIENG (XT4947) utilizing 39 C-123 and 42 CH-47 sorties. One incident occurred when a C-123 received small arms fire. The airlift consisted of vehicular elements and selected personnel from 2/16 Inf, 1/18 Inf, 2/18 Inf and 1/7 Arty (-). Forward CP became operational at XT494474. 190900.

D-1. 1st Brigade elements began to move to support Operation MASTIFF with the airlift of the 1st Battalion, 2d Infantry to PHU LOI. Nineteen C-123 and 15 CV-2 sorties were utilized.

2d Brigade continued movement of troops, equipment, and supplies by 37 C-123, 25 CV-2, and 58 CH-47 sorties, from BIEN HOA to DAU TIENG. All units closed by 201720H February. The movement was without VC initiated incidents, however 2 helicopters lifting troops of the 2/16 Inf collided in a heavy dust cloud created by the lift-off resulting in 1 killed, and 13 injured from 2d Brigade.

D-Day (21 February 1966): Operation MASTIFF commenced 210654H February 1966. Movement of Div Arty elements (HHB, A & C Btries 8/6 Arty, Tac CP) departed PHU LOI at 210445 and conducted a tactical motor movement to their operational area vic RUNG CAY (XT4826), closing 210910. 1/4 Cav (-) secured the movement of Div Arty elements enroute. The Royal Australian Artillery Battery was airlifted at 210500H to the operational area and came under operational control of Div Arty upon closing at 210800H. Tanks of the 1/4 Cav, which had closed in DI AN at 201740H, joined 1/4 Cav (-) enroute to the MASTIFF area on 21 February. 1/4 Cav (-) closed into blocking position PAUL (XT5825) at 211130H. They discovered a VC base camp to include kitchen facilities for 20 personnel at XT580299. The squadron established defensive positions vic XT5628 - XT5829 for the night.

3d Brigade commenced Operation MASTIFF at 210645H with the movement of the 2d Bn, 28th Inf from position along Highway 13 to the vicinity of BEN CAT to secure passage of the brigade road column, led by 2/35d Arty. The air mobile assault commenced with the helilift of the 2d Bn, 2d Inf to LZ RICK (XT5328). The battalion swept northeast to blocking position GEORGE (XT5429). Thirty VC suspects were apprehended and evacuated to the brigade IPW team. The battalion coiled for the night XT545295.

The 1st Bn, 16th Inf was helilifted into LZ HAL (XT5029) commencing at 210900H and moved immediately to occupy blocking position BILL (XT5130). The battalion established defensive perimeter for the night at XT496291.

The 2d Bn, 28th Inf secured Highway 13 south of LAI KHE to XT777277 in conjunction with the 5th ARVN Division which secured the route from XT777277 to PHU CUONG. The battalion returned to LAI KHE to assume base camp security after passage of the brigade column.

The 2d Bn, 33d Arty closed into firing positions with Div Arty (XT485265) without incident.

The 1st Bn, 2d Inf was placed under the operational control of division. This was a change to the original plan in that the 1st Battalion, Royal Australian Regiment was originally scheduled to be the division reserve. The 1st Bn, 2d Inf deployed by air to PHU LOI, on D-1, and conducted an air assault on LZ KARL (XT481305) on D-Day, set up blocking positions, and remained there as division reserve.

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C Company was placed under OPCON of div arty to provide security of the artillery base. The 1st Bn, 2d Inf (-) conducted local sweeps but made no contact with the enemy. The battalion was released to OPCON of the 1st Bde at 240920 February.

The 2d Brigade opened MASTIFF with an artillery preparation of LZs ANN and BETTY 210800H.

The 2d Bn, 16th Inf was helilifted to LZ ANN (XT450378) in two lifts between 0848 and 0917. The battalion crossed LD (Line TERRIER XT4839 - XT4435) and commenced attacking southeast in zone. A Company made contact with a small group of VC and killed 1 VC (body count) and captured a rifle. By 211800 the battalion was establishing positions for the night in the vicinity of PL GREYHOUND (XT5136 - XT4732).

The 1st Bn, 18th Inf (-) conducted a heliborne assault into LZ BETTY (XT408390) utilizing two lifts beginning 0954. The battalion closed on BETTY 1026 and commenced sweeping east with the recon platoon blocking on the east. Light contact was made by C Company resulting in 1 VC KIA (BC). Mines, booby traps, and small arms fire were encountered in the vicinity of XT507376 resulting in 1 U.S. KIA, and 7 U.S. WIA. The battalion closed on Position STEEL (XT5037) and established blocking positions for the night.

During the period 0925 to 0949, the 2d Bn, 18th Inf conducted a heliborne assault on LZ ANN, utilizing two lifts. The battalion had no contact during the day and established defensive positions for the night vic XT4735.

Heliborne assaults received light small arms, but no casualties were inflicted.

Overlay of brigade areas of operation are at Annexes D and E.

D+1 (22 February 1966): The 2d Brigade continued MASTIFF with two battalions (2/16 and 2/18) attacking southeast and then turning northeast. The 1st Bn, 18th Inf continued blocking at Position STEEL (XT5037). 220930, B Company, 2d Bn 16th Inf discovered a large base camp vic XT494371. Six VC were found in a tunnel, two were killed and four were captured. At 0935 hours C Company, 2d Bn, 16th Inf located a base camp at XT487366 and killed three VC. Both camps contained hospital facilities. The 1st Bn, 18th Inf sustained one WIA at XT490472 from small arms fire. Co B, 1/18 found one VC body vic XT507347. The 2d Bn, 18th Infantry continued the attack southeast in zone. C Company located a heavily mined and booby trapped area vic XT500325 and encountered small arms fire resulting in five U.S. WIA. Artillery fire was placed on the area and when C Company reentered the area, an additional four U.S. WIA and one KIA were sustained from command detonated mines. Company B engaged two VC bunkers at XT501326 late in the afternoon. Two companies of the 2/18 Infantry remained in position near the fortifications and base camp during the night.

The 1st Bn, 7th Arty (-) element departed DAU TIENG 0700 for the artillery base area. Btry C remained at DAU TIENG.

The 3d Brigade continued with two battalions conducting search and destroy operations north with the 1st Sqdn 4th Cav blocking on the east. The 2d Bn, 2d Inf closed at XT5633 at 1800 hours without contact. The 1st Bn, 16th Inf sighted 6 VC at XT502302 during the night of 21 February and fired on them with mortars, but results were unknown. Two additional VC were sighted about 10 meters in front

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of C Company at 220058. One VC was killed (BC). During the search and destroy in zone, C Company sustained four KIA and four WIA from a mine in the vicinity of XT541316. 1st Bn, 16th Inf closed for the night at XT537338.

The 1st Sqdn, 4th Cav (-) blocked in position until 1220 hours and then moved to position SN00PY. Small arms, automatic weapons, and grenade fire were received during the day and one U.S. KIA was sustained. Troop A was dispatched to 3d Brigade CP at 1600 hours with the squadron (-) remaining at XT338353 for the night.

D+2 (23 February): 2d Brigade operations during the day consisted of the 1/18 Inf remaining in blocking position STEEL; the 2/18 Inf clearing out the fortified position encountered the previous day and then sweeping north; and the 2/16 Inf guarding and extracting the rice discovered in the caches along the river. Air strikes were called in on the bunkers holding up the 2/18 Inf and B Company reentered the area. One large concrete bunker, and several smaller bunkers with connecting tunnels were neutralized. All VC had departed the area. The 2d Bn, 16th Inf prepared to extract rice from XT515366. Twenty boats were dispatched from DAU TIENG to transport the rice and power boats were sent from PHU LOI to tow the rice boats.

3d Brigade operations continued with battalions conducting local search and destroy missions. Troop C, 1st Sqdn, 4th Cav deployed a blocking force along the north of the brigade zone while Troop A conducted search and destroy operations on the eastern edge.

The 2d Bn, 2d Inf utilized G Company from XT564327 to XT571317 and A Company from XT562325 to XT557312 for detailed search of the area for VC personnel and installations. B Company remained at XT563320 to secure the battalion headquarters and provide a rapid reaction force. C Company discovered approximately 75 tons of rice at XT565325. Two personnel were wounded at this location from a mine explosion. Further investigation revealed the entire rice cache was booby trapped. A tracked recovery vehicle was dispatched to the location by C Troop, 1st Sqdn, 4th Cav and pushed the rice into the river. Several explosions occurred during the process. The 2d Bn, 2d Inf closed for the night vic XT563320.

The 1st Bn, 16th Inf occupied blocking positions from XT516340 to XT528344 but was released at 1400 hours as a result of negative contact. The battalion established positions for the night vic XT537338.

The 1st Sqdn, 4th Cav (-) occupied blocking positions during the day. A Troop blocked from XT540346 to XT544350 in conjunction with a sweep made by the 2d Bn, 18th Inf up the valley from XT487306 to XT540346. Troop A, was reinforced with two rifle platoons and conducted search and destroy operations from XT565281 to XT578294. This troop became heavily engaged at 1225 hours with a VC platoon vic XT579287. The task force sustained two U.S. KIA and nine WIA. The engagement continued sporadically throughout the afternoon. An APC was destroyed by burning when hit in the gas tank by a 57mm recoilless rifle at XT579287. Two additional personnel were WIA from small arms fire. VC losses during the afternoon contact were three KIA (BC) and 15 additional KIA estimated. Troop A and C closed for the night at XT533290 and XT540281 respectively.

Action of significance at the artillery base involved a  $\frac{1}{4}$  ton truck that was slightly damaged when TNT was exploded nearby. However,

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three U.S. WIA were sustained which included the Div Arty Sergeant Major, and 8th Bn, 6th Arty Sergeant Major.

D+3 (24 February): 2d Brigade reinforced ARVN efforts to extract the captured rice from the 2d Brigade area of operations. The 2d Bn, 16th Inf provided security during the loading of rice on the boats and by conducting searches in the vicinity of XT522358. Contact was made with an unknown number of VC and negative casualties were sustained by either side. An additional 39.2 tons of rice was discovered, but were destroyed when explosions from booby traps occurred.

Efforts by ARVN to extract rice by boats were disrupted when the boats received small arms fire while moving upstream. The Vietnamese abandoned the boats and a PSYWAR loudspeaker helicopter was unsuccessful in inducing them back to their stations. Attempts to put ARVN personnel on the boats by helicopter were also unsuccessful. The boats were destroyed by TAC air to prevent them from falling into the hands of VC.

The 1st Bn, 18th Inf remained at Position STEEL and conducted patrols. Light contact was made with VC with negative results. In the afternoon, two VC ralliers surrendered with safe conduct passes. Interrogation revealed that they had responded to surrender broadcasts.

The 2d Bn, 18 Inf searched an area bounded by XT510348, XT520360, XT545364, and XT545348. At 1350 hours A Company made contact with VC in a base camp located at XT518352. Results were two VC KIA (BC) and two U.S. KIA and 13 U.S. WIA. The fight terminated at 1740 hours. The 3d Brigade continued MASTIFF with two battalion search and destroy operations toward the south. The 2d Bn, 2d Inf operated in zone along line XT579309 to XT556284 with A Company on the right and B Company on the left. B Company suffered one U.S. KIA and four WIA from small arms fire. A Company engaged four VC at XT567303 and estimated two VC KIA.

The 1st Bn, 16th Inf continued search and destroy operations at 0800 hours with two companies on line from XT535337 to XT520311. A Company engaged an estimated reinforced VC platoon. The company sustained seven WIA and two KIA. VC casualties were two KIA (body count) and eight possible KIA. B Company made contact with four VC at XT533323 and killed two VC while suffering one WIA. The battalion CP was relocated to XT542292 and all units closed in that area for the night.

The 1st Sqdn, 4th Cav (-) occupied blocking positions with A Troop from XT492306 to XT520297 and C Troop from XT560287 to XT556287. Troop D air elements patrolled between the blocking positions. A squadron 5-ton POL truck was damaged by a command detonated mine at XT522271. A tracked recovery vehicle and an armored personnel carrier were damaged by mines at XT519267 and XT514263 respectively.

In the forward artillery base area, G Company 1st Bn, 2d Inf was released from OPCON of division artillery and was airlifted to the parent unit location. C Troop 1st Sqdn, 4th Cav arrived in the artillery base area 1700 hours and assumed the security mission that had been assigned C Company. The Australian Battery was released from OPCON of division artillery and was airlifted to BIEN HOA.

D+4 (25 February): The 2d Brigade began extracting from MASTIFF area of operations and returned to DAU TIENG. Extraction began 1000

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hours and all units closed DAU TIENG 1126 hours. Defensive perimeters were established around this location. Small arms fire was encountered during extraction.

The 3d Brigade elements continued Operation MASTIFF with two battalions and the 1st Sqdn, 4th Cav (-) conducting search and destroy operations. The 2d Bn, 2d Inf closed via XT528284.

The 1st Bn, 16th Inf conducted search and destroy operations from XT530310 to XT534305 and XT513324. The battalion closed for the night at XT530310.

The 1st Sqdn, 4th Cav (-) swept from XT5727 to XT6033. Light contact was made throughout the day, resulting in one VC KIA.

D+5 (26 February): The 2d Brigade remained in defensive positions at DAU TIENG and conducted daylight patrols and established night ambush sites.

The 3d Brigade and cavalry squadron conducted local security missions around the forward base area. At 1042 hours, Company B, 1st Bn, 16th Inf was extracted by CH-47 and was lifted to PHU LOI.

D+6 (27 February): The 2d Brigade conducted local security operations. The 1st Bn, 18th Inf was given the mission of conducting an operation in MICHELIN Rubber Plantation to investigate a report that three American graves were located there. Two of the bodies were recovered and were two of the three U.S. personnel missing after the Battle of NHA MAT in December. The brigade remained at DAU TIENG in preparation for Operation HATTIESBURG.

The 3d Brigade began executing the move back to LAI KHE. The tactical motor march commenced at 0700 hours with the last units closing LAI KHE 1450 hours. The airlift of personnel and equipment was completed during the period 1100 to 1315 hours. The extraction was supported by normal artillery, helicopter gunships and TAC air.

The 1st Sqdn, 4th Cav, Hq & Hq and C Troops, cleared the road from RUNG CAY to Highway 1 and secured the division artillery road column from that location to PHU LOI. Troop A secured extraction zones for the 2d Bn, 2d Inf and the 1st Bn, 16th Inf.

Division artillery and OPCON units closed PHU LOI 1210 hours.

Operation MASTIFF was officially terminated 1600 hours 27 February 1966.

### 8. SUPPORTING FORCES: a. Artillery:

#### (1) Size of Force

1st Inf Div Arty Tac CP, Col Roy L. Atteberry  
1st Bn, 7th Arty DS, 2d Bde  
2d Bn, 33d Arty DS, 3d Bde  
8th Bn, 6th Arty (-) w/attach Btry C, 2d Bn, 32d Arty (8") GS  
2d Bn, 32d Arty (-) GS (155mm Btries LAI KHE and CU CHI)  
105th Field Btry RAA, GS, DS 1st Bn, 2d Inf (-) on order

(2) How and when employed: During the period D-2 to D-1, 1/7 Arty (-) deployed three batteries of four howitzers each and a headquarters element to DAU TIENG by aircraft. The Field Battery, Royal

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Australian Artillery, was to be moved by convoy to the artillery base under the original plan. However, the division artillery commander recommended that the Australian battery be airlifted by HU-1D to a position vic RUNG CAY prior to the 3d Brigade landing, to provide close support. The recommendation was approved and an infantry platoon from Troop D, 1st Sqdn, 4th Cav secured the landing zone. The battery was actually lifted using 12 sorties of CH-47 helicopters of the 11th Aviation Battalion to LZ vic XT522273 during the period 0750 to 0930 hours, 21 February. At 210458H February, D-Day, Division Artillery Tac CP, 8th Bn, 6th Arty (-), and 1st Sqdn, 4th Cav (-) departed PHU LOI. This convoy was joined by C Btry, 2d Bn, 32d Arty, at 0715 hours at CU CHI. During an aerial reconnaissance of the area prior to arrival of the convoy, it was discovered that the bridge at XT508259 could not be used. A new position area was selected in the vicinity of XT480264 and the convoy was diverted to the new area. Although the map indicated that the area was covered with rubber trees, the actual terrain was completely open and offered excellent fields of fire. The third march unit was detained when heavy engineer equipment blocked the bridge (XT856049). The remainder of the column was directed south along Highway 13, through SAIGON, and joined the planned route at XT797989. A Btry, 1st Bn, 7th Arty was helilifted from DAU TIENG to XT481268, using Air Force CH-3 helicopters. Battery A arrived in position at the artillery base area at 1550 hours. With the closure of the Australian battery, the following elements were located in the artillery base area: Division Artillery Tac CP, 8th Bn, 6th Arty (-), 2 Bn, 33d Arty (-), 1st Bn, 7th Arty (-), C Co, 1st Bn, 2d Inf, Hq & Hq Troop 1st Sqdn, 4th Cav, D Co, 1st Engr (-) and Royal Australian Artillery battery.

On 22 February, B Btry, 1st Bn, 7th Arty was helilifted into the artillery base, closing at 1230 hours. Company C, 1st Bn, 2d Inf was released from the OPCON of division artillery and rejoined 1st Brigade.

Liaison officers and forward observers were provided 2d Brigade by 1st Bn, 7th Arty and 3d Brigade by 2d Bn, 33d Arty. The Royal Australian Artillery Battery provided parties to 1st Bn, 2d Inf. Two forward observer parties and one liaison party from the 1st Bn, 5th Arty with the 1st Sqdn, 4th Cav were replaced with a forward observer section of the 8th Bn, 6th Arty and the 2d Bn, 33d Arty on 24 February. The liaison officer from 8th Bn, 6th Arty with 1st Bn, 7th Arty was shifted to 1st Sqdn, 4th Cav. Parties from the 1st Bn, 5th Arty returned to their parent organization participating in Operation ROLLING STONE. Troop C, 1st Sqdn, 4th Cav, assumed the mission of artillery base area security at 241645H.

Fire support throughout the operation was continuous. It was necessary to move Headquarters, A, and B Batteries, 1st Bn, 7th Arty from DAU TIENG to the artillery base area because the entire area of operation for 2d Brigade could not be supported entirely from either location. Fire was effectively placed on known and suspect personnel and installation locations. Harassment and interdiction fires were conducted each night and suspect targets were illuminated when discovered by air observers. Small arms and mortar fire received in the artillery base area were immediately fired on by artillery and mortars. On 23 February, the artillery fired a preparation on the bunker complex that had held up the 2d Brigade advance on the afternoon of 22 February. The 8th Battalion, 6th Artillery was given the mission of direct support for 1st Sqdn, 4th Cav operation in conjunction with the 3d Brigade on 25 February. Artillery fired 7,084 rounds during the operation.

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During the period 242220 - 250100, Division Artillery Tac CP worked directly with 1st Aviation Battalion Mohawks equipped with SLAR. Nine moving targets were engaged by artillery units from the artillery base area and seven were relayed to units remaining at PHU LOI, three of which were engaged. Seven targets relayed to 1st Bn, 8th Arty (CU CHI) were engaged. Eight additional targets located by SLAR on 252345 hours were engaged with HE - fuse VT and WP rounds. Targets located by infrared radar technique were fired on also.

On 26 February, an air observer reported road blocks on the MSR between HUNG CAY and TRANG BANG. In addition, 13 mines were reported on the same road. An alternate route was selected, using the trail from XT472259 to XT464243 to GIA BINH (XT454223) junction with Highway 1, for the return to PHU LOI. Battery C, 2d Battalion, 32d Artillery remained in position to support the 3d Brigade extraction by helicopter. An air observer adjusted 9" howitzers on the road-blocks on 26 and 27 February to mislead the VC into thinking the road would be used for the departure. Two secondary explosions were observed on 26 February and one on 27 February. Units commenced departure from the artillery base at 0830 hours on 27 February and C Battery, 2d Battalion, 32d Artillery, the last unit to displace, closed CU CHI 1830 hours.

Fire support coordination lines (FSCL) and zones of fire for the Australian battery are indicated in Annex F. Division Artillery Tac CP provided artillery/mortar warning to aircraft within the area of operation. To accomplish this mission in MASTIFF area and at division artillery rear, required radios were borrowed from the division air liaison officer. Two air controllers were provided by 1st Avn Bn. Division artillery conducted 24 hour visual recon of SAIGON River from XT650318 to XT490443.

Commanding Officer, 2d Battalion, 33d Artillery was responsible for coordination of security. C Company, 1st Battalion, 2d Infantry augmented security with three organic 81mm mortars and two 4.2 inch mortars organic to 1st Bn, 2d Inf. Mortars were positioned with 8th Bn, 6th Arty.

b. Engineers: D Company (-), 1st Engineer Battalion, was placed in direct support of the operation and co-located with the artillery base. The company included two combat engineer platoons, augmented by 45 feet of dry span bridge from E Company, 1st Engineer Battalion. D Company furnished timely and adequate support by locating and removing mines and obstacles, improving access roads, and emplacing 38 feet of bridging over a stream into 3d Brigade command post.

c. Signals: 121st Signal Battalion provided VHF, HF, and FM radio and secure on-line teletype to division forward TOC, 2d Brigade forward, 3d Brigade forward, and division artillery forward. 2d Forward Signal Platoon supported division TOC and 2d Brigade forward by displacing two AN/MRC-69 for VHF communication, one AN/MRC-17 to provide communication center facilities, one AN/GRC-46 for secure radio-teletype operations, and one AN/VSR-5 for FM radio-wire integration. This equipment was displaced utilizing CH-47 sling loads and one C-123 sortie. VHF communication was established to Division Main utilizing VHF Radio Relay Point operated by C Company on NUI BA DEN Mountain, vicinity of XT2856, elevation 3,000 feet. The 3d Forward Signal Platoon supported the 3d Brigade forward with two AN/MRC-69, one AN/MRC-17, one AN/GRC-46, and one AN/VSR-5. Equipment was moved to HUNG CAY in convoy.

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Company C supported division artillery forward with one AN/MRC-69 displaced in convoy.

## Telephone circuits provided:

### (1) Sole-user circuits terminated at each headquarters:

|                            |   |
|----------------------------|---|
| Division Advance TOC       | 5 |
| Division Rear TOC          | 6 |
| 2d Brigade Forward         | 5 |
| 3d Brigade Forward         | 5 |
| Division Artillery Forward | 3 |

### (2) Common-user telephone service:

|                                            |   |
|--------------------------------------------|---|
| Division to Division TOC Advance           | 1 |
| Division to 2d Brigade                     | 2 |
| Division to 3d Brigade                     | 2 |
| Danger North (PHU LOI) to Div Arty Advance | 2 |
| 2d Brigade to 3d Brigade                   | 2 |

## d. U.S. Air Force Close Air Support:

(1) Size of Force. During Operation MASTIFF a total of 197 TAC air sorties were flown in support of 1st Infantry Division elements as follows:

|         |                                  |
|---------|----------------------------------|
| 21 Feb. | 35                               |
| 22 Feb  | 28                               |
| 23 Feb  | 28                               |
| 24 Feb  | 30                               |
| 25 Feb  | 37                               |
| 26 Feb  | 30                               |
| 27 Feb  | 9                                |
|         | <u>197</u> (Total sorties flown) |

### (2) How and when employed:

(a) TAC air provided convoy cover for moves from LAI KHE and PHU LOI to the operational area and was also employed for the return trip on 27 February.

(b) TAC air provided preparation on all LZ's with approximately six sorties per LZ.

(c) Fifty-eight pre-planned sorties expended 77,500 pounds of ordnance in support of the deception plan. During the period 21 - 27 February, 156 pre-planned sorties were expended.

(d) Thirty-two immediate request sorties were expended during the operation.

(e) A forward air controller was airborne at all times during daylight. FAC's were on strip alert at DAU TIENG, LAI KHE, and PHU LOI. Each brigade had a FAC acting as ALO, but there were no FAC's with the forward elements.

(f) A flare ship was used during the night of 24 February.

(g) B-52 strikes were made in support of the deception plan.

197 (Total sorties flown)

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(3) Results: Excellent. Effectiveness cannot be adequately judged due to the limited contact. Numerous structures and bunkers were destroyed and 15 sampans were sunk. TAC air prevented the rice that was being extracted from 2d Brigade area from being recaptured by the VC when Vietnamese personnel abandoned the boats. Hostile ground fire was neutralized on several occasions, but estimates of damage were not made because of heavy foliage. Most significant results were obtained on 27 February when an estimated 40 VC were KBA (killed by air).

Reaction time varied according to the situation. Average time when aircraft were diverted from outside division resources was approximately 20 minutes, including aircraft on ground alert. Average time when aircraft were airborne in the division area was approximately 7 minutes from time of request until drop of first ordnance. A total of 439,150 pounds of ordnance and approximately 120,000 rounds of 20mm were expended during MASTIFF.

## e. U.S. Air Force Tactical Airlift:

(1) Size of Force. A total of 82 C-123 sorties were utilized to transport the following items:

| <u>CARGO</u>                   | <u>WEIGHT</u>      |
|--------------------------------|--------------------|
| 105mm Ammo - 2,250 rounds      | 135,845 lbs        |
| Rockets (plus extras)          | 74,000 lbs         |
| Rockets (for O-1)              | 3,000 lbs          |
| Rations, Misc Ammo, Misc Equip | 95,000 lbs         |
|                                | <u>307,845 lbs</u> |

| <u>VEHICLES</u> | <u>NUMBER</u> |
|-----------------|---------------|
| 3/4 Ton Truck   | 37            |
| 3/4 Ton Trailer | 18            |
| Water Trailer   | 4             |
| 1/4 Ton Truck   | 11            |
| 1/4 Ton Trailer | 5             |

Total weight transported 606,713 lbs.

| <u>PASSENGERS</u> | <u>WEIGHT</u>      |
|-------------------|--------------------|
| 19 Feb 215        | 53,750 lbs         |
| 20 Feb 234        | 58,500 lbs         |
| Total 449         | <u>112,250 lbs</u> |

(2) How and when employed. TAC airlift was utilized to deploy the 2d Brigade from BIEN HOA to DAU TIENG. C-123 aircraft were used to transport personnel, vehicles, supplies and equipment and POL. POL was flown directly from TAN SON NHUT to DAU TIENG and then aircraft recovered at BIEN HOA. In addition, USAF CH-3 helicopters were utilized during MASTIFF to displace artillery.

## f. U.S. Army Aviation:

(1) Size of Force:

(2) 11th Aviation Battalion, Task Force I, consisting of:

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| <u>UNIT</u>      | <u>AIRCRAFT</u>      |
|------------------|----------------------|
| 128th Avn Co     | 13 UH-1D, 6 UH-1B(A) |
| 116th Avn Co     | 13 UH-1D, 8 UH-1B(A) |
| 162d Avn Co      | 13 UH-1D             |
| A Co, 1st Avn Bn | 13 UH-1D, 6 UH-1B(A) |
| 147th Avn Co     | 12 CH-47             |

145th Aviation Battalion, Task Force II, consisting of:

|                    |                        |
|--------------------|------------------------|
| A Co, 501st Avn Co | 12 UH-1D, 6 UH-1B(A)   |
| 118th Avn Co       | 13 UH-1D, 6 UH-1B(A)   |
| 68th Avn Co        | 12 UH-1D, 4 UH-1B(A)   |
| 197th Avn Co       | 3 UH-1B(S), 12 UH-1(A) |

Lt Col Harold G Keebaugh, CO, 1st Aviation Battalion, was air mission commander. His headquarters planned and supervised the aviation requirements for Operation MASTIFF. Lt Col John Lauterbach, CO, 11th Aviation Battalion, was Commander Task Force I and Lt Col Horst K Joost, CO, 145th Aviation Battalion was Commander Task Force II.

## (2) How and when employed:

(a) D-2 to D-1. In addition to the TAC airlift participating in the deployment of the 2d Brigade and the pre-positioning of supplies, U.S. Army CH-47, CV-2, and UH-1D aircraft were committed. Ten CH-47's and 4 CV-2's flew 59 and 25 sorties respectively. The plan originally called for all personnel, equipment and supplies to be airlifted with C-123, CH-47, and CV-2 aircraft. However, problems were encountered keeping the five planned C-123 aircraft flyable the entire period. Had the same resources been available for 20 February that had been used on 19 February, the lift could have been completed by 1600 hours on 20 February. All CH-47 helicopters were grounded on 19 February due to a safety of flight inspection on the transmission quill assembly. The placement of 4 CV-2 aircraft in the operation overcame the setback to airlift plans when the CHINOOKS were grounded.

The lift continued on 20 February using the 4 CV-2's and 5 C-123's. By noon the lift was behind desired schedule. Sixty UH-1D's were missioned to complete the troop lift and all personnel and equipment closed at DAU TIENG prior to 1800 hours. During the two day deployment of the 2d Brigade from BIEN HOA to DAU TIENG, CV-2 aircraft transported 600 passengers and CH-47's carried approximately 512 passengers and 181.6 tons of supplies and equipment. UH-1D's transported 406 passengers.

(b) D-Day. The 1st Aviation Battalion (+) conducted airmobile assault landings of the 2d Brigade by placing two battalions in LZ ANN and one battalion in LZ BETTY. Assault landings of the 3d Brigade were made by placing one battalion in LZ HAL and one battalion in LZ RICK. Each brigade utilized 48 UH-1D's. After completion of the brigade assault landings, 1st Battalion, 2d Infantry (-) was lifted into LZ KARL. All LZ's were prepared by fifteen minutes artillery, followed by fifteen minutes of TAG air. A ten minute preparation was fired by UH-1B(A) just prior to the landing of assault troops. The first troops were placed on LZ BETTY and HAL at 0900 and the last lift into KARL was completed at 1110. Prior to the assault troop lifts, the Australian Battery was lifted from BIEN HOA and their security element of 1st Sqdn, 4th Cav from PHU LOI into a firing

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position at XT5227. Combat assaults by the 2d Brigade originated at DAU TIENG and by 3d Brigade from LAI KHE.

Throughout Operation MASTIFF, the Air Mission Commander provided command and control aircraft to division and brigade command groups and armed helicopters to division artillery. These gunships were on standby at the artillery base in the vicinity of RUNG CAY. Additional resupply airlift of approximately 120 tons daily was performed by UH-1D and CH-47 aircraft.

(3) Summary of airlift provided:

(a) Task Force I:

|         | <u>116th</u> | <u>128th</u> | <u>147th</u> | <u>162d</u> |
|---------|--------------|--------------|--------------|-------------|
| Sorties | 185          | 122          | 70           | 110         |
| Troops  | 368          | 360          | 147          | 376         |
| Hours   | 67           | 54           | 33           | 40          |

(b) Task Force II:

|         | <u>A/501st</u> | <u>A/82d</u> | <u>118th</u> | <u>68th</u> | <u>197th</u> |
|---------|----------------|--------------|--------------|-------------|--------------|
| Sorties | 146            | 146          | 134          | 126         | 120          |
| Troops  | 274            | 274          | 295          | 274         |              |
| Hours   | 67             | 67           | 71           | 67          | 49           |

(4) Helicopter route plan at Annex I.

9. RESULTS: a. Friendly losses:

KIA 17  
WIA 94  
Equipment lost - 2 M16 Rifles  
Equipment destroyed - 1 Armored Personnel Carrier  
Equipment damaged - 1 Armored Personnel Carrier  
1 Vehicle Tracked Recovery  
1 5-Ton Truck  
1 2½-Ton Truck  
1 ½-Ton Truck  
1 UH-1D  
1 Bridge Truck  
1 250 CFM Air Compressor

b. Enemy losses:

KIA (BC) 61  
KIA (EST) 22  
VCC 6  
VCS 42  
Equipment captured or destroyed - 22 Base Camps  
198 Tons of Rice  
4,511 Rounds Small Arms,  
Grenades, Arty Rounds,  
and 20mm Ammo.  
7 Sampans  
28 Mines  
1 Claymore Mine Factory  
10 Weapons

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Numerous Medical Supplies  
and Documents  
3 Ton Peanuts  
1 Ox Cart  
146 Buildings, Bunkers,  
Tunnels  
500 Gallons of Fuel Oil  
55 Gallons of Tar  
17 Bicycles  
200 Sheets of Tin  
Misc Clothing and Supplies

10. ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS: a. Supply. Prior to the beginning of Operation MASTIFF a resupply convoy was conducted on 18 and 19 February to LAI KHE. This convoy was primarily concerned with building adequate stocks of rations, POL, and ammunition to support the air assault from LAI KHE. Seventy-five empty vehicles arrived in DI AN from LAI KHE on the morning of 18 February and 69 loaded vehicles returned. The same procedure was repeated on 19 February with 69 vehicles coming from LAI KHE and 75 returning to that base camp in the afternoon. A total of 108 tons of cargo was carried during the two-day resupply action.

b. Logistical support in the artillery base area was not entirely adequate since there was no direct support maintenance of forward supply element. The force of approximately 1,600 personnel was supported in the following manner:

(1) Class I. Units carried from 3 to 10 days supply depending on the transportation capability. Class A rations were delivered from the PHU LOI Class I point by HU-1D. Water was produced by two engineer water points from a small lake within the perimeter.

(2) Class II and IV (including repair parts). End item replacement and repair parts were obtained through organization rear detachments.

(3) Class III. Units carried the maximum permitted by available transportation. S&T battalion attached two 5,000 gallon tankers to division artillery S-4 to carry MOGAS and diesel. S&T battalion resupplied 1,000 gallons of JP-4 and 4,000 gallons of MOGAS by helicopter.

(4) Class V. Artillery units carried a five day supply. An additional five day supply was prepositioned at CU CHI but was not needed. Small arms and mortar ammunition for the cavalry and infantry units was resupplied from the division ammunition officer by HU-1D. Three cavalry troops and one rifle company required 16 HU-1D sorties per day.

(5) Organizational maintenance was provided by units on site and there was not direct support maintenance available. Some small items were evacuated to DI AN for required direct support maintenance, but large items were evacuated overland upon completion of the operation.

c. Medical clearing facilities were provided by the division artillery surgeon, and he also handled air evacuation of casualties. Only two casualties were held overnight at the aid station.

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d. Transportation. The air LOC worked well within its capability. Since there was no strip available to accommodate fixed wing aircraft, all support was provided by UH-1D, CH-3, and CH-47 aircraft. The land LOC was not used since forces were not allocated to escort convoys.

e. Unit Strengths:

| <u>UNIT</u>                | <u>BEGINNING OF<br/>OPERATION</u> | <u>END OF<br/>OPERATION</u> |
|----------------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Division Artillery Tac CP  | 26                                | 26                          |
| 1st Bn, 7th Arty           | 293                               | 291                         |
| 8th Bn, 6th Arty           | 267                               | 262                         |
| 2d Bn, 33d Arty            | 359                               | 358                         |
| Royal Australian Arty Btry | 102                               | 102                         |
| 1st Bn, 2d Inf             | 883                               | 848                         |
| 2d Bn, 32d Arty            | 486                               | 468                         |
| D Co, 1st Engr Bn          | 104                               | 103                         |

f. Administrative matters for 2d and 3d Brigades included in Annexes G and H.

11. SPECIAL EQUIPMENT AND TECHNIQUES: None.

12. COMMANDERS ANALYSIS: Operation MASTIFF represented the second largest operation conducted by the 1st Infantry Division to date. Although the number of VC killed did not meet expectations, neither were the VC encountered in the numbers anticipated from intelligence reports. The deception plan was excellent and effectively complemented the actual plan. The operation definitely revealed that the division is capable of planning and conducting an operation of this magnitude and in an area of our choosing. MASTIFF was successful in all phases. During Operation MASTIFF, valuable information was gained in the use of supporting forces such as artillery, TAC air, TAC airlift, and communications. The Air Force and Army airlift of the 2d Brigade from BIEN HOA stands well as a high point in combined airlift for this combat theater.

13. CONCLUSIONS AND LESSONS LEARNED: a. Conclusions:

(1) The use of OV-1 aircraft equipped with SLAR and IR and reporting the results for artillery engagement was very effective.

(2) The role played by the artillery in attempting to block the enemy escape route over the SAIGON River was ineffective during darkness due to a lack of adequate illumination.

(3) Air lines of communication were adequate. Units utilized both fixed and rotary wing aircraft.

(4) The division signal battalion is capable of supporting wide-spread operations of an infantry division as evidenced by the number of tactical locations supported during MASTIFF while continuing to support the four major semi-fixed base camps. Elements in support of forward CP locations can be successfully airlifted and within a prescribed time frame, establish positive and reliable communications for the division. The utilization of a relay point on NUI BA DEN effectively provided necessary long range communication.

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(5) Provision for a longer period to displace the 2d Brigade would have allowed greater margin of assurance in completing the move without applying the maximum effort on the final day. With the loss of aircraft due to mechanical failure, other aircraft that were being prepared for the air assault had to be missioned to complete the move of the 2d Brigade.

### b. Lessons Learned:

(1) Roads cleared the previous day should not be considered cleared until they are again swept for mines immediately prior to being used.

(2) The division signal battalion, by utilizing a suitable VHF radio relay unit (NUI BA DEN) can extend the effectiveness of VHF equipment far beyond its' normal line of sight range of 30 miles. Such a relay provides reliable communication and compensates for the often undesirable communication sites encountered in forward areas experienced in flat and heavily forested areas found in Vietnam.

(3) Aerial resupply of signal equipment is a factor which must be anticipated. Backup equipment is reduced to the minimum with such widespread operations as MASTIFF and the quantity of equipment committed.

(4) Signal maintenance technicians must be prepared to immediately analyze verbal reports of equipment malfunctions in forward areas, and then either displace repair personnel forward to repair or evacuate the equipment.

### ANNEXES:

- A -- Enemy Order of Battle
- B -- Sequence of Events
- C -- Overlay of Deception Plan (FRAG O 12-66)
- D -- Operations Overlay 2d Brigade Area of Operation
- E -- Operations Overlay 3d Brigade Area of Operation
- F -- Operations Overlay Operation MASTIFF
- G -- After Action Report 2d Brigade
- H -- After Action Report 3d Brigade
- I -- Air Assault Lanes

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**ANNEX A**  
**ENEMY ORDER OF BATTLE**

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ANNEX A to Combat Operations After Action Report, Operation MASTIFF,  
Enemy Order of Battle

APPENDIX 1 (Enemy Order of Battle) to ANNEX A (Intelligence) to OPLAN  
1-66 (Operation MASTIFF).

1. The three main force regiments (271, 272, and 273) have been operating around the Michelin area since the middle of November 1965. 271 Regiment has been reported numerous times, generally to the west of the Michelin Plantation in the vicinity of XT4355. Reports on 23 Jan 66 from a rallier and 2 VCC claimed that as of 22 Jan 66 the 271 Regiment was located at XT540710. Four laborers said they carried ammunition across highway 13 between Chon Thanh and Bau Bang on an unknown date. This information correlates with the most recent report from III Corps reporting 271 Regiment moving to the vicinity of XT730550 on 26 January.

## OB COMMENT:

The 271 Regiment was last located in the vicinity of XT540710 around 22 January. As to the regiment moving east, there is no information confirming or denying the information reported by the four laborers. This information should be considered probable (F/3) with the possible objective of attacking either the 1st Brigade or Bien Hoa Air Base.

2. Throughout November and December 272 Regiment has been reported to the east of the Michelin Plantation within the vicinity of XT6750 and was believed to still be located there as of 7 January. A rallier reported on 15 January, the 602/272 Regiment was located at XT670560 with the other two battalions positioned nearby.

## OB COMMENT:

There is no available information to substantiate any movement by the 272 Regiment.

3. In November 1965, the 273 Regiment was reported east of the Michelin Plantation in the vicinity of XT7940 by numerous sources (F/6). The location of this unit was unknown until 24 December when III Corps reported it in vicinity XT3565; as of 24 January it has been carried in the vicinity XT6968. One rallier reported the departure of 707/273 Regiment from War Zone "C" on 22 January 1966 to XT609597 and another rallier reported 241 Arty Battalion, subordinate to 707 or 709/273 Regiment had crossed highway 13 at Ben Dong So (XT7943) on 26 Jan (F/6).

## OB COMMENT:

Information received substantiates the location of 273 Regiment in the vicinity of XT6968 up to 24 January. Further movement east by the regiment seems to correspond with information obtained about 271 Regiment. Further investigation of this information is needed. The 241 Artillery Battalion has not been located for some time, but it is believed to be attached to the 273d Regiment.

4. Other units have been reported in the vicinity of the Michelin Plantation. The Phu Loi Battalion has been reported three times east and southeast of Michelin (XT6743 to XT7946). The 302 Battalion was reported on 18 November vicinity XT4050 on 15 November by SF (F/6), the 320 Battalion vicinity XT4350 on 12 November by III Corps (F/6), and the 3rd Battalion, 165th Regiment vicinity XT7943 on 20 January by MACV (C/3).

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ANNEX A to Combat Operations After Action Report, Operation MASTIFF,  
Enemy Order of Battle (Con't)

## CURRENT ORDER OF BATTLE HOLDINGS

| UNIT                         | CODE NAMES                       | IBN       | PERSONALITIES                                                 | SUB UNITS                                     | STRENGTH | WPNS                                                                           | REMARKS                                                |
|------------------------------|----------------------------------|-----------|---------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------|----------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------|
| 271 Regt<br>(MF)<br>(C)      | C56<br>C67<br>G271<br>Q761<br>Q1 | HT 8000 B | Lt Col Nguyen C.O.<br>Maj Le Thanh X.O.<br>Le Thanh Leur P.O. | J 10 Bn<br>J 15 Bn<br>J 20 Bn<br>Z 35 Arty Bn | 2500     | 2-81mm Mtr<br>4-60mm Mtr<br>2-SK 57mm<br>1-AA MG<br>7-50 Cal MG                | UNIT VERY<br>WELL ARMED                                |
| 272 Regt<br>(MF)<br>(C)      | C58<br>C69<br>G272<br>Q762       | HT 9000 A | Lt Col Ta Minh Khan<br>Thoi X.O.                              | C602 Bn<br>C604 Bn<br>C606 Bn                 | 2000     | 10-Mtrs<br>2-SK 57mm<br>15-SK 257mm<br>5-AA MG<br>10-50 cal MG<br>12-30 Cal MG | UNIT VERY<br>WELL ARMED                                |
| 273 Regt<br>(MF)<br>(C)      | C59<br>G273<br>Q763              | HT 6000 B | Chin Hien C.O.<br>Mai Hung X.O.<br>Tam Danh P.O.              | C707 Bn<br>C709 Bn<br>C711 Bn<br>24th Arty Bn | 2000     | 10-Mtrs<br>2-SK 57mm<br>2-50 cal MG<br>5-30 cal MG                             | UNIT VERY<br>WELL ARMED                                |
| Phu Loi<br>Bn<br>(MF)<br>(C) | Quyet-<br>Thang<br>II            | Unk       | Ba Quan C.O.<br>Tu Bau X.O.<br>QUYET Tu P.O.                  | C62 Co.<br>C306 Co.<br>C308 Co.<br>C304 Co.   | 500      | 5-Mtrs<br>2-SK 275mm<br>2-SK 257mm<br>2-50 cal MG<br>4-30 cal MG               | UNIFORM:<br>GREEN PAT-<br>IGUES AND<br>YELLOW<br>SCARF |
| C 302 Bn<br>(MF)<br>(C)      | Unk                              | Unk       | Unk                                                           | Unk                                           | 350      | Unk                                                                            |                                                        |
| C 320 Bn<br>(MF)<br>(C)      | C47<br>D14                       | Unk       | Bach<br>Thuc<br>C.O.<br>X.O.                                  | C315 Co.<br>C325 Co.<br>C335 Co.<br>D14 Co.   | 500      | 3-60mm Mtr<br>1-SK 275mm<br>2-SK 257mm<br>2-50 cal MG<br>3-30 cal MG           |                                                        |

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ANNEX A to Combat Operations After Action Report, Operation MASTIFF,  
Enemy Order of Battle (Con't)

| UNIT                             | CODE NAMES          | IBN | PERSONALITIES                              | SUB UNITS                                | STRENGTH | WPNS                                    | REMARKS |
|----------------------------------|---------------------|-----|--------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------|----------|-----------------------------------------|---------|
| Autumn Bn<br>(MF)<br>(POSSIBLE)  | Mau Thu<br>Chien Bn | Unk | IE C.O.                                    | Unk                                      | 400      | 1-60mm Mtr<br>1-SK 259mm<br>2-50 cal MG |         |
| 31 Bn/165<br>Regt<br>(MF)<br>(C) | Q-3                 | Unk | Batban C.O.<br>Batlong X.O.<br>LeBinh P.O. | 1st Co.<br>2nd Co.<br>3rd Co.<br>4th Co. |          |                                         |         |

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**ANNEX B**  
**SEQUENCE OF EVENTS**

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## ANNEX B Sequence of Events Operation MASTIFF

### SEQUENCE OF EVENTS Div Elements

| <u>ITEM NO</u> | <u>DATE/TIME</u> | <u>EVENT</u>                                     |
|----------------|------------------|--------------------------------------------------|
| 1              | D-1              | Div Tac CP moves to DAU TIENG.                   |
| 2              | D-1              | Tanks 1/4 Cav moves to DI AN.                    |
| 3              | D-Day 0400       | Tanks 1/4 Cav departs DI AN.                     |
| 4              | 0445             | 1/4 Cav (-), Arty Btries depart PHU LCI.         |
| 5              | 0700             | 1/4 Cav (-) and tanks rejoin on Highway 1.       |
| 6              | 0745             | 1/4 Cav (-) arrives CU CHI picks up Btry 8" How. |
| 6A             | 0820             | RAA lands.                                       |
| 7              | 0915             | 1/4 Cav (-) arrives release point vic XT516260.  |
| 8              | 1045             | 1/2 Inf (-) lands LZ KARL.                       |

### SEQUENCE OF EVENTS 2D BDE

|    |            |                                                                  |
|----|------------|------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1  | D-2        | 2d Bde begins movement to DAU TIENG by C-123 and CH-47 aircraft. |
| 2  | D-1        | 2d Bde closes DAU TIENG.                                         |
| 3  | D-1        | Div Tac CP moves to DAU TIENG.                                   |
| 4  | D-Day 0820 | begin Arty prep on LZ ANN.                                       |
| 5  | D-Day 0835 | End Arty begin TAC air prep on LZ ANN.                           |
| 6  | D-Day 0855 | End TAC air begin UTT prep of LZ ANN.                            |
| 7  | D-Day 0900 | 1st lift of 2/16 Inf land on LZ ANN.                             |
| 8  | D-Day 0915 | 2d lift of 2/16 Inf land on LZ ANN.                              |
| 9  | D-Day 0925 | Begin air prep LZ BETTY.                                         |
| 10 | D-Day 0930 | 1st lift of 2/18 Inf land on LZ ANN.                             |
| 11 | D-Day 0945 | 2d lift of 2/18 Inf land on LZ ANN.                              |
| 12 | D-Day 0945 | End TAC air begin prep of LZ BETTY.                              |
| 13 | D-Day 0955 | End Arty prep begin UTT.                                         |
| 14 | D-Day 1000 | 1st lift of 1/18 Inf land on LZ BETTY.                           |
| 15 | D-Day 1015 | 2d lift of 1/18 Inf land on LZ BETTY.                            |
| 16 | D-Day      | All Bde troops closed on LZs.                                    |

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## ANNEX B Sequence of Events Operation MASTIFF (Con't)

### SEQUENCE OF EVENTS 3D BDE

| <u>ITEM NO</u> | <u>DATE/TIME</u> | <u>EVENT</u>                                                                                                                                   |
|----------------|------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1              | 21 Feb 0728      | 3d Bde road column crosses SP-LAI KHE.                                                                                                         |
| 2              | 21 Feb 0800      | Rifle Co 1/16 Inf arrives LAI KHE air strip for reaction force 10 min alert.                                                                   |
| 3              | 21 Feb 0820      | Arty prepares LZ's HAL & RICK.                                                                                                                 |
| 4              | 21 Feb 0830      | Bde CMD Group departs LAI KHE in C&C aircraft.                                                                                                 |
| 5              | 21 Feb 0835      | USAF prepares LZ's HAL & RICK.                                                                                                                 |
| 6              | 21 Feb 0849      | 1st airlift departs LAI KHE.                                                                                                                   |
| 7              | 21 Feb 0850      | UH-1B fire teams prepare LZ's HAL & RICK.                                                                                                      |
| 8              | 21 Feb 0900      | a. H-Hour.<br>b. 1st airlift arrives LZ HAL.<br>c. 3d Bde road column arrives LAI THIEU (G3).<br>d. 2d Bde road column arrives LAI THIEU (G3). |
| 9              | 21 Feb 0914      | 2d airlift departs LAI KHE.                                                                                                                    |
| 10             | 21 Feb 0915      | 1/4 Cav OPCON 3d Bde on arrival line SHEPHERD and occupies blocking Psn PAUL.                                                                  |
| 11             | 21 Feb 0925      | a. 3d Bde land tail clears LAI THIEU (G3).<br>b. 2d airlift arrives LZ RICK.                                                                   |
| 12             | 21 Feb 0939      | 3d airlift departs LAI KHE.                                                                                                                    |
| 13             | 21 Feb 0950      | 3d airlift arrives LZ's HAL & RICK.                                                                                                            |
| 14             | 21 Feb 1000      | Helicopter movement of 3d Bde elements complete.                                                                                               |
| 15             | 21 Feb 1015      | 2/2 Inf & 1/16 Inf move to occupy blocking positions BILL & GEORGE.                                                                            |
| 16             | 21 Feb 1100      | Blocking Psn BILL & GEORGE occupied.                                                                                                           |
| 17             | 21 Feb 1134      | a. Road column arrives RP.<br>b. C/1/2 Inf released to OPCON div arty.                                                                         |
| 18             | 21 Feb 1150      | 2/33 Arty clears RP.                                                                                                                           |
| 19             | 21 Feb 1155      | 2/33 Arty occupying firing positions.                                                                                                          |

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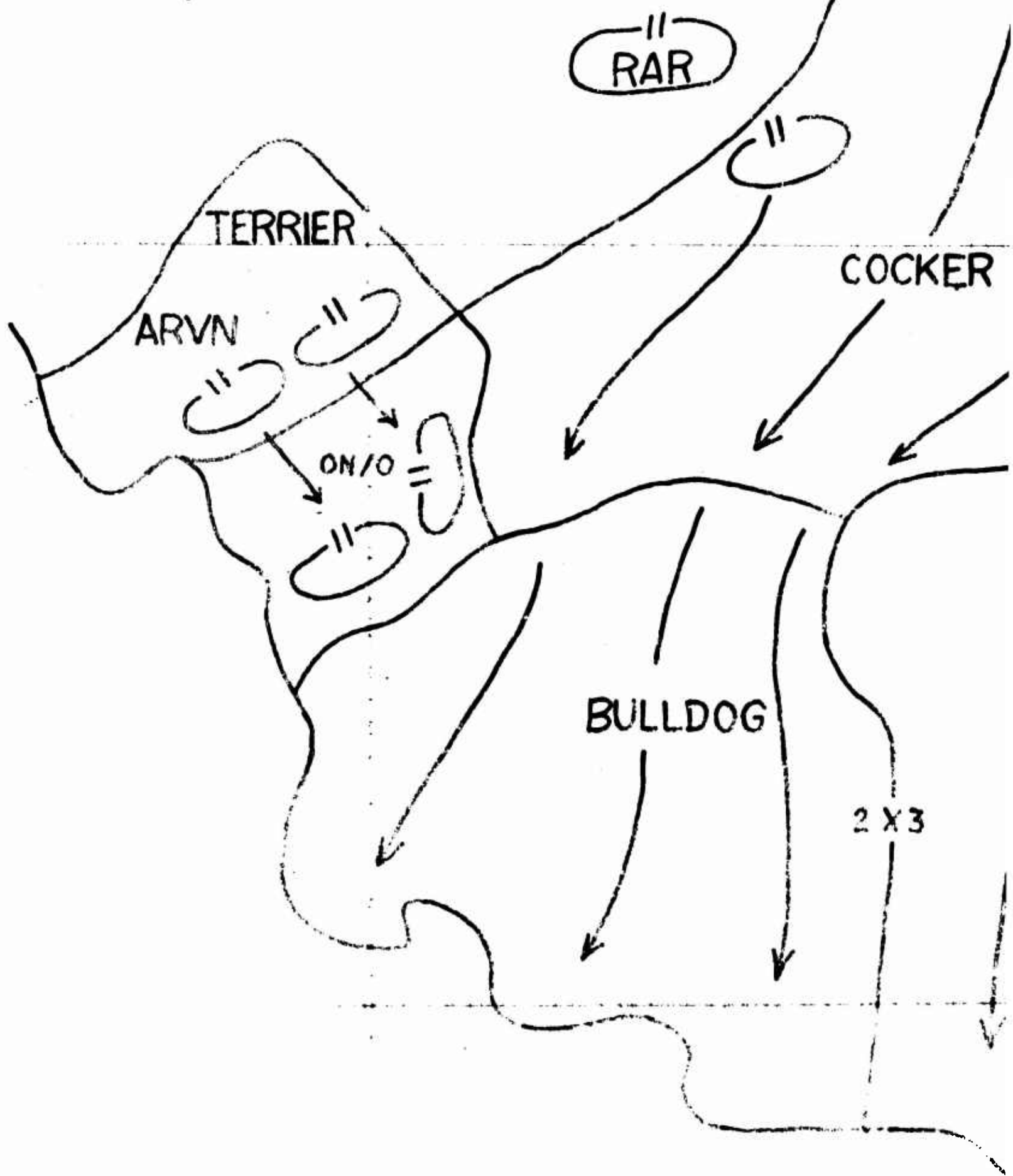
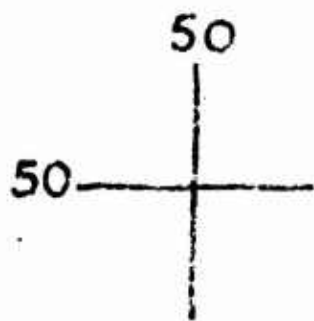
## ANNEX B Sequence of Events Operation MASTIFF (Con't)

| <u>ITEM NO</u> | <u>DATE/TIME</u> | <u>EVENT</u>                                                |
|----------------|------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------|
| 20             | 21 Feb 1159      | 3d Bde road column clears RP.                               |
| 21             | 21 Feb 1201      | 2d Bde road column arrives RP & released from OPCON 3d Bde. |
| 22             | 21 Feb 1300      | 3d Bde Tac CP open vic XT533287.                            |

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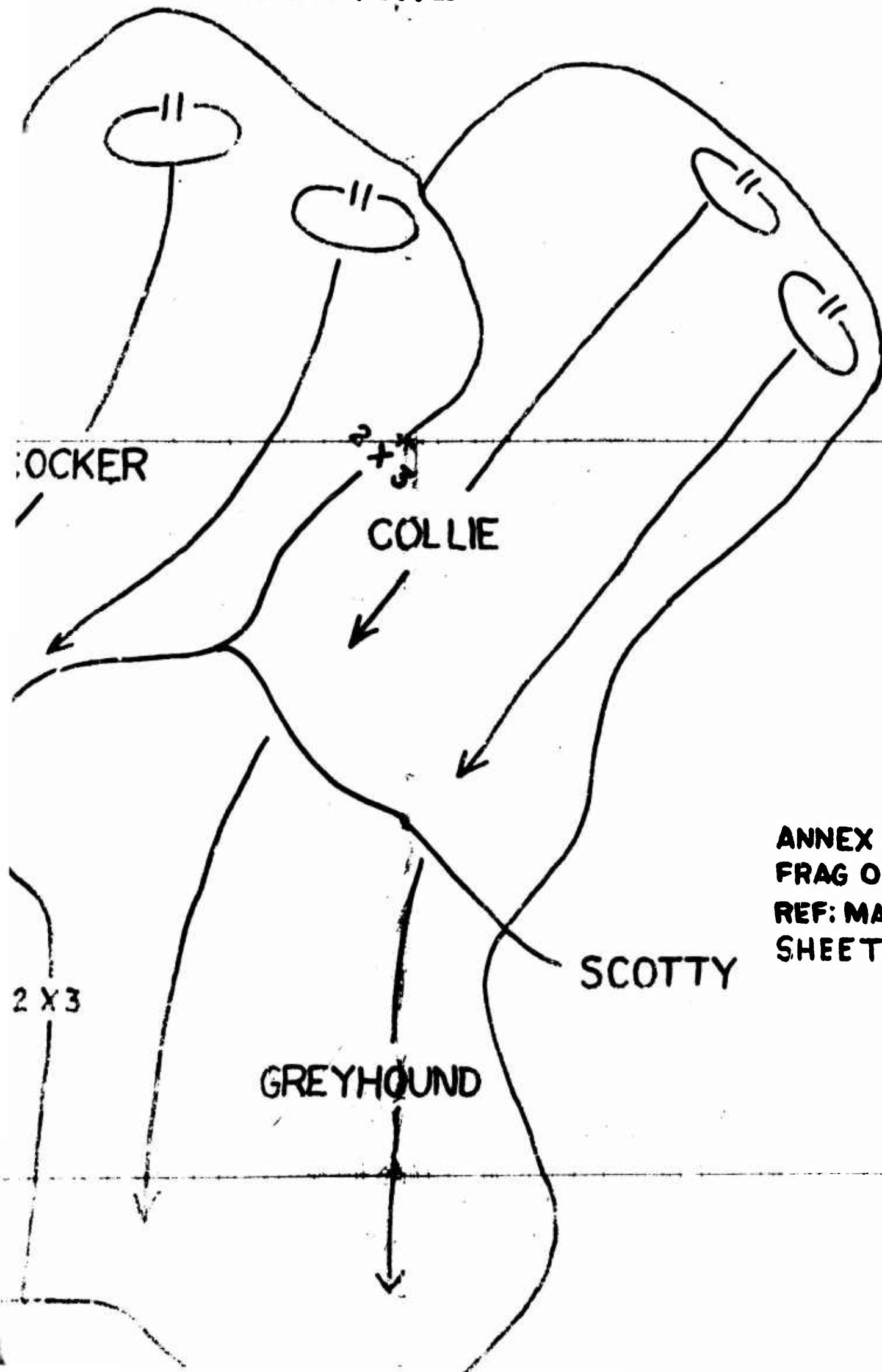
ANNEX C

OVERLAY OF DECEPTION PLAN (FRAG Ø 12-66)



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2



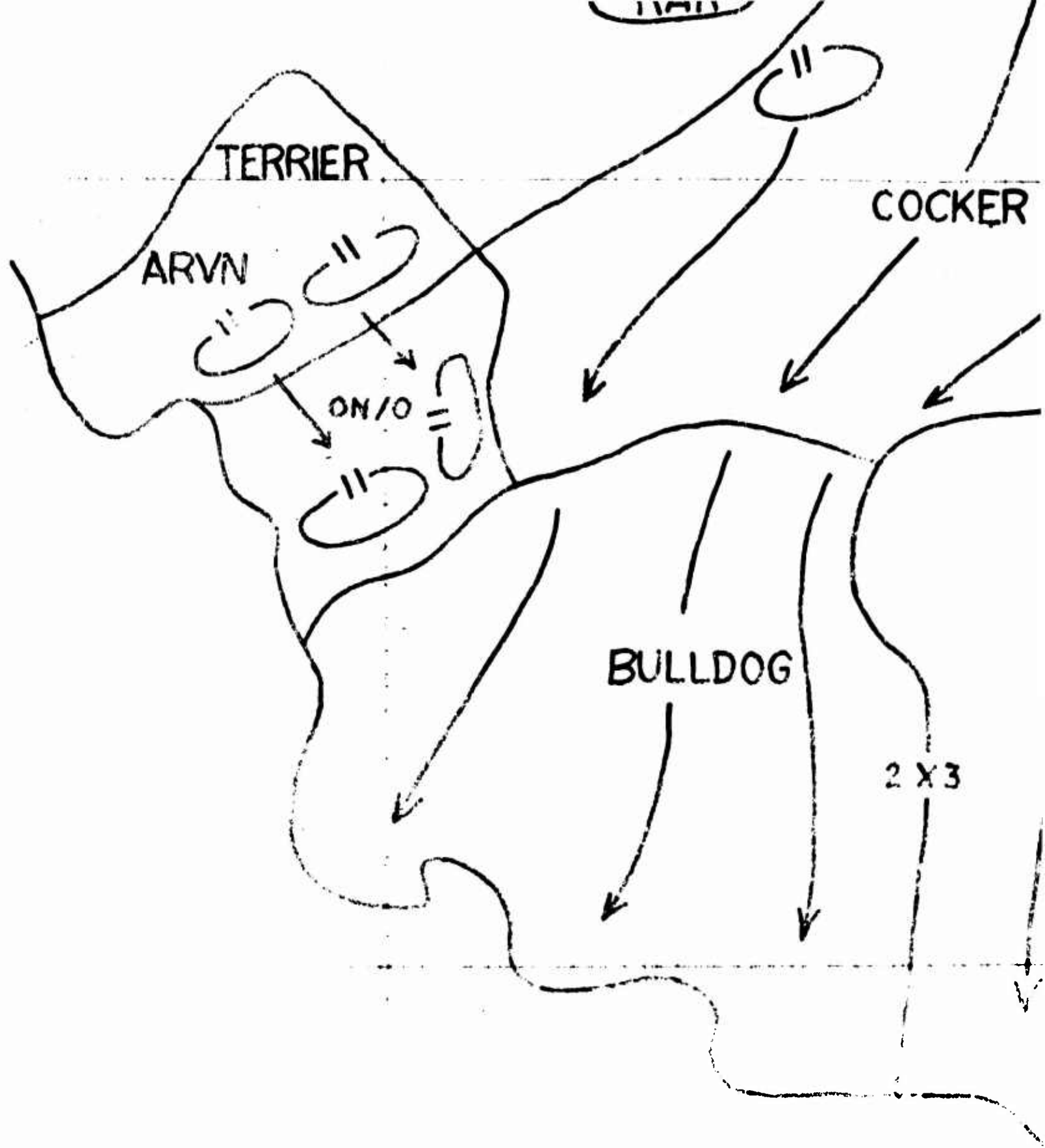
ANNEX A OPERATIO  
FRAG O 12-66 (OPE  
REF: MAPS VIETNA/  
SHEETS: 6244 I  
6344 IV  
6244 II  
6344 III

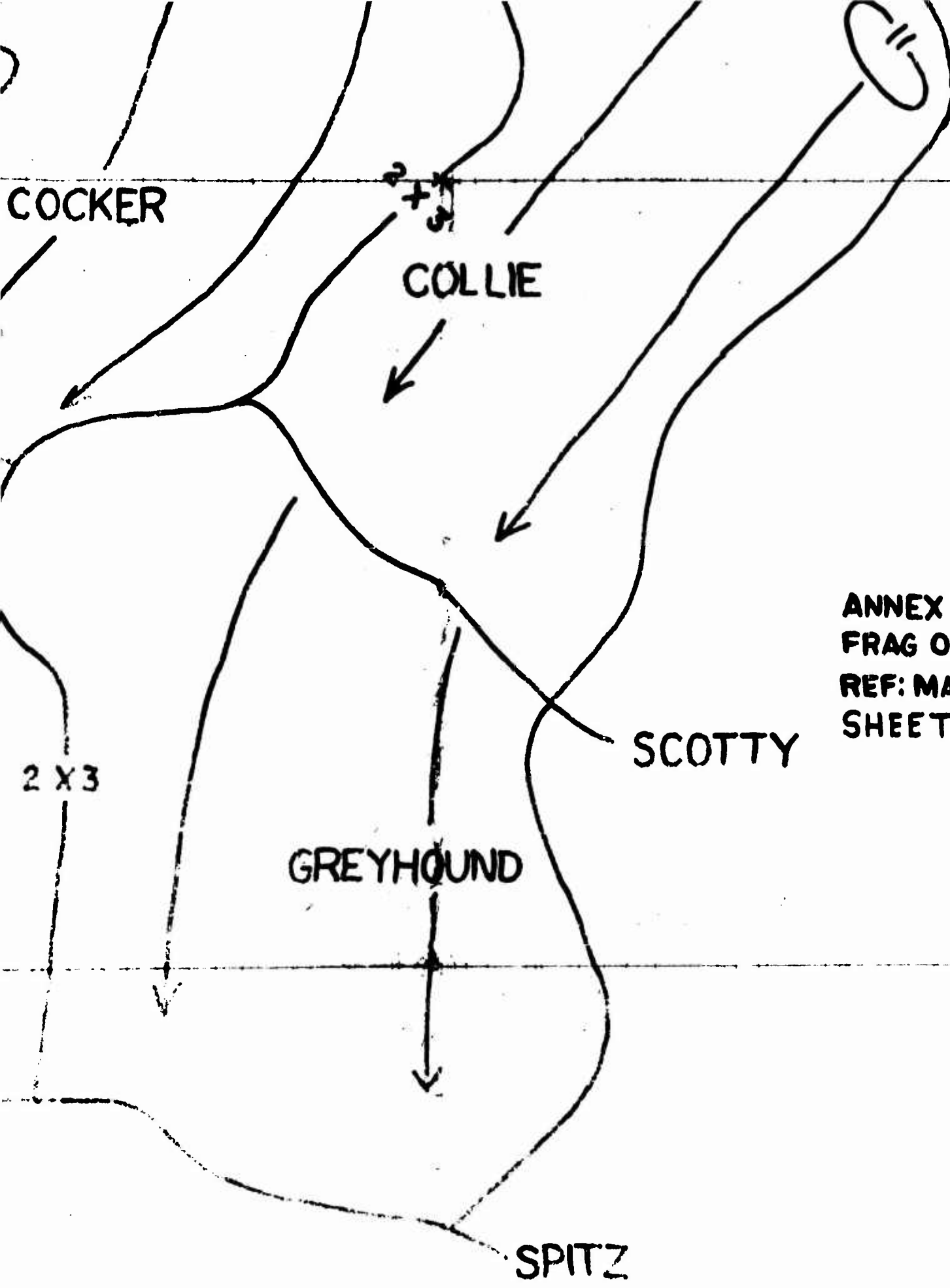
37

ANNEX C TO COMBAT OPERATION AFTER  
ACTION REPORT, OPERATION MASTIFF  
OVERLAY OF DECEPTION PLAN

ANNEX A OPERATION OVERLAY TO  
FRAG O 12-66 (OPERATION MASTIFF)  
REF: MAPS VIETNAM 1:50,000  
SHEETS: 6244 I  
6344 IV  
6244 II  
6344 III

SCOTTY





ANNEX A OPERAT  
FRAG 0 12-66 (O  
REF: MAPS VIETN  
SHEETS: 6244J  
6344I  
6244J  
6344I

65  
30

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ANNEX C TO COMBAT OPERATION AFTER  
ACTION REPORT, OPERATION MASTIFF  
OVERLAY OF DECEPTION PLAN

ANNEX A OPERATION OVERLAY TO  
FRAG O 12-66 (OPERATION MASTIFF)  
REF: MAPS VIETNAM 1:50,000  
SHEETS: 6244 I  
6344 IV  
6244 II  
6344 III

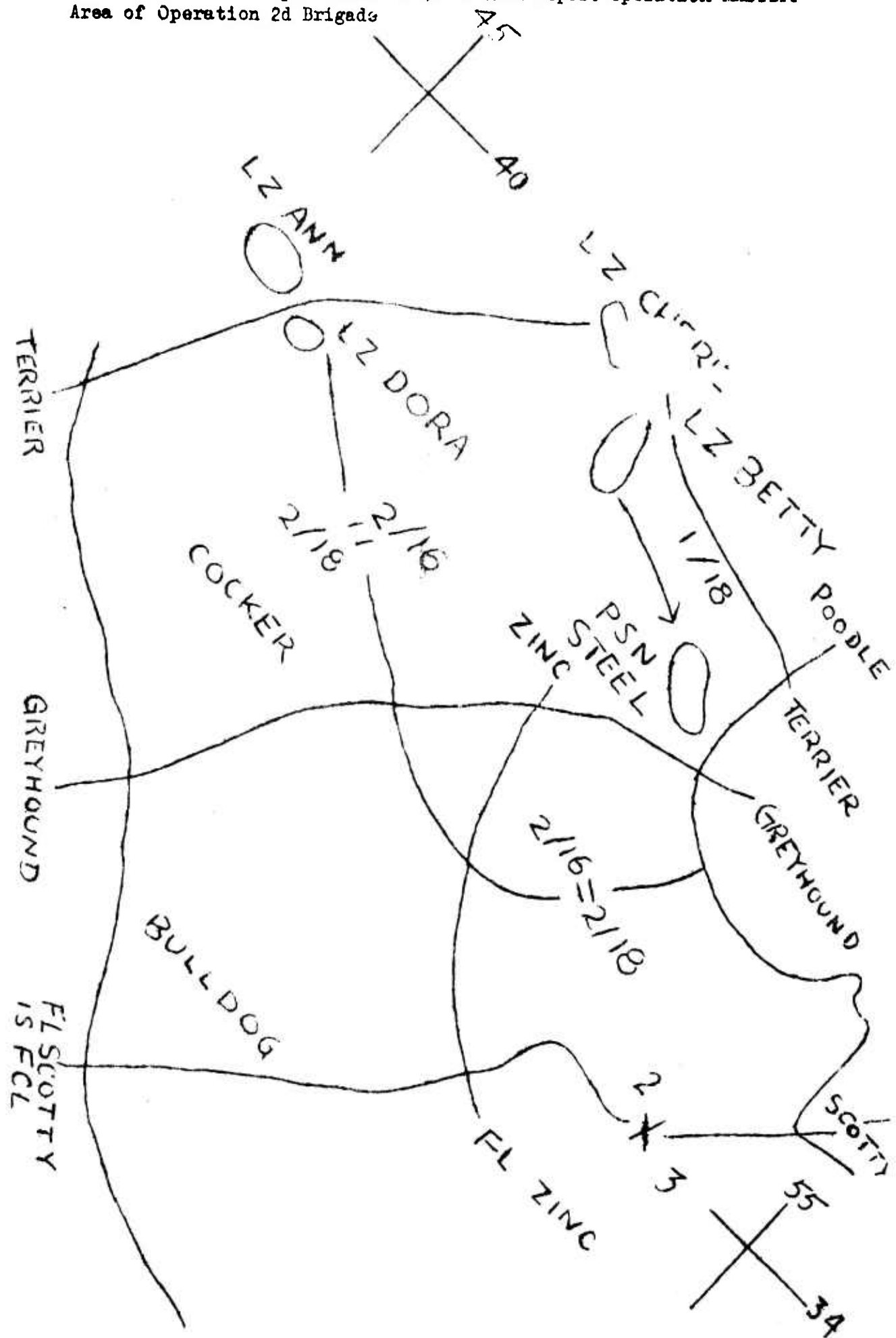
SCOTTY

ANNEX D

OPERATIONS OVERLAY 2D BRIGADE AREA OF OPERATION

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ANNEX D to Combat Operations After Action Report Operation MASTIFF  
Area of Operation 2d Brigade



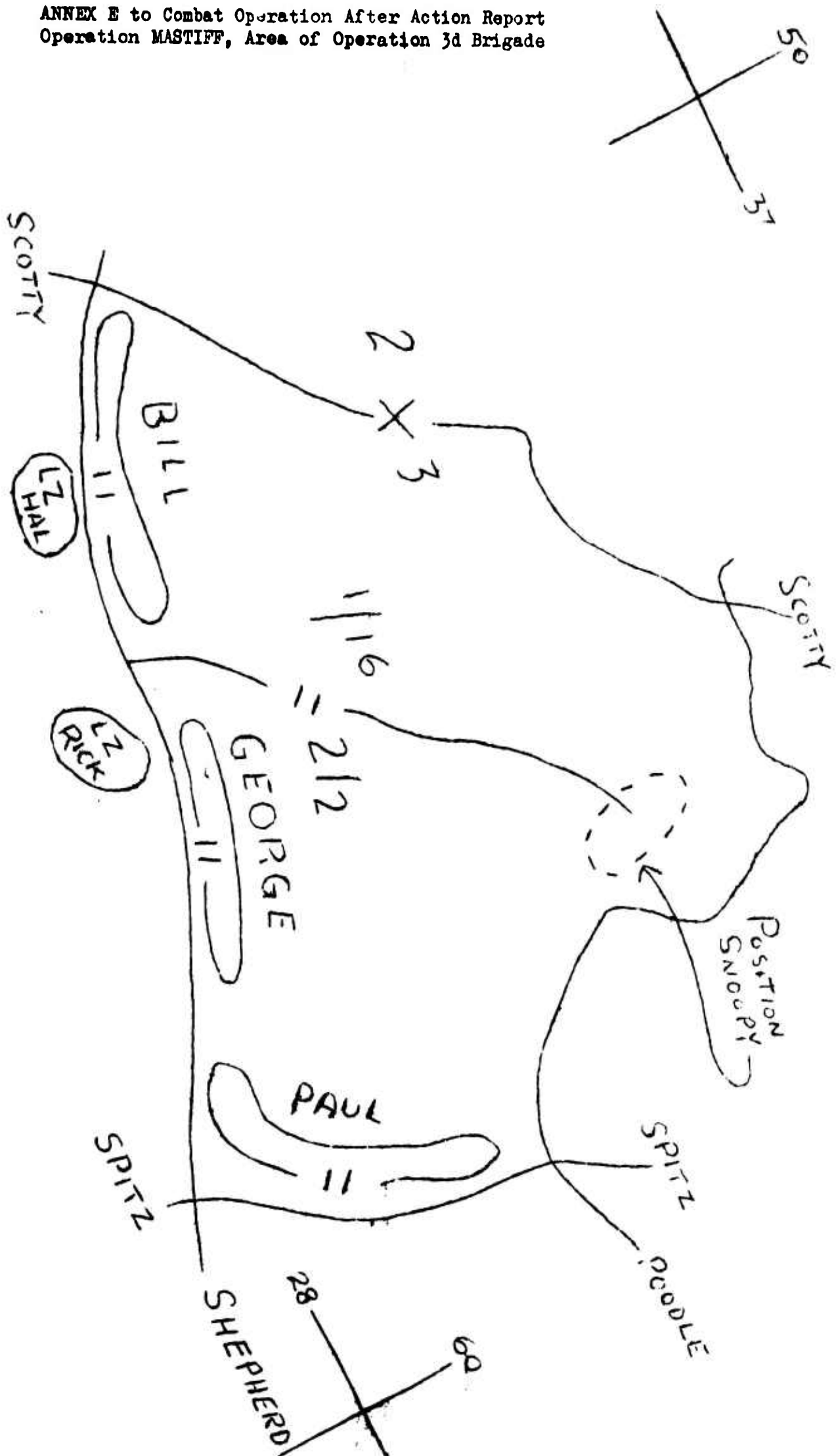
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ANNEX E

OPERATIONS OVERLAY 3D BRIGADE AREA OF OPERATION

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ANNEX E to Combat Operation After Action Report  
Operation MASTIFF, Area of Operation 3d Brigade



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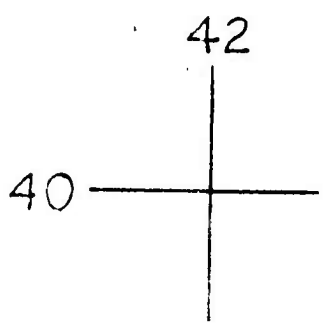
ANNEX F

OPERATIONS OVERLAY OPERATION MASTIFF

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ANNEX  
AFTER  
OPER.  
OPER



SHEPHERD

TERRIER

COCKER

BULLDOG

GREYHOUND

POODLE

TERRIER

GREY

FSCL SCOTTY

105 RAA  
ZONE OF  
FIRE

LZ  
MARK

SCOTTY

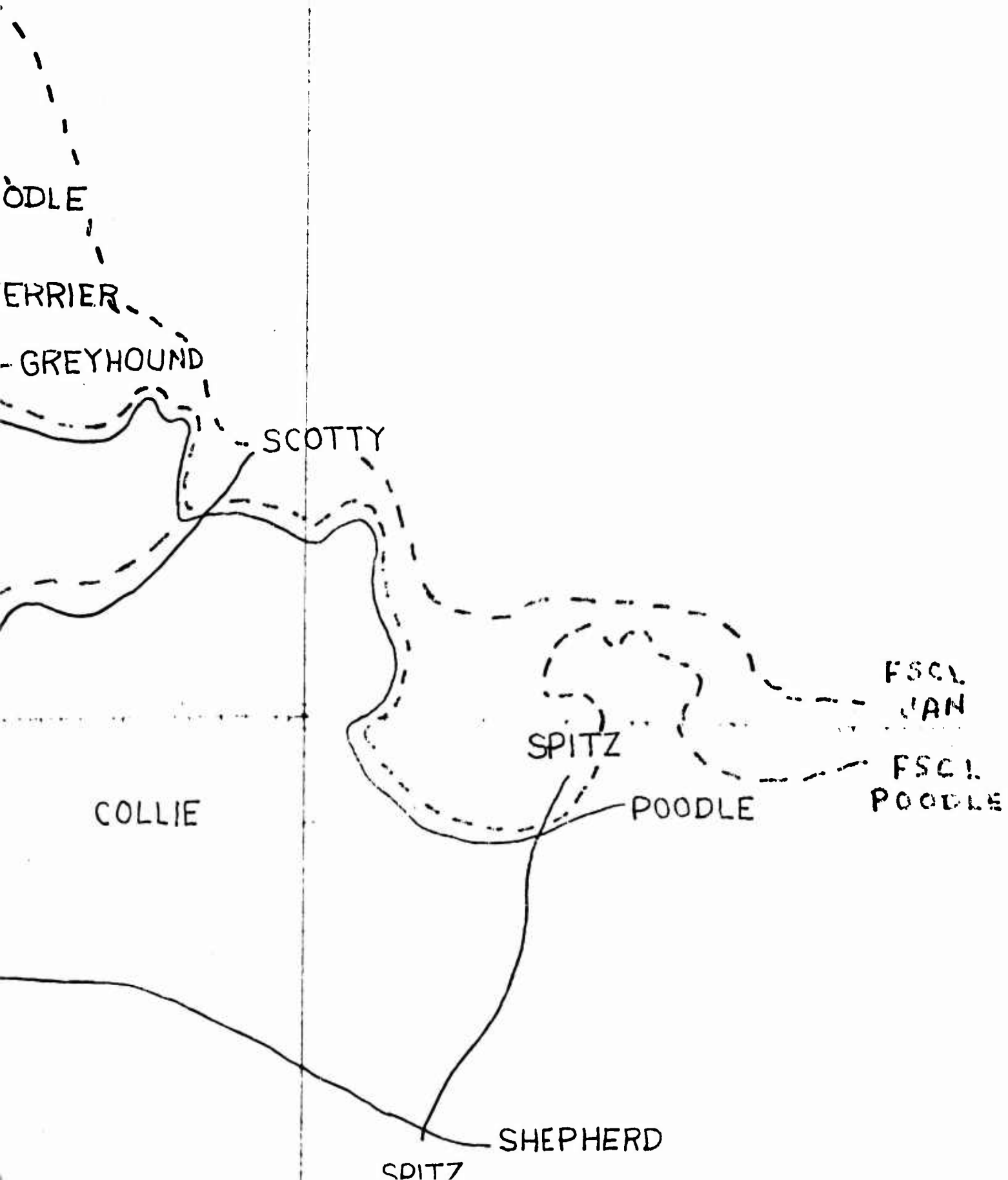
ANNEX B OPERATION OVERLAY TO  
OPLAN 1-66 (OPERATION MASTIFF)

REF: MAPS VIETNAM 1:50,000

INITIAL.

2

ANNEX F TO COMBAT OPERATIONS  
AFTER ACTION REPORT  
OPERATION MASTIFF  
OPERATION OVERLAY



40

SHEPHERD

TERRIER

COCKER

BULLDOG

GREYHOUND

105 RAA  
ZONE OF  
FIRE

SCOTTY

LZ  
MARK

ARTY  
BASE

POODLE

TERRIER

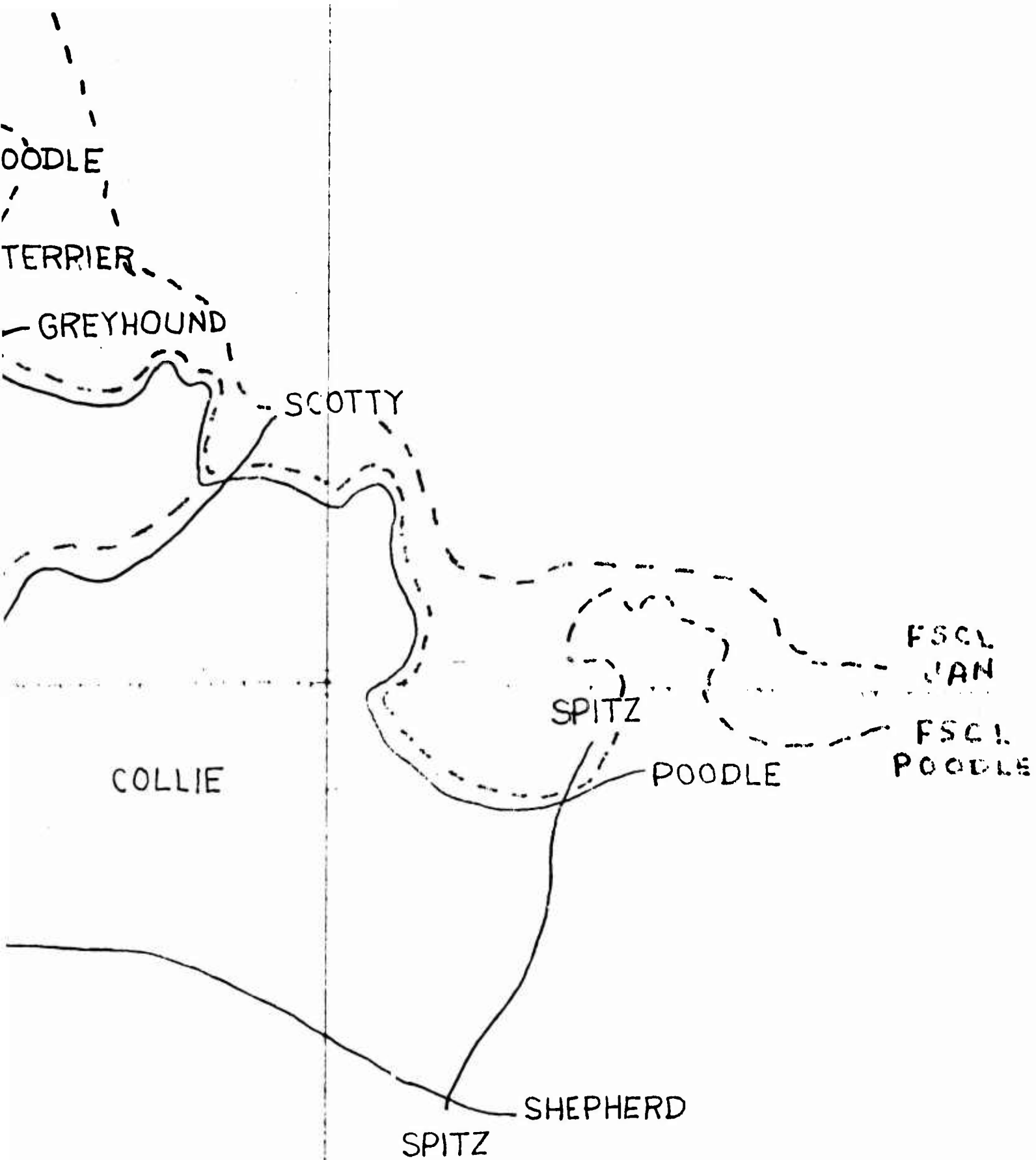
GREY

ANNEX B OPERATION OVERLAY TO  
OPLAN I-66 (OPERATION MASTIFF)

REF: MAPS VIETNAM, 1:50,000

SHEETS: 6245 II  
6244 I  
6345 III  
6344 IV

3  
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23

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ANNEX G

AFTER ACTION REPORT 2D BRIGADE

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DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY  
HEADQUARTERS 2D BRIGADE 1ST INFANTRY DIVISION  
APO U.S. FORCES 96345

31 March 1966

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report (MACV/RCS/J3/32)(U)  
(Operation MASTIFF)

THRU: Commanding General  
1st Infantry Division  
ATTN: AVID-T  
APO U.S. FORCES 96345

TO: Commander  
US Military Assistance Command, Vietnam  
ATTN: J321  
APO U.S. Forces 96243

1. (C) NAME AND TYPE OF OPERATION: Operation MASTIFF, Search and Destroy Operation.

2. (C) DATES OF OPERATION: Operation began 190700H February 1966 and Terminated at 251200H February 1966.

3. (C) GENERAL: Operation MASTIFF was initiated by 1st Infantry Division OPLAN 1-66 dated 051200H February 1966. 2d Brigade OPORD was published 161200H February based on the Division Plan for the actual operation in all aspects except that the operations overlay and details of the tactical plan were based on the deception plan which had been published as a part of 1st Division OPLAN 1-66. Subsequently, at DAU TIENG staging area, 2d Brigade published FRAG 0 12-66 dated 161200H February 1966 which contained the details of the actual tactical operation. The Brigade used DAU TIENG (XT4846) as a staging area and the tactical operation was conducted in a jungle area south of the S.IGON River in an area bounded by coordinates XT430400, XT440350, XT490300, and XT550360 in KHIEM HANH District, TAY NINH Province in the 25th ARVN Division DTA. In brief, the tactical plan was to lift three Infantry Battalions into the objective area by helicopter, placing one in a blocking position vic XT508378 to intercept VC movement out of the area of operations while the other two Infantry Battalions conducted a sweep to drive against the river or the blocking position and destroy or capture them. The initial sweep was to be followed by a detailed search of the area for VC facilities and supplies. The 2d Brigade operation was conducted under 1st Division control in conjunction with a coordinated operation by the 3rd Brigade to the southeast of the 2d Brigade area of operations.

a. Reporting Officer: Colonel A.E. Milloy, Commanding

b. Task Organization:

2/16 Inf: Lt Col W.S. Hathaway, Commanding

6 National Policemen  
3 ARVN Dog Teams  
2 Demo Teams, Co B, 1st Engr Bn

1/18 Inf (-): Lt Col K.R.M. Morton, Commanding

6 National Policemen  
3 ARVN Dog Teams  
2 Demo Teams, Co B, 1st Engr Bn

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2/18 Inf: Lt Col H. McCrystal, Commanding

6 National Policemen  
2 ARVN Dog Teams  
2 Demo Teams, Co B, 1st Engr Bn

Bde Arty(DS):

1/7 Arty (105mm Towed) Lt Col J.H. Fye, Commanding

Bde Reserve:

Co B 1/18 Infantry

Bde Troops:

Hq & Hq Co 2d Bde  
4.2 Mort Plt (3 tubes) 2/16 Inf  
Squad 1st MP Co  
MI Det (IPW)  
ARVN Dog Plt (-)

## 4. (C) INTELLIGENCE:

a. Intelligence prior to operation: At the start of Operation MASTIFF, the strength of VC forces in the general area was estimated to be three main force regiments (271-272-273) and the Provincial Mobile Battalion (PHU LOI). These units had been reported as late as 14 February 1966 to be operating in the MICHELIN Plantation area since November 1965. Their presence or movement in or out of the area could not be substantiated as none of the referenced units or subordinate units were encountered. Intelligence information was received from Headquarters 1st Infantry Division prior to commencement of this operation. Maximum use of intelligence through SPAR, SLAR and Red Haze reports was utilized. Aerial support from Headquarters 1st Infantry Division was excellent. Photos were up to date and showed good ground detail.

b. Enemy situation during operation: Large massing of VC was not anticipated and none took place. Course of VC actions encountered throughout the operation was the employment of mines, boobytraps, SA fire from local guerrilla forces and base camp caretaker personnel at base camp installations.

c. Terrain and Weather: The terrain was jungle with some red open areas. The jungle canopy offered good concealment from observation. Ground under the canopy was generally clear of undergrowth providing good mobility along existing roads and trails. The weather was hot and humid, with one rain shower of short duration during the period. The major obstacle was the SAIGON River which flows generally from north to south forming a natural barrier on the west of the area of operations. The river was not fordable to foot troops except at prepared crossing sites.

d. Fortifications: See Inclosures 2 through 5

e. CA/Psy Ops Evaluation: A total of 20,000 leaflets were dropped with theme: "Gun-US Air Power" and four Psy Loudspeaker missions were flown. Interrogation of two Ralliers revealed that they surrendered after reading Psychological Warfare Leaflets and hearing Psychological Warfare broadcasts.

5. (C) MISSION: On 19 February, 2d Brigade deploys by air to DAU TIENG, closes DAU TIENG on 20 February and on 210900H February, conducts an airmobile assault on LZ in area COCKER, attacks to the southeast within the LAOR and on arrival on line GREYHOUND attacks north to line POCTLE in coordination with 3rd Brigade.

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6. (C) CONCEPT OF OPERATION:

a. Manuever: This operation was conducted in four phases as follows:

(1) Phase I: On D-2, 2d Brigade moved by C-123 and/or CH-47 aircraft to DAU TIENG, closed by D-1 and established a Brigade CP, Logistical Support base, Artillery firing positions, and Battalion marshalling areas from which to conduct and support succeeding phases of the operation.

(2) Phase II: D-Day, H-Hour; 3 Infantry Battalions supported by Artillery and TAC Air Conducted an airmobile assault on LZ Vic PL TERRIER. On completion of the airmobile assault, two Infantry Battalions attacked to the southeast to destroy VC forces in zone while one Battalion established a blocking position to prevent VC movement to the north. Phase II ended when attacking forces reached line GREYHOUND.

(3) Phase III: One Battalion continued to block VC movement to the north while Two Battalions continued to the northeast in TAOR BUILDG in coordination with the 3rd Brigade, Phase III ended when attacking forces of 2d Brigade and 3rd Brigade closed on line POODLE.

(4) Phase IV: After closing on line POODLE, 2d Brigade forces prepared to conduct a detailed search to destroy VC facilities, supplies and equipment in zone.

b. Fire Support: Artillery, TAC Air and UTTs were employed to prepare landing zones, support search and destroy operations, deny the use of the SAIGON River to the VC and to interdict VC concentrations and routes of withdrawal. Brigade was supported initially by 1/7 Artillery, from DAU TIENG. As units moved out of range of DAU TIENG, 1/7 Artillery displaced by another Battalion Artillery base area and supported the remainder of the operation from that location.

7. (C) EXECUTION:

a. Chronology:

7 Feb - Brigade received 1st Division OPLAN 1-66 and began planning and coordination for Operation MASTIFF.

16 Feb - Brigade published 2d Brigade FRAG 0 12-66 which included all administrative details necessary to initiate Operation MASTIFF. The tactical portion of this plan, however, was based on the Division deception plan which had been published as a part of the Division OPLAN.

19 Feb - Brigade initiated air movement to DAU TIENG in preparation for the operation. 39 C-123 sorties and 42 CH-47 sorties were employed to move elements of the Brigade CP, Brigade and Battalion Trains, 1/7 Artillery and 2/18 Infantry.

20 Feb - Brigade continued the air movement of men and equipment to DAU TIENG. During the day, 37 C-123 sorties, 25 CV2 sorties and 58 HH-44 sorties were flown to close the operational elements of all units into DAU TIENG by 201840H. The Brigade CP had been operational in the new area since 200900H. At 202000H, the Brigade Commander issued the Brigade OPRD 5-66 for the actual conduct of the tactical operation the next day.

21 Feb - At 210820H, the 1/7 Artillery began preparation of the LZs. At 210845H, forty HUID helicopters landed at DAU TIENG to load the first lift of troops. The first lift, 2/16 Infantry, took off at 210848H and landed on LZ ANN at 210900H. Each of the three Battalions required two lifts. The 2/16 Infantry landed on the same LZ at 210925H and the second lift closed at 210949H. The first lift of the 1/18 Infantry departed DAU TIENG at 210954H to land on LZ BETTY and the second and last lift closed on the LZ at 211026H. The flight was conducted flawlessly. Light sniper fire was encountered on and near the LZs, but it had no significant effect on the operation. All units moved rapidly from the LZs.

(3)

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2/16 and 2/18 Infantry initiated an attack toward line GREYHOUND. The 1/18 Infantry moved from LZ BETTY toward blocking position STEEL. VC resistance was scattered and unorganized. Most contacts were meeting engagements with small groups of VC riding bicycles. 13 TAC air sorties were flown during the day and the 1/7 Artillery fired a total of 898 rounds. During the day, the Brigade Psy War Team dropped 10,000 "Bomber" leaflets in the area of operations. In the evening, the 2/16 and 2/18 Infantry closed into Battalion base camps near line GREYHOUND while the 1/18 Infantry closed on position STEEL and established a blocking position. During the day, VC losses were 3 VC KIA (Body Count), 2 small arms and 1 VC suspect were captured and an additional 4 VC were estimated to have been killed. US losses were one killed and seven wounded. All of these casualties were the result of a mined booby trapped area encountered by 1/18 Infantry on their route to position STEEL.

22 Feb - The 2/16 and 2/18 Infantry continued to attack initially to the southeast and subsequently to the northeast toward line POODLE. The 1/18 Infantry remained in blocking position STEEL. Enemy resistance continued to be scattered and light. Small groups of VC were encountered on trails and in base camps. There was no organized delaying action on the part of the VC. Only one instance of sniper fire was reported by 1/18 Infantry in the blocking position while 2/16 and 2/18 Infantry overran several VC base camps, one with extensive medical facilities and a large rice cache. The 1/7 Artillery fired 108 rounds, 12 TAC air sorties were employed and the Brigade Psy War Team dropped 10,000 "US Power" leaflets in the area of operations. Total VC losses for the day were 5 VC killed (Body Count), 4 VC captured, 3 base camps and 2 sampans destroyed and 4 small arms and 85.7 tons of rice and 2 tons of peanuts captured. US casualties were two killed and twenty two wounded, all from 2/18 Infantry in an encounter with mines, booby traps and small arms fire around a VC base camp.

23 Feb - This day marked the end of the attack phase of the operation and the beginning of a detailed search for VC supplies and facilities. The 1/18 Infantry continued to occupy position STEEL and conducted extensive patrolling in that general area, encountering only scattered sniper fire. The 2/16 Infantry secured rice captured on 22 February and made preparations for the extraction of the rice by boats on the SALGON River. Vietnamese boats were dispatched from DAU TIENG and PHU LOI and arrived at the rice cache area at 231130H. The rest of the day was spent in loading them. In addition, the 2/16 Infantry conducted patrols in the area and found additional quantities of rice, documents, small arms and explosives. The 2/18 Infantry completed the destruction of a fortified base camp found the day before and conducted patrols which located more rice and base camps, which were destroyed. Eleven sorties of TAC air were flown and 1/7 Artillery fired 162 rounds during the day. VC losses were one KIA (Estimate), three VCC, 50.5 tons of rice and 5 small arms captured and 7 base camps destroyed. US losses for the day were 9 wounded.

24 Feb - Brigade conducted a detailed search of the area. All Bns conducted extensive reconnaissance patrols and met only scattered resistance by SA fire. The attempt to extract rice by river boat failed when the Vietnamese abandoned the boats when they came under SA fire from the river banks. After fruitless attempts to induce them to recover their boats, the boats were destroyed by TAC air to prevent their falling into VC hands. Patrols continued to locate more VC rice and base camps, all of which were destroyed. 2/18 Infantry again engaged a number of VC in a base camp and took several casualties in the resulting fire fight. 17 TAC air sorties were flown and 1/7 Artillery fired 247 rounds during the day. Brigade Civic Actions Team continued programs in BIEH HOA Province and the Psy War Team made loudspeaker flights over the operational area playing CHU HOI tapes. VC losses during the day were 4 KIA (Body Count), 1 KIA (Est), 2 Ralliers, 45.25 tons of rice, 3 base camps, 9 caches and 3 sampans destroyed and one weapon captured. US losses were two killed and thirteen wounded, many of whom were lightly wounded and later returned to duty.

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25 Feb - In the morning, Battalions moved to LZs from which to extract from the area of operations back to DAU TIENG base camp area. The helicopter extraction began at 251000H and all units closed DAU TIENG at 251126H. The helicopters encountered only light sniper fire. The Battalions occupied defensive positions around the DAU TIENG airfield and began to conduct normal security operations. The only engagement during the day was initiated by a patrol from 1/18 Infantry which engaged an estimated 10 VC within the MICHELIN Plantation. 9 TAC air sorties were flown and 1/7 Artillery fired 516 rounds. Psy War loudspeaker missions were flown over the operational area and the Brigade Medical Company continued to treat civilians and ARVN military personnel who came to the Medical Company at DAU TIENG. VC losses during the day were one KIA (Est) and 4 VC suspects. US losses were one killed two wounded.

26 Feb - The Brigade remained in defensive positions at DAU TIENG conducting daylight patrols, night ambushes and preparing for further operations. There was one incident of VC sniper fire and a grenade thrown at an outgoing US patrol. 10 TAC air sorties were flown and 1/7 Artillery fired 212 rounds. VC losses for the day are unknown. US losses were two wounded. 1st Division FRAG C 21-66 for Operation HATTIESBURG was received during the day.

27 Feb - The Brigade remained in defensive positions at DAU TIENG conducting security operations and preparations for further operations. Operation MASTIFF was terminated by Division Order at 270700H.

b. Communications: Brigade encountered no difficulties with communications with tactical units during the operation.

c. Employment of Supporting Forces and Resources: Due to the light VC resistance, there was no requirement to commit forces other than normal Artillery and Air fire support. The operation was conducted in accordance with the original plan throughout. There were no unusual tactics or techniques employed.

## 8. (C) SUPPORTING FORCES:

a. Artillery: The Artillery support was provided by 1/7 Artillery Battalion organized into three 4 gun firing Batteries. Unit was airlifted into the Area of Operations while remaining guns (2 per Battery) were moved with the land tail to the Artillery base. The original plan called for the Battalion (-) to join its land tail in the Artillery base on D-Day or D plus 1, when it could no longer support from its original position. This plan was altered and one Battery (4 gun) remained at DAU TIENG while two other (4 gun) Batteries and the Headquarters Battery joined the land tail in the Artillery Base. The support structure remained in this configuration for the rest of the operation. It was anticipated that the separation of Batteries would lead to problems of control, however, it worked better than anticipated.

b. Tac Air: Air Force Tac Air was employed regularly on both a pre-planned and immediate request basis. Requests were made through ALO channels and no difficulties were experienced with these requests. Sorties were employed against preplanned targets which had been developed by intelligence and targets of opportunity which were developed by the ground forces. Battle damage was difficult to evaluate, due to limited visibility, however, there is no doubt as to the effectiveness of the Tac Air strikes or the effect on VC operations, morale and facilities.

## 9. (C) RESULTS:

a. Enemy Losses: Enemy losses during the period were 12 KIA (body count) and seven estimated KIA. The US Advisor at DAU TIENG reported an additional forty VC KIA (body count) via XTL70500 where air strikes were conducted on 4 March 1966. 181.45 tons of rice, two tons of peanuts, forty houses, eight bunkers, and one hospital complex were destroyed. 18,000 Pla-stres, thirteen weapons, two hundred rounds of ammunition, two hundred pounds

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of usable medical supplies were captured, and two hundred pounds of documents were collected and forwarded for evaluation. An IPW team was deployed during the operation and processed five VCS and seven VCC who were apprehended, interrogated and evacuated to the DAU TIENG District Headquarters. Two Malliers with one US Carbine and two Chicom hand grenades surrendered, were interrogated and evacuated to the DAU TIENG District Headquarters.

## b. Friendly Losses:

KHA: 6  
WHA: 55  
MIA: None  
Equip: 2 small arms

c. Other: No friendly losses were reported for other than US Forces. A number of air strikes were flown against suspected VC psns and facilities or points from which aircraft received ground fire which were too remote from friendly forces to permit a ground investigation and evaluation.

## 10. (C) ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS:

### a. Personnel:

#### (1) Strengths:

| Unit:         | Rear Detachment: | Combat Strength |    |     |            |    |     |
|---------------|------------------|-----------------|----|-----|------------|----|-----|
|               |                  | Prior to Opn:   |    |     | After Opn: |    |     |
|               |                  | O               | WO | EM  | O          | WO | EM  |
| HHC 2d Bde    | 86 to 99         | 26              | 6  | 131 | 27         | 6  | 127 |
| 2/16 Infantry | 217 to 205       | 35              | 2  | 702 | 34         | 2  | 654 |
| 1/18 Infantry | 243 to 245       | 35              | 2  | 711 | 33         | 2  | 730 |
| 2/18 Infantry | 260 to 284       | 33              | 1  | 652 | 33         | 2  | 663 |
| 1/7 Artillery | 121 to 180       | 38              | 5  | 475 | 38         | 5  | 434 |

b. Administrative Plans: Administrative plans and procedures were adequate. The coding and decoding of names in casualty reporting causes a loss of valuable time. The large number of personnel, replacements and others who must be moved between forward and rear base areas necessitates a regular daily shuttle between these two points.

### c. Logistics:

(1) Supply: Supply of Class I and III items was delivered by C-123 to DAU TIENG airfield by SAIGON Logistical Area based on forecasts and requests by the Brigade S-4 and supporting aviation units. Class II and IV were unit responsibilities, however, transportation of these items was a Brigade S-4 responsibility. Class V was delivered to DAU TIENG by the DAO based on requests submitted by the Brigade S-4 or supporting aviation units. Small Class V items were picked up by unit ammunition sections and shipped with the mail while the large shipments were shipped by the DAO from BIEN HOA or by the LONG THANH ASP. Prescribed combat loads were adequate however, company size units throughout the Brigade required resupply on the first day.

(2) Maintenance: There were no significant maintenance problems. A contact team composed of armament, signal and a very small automotive team was utilized in the forward area.

(3) Treatment of Casualties and Evaluation of Hospitalization: The 2d Brigade concept of a consolidated clearing and aid station continued to prove sound. Seriously wounded were stabilized and given necessary treatment to survive the evacuation flight from a remote area.

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(4) Transportation: Transportation support by air was adequate utilizing CH-47, UH-1D, CV-2 and Air Force C-123 aircraft.

(5) Medical Evaluation: During this period, incidences of combat fatigue increased. This was not significant in that this is to be expected when the Brigade operates in a hostile environment for 5 to 6 weeks without an extended rest period.

(6) Communications: Brigade Communications for Operation **WESTIFF** were standard with the following exceptions:

(a) Communications for the Division TAC CP was superimposed on the Brigade. This taxed the Brigade facilities to the maximum but not to the point of inefficiency.

(b) All communications personnel and equipment were air lifted into the forward CP. The airlifting of communications equipment pointed out problems as follows:

1. Lift capability was limited by the availability of 10,000 pound slings. Only one set was available. A minimum of two should be available for each Forward Area Signal Center Platoon.

2. Generator equipment for the MRC-69 is too bulky to fit in a CH-47 and must be reconfigured or moved separately in fixed wing aircraft. This limits its deployment. Only generators which can be moved by CH-47 should be issued to the Forward Area Signal Center Platoon.

11. (C) SPECIAL EQUIPMENT AND TECHNIQUES: The Direct Support Medical Company and the Battalion Aid Stations were consolidated into a Brigade Clearing Station at the Brigade Forward Trains location. This consolidated facility, located close to the area of operations, had most of the facilities of an Evacuation Hospital, to include a laboratory capability. All casualties, particularly seriously injured, were evacuated through this unit. It is certain that this procedure saved several lives.

12. (C) COMMANDERS ANALYSIS: The scheme of maneuver which was followed was specified in the Division Plan. As no major VC forces were encountered, there were no requirements for any changes in the original plan.

### 13. (C) CONCLUSIONS AND LESSONS LEARNED:

#### a. Conclusions:

(1) The requirement to consider LZs for use in resupplying tactical units during an operation is often a limiting factor in the employment of that unit. The Brigade needs a capability to deliver supplies and extract equipment and casualties from areas in which there are no LZs. This can be accomplished by sling loading supplies palatized and packed on paper honeycomb and then free falling them to the unit through the trees. Extraction can be accomplished by winch equipped helicopters.

(2) In all operations conducted to date, the use of a blocking force in conventional disposition has proved futile. As it is known that the VC habitually use roads, trails and streamlines in their withdrawal, a better employment of a blocking force would be to place them in small but strong ambush positions on roads, trails and streamlines over a wide area to the rear and flanks of the VC position. The ambush force should be backed up by a reaction force. This technique would also indicate the direction of VC withdrawal and facilitate further pursuit.

(3) Preplanned air corridors must be established within the area of operations to facilitate the coordination of Artillery fire. Corridors would permit more rapid employment of Artillery without the requirement to contact and clear aircraft from a given area.

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## b. Lessons Learned:

(1) On search and destroy operations, small areas of responsibility for the Infantry Battalions facilitate a thorough search and permit the Battalions to deploy subordinate elements within supporting distance of each other.

(2) As the VC invariably evacuate their base camps when they are under attack, a wide enveloping maneuver is the best approach to this type of attack. Ambushes should be established to the flanks and rear of the VC position. Frequently, there are not enough VC defenders to man all defensive positions in the camp. For this reason, contact should be spread to several points.

(3) The VC cut fire lanes close to the ground. Frequently these cannot be seen by a standing man. Men must be instructed to squat down and look for them, particularly when approaching a VC fortified position.

(4) An effective means of destroying rice by burning has been found. Gasoline, Diesel oil and unused artillery powder increments are mixed in with the rice to insure a hot fire.

FOR THE COMMANDER:



A. C. LIEBER  
Captain, Infantry  
Asst Adjutant

**Inclosure** 1 - Sketch of Area of Operations  
2 - Sketch of VC fortified base camp  
3 - Sketch of VC fortified base camp  
4 - Sketch of VC fortified base camp  
5 - Sketch of VC fortified base camp  
6 - Sketch of VC fortified base camp

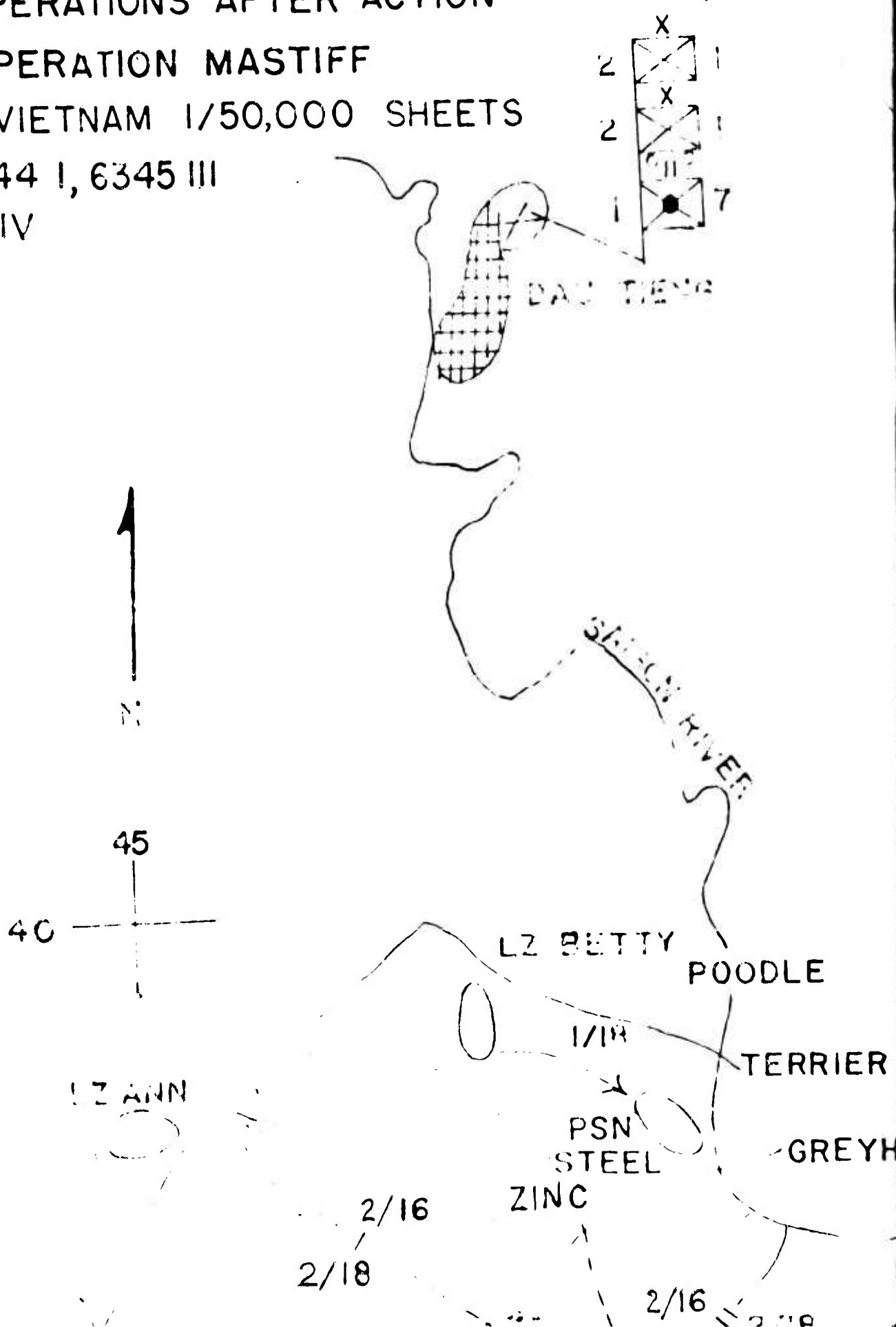
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15 - G3 1st Inf Div  
1 - 1st Bde  
1 - 3rd Bde  
1 - 2/16 Inf  
1 - 1/18 Inf  
1 - 2/18 Inf  
1 - 1/7 Arty  
1 - C 1/4 Cav  
1 - SA BIEN HOA  
5 - S3 File

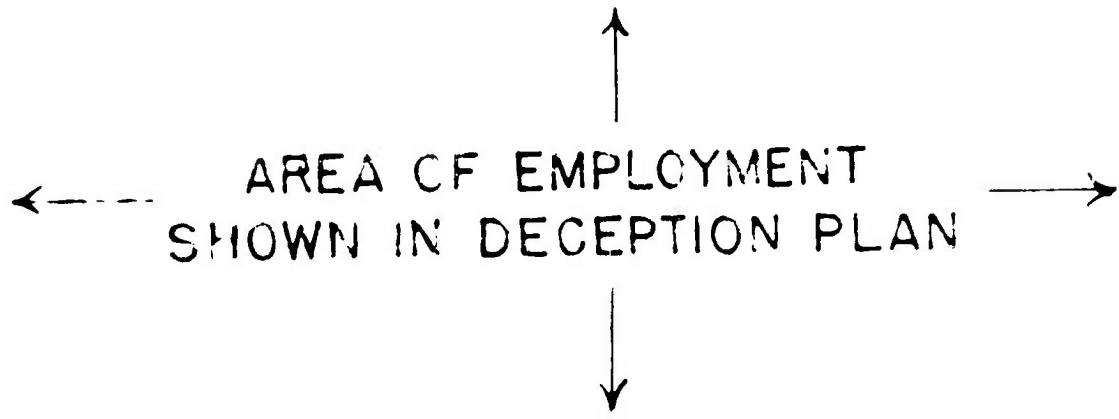
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61

INCLOSURE I TO 2ND BDE 1ST INF DIV  
 COMBAT OPERATIONS AFTER ACTION  
 REPORT, OPERATION MASTIFF  
 REF: MAP, VIETNAM 1/50,000 SHEETS  
 6245 II, 6244 I, 6345 III  
 AND 6344 IV



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SCOTT RIVER

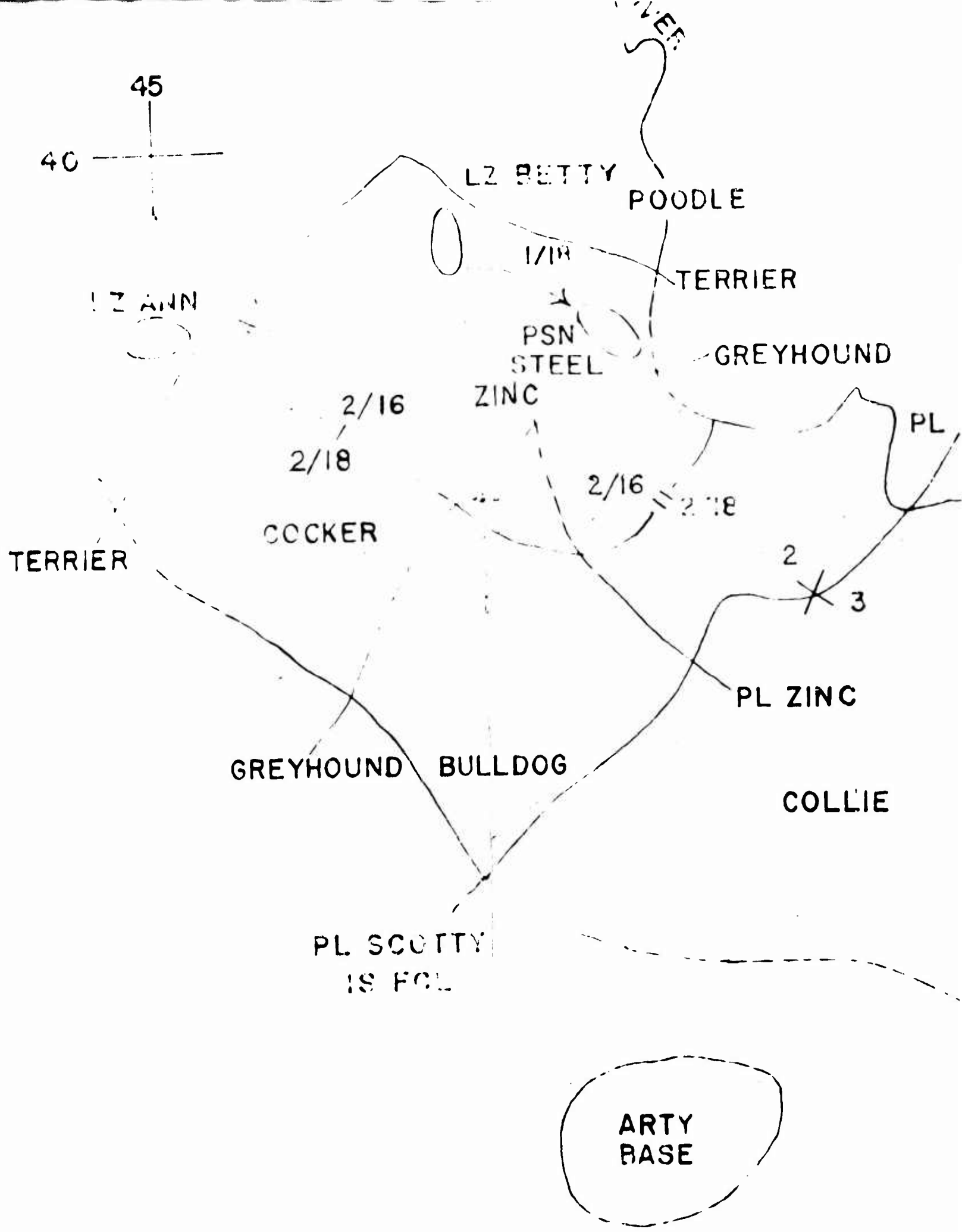
TY  
POODLE

TERRIER

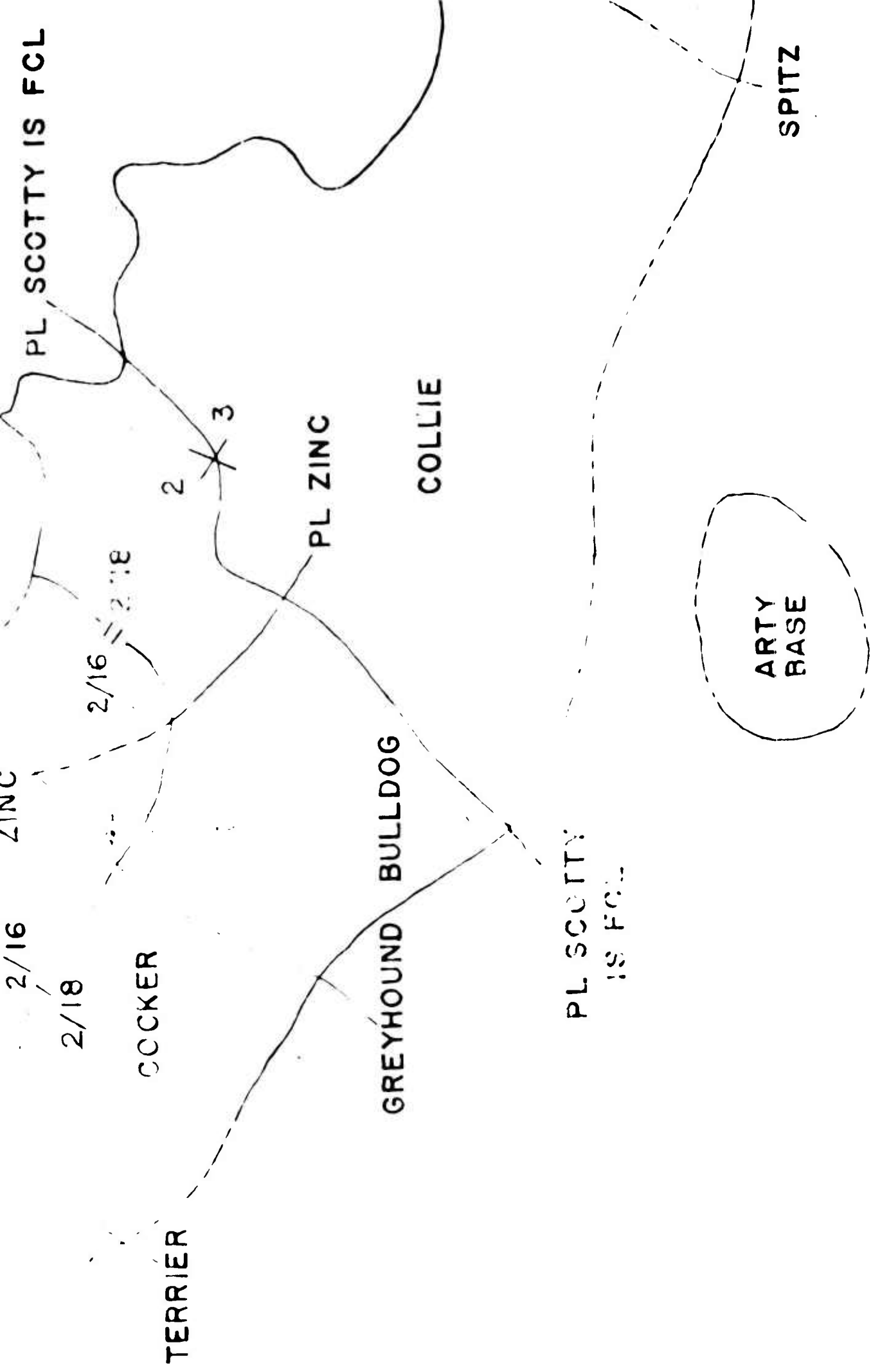
EL  
GREYHOUND

PL SCOTTY IS FCL

2/16 = 2/18



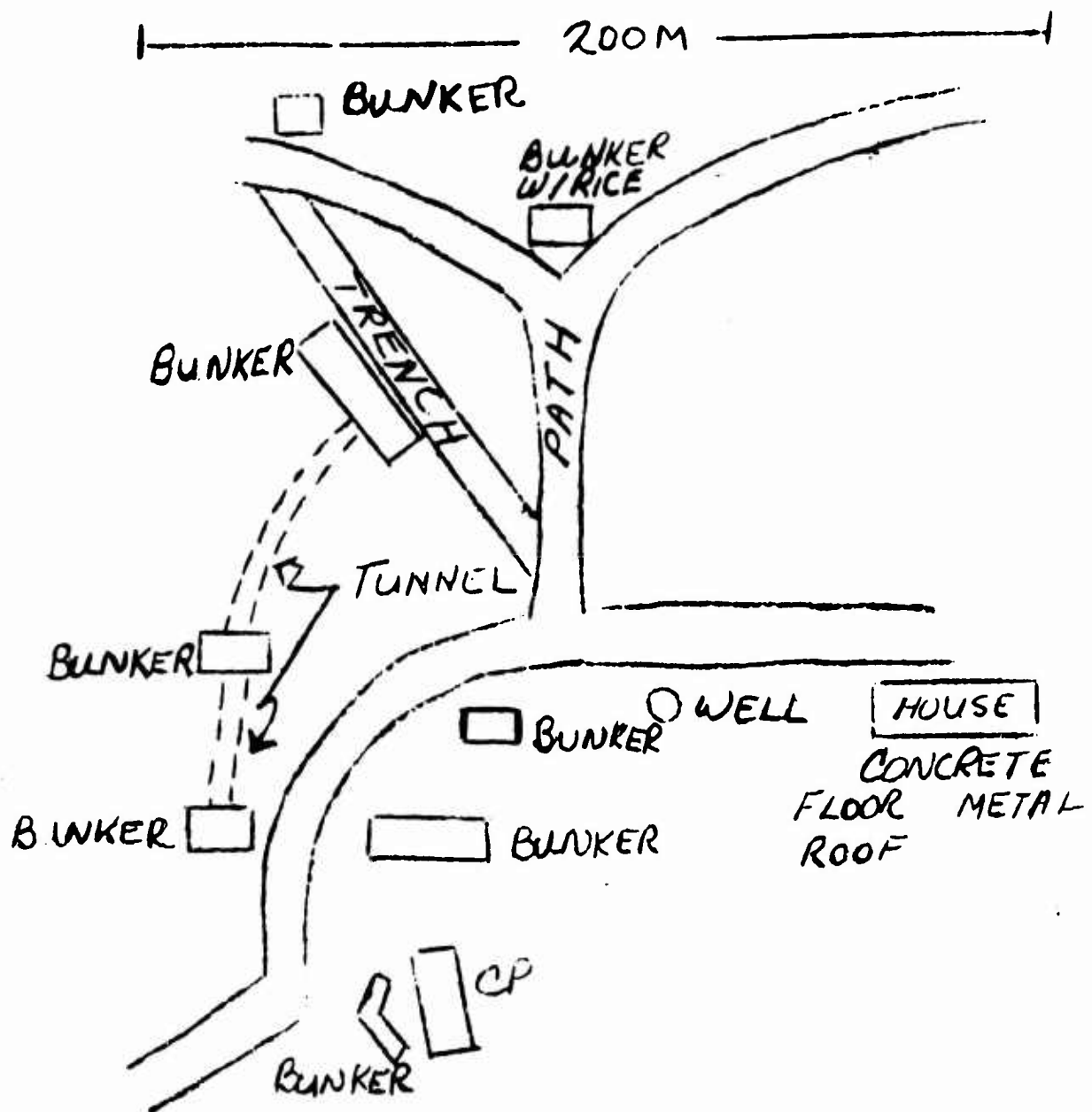
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Inlosure 2 to Hqs 2d Bde 1st Inf Div Combat Operations After Action Report  
(Operation MASTIFF)

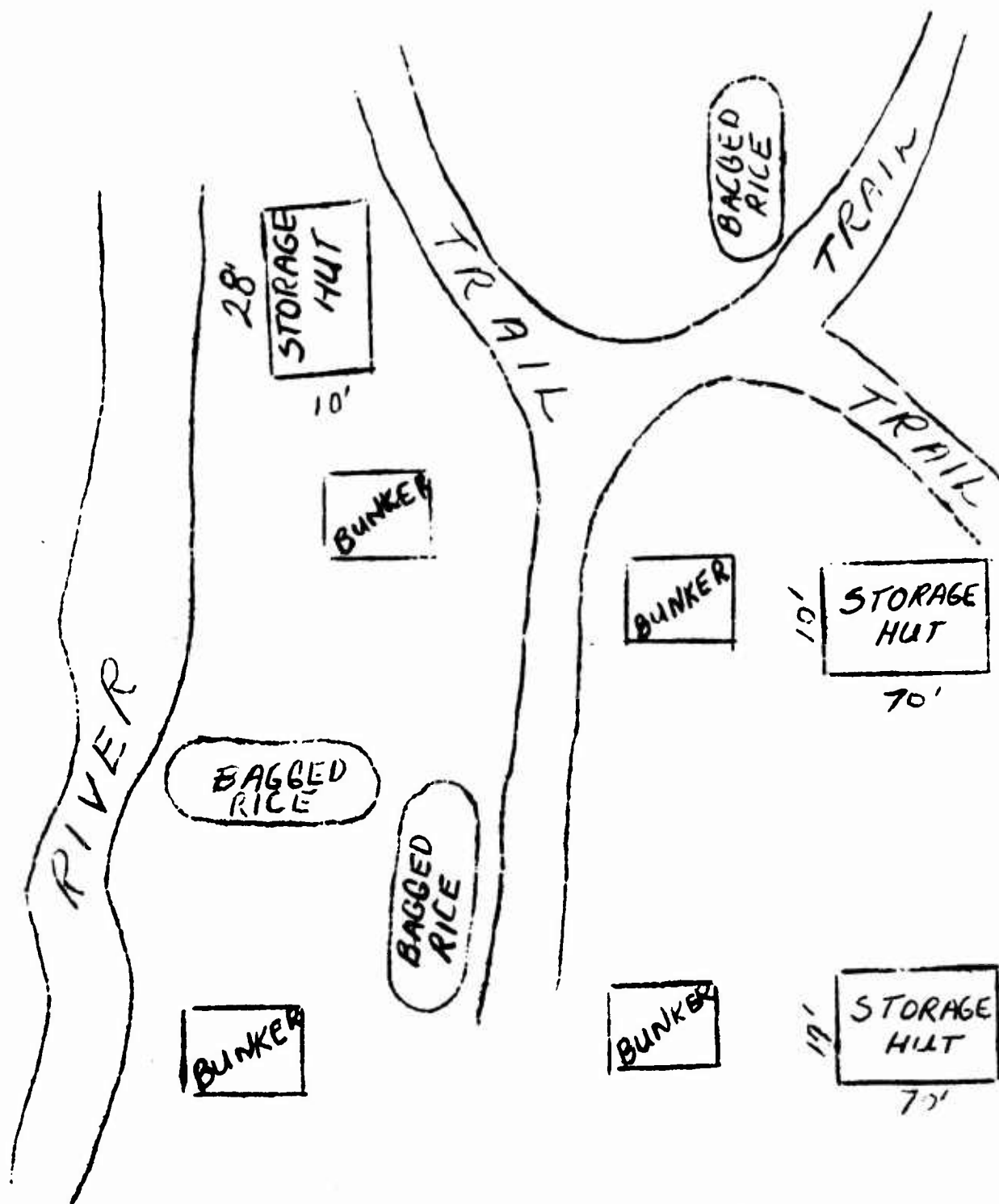


SKETCH (NOT TO SCALE). BASE CAMP LOCATED  
BY "C" 2/16 INF, 22/100 MAR 66, VIC YT 508349 ON  
OPN MASTIFF

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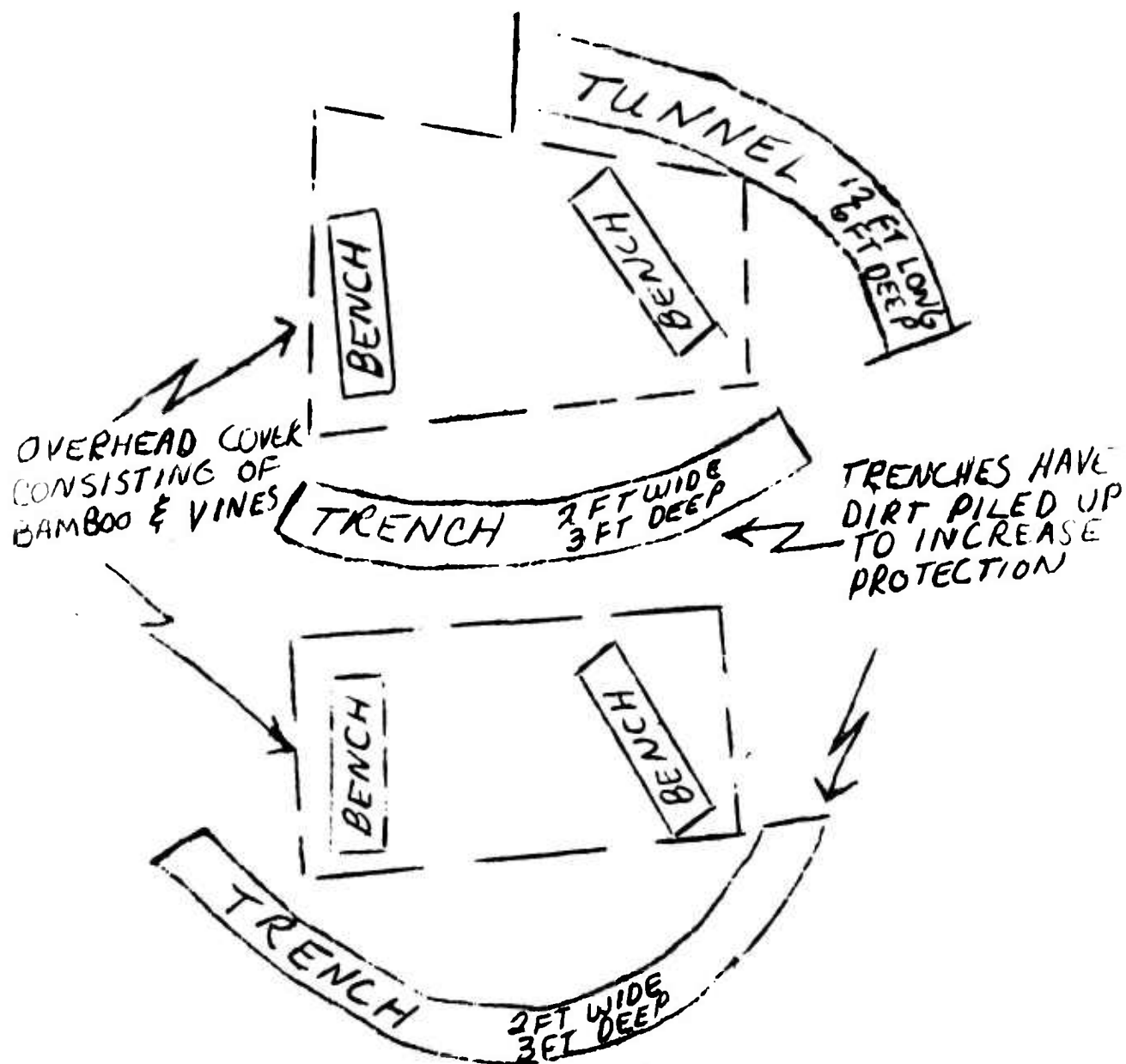
Inclosure 3 to Hqs 2d Bde 1st Inf Div Combat Operations After Action Report  
(Operation MASTIFF)



SKETCH (NOT TO SCALE): BASE CAMP  
LOCATED BY "A" 2/16 INF 221600 FEB 66,  
VIC XT 515365 DURING OPN MASTIFF

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Inclosure 4 to Hqs 2d Bde 1st Inf Div Combat Operations After Action Report  
(Operation MASTIFF)



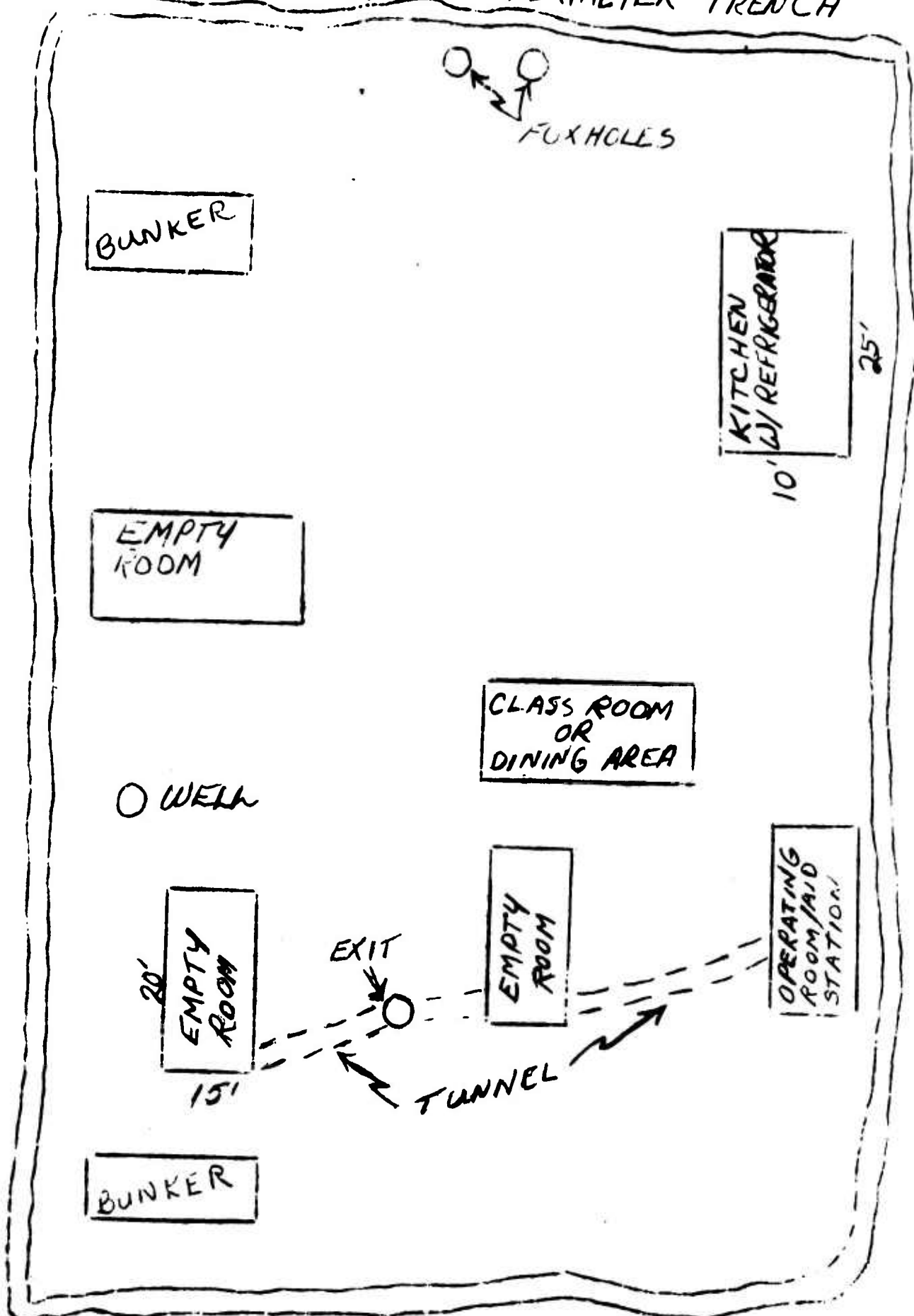
SKETCH (NOT TO SCALE): TRAINING CAMP  
LOCATED BY "C" 2/18 INF, 241000 FEB 66,  
VIC XT 525359 DURING OPN MASTIFF

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Inclosure 5 to Hqs 2d B 1st Inf Div Combat Operations War Action Report  
(Operation MASTIFF)

VERY OLD PERIMETER TRENCH

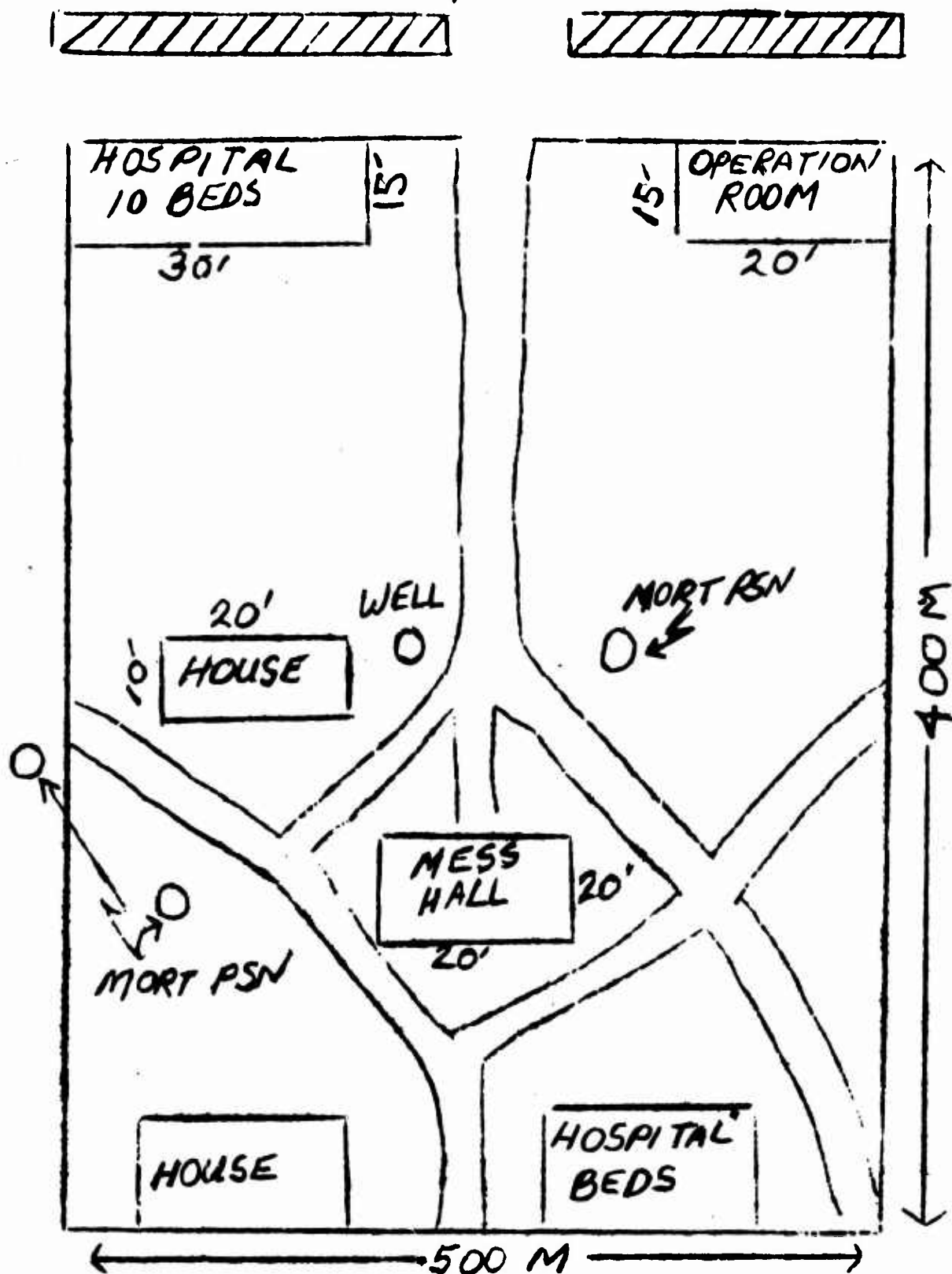


SKETCH (NOT TO SCALE): BASE CAMP LOCATED  
BY "B" 2116 INF, 220900 FEB 66, VIC XT 503367  
DURING OPN MASTIFF

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Inclosure 6 to Hqs 2d Bde 1st Inf Div Combat Operations After Action Report  
(Operation MASTIFF)



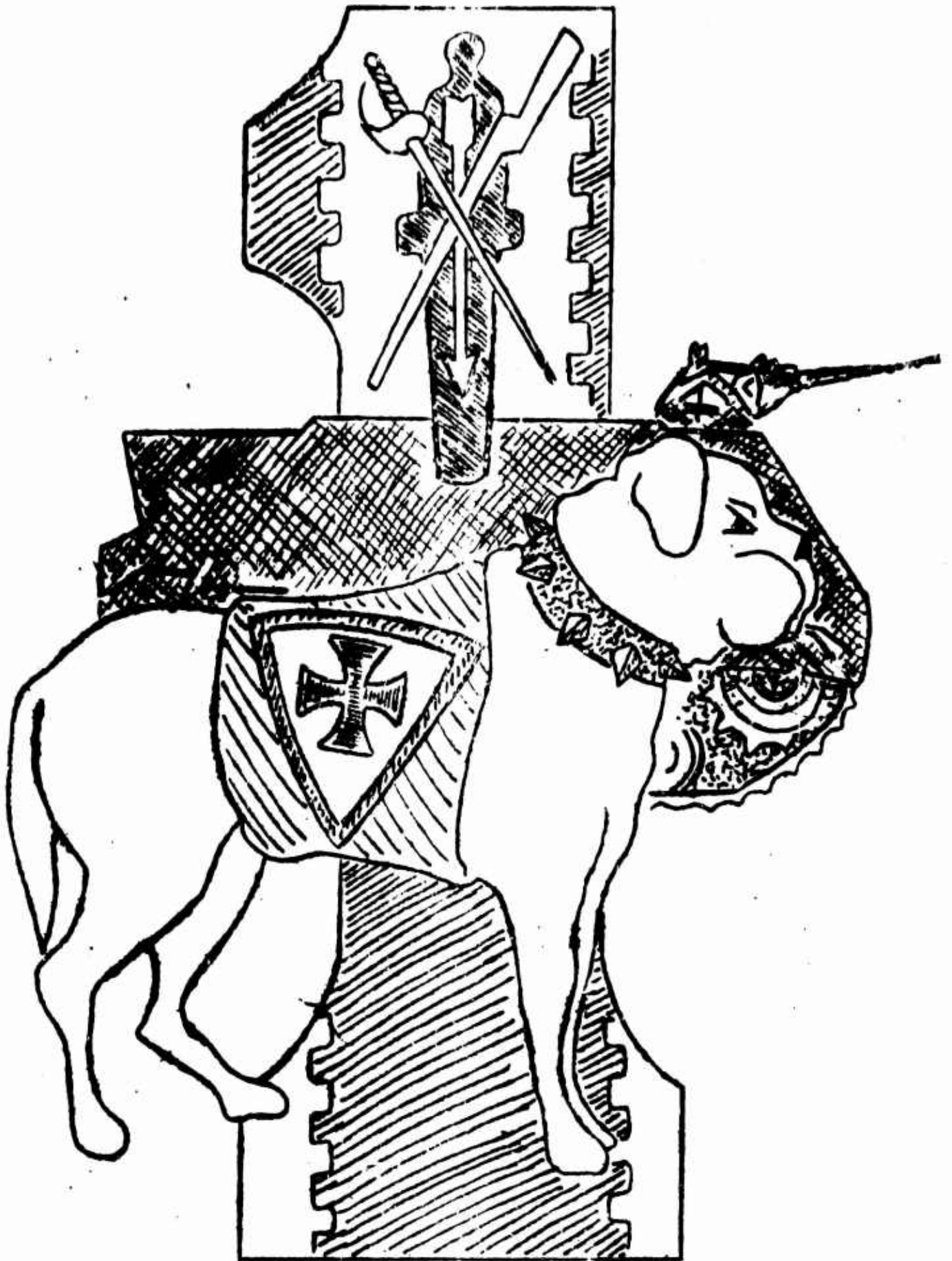
SKETCH (NOT TO SCALE): BASE CAMP  
LOCATED BY 2/16 INF 22 FEB 66 VIC  
XT 497347 DURING OPN MASTIFF. ALL  
BUILDINGS WERE ABOVE GROUND EXCEPT  
MESS HALL

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ANNEX H .

AFTER ACTION REPORT 3D BRIGADE

**OPERATION MASTIFF**



**COMBAT OPERATIONS AFTER ACTION REPORT**

**3D BRIGADE  
1st Infantry Division**

**WILLIAM D BRODBECK  
Colonel Infantry  
Commanding**

HEADQUARTERS 3D BRIGADE  
1st Infantry Division  
APO US Forces 96345

AVID-WB-C

25 March 1966

SUBJECT: ~~Combat Operations~~ After Action Report (MACV/ROS/J3/32)

THRU: Commanding General  
1st Infantry Division  
ATTN: G3  
APO US Forces 96345

TO: Commander  
US Military Assistance Command Vietnam  
ATTN: J3M2  
APO US Forces 96343

1. NAME AND TYPE OF OPERATION: Operation MASTIFF - Search and Destroy.
2. DATES OF OPERATION: 210645 February 1966 - 271600 February 1966.
3. LOCATION: HAU NGHIA Province south of MICHELIN RUBBER PLANTATION and west of the SAIGON RIVER (Appendix 1 - Operations Overlay).
4. COMMAND HEADQUARTERS: Headquarters, 3d Brigade, 1st Infantry Division.

5. UNIT COMMANDERS:

Colonel William D Brodbeck, CO 3d Brigade  
Lt Col George M Shuffer, Jr, CO 2/2 Infantry  
Lt Col William S Lober, Jr, CO 1/16 Infantry  
Lt Col Kyle W Bowie, CO 2/28 Infantry  
Lt Col Paul E Fisher, CO, 1/4 Cavalry  
Lt Col Frank R Tims, CO, 2/33 Artillery

6. TASK ORGANIZATION:

Headquarters 3d Brigade  
2/2 Infantry  
1/16 Infantry  
1/4 Cavalry

7. SUPPORTING FORCES:

a. 2/33 Artillery.

(1) Size of Force: 2 six gun 105mm Howitzer batteries and Headquarters Battery (-) in direct support of the 3d Brigade Task Force. Headquarters Battery (-) and 1 six gun 105mm Howitzer battery in support of LAI KHE perimeter.

(2) How and When Employed:

(a) 2/33 Artillery (-) moved by land from LAI KHE to the operational area via RUING CAY (XT5026).

(b) During Operation MASTIFF the battalion fired a total of 1,717 rounds to support the 3d Brigade.

(3) Results of Effectiveness: The fire support was outstanding. The 2/33 Artillery prepared LZ's RICK and HAL with accurate and violent fire. Suppressive fires were used on several occasions to counter sniper fire

25 March 1966

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report (MACV/RCS/J3/32)

and protect the Brigade CP location from mortar attacks. Accurate artillery fire accounted for the destruction of VC base camps and H&I fires kept the VC on the move during the night denying him safe havens

b. Air Force: During Operation MASTIFF the Air Force flew 75 close air sorties in support of the Brigade. On 21 February 1966, the first day of the operation, 16 sorties were flown, a number of which were used to prepare the LZ's prior to the infantry landing. Throughout the operation close air support controlled by 3d Brigade FAC's was outstanding and accurate. Fighter sorties were as follows:

|           |            |
|-----------|------------|
| 21 Feb 66 | 16 Sorties |
| 22 Feb 66 | 4 sorties  |
| 23 Feb 66 | 15 Sorties |
| 24 Feb 66 | 12 Sorties |
| 25 Feb 66 | 13 Sorties |
| 26 Feb 66 | 15 Sorties |
| 27 Feb 66 | 0 Sorties  |

During the extraction on 27 February there were sorties on call but no targets appeared which warranted calling in close air support.

c. Army Air Support: On the morning of 21 February 1966, elements of the 11th Aviation Battalion airlifted the 1/16 Infantry and the 2/2 Infantry into LZ's RICK and HAL. All aircraft landed and departed LZ's without incident. The Brigade aviation section was able to support the operation with daily use of H-13's for the Battalion Commanders and Brigade Staff. The section flew 119 hours with 66 tasks and 140 sorties during Operation MASTIFF. The following comments regarding air control are those of the Brigade Aviation Officer and the Aviation Section of the 3d Brigade:

(1) Planning.

(a) The air control plan published as Appendix 1, Annex D to 1st Inf Div OPLAN 1-66, Operation MASTIFF, did not contain sufficient information to be used by aviators operating in the tactical area. As a minimum the written coordinates following the reporting points, the locations of the various control stations, ie. Corsair Forward, Hawk Forward, etc, and the frequencies for these stations should be indicated on the overlay to facilitate its use by air crews.

(b) The assignment of frequencies was a problem in that HAWK FORWARD was assigned UHF Primary 275-8. This frequency is also assigned to TAN SON NHUT AB. Numerous problems were encountered using this frequency.

(c) The basic air control plan was sound and offered an excellent chance of success in that it relied on UHF for primary aircraft advisory and control thus freeing the FM radio for tactical use with supported ground elements.

(2) Execution.

(a) The first air control problem occurred on 211300 Feb 66 when 3d Brigade aircraft were unable to contact CORSAIR FORWARD on assigned UHF frequency. Contact was established on FM and it was found that CORSAIR FORWARD'S UHF was inoperative. This continued throughout the remainder of the operation. Although the advisories furnished by CORSAIR FORWARD were highly accurate and more than adequate for the purpose intended the fact that these advisories could only be received on FM made the entire air control plan of limited value to aircraft performing C/C, fire support, and resupply missions over the battle area. Until such time as auxiliary FM receivers are available

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report (MACV/RCS/J3/32)

in army aircraft, primary air control must be accomplished on UHG.

(b) On 220845 Feb 66 a 3d Brigade helicopter going into DAU TIENG was unable to contact TOLL HOUSE CONTROL on FM frequency 36.5 mc as published. Realizing that the station might be having radio trouble and that 2d Brigade was also located at DAU TIENG the pilot attempted to contact TROOPER FORWARD on their published UHF and FM radio frequencies. After landing at DAU TIENG without an advisory the pilot found that TOLL HOUSE CONTROL was non-existent and that 2d Brigade was not using the published call signs or frequencies. It is imperative that control plans be complete, accurate, and followed by subordinate units if any degree of professionalism is to be achieved.

(3) Recommendations.

(a) That the basic air control system used in Operation MASTIFF be retained and refined for future Division operations.

(b) That Brigades use a similar system during independent operations to standardize air control procedures within the 1st Infantry Division.

(c) That schematic overlays showing reporting points and coordinates, frequencies, locations of stations, and corridors be reproduced in quantity and distributed by Brigade aviation officers at daily briefings conducted for air crews supporting their respective units.

8. INTELLIGENCE:

a. Estimate of VC Strength: Prior to the operation the total estimated VC strength in the operational area was believed to be around 3,700 VC. The order of battle appeared to be the 271st Regt with estimated strength of 2,500. The C 320 Battalion with a strength of 600 and the PHU LOI Battalion at a strength of 600.

b. Source of Intelligence Received Prior to the Operation: Headquarters 1st Infantry Division was the primary source of intelligence information prior to Operation MASTIFF. The G2 advisor with the 5th ARVN Division, was also helpful in supplying information for the operation. Photo coverage along with timely and detailed interpretation of the photos was a valuable aid in preparing for this operation.

c. Situation Anticipated in Objective Area prior to Operation: The Brigade Commander felt that with such a large force being deployed into the area that the VC would not stand and fight unless trapped by US troops, or to protect a vital base camp area. The tactics that he felt the VC would use would be to harass US troops with mines, booby traps and snipers and avoid a heavy engagement if at all possible.

d. Situation Encountered During the Operation: No major contact or engagement was encountered as expected. Small base camps and rice storage areas were discovered with only light and sporadic contact with local guerrillas. It was felt that the VC had occupied the areas recently in large numbers but had moved out before the operation commenced. The largest VC force encountered was estimated to be of platoon size. Mines, booby traps and snipers were used extensively during the operation to harass US troops. It appears that the VC normally protect base camps with platoon or smaller size forces.

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e. Terrain Features, Obstacles and Weather: The northern portion of the operational area was primarily dense jungle with heavy undergrowth. The southern half of the area consisted of dry rice paddies and sparse vegetation. The weather during this time was extremely hot and dry with occasional scattered clouds during the day. Moonlight during the operation was negligible. The only major obstacle was the SAIGON RIVER on the northern edge of the operational area.

f. Psychological Warfare. A total of 67,555 leaflets were distributed by vehicle and aircraft during the operation. The themes used were: (1) 969 Reward Program, (2) Denial of Safe Haven; (3) Safe Conduct Pass; (4) CVN-US Air Power; (5) Surrender or be Killed; (6) Defeat by Powerful Allied and ARVN.

g. MI and IPW Activities During the Operation: The civilian population in the operational area was considered to be generally hostile. The IPW team with the 3d Brigade interrogated fifty (50) VCS with the following results: thirty-five were released, four were turned over to ARVN at RUNG GAY and eleven VCS were delivered to the National Police at TSANG BANG for further interrogation. To date the 3d Brigade has received no verification as to whether any of the 11 VCS were confirmed to be VC.

h. Technical Intelligence: A medical technical intelligence team was attached to the 3d Brigade to examine and obtain samples of VC medical supplies taken from one of the base camps discovered in the area. The team later reported that the antibiotics were of a type and brand that could be purchased on the open market in the Republic of Vietnam. The vitamin K (Ampoule K) found at the base camp was manufactured by Laboratories TEVETE in Saigon. Large quantities of this had been reported secretly captured by the VC in several places. The majority of the other drugs were of the type normally found in VC captured medical supplies. The lot numbers and other information obtained from these medical supplies are of valuable assistance in determining and eliminating sources of supply to the VC. For this reason medical supplies should be evacuated if at all possible through S2 channels rather than destroyed in place.

9. MISSION: From 1st Infantry Division OPLAN 1-66 (Operation MASTIFF) dated 051200 February 1966:

1st Inf Div (Reinf) locates and destroys VC forces and base camps in the vicinity of the MICHELIN RUBBER PLANTATION. (Code name of the operation - MASTIFF.

d. 3d Bde.

- (1) Release A trp 1/4 Cav to parent unit on D-4.
- (2) 1st Sqdn, 4th Cav (B-Trp) OPCON 3d Bde on arrival in initial blocking positions on LINE SHEPHERD.
- (3) Rifle company defending PHU LOI relieved OPCON Division Artillery on 18 February 1966.
- (4) Conduct airmobile assault on D-Day, H-Hour to LZ's on LINE SHEPHERD.
- (5) Establish blocking positions on LINE SPITZ and on LINE SHEPHERD, between SPITZ and SCOTTY.
- (6) Block VC attempts to withdraw to the south and east.
- (7) When 2d Bde closed on LINE GREYHOUND attack north in zone to LINE POODLE.
- (8) Redeploy to base camp on order.

p. Coordinating Instruction:

- (2) Authority granted to Brigade Commanders to employ RCA in accordance with current instructions.

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(5) There will be a 48 hour standown on army aircraft prior to implementation of this plan. All units can expect the absolute minimum in helicopter support during this period.

10. CONCEPT OF OPERATION: From 3d Brigade OPORD 3-66 (Operation MASTIFF)

3. EXECUTION:

a. Concept of Operations: 3d Bde Task Force conducts Operation MASTIFF in four phases:

(1) PHASE I: 21 February 1966 - 3d Bde conducts tactical motor march from LAI KHE to vic RUNC CAY 210700 February 1966; conducts airmobile assault with 2/2 Inf and 1/16 Inf into LZ's HAL and RICK respectively on 210900 Feb 66; assume OPCON of 1st Squadron 4th Cavalry on arrival LINE SHEPHERD and SPITZ; block VC attempts to escape to east and south.

(2) Phase II (on order): Attack with 2 battalions and Cav Squadron from LINE SHEPHERD to LINE POODLE.

(3) Phase III (On order): Conduct a detailed search with 2 battalions and Cav Squadron of TAOR COLLIE to locate and destroy VC base camps and tunnel complexes to include houses and villages within the TAOR.

(4) PHASE IV (On order): Return to base camp areas at LAI KHE and PHU LOI.

b. 2/2 Infantry:

- (1) Conduct airmobile assault into LZ RICK 210945 February 1966.
- (2) Occupy blocking position GEORGE.
- (3) Provide one plat as brigade reserve during PHASES I, II, III.

c. 1/16 Infantry:

- (1) Conduct airmobile assault into LZ HAL 210900 February 1966.
- (2) Occupy blocking position BILL.
- (3) Conduct S&D in zone on order.

d. 2/28 Infantry:

- (1) Released OPCON 1st Bde 201200 February 1966.
- (2) Select and establish RON positions to facilitate operations on Route 13 from LAI KHE to XT 777277 on 21 February 1966.
- (3) Sweep and secure Hwy 13 from ALI KHE to XT777277 to allow movement of road column NLT 210700 February 1966.

e. 00 1/2 Infantry: Join 3d Bde TACTICAL COLUMN At PHU CUONG on Route BIRD DOG and escort to vic RUNG CAY, 210900 February 1966.

f. 1/4 Cav:

- (1) Opcon 3d Bde upon arrival LINE SHEPHERD.
- (2) Occupy blocking position PAUL.
- (3) Be prepared to occupy blocking position SNOOPY on order.
- (4) Provide 1 plat with tanks as brigade reserve during PHASES I, II, III.

g. 2/33 Artillery: (DS) Displace from LAI KHE to vic RUNG CAY 210700 Feb 1966 on Route BIRD DOG.

h. D Company 1st Engr Bn:

- (1) DS 3d Bde.
- (2) Provide 3 demo teams and 1 NCO Engr advisor to 2/2 Inf, 1/16 Inf and 1/4 Cav.
- (3) Company (-): DS vic Bde CP.

i. Bde Trains: Displace from LAI KHE to vic RUNG CAY on Route BIRD DOG 210700 February 1966.

j. Bde Reserve: 1 Cav Plat, 1/4 Cav; 1 rifle plat 2/2 Inf; 1/4 Cav provide reserve force commander.

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## k. Coordinating Instructions:

(1) The following Annexes published with OPLAN 2-66 (Operation MASTIFF) are still in effect: Annexes B, D, E, F, and H.

(2) Aircraft allocation 48 UH1D's to 1/16 Inf, 48 UH 1D's to 2/2 Inf on second lift, 24 UH1D's to each battalion on 3d lift.

(3) Airlift Schedule:

- (a) 0845: 1st lift 1/16 Inf arr LAI KHE airstrip (48 UH1D)
- (b) 0849: " " departs LAI KHE (48 UH1D)
- (c) 0900: " " arr LZ HAL (48 UH1D)
- (d) 0912: 2d lift 2/2 arr LAI KHE (48 UH1D)
- (e) 0914: " " 2/2 departs LAI KHE (48 UH1D)
- (f) 0925: " " 2/2 arr LZ RICK (48 UH1D)
- (g) 0936: 3rd lift 1/16 and 2/2 Infantries arrive LAI KHE (24 UH1D per battalion)
- (h) 0939: 3rd lift 2/2 Inf and 1/16 Inf departs LAI KHE (24 UH1D per battalion)
- (i) 0950: 3d lift 2/2 Inf and 1/16 Inf arrive LZ's HAL and RICK (24 UH1D per battalion)

11. EXECUTION:

In order to deceive the VC of our intentions during Operation MASTIFF, a false operations order was originally written and distributed. The deception plan focused attention on the area southeast of the MICHELIN RUBBER PLANTATION and east of the SAIGON RIVER with the hope that this would divert attention from the actual area of operation, west of the SAIGON RIVER. Reconnaissance of the actual area of operation MASTIFF was held to an absolute minimum. It was hoped the plan would cause the VC to withdraw into the area west of the SAIGON RIVER where we could block and destroy his forces.

On 23 February 1966, the 3d Brigade commenced Operation MASTIFF at 0645 hours with the movement of the 2/28 Infantry to clear Hwy 13 from LAI KHE in conjunction with the 5th ARVN Division. The 2/28 Infantry returned to LAI KHE after the passage of the road column and remained there through out the operation to secure the base camp area. The 2/2 Infantry conducted an airmobile assault into LZ RICK at 0931 hours and a second lift at 1000 hours. The battalion then moved to blocking position GEORGE. Four aircraft carrying 28 troops of the 2/2 Infantry were accidentally lifted into LZ HAL which was the LZ for 1/16 Infantry. The 1/16 Infantry commenced Operation MASTIFF with an airmobile assault starting at 0900 hours and occupied blocking position BILL to the left of the 2/2 Infantry. The Battalion drew small arms fire twice during the day and fired on 6 VC during the night using mortars with unknown results. 1/4 Cavalry came under the OPCON of the 3d Brigade at 0900 and occupied blocking position PAUL by 1130 hours. The squadron received small arms fire during the day and night resulting in 2 WIA and located a base camp large enough for 20 personnel to include a kitchen. This was found at 1430 hours vic XT 580299. The 2/33 Artillery supported the 3d Brigade from that location (XT 485265) throughout Operation MASTIFF.

On 22 February 1966 the 2/2 Infantry commenced PHASE II of Operation MASTIFF by conducting S&D to the north toward LINE POODLE. No contact was made during the day. The 1/16 Infantry accounted for the 3d Brigade's first confirmed kill of the operation. At about 0058 hours two VC popped out of a hole about 10 meters to the front of Company C. The company killed one and the other fled into the jungle. 1/16 Infantry commenced PHASE II conducting S&D north toward line POODLE in conjunction with the 2/2 Infantry. The 1/16 Infantry found a regimental size base camp at 1615 hours in the vic of XT533-336. The battalion found medical supplies and ammunition in this base camp.

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Throughout the day the battalion found and destroyed about 5000 lbs of rice, grenades, mortar rounds, etc. The 1/16 Infantry suffered 8 casualties (4 KIA and 4 WIA) from a mine at XT541316. The 1/4 Cavalry remained in blocking position PAUL until 1220 hours at which time they commenced moving toward position SNOOPY. The squadron suffered one KIA from sniper fire vic XT570280. Position SNOOPY was occupied at 1415 hours. Troop A was dispatched to take up defensive positions around the

On 23 February 1966 the 2/2 Infantry conducted local S&D operations with 2 companies. The battalion discovered approximately 50 tons of rice at XT565325. As elements of the battalion attempted to investigate the rice, a booby trap within the rice exploded resulting in 2 WIA. It was determined that several booby traps were emplaced in the rice and that it would have to be destroyed. A VTR was used to push it into the SAIGON RIVER. The battalion also destroyed a building full of peanuts at XT570319 and 75 tons of rice were destroyed at XT567321 by throwing them into the river. The 1/16 Infantry spent most of the day occupying a blocking position along LINE SCOTTIE but had negative enemy contact throughout the day. The 1/4 Cavalry (-) occupied a blocking position from XT540346 to XT544350 while elements of the 2d Brigade swept up the valley along LINE SCOTTIE from south to north. Troop A reinforced with 2 rifle platoons conducted S&D vicinity LINE SPITZ from XT565281 to XT578-294. Light contact with snipers continued until about 1225 hours when Troop A became heavily engaged with an estimated VC platoon, resulting in 2 US KIA and 9 WIA. The engagement continued sporadically throughout the day with the Troop suffering 2 more WIA and losing 1 APC as a result of a 57mm recoilless rifle. The VC count was 3 KIA (BC) and 15 KIA (est) when the troop finally coiled for the night.

On 24 February 1966 the 2/2 Infantry conducted S&D south to vic LINE SHEPHERD with 2 companies. The battalion suffered 5 WIA and 1 KIA from small arms fire during the day. The 1/16 Infantry also conducted S&D south to LINE SHEPHERD. The battalion found 2 base camps one of which was an ammunition reloading point and the other appeared to be a claymore mine factory. The battalion had sporadic contact throughout the day with platoon and smaller size units. When the battalion coiled for the night it had sustained 2 KIA and 8 WIA with the VC count at 4 KIA (BC), 13 estimated WIA and 8 estimated KIA. The 1/4 Cavalry occupied blocking positions BILL and GEORGE with one element patrolling the area between these positions. An airstrike was conducted vic XT595295 and the forward air controller with the squadron reported 2 VC KIA (BC) after the strike.

On 25 February 1966 the 2/2 Infantry conducted company size S&D operations throughout the day resulting in the destruction of 53 tons of rice, 7 bicycles with parts and extensive tunnel and defensive positions. The battalion coiled for the night around the 3d Brigade CP. The 1/16 Infantry also conducted S&D operations discovering that a VC aid station and medical supplies. The medical supplies were evacuated to the 3d Brigade CP. The battalion found a wounded VC but he died before medical aid could be administered. The 1/4 Cavalry had a most active day finding an old CP area, classroom area which had been recently used, bunkers and accounted for 3 VC KIA (BC) before the squadron coiled for the night.

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On 26 February 1966 all elements of the 3d Brigade Task Force conducted care and maintenance in preparation for the move back to LAI KHE on 27 February 1966, as well as local security missions around their coil positions. B Company 1/16 Infantry moved by CH47 helicopters from the operational area to PHU LOI to provide security for 1st Division Artillery base camp. The lift was completed at 1042 hours.

On 27 February 1966 the 3d Brigade Task Force commenced PHASE IV of Operation MASTIFF which involved extraction from the operational area back to LAI KHE. The extraction began at 0700 hours with the 2/2 Infantry clearing the road from XT529284 to XT506260. At 0800 hours the 3d Brigade landtail began moving out of the operational area and closed into LAI KHE at 1515 hours. One mine was exploded on the route vic XT521271 damaging one 2½ ton truck and trailer; however, there were no personnel injured. 2/2 Infantry began extraction by air at 1120 hours, closing with the last lift into LAI KHE at 1300 hours. The 1/16 Infantry began extracting by air at 1102 hours and the last lift touched down at LAI KHE at 1315 hours. The 1/4 Cavalry cleared the road from RUNG CAY to Hwy 1 and secured the extraction zone for the 2/2 Infantry and 1/16 Infantry. On the move back to PHU LOI, the squadron sustained 2 WIA from 2 mines, damaging 1 APC and one 2½ ton truck.

## 12. RESULTS:

### a. Captured Equipment:

| <u>QUANTITY</u> | <u>ITEM</u>                |
|-----------------|----------------------------|
| 2               | Canisters medical supplies |
| 2               | Small boxes of penicillin  |
| 30 lbs          | Documents                  |
| 1               | Chicom sub-machinegun      |
| 6               | Blankets                   |
| 3               | Ponchos                    |
| 16              | shirts                     |
| 9               | trousers                   |
| 1               | Web belt                   |
| 1               | First aid packet           |
| 5               | Field packs                |
| 1               | Medical kit                |
| 2               | Shovels                    |
| Numerous        | Documents                  |

### b. Equipment Destroyed:

| <u>QUANTITY</u> | <u>ITEM</u>              |
|-----------------|--------------------------|
| 184 tons        | Rice                     |
| 19              | Huts                     |
| 1               | Shotgun                  |
| 1               | Chicom sub-machinegun    |
| Numerous        | Grenades                 |
| 7               | 60mm mortar rounds       |
| 7               | Bicycles                 |
| 1               | Claymore factory         |
| 70000 rounds    | Chicom 7.62 ammunition   |
| 750 rounds      | US M1 carbone ammunition |
| 1               | Aid Station              |

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| <u>QUANTITY</u> | <u>ITEM</u>                |
|-----------------|----------------------------|
| 1               | Classroom complex          |
| 1               | Ammunition reloading plant |
| 1               | Carpenter shop with tools  |
| 1               | Smelter with grenade molds |
| 1               | 750 lb bomb                |
| 1               | 150 lb bomb                |
| 1               | Bomblet                    |
| Numerous        | Mines and booby traps      |
| 2               | Sampans                    |

## c. Friendly Losses:

| <u>DATE</u> | <u>KIA</u> | <u>WIA</u> |
|-------------|------------|------------|
| 21 Feb 66   | 0          | 0          |
| 22 Feb 66   | 6          | 10         |
| 23 Feb 66   | 4          | 13         |
| 24 Feb 66   | 4          | 14         |
| 25 Feb 66   | 1          | 6          |
| 26 Feb 66   | 0          | 0          |
| 27 Feb 66   | 0          | 0          |
| TOTAL       | 15         | 43         |

## d. Enemy Losses:

| <u>DATE</u> | <u>KIA(BC)</u> | <u>WIA(Est)</u> | <u>WIA (Est)</u> |
|-------------|----------------|-----------------|------------------|
| 21 Feb 66   | 0              | 0               | 0                |
| 22 Feb 66   | 2              | 1               | 0                |
| 23 Feb 66   | 3              | 15              | 0                |
| 24 Feb 66   | 7              | 9               | 0                |
| 25 Feb 66   | 4              | 4               | 0                |
| 26 Feb 66   | 39             | 0               | 21               |
| 27 Feb 66   | 0              | 2               | 0                |
| TOTAL       | 55             | 31              | 21               |

13. ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS:

The logistical base remained at LAI KHE due to the short flight time to the operational area. Sufficient quantities of Class I and Class V were on hand at LAI KHE to support the campaign. A resupply convoy was run before the operation started to acquire a 5 day ASR. HU1D helicopters were used to resupply the battalions daily. No particular problems were encountered during the operation.

The troops again prepared waterproof bags of clean clothes before departing LAI KHE. These were brought to the operational area on request of the battalions. This technique was proven again to be a factor in maintaining high morale and personal hygiene.

15. COMMANDERS ANALYSIS:

Some lessons learned during Operation MASTIFF were:

a. Boundaries between units should be along recognizable terrain features whenever possible.

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b. The shortage of maps of the operational area hinders the operation of squads and platoons.

c. Brigade should have more photomaps of the operational area to aid in the reconnaissance made by the rifle battalions.

d. When an airmobile assault takes place simultaneously with the movement of landtail elements two separate radio nets should be used to alleviate heavy traffic on the net.

e. When crossing large open areas, available artillery and mortar fires should be used on the far woodline and in depth into the area in the direction of forward movement.

f. Open areas should be crossed only when the area is too large to be skirted by the unit.

g. Reconnaissance by fire was found to be a very successful technique for movement through likely enemy infested areas.

h. Two man demolition teams were used successfully with each rifle company and should be used in future operations.

i. Mines and booby traps in the area were usually marked by sticks extending the width of the path on both sides of the mine or booby trap.

#### COMMANDER'S COMMENTS

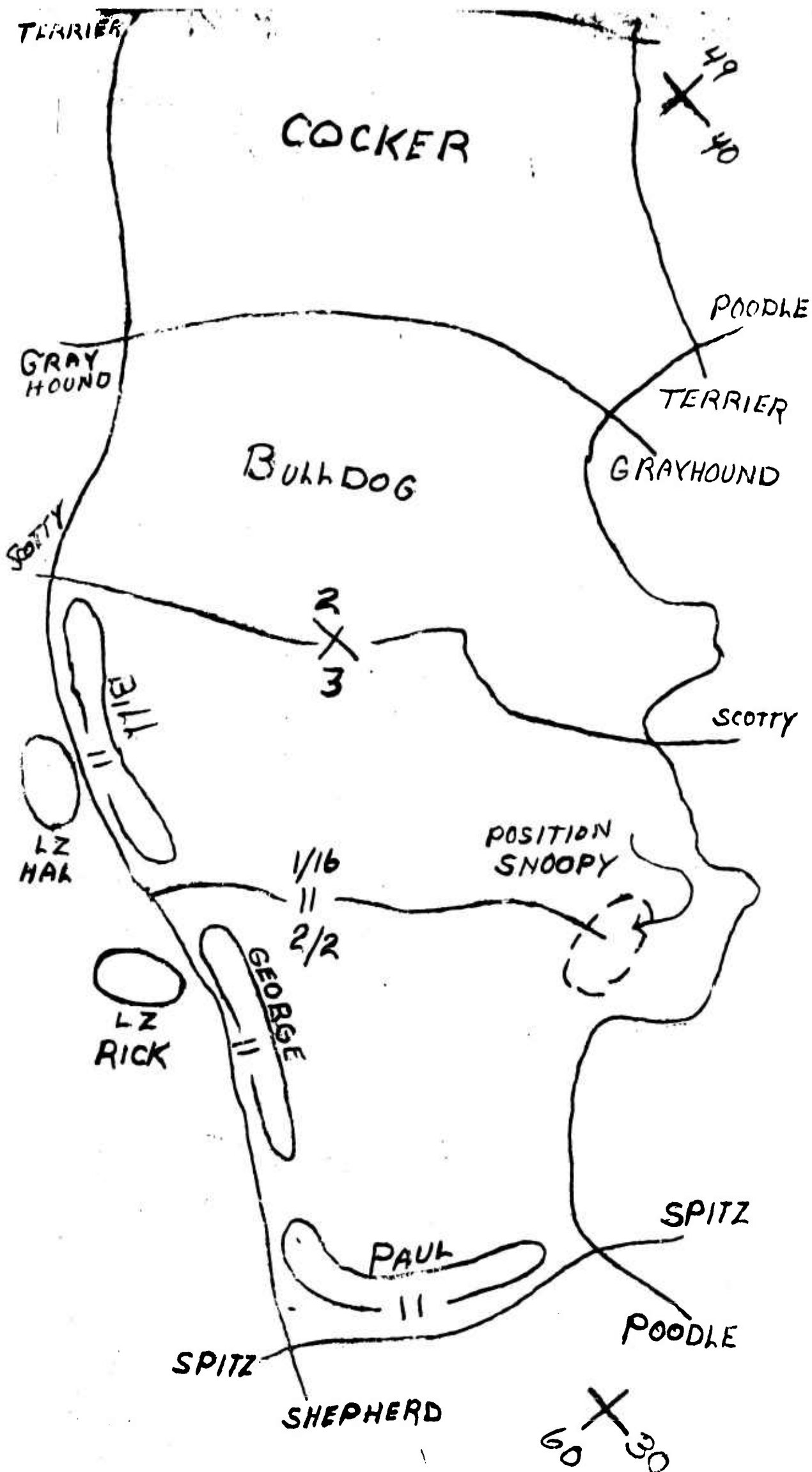
The magnificent soldiers that make up this outstanding fighting team can be proud of another mission accomplished successfully. Although there were no major engagements with VC forces, the Brigade moved into an area never before entered by US troops and destroyed base camps, stores of food, munitions and medical supplies. Denial of these critical items contributes to the defeat of the VC as does a major battle. We have proven again that the VC no longer have a safe haven where they can go to rest and train. Although Division size operations uncover base camps and supplies the VC will rarely, if ever, stand and fight such a large force.

The men of the Brigade proved their professional skill acquired over the last 5 months of action against the VC by spotting many booby traps and mines before they caused casualties within the unit. This skill was demonstrated several times when men discovered how the VC mark booby traps on trails upon which they must also travel.

The Brigade again lived up to the fighting spirit of the finest division in Vietnam. It is this spirit along with our professional skill that has given this Brigade the highest kill ratio of VC within the Division. No mission too difficult - No sacrifice too great - DUTY FIRST.

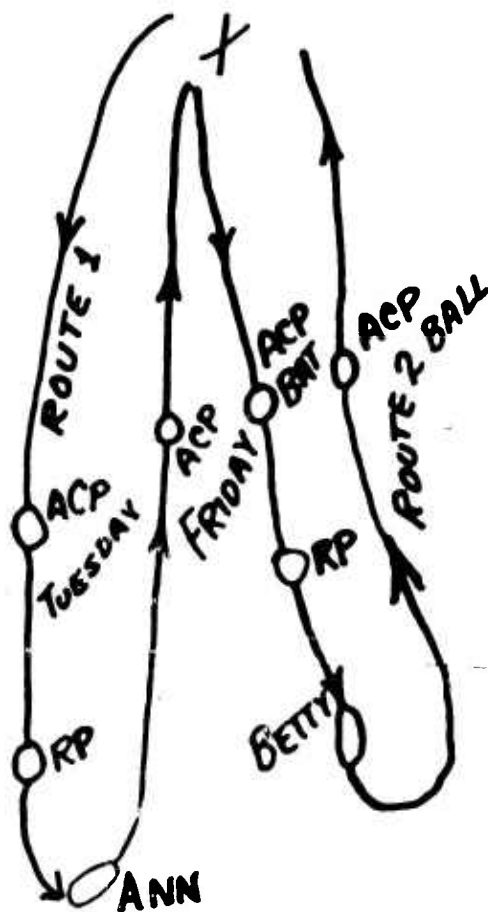
WILLIAM D. BRODBECK  
Colonel, Infantry  
Commanding

Copies furnished  
MACV J2  
MACT  
Commander 2d Air Div  
Commanding General 1st Inf Div



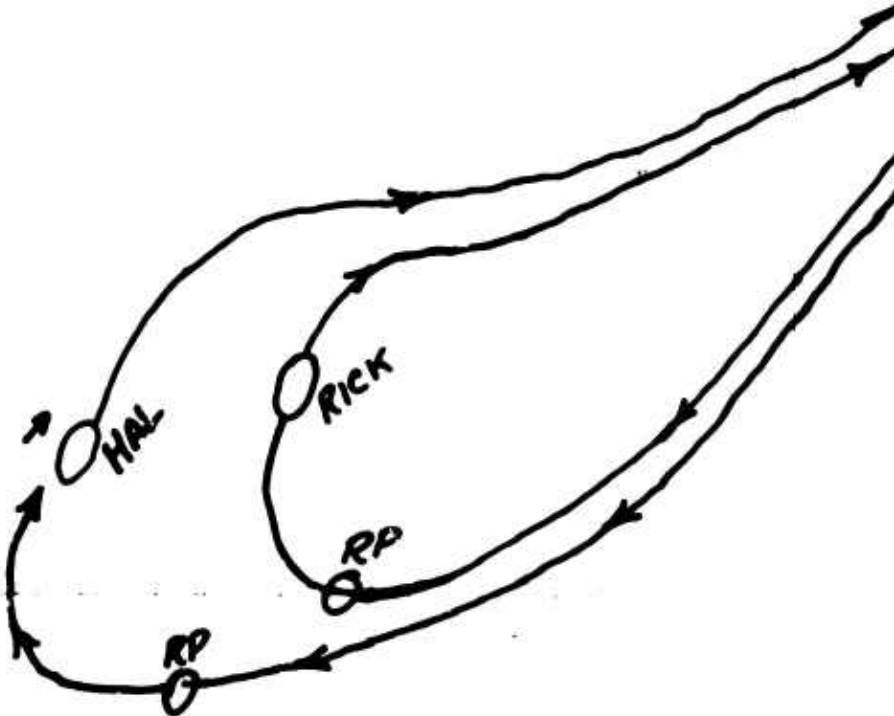
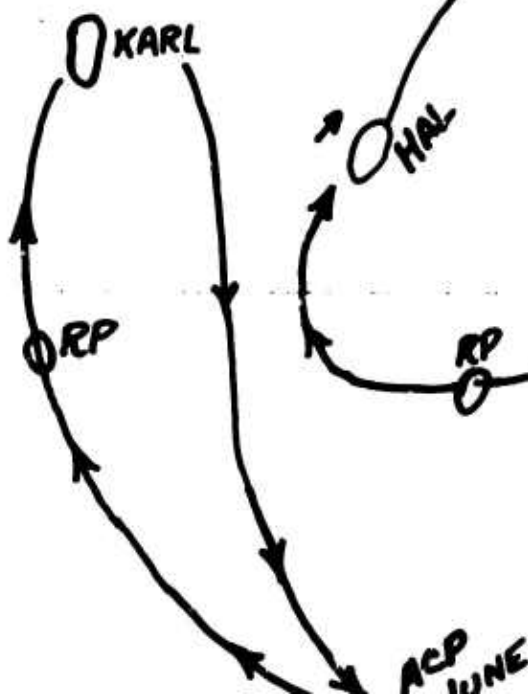
**ANNEX I**  
**AIR ASSAULT LANES**

ANNEX I to Combat Operations After Action Report  
OPERATION MASTIFF  
HELICOPTER ROUTE PLAN



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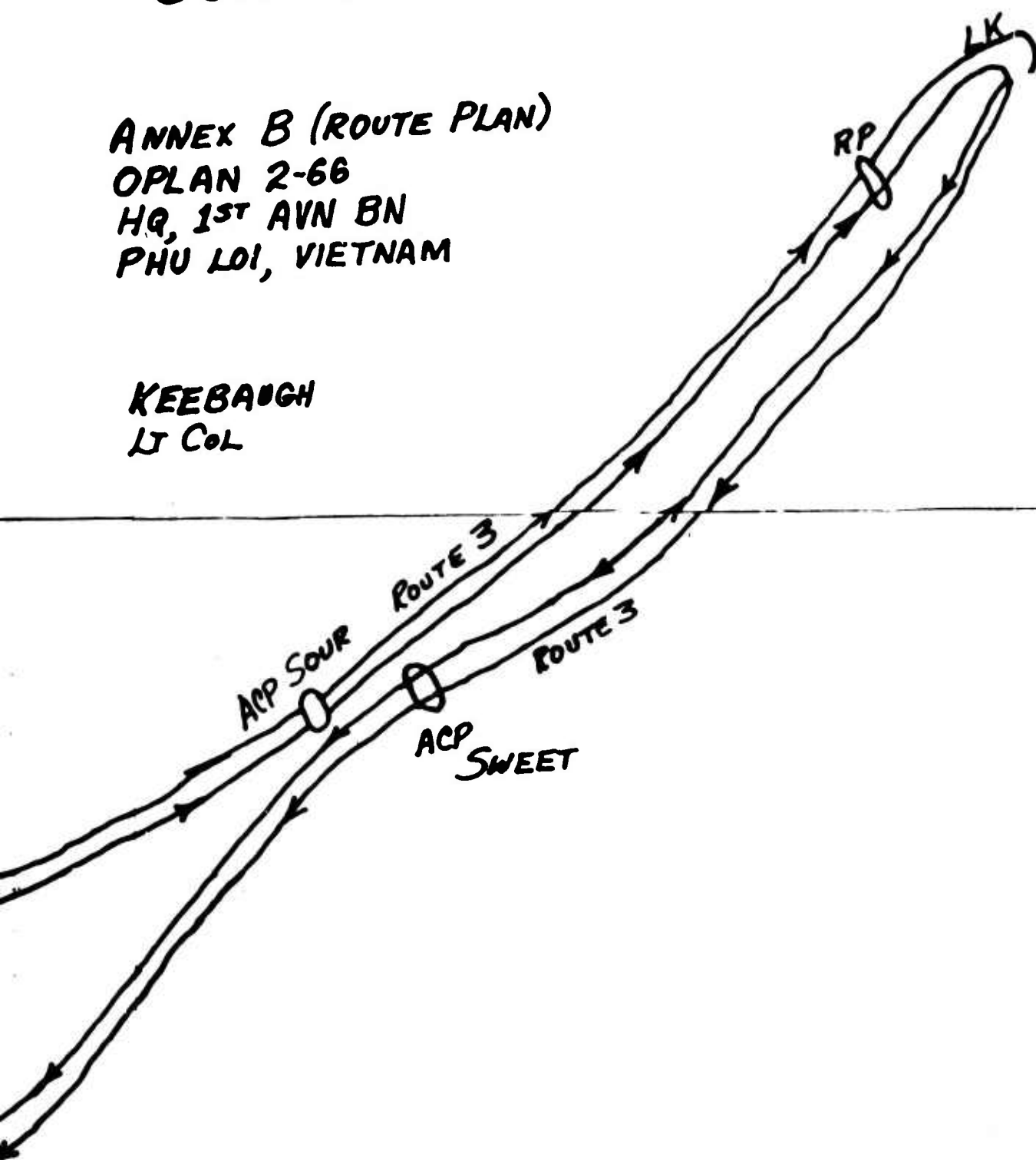
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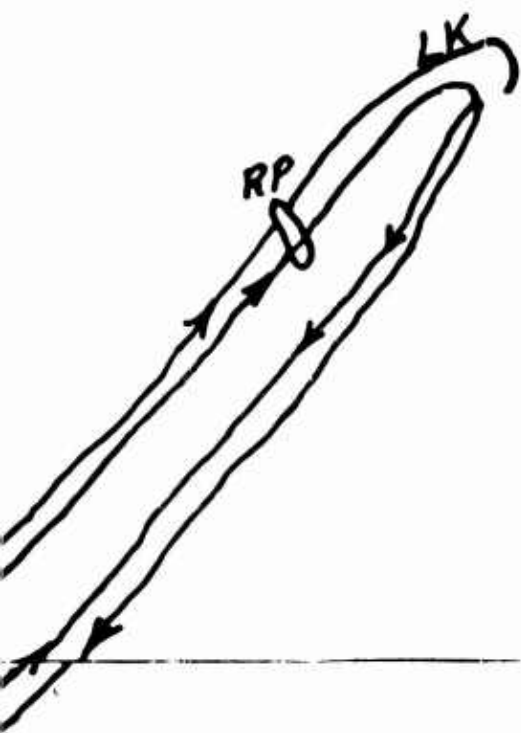
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**ANNEX B (ROUTE PLAN)**  
**OPLAN 2-66**  
**HQ, 1ST AVN BN**  
**PHU LOI, VIETNAM**

**KEEBAUGH**  
**LT COL**



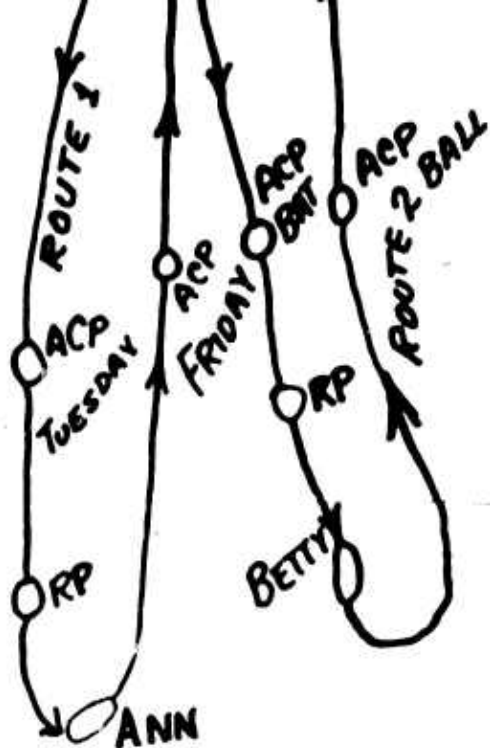


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ANNEX I TO COMBAT OPERATIONS AFTER ACTION REPORT  
 OPERATION MASTIFF  
 HELICOPTER ROUTE PLAN

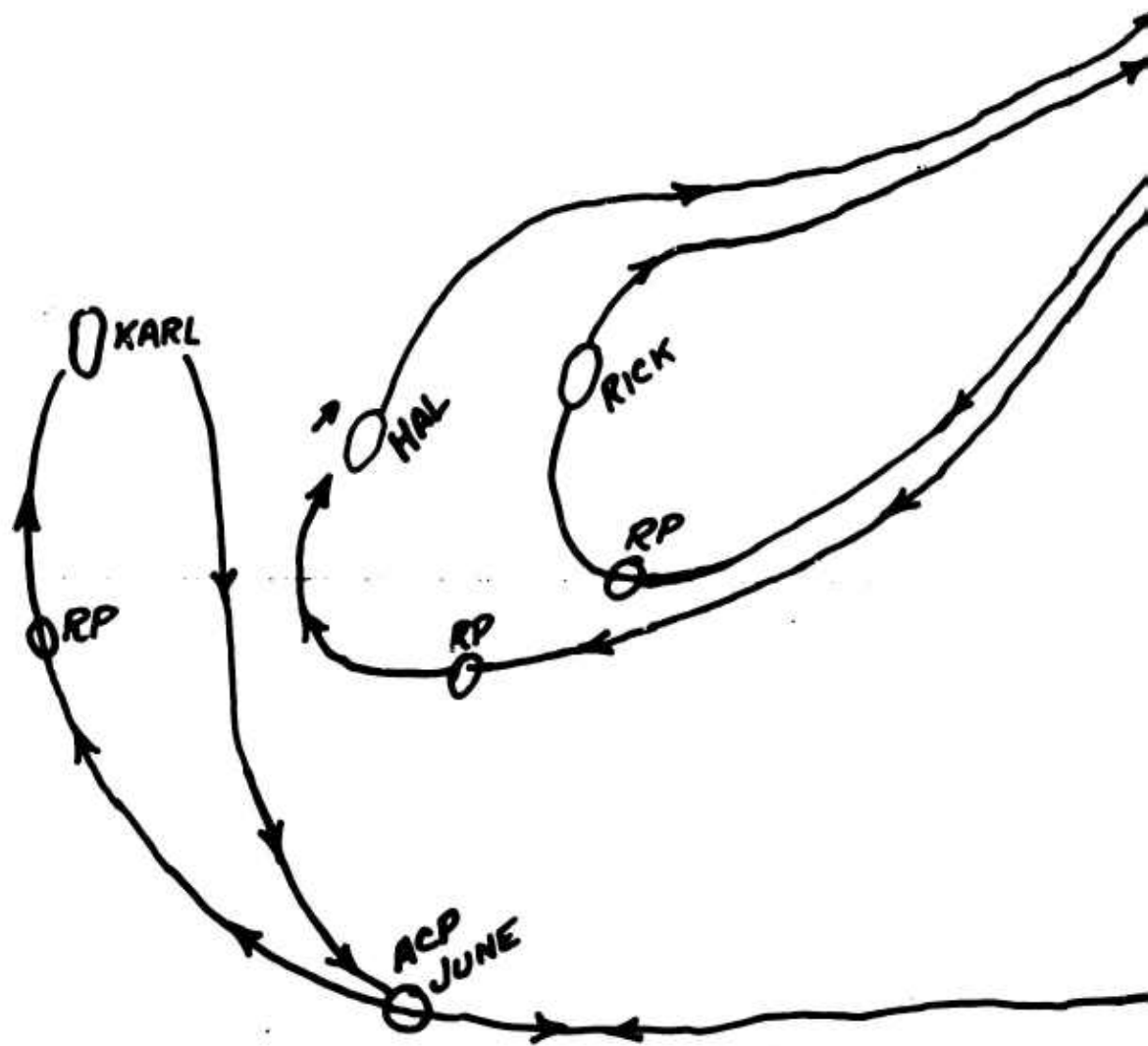


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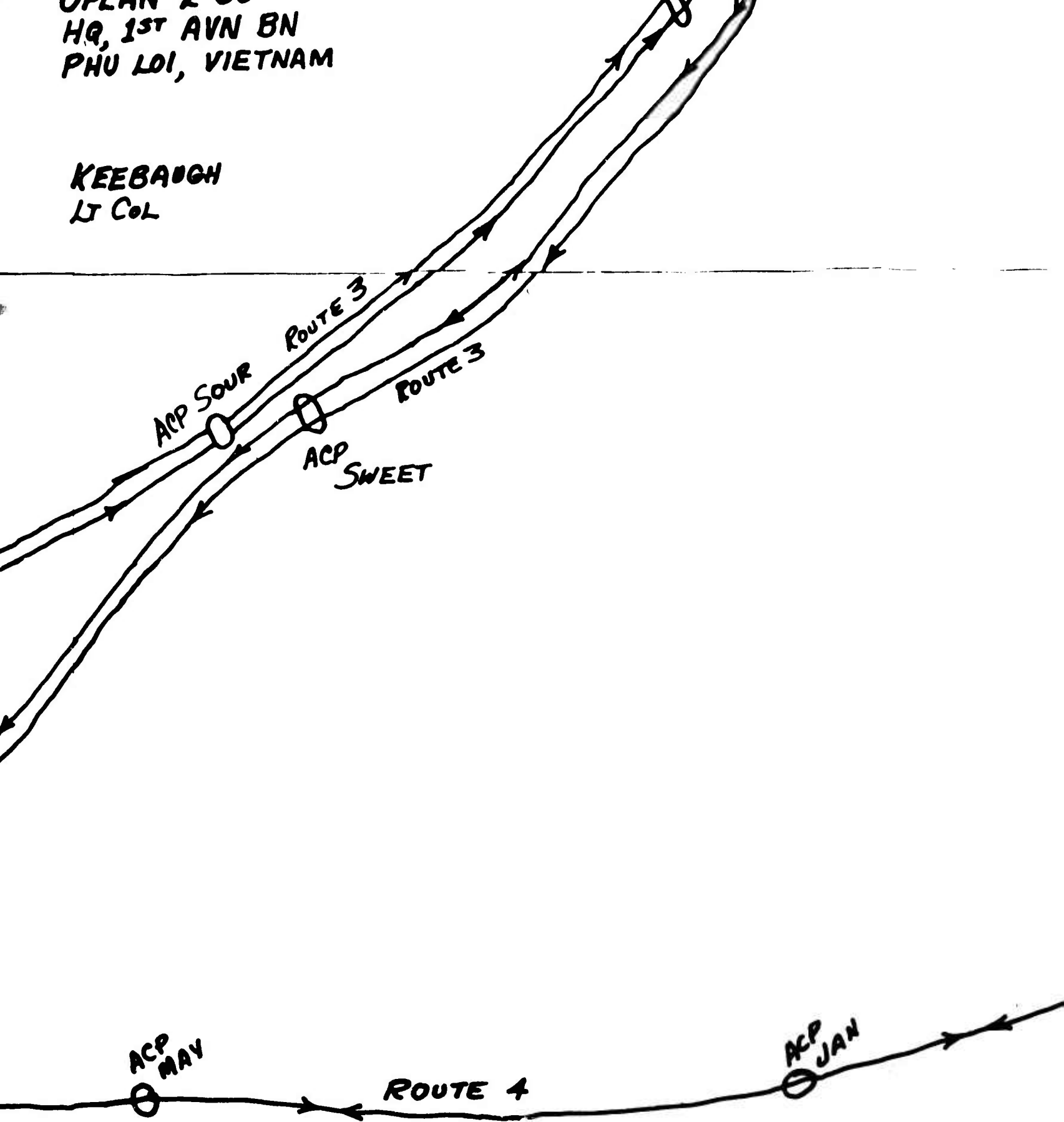
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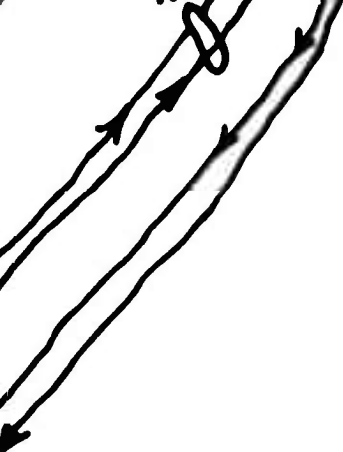


UPLAN 2 00  
HQ, 1ST AVN BN  
PHU LOI, VIETNAM

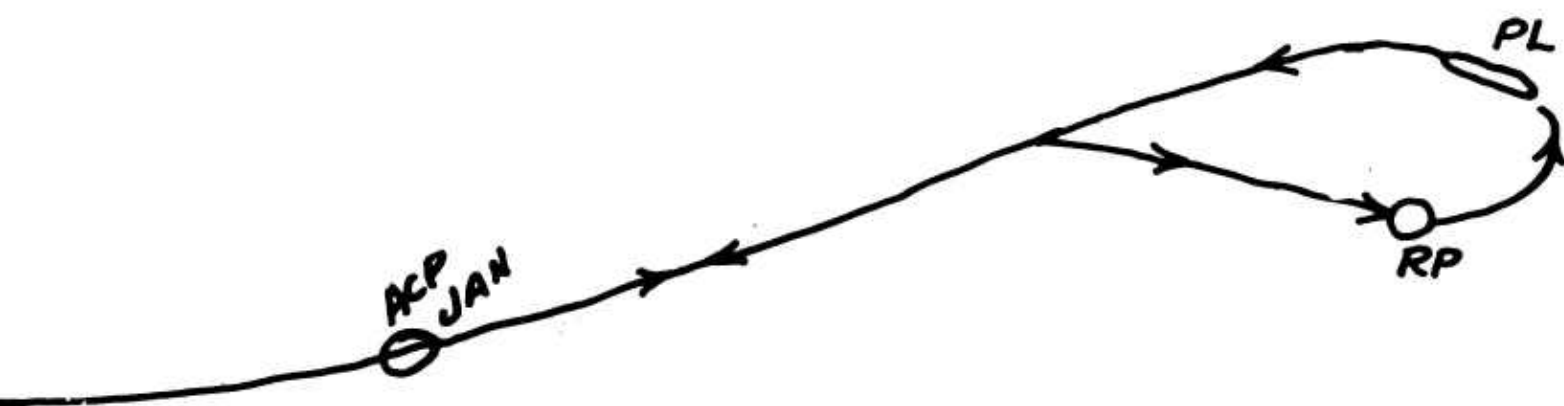
KEEBAUGH  
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