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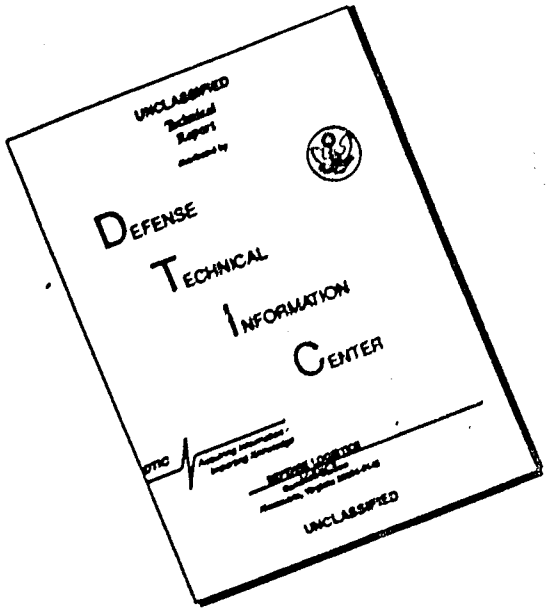
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8 December 1966

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Kenneth G. Wickham

KENNETH G. WICKHAM
Major General, USA
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Combat After Action Report

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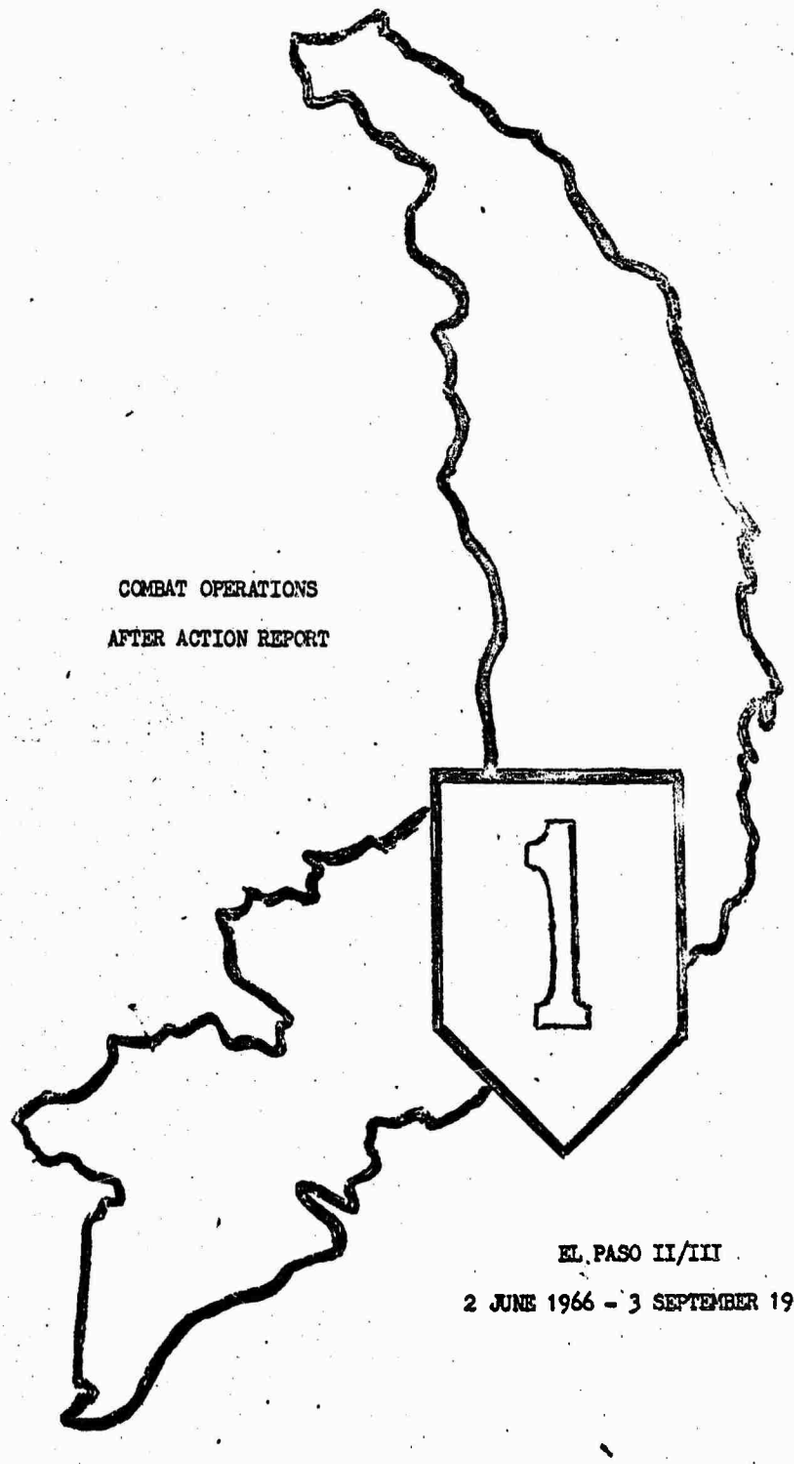
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1ST INFANTRY DIVISION



COMBAT OPERATIONS

AFTER ACTION REPORT

EL PASO II/III

2 JUNE 1966 - 3 SEPTEMBER 1966

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

COMBAT OPERATIONS AFTER ACTION REPORT
OPERATION EL PASO II/III

1. NAME AND TYPE OF OPERATION: 1st Infantry Division Operation EL PASO II/III - Search and Destroy, Base Camp and Airfield Security, and ROADRUNNER operation. Reference: Maps Vietnam, 1:50,000 sheets 6244 I, 6245I, II, 6246 I, II, 6345 I, II, III, IV, 6346 I, II, III, IV, 6446 III, IV.

2. DATES OF OPERATION: 021430H June - 031200H September 1966.

3. GENERAL: On 2 June 1966, II Field Force Vietnam directed Operation EL PASO II/III commenced under control of the 1st Infantry Division. The initial area of operation covered the area vicinity of the airfield and ARVN compounds around LOC NINH in BINH LONG Province. As the operation developed and 1st Infantry Division strength was built up, forces were deployed on operation throughout BINH LONG and portions of PHUOC LONG Provinces. The general area of operation for BINH LONG Province is at Annex D. Three other areas of operation were established as the enemy threat was countered. The SONG BE AO is at Annex E. Areas of operation were established around MINH THANH (Annex F) and the area in which the raid on the rice cache was conducted (Annex G).

Initially the operation consisted of one brigade sent upon direction of Commanding General, IIFFORCEV and at the request of Commanding General, 5th Division (ARVN) to defend the LOC NINH area against the possibility of attack by the 9th VC Division. By mid June, a two brigade (reinf) operation was being conducted to locate and destroy VC forces and installations. Brigades operated in assigned areas and moved rapidly to successive areas to exploit intelligence on VC troop and supply installations.

a. The reporting officer for this report is Major General William E. DePuy, Commanding General, 1st Infantry Division.

b. Task Organization. Control of the operation was exercised by Headquarters, 1st Infantry Division, operating from a tactical command post. The initial task organization is listed below. Due to the large and frequent changes in task organization, these changes are shown as they occurred daily in paragraph 7, Execution. Commanders are shown at Annex M.

3d Brigade Task Force (2 June)	COL William D. Brodbeck
HHC, 3d Bde (-)	
2d Battalion, 28th Infantry	LTC Kyle W. Bowie (2 Jun - 14 Jul)
	LTC Thomas H. Jones (14 Jul - 11 Aug)
	LTC Elmer D. Pendleton Jr.
2d Battalion, 33d Arty (-)	
D Troop, 1st Sqdn, 4th Cavalry	

4. INTELLIGENCE:

a. Mission:

(1) In conjunction with other MACV agencies in the field, the 1st Infantry Division conducted Operation EL PASO II/III from 2 June thru

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3 September 1966. The intelligence objective was to estimate VC strengths, locations, dispositions, and anticipated situations in the objective area, prior to the operation. Special attention was to be directed to determine the validity and source of current information, if security would permit. 4

(2) In the course of the operation, MACV desired pertinent intelligence as to the identity of VC units encountered, to include an overlay of the locations encountered, military characteristics of the area of operations, the effects of weather, descriptions of the type of fortifications encountered, and the methods used to destroy them or deny their use to the enemy. Sketches or drawings of such fortifications were desired when possible.

b. Events Prior to the Operation:

(1) On 26 April 1966, a rallier from the 2d Battalion, 273d Regiment stated that the regiment was moving to War Zone C for rest and resupply. He also stated that the 271st Regiment would follow. At this time the 1st Infantry Division was deployed in War Zone C.

(2) In late April captives and ralliers in PHUOC LONG Province indicated the 141st and 250th Regiments had also infiltrated in the BINH LONG - PHUOC LONG Province area.

(3) On 3 May 66, a notebook taken from a rear element of 272d Regiment indicated the regiment would be involved in an offensive operation in the LOC NINH area.

(4) On 5 May 66, vic XU 8170, a member of the reconnaissance element of 271st Regiment was killed and his personal notebook captured. Translation disclosed the following information: A possible four regiment attack on LOC NINH (XU 7308) involving 271st, 272d, and 273d Regiments and the 101st NVA Regiment/325th Division. The reconnaissance element of 271st Regiment had been conducting reconnaissance and a battle-field study in the vicinity LOC NINH since 10 April 1966. On the nights of 6 thru 8 May the units were to move to their battle positions and attack as follows:

(a) 101st Regiment/325th attack LOC NINH Special Forces Camp;

(b) 273d Regiment is to attack LOC NINH Subsector Headquarters;

(c) 272d Regiment was to set up blocking positions to ambush friendly reinforcements; and

(d) 271st Regiment was to attack TICH THIEN subsector and then assist 272d Regiment in ambushing reinforcements. Indications were that the document was not a plant and was a personal notebook belonging to a member of 271st Regiment.

(5) On 16 May a PW said the 16th Regiment was located vic YU 2541. A returnee earlier reported the infiltration of the 16th Regiment into the PHUOC LONG - BINH LONG Province area. The 16th Regiment is also known as (AKA) for the 101st NVA Regiment/325th Division.

(6) On 17 May 66 an ARVN Mike Force made contact with an estimated VC battalion vic XU 5804. The 2d Battalion, 9th Regiment (ARVN) was dispatched to assist the Mike Force and it also made contact with an estimated VC battalion.

(7) On 20 May the 3d Brigade, 1st Infantry Division deployed forcee to LOC NINH.

c. Significant Engagements:

(1) On 081430 June Troop A, 1st Squadron, 4th Cavalry was moving north on National Route 13 when an air observer flying over the convoy spotted VC along the road vic XT 7676. Troop A engaged the VC. Later that afternoon the 2/18th Infantry and a 5th Division ARVN APC unit joined in battle. By 1800H the VC had fled southwest. VC losses were 93 KIA (BC), 250 KIA (Prob), 1 VCC, one 57mm RR, one RPG-2, 30 small arms, 78 grenades, and a considerable amount of individual equipment. The VC unit was identified as 272d Regiment. The Commanding Officer of the 1st Battalion, 272d Regiment was killed during the battle and a document found on the body was a sketch of the ambush plan. It showed the three battalions of the regiment along the west side of Route 13.

(2) From 9 to 11 June only small groups of VC were encountered. The 2/2d Infantry killed one VC and captured one rifle at 101343H vic XT 7175. Documents on the body indicated the VC was from 272d Regiment. The 1/4th Cavalry killed one VC on 101000H vic XT 7941. With the prospect of more significant engagements the 1st Brigade was moved to MINH THANH (XT 6488) and the division CP deployed to AN LOC (XT 7586).

(3) At 110735H the platoons of Company A, 2/28th Infantry made contact with a VC platoon vic XU 708098. The VC fled north. Information indicated a VC company vic XU 710100. A and B Companies, 2/28th Infantry and a CIDG platoon maneuvered against the VC. Company C, 2/28th Infantry, with the recon platoon, located another VC company vic XU 722112. Heavy fighting continued throughout the day. The VC were in trenches and bunkers with overhead cover. Both VC positions were overrun by 1730H and the VC fled through intenee artillery firee. VC losses were 98 VC KIA (BC), 150 VC KIA (Prob), one VCC, one 60mm Mortar, one RPG-2, one MG-34 machinegun, one SKS CHICOM Carbine, one DH-10 Claymore mine, twenty-seven 60mm Mortar rounds, four RPG-2 grenades, 12 CHICOM grenadee, 900 rounds of SA ammo, medical eupplies and pereonal equipment. Documente found in the battle area identified the 707th Battalion, 273d Regiment.

(4) At 131110H June, a rallier surrendered at LOC NINH. The rallier etated he wae from the 7th Battalion, 3d Regiment which is an AKA for the 707th Battalion, 273d Regiment, engaged by 2/28th Infantry in this area on 11 June.

(5) On 141600H the 1/4th Cavalry, while escorting an ARVN convoy received fire from both flanke vic XT 794943. The 1/4th Cavalry engaged the VC. VC losees were seven VC KIA (BC), two M-1 Carbines, 40 CHICOM hand grenades, and one CBU.

(6) On 151508H June the 2/2d Infantry destroyed a large base camp vic XT 690551. It contained 60 buildings, 16 huts, several mess halls, a rifle range, six kitchens with underground smoke vents, a grenade training course, a bleacher area for 100 people, and two wells. Documents found in the camp had letter box numbers HT9383A (4th Company, J108 Battalion/272d Regiment) and HT9271A (2d Company, J108 Battalion/272d Regiment). This wae the second largest 272d Regimental base camp found in the LONG NGUYEN area.

(7) On 171415H a patrol from 2/28th Infantry attacked a VC check point guarded by seven VC vic XU 736135. VC losses were two VC WIA (one captured), one carbine, 125 rounds SA ammo, one grenade launcher,

two grenades, and medical supplies. A nearby village was searched. One VC was found with an old bullet wound in the thigh and a VC rallied in the village. The captured VC was a member of a local guerrilla unit. He indicated he was willing to point out other VC in the area. Early on the morning of 20 June the 2/28th Infantry, with the captured VC, cordoned and searched the village vic XU 742123. One VC committee leader and one local guerrilla were captured.

(8) On 21 June the 2/16th Infantry made a heliborne assault on a VC supply base vic XT 445540 which had been targeted during Operation BIRMINGHAM. This raid is discussed in Annex H.

(9) On 240950H June the 1/4th Cavalry and elements of the 2/18th Infantry engaged an unknown number of VC vic XT 764726. The VC fled. The VC losses were two VC KIA (Prob), one CHICOM carbine, one ROG-2, 254 rounds SA ammo, one grenade, one A/P mine and one A/T mine.

(10) On 260005H, a 2/18th Infantry patrol engaged an estimated VC company vic XT 808898. A platoon moved to reinforce the patrol and it made contact with a VC force of unknown size approximately 1,000 meters west of the patrol. The VC broke contact at approximately 0400H. VC losses were five VC KIA(BC), 21 VC KIA (Prob), one RPG-2, one CHICOM carbine, five CHICOM grenades, 620 rounds ammo, and numerous items of personal equipment. There were four other contacts during the day. At 1130H an armed CH-47 helicopter killed five VC (BC) and destroyed one .50 cal MG vic XT 421149. At 1305H a C-47 received ground fire vic XT 695425. Airstrikes were placed in the area resulting in five VC KIA (BC) and 15 VC KIA (Prob). At 1915H the 2/16th Infantry engaged an unknown number of VC in the trees vic XT 448540 resulting in 11 VC KIA (Prob). At 2000H an armed CH-47 helicopter killed two VC (BC) and destroyed one sampan vic YU 253127.

(11) On 300930H June the 1/4th Cavalry received AW and mortar fire along Route 13 vic XU 723030. They were soon heavily engaged as a large VC force attempted to split the column. The 2/18th Infantry was immediately committed to the battle along with an ARVN APC troop and a company of the 2/9th ARVN Battalion. The VC broke contact at 1630H, the rapid reaction by US Forces prevented the VC from making a search of the battle area. VC losses were 270 VC KIA (BC), 300 VC KIA (Prob), nine VCC, 23 crew served weapons (including: .50 cal MG, RPG-2, 57mm RR, mortar), 40 small arms, 1,630 rounds of SA ammo, three RPG-2 grenades and one PRC-10. Interrogation of captives and translation of documents showed all three battalions of the 271st Regiment participated in the battle. Captives indicated the regiment had left its personal equipment (cooking utensils, hammocks, clothing etc.) in the regimental camp vic SROC CON TRANG (XT 5785). One captive indicated the camp was a 15 minute walk from the SAIGON River vic SROC CON TRANG. The VC were withdrawing to the west toward the SROC TRANG area. Only three to four days rice was carried with the regiment. The 2d Battalion, 271st Regiment performed the reconnaissance and prepared the battle area for the regiment. Pursuit of the VC fleeing the battle accounted for another 23 VC KIA (BC), two VC KIA (Prob), two VCC, and some small arms captured. During the battle on 30 June vic XU 723020 the commander of the 3d Company, 2d Battalion, 271st Regiment was killed and his notebook recovered. It indicated he was given an order on 28 June to gather rice for three days and prepare for battle on 30 June. His mission was stopping a convoy and destroying six to ten tanks. His company occupied a 250 to 300 meter front along the route.

(12) On 1 July, three VC were killed (BC) and three VC captured west of the battle area as US Forces attempted to regain contact with the fleeing VC.

(13) On 020550H July, 2/18th Infantry began receiving AW and mortar fires vic XU 607018. By 0605H the unit was heavily engaged. The 1/28th Infantry was moved to reinforce the 2/18th Infantry in an unsuccessful attempt to flank the VC. Contact was broken at 0910H. VC losses were 46 VC KIA (BC), 150 VC KIA (Prob), one .50 cal MG, one LMG, one RPG-2, one 60mm mortar, three small arms, and 600 rounds SA ammo. The VC unit encountered was 711 Battalion, 273d Regiment. Police of the battle area on 3 July resulted in ten VC KIA (BC) and two VC KIA (Prob).

(14) At 091110H July the 1/4th Cavalry (-) and B 1/2d Infantry were moving in convoy vic XT 7075 when they were heavily engaged by a large VC force. The 272d Regiment was believed to be in the area and the convoy had been "advertised" in advance in an attempt to draw the regiment out of Zone C. Artillery and infantry units were prepositioned prior to the convoy moving. TAC air was standing by. By 1115H the convoy was heavily engaged. The combined effect of the .50 cal and 90mm fire from the tanks and APC's, the concentrated artillery fire, and the pounding from TAC air rapidly overwhelmed the regiment. By 1330H the regiment broke and ran in disorganized retreat. By this time, infantry units had been airlifted behind the regiment and began engaging retreating elements. Air and artillery continued to pound withdrawal routes. The following day, separated elements of the regiment continued to be engaged by the infantry battalions. By dusk on 10 July all elements of 272d Regiment had cleared the battle area. The regiment suffered severe losses during the engagement and was probably reduced to less than 50% strength. VC losses were 239 KIA (BC), 304 KIA (Prob), eight VCC, 13 crew served weapons and 41 small arms.

(a) On 11 June the 1st Battalion (707) 273d Regiment was engaged west of LOC NINH by the 1/28th Infantry. On 2 July the 3d Battalion (711) 273d Regiment was engaged west of LOC NINH by the 2/18th Infantry.

(b) On 8 June Troop A, 1/4th Cavalry engaged the 272d Regiment south of AN LOC, B and C Troops, 1/4th Cavalry engaged 271st Regiment on 30 June north of AN LOC, and 1/4th Cavalry (-) and Company B, 1/2d Infantry engaged 272d Regiment on 9 July south of AN LOC.

d. Analysis and Evaluation:

(1) Long range reconnaissance patrols were utilized during the operation (see Annex I).

(2) Prior to Operation EL PASO II/III the VC had the capability of attacking in BINH LONG Province with three VC regiments and three NVA regiments, totaling approximately 10,350 men. It appeared that LOC NINH would be the target. Contacts with groups of local guerrillas and mortar attacks on friendly forces were the significant enemy activities in the province between 20 May and 8 June 1966 when the 272d Regiment was engaged by elements of the 3d Brigade, 1st Infantry Division.

(3) PW Interogation Findings:

(a) On 29 May, a NVN soldier, VI VAN TY, rallied in PHOUC LONG Province. He stated he was from the 250A NVA Regiment. The 250th NVA Regiment was reported to have ten infiltration groups when it infiltrated into SVN. VC regiments are normally composed of four groups. Indications are that a considerable number of NVA soldiers become ill during infiltration. Some of the extra personnel were probably meant to replace those lost during infiltration, however, some of these went to the 9th Division as replacements for the 271st, 272d, and 273d Regiments.

(b) Four NVN soldiers were captured during the battle of 30 June. One died prior to interrogation. Of the other three, two were squad leaders and one was a platoon leader. One NVN captive stated he was from the 602 Group with an alias of BAC SON. BAC SON is an AKA for the 250th NVA Regiment recently infiltrated into III CTZ. One NVA captive stated he was one of a group of 45 who were sent to the 2d Battalion, 271st Regiment. Another captive from the 1st Battalion, 271st Regiment reported his battalion commander was killed in the battle. An AN/PRC-10 radio was captured during the battle. It was probably used by a battalion sized unit. It appeared to be hit by a CBU, and had been the radio of the 1st Battalion, 217th Regiment. Two captives stated the Headquarters of the 9th VC Division was near the SUOI BO stream. The location of the SUOI BO is unknown, but may be in the vicinity of XT 5877. Group 4 of the 4th Regiment and Group 329 were also mentioned by the captives.

(4) From the period 9 June thru 10 July 1966, the 1st and 3d Brigades, 1st Infantry Division had engaged and decisively defeated all major elements of the 9th VC Division. By 15 July it was apparent that the 9th VC Division had abandoned its offensive in BINH LONG Province, having sustained heavy losses in all battles. Contacts had diminished and friendly units began preparing for movement to new areas.

(5) Based on VC personnel losses the following is an estimate of the effectiveness of the 9th Division. This estimate is based on the assumption that fairly well trained troops are available in Zone C. Casualty figures indicate the probability that all battalions of 273d Regiment were reduced to 50% maximum effectiveness. The 2d Battalion, 273d Regiment has had sufficient time to become combat effective now. The 1st Battalion probably became combat effective by 15 July. The 3d Battalion probably became combat effective in early August. The 272d Regiment was probably reduced below 80% effectiveness on 8 June, and below 50% effectiveness on 9 July. No practical analysis can be made of its individual battalions. It was probably 90% effective in late August or early September. The 271st Regiment was probably reduced to less than 50% effectiveness on 30 June. The 2d and 3d Battalions appeared to have taken the majority of the casualties losing many of their leaders. The 2d Battalion may have suffered as high as 75% casualties. Even assuming personnel will be redistributed throughout the regiment, it probably did not achieve combat effectiveness before mid August.

(6) Any battalion of a regiment or any regiment of a division can assume a combat ready posture in a relatively short time at the expense of other units in the regiment or division, if the VC choose to do so. Any action of this nature would probably be an attempt to deceive friendly forces into assuming the whole regiment or division has recovered.

(7) Weapons lost during the encounters were significant but will probably not have any long range effect on the units effectiveness.

(8) VC constructed trench works, with overhead cover, consisting of logs and earth, have been built into existing plantation drainage ditches. Small shelters have been dug into the sides. These fortifications provide good cover. They are probably constructed and utilized by local forces.

(9) On 17 June vicinity XU 746135 a small quantity of medical supplies were captured. These supplies, from Lisbon, Athens, Paris, Saigon, Hue, and New York, indicate VC still have supply sources outside of the country or that previous reserves have not yet been exhausted.

(10) A rallier surrendered at LOC NINH on 041125H June. He was interrogated and evacuated to the Military Interrogation Center in Saigon. He claimed to be a member of a company of Cambodian bandits working with the VC. It ie possible that there are Cambodians working with the VC particularly in transporting supplies and in the local defense of basee near the border.

(11) Activities Subsequent to 15 July:

(a) Reports from an air observer and a FAC reinforced earlier findings from Operation BIRMINGHAM that the road from KATUM (XT 3390) to SROC CON TRANG (XT 5784) is a VC supply route through War Zone C. The eastern limit of the route was "seeded" with CBU. The VC village of SROC CON TRANG, which was active during Operation BIRMINGHAM, was destroyed by air strikes. The road is not used between XT 5784 and the SAIGON River. The discovery of a bridge across the river vicinity XT 6085 indicated a jungle road exiets from SROC CON TRANG to the bridge.

(b) In BINH LONG Province there are two VC main crossing points along Route 13. One in vicinity XT 7673 and the other vicinity XT 7299. The roads are consistently blocked and small arms fire is usually received when travelling through the area.

(c) Reporte from agents had indicated the CUU LONG QUANG VC Regiment wae in the LONG NGUYEN area. The tranelation of a captured VC document concerned, "Instructions Relative to the Active Opposition Against the Enemies' CHIEU HOI Policy," dated 7 February 1966, and was issued by CUU LONG Current Affairs. Current Affairs Committees are political in nature and are found to some extent at each echelon from village to COSVN. Although the CUU LONG QUANG was referred to as a regiment, it is probable that it is in fact a political headquartere of province or region level.

(d) Sources, including Imagery Interpretation, Red Haze, SLAR, agents and captives indicated a VC force located between SROC CON TRANG (YT 5785) and the Cambodian Border. The build-up appeared to be extensive, however, its exact nature could not be determined. Its proximity to the Cambodian Border and the lack of landing zones in the area made it unprofitable to attack the target area with ground forces, as the VC would have ample time to move across the border. The target was attacked by air. No BDA wae poseible due to the dense jungle canopy.

e. CA/PSYOP:

(1) Psychological Operations. In support of Operation EL PASO II/III, the division dropped 46 million leaflets and played over 190 hours of loudepeaker appeals during the period 8 June through 3 September. Two broad thematic approaches were utilized: the first approach, Combining Power, Chieu Hoi and Safe Conduct themes, was directed at hard-core VC units in the area; the second, explaining GVN goale and achievements, and utilizing primarily JUSPAO material, was aimed at the civilian population. In addition to the JUSPAO material, output directed at the civilian target audience included the divieion's request for intelligence, exploitation of MEDCAP, and publication of curfew regulations.

While the majority of the leaflet material utilized by the division came from stock supplies of JUSPAO and the 246th PsyOps Co, some 2,875,000 leaflets were prepared for Operation EL PASO on the division's printing prese. These leaflets were developed to respond to tactical requirements, and they were delivered on target within 12 to 24 hours after the requirement was known. Such special purpose leaflets were

designed, produced, and delivered to exploit the victories of 30 June and 9 July, to exploit a threatened strike by the workers of the XA CAT Rubber Plantation by blaming it on the VC, and to exploit the emergency airlift of rice to the province on 25 - 26 July.

Loudspeaker appeals included both prerecorded JUSPAO and 246th PsyOps Co tapes, and texts prepared in the field for special situations. For example, special tapes with surrender instructions and Chieu Hoi appeals were developed and played within hours after initial contact during the engagements of 30 June and 9 July.

To exploit fully information obtained from a NVA prisoner captured during the battle of 30 June, a special project team from JUSPAO was requested. This team conducted extensive interviews with the prisoner. The material acquired will be used to prepare future output. The team also surveyed civic action projects in the area. They took movies and recorded tapes for use in JUSPAO programs.

Despite the magnitude of the PsyOps program directed at VC units, immediate results were disappointing. Only two ralliers returned during the period, and they were low level members of local guerrilla units. While the portion of the psychological operations program directed against the Viet Cong units was not apparently productive in tangible results, i.e., Chieu Hoi ralliers, it was the first time the VC units operating in BINH LONG had been subjected to such a massive propaganda effort. Realizing that psychological warfare is a long term operation, less than dramatic results are to be expected from these initial efforts.

The quantity of PsyOps material disseminated during the period was accomplished utilizing largely organic aircraft of the division. Many missions were accomplished by utilizing G-3 and laison aircraft during periods when the aircraft would otherwise be idle, though required to be on-call. This was accomplished through coordination with AACC on the basis that a PsyOps mission would be standing by ready for flight any time during the day an aircraft became available. As many as three and four missions a day were accomplished utilizing this technique, without interfering with aircraft committed to other tactical support. While the accomplishment of an effective PsyOps program requires pre-scheduled aircraft missions, such work can be done utilizing standby craft on an as-available basis.

(2) Civic Action. Civic action programs conducted by the division during Operation EL PASO were characterized by close coordination between the division, agencies of the GVN, and ths US Advisory elements. All programs were joint efforts of the 1st Infantry Division and units or agencies in BINH LONG Province.

During the period, the division supported the Special Forces B Team and the Air Forces' MILPHAP (Military Province Hospital Assistance Program) Team MEDCAP program by providing additional supplies. A joint program was started between the MILPHAP team and the 1/4th Cav for MEDCAP patrols. Medical personnel came from the MILPHAP team and the cavalry provided security to escort the MEDCAP team into remote areas of the province.

In conjunction with the 5th Division (ARVN), and with the assistance of USAID, various projects were accomplished in AN LOC. The dispensary in the hamlet of DUC VINH HAI was repaired, repainted, and running water installed. A foundation was prepared for an addition to the BINH LONG hospital in HON QUAN. In conjunction with the Catholic priest in QUAN LOI, English classes were started at the Catholic school.

One program which was extremely well received was a series of 1st Infantry Division Band concerts. During the period the band played at a dedication ceremony for a new school in LOC NINH, participated in a 5th Division (ARVN) Awards ceremony in HON QUAN, and played concerts twice at LOC NINH, three times at HON QUAN, and once at MINH THANH. One concert at LOC NINH was preceded by a parade through the village. Of the three concerts in HON QUAN, two were at the market square, one was at the BINH LONG Province Hospital.

During the period, the division paid 56,550 $VN in solatium payments to victims and families who were killed or injured as a result of 1st Infantry Division operations. Four civilians were killed and eleven wounded as a result of mortar and artillery fire, and three civilians were killed and four wounded in an air strike erroneously called on a civilian truck. The solatium payments and condolence visits made as a result of these incidents were coordinated through the Sector S-5 Advisor, and the District Chief of the districts involved.

(3) Province Support Coordination Center. From 8 June through 20 August, the G-5 maintained a Province Support Coordination Center in the USAID Headquarters in AN LOC. This office, located in the immediate vicinity of all the major US and GVN agencies in the province, was the focal point for all psychological operations, and civic action conducted within BINH LONG Province during the operation. In the area of psychological operations, media development and targeting were coordinated with the Province Chief, the Sector Psy War Advisor, the CHIEU HOI Chief, and VIS. Having these agencies immediately accessable to the G-5 greatly facilitated this coordination, and helped ensure thematic continuity. In the area of civic action, coordination was accomplished with the Province Public Works Office, the Public Health Office, USAID, and the Sector Advisory Detachment. As a result of these efforts, the programs developed were joint US/GVN projects and followed established priorities for civic action within the province. In addition, the Province Support Coordination Center assisted in controlling prices and wage levels, in establishing joint US/GVN police check points, and in negotiations with the French plantation managers. The technique of physically locating a full time liaison officer, or staff depending on requirements, in the immediate vicinity of province headquarters proved its worth in BINH LONG Province.

5. MISSION: In close coordination with III ARVN Corps units, secure and defend initial installations in BINH LONG and PHUOC LONG Provinces and conduct operations to locate and destroy four enemy regiments within the area.

6. CONCEPT OF OPERATION: The general concept of operation was initially to deploy forces to strengthen the defenses of the LOC NINH area. As the estimate of enemy strength increased, additional add-on forces were deployed to further strengthen the defenses of LOC NINH and expanded to provide security for AN LOC - QUAN LOI and MINH THANH. Battalions were to operate in respective areae of operation around defended areas and maintain open lines of communication between the areas. Once the base areas were adequately strengthened, brigades would conduct search and destroy operations within the AO's to find and destroy the three VC and one NVA regimente and their bases. Planning called for flexibility in execution. Areas of operation would be adjusted, taking advantage of current intelligence.

7. EXECUTION:

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2 June - Changes in Task Organization

3d Bde TAC CP (AN LOC)
2/28th Inf (LOC NINH)
2/33d Arty (-) (LOC NINH)
D/1/4th Cav (LOC NINH)

3d Brigade initiated Operation EL PASO II at 1430H moving a tactical CP from LAI KHE to HON QUAN. 2/28th Inf and 2/33d Arty (-) moved by C-130 to the LOC NINH airfield. Troop D, 1/4th Cav was attached to the 3d Bde and moved from PHU LOI to LOC NINH.

3 June - 3d Brigade forces improved defensive positions with 2/28th Inf conducting company size patrols in the LOC NINH area; Co A vic XU 7207, Co B XU 7508, Co C XU 7210. There was no enemy contact.

Troop D, 1/4th Cav conducted visual reconnaissance around the LOC NINH area and introduced two LRRP teams into an area S of LOC NINH along the Cambodian Border.

4 June - VC sightings and contacts increased as 3d Brigade forces continued patrolling and surveillance operations. 2/28th Inf patrolled around the LOC NINH area and improved defensive positions.

The LRRP teams (1 and 4) of Troop D, 1/4th Cav continued to operate along the Cambodian Border. Team 1 observed 34 VC individually armed with various SA and carrying one 81mm mortar vic XT 592939 moving southwest. Team 4 was extracted at 1715H after receiving SA fire from 4 - 5 VC.

The LOC NINH airfield and a CIDG camp to the south began receiving mortar fire at 2220H from the south and southeast. Simultaneously a platoon size attack was launched on the National Police station in LOC NINH. Artillery and mortar returned fire and air strikes were called in on the VC positions. The VC attack on the police station was repulsed by National Police and CIDG forces and the incoming mortar fire ceased at 2300H. Casualties to personnel were light. Troop D, 1/4th Cav sustained heavy damage to three OH-13 and four HU-1B aircraft.

The 3d Bde CP remained at HON QUAN and was secured by ARVN and CIDG forces.

5 June - Operation EL PASO II continued with 2/28th Inf searching areas where known or suspected mortar positions were used during the previous nights attack. Patrols discovered a well dug-in position vic XU 725087 with 15 - 81mm mortar rounds still in cannisters.

Troop D, 1/4th Cav LRRP Team 4 exchanged fire with six VC on extraction from an LZ vic XT 6092. Two VC were killed (BC).

6 June - Changes in Task Organization

1/16th Inf OPCON 3d Bde (LOC NINH)
C/2/13th Arty Atch 2/33d Arty (-) (LOC NINH)

The 3d Bde CP moved from HON QUAN to LOC NINH airfield. 1/16th Inf joined Operation EL PASO II moving from LAI KHE to an LZ southeast of LOC NINH (XT 7603) where they established a perimeter for Battery C, 2/13th Arty which moved by CH-47 from PHU LOI. Battery C, 2/13th was

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placed under OPCON 3d Bde. 2/28th Inf patrolled the LOC NINH area in conjunction with ARVN and CIDG forces with negative contact. The battalion continued improvement of defensive positions around the airfield.

Troop D, 1/4th Cav conducted inspection and maintenance of all aircraft.

7 June - Operation EL PASO II continued with negative contact. 1/16th Inf and 2/28th Inf conducted platoon and company size partols around LOC NINH. Troop D, 1/4th Cav continued aerial surveillance of the LOC NINH area and repairs to damaged aircraft.

8 June - Changes in Task Organization

2/2d Inf OPCON 3d Bde (MINH THANH)
2/18th Inf OPCON 3d Bde (AN LOC)
A/1/4th Cav Atch 3d Bde (AN LOC)

The 1st Infantry Division continued to reinforce Operation EL PASO II and the 3d Bde Task Force. 2d Battalion, 18th Infantry was lifted from BIEN HOA to HON QUAN. Battery C, 1/7th Arty moved by C-123 aircraft to vic HON QUAN airfield (XT 7689). Troop A, 1/4th Cav moved from LAI KHE to HON QUAN along National Route 13. The troop engaged two battalions of the 272d VC Main Force Regiment in major contact at 1400H vic AP TAU O (XT 766750). ARVN artillery fires from CHON THAN and HON QUAN and a total of 43 Air Force sorties supported the cavalry troop. 2/18th Inf conducted an airmobile assault into an LZ vic XT 767750 at 1700H to block VC escape routes to the east. Contact lasted until 1930 when the VC broke and fled to the northwest. Troop A and the 2/18th Inf remained over night in the battle area.

2/28th Inf patrolled in the LOC NINH AO and killed one VC (BC) when they engaged a force of approximately 20 VC at 1045H vic XU 713097. 1/16th Inf moved two companies to secure Battery C, 1/7th Arty at HON QUAN. Company C patrolled southeast of LOC NINH and back with negative contact. 2/2d Inf moved from LAI KHE to MINH THANH (XT 675735) by CV-2 closing at 1945H.

9 June - Changes in Task Organization

1st Inf Div TAC CP (AN LOC)
1st Bde TAC CP (MINH THANH)
2/2d Inf (MINH THANH) Atch 1515H
2/16th Inf (MINH THANH) Atch 1515H
2/13th Arty (-) (DS)
C/2/33d Arty OPCON 2/13th Arty (-)
3d Bde TAC CP (LOC NINH)
C/1/7th Arty (DS) OPCON 2/33d Arty (-)

MG William DePuy, 1st Inf Div CG assumed control of Operation EL PASO II with forward CP and Div Arty Hq located vic HON QUAN airstrip.

1st Brigade commenced participation in Operation EL PASO II moving a TAC CP to MINH THANH (XT 6467) at 1215H. 2/2d Inf and 2/16th Inf were attached to 1st Bde with Battery C, 2/33d Arty at MINH THANH and 2/13th Arty (-) in direct support at CHON THANH (XT 7661). 2/2d Inf conducted extensive patrols in AO BLACK and remained overnight vic XT 675745. 2/16th Inf moved by C-130 from BIEN HOA and BEAR CAT and provided security for the 1st Bde forward CP.

3d Brigade continued patrol operations in the LOC NINH - HON QUAN areas. Companies A and B, 1/16th Inf returned from airfield security at HON QUAN to the battalion perimeter southeast of LOC NINH. Company C improved defensive positions. 2/28th Inf patrols around LOC NINH made no contact with the enemy. At 1925H the battalion received three mortar rounds at the south end of the airstrip which caused negative casualties. At the same time Battery C, 2/13th Arty fired in support of a CIDG patrol in contact with an estimated 200 VC vic XU 723079. 2/18th Inf and Troop A, 1/4th Cav conducted a police of the previous day's battlefield. Results of the battle are 93 VC KIA (BC), 250 VC KIA (Prob), two 57mm RR and 30 SA captured. Troop A sustained 13 KHA and 30 WHA with one APC destroyed and one tank and one APC damaged. Both elements returned to HON QUAN where they provided security for division CP and Battery C, 1/7th Arty.

10 June - Changes in Task Organization

1st Brigade
D/8/6th Arty (GS) (CHON THANH)

Operation EL PASO continued with 1st Brigade conducting extensive patrols in AO's BLACK and BLUE. During their sweep of AO BLACK, 2/2d Inf observed 50 VC vic XT 673740. Artillery fire was placed on the target and a subsequent search of the area revealed blood traces. Company C, 2/2d Inf killed one VC (BC) and captured one SA in a brief fire fight with three VC. The battalion moved to an overnight location vic XT 695755. The 2/16th Inf conducted search and destroy operations in AO BLUE with companies B and C, while Company A acted as the brigade rapid reaction force (RRF). At 1527H, Company A was lifted into vic XT 589675 to engage a reported 20 VC. Negative contact was established and the company remained overnight vic XT 6067 and XT 6066. The 3d Brigade continued patrols and improvement of defensive positions in the HON QUAN - LOC NINH areas. 1/16th Inf conducted company and platoon size patrols east of Route 13. 2/18th Inf (-) continued to reinforce the security of the HON QUAN area, with Troop A, 1/4th Cav. Company C, 2/18th Inf conducted a search and destroy patrol to the northwest and returned with negative contact. 2/28th Inf moved Companies A and B to patrol bases vic XU 800090 and XU 766082. Both companies conducted patrols in area and returned to LOC NINH with negative contact. Company C conducted a combat assault into an LZ vic XU 715181 then moved and searched the village vic XU 712175 with negative results. The company returned to the same LZ and was extracted.

11 June - Changes in Task Organization

3d Brigade
C/2/16th Inf OPCON 1830H
Division Troops
D/1/4th Cav

Seven company size operations were conducted with one major contact. Company A, 2/28th Inf with one CIDG platoon attached engaged the 707th Battalion, 273d VC Main Force Regiment vic XU 710100 at 1010H (Annex B). A CIDG company patrolling to the southwest of Company A established a blocking position vic XU 700090. Company C arrived in the contact area at 1130H and moved to intercept and attack VC forces occupying Hill 177 (XU 722112). Company C with the recon platoon enveloped Hill 177 and after artillery and air preparations forced the fleeing VC into artillery fires to the northwest. At 1445 the battalion commander committed Company B to assist Company A in their contact after artillery volleys and air strikes. Company B assaulted and overran the VC positions on

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Hill 150. The retreating VC moved south into the CIDG blocking position where they were engaged with heavy fire. All contact ceased by 1730H with the enemy sustaining 98 KIA (BC), 150 KIA (Prob) and one VCC. One 60mm mortar, one LR, and one MG were among the weapons captured. 2/28th Inf sustained 33 KHA and 33 WHA. Following reorganization, medevac and resupply, the battalion returned to the LOC NINH airstrip closing at 2200H. 1/16th Inf conducted company size patrols with Company B on search and destroy operations south to vic XU 8004, then west and back to the battalion perimeter. Company C conducted an airmobile assault landing in the vic XU 8407. The company moved to an objective vic XU 829068 and conducted search and destroy operations. The company was extracted at 1415H and moved to the LOC NINH airstrip where they were attached to 2/28th Inf. Company A continued to secure the battalion perimeter and Battery C, 2/13th Arty. 2/18th Inf continued improvement of defensive positions and local patrolling around HON QUAN while Troop A, 1/4th Cav secured the division CP at HON QUAN. There was no contact.

1st Brigade continued patrols in AO's BLACK and BLUE. 2/2d Inf conducted search and destroy operations in AO BLACK with Companies A and B. Company C secured their overnight position. All elements reported negative contact. At 1605 the battalion was ordered to move and occupy defensive positions vic MINH THANH airstrip, closing at 2010H. 2/16th Inf conducted patrols and established ambush sites in AO BLUE with negative contact. Company C was moved to LOC NINH by CV-2 at 1600H to assist in the security of the airstrip while Companies A and B were ordered to return to the battalion RON positions vic XT 635674 closing at 1730H. The 2/13th Arty (-) at CHON THANH received a report from the CHON THANH senior advisor of two VC battalions in the deserted village at XT 735540. Artillery from CHON THANH and the 175mm btry at PHUOC VINH fired into the village under control of an aerial observer three times during the day and early evening. At 1715 a CIDG force sent to the village reported five VC KIA (BC) and many wounded as evidenced by the many blood trails.

12 June - Changes in Task Organization

1st Brigade
C/2/16th Inf OPCON 1700H

The division continued Operation EL PASO II with no enemy contact, continuing patrol and search operations and repositioned forces.

1st Brigade conducted patrols in AO BLUE with 1/16th Inf and moved Company C, 1/16th Inf from LOC NINH to MINH THANH. The company departed at 0850H by CV-2 and closed MINH THANH at 1700H. 2/2d Inf conducted local patrols around their overnight position. The 3d Brigade continued patrol operations in their defense of the LOC NINH - HON QUAN areas. At 1055H, 1/16th Inf and Battery C, 2/13th Arty moved by road to a new base vic XU 740060. Company B, 2/18th Inf conducted an airmobile assault into an LZ vic XT 657913, while Troop A, 1/4th Cav reinforced with a platoon from Company C, 2/18th Inf blocked vic XT 680913. Company B closed into the LZ at 1033 then moved and searched the village vic XT 6791 with negative results. Troop A, 1/4th Cav returned to HON QUAN while Company B, 2/18th Inf remained overnight vic XT 680082. 2/2d Inf continued to defend the LOC NINH airstrip. Company A dispatched a patrol at 1515H which searched the village of LOC THIEN (XU 7208) with negative results. An ambush patrol was left behind vic XU 712088 as the company returned to LOC NINH.

13 June - Changes in Task Organization

1st Brigade
1/2d Inf OPCON 1453H
D/1/5th Arty (DS)
B/2/16th Inf Atch 1/2d Inf 1610H
Aero Rifle Platoon D/1/4th Cav Atch 2/16th Inf(-) 1245H

Two LRRP teams introduced into LZ's vic XT 663561 and XT 709551 gained enemy contact shortly after insertion. Artillery and air strikes were called in to support the extraction of the teams.

A member of Team 6 was killed in the vic of the LZ at XT 673556. The patrol killed four VC (BC) before extraction, but were unable to extract the body of the dead member.

The 1st Brigade lifted 2/2d Inf into LZ SUSAN (XT 654484) in reaction to the LRRP contacts. The battalion was unable to establish contact and remained over night vic XT 655583. 1/2d Inf was lifted from LAI KHE into an LZ vic XT 738542. Battery D, 1/5th Arty was lifted by CH-47 into the LZ and attached to the battalion. 1/2d Inf swept to the east with negative contact and returned to the LZ. 2/16th Inf conducted patrols in AO BLUE. Company B was lifted into the LZ vic XT 738542 and attached to 1/2d Inf.

3d Brigade continued the search for VC forces in the LOC NINH - HON QUAN AO's. 1/16th Inf conducted platoon size patrols from the battalion perimeter with negative contact. 2/28th Inf conducted patrols in the area of the 11 June battle where they located 12 - 81mm mortar rounds and several VC bodies in trenches vic XU 719111. 2/18th Inf searched the village at XT 6887 with negative results, while Troop A, 1/4th Cav secured the Division Forward CP at HON QUAN.

14 June - Changes in Task Organization

1st Brigade
A/1/28th Inf Atch 2/16th Inf (-) (MINH THANH)

1st Brigade conducted sweeps of AO's BLOOD, SILVER and BLUE in search of the VC forces engaged by the LRRP teams on 13 June. 1/2d Inf patrolled the western portion of AO BLOOD with negative contact. 2/2d Inf with LRRP Team 6 recovered the body of the LRRP member lost on 13 June vic XT 663564. The battalion conducted patrols from a base vic XT 657582. 2/16th Inf secured the brigade forward base and patrolled AO BLUE with negative contact. At 1415 Company A, 1/28th Inf was attached to the battalion. One platoon from Troop C, 1/4th Cav secured the 2/13th Arty (-) and Battery D, 8/6th Arty at CHON THANH.

3d Brigade elements conducted extensive patrols around the base camp areas. 2/18th Inf displaced Company A to vic QUAN LOI airfield to secure the area for movement of the division CP and 2/18th Inf (-) on 15 June. Troop A, 1/4th Cav remained vic HON QUAN airfield. 2/18th Inf secured the LOC NINH airstrip with company and platoon size patrols. 1/16th Inf conducted a company size sweep east to the village vic XU 7702 with negative contact.

15 June - Changes in Task Organization

1st Brigade
Aero Rifle Platoon D/1/4th Cav detach 1200H

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Operation EL PASO II continued with 1st Infantry Division elements searching AO's in conjunction with 5th ARVN and CIDG forces. The division CP moved from HON QUAN to the QUAN LOI airfield vic XT 8190.

1st Brigade searched AO BLOOD with 2/2d Inf uncovering a series of VC base camps and installations. A recently occupied, regimental size base camp was uncovered vic XT 690551. 1/2d Inf swept the southwest portion of AO SILVER with negative contact while Company B, 2/16th Inf continued to secure Battery D, 1/5th Arty. 2/16th Inf (-) provided the brigade RRF and secured the MINH THANH brigade CP.

3d Brigade CP remained vic QUAN LOI airfield secured by 2/28th Inf. Patrols searched the LOC NINH Rubber Plantation with negative contact. 1/16th Inf sealed and searched the village vic XU 770085 with negative results. The battalion CP remained vic XU 7407 with Battery C, 2/13th Arty. 2/18th Inf secured the road from HON QUAN to QUAN LOI with Troop A, 1/4th Cav for displacement of the Division Forward CP which closed QUAN LOI at 1615H. 2/18th Inf closed QUAN LOI and secured the division CP. Troop A, 1/4th Cav returned to HON QUAN.

16 June - Operation EL PASO II continued with elements conducting search and destroy operations in their respective AO's establishing no significant contacts. 2/2d Inf destroyed the VC regimental size base camp found on 15 June in AO SILVER, and remained overnight vic XT 688565. 1/2d Inf searched AO BLOOD to the west and northwest four kilometers from their battalion base. The battalion remained overnight vic XT 738562. 2/16th Inf secured the Brigade Forward CP, conducted local patrols and acted as the brigade RRF. At 1315 Company A located and destroyed 15 bunkers and foxholes vic XT 617690.

3d Brigade continued extensive patrolling operations in their defense of the HON QUAN - LOC NINH areas. 1/16th Inf secured Route 13 from XU 786163 to XU 741177 for passage of a resupply convoy from LOC NINH. At 0730H Company A moved to vic XU 755090 where a base was established and patrols conducted. The company returned to the battalion base at 1415H leaving a stay behind patrol at XU 760076. 2/18th Inf secured the Division Forward CP at QUAN LOI. Troop A, 1/4th Cav attached to 2/18th Inf secured Battery C, 1/7th Arty vic HON QUAN airfield. 2/28th Inf secured the LOC NINH airstrip and 3d Brigade CP. Company B patrolled west to vic XU 702115, then north to XU 710130, east to XU 725127, south to XU 722112, and southwest returning to the perimeter at 1617H with negative contact.

17 June - Changes in Task Organization

1st Brigade
D/1/5th Arty returned to LAI KHE

1st Brigade conducted search and destroy operations in AO's SILVER, BLOOD and FALCON. 2/2d Inf swept from their overnight position to LZ SUSAN (XT 6658) and at 1220 were lifted back to MINH THANH closing vic XT 631665 at 1719H. 1/2d Inf swept from their RON position in AO FALCON and established a patrol base vic XT 755585. All elements closed at 1415H. 1/16th Inf secured the brigade base camp and engineer elements working on the MINH THANH airstrip. Company B was lifted from RON position vic XT 754545 and returned to the battalion base camp at 1550H. 3d Brigade elements conducted patrols and search and destroy operations. 1/16th Inf moved Company B at 0200H to a blocking position north of the village at XU 7203. CIDG forces swept north through the village into the block with negative contact. Company B swept back to their base camp area closing at 0915H with negative contact. Company A patrolled

to vic XU 760078 returning to the battalion CP at 1620H with negative contact. 2/18th Inf provided security for the division CP at QUAN LOI with platoon size patrols while Troop A, 1/4th Cav secured the HON QUAN airfield. 2/28th Inf (-) secured the LOC NINH airfield. While sweeping from their overnight position Company A engaged seven VC vic XU 744131 capturing three and one carbine.

18 June - Changes in Task Organization

1st Inf Div
8/6th Arty (-) (CHON THANH) (GS-Reinf 2/13)
1st Brigade
A/1/28th Inf detach 1730H
3d Brigade
1/4th Cav (-) (AN LOC)
A/1/4th Cav detach 1900H

Operation EL PASO II continued with the division increasing the number of participating units. 1/4th Cav (-) with Troops B and C conducted a ROADRUNNER operation from PHU LOI to HON QUAN over Route 13. The squadron also provided convoy security for Headquarters 8/6th Arty and Battery B, 8/6th Arty which moved to CHON THANH to join Battery D, 8/6th Arty and 2/13th Arty (-). The squadron closed HON QUAN at 1615H and came under OPCON 3d Brigade. Troop A, 1/4th Cav returned to LAI KHE after the squadron minus closed HON QUAN leaving one platoon at CHON THANH to secure artillery elements. The operation was conducted without incident.

1st Brigade elements conducted local patrols around battalion perimeters while engineer elements continued work on the MINH THANH airstrip. Company B, 1/28th Inf was detached from 2/16th Inf and moved from MINH THANH by CV-2 and CH-47 to PHUOC VINH closing at 1730H.

3d Brigade elements conducted security patrols in the LOC NINH, HON QUAN, and QUAN LOI areas. A stay behind patrol from Company C, 1/6th Inf engaged two VC squads vic XU 720995 wounding three. The remainder of the company moved from their RON position and swept the area in an attempt to regain contact with negative results. The company returned to their RON position vic XU 726015. A stay behind patrol vic XT 728995 engaged three VC at 1755H. The VC fled and a subsequent search of the area revealed pools of blood and evidence that a body had been dragged away. 2/18th Inf dispatched a patrol from Company C to vic XT 832894 to assist a PF unit in contact. The patrol received 30 rounds SA fire in the contact area, and after returning the fire swept the area with negative contact. 2/28th Inf conducted an airmobile assault with Company C into LZ KING (XU 659048) at 0940H. The company swept into a blocking position established by 2/9th ARVN elements from XU 708085 to XU 707077. At 1520 Company C passed through the blocking forces and returned to the LOC NINH perimeter with negative contact.

19 June - Both brigades continued patrols and search and destroy operations with no significant enemy contact. 1st Brigade CP moved to XT 640670. 1/2d Inf swept the southeast area of AO FALCON. 2/2d Inf assumed responsibility for the defense of the brigade base camp at 0800H and secured engineer work parties in the area. 2/16th Inf searched VC supply routes in AO SNOW (XT 615725) and placed trip flares along supply trails.

3d Brigade continued patrols and search and destroy operations around LOC NINH, HON QUAN, and QUAN LOI. 1/4th Cav (-) conducted a reconnaissance of Route 13 from HON QUAN north along Route 13 to vic XT 7396 and returned. Troop B received sporadic SA fire during the

19 operation. 2/18th Inf elements swept five kilometers to the northeast and southeast of QUAN LOI and continued security of the division CP with negative contact. 2/28th Inf patrolled around the LOC NINH airstrip with negative contact. Company B moved to an overnight position vic XU 730125. 1/16th Inf swept areas northeast and southwest of their perimeter with negative contact. Company C returned to the battalion base area from their overnight position at 1155H.

20 June - Changes in Task Organization

Division Troops
1/28th Inf OPCON 1307H (SONG BE)
B/1/5th Arty Atch 1/28th Inf 0938H
D/1/4th Cav detach
1st Brigade
1/2d Inf detach 1245H
D/1/5th Arty (DS) 2/16th Inf 1450H (DAU TIENG)

The 1st Infantry Division continued Operation EL PASO II moving infantry battalions with supporting artillery to the SONG BE and DAU TIENG areas.

1st Brigade Forward CP moved a tactical element to DAU TIENG along with 2/16th Inf and Battery D, 1/5th Arty. Preparations were conducted to locate VC caches in the area west of DAU TIENG. 2/2d Inf secured the brigade CP at MINH THANH and patrolled AO BLUE with negative contact. One platoon of Troop A, 1/4th Cav continued security of artillery elements at CHON THANH. 1/2d Inf was extracted from AO FALCON. The battalion (-) moved to PHUOC VINH with Company A going to LAI KHE.

1/28th Inf was lifted with Battery B, 1/5th Arty from PHUOC VINH to SONG BE airfield under division control. Company B moved from LAI KHE to join the battalion.

3d Brigade elements conducted search and destroy operations in conjunction with CIDG and ARVN forces. 2/28th Inf with CIDG forces sealed and searched the village at XU 7413. Village men were screened and 14 VCC were pointed out by a VC captured on 18 June. The battalion with the CIDG forces returned to LOC NINH closing at 1605H. 2/18th Inf (-) swept the AN LOC Rubber Plantation east from vic XT 7093 while Troop B, 1/4th Cav blocked on the south. Troop C, 1/4th Cav and two RF companies assumed blocking positions along Route 13. RF elements and one ARVN Cav troop blocked from XT 7193 to XT 7393. Companies A and B, 2/18th Inf completed the sweep to Route 13 at 1650H with negative contact and all elements returned to their base camps at HON QUAN - QUAN LOI. 1/16th Inf swept from their base camp southeast to vic XU 775025 and northeast to vic XT 7809 and back with negative contact.

21 June - Changes in Task Organization

Division Troops
B/1/5th Arty Atch 1/28th Inf (SONG BE)
1st Brigade
C/1/4th Cav OPCON 2013H

Operation EL PASO II continued with 1st Brigade conducting airmobile assaults northwest of DAU TIENG and locating additional supply caches. 2/16th Inf conducted airmobile assaults into LZs PINK (XT 455553) and RED (XT 470515). Companies A and B searched the area vic LZ RED locating small VC base camps and caches. The two companies engaged small VC forces with four VC KIA (BC), two VC KIA (Prob), and one VC captured.

Company C lifted into PINK at 1510H and located ten tons of rice vic XT 446559. At 1850H Company B located 183 tons of rice vic XT 455530. Comapny A remained overnight vic XT 463522, Company B XT 447438, and Company C XT 448550. 2/2d Inf secured the brigade CP and engineer work parties at MINH THANH while maintaining one company as the brigade RRF.

3d Brigade continued security operations around base camps in BINH LONG Province. 1/16th Inf remained as RRF for possible commitment in the SONG BE area. 2/28th Inf continued to secure the LOC NINH airfield. Company A searched the high ground northeast of LOC NINH vic XU 772122 with negative contact. 2/18th Inf secured the division forward CP at QUAN LOI minus the recon platoon which was attached to Troop C, 1/4th Cav for its move.

1/4th Cav regained OPCON of Troop D at 1700H. Troop B escorted Battery C, 1/7th Arty from HON QUAN to a firing position vic XT 7983 to support a Troop C move to MINH THANH. One platoon of Troop A remained at CHON THANH and secured 8/6th Arty and 2/13th Arty (-). 1/28th Inf with Battery B, 1/5th Arty continued operations in the SONG BE area conducting company and platoon size patrols around the battalion and airfield base.

22 June - Changes in Task Organization

1st Brigade
1/2d Inf TAC CP atch 1513H (MINH THANH)
A/1/2d Inf
C/1/4th Cav atch 1/2d Inf 1600H

1st Infantry Division forces continued to discover VC supply caches in the DAU TIENG AO, uncovering 277 tons of rice and 100 sheets of tin. 2/2d Inf conducted a battalion size airmobile assault into LZ YELLOW (XT 415528) to assist 2/16th Inf in their search for VC rice caches. The battalion CP and Company A remained vic XT 408515 where they secured Battery A, 2/13th Arty which was moved into the AO by CH-47 from CHON THANH. Company B searched to vic XT 435541 where they remained overnight, Company C established an overnight position vic XT 412565. 2/16th Inf continued to exploit and search areas of previous cache discoveries. Company B uncovered 250 additional tons in the vic of the cache located XT 447537. Company C located and destroyed four tons of rice, 100 sheets of tin vic XT 445550. 1/2d Inf moved Company B from PHUOC VINH to secure the brigade CP at MINH THANH.

The 3d Brigade conducted a ROADRUNNER operation south of LOC NINH, and HON QUAN along Route 13 to destroy VC road blocks and reported tax collection points. 1/16th Inf moved Company C south along Route 13 to vic XT 722995 with negative results. Troop B, 1/4th Cav patrolled south along Route 13 to vic XT 765610 and removed four roadblocks in route. 2/18th Inf provided security for Division Forward CP and the QUAN LOI airfield. 2/28th Inf secured the LOC NINH airstrip and searched the high ground vic XU 7312 with negative contact.

1/28th Inf continued extensive patrols in company AO's around the battalion perimeter at SONG BE. There was negative contact.

23 June - Changes in Task Organization

1st Brigade
B/1/2d Inf OPCON 1/2d Inf 1035H
C/1/2d Inf OPCON 1/2d Inf 1720H
3d Brigade
1/16th Inf returned to LAI KHE 1720

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The 1st Infantry Division continued Operation EL PASO II. Additional VC caches were uncovered and several minor contacts were established in the DAU TIENG area. ROADRUNNER operations continued along Route 13. In the SONG BE area, 1/28th Inf received five mortar rounds at 0630H in their battalion perimeter. Company size patrols were conducted out to five kilometers from the base camp.

Security for the 1st Brigade CP at MINH THANH was provided by Company A, 1/2d Inf and Troop C, 1/4th Cav. Company B, 1/2d Inf moved from PHUOC VINH to MINH THANH while Company C moved from LAI KHE to MINH THANH. 2/2d Inf uncovered several VC supply caches and destroyed several small VC base camps. 2/16th Inf uncovered a major cache which contained 100C tons of rice and 8000 sheets of tin vic XT 447543. Company A killed four VC (BC) in a fire fight in the vic of the supply cache. Company B engaged an unknown number of VC at 1100H vic XT 448544 and estimated four killed. There was no major contact by the 3d Brigade elements conducting security operations in BINH LONG Province. Troop B, 1/4th Cav with Company B, 2/18th Inf moved north along Route 13 to the CAM LE Bridge (XT 723973) and searched south and east of the bridge with negative contact. 2/18th Inf (-) secured the Division Forward CP and conducted local patrols at QUAN LOI. 1/16th Inf moved to the LOC NINH airstrip where the battalion (-) was lifted to LAI KHE. Company C was lifted to PHUOC VINH closing at 1520H. 2/28th Inf conducted local patrols around LOC NINH and moved Company B to secure Battery C, 2/13th Arty vic XU 7406.

24 June - Changes in Task Organization

1st Brigade
C/1/4th Cav released OPCON 0730H

Significant food and supply caches continued to be uncovered in the DAU TIENG area. 2/2d Inf searched AO HORSE (XT 455575) uncovering several small caches and engaging 25 VC at a VC boat building site vic XT 459568. While searching vic XT 455553 Company B, 2/16th Inf killed one VC (BC) and captured one CHICOM SMG. The company uncovered a supply cache that yielded 25 tons of salt, 15 tons of dried fish, 1000 gallons of kerosene, 8000 aluminum pans, 1000 cans sardines, ten 55 gallon drums of oil, 500 hoes, and 900 soup ladles. 1/2d Inf secured the brigade CP at MINH THANH.

The 3d Brigade conducted a ROADRUNNER operation with cavalry and infantry elements. Troop B, 1/4th Cav and Company A, 2/18th Inf cleared Route 13 from HON QUAN to CHON THANH. Company B, 2/18th Inf and Battery C, 1/7th Arty moved to a firing position vic XT 7680 to support. Troop C was released from OPCON 1st Brigade and at 0730 moved to vic XT 7680. Company A, 2/18th Inf returned to QUAN LOI. 2/28th Inf continued local security operations around the LOC NINH airfield.

25 June - The extraction/destruction of VC rice and supply caches continued in the DAU TIENG AO. 2/2d Inf located ten tons of rice vic XT 449552 and 12 tons vic XT 451572 and destroyed several small base camps in AO HORSE. 2/16th Inf destroyed VC supply caches vicinity LZ PINK and conducted local patrols which killed one VC (BC) vic XT 451551 at 1025H. 1/2d Inf patrolled in AO BLUE and around the 1st Brigade CP at MINH THANH, with Company B destroying 1.5 tons of rice and five huts vic their overnight position (XT 410515).

The 3d Brigade conducted patrols in the LOC NINH area with 2/28th Inf and in the QUAN LOI area with 2/18th Inf. There was negative contact. 1/4th Cav (-) continued to secure the HON QUAN airfield with two troops.

1/28th Inf conducted daylight patrols in the SONG BE AO to the north and northwest of the airfield. At 2345H the battalion received five rounds 60mm mortar fire which caused no casualties or damage.

26 June - Changes in Task Organization

3d Brigade
1/28th Inf OPCON 1850H
B/1/5th Arty Atch 2/33d Arty (-) 1200H
C/2/13th Arty Atch 2/33d Arty (-) 1200H

Operation EL PASO continued and an increase in enemy contacts was noted while the division repositioned elements at SONG BE.

1st Brigade elements continued the destruction of VC rice caches in the DAU TIENG area. 2/2d Inf killed two VC (BC) and captured two SA rifles in a brief fire fight at 1030 vic XT 458564. 2/16th Inf prepared rice caches for destruction by bombing and contamination by chemical agents (CS-1). 1/2d Inf continued security of the brigade CP and engineer work elements at MINH THANH. Company B located and destroyed a platoon size base camp vic XT 438514.

The 3d Brigade gained OPCON of 1/28th Inf and Battery B, 1/5th Arty at SONG BE and moved Company A, 2/28th Inf and Battery C, 2/13th Arty to the SONG BE AO to assist in the security of the airfield and search for VC forces. 1/28th Inf made contact with an estimated VC company at vic XU 245095 which resulted in seven VC KIA (BC), 21 VC KIA (Prob) and several weapons captured. 2/28th Inf (-) continued security patrols around LOC NINH conducting a platoon size combat assault into an LZ vic XT 7707 with negative contact. Company B remained in vic XU 7604. 2/18th Inf made contact with an estimated VC company when an ambush patrol from Company B became engaged at 0005H vic XT 808898. A platoon size relief force encountered an unknown number of VC approximately 1000 meters from the ambush site. Results of the contacts disclosed five VC KIA (BC) and various weapons captured.

2/18th Inf elements sustained four KIA and six WIA. 1/4th Cav (-) moved at first light to blocking positions east and south of QUAN LOI in conjunction with 2/18th Infantry search and destroy operation to intercept the VC company engaged earlier.

27 June - Changes in Task Organization

Division Troops
2/18th Inf 1200H
1/4th Cav (-) 1200H
C/1/7th Arty Atch 8/6th Arty (-) 0800H
8/6th Arty (-) (DS) 2/18th Inf 0800H

1st Infantry Division continued Operation EL PASO II, searching the cache areas west of DAU TIENG and reinforcing operations in the SONG BE area.

1st Brigade TF continued destruction of the rice caches with 2/2d Inf in AO HORSE and 2/16th Inf working in LZ PINK. A CH-47 working out of LZ PINK crashed and burned on take off killing the pilot. Both battalions received harassing SA fire during the day. 1/2d Inf secured the 1st Brigade MINH THANH CP and engineer elements repairing the airfield. Mortar and artillery fire was placed in vic XT 405505 and XT 400500 where Company B was receiving SA fire and two VC were estimated killed.

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3d Brigade CP with 2/28th Inf (-) and 2/33d Arty (-) displaced to SONG BE airfield and assumed control of 1/28th Inf and its elements in the SONG BE AO. Company C, 2/28th Inf remained at LOC NINH and secured equipment and supplies still to be moved. 1/28th Inf secured the NUI BA RA airfield conducting company and platoon size search and destroy operations in the AO. 2/18th Inf was placed under division control at 1200H with 1/4th Cav (-) attached. The infantry battalion continued security operations around QUAN LOI while 1/4th Cav supported an ARVN resupply convoy by conducting a ROADRUNNER operation from HON QUAN to LOC NINH with Troop C.

28 June - Changes in Task Organization

1st Brigade
2/16th Inf detach 1640H
1/2d Inf (-) detach 1925H
2/2d Inf detach 1901H
Hq and A/2/13th Arty detach 1740H
1/18th Inf Atch 1600H (MINH THANH)

The 1st Infantry Division continued relocation of elements in Operation EL PASO II. 1st Brigade moved 1/2d Inf (-) from MINH THANH and Company C, 1/2d Inf from the DAU TIENG AO to PHUOC VINH closing at 1925H. 2/2d Inf was airlifted from LZ PINK to DAU TIENG airfield, then moved to LAI KHE closing at 1910H. 2/16th Inf swept to LZ PINK killing one VC (BC) vic XT 447548 enroute. They were lifted to DAU TIENG and moved by C-123 to BIEN HOA, closing at 1640H. 1/18th Inf moved by C-123 from BIEN HOA to MINH THANH where they closed at 1600H and assumed defense of the brigade CP and airfield. There were no major contacts during the moves.

3d Brigade completed its move out of LOC NINH when Company C, 2/28th Inf and trains closed SONG BE at 1700H. Company A, 2/28th Inf conducted an airmobile assault into an LZ vic YU 185035 and searched the area with negative results. 1/28th Inf swept west to the SONG BE River vic YU 189110 from NUI BA RA and returned at 1500H with negative contact.

In the QUAN LOI - HON QUAN areas, security operations continued. 2/18th Inf conducted one platoon size patrol to vic XT 803913 and secured the Division Forward CP. Troop B, 1/4th Cav with an RF company, cleared Route 13 south from HON QUAN to vic east - west grid line Troop C and a CIDG platoon sealed and searched villages at XT 83[illegible] XT 862877, XT 862899 with negative contact.

29 June - Changes in Task Organization

Division Troops
1/18th Inf OPCON 1st Div 0900H
Detach 1st Bde Fwd CP 1745H
B/1/2d Inf 1703H (-)
D/1/5th Arty 1530H

1st Brigade terminated participation in Operation EL PASO II returning to PHUOC VINH. 1/18th Inf continued to secure the engineer work parties at MINH THANH under division control.

2/18th Inf with 1/4th Cav attached continued security missions for the division base at QUAN LOI and conducted search and destroy and patrol operations in the QUAN LOI - HON QUAN AO's. Troop B, 1/4th Cav with Company D, 2/18th Inf attached conducted a ROADRUNNER and search and destroy along Route B to vic XT 873993. During the operation a small

amount of SA ammo, some medical supplies, and documents were discovered. Company A and Troop C with one CIDG platoon searched AO PINK (XT 807817) during the night and sealed the village in the vicinity.

The 3d Brigade TF continued operations in the SONG BE AO with 1/28th Inf conducting a battalion airmobile assault into LZ RED (YT 197995). The battalion swept to the west and closed into overnight positions vic YT 204994.

2/28th Inf remained vic NUI BA RA airfield. A patrol from Company A engaged 20 VC in a short fire fight at 1850H vic YU 191041 with negative results.

30 June - Changes in Task Organization

1st Brigade OPCON 1st Div Fwd 1530H
1/2d Inf OPCON 1530H
1/28th Inf OPCON 1620H
2/18th Inf OPCON 1550H
1/4th Cav (-) OPCON 1550H
8/6th Arty (-) DS 1/4th Cav (-)
A/2/33d Arty Atch 8/6th Arty (-) 1850H
C/1/7th DS 1st Bde

1st Infantry Division forces continued the search for elements of the 9th VC Division. A major engagement with the 271st VC Main Force Regiment vic of SROK DONG (XT 7299) resulted (Annex A). The battle developed when Troops B and C, 1/4th Cav conducting a ROADRUNNER operation from HON QUAN to LOC NINH on Route 13 received heavy mortar, SA and AW fire at 0930H vic XU 723014. Armed helicopters and artillery fired in support along one side of the road while air strikes were employed on the other side. A total of 88 Air Force fighter bomber sorties were flown during the battle. 2/18th Inf and Troop C, 1/4th Cav were committed. 2/18th Inf assaulted an LZ north of the VC positions vic XU 724014 with Companies A and B. Company C, 2/18th Inf and Troop C, 1/4th Cav moved along Route 13 to relieve Troop B and became heavily engaged vic XT 720986. Three CIDG companies, one ARVN APC troop and two companies of 1/9th ARVN Regiment were placed under OPCON 1st Infantry Division and assisted by blocking south and north of the contact area. 1/2d Inf was airlifted into LZ BLUE (XT 6799) west of the contact and swept east into the blocks. All elements of 2/18th Inf along with the cavalry troops were engaged in heavy contact until approximately 1730H. The VC losses were 267 VC KIA (BC), 300 VC KIA (Prob), 15 VCC, 23 crew served weapons, and 40 SA rifles captured.

The 1st Brigade rejoined Operation EL PASO II, moving a CP to QUAN LOI with OPCON of 1/2d Inf, 1/28th Inf, 2/18th Inf and 1/4th Cav (-). 1/28th Inf moved from NUI BA RA airfield to QUAN LOI and secured the division CP and airfield remaining on strip alert.

3d Brigade continued operations in the SONG BE AO with 2/28th Inf and Battery C, 2/13th Arty at NUI BA RA. Company B, 2/28th Infantry secured Battery B, 1/5th Arty vic YU 190134.

1 July - Changes in Task Organization

Division Troops
2/2d Inf OPCON (QUAN LOI)
C/1/7th Arty Atch 2/2d Inf 1530H
B/1/5th Arty (-) Atch C/1/7th Arty

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1st Infantry Division forces in conjunction with 5th ARVN Division forces continued to search the vicinity of the previous day's contact and moved forces to the west of Route 13 to interdict fleeing VC forces. Numerous shallow graves containing VC bodies were discovered during the day's operation.

1st Brigade positioned forces to prevent remnants of the 271st Regiment from escaping into Cambodia. 1/2d Inf was lifted into LZ BLUE (XT 668985) where Company C remained to secure Battery A, 2/33d Arty which was lifted into the LZ at 0843H. Companies A and B swept to vic XU 710031 where they remained overnight. One VC was captured during the sweep. 1/28th Inf conducted an airmobile assault on LZ GREEN (XT 6199) then swept to vic XU 660015. Sporadic sniper fire was encountered and one VC was killed (BC) vic XU 605002. 2/18th Inf initially searched the battle area then at 1600H the battalion conducted an airmobile assault into LZ PINK (XU 592025). Headquarters and Company C moved to overnight positions vic XU 589109, Company B vic XU 590039, Company A vic XU 607019. Company A received mortar and SA fire commencing at about 1800 and lasting until 2020H sustaining six KHA and 15 WHA (Annex A). 1/4th Cav (-) linked up with 1/2d Inf (-) vic Objective SOCCER (XT 674998) where they remained overnight. Troop C moved to LZ BLUE and joined Company C, 1/2d Inf securing Battery A, 2/33d Arty.

3d Brigade CP remained at the NUI BA RA airfield with 2/28th Inf. Battery B, 1/5th Arty moved three tubes to QUAN LOI, the remaining 105 howitzer and personnel were secured by Company B, 2/28th Inf vic YU 187135.

1/18th Inf under division control secured engineer elements working on the MINH THANH airstrip.

2 July - Changes in Task Organization

Division Troops
2/18th Inf OPCON 1530H
1st Brigade
2/2d Inf OPCON 1515H
3d Brigade
1/16th Inf OPCON
B/1/5th Arty

1st Brigade continued search and blocking operations west of Route 13. 2/18th Inf (-) was attacked at 0550H by 3d Battalion, 273d VC Regiment. Artillery and air strikes were called in with the Air Force using three flights of Sky Spot in close air support. 1/28th Inf moved from overnight positions to support 2/18th Inf. The two battalions joined up and swept the defensive position after the VC broke contact at 0910H. Results of the battle include 70 VC KIA (BC), and 110 VC KIA (Prob). 2/18th Inf was extracted to QUAN LOI and placed under OPCON division at 1530H. 1/28th Inf swept north to LZ ROSE (XU 587025) capturing one VC and locating several fresh graves. The battalion remained overnight at LZ ROSE.

1/2d Inf searched the woods north of LZ YELLOW (XU 7202) and located 11 VC bodies, one .50 cal MG, and one 60mm mortar. At 1245 the battalion was lifted from LZ YELLOW to LZ RED (XU 657050). The battalion (-) remained overnight at RED with Company C at XT 666984.

2/2d Inf was returned to 1st Brigade control and lifted into LZ PINK (XU 592025) where they remained overnight.

1/4th Cav (-) with an ARVN APC troop swept to LZ WHITE (XU 657037) where they remained overnight. Troop B secured LZ RED for 1/2d Inf, conducting reconnaissance of roads and trails in the area and returned to LZ BLUE to remain overnight.

The 3d Brigade returned to the LOC NINH area from SONG BE with 2/28th Inf, 2/33d Arty (-), Battery C, 2/13th Arty and elements of Battery B, 1/5th Arty. The remainder of Battery B, 1/5th Arty joined the brigade from QUAN LOI. 1/16th Inf moved from LAI KHE and joined 3d Brigade elements at LOC NINH. Defensive positions around the airfield were improved.

3 July - 1st Infantry Division forces searched and swept the area east of 2/18th Inf contact, and patrolled in the LOC NINH area. ARVN and CIDG forces continued operations in close cooperation with the division.

1st Brigade with 2/2d Inf in the south and 2/28th Inf on the north swept from overnight positions east of the previous day's contact area. Additional graves and bodies were discovered during the sweep. 2/2d Inf remained overnight at LZ WHITE. 1/28th Inf returned to LZ RED. 1/4th Cav (-) conducted a reconnaissance from LZ WHITE to Objective SOCCER (XT 677998) with negative contact, where it remained overnight. Two platoons swept from LZ BLUE to Route 13 vic CAM LE Bridge (XT 722972) which they secured overnight. One platoon remained at LZ BLUE.

3d Brigade airlifted remaining elements from SONG BE AO. 2/28th Inf moved Company C with Battery C, 2/13th Arty overland to a firing position vic XU 685066. A CIDG company joined them and remained overnight. 2/28th Inf (-) and 1/16th Inf in conjunction with 2/9th ARVN Regiment and CIDG forces secured the LOC NINH area.

1/18th Inf provided security for engineers working on the MINH THANH airfield with patrols throughout the rubber plantation. There was no contact.

2/18th Inf remained at QUAN LOI securing the division CP and airfield.

4 July - Changes in Task Organization

1st Brigade
2/18th Inf OPCON 0800H

1st Brigade terminated operations west of Route 13. 1/2d Inf (-) secured LZ RED for 1/28th Inf extraction to QUAN LOI at 0940H. 1/2d Inf (-) moved to LZ WHITE where it joined 1/4th Cav (-) and departed for QUAN LOI at 1040H. Both elements closed QUAN LOI and HON QUAN respectively by 1530H. One VC was captured enroute. Company B, 1/2d Inf was lifted from LZ BLUE and closed QUAN LOI at 1330H. 2/2d Inf moved from LZ WHITE to QUAN LOI by helicopter.

3d Brigade continued search and destroy operations with ARVN and CIDG forces in the LOC NINH area. Company A, 2/28th Inf secured an ACH-47 downed due to mechanical trouble vic XU 697101. Company C and Battery C, 2/13th Arty moved to a new firing position vic XU 685064. Company A, 1/16th Inf swept area vic XU 805067 with negative contact.

1/18th Inf continued security patrols in vic MINH THANH airfield. Five VC were killed (Prob) in a fire fight at 1730H.

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5 July - 1st Infantry Division elements continued patrols and care and maintenance of equipment in the QUAN LOI, HON QUAN, LOC NINH areas.

1st Brigade patrols had negative contact.

3d Brigade elements provided security for the LOC NINH airstrip. Company C, 2/28th Inf with one CIDG company secured the firing position for Battery C, 2/13th Arty (XU 685064).

1/18th Inf secured engineers working at MINH THANH.

6 July - Changes in Task Organization

Division Troops
8/6th Arty (-) GS
1st Brigade
Hq/1/5th Arty (-) DS
A/1/5th Arty
A/2/33d Arty Atch 1/5th Arty (-)

1st Brigade elements defended the HON QUAN, QUAN LOI bases with negative contact.

3d Brigade forces and 9th ARVN elements searched the LOC NINH AO. 1/16th Inf swept along Route 13 south to XT 720986. The battalion discovered 45 decomposed VC bodies vic XU 7200 believed to be from the 30 June battle. The recon platoon remained overnight vicinity XU 723005.

1/18th Inf conducted patrols two - three kilometers from the MINH THANH perimeter and provided security for the engineer elements repairing the airfield.

7 July - Operation EL PASO II continued as both brigades conducted local security around the base camps and prepared for future operations along MINH THANH Road.

1st Brigade began moving 2/2d Inf in small units by helicopter to MINH THANH. 8/6th Arty (-) was escorted to Artillery Base I (XT 709815) by Company B, 2/2d Inf where both elements remained overnight. A deception plan was released placing future division operations in the SROC CON TRANG area.

3d Brigade continued to defend the LOC NINH area in conjunction with ARVN and CIDG forces. 1/16th Inf swept southeast to vic XU 750020 and back to LOC NINH with negative contact.

2/28th Inf conducted a company size airmobile assault around the village XU 712152. Company A searched the village and a patrol engaged five VC vic XU 707147, killing two (Prob). Company B and one CIDG company secured Battery C, 2/13th Arty vic XU 685064.

8 July - Changes in Task Organization

1st Brigade
1/16th Inf OPCON 1635H

1st Infantry Division continued Operation EL PASO II with elements conducting care and maintenance and preparation for future operations. The deception plan continued in the SROC CON TRANG area. B-52 strikes and numerous reconnaissance flights were conducted, and artillery H&I fires increased. Artillery concentrations were plotted and LZ's planned along MINH THANH Road.

1st Brigade continued prepositioning of elements for operations along MINH THANH Road. 2/2d Inf completed infiltration to MINH THANH by helicopter and assisted 1/18th Inf in securing the airstrip. Company B, 1/2d Inf continued to secure 8/6th Arty (-) at Artillery Base I, while Company C with Headquarters, 1/5th Arty and Battery C, 1/7th Arty moved to/and established Artillery Base II vic XT 770780. 1/4th Cav (-) provided convoy security for a 1/28th Inf move to vic NHA TROUNG - MINH DUC (XT 734817). Company B, 1/28th Inf continued on to Artillery Base I to assist with security. 1/4th Cav (-) returned to HON QUAN. 2/18th Inf remained at QUAN LOI and patrolled the area with negative contact. 1/16th Inf moved from LOC NINH to QUAN LOI and was placed under OPCON 1st Brigade.

3d Brigade moved Battery C, 2/13th Arty and Company B, 2/28th Inf from a forward base back to LOC NINH. 2/28th Inf secured the LOC NINH airfield with negative contact.

9 July - Changes in Task Organization

Division Troops
2/18th Inf OPCON
1st Brigade
1/18th Inf OPCON 0600H

The 1st Infantry Division conducted a carefully planned reconnaissance along the MINH THANH Road to lure VC forces into preplanned artillery fires and air strikes. Forces remained on alert to be lifted into preplanned LZ's.

1/4th Cav (-) with Company B, 1/2d Inf attached departed HON QUAN for MINH THANH at 0720H conducting reconnaissance by fire as it moved. At 1048 an airborne FAC observed VC vic XT 675738. Artillery fires were called in and Air Force aircraft on alert for the operation were called. The cavalry TF continued to move and at 1115 became heavily engaged by SA, AW, recoilless rifle and mortar fire from the entrenched VC. Artillery and air support continued, and the cavalry elements returned fire with organic weapons. 1/28th Inf was lifted into an LZ northeast of the contact (XT 6975). 2/2d Inf moved by foot from MINH THANH to LZ 4 south of the contact (XT 685715). 1/18th Inf moved from MINH THANH and attacked from southwest along the north side of MINH THANH Road. The battalion became engaged with a VC blocking force at 1500H vic XT 665741. 1/16th Inf conducted an airmobile assault into an LZ NC vic XT 6878 then moved and blocked northwest of the contact vic XT 645766. 1/4th Cav (-) was resupplied by an ARVN APC troop from HON QUAN, while other ARVN elements at CHON THANH and LOC NINH were prepared to assist. As the VC forces attempted to flee to the north, 2/2d Inf was lifted from LZ 4 and lifted to LZ NC and moved southeast 2000 meters to a blocking position. The VC broke contact about 1330H and 1st Infantry Division elements began consolidating overnight positions. At darkness 160 VC bodies had been counted with seven VC captured. The VC force was identified as the 272d Regiment recently reconstituted with elements from the NVA. The Air Force supported the operation with 96 sorties and with the artillery continued fires on suspected VC escape routes. 2/2d Inf and 1/16th Inf remained in their blocking positions overnight. 1/18th Inf remained vic XT 665741. 1/28th Inf withdrew to a RON location vic XT 665742, while 1/4th Cav (-) moved Troop B to vic XT 664737 and Troop C to vic XT 691750 to RON.

During the contact 1/2d Inf (-) secured Artillery Bases I and II while 2/18th Inf secured the QUAN LOI area and remained on alert as the division RRF.

In the LOC NINH area, 2/28th Inf secured the 3d Brigade CP and remained on alert for possible committment into the contact area.

10 July - 1st Infantry Division forces conducted, search and destroy operations following the previous day's battle. The VC body count rose to 238 with an additional 100 VC estimated killed. Nine crew served weapons and 29 SA weapons were captured. 1st Infantry Division elements sustained 22 KHA and 100 WHA.

1st Brigade forces continued to locate and destroy VC forces. 1/18th Inf engaged an unknown number of VC vic XT 652739 and sustained two KHA and 13 WHA. VC results were unknown. 1/28th Inf searched the battle field locating additional VC bodies and weapons. The battalion remained overnight vic XT 645736. 1/4th Cav (-) with Company B, 1/2d Inf attached moved to MINH THANH and secured the airfield and engineer repair parties. 1/16th Inf killed one VC at 0230H vic their RON position. Company A swept southeast encountering a platoon size VC force and killing four (BC) vic XT 644775. The company located and destroyed a battalion size base camp in the contact area. 2/2d Inf swept from their RON position to Objective DICK (XT 695750) with negative contact. 1/2d Inf (-) secured artillery elements at Bases I and II.

2/18th Inf conducted patrols in the QUAN LOI area and secured the division CP with negative contact.

3d Brigade CP remained at LOC NINH. 2/28th Inf swept to the east and southeast with negative contact.

11 July - Changes in Task Organization

1st Brigade
2/18th Inf OPCON 1500H

Operation EL PASO II continued as 1st Brigade forces moved from overnight positions north of MINH THANH to QUAN LOI. 1/4th Cav (-) with Company B, 1/2d Inf and engineer elements moved from MINH THANH by road to HON QUAN. 1/18th Inf returned to MINH THANH while 2/2d Inf, 1/16th Inf and 1/28th Inf were extracted from LZs and moved by helicopter to QUAN LOI.

2/18th Inf secured the QUAN LOI area and came under OPCON 1st Brigade at 1500H.

3d Brigade CP remained at LOC NINH. 2/28th Inf swept to the southeast and back with negative contact.

12 July - Changes in Task Organization

1st Brigade
2/2d Inf detch 1722H moved to LAI KHE
2/18th Inf detch 2400H moved to CAMP COX

2d Brigade headquarters commenced movement by air from CAMP COX to QUAN LOI in preparation for participation in Operation EL PASO III. Fifteen of 31 lifts closed QUAN LOI by 2400 hours.

1st Brigade redeployed units from EL PASO AO to base camps and patrolled the brigade perimeter at QUAN LOI. 1/4th Cav (-) secured the AN LOC airfield and conducted a ROADRUNNER operation from AN LOC to XT 710817 between 0630 and 1130 hours.

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3d Brigade and 2/28th Inf conducted trail security patrols vic LOC NINH airfield without contact. 2/2d Inf moved from QUAN LOI to LAI KHE by air and came under 3d Brigade control at 1722 hours.

8/6th Arty (-) and Battery A, 1/5th Arty moved by road from XT 710817 to AN LOC, closing at 1115 hours.

13 July - Changes in Task Organization

2d Brigade
1/16th Inf OPCON 0700H
1/18th Inf OPCON 0700H
1/28th Inf OPCON 0700H
1/4th Cav (-) OPCON 0700H
B/1/7th Arty (DS) 1520H
1st Brigade detch 07 OH
1/2d Inf detch 2000H

Operation EL PASO moved into PHASE III. The 2d Brigade CP closed QUAN LOI at 1520 hours.

The 3d Brigade continued to secure the LOC NINH airfield. The 1st Brigade terminated its participation in PHASE II at 0700 hours.

The 2d Brigade assumed the responsibility of the defense of QUAN LOI, MINH THANH, and AN LOC. Reconnaissance patrols and search and destroy operations were conducted without contact.

The 3d Brigade continued to secure the LOC NINH airfield and conducted local patrols.

14 July - Changes in Task Organization

2d Brigade
1/16th Inf detch 1700H
2/16th Inf atch 0921H
3d Brigade Hq detch 1300H (TAC CP remains LOC NINH)
A/2/33d Arty detch 1620H

2d Brigade repositioned forces for future operations, conducted patrols within the TAOR and conducted care and maintenance. 1/16th Inf was airlifted from QUAN LOI to LAI KHE and attached to 3d Brigade at 1200 hours. 2/16th Inf was airlifted from LAI KHE to QUAN LOI and attached 2d Brigade 0921.

3d Brigade moved its headquarters by air to LAI KHE at 1300 hours. The brigade TAC CP and 2/28th Inf remained at LOC NINH, securing the airfield in conjunction with ARVN and CIDG forces.

15 July - Changes in Task Organization

3d Brigade TAC CP detch 1310H
2/28th Inf

2d Brigade conducted extensive patrols to south, west, and north of QUAN LOI. 1/18th Inf moved by air from MINH THANH to LOC NINH and assumed responsibility for the perimeter at 1200 hours.

3d Brigade TAC CP and 2/28th Inf moved by air from LOC NINH to LAI KHE closing at 1310 hours.

Battery C, 2/33d Arty was airlifted from MINH THANH to LOC NINH.

16 July - Changes in Task Organization

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2d Brigade
B/1/5th Arty (DS)
Hq/2/33d Arty detch
B/1/5th Arty detch
C/2/13th Arty detch
Hq/1/5th Arty detch

Extensive day and night patrols were conducted without contact. Troop C, 1/4th Cav (-) conducted a mounted patrol in the rubber plantation three - seven kilometers west of AN LOC.

17 July - Extensive patrols were conducted in the AN LOC - QUAN LOI - LOC NINH area with negative contact.

18 July - 2d Brigade conducted a road clearing operation from AN LOC along Route 13 to XT 765745. TF HATHAWAY: 2/16th Inf (-) was reinforced by one RF company, a US/ARVN engineer detachment, and 3/1st Cav (ARVN) moved to repair the bridge at XT 765745 and closed back to AN LOC at 1700 hours.

TF LEWANE: 1/4th Cav (-) was reinforced with Companies A and C, 2/16th Inf and assisted TF HATHAWAY on the operation to secure Route 13 and repair the bridge.

1/28th Inf defended QUAN LOI and served as brigade RRF.

19 July - 2d Brigade conducted extensive patrols in the AOs.

20 July - Operation SAN DIEGO/EL PASO III, was postponed due to adverse flying weather. The plan called for TF's LEWANE and HATHAWAY to open Route 13 from AN LOC to Bench Mark 69 (XT 766745). A combined US/ARVN engineer detachment would repair the road. In addition to normal local security of the QUAN LOI - AN LOC - LOC NINH perimeter, Company C, 1/18th Inf (-) conducted a joint search and destroy operation with 2/9th ARVN (-) north of LOC NINH to NHA THRONG.

21 July - The 2d Brigade forces conducted local search and destroy operations and extensive platoon and company-sized patrols.

22 July - 2d Brigade conducted Operation SAN DIEGO/EL PASO III, a ROADRUNNER operation along Route 13 south of AN LOC.

TF's LEWANE and HATHAWAY cleared Route 13 from AN LOC to Line LONDON (XT 767757). Each task force consisted of US infantry and cavalry personnel. One company from 1/9th ARVN Inf and 3/1st Cav (ARVN) participated with TF HATHAWAY. Engineer elements made road repairs at LONDON and both task forces closed AN LOC without contact.

23 July - Patrols were conducted from the perimeters at AN LOC - QUAN LOI - LOC NINH without contact. Company A, 1/18th Inf surrounded the village of MINH THANH (XU 7608) at 0500 hours for District and ARVN forces to search at first light.

24 July - Extensive patrolling was conducted from base camps. The counterattack plan for AN LOC and LOC NINH was rehearsed.

25 July - Ten platoon-sized and three company-sized patrols were conducted from the QUAN LOI - LOC NINH perimeters without contact. 2/28th Inf conducted Eagle Flights in conjunction with 1/4th Cav (-).

26 July - At 1940 hours, an ambush patrol from 1/18th Inf received small arms fire from an unknown number of VC at XU 766076. No casualties were sustained and contact was broken at 2000 hours.

27 July - Extensive patrolling was conducted in the QUAN LOI and LOC NINH areas. A joint US/ARVN cordon and search operation was conducted. Company C 1/28th Inf moved from overnight position and sealed the Village of TRA THANH (XU 770084). The cordon was in position at 0400 when it received small arms fire from two VC who fled back into TRA THANH. At 0730 a platoon from 1/4th Cav and one ARVN company searched the village and apprehended two female VCS.

28 July - At 0200, 2/16th Inf (-) passed through 1/28th Inf portion of the QUAN LOI perimeter and surrounded and hamlet of PHU MIENG (XT 790912). At 0630 a platoon from 1/4th Cav and one ARVN company searched the hamlet with negative results. Extensive patrolling was conducted from all perimeters.

29 July - Extensive patrols were conducted without contact. The Recon Platoon, 1/18th Inf commenced a two day operation in conjunction with a CIDG company. Two VCS were apprehended.

30 July - Changes in Task Organization

2d Brigade
1/28th Inf detch 0615H

Security of AN LOC - QUAN LOI - LOC NINH continued without contact. 2/16th Inf (-) assumed responsibility for the QUAN LOI perimeter with the extraction 1/28th Inf at 0615 hours.

31 July - Change in Task Organization

2d Brigade
1/28th Inf OPCON 1310H

A ROADRUNNER operation was conducted by TF LEWANE (1/4th Cav (-), C/2/16th Inf) along Route 13 to CAM LE Bridge (XT 722973). No contact was made and the TF returned to AN LOC without contact.

1/28th Inf was airlifted from LAI KHE to QUAN LOI. Upon closure at 1310, the battalion assumed responsibility for their portion of the QUAN LOI perimeter.

1 August - 5 August - Changes in Task Organization

2/16th Inf detch for period of Operation CHEYENNE
1/18th Inf
1/4th Cav
B/2/33d Arty detch 1640H

The 2d Brigade continued extensive patrolling and redeployed forces for Operation CHEYENNE. 2d Bn, 16th Inf secured the portion of QUAN LOI perimeter and conducted patrols out to a distance of 3000 meters to the east. The LRRP made contact with four VC vic XT 658836, but the VC fled, leaving a US carbine and an unidentified small arm.

1st Bn, 18th Inf moved from LOC NINH by air, closing QUAN LOI at 1823.

1st Bn, 28th Inf conducted two company-sized patrols 6000 meters west and south of QUAN LOI.

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TF LEWANE consisting of one platoon each of cavalry and infantry conducted a recon patrol 8000 meters southwest of AN LOC.

2 August - 1st Bn, 28th Inf secured the QUAN LOI - AN LOC complex and conducted two company-sized patrols north and south of QUAN LOI. The remaining brigade forces were deployed in support of Operation CHEYENNE.

3 August - 1st Bn, 28th Inf continued to secure QUAN LOI - AN LOC complex.

4 August - With the passage of the ARVN resupply convoy from the 2d Brigade Operation CHEYENNE AO, forces were redeployed to QUAN LOI - AN LOC complex. 2/16th Inf and B Troop, 1/4th Cav moved to QUAN LOI. 1/18th Inf also returned to QUAN LOI. Six VC were engaged by a gunship at XT 792792 with undetermined results.

5 August - Changes in Task Organization

2/18th Inf OPCON 1541H
1/4th Cav (-) detch
C/1/4th Cav

With reports of alleged attacks on LOC NINH (XU 742132) by the 101st NVA Regiment, the 2d Bn, 18th Inf was moved from LAI KHE to LOC NINH and coming under OPCON 2d Brigade upon closure at 1541 hours. Company C, 2/18th Inf conducted an airmobile assault into LZ CHEROKEE (XU 742062) and secured it for arrival of a platoon of the Light Assault Artillery Battery. The battalion (-) secured the LOC NINH airfield. 2/16th Inf (-), 1/18th Inf, and 1/28th Inf secured the QUAN LOI perimeter and conducted extensive patrols.

Task Force MEEKS, consisting of 8/6th Arty (-), C Company, 2/16th Inf, B Troop, 1/4th Cav and A Battery, 1/5th Arty moved from AN LOC to a forward artillery base at XT 721972 to support forces at LOC NINH.

6 August - All battalions continued their missions of security for the AN LOC - QUAN LOI - LOC NINH bases. Eight platoon-sized recon patrols were conducted without contact. Three LRRP's were inserted into AO's and closed back to QUAN LOI without contact. One platoon, 2/18th Inf reinforced by a engineer squad conducted an airmobile assault into an LZ vic XU 711190 and cratered Route 13 to deny its use to VC vehicles moving south.

7 August - 2d Brigade continued to secure QUAN LOI and LOC NINH. Extensive patrolling to the west of AN LOC produced no significant results.

8 August - Changes in Task Organization

1/28th Inf detch 1930H

2d Brigade continued to secure the QUAN LOI and LOC NINH airfields and to conduct recon patrols within the TAOR. 1/18th Inf (-) assumed responsibility for the 1/28th Inf sector of the QUAN LOI perimeter when the latter was extracted to PHUOC VINH.

9 August - Changes in Task Organization

1/18th Inf detch 0942H returned to CAMP COX

Reconnaissance and night combat patrols were conducted southwest of AN LOC. 2/16th Inf assumed responsibility for the defense of QUAN LOI at 0942 with the extraction of 1/18th Inf. LRRP Team Red sighted a VC squad using dogs vic XT 720777. Company C, 2/16th Inf (- one platoon) displaced with D Btry, 8/6th Arty to AN LOC.

10 August - 2/18th Inf (-) extracted from LOC NINH to QUAN LOI closing at 2000 hours. One company remained at LOC NINH. The Light Assault Artillery was extracted and returned to QUAN LOI at 1100 hours. All patrol activity was conducted without contact.

11 August - The remainder of 2/18th Inf closed QUAN LOI at 0700.

12 August - Patrols were conducted to the northeast, southeast, and west of QUAN LOI. Company A, 2/18th Inf moved to the AN LOC airstrip and acted as a RRF for an ARVN operation to northwest of QUAN LOI.

13 August - 2d Brigade continued to secure the QUAN LOI - AN LOC complex. Patrols were conducted to the north, east, and west of QUAN LOI.

Company C, 2/16th Inf and two platoons of B Troop were attached to TF McGIFFERT to provide security for movement to a forward artillery base vic XT 705818.

14 August - 2/16th Inf and 2/18th Inf conducted patrols to northeast and southwest of QUAN LOI respectively. A two platoon infantry/cavalry patrol conducted a route recon northwest of AN LOC. One platoon escorted an engineer work detail to the CAM LE Bridge. All activities were concluded without incidents or contact.

15 August - At 0940 hours Company A, 2/18th Inf began a heliborne assault into the MINH THANH area and was joined by a platoon of Light Assault Artillery and B Btry, 1/7th Arty. Extensive patrolling was conducted around QUAN LOI, AN LOC, and MINH THANH with negative contact.

16 August - Units conducted patrols in the QUAN LOI, AN LOC, and MINH THANH areas.

17 August - Reconnaissance patrols were conducted in all directions from the QUAN LOI perimeter. Forces at MINH THANH returned by air to QUAN LOI, closing at 1658 hours.

Team CHARLIE (Company C, 2/16th Inf, B Troop, 1/4th Cav) conducted a route reconnaissance along Route 13 from AN LOC to DUC VINH (XT 763816) and secured and area for MEDCAP teams operations. At 1040, an infantry/cavalry team was dispatched to TAN KHAI (XT 767765) to eliminate a reported VC tax collection point. No contact was made and the team returned to AN LOC at 1215 hours.

18 August - In addition to extensive patrolling around the base at QUAN LOI, six LRRP's were inserted into LZ's 11 kilometers to northwest of AN LOC. There was no contact in the brigade TAOR.

19 August - 2d Brigade commenced Operation BURLINGTON to repair the TAU O Bridge (XT 765729). Team CHARLIE departed AN LOC at 0934 hours and secured Position CHARLIE, two kilometers north of the TAU O Bridge. Company A, 2/16th Inf secured a forward arty base southwest of AN LOC from which 8/6th Arty (-) fired a preparation on LZ BLUE (XT 781729). Following the preparation, Recon Platoon, 2/16th Inf, landed on LZ BLUE and secured it for the landing of B Company at 1120 hours. The bridge

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was secured by 1225 hours and elements of E Company, 1st Engr Bn completed the repairs by 1645 and were extracted. Team CHARLIE displaced to the artillery base and relieved A Company, which closed QUAN LOI at 1950. Company B was extracted at 1748, leaving one platoon at LZ BLUE. 2/18th Inf provided the brigade RRF and conducted patrols to north, west, and south of QUAN LOI.

20 August - Changes in Task Organization

2/18th Inf OPCON 3d Brigade LAI KHE 1217H

Operation BURLINGTON terminated at 1126 hours with the return of the forces from the artillery base and the platoon from LZ BLUE. Patrols were conducted around the perimeter at QUAN LOI and AN LOC without contact.

2/18th Inf was airlifted from QUAN LOI to LAI KHE, closing at 1217 hours and immediately came under OPCON 3d Brigade.

21 August - 2/16th Inf (-) conducted squad size search and destroy patrols in four consecutive areas, using helicopters between areas. Team CHARLIE (Company C, 2/16th Inf (-) and B Troop, 1/4th Cav (-)) conducted route reconnaissance north, west, and south of AN LOC. Negative contact was reported during the day.

22 August - The 2d Brigade continued to provide security for the QUAN LOI - AN LOC area. Extensive patrolling was conducted with negative contact.

23 August - 2/16th Inf (-) continued to defend QUAN LOI. Patrols were dispatched to the north, northwest, west, and south and all returned without contact. Team CHARLIE provided a RRF for ARVN forces conducting a road clearing operation from AN LOC to LOC NINH.

24 August - The 1st Brigade assumed responsibility of Operation EL PASO at 1305 hours and established a forward CP at QUAN LOI. The 2d Brigade moved its CP to CAMP COX.

2/16th Inf (-) continued to provide security for QUAN LOI and dispatched patrols to the west, north, and east of the base camp. Team CHARLIE secured the AN LOC airstrip and conducted route reconnaissance south and west of AN LOC.

25 - 27 August - 2/16th Inf continued to secure the QUAN LOI - AN LOC area. Patrols were conducted with negative contact.

28 August - Changes in Task Organization

Hq 1st Brigade detch 1210H
(3) Hq 2d Brigade atch 1210H

The 3d Brigade assumed OPCON of the EL PASO area at 1210 and the 1st Brigade was extracted to PHUOC VINH. Local patrols were conducted around the AN LOC - QUAN LOI perimeter with negative contact.

29 - 31 August - 3d Brigade continued Operation EL PASO in the QUAN LOI - AN LOC area. Patrols were conducted with negative contact.

1 - 2 September - 3d Brigade continued the defense of the QUAN LOI - AN LOC complex by conducting local patrols.

3 September - Operation EL PASO terminated at 1200 hours when the 3d Brigade forward CP was withdrawn from QUAN LOI.

8. SUPPORTING FORCES:

a. Artillery: (See at Annex Q)

b. Signal:

(1) Size of Force:

Hq 121st Sig Bn	LTC R. R. Curington
A Co	CPT Pierce A. Ruston Jr.
B Co	CPT Gary Howley
C Co	CPT Alan R. Wild
1st Fwd Sig Plat	
2d Fwd Sig Plat	
3d Fwd Sig Plat	

(2) How and When Employed: The battalion provided VHF, HF, and FM radio, and secure on-line teletype service to an Advance Division TOC, 1st, 2d, and 3d Brigades Forward, and Division Artillery Forward.

(3) Concept of Operations:

(a) In order to meet VHF communications required for area of operation, heavy reliance was placed on VHF radio relay. All circuitry for Division Rear to Division Forward was relayed through 121st Signal Battalion VHF relay site at NUI BA DEN mountain and Division Artillery located at PHU LOI.

(b) To provide support for Division Forward, 121st Signal Battalion displaced two AN/MRC-69's for VHF communications, one AN/MGC-17 for secure communication center facilities, one AN/GRC-46 for secure radio teletype operation in Division Operations Net, and one AN/VRC-47 for FM radiowire integration.

(c) In support of 1st Brigade, displaced one AN/MRC-34½ for VHF communications.

(d) In support of 2d Brigade, displaced one AN/MRC-34½ for VHF communications and one AN/GRC-46 for radio (AM) communications in Division Operations Net.

(e) In support of 3d Brigade, displaced one AN/GRC-46 for radio communications in the Division Operations Net.

(4) Execution:

(a) Company C was tasked with the mission of providing communications support for the Division Forward, Forward Logistical Base Elements, and Division Artillery Forward. In order to accomplish this mission, Company C displaced personnel and equipment at AN LOC, QUAN LOI and LAI KHE.

1. On 7 June 1966 Company C began to move communication equipment into AN LOC to provide communication for elements of Division Artillery Forward. Major items of equipment displaced were:

EQUIPMENT	QUANTITY	PURPOSE
AN/MRC-69	2 ea	Provide 48 VHF channels for Division Forward and Division Rear telephone service

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EQUIPMENT	QUANTITY	PURPOSE
AN/GRC-46	1 ea	Division Net #2 (Ratt Intel)
SB/86	1 ea	Local and trunk switching for all elements at AN LOC

2. On 8 June 1966 communication equipment and team members were airlifted into QUAN LOI to provide communication support for Division Forward elements. Major items of equipment displaced were:

EQUIPMENT	QUANTITY	PURPOSE
AN/MRC-69	2 ea	48 VHF channels for Division Forward elements
AN/GRC-46	1 ea	Division Net #2 (Ratt Intel Net)
AN/MTC-7 and SB/611	1 ea	To provide local and trunk switching service for all elements at QUAN LOI

3. On 27 July 1966, the following items of signal equipment were convoyed to LAI KHE to provide communications support for Division Forward elements moving from QUAN LOI to LAI KHE. Major items of equipment displaced were:

EQUIPMENT	QUANTITY	PURPOSE
AN/MRC-34½	1 ea	12 VHF channels for Division Forward elements
AN/MRC-69	1 ea	24 VHF channels for Division Forward
SB/611 and AN/MTC-3	1 ea	Provide local and trunk switching for all elements at QUAN LOI
AN/GRC-26	1 ea	Provice secure Ratt for units in area and back-up for communications center teletype
AN/MGC-17	1 ea	Provide communication service for all units at QUAN LOI

(b) Company B was tasked with the mission of providing communication support for the 1st, 2d, and 3d Brigades. The company was also given the responsibility of providing personnel and equipment for Airborne Relay Station.

1. On 11 June 1966, communication personnel from the Forward Signal Platoon departed base camp with the mission of providing VHF communications for 1st Brigade Forward CP at MINH THANH. Major items displaced were:

EQUIPMENT	QUANTITY	PURPOSE
AN/MRC-34½	1 ea	Provide VHF communications between MINH THANH and QUAN LOI

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2. On 17 July 2d Forward Signal Pletoon departed base camp with mission to provide VHF signal communications and secure radio teletype communication to 2d Brigade Forward CP at QUAN LOI. Major items of equipment displaced were:

EQUIPMENT	QUANTITY	PURPOSE
AN/MRC-34½	1 ea	Provide VHF communications between QUAN LOI and PHUOC VINH
AN/GRC-46	1 ea	Provide secure radio teletype communications and back-up for communications center teletype

(5) Results:

(a) The 121st Signal Battalion provided simultaneous communications for ten different elements of the division:

1. 1st Brigade Forward
2. 2d Brigade Forward
3. 3d Brigade Forward
4. 1st Brigade Rear
5. 2d Brigade Rear
6. 3d Brigade Rear
7. Division Forward
8. Division Rear
9. Division Artillery Forward
10. Division Artillery Rear

(b) Telephone circuits provided

1. Sole User Circuits:

Division Forward	12
Division Rear	5
1st Brigade Forward	4
2d Brigade Forward	4
3d Brigade Forward	4
Division Artillery Forward	7
Division Artillery Rear	2

2. Common User Telephone Service:

Division Rear to Division Forward	4
Division Forward to 1st Brigade Forward	2
Division Forward to 2d Brigade Forward	2
Division Forward to 3d Brigade Forward	2
Division Forward to Division Artillery Forward	2
Division Forward to Division Artillery Rear	2
Division Artillery Forward to Division Artillery Rear	2

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(c) Circuit and Traffic Diagrams are shown at Annex L.

c. U.S. Army Aviation:

(1) Size of Force:

1st Aviation Battalion
11th Combat Aviation Battalion (DS)
128th Combat Assault Helicopter Company DS 2d Bde
162d Combat Assault Helicopter Company DS 1st Bde
173d Combat Assault Helicopter Company DS 3d Bde

(2) How and When Employed: 1st Aviation Battalion provided general support aviation support for divisional elements and conducted 11 airmobile operations. Elements of the 11th Aviation Battalion supported the division on a mission basis as directed by Headquarters, II Field Force, Vietnam. Troop lift and cargo helicopters were provided in direct support. The 11th Aviation Battalion conducted 33 airmobile operations, utilizing one or more assault helicopter companies. Both the 1st Aviation Battalion and the 11th Combat Aviation Battalion elements basically supported the operation from their base camps. However, a continuing requirement existed to leave ten troop carrier aircraft and one light fire team at QUAN LOI each evening for movement of rapid reaction forces (RRF). Increased air traffic in the operational area required air traffic control facilities at LOC NINH and QUAN LOI. Air traffic control teams from the 125th Air Traffic Control Company provided this support.

(3) Statistics on aviation support of operations:

(a) 1st Aviation Battalion

1. Hours flown:

UH-1	4,860
OH-13	2,024
OV-1	1,079

2. Sorties flown — 19,697

3. Cargo moved — 370.4 tons

4. Passengers moved — 17,193

(b) 11th Combat Aviation Battalion:

1. Hours flown:

UH-1	3,930
CH-47	525

2. Sorties flown — 11,700

3. Cargo moved — 1,820 tons

4. Passengers moved — 25,800

(4) Elements supporting aviation battalions:

(a) 1st Aviation Battalion:

1. E Co, 701st Maint Bn (normal aircraft direct support maintenance).

2. Elements of the 125th Air Traffic Company (provided periodic air traffic control at QUAN LOI and LOC NINH during the operation).

(b) 11th Combat Aviation Battation:

1. 53d Aviation Detachment (ACH-47).

2. Following elements of 145th Combat Aviation Battalion:

a. 68th Assault Helicopter Company

b. A Company, 501st Aviation Battalion

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

(1) Utilization of Tactical Air Support. The mission of tactical air was as followe:

(a) Neutralization of enemy forces.

(b) Destruction of enemy forces in contact with division units.

(c) Destruction of enemy base camps and storage areas.

(d) Interdiction of enemy liaison/communication routes.

(e) Interdiction and neutralization of enemy routes of reinforcement and withdrawal.

(2) Control: All air strikes were controlled by a FAC using an O-1 type aircraft. SKY SPOTS were used extensively and effectively as a means of reaching targets beyond artillery range.

(3) Effectiveness:

(a) Close air support throughout the operations was highly effective. The CAS given during the several battles conducted during the operation was instrumental in stopping and destroying enemy forces in contact with friendly forces.

(b) The lack of sufficient CBU was a hinderance as this is a highly effective ordnance when contact has been made.

(c) Seeding missions were requested along enemy supply routes. Several missions were attempted with the ordnance exploding instantly. It is felt this capability of the Air Force should be increased as an effective weapon to be used in this type of war.

(d) Clearance procedures were improved during the operation as a result of a FAC bringing an air strike in on friendly civilian trucks. The ARVN had cleared the target but had failed to check with the province and district chiefs to insure the trucks did not belong to one of the plantations in the area. This is now being done along with other positive control measures adopted as a result of this incident.

(4) Recapitulation of Close Air Support Sorties at Annex K.

e. Engineer:

(1) Size of Force:

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Hq, 1st Engr Bn	LTC Howard L Sargent (3 Jun-14 Jul)
	LTC J.S. Kiernan, Jr.
Task Force (1) Company A(-)	CPT Wayne M. Lucas
Task Force (2) Company D	CPT Ollie T. Jackson (3 Jun-5 Aug)
2d Plat Co A	CPT Thomas E. Valente (5 Aug-3 Sep)

(2) How and When Employed: The 1st Engineer Battalion (-) provided combat support to the 1st Infantry Division in accomplishing its search and destroy mission in the AN LOC/QUAN LOI/LOC NINH/MINH THANH areas. Engineer support was required for the improvement of the airstrips at MINH THANH, AN LOC, and QUAN LOI. This work was accomplished by D Company with attachments for Hq's and A Companies. The battalion also performed general engineering tasks such as construction of field fortifications and LZ's, road clearing operations, and AVLB preparation and installation, as well as demolitions. Convoy security was provided by 1/4th Cav for D Company road movements otherwise security was provided by both 1st and 3d Brigade forces.

(3) Execution:

8 June - 2d Platoon, D Company, convoyed north on Highway 13 with 1/4th Cav to assist the cavalry move up the road. The unit mission was to clear road of mines and destroy all roadblocks that could not be bypassed. Column was ambushed near Bench Mark 69 (XT 766746). Engineer casualties were one KIA and nine WIA.

10 June - 1st Platoon, D Company moved to AN LOC to reinforce 2d Platoon.

10 June - 28 June - 1st and 2d Platoons, D Company, constructed bunkers for 3d Brigade TOC, communications center, and FCC at LOC NINH. The units also conducted a reconnaissance and classification of a bridge vicinity of LOC NINH and constructed an LZ to extract wounded near the same location.

14 June - S-2 Section performed reconnaissance and survey of MINH THANH airstrip.

14 June - 3d Platoon, D Company, moved to MINH THANH to begin repair and improvement of airstrip.

15 June - 24 July - A Company (-) provided combat support for 1st Brigade, and 1st Division Forward. Constructed bunkers and maintained Division Forward area. Constructed field fortification of bunkers, concertina, and fields of fire at 1st Brigade Forward area. Installed 200 feet of 36" culvert. Cleared area for artillery mask clearance, 20 trees ranging from two to five feet in diameter.

15 June - S-2 Reconnaissance team reconed laterite pit near MINH THANH.

16 June - A Company sent one platoon to MINH THANH to be attached to D Company for improvement of MINH THANH airstrip.

16 June - The following equipment was airlifted to 3d Platoon, D Company;

5-ton dump trucks (D Co)	6	graders (Hq Co)	3
13-wheel roller (D Co)	1	front loader (1st S&T)	1
2½-ton truck (D Co)	2	13-wheel roller (173d)	1
¼-ton truck (D Co)	1	front loader (173d)	1
5-ton dump trucks (C Co)	3	dozers (173d)	2

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17 June - 1st Engineer Battalion Forward elements displaced to join 1st Division Forward at MINH THANH.

14 June - 14 July - Company D with one platoon, A Company attached, improved the MINH THANH airfield to include a runway 5900 feet long and 80 feet wide and a parking apron 150 feet by 400 feet. Construction was started on a 150 feet by 400 feet supply and logistics area, but this area was not completed. Turn-arounds were constructed at each end of the runway. A laterite pit was opened and operated one mile from the job site to support the operation. Demolition teams from A and D Companies blast trees and stumps to expand airstrip, parking aprons, and two approach zones (500 feet by 300 feet each).

19 June - 28 June - B Company attaches two demolition teams to 2/16th Inf to perform general demolition support of infantry operations.

25 June - S-2 Section recons AVLB site for movement of 1st Division convoys.

26 June - A Company platoon prepared abutment and installed AVLB for the 1st Division convoys.

26 June - 27 June - A Company platoon constructed LZ for extraction of 17,000 tons of captured rice. The rice was stored in different sites containing from 100 - 500 tons in each site. Trees around the site were blown away to expose them to air observers. Some rice extracted, but most of rice merely scattered on the ground.

6 July - D Company demolition team detonated a dud 500 pound bomb.

9 July - 10 July - A and D Company elements prepared AVLB bridge site, installed the AVLB, and after convoy passage, withdrew the AVLB.

11 July - 3d Platoon, D Company, convoyed from MINH THANH to AN LOC accompanied by elements of the 1/4th Cav. Equipment convoyed included one front loader, three 5-ton dump trucks, and one ¼-ton truck.

12 July - 15 July - 3d Platoon, D Company resurfaced the AN LOC airfield with laterite. 75% of the airfield was resurfaced. The strip is 1850 feet long and 120 feet wide. The platoon operated a laterite pit at the airfield to support the operation.

12 July - 24 August - One squad from B Company attached to HHC, 2d Brigade to be utilized for mine detection and destruction.

14 July - 1st Engineer Battalion Forward returned to DI AN base camp.

14 July - One platoon, A Company departed MINH THANH and returned to PHUOC VINH base camp.

16 July - 3d Platoon, D Company moved to QUAN LOI Plantation to begin improving runway to 3500 feet.

17 July - 3 September - 3d Platoon, D Company improved the airfield at QUAN LOI. The runway was extended to 3500 feet long and 60 feet wide to take C-130 air traffic. A 400 feet by 382 feet parking apron was constructed at the southern end of the airfield. The platoon received additional equipment support from a 5th ARVN Division Engineer Company which provided three 2½-ton dump trucks, one D-7 dozer, and one

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front loader. AN LOC Public Works provided two 2½-ton dump trucks, and the French plantation owner provided TD-9 dozer and one 13-wheel roller. The platoon operated a laterite pit four miles from the airfield. The average daily haul was fifty loads.

3 August - 1st Platoon, D Company convoyed from LAI KHE to QUAN LOI with five 5-ton dump trucks, one grader, and one front loader. The 1st Platoon relieved the 3d Platoon of the QUAN LOI airfield construction project for six days.

6 August - 24 August - One officer of B Company joined 2d Brigade Forward acting in capacity of brigade engineer to provide technical advice and assistance in engineering matters.

9 August - 11 August - 1st and 3d Platoons, D Company constructed headwalls for the AVLB site at the CAM LE Bridge site (XT 723973).

15 August - 1st Platoon, D Company returned to LAI KHE by air. 3d Platoon continued QUAN LOI airfield construction.

3 September - 3d Platoon, D Company returned to LAI KHE. QUAN LOI airfield project assumed by Company A. Company D trucks and equipment at QUAN LOI were attached to Company A.

(4) Results:

(a) Construction:

1. Six permanent bunkers constructed.

2. Ninety semi-permanent bunkers constructed.

3. Three LZs constructed.

4. Headwalls constructed for one AVLB site.

5. AVLB abutments prepared and AVLB launched and retrieved three times.

6. Laterite Pit Operation:

a. MINH THANH — 31 days.

b. AN LOC ——— 3 days.

c. QUAN LOI —— 49 days.

7. Airfield Construction and Improvement:

a. MINH THANH runway ——————————5900 feet by 80 feet.

b. MINH THANH runway turn-arounds ——— 2 each.

c. MINH THANH parking apron ——————— 400 feet by 150 feet.

d. MINH THANH supply and logistics area — 400 feet by 150 feet - not completed.

e. AN LOC airfield - 75% of runway resurfaced. Runway 1850 feet by 120 feet.

f. QUAN LOI airfield - improvement of runway - existing runway is expanded to 3500 feet by 60 feet.

g. QUAN LOI parking apron - 400 feet by 382 feet.

8. Engineer Reconnaissance:

a. Air reconnaissance ———— 36

b. Ground reconnaissance ———— 3

c. Laterite pits ———— 1

d. AVLB sites ———— 4

e. MIN THANH air field survey — 1

f. Chemical: Chemical support was rendered by personnel of the 242d Chemical Detachment and 266th Chemical Platoon under staff supervision of the Division Chemical Officer. The Division Chemical Officer was asked for his recommendation as to the possible application of chemicals in the destruction of the large rice caches discovered in vicinity of XT 445545 and XT 455530. He proposed that immediately after the rice had been scattered by air strikes, the area should be contaminated with large quantities of CS-1. This would delay VC salvage attempts until the rice was completely destroyed by weather. The area vicinity XT 445545 was hit by air strikes on 29 June followed by the CS-1 drop on 5 July. Thirty 55 gallon drums were dropped with the determination that 3300 feet was the best altitude for maximum effectiveness. Ten additional drums were dropped on this target and twenty drums were dropped at XT 455530. The third and final drop of twenty drums was made on the target at XT 445545.

9. RESULTS:

a. Friendly Losses:

KHA	125	
WHA	424	
Equipment lost:	1	M60 MG
	3	M16 Rifles
	2	TRC-25 Radios
Equipment destroyed:	8	M113 APC's
	1	CH-47
	1	UH-1D
	1	M48A3 Tank
Equipment damaged:	3	UH-1B's
	6	UH-1D's
	3	OH-13's
	11	M113 APC's
	6	M48A3 Tanks
	2	CH-47's
	2	ACH-47's
	1	105mm Howitzer

b. Enemy Losses:

(1) Personnel:

KIA (BC) ———— 825
KIA (Prob) ———— 1249

VCC	38
VCS	43
Returnees	1

(2) Weapons and Ammunition:

Crew Served	44
Small Arms	154
Artillery Rounds	5
Mortar Rounds	84
Mines	16
Grenades	350
Small Arms Ammunition	15,155
Recoilless Rounds	3

(3) Installations:

Base Camps	23
Hospitals	1
Boat Building Shop	1
Bicycle Repair Shop	1

(4) Foodstuffs:

Rice (tons)	1,547
Salt (tons)	275
Fish (tons)	175
Flour (pounds)	1,350
Sardines (cans)	1,000
Tea (pounds)	300
Miscellaneous (pounds)	550

(5) Supplies:

Kerosene (gallons)	1,000
Typewriters	2
Boats	14
Stoves	20
Tin (sheets)	5,400
Pans (cooking)	8,000
Ladles	900
Fuel (gallons)	185
Oil (gallons)	550
Wax (pounds)	500
Trailer	1
Tires	6
Bicycles	2
Oxcarts	7
Thermos Jugs	15
Tar (gallons)	5
Bailing Wire (spools)	5
Water Pumps	1

(6) Miscellaneous:

Numerous Documents
Large amount of Medical Supplies

10. ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS:

a. Logistics:

(1) Preparation:

(a) EL PASO II. During this phase of the operation involving the 1st and 3d Brigades, a Division Forward Logistics Base was established at LAI KHE. Brigade and battalion S-4 personnel remained at the log base to coordinate the resupply of units by air. Support Command established a forward CP to control the logistic activities. A Division Tactical CP was located at QUAN LOI.

(b) EL PASO III. This phase of the operation involved the 2d and 3d Brigades and the logistics base operation remained the same as EL PASO II. The Division Tactical CP was relocated at LAI KHE.

b. Concept of Operation: This operation was preceeded by a detailed study of previous operations and a coordination meeting with 1st Infantry Division Support Command, G-4, and all participating S-4's. Specific problems from previous operations were discussed and workable solutions were established. In addition to the log base at LAI KHE, six additional supply points were established at various times throughout the operation by Support Command elements at the following locations: MINH THANH, CHON THANH, AN LOC, QUAN LOI, LOC NINH, SONG BE. The 1st Infantry Division was supported in these operations by the 1st Logistical Command.

c. Execution:

(1) Supply:

(a) Class I:

1. The supply of Class I was accomplished with little difficulty. Sufficient A ration components were furnished to provide all troops with at least one modified A meal daily, tactical situation permitting. Combat units in the "rest period" and supporting units were fed three modified A rations daily. Adequate ice was available through local procurement with Imprest Funds and aerial resupply from DI AN. Sundry packs were issued every five days.

2. Stockage Objectives:

a. A Rations - Daily.

b. B Rations - 15 days on hand.

c. C Rations - 15 days on hand.

3. Quantity Delivered:

a. A Rations - 1606.4 short tons.

b. B Rations - 1741.0 short tons.

c. C Rations - 375.3 short tons.

(b) Class II and IV (less repair parts).

1. Units carried anticipated Class II and IV requirements in their battalion trains, however, due to the nature of the operation additional items were needed.

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2. No stockage objective was established for Class II and IV, however, it was necessary to issue 912 short tons during the combined operations.

(c) Class III.

1. The issue of this item was sufficient for the demand. The establishment of the Class III supply points forward provided the responsiveness desired by supported units. Maximum use was made of available aircraft for resupply. This method was assisted by the convoy of 10 August which delivered 25,000 gallons to forward supply points. The use of 500 gallon collapsible fuel tanks was extremely gratifying and assisted the operation greatly.

2. Stockage Objectives:

a. JP-4 ——— 50,000 gallons

b. AVGAS ——— 10,000 gallons

c. MOGAS ——— 30,000 gallons

d. Diesel ——— 10,000 gallons

3. Quantity Received:

a. JP-4 ——— 1,248,510 gallons

b. AVGAS ——— 178,240 gallons

c. MOGAS ——— 367,301 gallons

d. Diesel ——— 176,909 gallons

e. Package POL — 234 short tons

(d) Class V:

1. This item was issued by the supply point method. The 3d Ordnance Battalion (AMMO) supported the operation with a forward ASP in LAI KHE and for a short period an ASP located at QUAN LOI. Artillery ammunition was shipped by air directly from BIEN HOA to unit trains at QUAN LOI and LAI KHE. Due to the RSR of the division it was necessary to augment the airlift of ammunition with road convoys.

2. Stockage Objective: 400 short tons.

3. Quantity Received: 2,984.438 short tons.

4. Quantity Issued: 2,680.262 short tons.

(2) Services:

(a) Transportation:

1. During Operation EL PASO II/III the Division Transportation Office established one ATCO at LAI KHE Airfield to coordinate movement of supplies from LAI KHE to forward units. During EL PASO III an ATCO was also established at DI AN Airfield to coordinate movement of supplies to brigade locations. The road movements were coordinated by the DTO

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office located in DI AN. Additional responsibility for the mail courier (Pony Express) and Errand Boy courier was also a part of the DTO operation. The operation was conducted in two phases.

a. Phase I, 1 July - 9 August, the DTO had control of all CV-2B aircraft available. Phase II, 10 August - 26 August, the DTO and the brigade had joint operational control of the CV-2B aircraft. The following data reflects the airlift operation for both phases.

1) Sorties ———————— 1124.

2) Supply tonnage moved — 2086.7 short tons.

3) Passengers moved ——— 9661.

4) Mail tonnage moved —— 516 short tons.

b. The DTO coordinated seven resupply convoys during the period. They were used to augment the airlift of the division with supplies for the LAI KHE brigade and to support the operations. The convoys consisted of 912 vehicles carrying 4460 short tons of supplies.

(b) Maintenance was conducted by establishing contact teams from the 701st Maintenance Battalion in all supply point locations. Liaison visits were conducted daily by the battalion as well as technical inspections and assistance teams on the request of forward units.

1. Volume of Business:

a. 537 job repairs by contact teams.

b. 706 job repairs by TI teams at unit locations.

c. Equipment evacuated:

1) Automotive — 1.

2) Electronic — 12.

3) Instrument — 1.

4) Small Arms — 1.

5) Engineer —— 1.

2. Supply support resulted in the shipment of 30 short tons of repair parts to the forward units.

(c) Medical Evacuation and Hospitalization:

1. Concept: Forward sections of D Company, 1st Medical Battalion, 2 June - 28 July, and C Company, 1st Medical Battalion, 23 July to 3 September, and 1st Medical Battalion clearing platoons provided division level medical support from a forward base to battalions and brigades. Medical supplies were sufficient for the operations and a minimum of 15 days supply was on hand at all times. Whole blood requests were filled by 406th Medical Laboratory. The replacement of C Company by D Company was due to a possible contingency plan which D Company was designated to support. This change did not impair the medical support and gave the medical battalion an opportunity to give more of their personnel field experience.

2. Volume of Operation:

a. Patient load ---------- 1078.

b. Patients evacuated ---------- 442 (aeromedical evac).

c. Patients returned to duty ---- 636.

3. "Dust Off" operations were sufficient with one "Dust Off" in support of the operation located at QUAN LOI and a standby located at LAI KHE. Other "Dust Off" standby were located at SAIGON and LONG BINH and were provided on an as needed basis. "Dust Off" units were also used for resupply of urgent medical supplies.

d. Administrative matters for 1st, 2d, and 3d Brigades are included in Annexes N, O, and P.

11. SPECIAL EQUIPMENT AND TECHNIQUES:

a. Troop "Y" Formation. This technique envisions an armored cavalry troop marching with two columns straddling a road where the off-road mobility is afforded. Two armored cavalry platoons move side-by-side approximately 20 meters off each side of the road. The third elements moves either on or off the road, but the head of the third element is abreast of the tail of the leading elements. This formation affords mutual supporting fires from two platoons in a given area of contact and puts the maximum amount of strength to the front of the column.

b. Use of SKY SPOT (Radar Bombing) in the close in support role. Three flights of SKY SPOT (Radar Bombing) were used in a close air support role during the attack on 2/18th Infantry, 2 July. These strikes which landed within 500 meters of friendly troops, were the first known SKY SPOT strikes to be used in a close air support role.

c. A requirement for a rapid reaction aircraft flare delivery capability emerged during the operation. Delivery of the MK-24, mod 3 aircraft flare from UH-1 aircraft requires certain equipment and compliance with specific procedures to insure safety for aircraft and crew. These procedures and necessary equipment are described in detail in letter SMUAP-Q, Hq Ammunition Procurement and Supply Agency, Joliet, Illinois, dated 22 July 1965, subject: Flare, Aircraft, Parachute, MK-24, all mods. One UH-1 aircraft in A Company has been rigged to drop these flares; 2000 flares are on hand in the division area; and three crews have been trained in their handling and use. Availability of this aircraft and flare system under the direct control of the division commander permits night illumination of two hours with 40 - two million candlepower flares being carried internally in the UH-1. While time on station and number of flares is not nearly as great in this organic system as can be provided by the Air Force, it does provide a significant emergency, back-up illumination capability.

d. Armed CH-47. The ACH-47 supported operations six times during the period 25 June to 9 July. On three occasions the aircraft was forced to land as a result of hits from enemy fire. The ACH-47 was used to attack VC established in attack positions, utilizing all the types of armament on board the aircraft. During the action on 30 June, it was discovered that the 7.62mm Miniguns alone do not have the necessary suppressive capability. When an ACH-47 is forced down, it immediately becomes a battlefield liability, requiring the diversion of combat forces for security until it can be repaired and/or extracted. Recommended employment is to have the aircraft stand off and take advantage of the range of the on-board weapons.

e. Light Assault Field Artillery Battery, 4.2 inch. This unit was organized in July 1966 under 1st Infantry Division provisional TOE 6-1 and is known throughout the division as the 1st Lighthorse Assault Artillery Battery. The battery was conceived as a means of filling a possible void in airmobile operations. Movement of 105mm howitzers batteries in support of LZ's were dependent upon CH-47's which were often in short supply. The Lighthorse Battery is designed to be moved completely by UH-1 slicks. This capability increased the firepower flexibility of the division and provided additional assurance that adequate firepower could be made available to isolated LZ's. The battery also has the capability to move by road in organic vehicles. Personnel and equipment for the unit which is commanded by a Major were provided by the heavy mortar platoons of 1/2d, 2/2d, and 2/16th Infantry Battalions with additional Headquarters and Fire Direction personnel being provided from Division Artillery and Division Headquarters resources. During operation EL PASO II/III the battery displaced seven times, firing a total of 2305 rounds in support of road clearing and convoy operations along Route 13.

12. COMMANDERS ANALYSIS:

a. General: Operation EL PASO inflicted a severe defeat on the 9th VC Division, completely frustrated the monsoon offensive in the northern III Corps area, and represented an important learning process throughout the 1st Infantry Division.

b. Although it was not apparent through the counting of bodies on the battlefield during the five major engagements of EL PASO, subsequent interrogation of prisoners from all three of the VC regiments of the 9th VC Division make it clear that the division lost over 2,000 killed and several thousand wounded out of a strength of about 10,000. In the last battle, the 272d Regiment went into action with 800 North Vietnamese replacements only three days after their arrival. The VC employed against the 1st Division tactics which had bsen successful without exception both against the French and against the Vietnamese Army - that is, major ambushes by very large VC forces against small friendly forces. Each time the VC were defeated and each time they were defeated more soundly than the time before as the 1st Division learned more and more how to react to this mode of attack.

c. The first ambush was against a single cavalry troop from the 1st Squadron, 4th Cavalry (Troop A). The deployment of VC forces was along a five kilometer stretch of road and far over-extended the length of the cavalry column which was moving in a reasonably tight formation. The bulk of the troop was able to pull into a small clearing toward the head of the ambush site and there it accounted for itself very well. In this particular sector, the 1st Battalion, 272d Regiment lost in killed and wounded approximately 90% of its strength. One cavalry platoon was isolated at the TA O Bridge together with about 30 ARVN soldiers. This element was engaged by the 2d Battalion of the 272d VC Regiment which in the course of four hours lost about 50% of its strength in killed and wounded. The 3d Battalion extended farther to the south and only engaged the trail party, including a VTR, one tank, two APCs and an engineer dozer tank. The VC lost very few men in this engagement and the 3d Battalion withdrew from the battlefield largely unharmed. On the US side, original estimates of the size of the VC force were low and only after about an hours fighting did it become apparent that an entire regiment was involved. As a consequence, both air and artillery were used, but not as effectively as in later battles because they were directed only against the enemy units in direct contact and not against the area in which the enemy was maneuvering, reinforcing or withdrawing.

Additionally, commanders involved were not as aggressive in using fire support as they could have been owing to the underestimate of enemy strength and lack of knowledge as to its exact location. The infantry reaction force did not arrive on the scene of battle in time to be decisive. By the time it did arrive, the VC were withdrawing.

d. After a thorough critique by all commanders involved, the communications were tightened up, the coordination of air and artillery was improved by the simple means of preplanning artillery support on one side of the road and air support on the other so these two decisive weapons could be used continuously and simultaneously. It was also decided that the infantry reaction would be divided into two elements. First, a battlefield relief force to preclude a defeat in the area of the main attack, and second, a battlefield exploitation force which would be landed along the routes of withdrawal in order to destroy VC forces some distance from the ambush site.

e. On 30 June, the 271st Regiment attacked two troops of the 4th Cavalry, reinforced by a company of the 2d Battalion, 18th Infantry. During this battle, the coordination of fire support was vastly improved, the cavalry maneuvered during the battle and the battlefield relief force arrived in time to engage the VC prior to withdrawal. The battlefield exploitation forces eventually succeeded in landing behind the enemy along the Cambodian Border where another major engagement with a full regiment of VC ensued. The cavalry by this time had doubled its basic load of 50 calibre ammunition and doubled the number of cannister rounds. More artillery was within range and had registered ahead of time. VC casualties in the battles of 30 June - 2 July were significantly higher than on 8 June.

f. Prior to the battle of 9 July, intelligence indicated the positioning of the 272d Regiment along the MINH THANH Road. Deception as to the size of the US force to transit the road was employed, five batteries of artillery positioned, four infantry battalions positioned next to the ambush site or within helicopter rapid reaction distance. In this battle, fire coordination improved even further, again putting the artillery on one side of the road, in this case, the north side, and continuous air strikes on the south side. Four infantry battalions were introduced into the battle within three hours; one of them within 45 minutes by helicopter; whereas two battalions were moving to the battle through the jungle within a matter of minutes after the ambush started. This combination of maneuver and increased fire power caused the VC to break off the battle in one hour and 45 minutes, whereas previously, they had fought for four hours and six hours respectively.

g. In each successive battle, the number of VC killed and captured rose sharply and the number of weapons captured was particularly high on the 9th of July, including some 23 machineguns, plus recoilless rifles and a large number of AK-47 assault rifles and BARs. No unit of the 9th VC Division undertook any combat operations of any kind for 3½ months after the 9th of July. It is not known at this time whether the division has recovered, or to what extent. Since those battles, the 1st Division has run convoys on Route 13 and cavalry reconnaissance on Highway 13 and adjacent roads without contact. Civilian traffic is now flowing, and although the division fully expects more such engagements in the future, perhaps by even larger forces, the techniques developed for rapid reaction and heavy fire power should make it impossible for the VC to enjoy a victory and should result in further heavy losses should they choose again to employ this favorite of all their tactics. It is perfectly clear that armored units have a high utility in connection with road security and road reconnaissance. Since 9 July, the 1st Division

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has been reinforced with two tank companies and is now asking for its own 69th Tank Battalion to be deployed to Vietnam. The combination of armored elements and air mobile infantry and light artillery presents the VC with tactical problems with which they seem unable to cope.

h. The last victory of the 9th VC Division was in November 1965 against the ARVN 7th Regiment in the MICHELIN. A year has now gone by without their having conducted any profitable operation. As a consequence, the local guerrillae and regional VC force have been without the support of this main force unit and have in turn, suffered a series of major and minor defeats which is beginning to show up as a marked up-turn of the overall security of the northern III Corps area.

13. LESSONS LEARNED:

a. Dust Off and resupply sites should be established by elements other than those engaged with the enemy. Movement of wounded personnel by the unit, particularly armored elements, detracts from the firepower available. Empty medevac vehicles including personnel carriers and helicopters should be used to transport ammunition to engaged elements.

b. Committing reserve (trail) elements of armored cavalry should be done as soon as the battle develops in order to bring the maximum amount of firepower to bear.

c. Infantry mounted on and fighting from armored personnel carriers is found to be unsatisfactory when the crew exceeds five men. If more than this number is present they tend to get in each other's way. Infantry can best be utilized by riding on vehicles of the trail elements, then committed as dismounted infantry where needed.

d. Concentration of elements composed of tanks and APC's in the "killing zone" has proved effective in that it massed more firepower in the VC "killing zone". Concentration is considered to be an extra-closed column (10 - 15 meters between vehicles).

e. VC used a trench in defense to trap attackers. The main VC elements were in fortified positions on a small hill and had prepared a straight-line trench near the bottom. As the attacking U.S. platoon approached the position, they came under mortar, grenade and automatic weapons fire. The U.S. forces made the instinctive reaction of taking cover in the trench in preparation for the assault. The VC maneuvered a machine gun into the trench on the flank of the platoon, giving them good enfilade fire which caused heavy casualties in the platoon in a matter of seconds. The attacking forces could have denied success of this maneuver to the VC had flank security been established prior to seeking cover in the trench.

f. The VC use routes of attack as initial routes of withdrawal. Several VC captives stated that the initial route of withdrawal from an objective area or ambush site is the same route that is used for movement to the attack. This makes it easier for the soldier to find his way back to assembly areas. In three regimental sized attacks against U.S. forces, the VC never attacked through the column. Their withdrawal was always in the direction from which they attacked. This is a prime consideration in the employment of artillery and air once it is determined that the VC are attempting to break contact. If the route of attack is known, artillery and air must be placed on the routes to block the withdrawal. It must also be made known to the friendly forces in order for the commander to properly execute the pursuit.

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g. The VC showed the capability to recuperate rapidly after heavy losses. On 8 June, two battalions of the 272d Regiment were severely decimated, losing upwards of 340 men. On 9 July the same regiment attacked a column with three battalions. Captives stated that up to 800 NVA replacements had joined the regiment on 7 July. On 30 July a returnee from the 271st Regiment stated that his regiment had received 500 NVA replacements on 26 July. The 271st Regiment had approximately 570 men on 30 June. All NVA replacements were trained soldiers and gave the VC regiments the ability to regain combat effectiveness in short order. Intelligence personnel must consider this capability of the Viet Cong and continue to maintain locations of units that have suffered heavy losses.

h. When dropping CS-1 from CH-47 aircraft the drop should start about 200 meters before reaching the target area due to the minimum speed of 40 knots per hour. With a 22½ second fuze, the drums should be dropped from 3300 feet to obtain tree top bursts.

i. Pathfinder teams should be attached to brigades when it is necessary to support a fixed airfield. Minimum equipment necessary will include runway lights and radio communications with FM and VHF capatilities. Personnel should not be rotated during the operation without proper coordination with brigade headquarters.

j. When USAF aircraft are utilized to lift elements of a brigade an air combat control team should be established at both the point of embarkation and the point of debarkation. This is necessary to have adequate control to prevent a serious accident and to enable pilots to receive instructions to make loading and unloading more efficient.

k. FAC's should be equipped with a radio covering the same frequency range as the ground troops. It is necessary for the FAC to be able to monitor the actions of ground commanders, thereby gaining a better perspective of the ground operation which in turn will help him to provide better close air support with higher assurances of troop safety.

l. The VC attempted to fortify the high ground around LOC NINH in preparation for an attack on that town. Extensive patrolling disrupted the VC fortifications, and allowed the decisive defeat of a VC battalion. Aggressive and continuous patrolling provides the best defense against enemy offensive build-up.

m. Supporting logistical units must maintain direct communications with the supported element. There were several instances in which the logistical support elements were not in direct land line communications. Radios were used, but due to the limited communications in the supporting units adequate communications were difficult to obtain. Logistical units must be provided with sufficient communications facilities to insure a primary command net with a backup radio net.

n. The majority of POL products were delivered to forward support areas in 55 gallon drums. Since forward support areas are manned by a minimum of personnel the quick responsiveness required by the supported units at times was barely adequate. 500 gallon collapsible drums are preferred since they are easier to handle by support point personnel. Responsiveness of USAF logistical lift continues to be of concern although new procedures in requesting airlift and programming missions are being tested. Air Force personnel must be made aware of the necessity of back hauling empty containers.

o. The logistical element does not have control of logistical aircraft. An Aircraft Control Center should coordinate all division air transportation. A detailed and systematic method should be established by the Support Command with close coordination between the G-3 and G-4 to insure all modes of land and air transportation are utilized to the maximum.

p. The medical battalion has a low priority for air movement. Because of this the forward brigades are usually moved into an AO and do not have the ready support of the forward element of their medical company. Earlier movement would enhance the supported units medical service. Four sorties are required to move the element. The brigade conducting operations in forward areas should consider the movement of their forward medical unit during operational planning.

q. When a convoy is attacked the direction from which the fire is being received and the major concentration of VC forces must be determined immediately. Due to the confusion that can result as personnel become misoriented a recommended method of pointing out the direction of attack is through the use of smoke. Heavy concentrations of supporting fires should be placed 100 - 400 meters off the road since the bulk of the VC force is often back from the road and moves up to fighting positions along the ditches after the initial exchange of fire. Main elements of the VC force will usually be located in areas adjacent to the road where the jungle is most dense and few or no landing zones exist thereby protecting their flanks and rear against rapid reaction forces.

r. Reconnaissance by fire by ground elements moving along a road is unsatisfactory if the fire is placed at a 90 degree angle to the column. The lead vehicles should direct their fire into the ditches where camoflouged foxholes are likely to exist. Enfilade fire in the ditches is more likely to cause the VC to disclose position prematurely.

s. The operation revealed significant shortcomings in the organization and equipment of the divisional aviation battalion for employment in the RVN type environment. The current authorization of 16 UH-1D aircraft in the airmobile company is wholly inadequate to support divisional quick reaction airmobile force requirements. The addition of five UH-1D aircraft to the non-divisional air assault companies is a step which should also be taken in the divisional airmobile company at the earliest practicable date. With 21 troop carrier aircraft, the divisional airmobile company would have a more potent airlift capability and be capable of properly supporting the division in airmobile operations. This capability is essential when non-divisional assault helicopter units are not available immediately.

ANNEXES:

A — Battle of SROK DONG Narrative
B — Battle of LOC NINH Rubber Plantation Narrative
C — Battle of MINH THANH Road Narrative
D — Operations Overlay - AN LOC - QUAN LOI AO
E — Operations Overlay - SONG BE AO
F — Operations Overlay - MINH THANH AO
G — Operations Overlay - TAY NINH AO
H — Raid Target 21 - 27 June 66
I — Long Range Reconnaissance Patrols
J — VC Installations
K — Close Air Support Sorties
L — Communications Traffic and Circuit Diagrams
M — List of Commanders
N — After Action Report 1st Bde
O — After Action Report 2d Bde
P — After Action Report 3d Bde
Q — After Action Report Division Artillery

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ANNEX A

BATTLE OF SNOK DONG NARRATIVE

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NARRATIVE OF THE BATTLE OF SROK DONG
30 JUNE 1966

9 AUG 1966

INTRODUCTION (U)

The 271st Viet Cong Main Force Regiment was defeated on 30 June 1966, near the village of SROK DONG in one of the classic engagements of the Vietnam conflict. In continuing their efforts to repel the 1st Infantry Division from the EL PASO II area of operations, the VC attempted to ambush Troops B and C, 1st Squadron, 4th Cavalry and Company C, 2d Battalion, 18th Infantry. As a consequence, the 271st Regiment suffered heavy lossee and was soundly defeated.

BACKGROUND (U)

Operation EL PASO II commenced on 2 June 1966 when intelligence indicated that three Viet Cong and one North Vietnamese regiments were poised to resume their "Monsoon Campaign" by attacking GVN and U.S. Special Forces compounds in MINH THANH, HON QUAN, LOC NINH, and SONG BE. Because of this threat, Commanding General, II Field Force, Vietnam, directed one infantry and one artillery battalion be deployed to LOC NINH to strengthen the defenses in this area. Subsequently, additional elements were deployed by CG 1st Div until by mid-June the majority of the division was operating throughout BINH LONG and PHUOC LONG Provinces. 1st Infantry Division troop dispositions as of 300600 June are indicated on attached map 1. Two significant engagements had been fought with the VC prior to 30 June. On 8 June, Troop A (+), 1st Squadron, 4th Cavalry had spoiled an ambush on Route 13, set by the 272d VC Main Force Regiment while passing through TAU O, an area between CHON THANH and HON QUAN. When the 4-hour engagement ended, the VC had lost 105 KIA (BC) with an additional 250 probably killed. The second significant engagement involved elements of the 2d Battalion, 28th Infantry and CIDG forces in the Battle of LOC NINH Plantation on 11 June 1966. One battalion of the 273d Main Force Regiment was emplaced in trenches and heavily fortified bunkers, but after massive artillery and mortar fire and air strikes, the positions were overrun. VC losses were 98 KIA (BC) and 150 KIA (Probable).

For about two weeks the 2d Battalion, 18th Infantry with the 1st Squadron, 4th Cavalry (-) had the mission of securing the division base at QUAN LOI and the HON QUAN airfield. From 8 June, the cavalry squadron had been performing reconnaissance to the east, south, southwest, and to the north limited by the destroyed bridge on Route 13 at XT 722973. In coordination with ARVN forces the banks of the stream were prepared to permit emplacement of an armored vehicle launched bridge (AVLB) just to the left of the one that had been damaged. An operation was planned in conjunction with the emplacement of the AVLB, to commence on 30 June. The squadron plan was submitted to Lt Col Herbert McChrystal, Commanding Officer, 2d Battalion, 18th Infantry, and was approved for operations in the area indicated on maps 2 and 3. The mission assigned to Lt Col Leonard Lewane, Commanding Officer, 1st Squadron, 4th Cavalry, was actually threefold. First the squadron (-) was to cross Check Point GOLDEN GATE (AVLB) and proceed north along Route 13 conducting a reconnaissance in force. Troop C was to operate in area of operation BASEBALL while B Troop would initially operate in FOOTBALL and later in TENNIS. Second, B Troop, in conjunction with operations in TENNIS, would escort an engineer scoop loader from LOC NINH, back to Check Point GOLDEN GATE. Third, the operation was to deceive the enemy as to the actual area in which the division was planning to operate in the near future. Both troops were to close back into HON QUAN by 1930 on 30 June.

DOWNGRADED AT 3 YEAR INTERVALS;
DECLASSIFIED AFTER 12 YEARS.
DOD DIR 5200.10

Troop B would have one platoon of C Company, 2d Battalion, 18th Infantry attached, while the remainder of C Company would move with C Troop. The 2d Battalion, 18th Infantry maintained B Company on alert as the rapid reaction force. With final planning completed, the operation would begin on 30 June.

The vegetation in the area of the contact is wooded on both sides of the road. The only open areas are rice paddies, some stream lines, and small lakes. Even here, there is adequate concealment due to the chest-high grass. There are heavily forested areas as indicated on map 3 and the sketch maps, with the trees 150 - 200 feet high. Although movement in the grass is difficult to observe from the ground, it can be observed from the air except where the terrain is heavily forested. The chest-high grass comes up to the shoulders of the road. The weather at the time of contact was clear and hot.

THE BATTLE OF SROK DONG (U)

On 30 June, Troop B, 1st Squadron, 4th Cavalry, with attached 1st Platoon, C Company, 2d Battalion, 18th Infantry and AVLB section departed the squadron perimeter at HON QUAN enroute to Check Point GOLDEN GATE. The column was located at the bridge site by 0859 hours. Troop C was to depart HON QUAN at 0730 with C Company (-). However, this column was delayed until Troop C could reorganize after the search operation conducted until 2400 hours the previous night. At 0910, the column crossed GOLDEN GATE with B Troop leading and proceeded north on Route 13 to the operational areas specified in the order. Upon arrival at Check Point 1, the 3d Platoon with the platoon of infantry turned east and conducted a reconnaissance to the ford at Check Point 2. Due to the depth of the ford, the platoon retraced the route to Check Point 1, turned north on Route 13, passed through the 1st Platoon, and continued north. Order of march was now 3d Platoon with attached infantry, Troop Command Group, 2d Platoon, and 1st Platoon.

Troop C turned west at Check Point 1 and proceeded to the first stream. Three mortar carriers, ten infantry-men, and the 3d Platoon remained at Check Point 1 and established a perimeter. The mortars were laid west to support the troop. As C Troop moved west, they flanked the road on both sides. After crossing the stream, the infantry dismounted and deployed.

At about 0938 hours when the lead personnel carrier of B Troop, moving north on Route 13 toward LOC NINH, reached a point about midway across the rice paddy (sketch map 1), it began receiving mortar, small arms and recoilless rifle fire and appeared to be the only one engaged. 1st Lieutenant James P. Flores, B Troop Commander, could see the mortar rounds bursting from his position in the column about 800 meters to the rear of the lead vehicle. He immediately called Col Lewane, who was over the area in an OH-13 helicopter. The 3d Platoon then reported receiving heavy fire from the north and northwest. A preplanned airstrike was currently in progress vicinity XT 7499, which Col Lewane diverted to XU 721018 at Lt Flores' request. Lt Flores then called the 2d Platoon forward and deployed them around the 3d Platoon. The 2d Platoon brought their two tanks and one from the 1st Platoon forward. By this time all but one tank and a personnel carrier of the 3d Platoon had returned to Check Point 1 with wounded and to replenish ammunition. All platoons were now in contact on both sides of the road, with the heaviest volume of fire coming from the west.

59 The Viet Cong had set up the ambush in the shape of an "L", with a heavy security element crossing the road along the trail north of the paddy. The logs piled at random to the east of Check Point 3 afforded good protection and some of the recoilless rifles were probably located here. Mortars were reported by a forward air controller in the woods to the north of the village. The ambush extended for about 2000 meters, but with the exception of a security element to the northeast of Check Point 1, the eastern side of the road was lightly defended. The VC appeared to be lined up all along the west side of the road with the heavy weapons about 150 meters from the road in the heaviest vegetation. The VC were wearing a variety of khaki, black, and green uniforms. One strong point had been established by the VC in vicinity XU 722007. The recoilless rifles caused the most trouble, and were also the most difficult to locate. During the first 30 minutes of the contact, the enemy concentrated on knocking out the tanks. All four B Troop tanks were disabled from hits on the tank commander's cupola and subsequent wounding of the crew.

The 1st Platoon of B Troop was carrying the wounded to GOLDEN GATE with an intermediate aid station set up at Check Point 1. They also helped with the establishment of a strong point at Check Point 1. Because the incoming fire at Check Point 1 was so intense, Dust Off aircraft could not land so the squadron S-3 set-up the Duet Off LZ at GOLDEN GATE and wounded were collected at Check Point 1 and then moved south.

Troop B concentrated on laying down a heavy base of fire to the west. Airstrikes which had been continuous from the initial strike, were being placed to the north and west. Artillery was attacking targets on the east of Route 13 and armed UH-1B's and CH-47's were making firing passes north and south on the areas immediately adjacent to the road. When the 1st Platoon reported receiving fire at Check Point 1, it appeared to Lt Flores that the VC were attempting to cut him off from Check Point 1. An airstrike was immediately called in and the fire slackened at this location. The remaining elements at the head of the column were still receiving heavy fire from all types of weapons and Lt Flores called requesting C Troop come up and help.

When the first contact was reported, Captain Stephen Slattery, C Troop Commander, ordered the infantry to mount up and prepare to move back to Check Point 1, establish a strong point, and be prepared to assist B Troop. The 3d Platoon had been receiving some light fire at Check Point 1, but when the other platoons arrived at this location, the fire became more intense. Several of the infantry riding on the personnel carriers were hit as mortar rounds started falling into the area. Capt Slattery ordered the platoons to deploy and push out the perimeter, primarily to the north. The 3d Platoon was operating northwest of the crossroads, 1st Platoon east, and 2d Platoon west and southwest. The mortars had been re-laid to fire to the north. Check Point 1 was becoming very jammed with C Troop maneuvering and vehicles returning with B Troop wounded. Check Point 1 continued to receive heavy small arms fire with most of it coming from west of the road. Mortar and recoilless fire was being answered with a heavy volume of 50 caliber fire from the personnel carriers at the road junction. Col Lewane called and ordered C Troop to push north and relieve the pressure on B Troop. The 3d Platoon was finally able to start moving north with the tank from 2d Platoon. About 200 meters from Check Point 1, the tank was hit in the turret and the commander, Sergeant Allison, and the loader were seriously wounded. They were pulled from the tank and evacuated. The tank continued north. The

C Troop column consisted of the 2d Platoon, 1st Platoon, and Troop Command Group (sketch map 2). The 3d Platoon, C Company (-), and mortars remained at the crossroads. Intense fire was received all the way to B Troop's position, but a heavy base of fire was maintained by the personnel carriers and the tank. The brush was so thick and close on both sides of the road, grenades were just tossed over the sides of the vehicles. About 600 meters after the first hit, the tank was hit again, but the driver kept going even though the gunner, Sergeant Riddle was wounded and evacuated. When the Troop C column arrived at the tail of the B Troop position, Lt Flores said to go farther north and fire to the west. The 1st and 2d Platoons moved up and deployed as best as they could since they were confined to the area immediately left and right of the road. Fire was directed east and west with the heaviest volume to the west. Col Lewane ordered C Troop to hold at this point until B Troop could be extracted and move south. The C Troop tank went almost to the 01 grid line before it turned around and came back. Three men from the 2d Platoon joined Sergeant Wilson in the tank and although power to the turret was gone, they succeeded in getting the gun bearing to the north and northwest. Sixty rounds were fired before the ammunition was exhausted. The tank was then moved along side a disabled B Troop tank and the ammunition transferred. VC could be seen jumping around but didn't appear to be withdrawing. Artillery was firing north and east and airstrikes were being concentrated on the west, but appeared to be too far west. Captain Slattery asked Col Lewano to move them in closer and the next strike came in south to north with CBU which landed very close to the road.

With the arrival of C Troop, Lt Flores pulled all the remaining elements of B Troop back to Check Point 1, to regroup, rearm, and establish a block along the road west from Check Point 1. When the first lifts of A Company, 2d Battalion, 18th Infantry were approaching the LZ, Lt Flores pulled back. Troop B remained at Check Point 1 for about 40 minutes to rearm and get the wounded and dead back to GOLDEN GATE. The next 30 minutes were taken to move the 1st and 2d Platoons down the road to block. The 3d Platoon handled the evacuation of wounded (sketch map 3).

Lieutenant Charles D Cole with the 3d Platoon of C Troop had been handling casualties between the forward elements and GOLDEN GATE. He loaded C Company on the personnel carriers and moved to the head of the column. After the infantry were dropped, the 3d Platoon deployed west of the road while the 2d Platoon moved off to the east in an attempt to push the VC out ontc the LZ (sketch map 4). Lt Cole's platoon hit a VC strong point. He was hit in the chest and several others were wounded before they could pull back. The mechanized flame thrower with Lieutenant John K Lyon's 1st Platoon assisted in the extraction of 3d Platoon. As the infantry began to land on LZ 2 and C Company began to deploy, the fire slackened. Fire from the personnel carriers was directed more to the west. The VC started withdrawing and many were killed as they jumped to run through the high grass.

After a delay of about 30 minutes caused by enemy fire received from both sides of the road, B Troop was occupying their blocking position. Initially, the head of the column halted just west of the stream until information was received that a reinforced ARVN APC troop would assist. The block was then extended to about the 70 N-S grid line. From the blocking position, VC could be seen withdrawing along the trail that parallels the road and were taken under fire.

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Troop C established a perimeter along Route 13 until the infantry started making the sweep. By 1530 contact along the road had practically ceased and the personnel moved into the brush to search for dead and wounded VC and weapons. The 3d Platoon, B Troop returned to the blocking position with the Aero Rifle Platoon of D Troop. By 1700 movement had ceased and the two troops remained in position the remainder of the day.

REACTION (U)

For a week prior to 30 June 1966, B Company, 2d Battalion, 18th Infantry had been maintained on a 30 minute alert as a rapid reaction force and was in this posture at the time B Troop made contact. When it became obvious that both troops and the attached rifle company were heavily engaged, B Company was alerted for probable deployment. Two questions had to be answered first; how they would be employed and by what means of transportation. All helicopters were fully committed on other missions. Twelve 3/4 ton trucks were collected from the various units in the vicinity of the battalion command post at QUAN LOI, and B Company was prepared to move prior to their arrival. At 1026 hours the helicopters supporting the 1st Battalion, 28th Infantry in the SONG BE area were diverted to QUAN LOI, but by 1040 hours had not arrived. Company B departed by vehicle for the squadron command post at HON QUAN, and at 1105 passed to control of Col Lewane.

Between 1015 and 1020 hours, A Company, 2d Battalion, 18th Infantry was alerted, pulled off the perimeter, and instructed to be on the airfield in the event helicopters became available. Company A was assembled on the airfield by 1100 hours. General DePuy called Col McChrystal to the division command post about 1040 hours to be briefed on what had happened in his battalion. General DePuy made the decision to divert 12 helicopters from SONG BE. All helicopters closed the QUAN LOI airfield at 1130 hours. Col Lewane was informed of the current status of Companies A and B and asked where and how he wished to deploy them. A command and control helicopter arrived for Col McChrystal and he and the battalion S-3 went forward for a reconnaissance.

Col Lewane had selected two landing zones; LZ 1 in the rice paddy on the east of Route 13 (XU 727012) and LZ 2 across the road. He decided on the latter with the direction of attack south. At 1145, Col Lewane was informed that the first lift of A Company was loaded. The company commander was briefed that he would land on LZ 2; he should operate his radio on the squadron frequency; and he was under control of the squadron commander. The LZ was prepared by air strikes and artillery and then was marked with smoke from Col McChrystal's aircraft. A Company closed in two lifts.

Company B proceeded north on Route 13 toward CP GOLDEN GATE. Upon arrival at that location, the company would be moved into the battle area by helicopters or personnel carriers. Major Taylor landed at the bridge and discovered there were a number of wounded requiring evacuation by Dust Off helicopters and the pick-up zone would become too congested with assault helicopters landing there also. An alternate pick-up zone was selected at XT 734967 and the road column of B Company was diverted to this location. Company B then made an airmobile assault into LZ 2 utilizing four lifts of five aircraft. A command group from the 2d Battalion, 18th Infantry had been prepared for lift after B Company had closed the LZ. As one helicopter in the last lift of B Company landed, it apparently struck a dud CBU bomblet. All personnel cleared the damaged ship

before it was consumed by fire. Col McChrystal landed with B Company, and assumed command of Companies A and B. Col Lewane was informed of this and that the battalion (-) was attacking in the direction he had specified.

As the companies started pushing south, B was west of Route 13 and A to their right (sketch map 5). Company A met resistance about 200 meters south of the LZ while B Company was mopping up the remainin elements of the enemy just to the west of Route 13. About 300 meters south of the LZ, B Company uncovered C Troop and C Company (-). At this time, Col McChrystal assumed command of these elements. Company C was ordered to reorganize and search the immediate area, while C Troop was to reorganize, recover disabled tanks and personnel carriers, and support from Route 13 as Company B continued sweeping south and A Company southwest. Company B ceased to meet resistance by the time they had progressed about 800 meters from the LZ. However, A Company met stiff resistance along the creek, vicinity XU 715005 (sketch map 6). The Viet Cong had established a strong combat outpost line east and west of the creek. Company A sustained a few wounded. Since no headway was being made, C Company was committed on the right flank of A Company. The link-up was made by 1515 and the strength of the two companies forced the VC out of their positions. Dust Off was completed and the sweep continued south to the blocking positions held by B Troop and the ARVN forces.

At 1500, Col Berry, 1st Brigade Commander, landed and directed the 2d Battalion, 18th Infantry to assemble at LZ 2 and become the brigade reserve. The units returned to an assembly area just south of the LZ in the order B, A, and C Company, where the battalion remained overnight. The reconnaissance platoon, and mortar platoon of the battalion were flown in at 1700. Three ambush sites were established on the south, southwest, and the west, but no enemy activity was experienced during the night.

During the time the 2d Battalion, 18th Infantry was preparing for deployment, the 1st Brigade Commander was alerted at 1003 to move one infantry battalion and the brigade TAC CP in that order to QUAN LOI. The 1st Battalion, 2d Infantry commenced the move at 1234 hours using C-123 and CV-2 aircraft. The brigade closed the airfield at QUAN LOI at 1530. At 1622, the 1st Battalion, 2d Infantry commenced an airmobile assault into LZ BLUE, (map 2) and by about 1715 had closed into the area and began sweeping eastward.

Shortly after the contact was reported, the BINH LONG Province Chief offered units immediately available to him for support of the 1st Infantry Division. The 3d Troop, 1st Cavalry, ARVN, with 20 APC's reinforced with the 3d Company, 1st Battalion, 9th Regiment, ARVN, were attached to the 1st Squadron, 4th Cavalry. At 1100 hours the U.S. Advisor reported to the 1st Infantry Division G-3 for a mission. He was directed to immediately proceed north on Route 13 to link up with U.S. elements at Check Point 1. This was accomplished and the blocking position established at approximately 1300 hours (sketch map 5). The 9th Regiment had one other company immediately available for operations which moved to secure the bridge at Check Point GOLDEN GATE. The Regional Force companies were securing the road between the bridge and HON QUAN. One company of the 9th Regiment was called back from an operation south of QUAN LOI as a possible escort for the move of an artillery battery north on Route 13.

At about 1100 hours, two CIDG companies were sent from LOC NINH and assumed blocking positions north of the battle area.

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The 1st Battalion, 28th Infantry was ordered at 1020 hours to move from SONG BE to QUAN LOI. The battalion closed at QUAN LOI at 1620 and A Battery, 2d Battalion, 33d Artillery moved by CH-47 from SONG BE, closing at 2245. This battery was moved to LZ BLUE (map 2) at 1115 hours, 1 July.

At 1420 hours, the 1st Battalion, 16th Infantry was ordered to terminate its operation, return to LAI KHE and prepare for movement on order. At 1430 2d Battalion, 16th Infantry was ordered to move one company from the 2d Brigade Base Camp to PHUOC VINH and the battalion (-) to LAI KHE. The 1st Battalion, 16th Infantry closed into LAI KHE at 1715 and the last of C Company, 2d Battalion, 16th Infantry was on the way to PHUOC VINH in fixed wing aircraft by 1813.

The 2d Battalion, 2d Infantry commenced moving from LAI KHE at 1600 hours utilizing C-123 and CV-2 aircraft. All elements of this battalion had closed into QUAN LOI at 1710.

1 - 2 JULY (U)

On 1 July, follow up action continued against remnants of the 271st VC Regiment. The 1st Battalion, 2d Infantry secured LZ BLUE as Battery A, 2d Battalion, 33d Artillery was lifted by CH-47 to support future operations. Company C remained to secure the LZ while the remainder of the battalion moved to seize the bridge at XT 683998; link up with the 1st Squadron, 4th Cavalry (-); and with B Troop proceed to Objective 1 (XU 698027). Troop C joined Company C, 1st Battalion, 2d Infantry at LZ BLUE.

The 1st Battalion, 28th Infantry conducted an airmobile assault into LZ GREEN (XT 616995) at 1000 hours. The battalion moved to secure Objective BASEBALL (XT 623996); left one company in blocking positions; and proceeded to vicinity of XU 721021 to conduct a search of the battle area of the previous day. Light contact was made with small groups of VC.

The 2d Battalion, 18th Infantry continued to search the battle area and uncovered numerous shallow graves and additional VC bodies. At 1600 hours, the battalion conducted an airmobile assault on LZ PINK (XU 592025) and occupied positions for the night as shown on Overlay 1. Company A made contact with the VC and Company C and Recon Platoon were sent to reinforce. Mortar and small arms fire was received until contact was broken at 2030 hours. At 0545 hours 2 July, the overnight positions of A Company, C Company, and Recon Platoon, were taken under fire by VC automatic weapons and mortars. The VC then launched a series of five assaults from all directions, but the attack was countered by fire support from artillery, gun ships, and fighter bombers. A total of 61 sorties were flown by USAF fighter bombers and included close air support by three flights using SKY SPOT (radar bombing) techniques. Company B was moved at 0730 hours to reinforce Companies A and C and contact was broken at 0900 hours. A body count of VC dead revealed that the attacking 3d Battalion, 273d VC Main Force Regiment suffered the loss of 78 killed.

At 0710 hours, the 1st Battalion, 28th Infantry moved from overnight positions to support the 2d Battalion, 18th Infantry. Link-up was made at 0930 hours and both battalions searched the area around the defensive perimeter. The 1st Battalion, 28th Infantry then continued north toward LZ ROSE (XU 5904) but made no contact.

The 1st Battalion, 2d Infantry, minus C Company at the artillery base, assembled on Route 13 and was helilifted into LZ RED (XU 657050), closing at 1320 hours. This LZ and adjacent LZ WHITE (XU 657037) were secured by ps B and C, 1st Squadron, 4th Cavalry and attached ARVN APC troop an rifle company. 64

The 2d Battalion, 2d Infantry was helilifted into LZ PINK and relieved the 2d Battalion, 18th Infantry which returned to control of 1st Infantry Division at 1530. During the night the 2d Battalion, 2d Infantry came under mortar attack which appeared later to have been e cover for the withdrawal of the VC to the southwest and northwest. A sweep of the area was made with only minor contact.

FIRE SUPPORT (U)

At the time B Troop made contact, a preplanned air strike was in progress vicinity XT 7499. The aircraft had commenced dropping CBU at the time Col Lewane notified the forward air controller (FAC) that the armored column was in contact. The pilot pulled out of his southeast to northwest direction of flight and brought his aircraft down the west side of Route 13, expending the remainder of his CBU, Napalm, and 20mm. A large group of VC were seen running east along the trail north of the rice paddy. The next flight concentrated on the logs at Check Point 3 and the trail. A second FAC arrived about 1030 and started working along the trail. Col Lewane requested the area along Route 13 about 300 meters from the road be hit, however, the troop commanders requested it be moved closer to the road. During the dash of Lt Cole's 3d Platoon forward with the infantry, a napalm strike was placed along side the west of the road assisting his movement. Col Lewane called for a preparation on LZ 2, but delayed the actual landing when he was notified that aircraft were on station with CBU. This strike was placed from the 00 grid line to the LZ. After the LZ preparation, air strikes were directed to the west to cover trails on which VC were withdrawing in groups of from 5 to 15. Napalm strikes were placed ahead of the advancing 2d Battalion, 18th Infantry.

From the initial preplanned strike, close air support was continuous and unlimited. A total of 88 sorties were flown as follows:

A4 - 24
F100 - 40
A1 - 10 (VNAF)
F5 - 6
F4 - 8

Ordnance expended included:

High Explosive - 42.3 tons
Napalm - 48 tons
CBU - 11.5 tons
Rockets - 160

There was a minimum of one FAC on station at all times. These FACs were in constant communication with either the squadron commander, S-3, or troop commanders.

Artillery direct support was provided by Battery B (155mm) and Battery D (8"), 8th Battalion, 6th Artillery located at HON QUAN (XT 762891). Battery B fired 548 rounds and Battery D fired 277 from the time contact was made until about 1900 hours.

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Defensive concentrations had been plotted along the route which facilitated ground observers with the column to call for fire. However, most of the missions were adjusted by air observers. Within minutes after contact began, an air observer was over the battle area. Fire was most intense from the northeast and northwest and artillery was fired on the trail north of the rice paddy. These fires were shifted to the wooded area north of SROK DONG. Col Lewane then directed that artillery would fire to the east of Route 13. This was continued until such time as he directed that artillery be placed as a block along the streamline to the west. Artillery was also used in the preparation of LZ 2 and shifted prior to the landing to the woods on the north. Artillery continued to block along the streamline to the west after the infantry deployed. Groups of VC were seen to walk into the fire, lying down or getting in holes between volleys. By 1700, resistance had ended, but air and artillery continued to interdict likely assembly areas and routes of withdrawal. Interdiction continued throughout the night.

In addition to air and artillery, helicopter gunships supported the engaged units. At 0945 hours an armed CH-47, GO-GO 154, received an ambush reaction mission in support of the armored column. Contact was made with Col Lewane at 1000 hours. The pilot was briefed on the situation and made an immediate attack on the enemy forces 100 meters west of Route 13. The first attack was made at 1008 hours using 20mm and 50 caliber guns and 40mm grenades. After the first pass, Col Lewane requested that fire be moved to within 25 to 50 meters from the road and the second attack was made using the same weapons. A third pass was made using M-18 (7.62 Miniguns) and 50 caliber side and rear guns. The Miniguns appeared to have little suppressive effect and the aircraft received several hits. Transmission warning lights, oil pressure, and temperature gauges indicated heavy damage and an immediate landing was made in the rice paddy east of Route 13. A check indicated the aircraft was safe to fly and the aircraft returned to QUAN LOI to ascertain the extent of damage. At 1130 hours, VUNG TAU was contacted for a replacement aircraft which arrived at 1300 and continued attacks on enemy troops, evacuation routes, assembly areas, and close support of elements occupying blocking positions.

Operations with armed Chinooks ended at 2015 hours. Numerous sorties were flown by armed UH-1B's both as cover for the armed Chinooks and against targets selected by Col Lewane.

RESULTS (U)

Enemy losses included:

270 KIA (Body Count)
300 KIA (Probable)
7 VC Captives
40 Small Arms
23 Crew Served Weapons
1633 Rounds of Ammunition

(C) Friendly losses are as follows:

1st Squadron, 4th Cavalry

	KIA	WIA
Hq Troop		5
B Troop	7 (1 DOW)	32
C Troop	5 (2 DOW)	18
Total	12	55

2d Battalion, 18th Infantry

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	KIA	WIA
A Company	1	12
B Company	1	10
C Company	5 (1 DOW)	17
Total	7	39

Seven armored personnel carriers and four tanks were damaged. One personnel carrier and one UH-1D were destroyed.

CONCLUSION (U)

As the reaction forces continued to search the battle area, conclusive evidence was found that the 271st VC Regiment had been decisively defeated and again failed in its assigned mission to destroy U.S. armored forces along Route 13. The rout of 271st Regiment can be attributed to several significant facts:

From the first indication of contact until the VC withdrew in defeat, Lt Col Lewane was in complete command of the situation. At the time of contact, the squadron was under OPCON 2d Battalion, 18th Infantry. Because he had complete control of the situation, subordinate elements of the 2d Battalion, 18th Infantry were placed under his control when committed to the battle. Except for short periods of time when he returned to refuel, he was over the battle area. During his absence, he had his S-3 replace him to control the action and coordinate the fire support. Col Lewane was in constant communication with his troop commanders, artillery observers, forward air controllers, and gunships. He coordinated all the fires to insure that the maximum amount of uninterrupted firepower could be brought to bear on the enemy forces.

Lt Col McChrystal's plans for deployment of the rapid reaction force saved many valuable minutes, preventing a larger number of VC from withdrawing.

The decision of General DePuy to divert helicopters for the lift of 2d Battalion, 18th Infantry, coupled with the movement of B Company by vehicle to the pickup zone cut to a minimum, the time between landing of the two companies.

Preplanned airstrikes were available for diversion to the area of contact and subsequent close air support was continuous. There was unlimited support with varying quantities and types of ordnance.

Medium and heavy caliber artillery was available within range of the battle area and rapidly responded to requests for fire by Col Lewane.

Troop C was not initially engaged and was available for immediate reinforcement on Col Lewane's order.

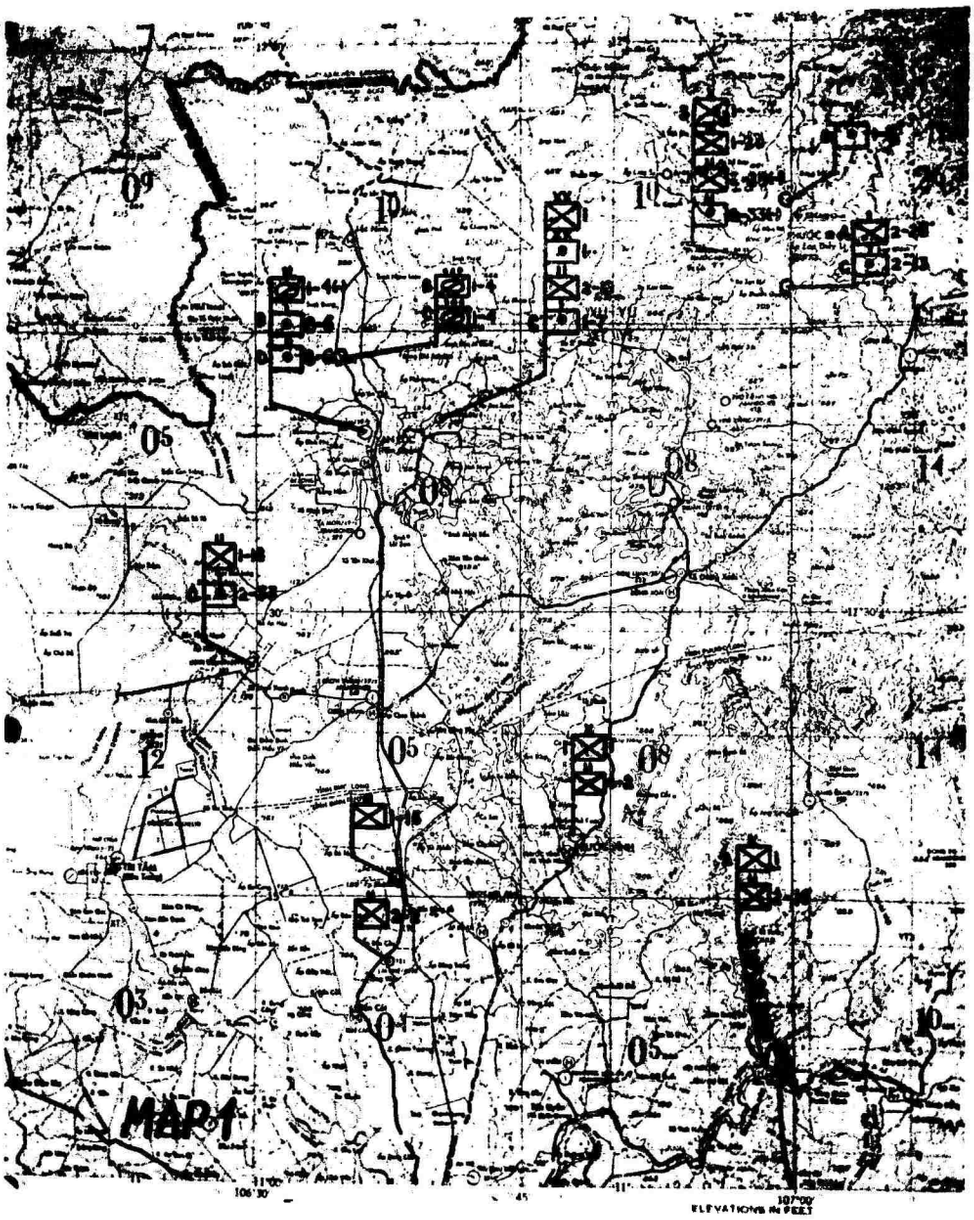
The tremendous base of fire laid down by the tanks and personnel carriers, coupled with the tenacity with which personnel fought and the outstanding leadership given the men, were instrumental in overcoming the numerically superior VC force. As squad and platoon leaders were wounded or killed, assistants immediately assumed command so that at no time were the troops lacking direction.

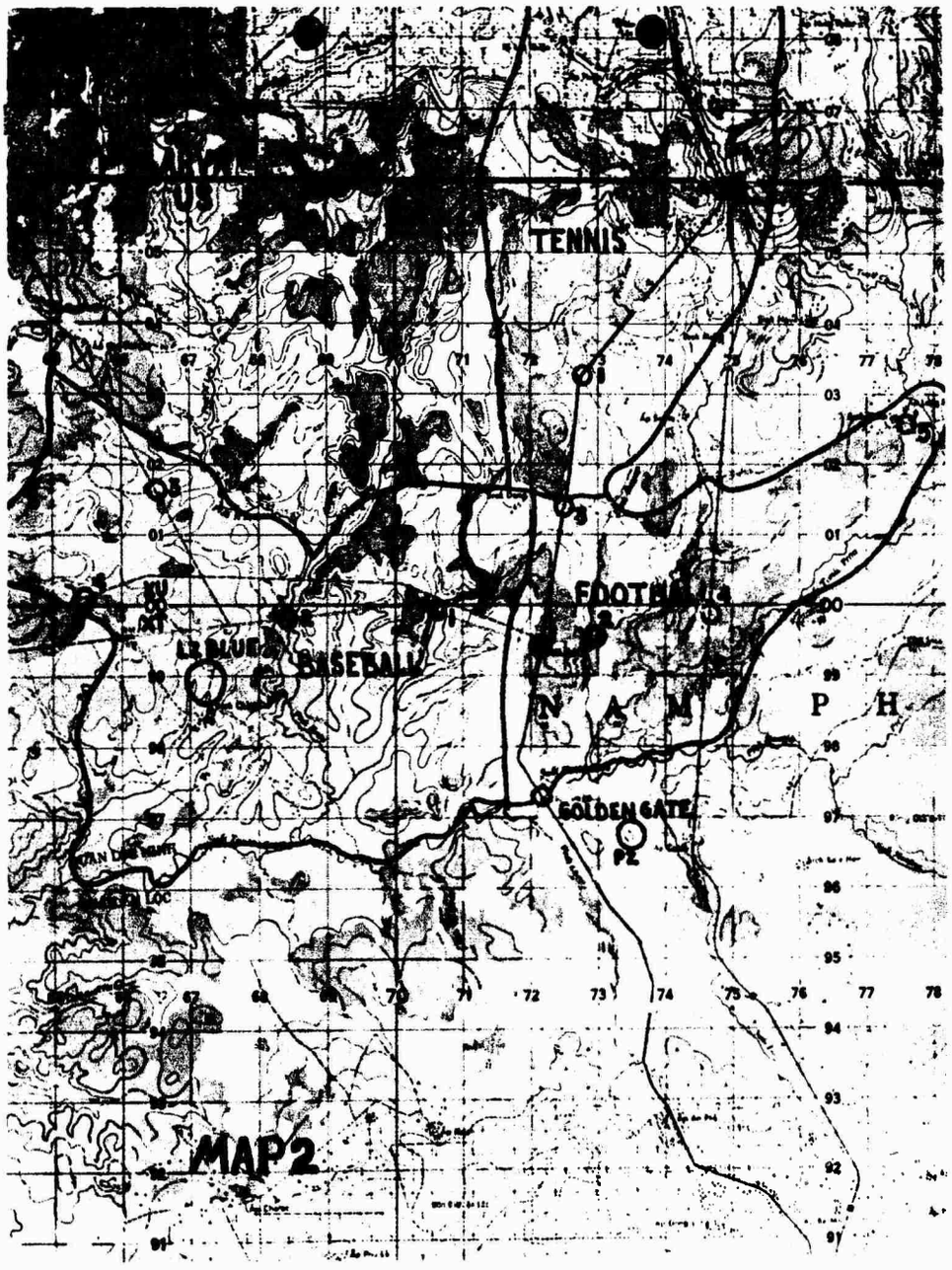
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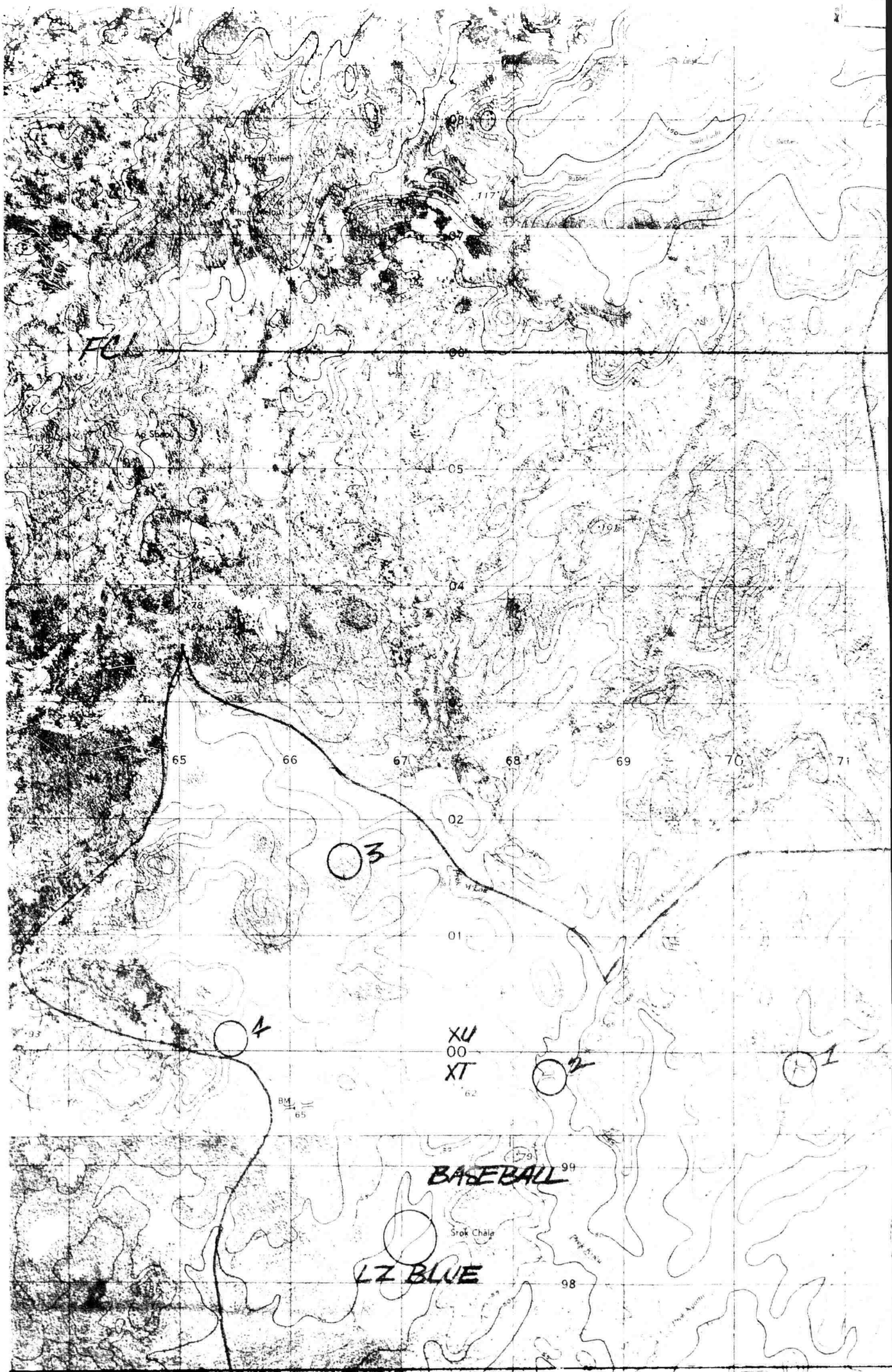
The time contact was made is particularly significant. The battle started at 0938 leaving ten hours of daylight for the battle to develop, a reaction force to be committed, and a search of the battle area to be conducted after contact was broken. This denied the enemy the capability to police the area.

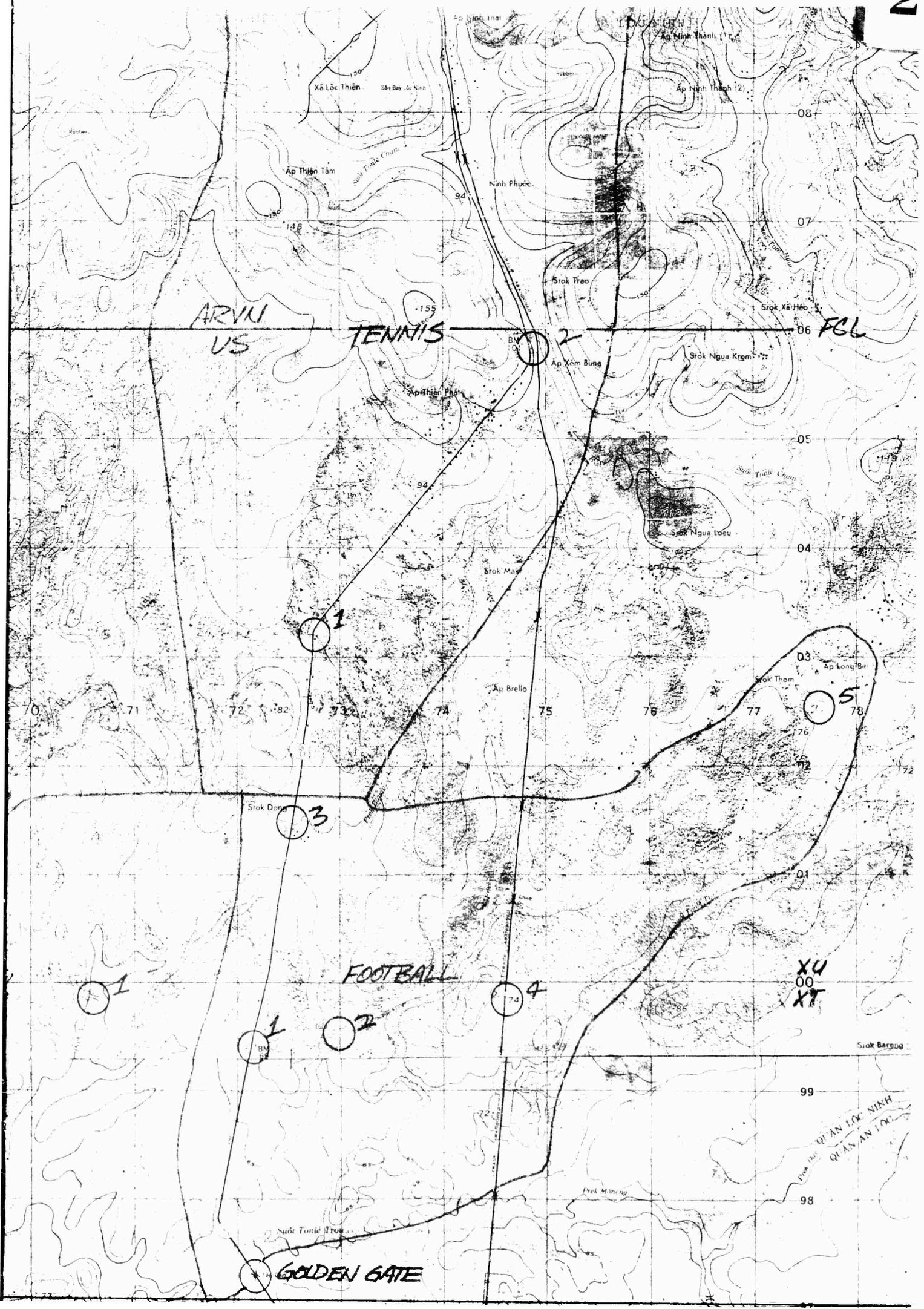
Weather conditions did not limit the ability of the forward air controllers or artillery observers to place effective fire on the enemy.

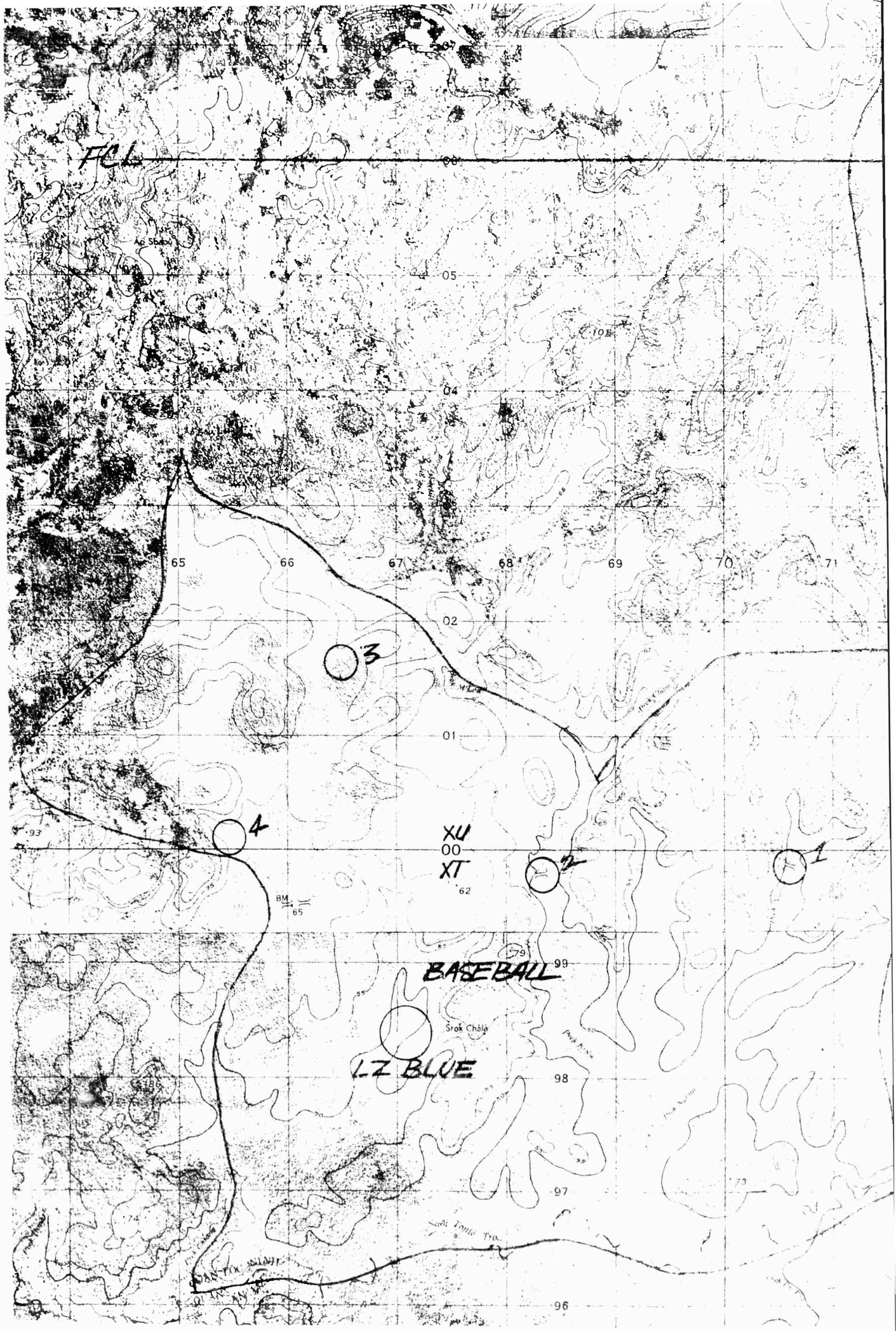
Incl -- MAP 1 - 1st Inf Div Troop Dispositions
MAP 2 - Area of Operation 1:50,000
MAP 3 - PICTOMAP Area of Operation 1:25,000
Sketch Maps 1 - 6
Overlay - Battle of HO KRIGNOU

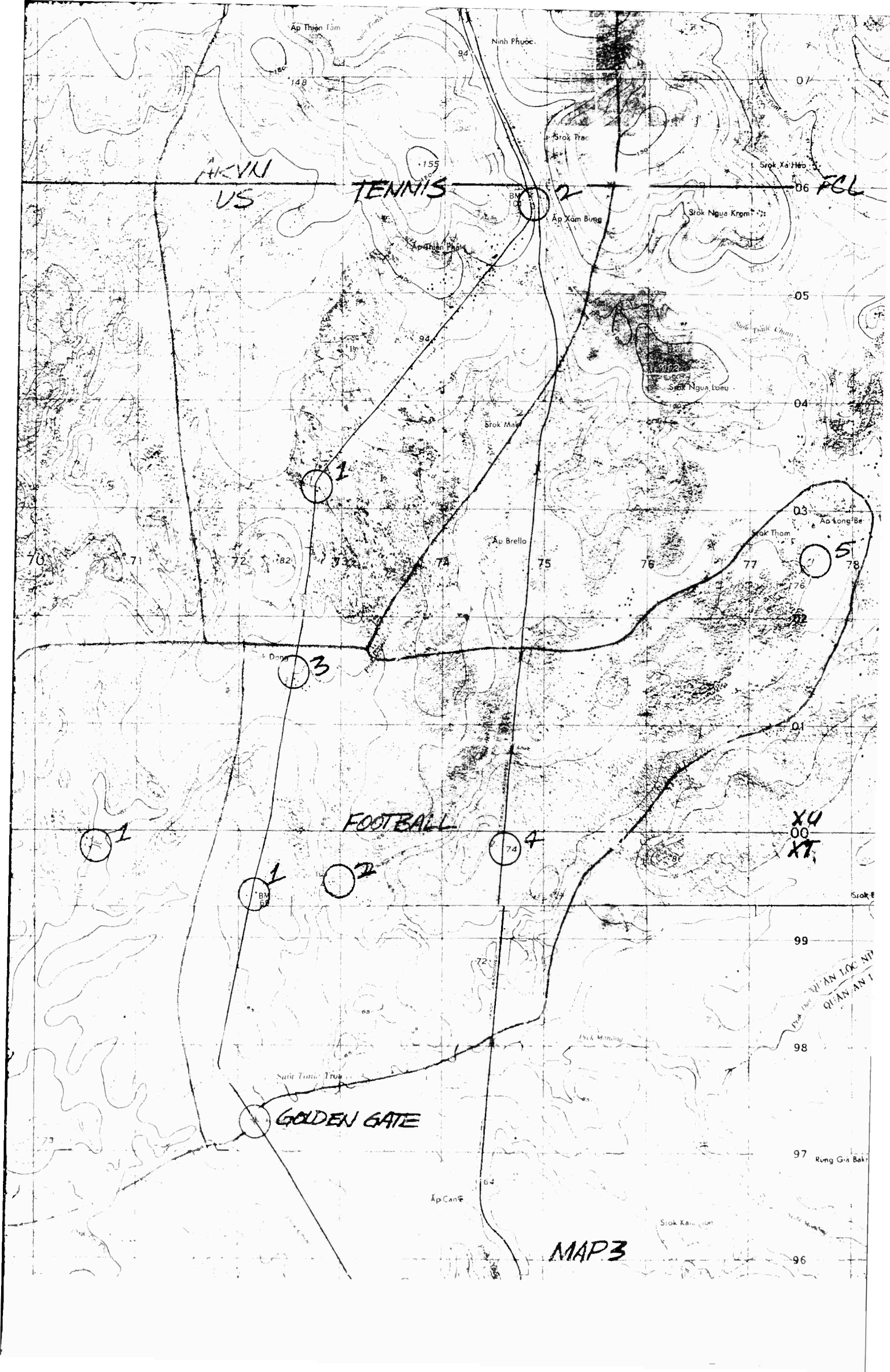

MAP 1
ELEVATIONS IN FEET

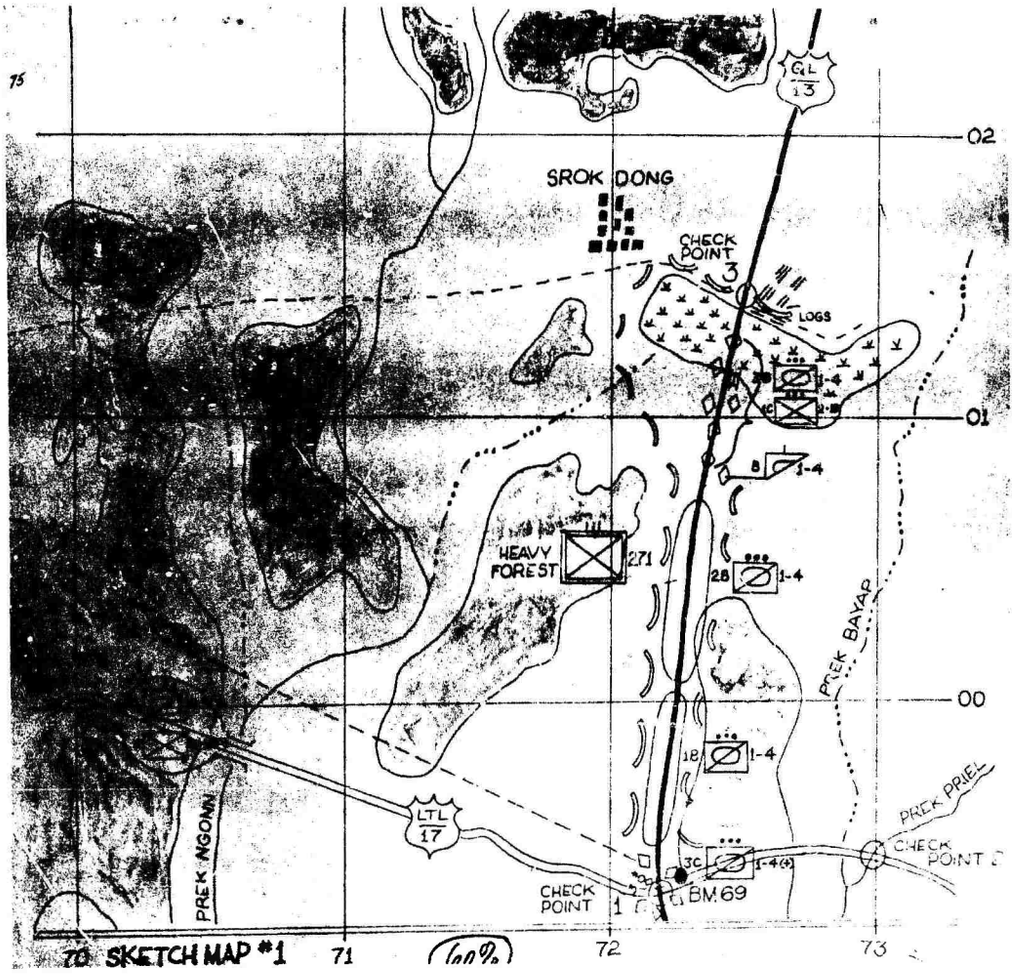

TENNIS
BASEBALL
GOLDEN GATE
MAP2

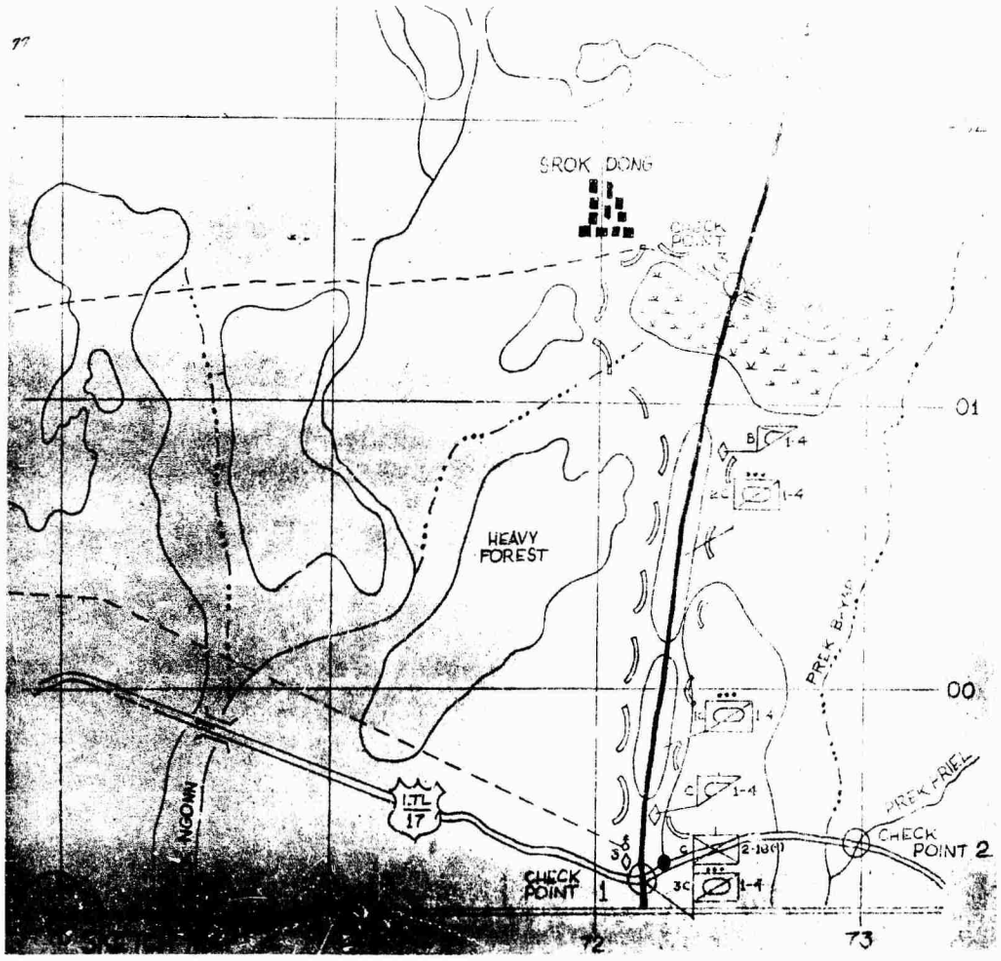

FCL
Phum Teteh
Phum Melouk
Ang Sbaou
Rubber
Stream
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66
67
68
69
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71
00
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4
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00
XT
BASEBALL
LZ BLUE
Srok Chala
98
99

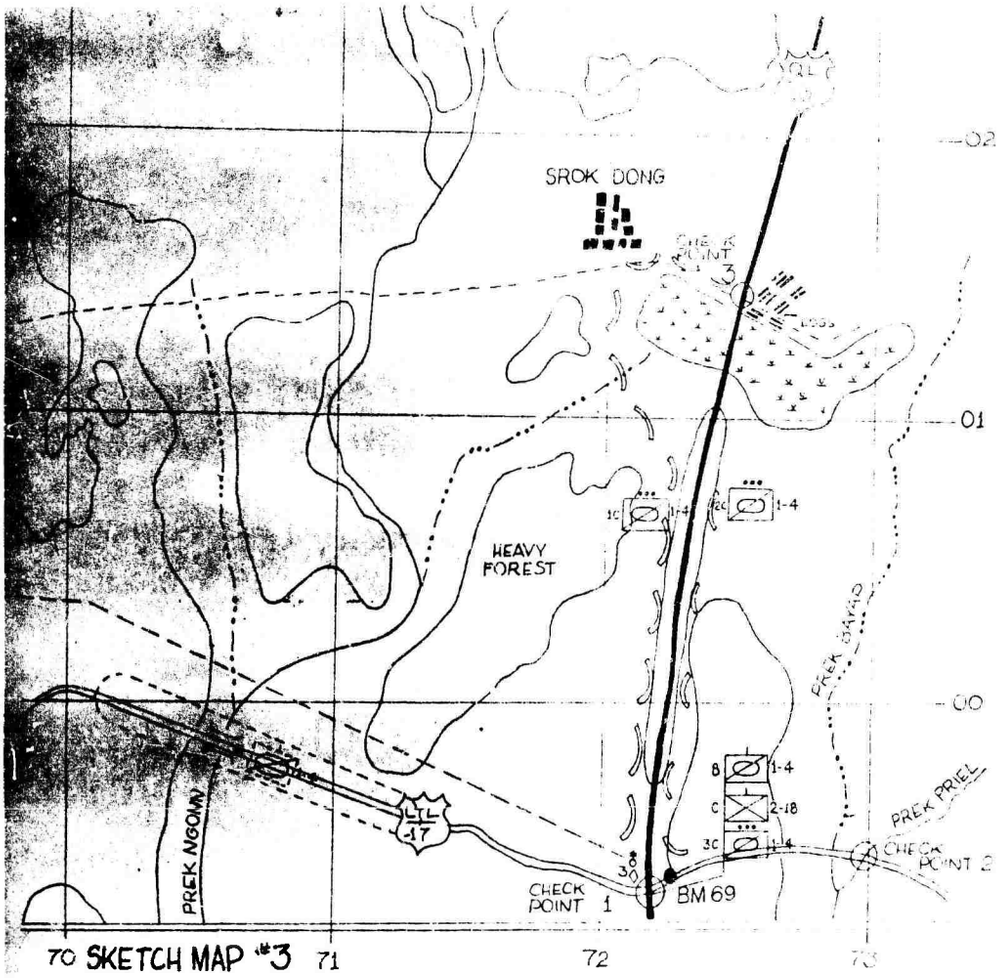

ARVN
VS
TENNIS
FGL
FOOTBALL
GOLDEN GATE
XU
XT
Ap Ninh Thanh (1)
Ap Ninh Thanh (2)
Xa Loc Thien
Ap Thien Tam
Ninh Phuoc
Srok Trao
Srok Xa Heo
Ap Xom Bung
Srok Ngua Krom
Ap Thien Phat
Srok Ngua Loeu
Srok Mai
Ap Brello
Ap Long Be
Srok Thom
Srok Dong
Srok Barsue
Suoi Tonle Chum
Suoi Tonle Trou
Prek Mamang
QUAN LOC NINH
QUAN AN LOC


FCL
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BASEBALL
Srok Chàla
LZ BLUE
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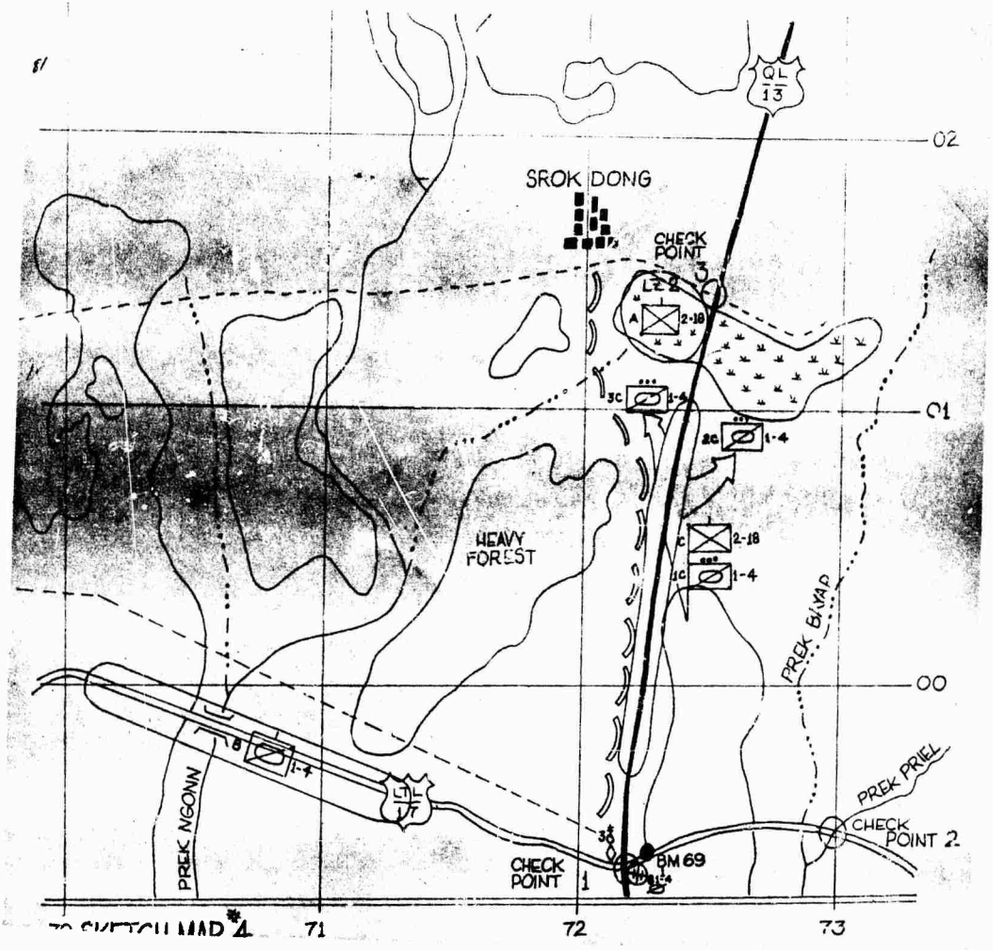

Ap Thien Tam
Ninh Phuoc
Srok Trac
Srok Xa Heo
TENNIS
Ap Xom Bung
Srok Ngua Krom
Ap Thien Phuoc
Srok Ngua Loeu
Srok Mak
Ap Brello
Ap Long Be
Srok Thom
FOOTBALL
GOLDEN GATE
Ap Can 6
Srok Kanh Gion
Rung Gia Bak
MAP 3


75
GL 13
02
SROK DONG
CHECK POINT 3
LOGS
01
1-4
8
1-4
HEAVY FOREST
271
28
1-4
PREK BAYAP
00
18
1-4
LTL 17
PREK PRIEL
CHECK POINT 2
3C
1-4(-)
CHECK POINT 1
BM 69
PREK NGOM
70 SKETCH MAP #1
71
72
73

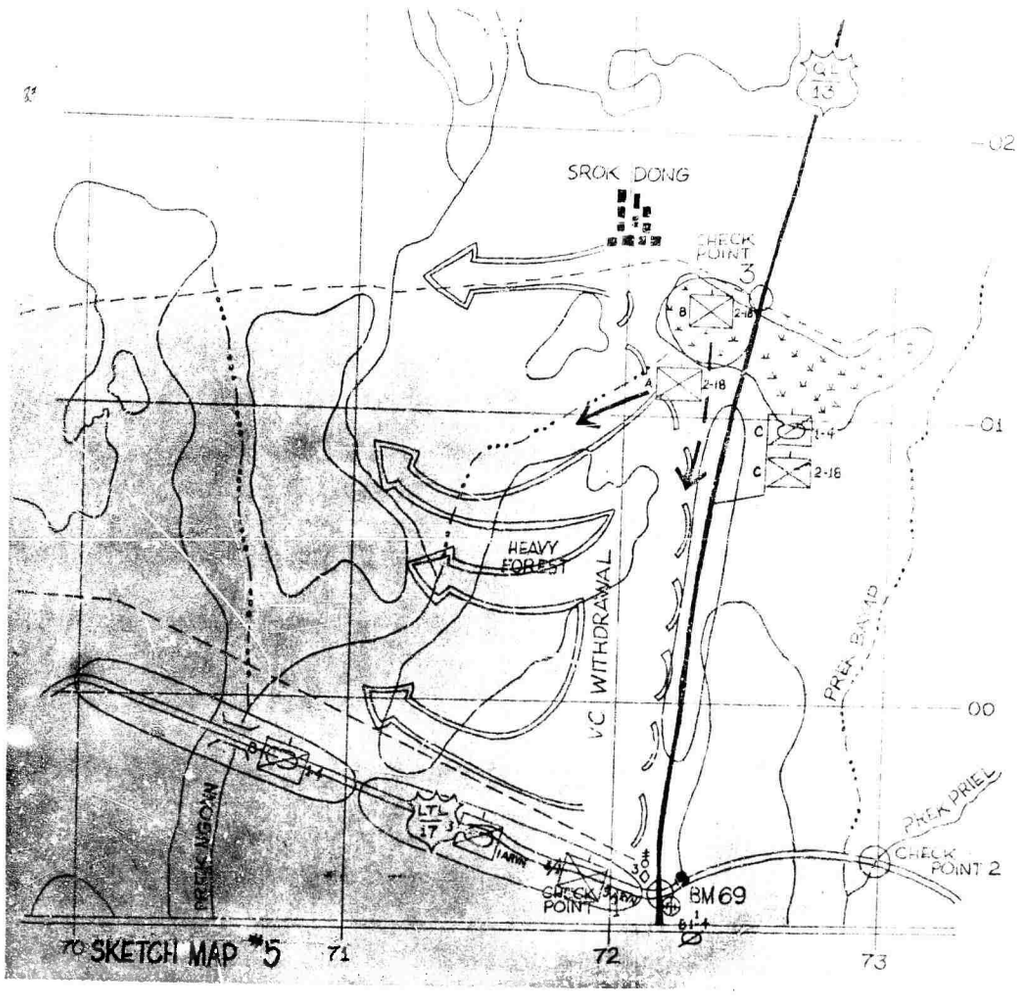

77
SROK DONG
01
00
HEAVY FOREST
B 1-4
C 1-4
1-4
C 1-4
PREK BYSE
PREK PRIEL
CHECK POINT 2
CHECK POINT 1
1TL 17
NGOAN
C 2-106
3C 1-4
72
73

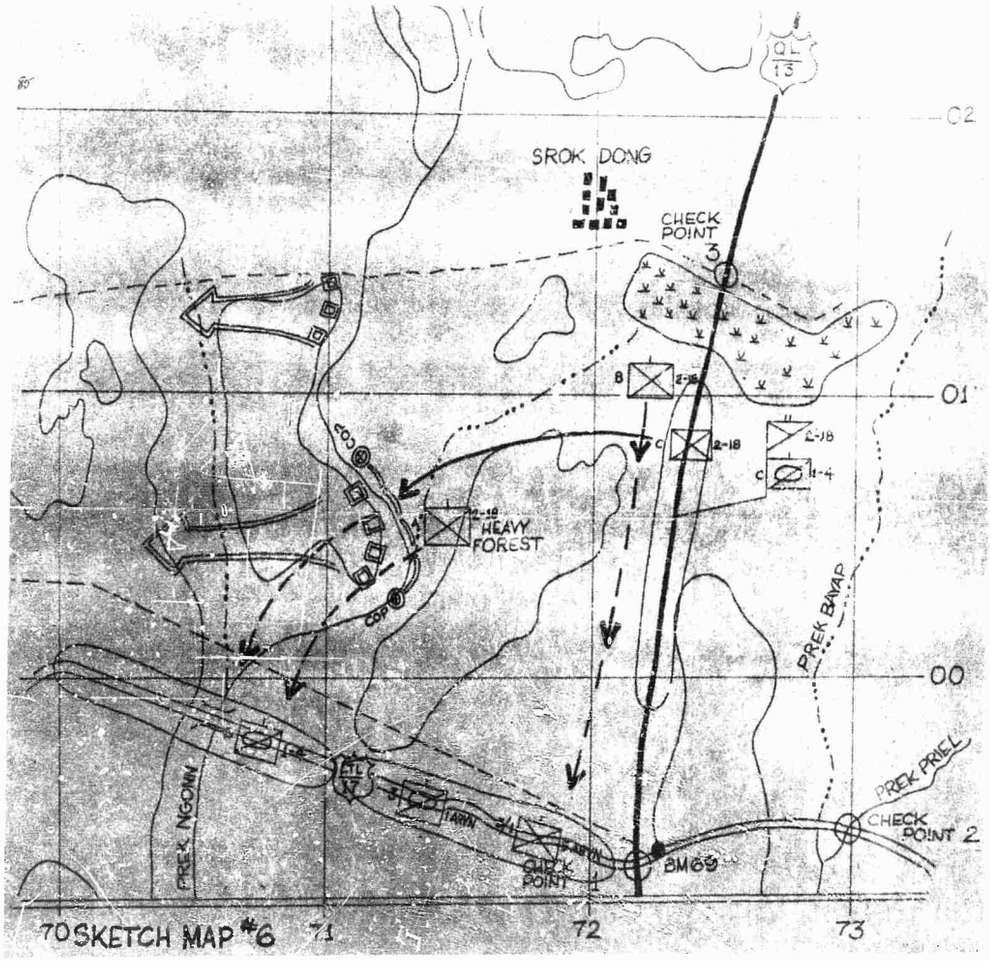

SROK DONG
CHECK POINT 3
HEAVY FOREST
PREK DAMAD
PREK NGOMN
PREK PRIEL
CHECK POINT 1
CHECK POINT 2
BM 69
LTL 17
1C
2C
3C
B
C
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2-18
02
01
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70
71
72
73

SKETCH MAP #3

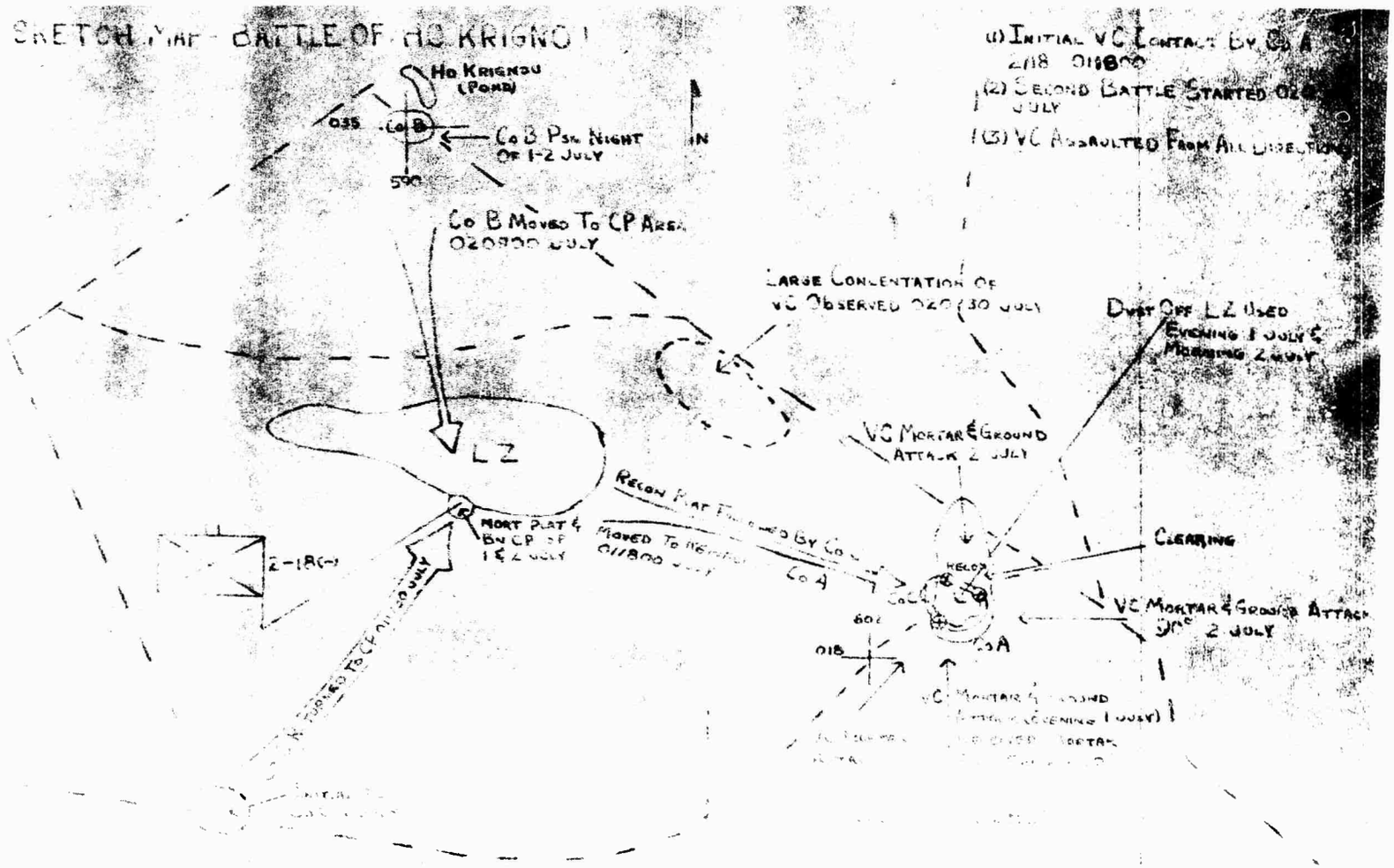

QL 13
02
SROK DONG
CHECK POINT 3
LZ 2
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3C 1-4
01
2C 1-4
C 2-18
1C 1-4
HEAVY FOREST
PREK BAYAP
00
B 1-4
QL 13
PREK NGONN
PREK PRIEL
CHECK POINT 2
3B
CHECK POINT 1
BM 69
71
72
73

SKETCH MAP 4


SROK DONG
CHECK POINT 3
HEAVY FOREST
VC WITHDRAWAL
PREK PRIEL
CHECK POINT 2
CHECK POINT
BM69
MOON RIVER
SKETCH MAP #5
70
71
72
73
02
01
00


QL 13
C2
SROK DONG
CHECK POINT 3
01
B 2-18
C 2-18
C 4-4
2-18 HEAVY FOREST
PREK BAMP
00
PREK NGONN
PREK PRIEL
CHECK POINT 2
BM69
CHECK POINT 1
70
71
72
73

SKETCH MAP #6


SKETCH MAP - BATTLE OF HO KRIGNO
Ho Krignou (Pond)
035
Co B
590
Co B Psn Night Of 1-2 July
Co B Moved To CP Area
020900 July
LZ
Recon Plat
Mort Plat & Bn CP
1 & 2 July
Moved To
011800 July
Co A
Large Concentration Of VC Observed
(30 July)
VC Mortar & Ground Attack 2 July
Dust Off LZ Used Evening 1 July & Morning 2 July
Clearing
VC Mortar & Ground Attack 2 July
018
(1) Initial VC Contact By Co A 2/18 011800
(2) Second Battle Started 02
July
(3) VC Assaulted From All Direction

B

ANNEX B

BATTLE OF LOC NINH RUBBER PLANTATION NARRATIVE

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ANNEX B Combat Operations After Action Report, Operation EL PASO II/III
Battle of LOC NINH Rubber Plantation Narrative

RESUME OF BATTLE OF LOC NINH RUBBER PLANTATION

The Battle of the LOC NINH Rubber Plantation was conducted under the canopy of the gently rolling LOC NINH Rubber Plantation two kilometers west and northwest of LOC NINH, coord XU 737097. Vegetation under the 60 foot rubber trees was negligible. Weather for the operation was fair with the exception of heavy ground fog in the early morning. The fog delayed the heliborne portion of the operation from 0620H until 0815H when the fog dissipated sufficiently to allow the HU-1D helicopters to make their lift of one CIDG platoon and one platoon from A Company into the LZ vic coord XU 702112. Touchdown was 110835H Jun 66 following a five minute gunship preparation in the area.

The ground blocking elements, two platoons from A Company, 2/28th Inf departed the LOC NINH area at 0715H along Route RED and Route BLUE, respectively. At 0735H these elements reported receiving SA fire from approximately one platoon of VC vic coord XU 715093. A Company's 81mm mortars were fired into the area with unknown results. In the same vic, at 0810H, the blocking elements had three wounded by SA fire from the VC positions at the top of Hill 150. The 81mm mortars from A Company were again called on the hilltop. Following the mortar barrage the two blocking platoons moved into positions to the south and east of the VC locations on Hill 150, vic coord XU 715095.

The heliborne elements after their initial landing, headed south toward their original objective of the Village Nr. 10 complex, centered at XU 710100. At 0849H the blocking elements reported receiving MG fire from a bunker at vic coord XU 717095. Upon receiving this information the CIDG/A Company elements altered their mission and moved south to assist against what was now estimated to be at least one VC platoon entrenched on top of Hill 150. A Company's platoon moved to the north of the VC positions tying in with the two blocking forces on the east and south, thus forming a U-shaped ring open to the NW. The CIDG platoon attempted to penetrate the VC positions from the NW, but were repulsed by heavy SA and AW fire coming from the well entrenched enemy. The CIDG elements then displaced, tying in with A Company's blocking elements on the south. 81mm mortars were immediately called in to the north, sealing off any VC route of withdrawal.

Due to the intensity of the fighting C Company was alerted at 0910H to be prepared to move on foot to assist A Company. At 0940H C Company was ordered to move in support of the elements around Hill 150. By 1030H A and C Companies had linked up, C Company moving around toward coord XU 713093. As C Company moved to effect tie in, A Company indicated that VC were moving to the NE toward Hill 177, vic coord XU 721111. C Company was then ordered by the battalion commander to move north to intercept and attack the VC in that vicinity.

Upon approaching coord XU 720104 C Company ran into intense ground fire from at least one VC company firmly entrenched in bunkers with overhead cover in the vic of Hill 177. Artillery and 4.2" mortar fire was called on the VC positions and to the north to prevent the VC from escaping. At 1200H C Company requested ammunition resupply and further assistance to maneuver against the enemy force. In less than 15 minutes two helicopter loads of ammunition were airdropped on C Company's front lines. The Recon Platoon was immediately dispatched on foot from LOC NINH with still additional ammunition and a mission of aiding the C Company attacking elements south of Hill 177.

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The Recon element moved to A Company's CP location, vic coord XU 720092 and then proceeded north to assist C Company, killing three VC snipers along the way. At 1330H Recon and C Company linked up with Recon being placed on C Company left flank vic coord XU 717104. In preparation for an assault, more artillery was fired on the VC positions around Hill 177. The attack commenced at 1425H with C Company on line east to west and the Recon Platoon pinching in on VC trenchwork from the west along a ridgeline running north vic coord XU 715113.

At this point the VC concentrated their fire on Recon and C Company platoon on the left, hurling grenades and firing SA from the trees. Simultaneously, the VC began hitting the Recon Platoon's left flank with intensified SA and AW fire. The Recon in turn attempted to fall back to prevent the VC enveloping movement. While in the process of accomplishing this maneuver, the VC moved a machinegun into a trench occupied by the remaining Recon elements, resulting in the VC overrunning the positions. C Company immediately countered with its reserve platoon, eliminating the VC resistance, pushing the enemy off Hill 177 into the artillery volleys to the north and northwest, terminating this portion of the battle at around 111615H Jun 66.

Meanwhile, in the A Company area to the south, consecutive assaults from the north, south, and west failed to dislodge the VC from their entrenched positions. A CIDG company moving west on patrol was diverted into a blocking position vic coord XU 700090. A Company's 81mm mortars continued to pound the VC positions, but to no apparent avail. The battalion commander then decided to commit his final reserve, B Company, at 1430H, at the same time moving the CIDG company east to XU 713090 into a more advantageous blocking and maneuvering location.

When B Company linked up with A Company at 1500H the A Company elements were repositioned to allow the artillery to fire a preparation all along Hill 150 prior to an assault by B Company. In the meantime the CIDG platoon attached to A Company and positioned vic coord XU 714093 retreated to the south after their interpreter had been killed by the VC, thus creating a gap in the A Company lines on the south. The SF Advisor then joined A Company until the battle ended.

Following a sixteen volley artillery bombardment B Company assaulted Hill 150 at 1630H, completely overruning the VC positions. The VC fled to the south and ran into a heavy volumn of fire from the CIDG blocking force, causing the VC to scatter SW in complete disorganization.

After the final assault, consolidations were made in the battalion zone of action. Casualties were then evacuated, ammunition resupply was effected, and the battlefield was policed of VC bodies and equipment with a thorough search of the entire area. The battalion then moved on foot back to base camp location around the LOC NINH airstrip, final elements closing at 112100H Jun 66.

1. Casualty Figures:

US	VC
KIA - 33	KIA - 98 (BC)
WIA - 33	WIA - 1 (Captured)

ANNEX B Combat Operations After Action Report, Operation EL PASO II/III
Battle of LOC NINH Rubber Plantation Narrative (Con't)

The enemy force was estimated to be from two to three main force VC companies. Because of the nature of resistance this estimation was never apparent until approximately 1200H.

2. Enemy Equipment Captured:

a. 60mm mortar ———— 1 each complete with ammunition.

b. SKS Russian Carbine — 1 each.

c. Panzerfaust ———— 1 each with ammunition.

d. MG-42 machinegun —— 1 each.

e. VC webgear.

f. VC medical supply.

h. Numerous grenades, mines and small arms ammunition.

3. Ammunition Expended:

a. 81mm mortars — 400 HE, 14 Ill.

b. 4.2" mortars — 95 HE, 5 WP.

c. 105mm Arty —— 1143 HE.

d. Small arms —— two basic loads.

4. Air Sorties Flown: Air was used to block VC route of escape to the west side of the battle area. Sixteen sorties were flown by F-100's, F-4C's, and Navy A1H aircraft. Ordnance expended as follows: CBU, Napalm, 250 pound fragmentation bombs, 20mm cannon.

2nd Bn, 28th Inf, 1st Inf Div
Loc Ninh, South Vietnam (XU 7308)
101600H Jun 66
KM

FRAG ORDER (OPERATION EL PASO II)

REFERENCE: MAP, SOUTH VIETNAM; 1:50,000 LOC NINH 6346 IV; LOC THIEN 6346 III.

1. MISSION: A Co w/1 platoon CIDG conducts search of Village Nr. 10, Loc Ninh Rubber Plantation, vic coord XU 7209, to clear area of local VC.

2. EXECUTION:

a. Concept of operation: A Co (-) w/CIDG platoon attached, at 110600H commences move by foot and HU1D helicopter to surround Village Nr. 10 and clear it of VC and VC sympathizers.

b. A Co: At 0600H two platoons follow Route Red and Route Blue to blocking positions east and south of Village Nr. 10. At 0630H one platoon from A Co w/one platoon of CIDG helilifted to LZ XU 701112, move south, conduct search and clear of VC in Village Nr. 10.

c. B Co: Be prepared to reinforce A Co on 20 min. alert.

d. C Co: Be prepared to reinforce A Co on 5 min. alert.

e. Heavy Mortar: GS, priority to A Co.

f. Recon: Reinforce on call.

g. AT: Demo support on call.

h. Coord. Instructions:

(1) A Co send one man to maintain constant coordination with CIDG.

(2) Gunship prep of LZ five minutes prior to landing.

(3) VC and VCS evacuated to Loc Ninh on foot.

(4) Evacuate casualties to rear on foot if possible. Dustoff on call. Dustoff freq: 45.7

(5) FAC freq: 43.6

99

ACKNOWLEDGE:

BOWIE
Lt Col

ANNEX: A

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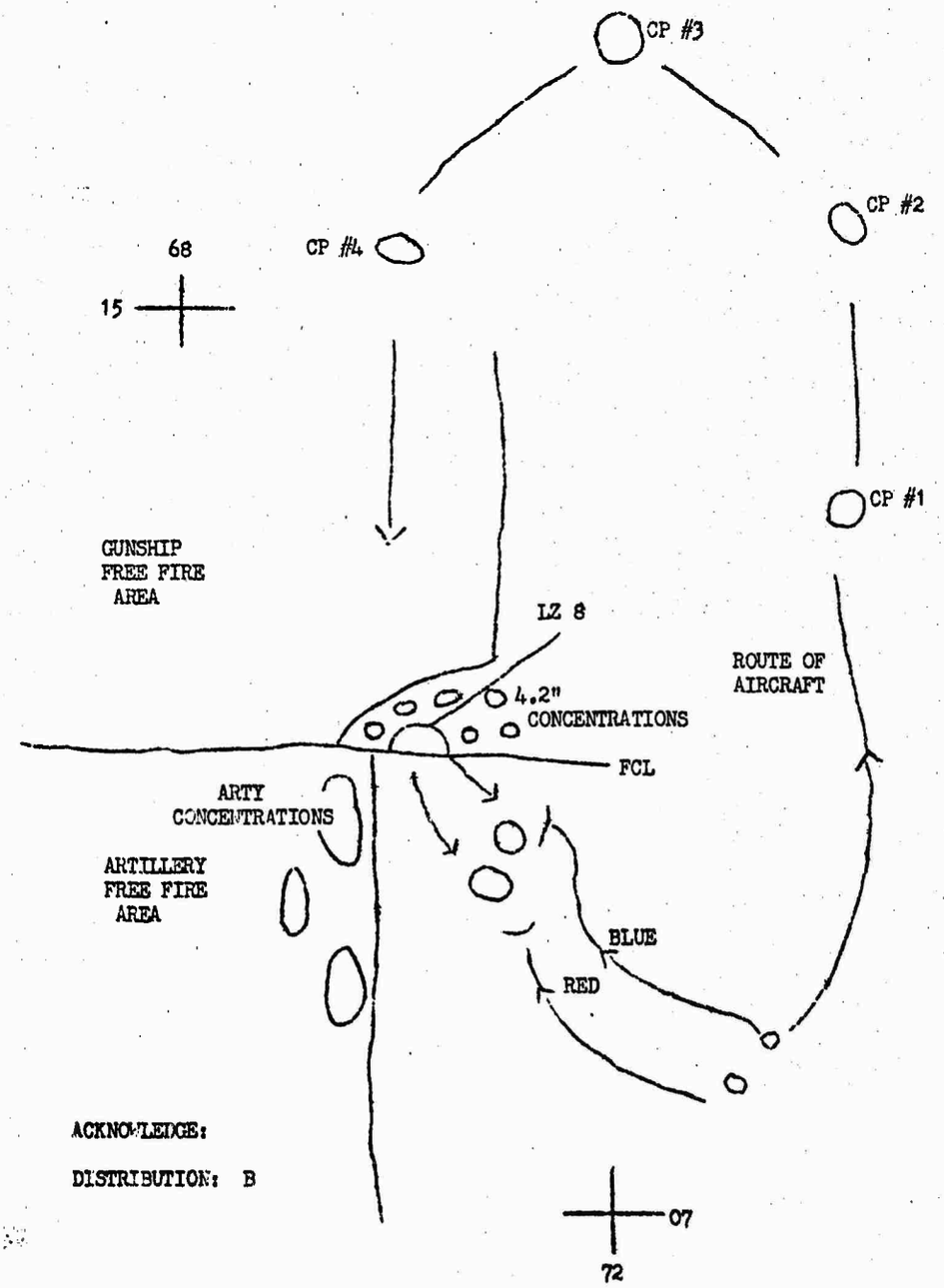
/s/Fish
for /t/RABDAU
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2nd Bn, 28th Inf, 1st Inf Div
Loc Ninh, South Vietnam (XU7308)
101600H Jun 66
KDM

ANNEX A (OPERATION OVERLAY) to FRAG ORDER (OPERATION EL PASO II)



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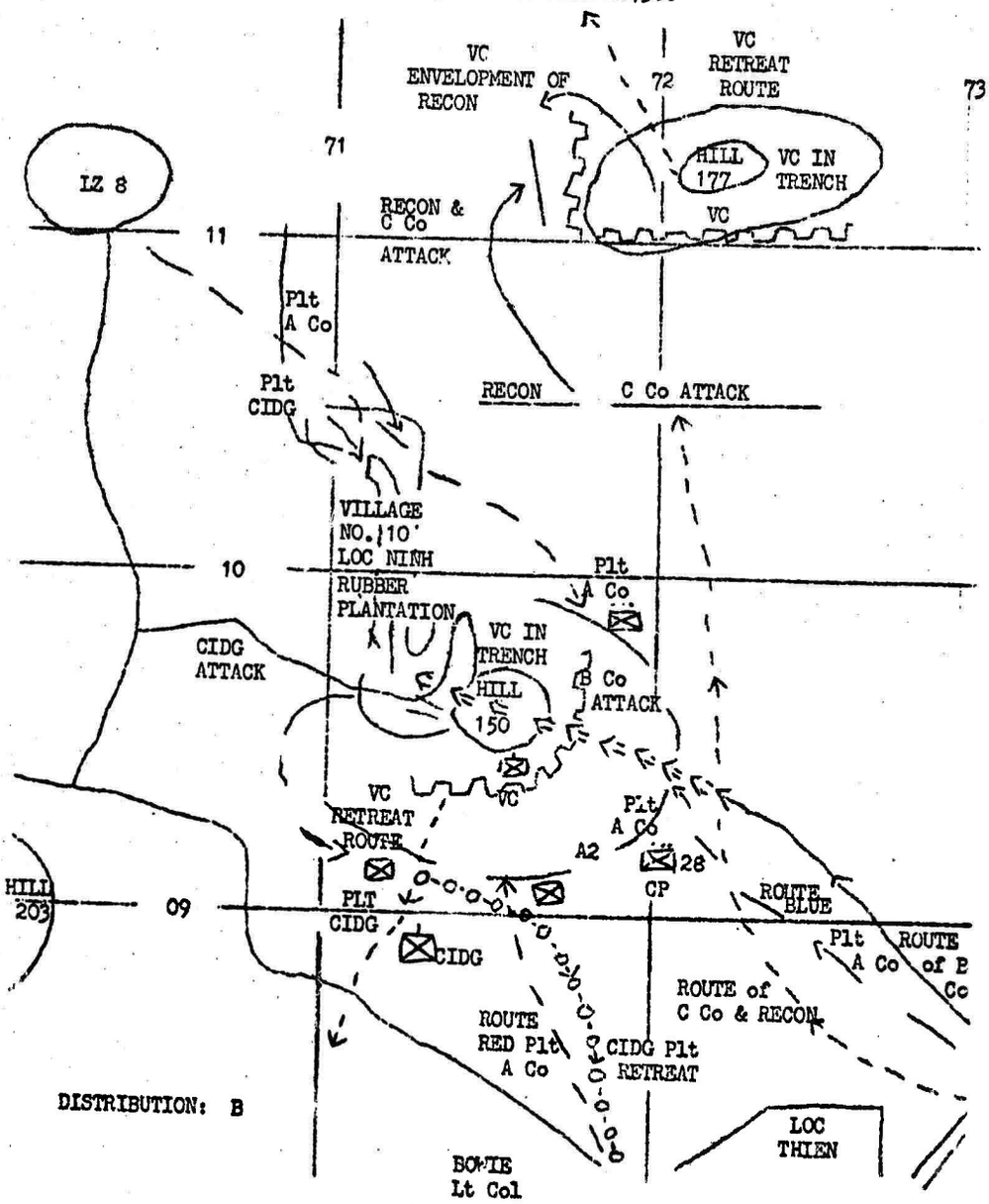
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2nd Bn, 28th Inf, 1st Inf Div
Loc Ninh, South Vietnam (XU7308)
12 June 1966
KM

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RESUME OVERLAY to FRAG ORDER (OPERATION EL PASO II)

NOT EXACT SCALE: APPROX 1:20,000 LOC NINH-XU7308



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for/t/RABOAU
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BONTE
Lt Col

C

ANNEX C

BATTLE OF MINH THANH ROAD NARRATIVE

ANNEX C Combat Operations After Action Report, Operation EL PASO II/III
Battle of MINH THANH Road Narrative

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THE BATTLE OF MINH THANH ROAD

The 272d Viet Cong Main Force Regiment is considered the elite regiment of the 9th VC Division. However, during the Battle of MINH THANH Road on 9 July 1966, this regiment suffered its second defeat by the 1st Infantry Division and supporting forces. On 8 June 1966, two battalions of the 272d Regiment had attacked an armored cavalry column and were severely decimated during the three and a half hours attack. The Battle of MINH THANH Road is another example of the departure from conventional tactics the 1st Infantry Division has experienced during its first year in the Republic of South Vietnam.

The Battle of MINH THANH Road was one of five major actions in which Viet Cong Main Force Regiments were engaged and defeated by men of the Big Red One during Operation EL PASO, June - July 1966. The battle is classic in two respects. First was the planning and execution. Second, this was not an instance of where the VC alone planned the attack and launched it at a time and place of their choosing, withdrawing before adequate resources were deployed in reaction.

Based on the previous successes of ROADRUNNER operations conducted by armored cavalry forces, the Commanding General, 1st Infantry Division, gave the 1st Brigade Commander the mission of developing a plan to lure the Viet Cong into attacking US forces. Colonel Sidney B Berry Jr received the mission, gave his staff the concept of operation, and issued the order for Operation OLYMPIA/EL PASO (OPORD 23-66), 6 July. The 1st Brigade mission was: "to position forces and conduct reconnaissance in force to lure VC forces to ambush/attack the column, enabling the 1st Brigade to destroy VC forces by offensive action." Operation OLYMPIA was a multi-phase plan in concept, easily modified to insure response to attacks on either the MINH THANH Road or National Route 13 south of AN LOC. In response to additional guidance from General DePuy, the 1st Brigade included a feint against SROC CON TRANG. On 8 July, a simulated airmobile assault would be conducted into an LZ vicinity SROC CON TRANG following air and artillery preparations causing the VC to be drawn into the killing zone of a B-52 strike. Subsequent to receipt of the mission, extensive planning, reconnaissance and wargaming was conducted. All commanders participated in the plan and knew exactly what the philosophy was and what the other commanders felt. This facilitated the carrying out of modifications with a minimum of radio transmissions once contact was made. On 9 July, Phase II of the concept of operations would commence with Task Force DRAGOON, consisting of Troops B and C 1/4 Cavalry and B Company 1/2 Infantry, conducting a reconnaissance in force along Route KNIFE (map 1) to MINH THANH. TF DRAGOON would receive engineer equipment at MINH THANH and return to AN LOC. In the event TF DRAGOON was ambushed or attacked enroute, forces previously positioned would respond immediately as the situation developed. Commitment of initial battalions would be against the VC flanks. Remaining battalions would be committed to the immediate battle area or to blocking positions. Landing zones and tentative blocking positions along likely VC routes of withdrawal were selected (map 1) to be occupied on order. To further insure the VC were lured into contact, the movement of bulldozers and resupply trucks from MINH THANH to AN LOC escorted with a small amount of armored cavalry was leaked. Information was also leaked that a convoy would be moving down Route 13 in the near future in hopes that should the VC not be lured into attacking the MINH THANH convoy, they would attack the one on Route 13. The latter convoy would be covered by Artillery Base II. The attack on the MINH THANH Road was preferred

because of landing zones. The plan was wargamed from the VC standpoint and although five possible sites were selected for the attack, the final position selected was the same location the actual attack took place. The intelligence estimate indicated a minimum of one battalion and possibly a regiment could be expected to attack. Intelligence had shown the 272d Regiment to be operating in the area in regimental strength.

On 7 July, the 1st Brigade began positioning its forces and completed care and maintenance for future operations. Headquarters, B, and D Batteries, 8/6th Artillery and A Battery 1/5th Artillery moved to Artillery Base I. The 2d Battalion, 2d Infantry commenced infiltration to MINH THANH, using UH-1D and CV-2 aircraft. The move was completed on 8 July. Forces at MINH THANH then included 2/2d and 1/18th Infantry and Battery C, 2/33d Artillery. The simulated airmobile assault was conducted on 8 July by elements of 1/28th Infantry, followed by the B-52 strike at 1100 hours. Air strikes were also employed against suspected VC bases in the SROC CON TRANG area. Headquarters Battery, 1/5th Artillery and C Battery 1/7th Artillery moved to Artillery Base II. Lieutenant Colonel Robert Haldane's 1st Battalion, 28th Infantry occupied positions around the abandoned airstrip 2500 meters east of Artillery Base I and secured the artillery with one company. The 1st Battalion, 16th Infantry, commanded by Lieutenant Colonel Rufus G. Lazzell, moved from LOC NINH to QUAN LOI, 5500 meters northeast on AN LOC, and came under control of 1st Brigade. Company C, 1/2 Infantry and an ARVN APC troop provided security for Artillery Base II. The 1/18 Infantry maintained one company at position S5 and the battalion (-) at the MINH THANH airfield. The 2/2 Infantry occupied overnight positions in vicinity of S11.

The 1/18 Infantry (-) began moving to S5 at 0605 on 9 July, followed by the movement of 2/2 Infantry to S11 at 0656. Company B, 1/28 Infantry, assisting in the security of Artillery Base I, returned to control of the parent organization.

At 0700 hours 9 July, Task Force DRAGOON crossed the start point at the AN LOC airfield with C Troop, commanded by Captain Stephen Slattery, leading. Troop B, commanded by Captain David Kelly followed at 0710. The artillery began firing preparation along Route KNIFE at 0720 hours. Due to the low overcast and its interference with close air support, the column halted at 0755 in the vicinity of Check Point HANK. A 30 minute delay was anticipated, but it was 0900 before the column resumed movement. LTC Lewane, overflying the column, gave the order to move and Troop C continued to lead. The tactical formation consisted of two platoons flanking the road with a command group and a third platoon following on the roadway. However, as the column proceeded beyond the rubber plantation, the thickness of the underbrush and secondary jungle growth forced those elements on the flanks to return to the roadway. Tanks were interspersed with the platoons and a mechanized flame thrower was integrated into the tactical formation of each troop. Personnel of B Company, 1st Battalion, 2d Infantry were integrated into the elements of the squadron (-) with the majority with C Troop, giving each personnel carrier six fighting troops. After the column had proceeded approximately 2100 meters, the terrain on the flanks of the road opened sufficiently for assumption of the flanking wedge formation. The flanking platoons employed reconnaissance by fire, but no fire was returned and no enemy activity was observed. Artillery continued to fire on preplanned concentrations approximately 200 to 300 meters ahead of the column and about 100 meters off the road. Fire teams (armed UH-1B's) and an

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armed CH-47 were also conducting reconnaissance by fire on both sides of the road. The aerial scouts from D Troop flew ahead and to the flanks of the column to detect any VC movement.

Troop C assumed a box formation approximately 200 meters before reaching Check Point DICK with the Troop Headquarters closing the box in the rear and maintaining contact with the trail troop. An artillery preparation, followed by airstrikes, softened up the bridge area. Napalm was particularly effective in burning out dense undergrowth adjacent to the bridge. Following the airstrikes, the lead platoon, with two engineer mine sweeper/demolition teams attached and supported by overwatching tank fire, moved rapidly to the bridge site. Dismounted personnel secured both sides of the bridge and after a check revealed no demolitions were installed on the bridge, several M113's crossed to add force to the far side. Extensive scouting, mine sweeping, and checks found no evidence of enemy activity and the bridge was determined to be in good enough condition to support heavy armor. After the bridge was secured, the 1st and 2d Platoons moved rapidly across and established blocking positions on both sides of the road. LTC Lewane called at this time and instructed the column to speed up the operation. Because of the combination of the time factor and the thick jungle growth adjacent to the road, the column formation was resumed as the squadron continued movement toward Check Point TOM.

A forward air controller (FAC), flying over Route KNIFE spotted an estimated squad of VC at 0945 in vicinity of Check Point TOM headed north. An airstrike was immediately called in on the enemy. However, the column continued without incident until 1110. At a point midway between Check Points DICK and TOM, Lieutenant Jack Lyons, 1st Platoon leader of C Troop, reported an estimated five VC crossing the road from north to south. A second group of about ten VC crossed the road in the same direction and were taken under fire by the main tank gun. This was followed by incoming small arms fire then automatic weapons fire. The lead elements rapidly deployed and were engaged by enemy mortar and anti-tank fire. By 1115 the entire column was receiving heavy automatic weapons, recoilless rifle, mortars, and small arms fire (sketch map).

LTC Lewane requested a determination be made as to the direction of the main attack and on which side of the road the major concentrations were located. This was extremely difficult to determine because of the tremendous volume of fire from the deployed tanks and M113's and the confusion that existed as personnel became misoriented as the vehicles maneuvered up and down the column. Reports were received that the VC were attempting to cross the road ahead of the column from right to left and that enemy fire received from the rear was coming from the left side of the road. Based on these events, initial determination was made that the main force was on the left (south) side of the road. Soon after this, as accurate casualty counts and concise reports from the personnel on the ground and aerial observers were received, it was then determined that the main VC force was concentrated on the right side or northwest of the contact point. Artillery fire was concentrated in this area. The delay in making an early and accurate determination was probably the most critical time of the battle because of its influence on springing the reaction forces. The actual ambush site was approximately 1000 meters long. Foxholes with overhead cover were prepared in the ditch along the road, but did not appear to be fully occupied until shortly before the firing started. The bulk of the forces were from 100 to 400 meters from the road and moved up to fighting positions as the column moved into the

contact area. Drainage ditches, dug at a 45 degree angle into the contact area, were used as fire lanes by the VC although apparently were not dug for this purpose.

As soon as the attack started, the squadron assumed a compressed formation. The lead troop compressed and the trail troop closed on the lead troop and also compressed. The gunships and aerial scouts immediately moved out of the way of the airstrikes and artillery to a distance of [illegible] kilometers and began looking for withdrawal routes. The ACH-47 was hit at 1129 and forced on the road approximately 600 meters southwest of DICK. It was later extracted by a "Flying Crane". This area was also designated as the initial Dust Off pickup zone and forward logistics site.

COL Berry alerted Major John C Bard at 1105 to be prepared to move the 1/18 Infantry to position N9 and Lieutenant Colonel Jack L Conn to be prepared to move the 2/2 Infantry on order. At 1117 the 1/18 Infantry was ordered to move on the trail from position S5 as the Battlefield Assault Force and minutes later the 1st Battalion, 28th Infantry was alerted for possible movement to position NC or ND. The order was given at 1130 for the 1/28 Infantry to move to ND, then to the west and occupy a position southwest of ND from where it was planned to attack the enemy column to the southwest. The 2/2 Infantry was ordered to move to position S4, on foot, report their location, and prepare to attack due north. As the 1/18 Infantry started moving to N9, they found moving in the heavy jungle undergrowth very difficult. General DePuy directed division artillery to put more observers over the contact area. The 1/18 Infantry became tangled up in bunkers and foxholes and requested more close air support.

COL Berry radioed his present plans summary to the Division Tactical Operations Center (DTOC) at 1134: "The 1/18 Infantry is moving north parallel to the road to relieve pressure on the cavalry and to hit the VC flank. The 1/28 Infantry will land on LZ ND and move west to occupy positions southwest of ND and await orders. The 1/28 Infantry is planning to attack along the enemy column to the southwest. The 2/2 Infantry will move by foot to blocking position S4 report upon arrival and then prepare to move north to relieve the pressure on TF DRAGOON. The 1/16 Infantry has been alerted for possible movement at 1200 hours into the forward area." This plan was later modified by moving 2/2 Infantry to NC by helicopter. During the time the brigade commander was relaying his plans, the VC were hitting the column with mortars and recoilless rifle fire. Artillery was hitting the enemy force with such a heavy volume of fire, only the personnel on the ground could observe its devastating effect. Air strikes were continuous and at one time five flights of fighter bombers were stacked up waiting their turn to go in. LTC Lewane's estimate of the size of the enemy force was possibly two battalions or a regiment.

The first lift of the 1/28 Infantry was off the ground at 1210 hours and touched down on LZ ND at 1215. By 1230 the entire battalion had closed ND. The 1/28 Infantry controlled its own fires on the LZ, but came under Operational Control (OPCON) of Commanding Officer 1/4 Cavalry (-) at 1250 by direction of COL Berry. At this time B and C Troop had compressed 1400 meters southwest of DICK and casualties were being evacuated to the Dust Off area vicinity of the downed ACH-47. COL Berry gave the order at 1326 to Commanding Officer 1/16 Infantry to commence his heliborne assault on NC and be prepared to move to N5 or N6 (LZ NA was

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considered but not selected because it was too obvious and would probably be ambushed. This left NC as the only usable LZ from which the infantry battalions could be moved to blocking positions on the northwest.)

The VC appeared to have broken contact about 1330 and aerial observers reported large groups of VC moving to the northwest. Troops B and C pulled back to DICK for ammunition resupply. The 1/28 Infantry was located approximately 700 meters from DICK moving southwest, parallel to the road. When the battalion reached the initial contact point it also made contact with an unknown size force. The 1/18 Infantry was given a new direction of attack; east with the right flank on the road and left flank 500 meters into the woods. By 1405, 1/16 Infantry had the first lift enroute to NC and the 2/2 Infantry was preparing for lift to the same LZ. The 1/18 Infantry was deploying to attack parallel to the road in vicinity of TOM, converging on DICK. The first and second lifts of the 1/16 Infantry landed on NC at 1417 and 1430 respectively. An APC troop from the 5th ARVN Division linked up with the 1/4 Cavalry (-) at 1525 and was given instructions to retrieve 90mm ammunition that had been dropped along the road between DICK and TOM. The 1/18 Infantry received a change in direction of attack at 1435; new direction of attack north and block south of N5. An enemy blocking position was encountered approximately 800 meters north of TOM and air strikes were called in. The aero rifle platoon from D Troop reinforced C Troop at 1500 because more casualties had been sustained among the infantry than with B Troop. The VC broke contact with the 1/28 Infantry about 1540. At 1545, COL Berry recommended to General DePuy that the 1/4 Cavalry (-) and ARVN APC troop block from TOM to DICK. The 1/28 Infantry would attack southwest along the north side of the road and then sweep back along the south side. The 1/16 Infantry was to move from NC to N5, leaving an element to secure the LZ for arrival of the 2/2 Infantry. After the 2/2 Infantry arrived, the battalion would move to N6 and in conjunction with 1/16 Infantry occupy blocking positions. By 1700, the first lift of the 2/2 Infantry was off S4 enroute to NC. The 1/18 was still in light contact and clearing a bunker complex. VC in the area were wearing a leather belt with a copper buckle and a star superimposed on the buckle. The 1/28 Infantry was moving between the 1/18 Infantry and the road. The last lift of the 2/2 Infantry landed on NC at 1755. The 1/16 Infantry found the movement to N5 to be very difficult. Although contact was made with small groups of VC fleeing toward the SAIGON River, the greatest difficulty was caused by the heavy jungle undergrowth. This hurt the attempt to close the ring around the VC force. One small fight developed during which LTC Lazzell was wounded. COL Berry assumed temporary command of the battalion until LTC George M. Wallace III could be flown in to the forward area. The 1/16 and 2/2 Infantry established blocking positions vicinity of N5 and NC respectively. Troop B occupied a blocking position at TOM while 1/18 Infantry established overnight positions northwest of TOM. The 1/28 Infantry swept west through the VC positions on the north side of the road and then returned on the south side. There was very little evidence that any considerable VC forces had been south of the road, further substantiating the determination that the main attack had come from the northwest. The 1/28 Infantry remained overnight north of TOM. Troop C remained overnight at DICK and the ARVN APC troop midway between TOM and DICK. An inventory of vehicles revealed that four M113's and one M48A3 tank had been destroyed and three additional M113's had been damaged.

On 10 July, the 1st Brigade forces conducted search and destroy operations to locate and destroy the remnants of the 272d VC Regiment,

block routes of withdrawal, and deny the VC safe havens west of the battlefield. With the exception of contact with a platoon size force and one of unknown size, contact was limited to skirmishes with small groups of VC attempting to flee across the SAIGON River. The 272d VC Main Force Regiment had sustained the loss of 239 KIA (Body Count), 304 KIA (Probable), eight captives, 13 crew served weapons, and 41 small arms. An extensive bunker complex was discovered 1500 meters west of N5 and a battalion size base camp was located approximately 1500 meters north of TOM. The 2/2 Infantry swept from NC to DICK. Mortar positions were discovered and evidence indicated the VC had conducted a hasty withdrawal on 9 July. The 1/4 Cavalry (-) conducted a search of the area between DICK and TOM and moved to MINH THANH at 1630. The remaining battalions were extracted from the battle area on 11 July.

Operation OLYMPIA achieved the results for which it was generated; the 272d VC Main Force Regiment was lured into attacking the 1st Infantry Division and suffered losses that probably reduced the regiment to 50% strength. The success of US forces during the Battle of MINH THANH Road can be attributed to several significant facts.

Intelligence proved to be excellent because one of the assumptions made in the intelligence estimate was that the 272d Regiment was operating in the area in regimental strength.

The value of thorough and deliberate prior planning and wargaming cannot be over emphasized. All commanders participated in development of the plan and each commander knew what the other would do. It was a plan of the whole group with each having a vested interest. As the plan was modified, it was easily executed because every commander knew the philosophy and how other commanders felt.

The decision to delay the move until the fog and overcast dissipated had a profound effect on the final outcome. This coupled with the fact that the attack came early in the day offered a sufficient period of daylight to fight the battle and sweep the area before the VC had the opportunity to return under cover of darkness and remove the dead, wounded, and weapons.

The artillery and close air support were effective as the principle killer. Over half of the enemy were probably killed by this combined firepower. The road provided an easily defined FSCL. With friendly forces fighting from the road, FAC's and airborne observers had no question as to where to place the fire. The positions selected for the artillery and the philosophy of bringing the artillery north of the FSCL and the air south placed the preponderance of both in these areas. The massed 155mm and 8" fires were instrumental in the quick breakup of the VC attack and subsequent withdrawal. Ninety-six fighter bomber sorties were expended in support of the engaged forces.

The support provided by the airlift mission commander had a tremendous effect on the successful outcome of the operation. Most important, he was present during the entire planning phase. He was also present with the unit to be lifted and sent his representative with the next unit to go.

Conversely, there were factors that had a detrimental effect on the outcome.

Most critical was the difficulty in determining the direction of the main attack and its influence on the initial movement of the reaction forces.

Difficulty in moving through the jungle prevented the 1/16th Infantry from closing the ring and closing off VC escape routes. This was compounded by the lack of adequate landing zones to the rear of the VC force.

Viet Cong camouflage and fire discipline was significant. The preplanned air and artillery fires, reconnaissance by fire, and continuous surveillance by airborne observers were ineffective in causing the VC to disclose his presence.

Certain readily apparent truths emerged from the Battle of MINH THANH Road in the form of lessons learned. While the basic fundamentals of tactical operations remain unchanged, changes in techniques are required as a result of lessons learned from different environmental conditions. The following lessons learned are included for the benefit of the units engaged in the battle, other units of the 1st Infantry Division, and other agencies interested in preparation of units or individuals for combat under similar conditions.

The direction of the main attack and the major concentration of VC forces must be determined immediately. This is important for two primary reasons. First, it is necessary in order to bring in the maximum amount of artillery and air to overcome any existing numerical superiority and break up the attack during the most critical time, the first 30 minutes. Second, reaction forces must be rapidly deployed to flank the VC positions and block routes of withdrawal. Due to the confusion that can result as personnel become misoriented, a recommended method of pointing out the direction of attack is through the use of smoke. Supporting fires should have been put in as soon as the first VC were spotted. Doubling the amount would not have been too much. Fires should have been placed farther from the road since the VC were initially back from the road from 100 - 400 meters and then moved up. Reconnaissance by fire farther back would have gotten the bulk of the weapons and troops before they moved up to fighting positions along the ditches.

The main attack was expected from the direction of where the jungle was most dense. It did come from that direction where there were few or no landing zones and thus prevented attacks on the flanks and to the rear.

The Compressed and Compressed "L" Formations were developed to win the firepower battle. In these formations, the lead troop precedes the trail or following troops by 100 to 300 meters. When contact is made the troops compress and the trail or following troops close on the lead troop. The Compressed "L" Formation utilizes dismounted infantry to form the "L". As the infantry move forward, the vehicles that are masked weave their way to the lead of the column. Air and artillery are placed in the pocket ahead of the infantry. During the Battle of MINH THANH Road, the Compressed "L" Formation was not used because the bulk of the infantry were riding on the personnel carriers of the lead troop.

This was the first time infantry were used as cavalry, placed in personnel carriers to fight from the carriers. This amounted to about eight or nine men per carrier including the crew. This was a mistake,

resulting in too many personnel on one carrier to fight effectively. The optimum number of troops to fight from an ACAV is five. More than this hinder the action rather than assist it.

During the action, the M-14 Rifle proved superior to the M-16 Rifle. The infantry complained that dust collected during the road march caused the M-16's to jam. There were no reports of similar M-14 malfunctions.

The Starlight Scope proved effective during the night and periods of rain. Enemy movement and lights were observed up to 100 meters. Activity was observed around two disabled M-113's on the north side of the road.

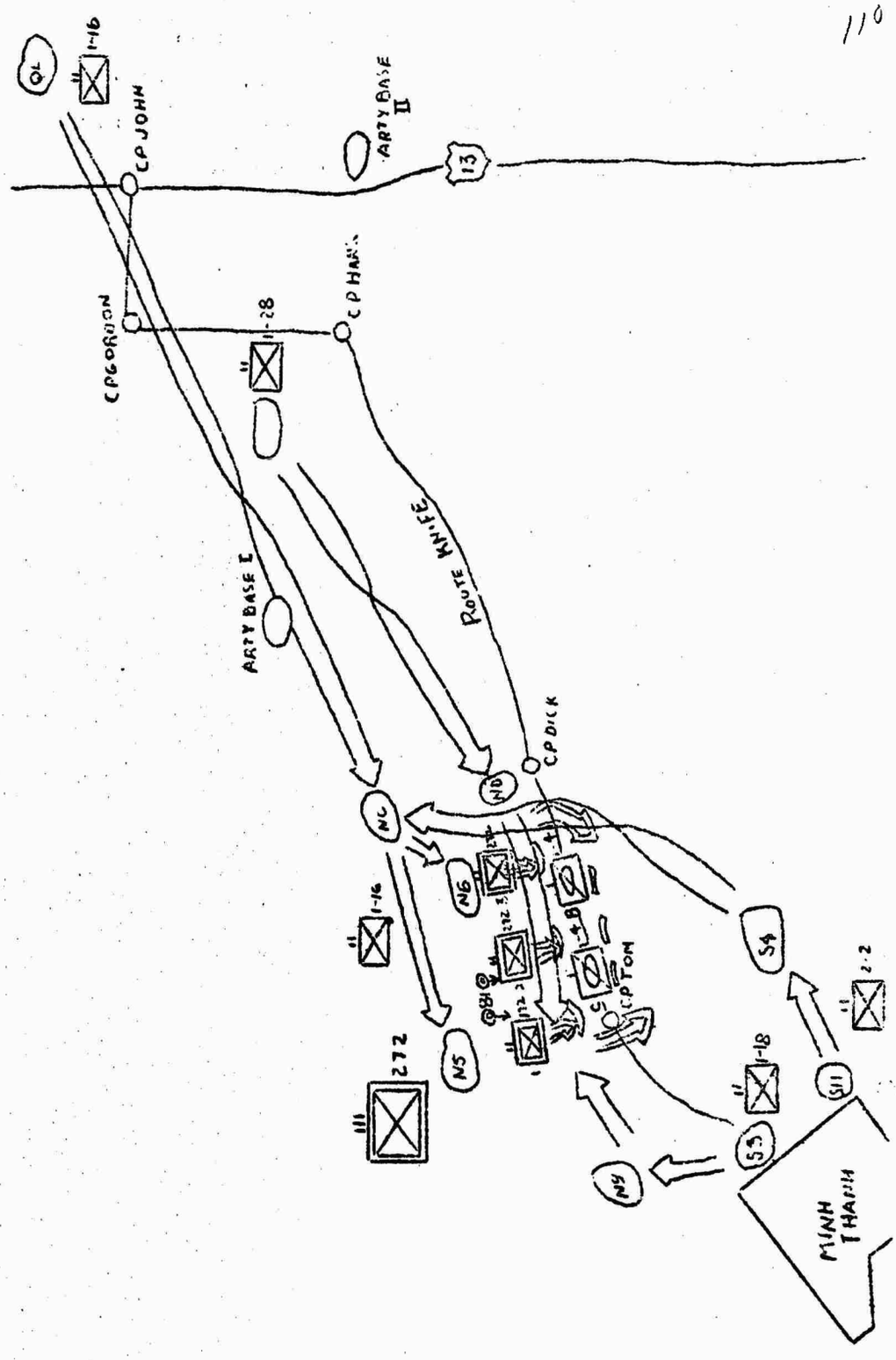
The type of action in which the column was engaged revealed the need for a representative from the squadron command group on the ground to establish a command post area to: (1) evacuate wounded, (2) resupply forward troops, and (3) exert additional command and control over the forward troops.

The reconnaissance by fire by the ground elements was unsatisfactory because it was done at a 90 degree angle to the column. The lead vehicles should direct their fire into the ditches where the camouflaged foxholes were located. A better possibility of causing the VC to disclose their position exists.

Tanks should have led the column. Tanks can take more punishment and put out a greater volume of fire than the ACAV. The canister round is effective at close ranges and on 9 July kept the VC from overrunning the column.

An armored unit can sustain itself during the critical-period of the first two hours. Trucks with infantry cannot be expected to sustain itself for more than a 30 to 60 minute period primarily because of the difference in the amount of firepower and ammunition available.


CPTOM
MINH THANH


OL
1-16
CP JOHN
ARTY BASE II
13
CP GORDON
1-28
CP HARRIS
ARTY BASE E
ROUTE KNIFE
CP DICK
ND
NC
NB
1-16
272
NS
1-18
CP TON
S4
2-2
S11
S3
NH
MINH THANH

ANNEX D

OPERATIONS OVERLAY - AN LOC - QUAN LOI AO

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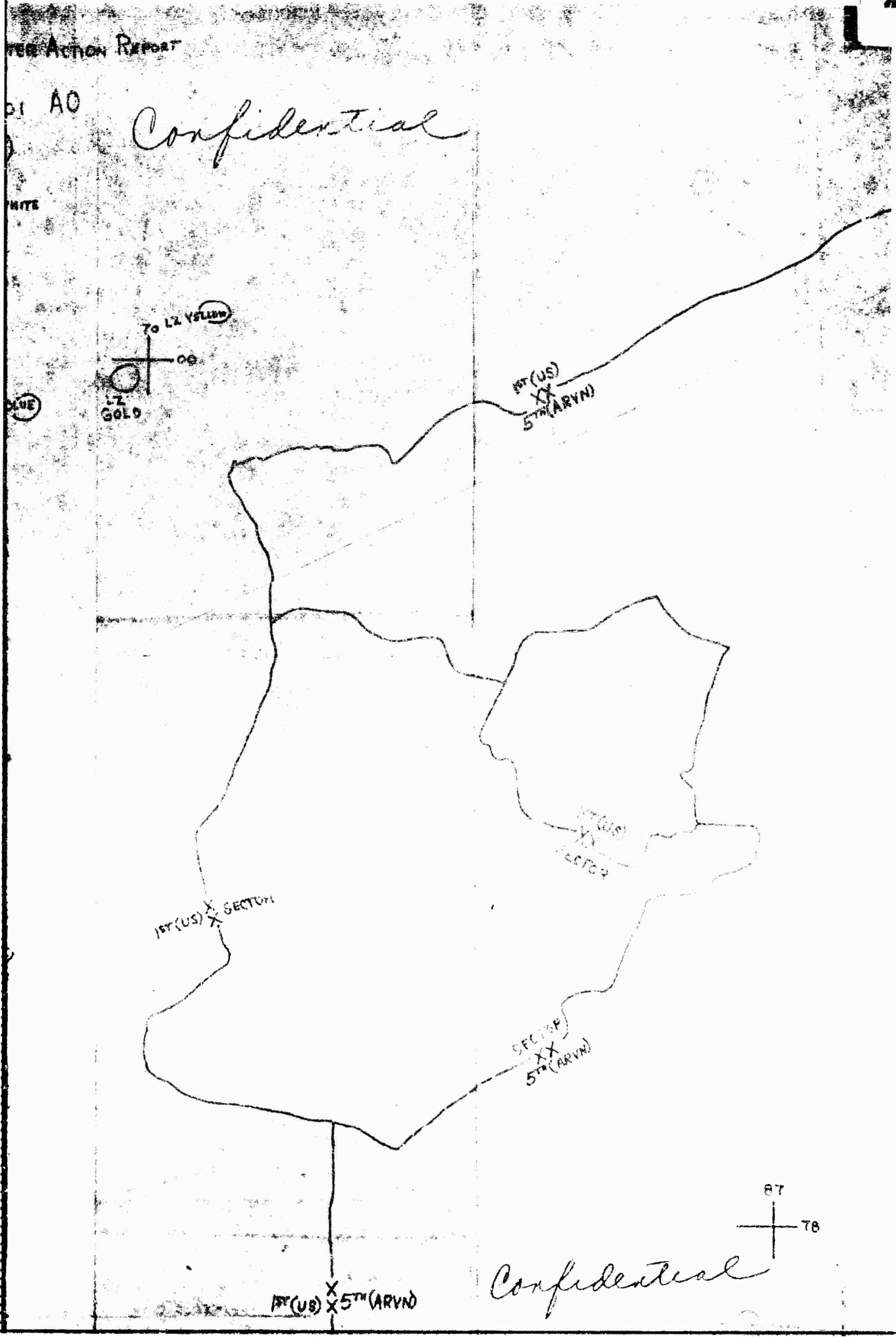
ANNEX D COMBAT OPERATIONS AFTER ACTION REPORT
OPN EL PASO II/III
OPN O'LAY AN LOC - QUAN LOI AO



TER ACTION REPORT

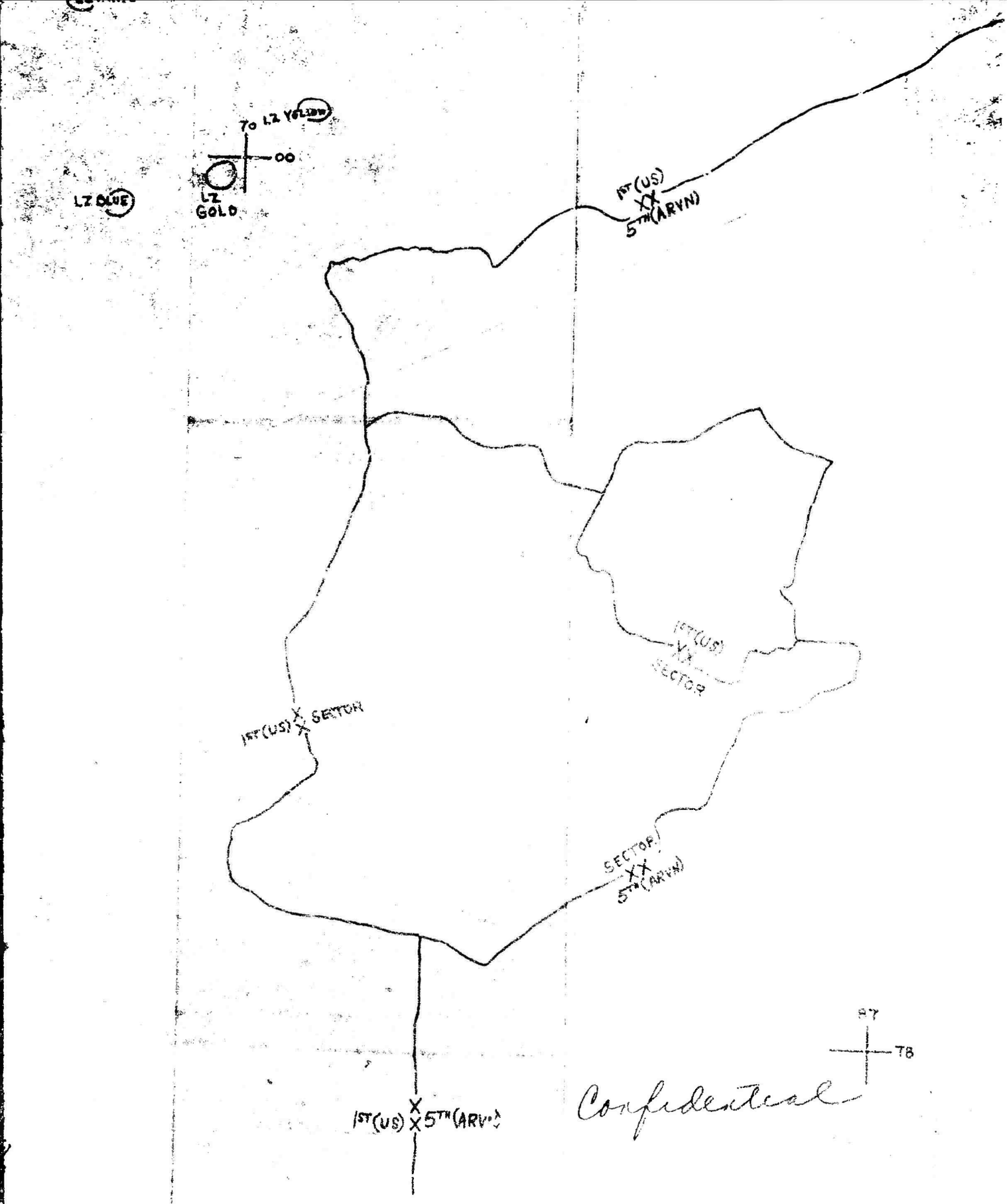
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WHITE
PINK
LZ BLUE
LZ GOLD
OC
1ST(US) SECTOR
1ST(US) 5TH(ARVN)

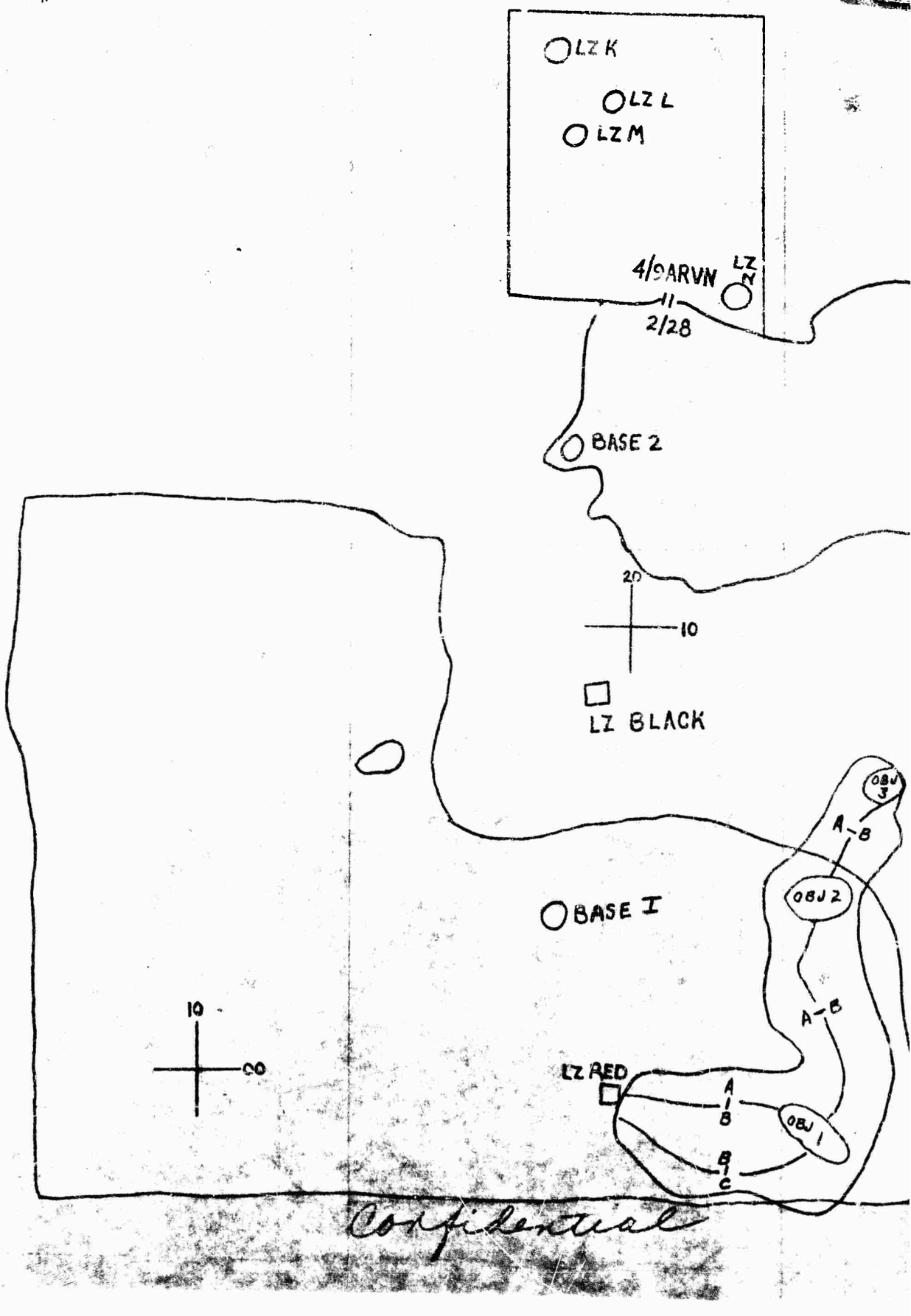

TO LZ YELLOW
00
LZ GOLD
LZ BLUE
1ST (US) XX 5TH (ARVN)
1ST (US) XX SECTOR
1ST (US) XX SECTOR
SECTOR XX 5TH (ARVN)
1ST (US) XX 5TH (ARVN)
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ANNEX E

OPERATIONS OVERLAY - SONG BE AC

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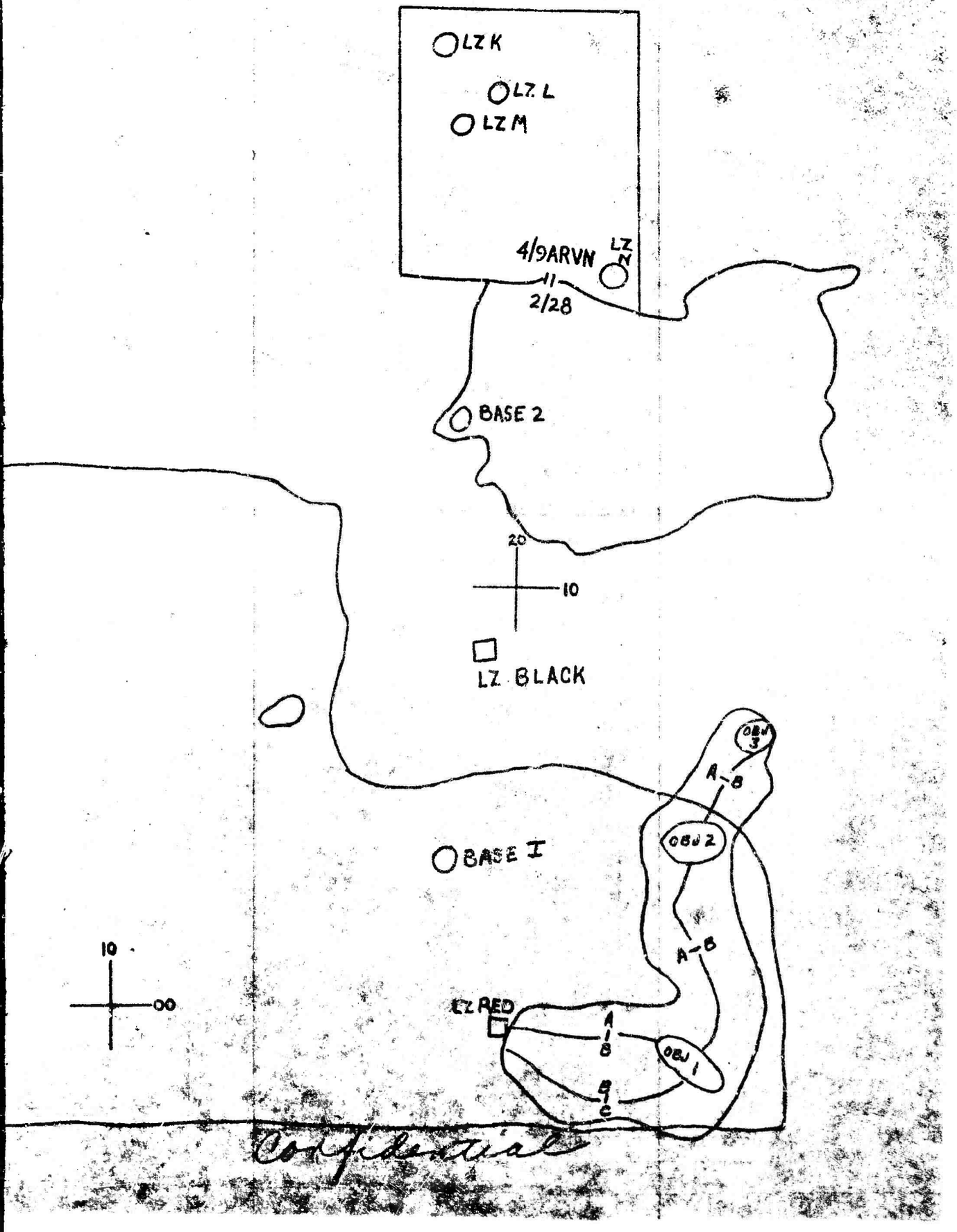
ANNEX 'E' COMBAT OPNS AFTER ACTION REPORT - OPN EL PASO II/III
OPNS O'LAY (SONG BE AO)



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ANNEX "E" COMBAT OPNS AFTER ACTION REPORT - OPN EL PASO II/III
OPNS O'LAY (SONG BE AO)

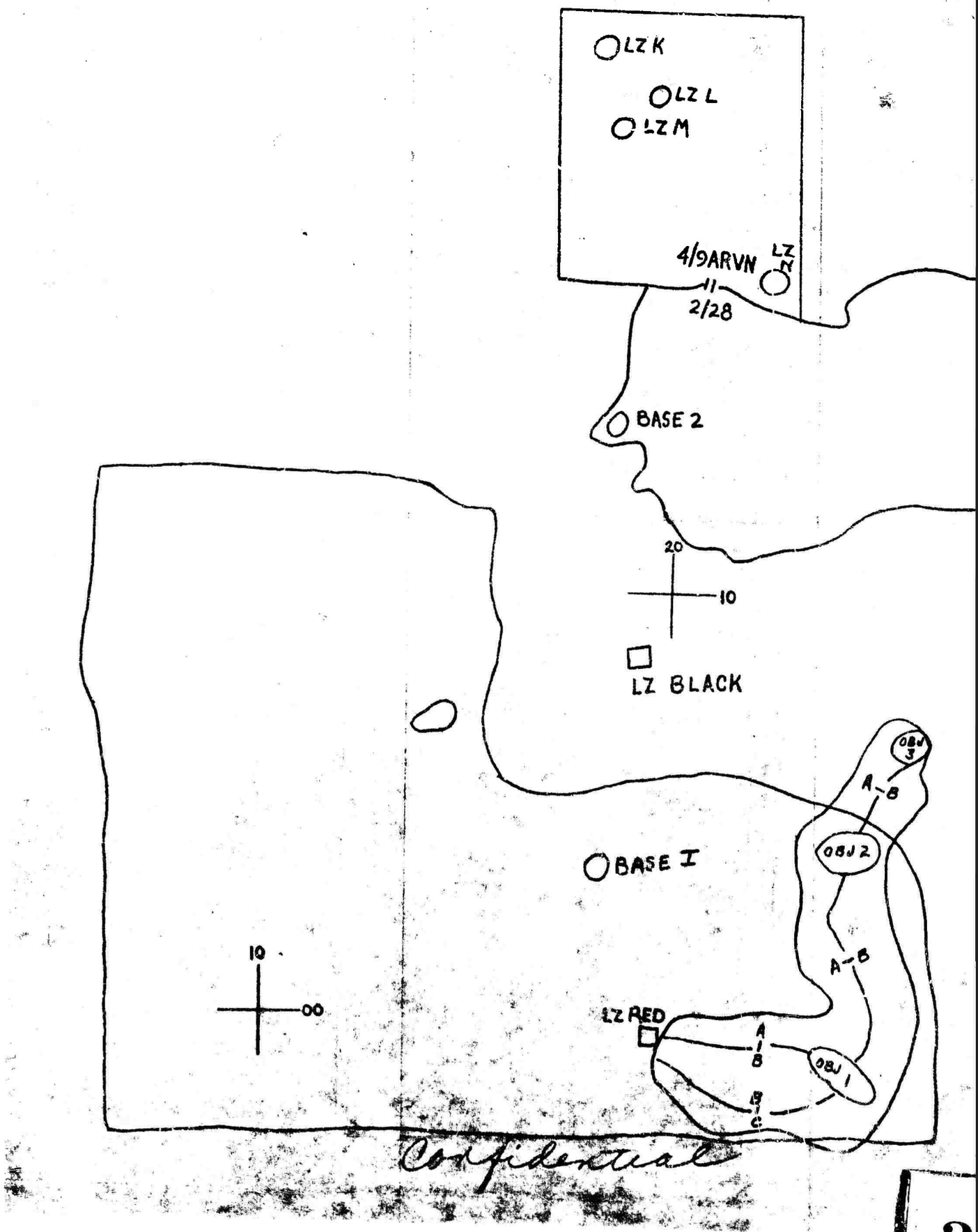


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ANNEX "E" COMBAT OPNS AFTER ACTION REPORT - OPN EL PASO II/III
OPNS O'LAY (SONG BE AO)

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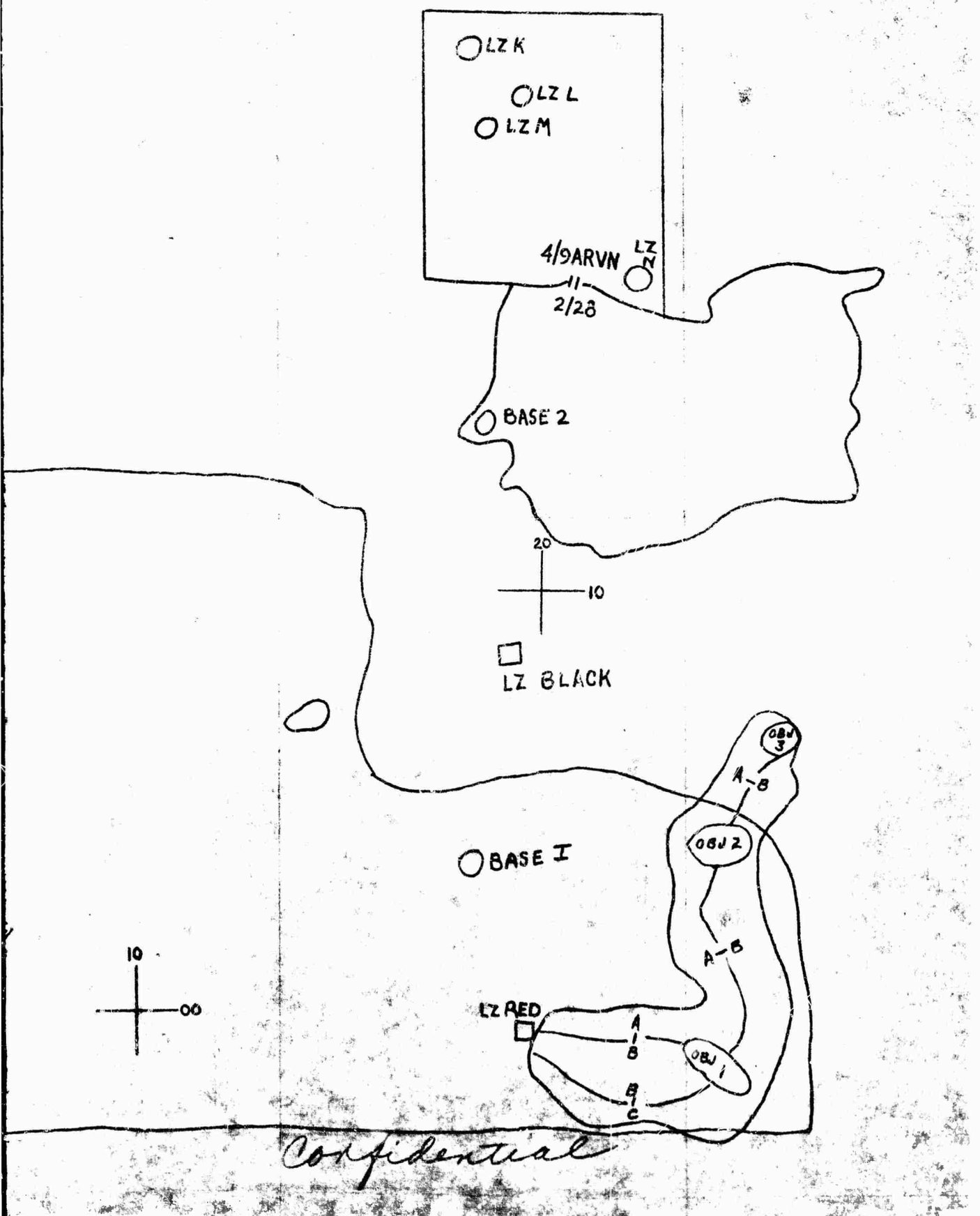


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ANNEX 'E' COMBAT OPNS AFTER ACTION REPORT - OPN EL PASO II/III

OPNS O'LAY (SONG BE AO)



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ANNEX F

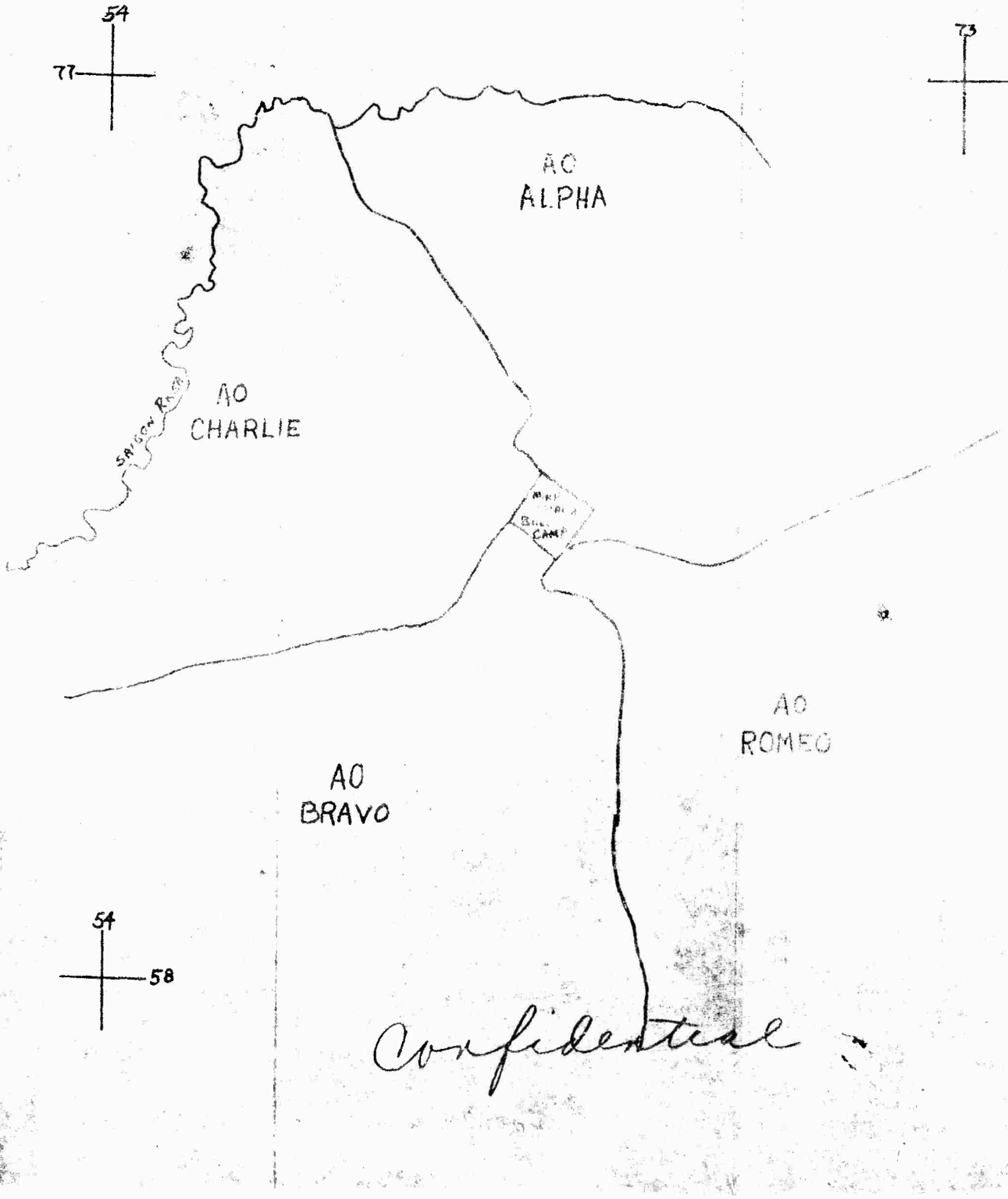
OPERATIONS OVERLAY - MINH THANH AO

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ANNEX "F" COMBAT OPERATIONS AFTER ACTION REPORT

121 OPN EL PASO II/III

OPN O'LAY MINH THANH AO



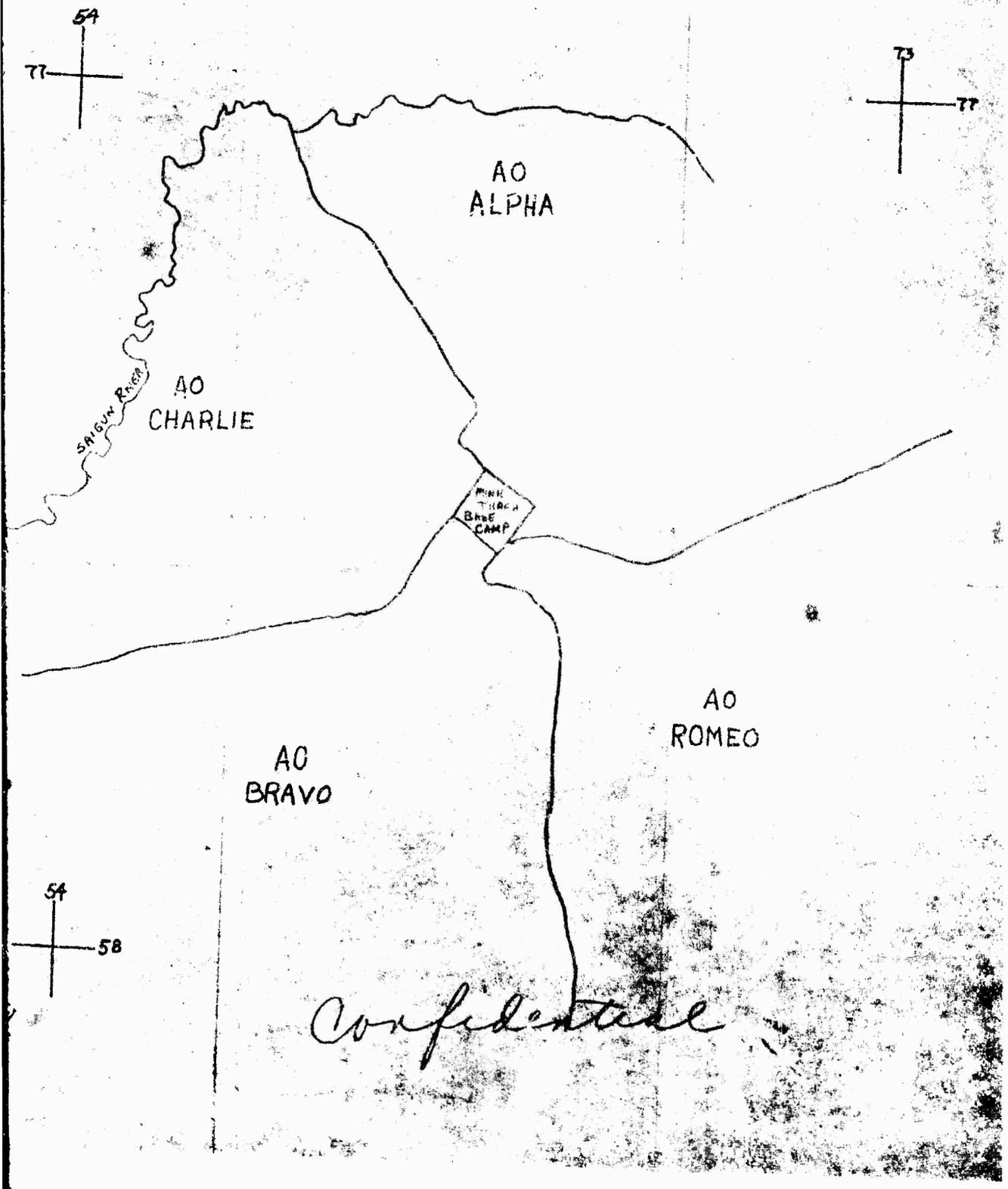
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ANNEX "F" COMBAT OPERATIONS AFTER ACTION REPORT

121 OPN EL PASO II/III

OPN O'LAY MINH THANH AO



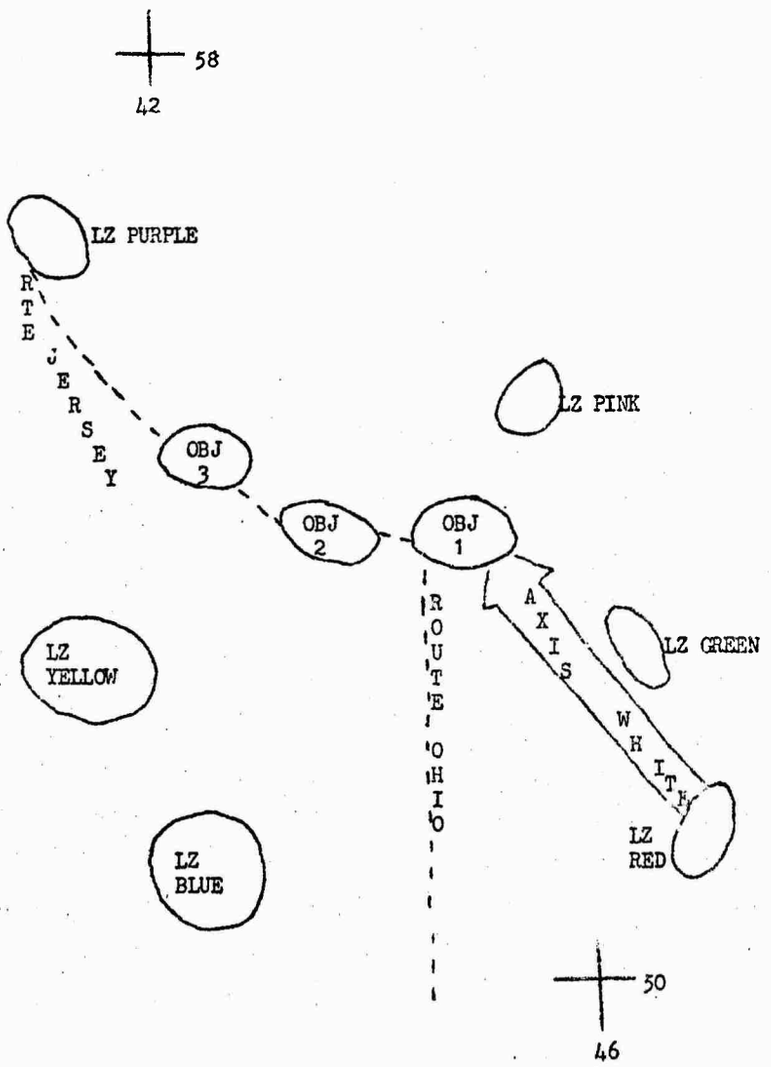
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ANNEX G

OPERATIONS OVERLAY - TAY NINH AO

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ANNEX G Combat Operations After Action Report, Operation EL PASO II/III
Operation Overlay - TAY NINH AO



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ANNEX H

RAID TARGET 21 - 27 JUNE 66

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ANNEX H Combat Operations After Action Report, Operation EL PASO II/III
Raid Target 21 - 27 June 1966

1. Background: A returnee, NGUYEN MING NHUT, rallied on 4 April 1966. He reported a storage area containing 3,000,000 piasters worth of supplies vic XT 445540. The camp was reported to be guarded by 80 men. On 1 May, 20 sampans were seen in the area and on 12 May, two sampans were sunk there. On 13 May a bridge capable of carrying truck traffic was destroyed by air and wooden crates on a landing dock nearby produced secondary explosings when hit by artillery fire. On 14 and 15 May approximately 200 tons of rice were uncovered by an airstrike in the area.

2. Raid: On the morning of 21 June the 2/16 Inf made a heliborne assault into a landing zone in the vicinity of the storage area with the intent of destroying the base. At 0925H, six VC were encountered near a hut vic XT 461512. One VC was killed (BC), two VC KIA (Prob), and one VCC. One German Mauser rifle, two 105mm rounds, and ten rounds SA ammo were also captured. The VCC stated he was from C-65 local unit. Their mission is tribute collection and formation of guerrilla teams in the BEN CUI area. Rallier NGUYEN MING NHUT stated the 80 man force guarding the storage area was B-65. At 1125H, vic XT 458525, the 2/16 Inf was engaged by another small group of VC resulting in one VC KIA (BC). The VC was carrying medicine and may have been a medic. Destroyed were a classroom, five huts, and one hospital consisting of an operating table, oxygen mask, and medical supplies. Other supplies captured or destroyed during the day were one French M-35 SMG, two sampans, 16 rounds of SA ammo, seven grenades, two 155mm rounds, torches, 55 gal gas, gunpowder, a water pump, 9½ tons of rice, one base camp and 300 sheets of tin.. The unit had not reached the base camp area by nightfall so they dug in and prepared to go on the following day.

3. On 22 June, the 2/2 Inf was committed to raid area. As the units penetrated into the supply area it became apparent that it was quite extensive. VC losses during the day were 47 tons of rice, two sampans, 100 sheets of tin, four grenades, 16 rounds SA ammo, eight huts and one building.

4. On 23 June the search of the area continued with numerous small contacts throughout the day resulting in eight VC KIA (Prob). VC losses during the day were four base camps, 1350 lbs of flour, 30 gal of tobacco, 30 gal NUOC MON, 2.25 tons of rice, two truck tires, four tractor tires, one 3/4 ton trailer, 75 gallons of fuel, two oxcarts, two bicycles and 1000 tons of rice.

5. On 24 June small groups of VC were again contacted resulting in one VC KIA (BC), and one k50/PPSH41 CHICOM SMG captured. VC losses during the day were one boat building facility, two boats, 300 lbs of tea, 15 tons of dried fish, 3.85 tons of rice, 55 gallons of fuel, 25 tons of salt, 1000 cans of sardines, 15 thermos jugs, 20 kerosene stoves, 100 gallons of kerosene, 8000 aluminum pans, 900 soup ladles, and 550 gallons of oil. Documents captured by the 2/2 Inf vic XT 416537 indicated that the 273d Regiment and Z43 Artillery Battalion were in the area as recently as 20 June and that the 271st Regiment was probably still in the BINH LONG - TAY NINH Province area. The losses suffered by 273d Regiment on 17 May and 11 June vic LOC NINH probably resulted in their withdrawal to this area for replacements and resupply.

6. On 25 June the number of contacts decreased, however, the 2/16 Inf killed one VC (BC), 11 VC KIA (Prob), and captured one CHICOM AK assault rifle. VC losses during the day were two - seven HP boat motors, two base camps, four sampans, 2.35 tons dried fish, 24.65 tons of rice, and five gallons of tar.

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7. On 26 June the 2/2 Inf killed two VC (BC), and captured one rifle and one German Mauser. An armed CH-47 helicopter killed five VC (BC) and destroyed one .50 cal MG in the area. VC losses were ten tons of rice, one grenade, 500 lbs of wax, 320 sheets of tin, five spools of bailing wire, 12 bicycles, and one bag of toothpaste and tooth brushes, one bicycle repair shop, and one base camp.

8. The units spent 27 June destroying VC supplies and extracting on the 28th. Evidence indicated that more supplies will be found along the SAIGON River north towards Cambodia. Total losses during the raid are listed in Appendix 1. VC losses during the operation in cost of supplies is in excess of 23,000,000 piasters.

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Appendix 1 (VC Losses on the Raid) to ANNEX H (Raid Target)

Personnel	
KIA (BC)	11
KIA (Probable)	21
VCC	1
Arms and Munitions	
Small Arms	5
Crew Served	2
105mm rds	2
155mm rds	2
SA Ammo	42
Grenades	4
Supplies	
Sampans	10
Tobacco (gal)	30
Tin (sheets)	5720
Fuel (gal)	185
Oil (gal)	550
Cooking Utensils	8900
Boat Motors	2
Wax (lbs)	500
Bicycles	12
Tires	6
Trailers (3/4 ton)	1
Oxcarts	2
Thermos Jugs	15
Food Stuffs	
Rice (tons)	1506
Salt (tons)	25
Dried Fish (tons)	17.15
Flour (lbs)	1350
Sardines (cans)	1000
Tea (lbs)	300
Nuoc Mon (gal)	30
Facilities	
Hospitals	1
Base Camps	7
Boat Building Shop	1
Bicycle Repair Shop	1
Supplies	
Kerosene Stoves	20
Tar (gal)	5
Kerosene (gal)	1000
Bailing Wire (spools)	5
Water Pump	1
Gunpowder	
Medical Supplies	
Tooth Brushes	
Tooth Paste	
Documents	

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ANNEX I

LONG RANGE RECONNAISSANCE PATROLS

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ANNEX I Combat Operations After Action Report, Operation EL PASO II/III
Long Range Reconnaissance Patrols

1. Long Range Reconnaissance Patrols were utilized to search suspected areas, vic LOC NINH for VC and installations. The results of their missions are listed below:

a. Team #4 infiltrated at 031900H June vic XT 6185 and exfiltrated at 041717 vic XT 6288. One VC was sighted at 040800H vic XT 855614. Contact was made with four VC at 041635H and a fight developed. The patrol took evasive action and requested exfiltration. During exfiltration the helicopters were fired on by an estimated VC platoon. Fire teams engaged the VC with unknown results.

b. Team #2 infiltrated 031855 June vic XT 5894. At 041500H vic XT 592939 one VC platoon was seen moving southwest. The VC had one 81mm mortar, one LMG, and individual weapons. An airstrike was placed in the area with unknown results. At 051145H the team was extracted vic XT 6090 and received fire from the village vic XT 675915 and airstrikes were placed on the target.

c. On 101857 June Team #5 infiltrated vic XT 5883. From 1915H to 2130H small groups totaling 100 men were seen moving west vic XT 584827. At 110925 the team was exfiltrated vic XT 585835.

d. On 101859H June Team #3 infiltrated vic XT 5786 and exfiltrated at 111358H vic XT 579880. No significant sightings.

2. By this time it was apparent the VC were withdrawing in small groups to the west towards Cambodia and there would be little chance of engaging a sizeable force in this jungle area. Operations were shifted to the MINH THANH area in an attempt to locate elements of the 272d Regiment located in the area. Attempts to infiltrate in the late afternoon of 12 June were hampered by poor visibility so the teams were infiltrated early on 13 June.

a. At 130658H June Team #1 was infiltrated vic XT 7155. There was a considerable amount of VC activity in the area. At 0920H the team was surrounded by an estimated 30 VC and requested exfiltration. Air strikes were called in on the VC and the teams extracted at 131000 vic XT 709549.

b. Team #6 infiltrated at 130650H June vic XT 6656. There was evidence of considerable VC activity. The team was engaged by an unknown number of VC, one team member was killed and four VC were killed (BC). The team requested extraction and was extracted, minus the KHA, at 130915 vic XT 663560. An air strike was placed on the VC positions.

c. The areas in a and b above were unsuitable for LRRP operations. Cover and concealment are sparse and the terrain is open in many places. Two infantry battalions were committed into the area. Several base camps, including one of regimental size, were found in the area, however, only small groups of VC were encountered as they chose to abandon their camps. The aerial rifle platoon was also committed where the patrol member was killed and his body was recovered.

3. The extent of VC losses as a result of LRRP findings cannot be accurately assessed. Canopies prevented BDA from air strikes and the VC chose to flee from US ground forces committed. Any VC casualties from air were carried off so they would not be found.

DOWNGRADED AT 3 YEAR INTERVALS;
DECLASSIFIED AFTER 12 YEARS.
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ANNEX J

VC INSTALLATIONS

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ANNEX J Combat Operations After Action Report, Operation EL PASO II/III
VC Installations

A. Base Camps

XT 405529	XT 678560	XT 725954
XT 412533	XT 678540	XT 839965
XT 415525	XT 679540	XU 266096
XT 438513	XT 682565	XU 714017
XT 485525	XT 684987	XU 746111
XT 579937	XT 689547	YT 199989
XT 579937	XT 690551	YU 199046
XT 635662		

B. Defensive Positions

XT 453570	XT 671549	XU 710100
XT 462568	XT 757451	XU 711015
XT 465563	XT 764726	XU 722112
XT 522570	XT 768728	XU 739067
XT 557708	XT 858912	XU 743108
XT 617690	XT 863917	XU 805125
XT 637678	XU 605033	YU 208048
	XU 646038	

C. AA Positions

XT 752968	XU 673247	YU 190035

D. Boat Landing

XT 462569

E. Salt Caches

XT 443542	XU 723015

F. Rice Caches

XT 405510	XT 431572	XT 446550
XT 411488	XT 433513	XT 455550
XT 423543	XT 440542	YT 455530
XT 432515	XT 441500	XT 689555
		YT 200993

G. Supply Bases

XT 406512	XT 443542	XT 454555
XT 431572	XT 446550	XT 455550
XT 442536	XT 448540	

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

ANNEX K

CLOSE AIR SUPPORT SORTIES

K

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ANNEX K Combat Operations After Action Report, Operation EL PASO II/III
Close Air Support Sorties

June 1966:

DATE	TOTAL SORTIES	LZ PREPARATION	INTERDICTION	SKY SPOTS	IMMEDIATE
2	26		24		2
3	33	3	26		4
4	43	8	33		2
5	39	3	33		3
6	31		22	3	6
7	22	3	19		
8	62	3	13	3	43
9	29		27		2
10	30		30		
11	31	3	12		16
12	19	3	16		
13	39	16			23
14	35		31		4
15	44		42		2
16	40		40		
17	18		18		
18	53	5	48		
19	34		31		3
20	38		33		5
21	39		27		12
22	29		23		6
23	50		48		2
24	53	4	47		2
25	34	3	22		9
26	51	2	47		2
27	49	3	44	2	
28	25		25		

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DATE	TOTAL SORTIES	LZ PREPARATION	INTERDICTION	SKY SPOTS	IMMEDIATE
29	45	3	38	4	
30	88		6	4	78
July 1966:					
1	61	11	46	4	
2	44		17	6	21
3	50		42	6	2
4	40		34	6	
5	45		43	2	
6	34		28	6	
7	44		44		
8	37	7	30		
9	102	8	27		67
10	62		25	14	23
11	45		39	6	
12	39		33	6	
13	27		27		
14	32		32		
15	55		45	10	
16	51		51		
17	72		61	9	2
18	67		63	4	
19	73		73		
20	62		54	2	6
21	49		49		
22	45	3	32	6	4
23	64		51	8	5
24	65		53	10	2
25	48		46	2	
26	42		42		

ANNEX K Combat Operations After Action Report, Operation EL PASO II/III
Close Air Support Sorties (Con't)

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DATE	TOTAL SORTIES	LZ PREPARATION	INTERDICTION	SKY SPOTS	IMMEDIATE
27	40		36	4	
28	96	8	70	16	2
29	74	11	23	26	14
30	84		75	9	
31	82		61	18	3
August 1966:					
1	37		17	14	6
2	65	3	52	8	2
3	70		54	16	
4	55		38	14	3
5	33		25	8	
6	41		33	8	
7	40		36	4	
8	35		11	8	16
9	30		22	6	2
10	27		27		
11	27		21	4	2
12	13	3	10		
13	43	13	11		19
14	38		7	2	29
15	10		6		4
16	30		18	10	2
17	14		14		
18	31		31		
19	26		22		4
20	39	12	25		2
21	18	3	13	2	
22	23		13	6	4
23	22		20		2

ANNEX K Combat Operations After Action Report, Operation EL PASO II/III
Close Air Support Sorties (Con't)

DATE	TOTAL SORTIES	LZ PREPARATION	INTERDICATION	SKY SPOTS	IMMEDIATE
24	30		30		
25	75	2	41		32
26	41		24		17
27	17		13	4	
28	20		20		
29	21		21		
30	22		22		
31	35		35		
September 1966:					
1	26		26		
2	23		20	2	1
3	26		24		2
Total	3955	130	2995	304	526

Total Tonnage (CAS) Operation EL PASO II/III

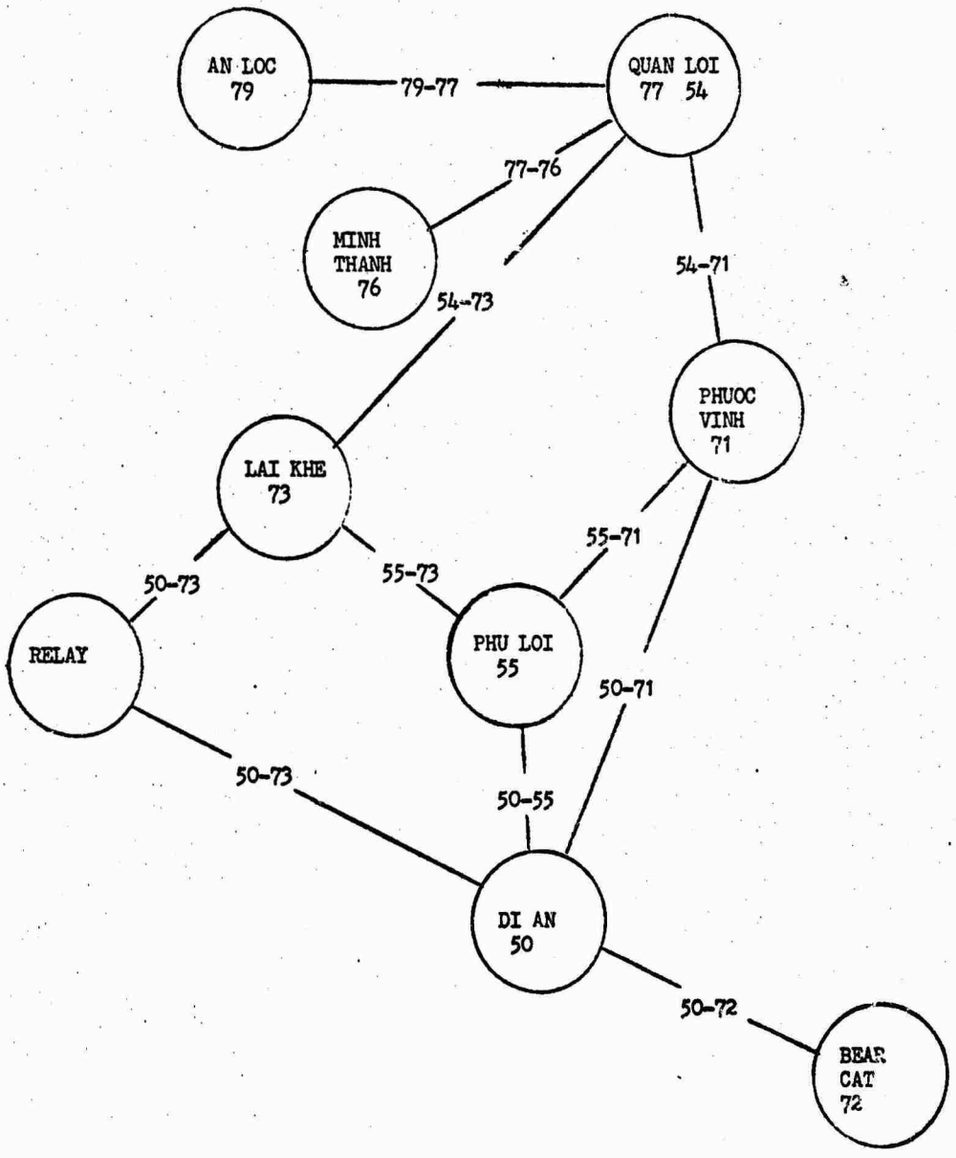
HE ——— 1581 Tons
NAP ——— 827 Tons
CBU ——— 171 Tons
Rockets — 1322

ANNEX L

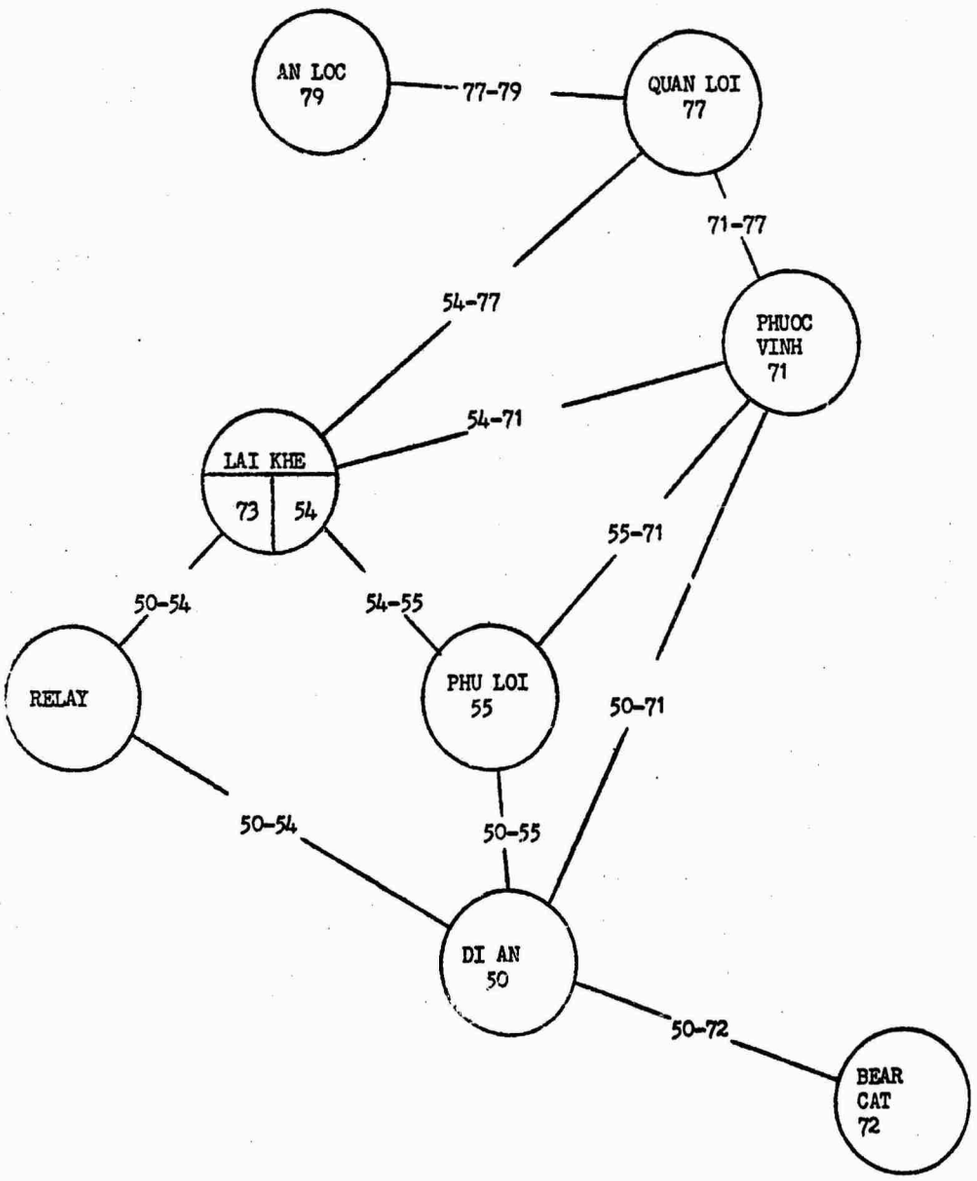
COMMUNICATIONS TRAFFIC AND CIRCUIT DIAGRAMS

ANNEX L-1 Combat Operations After Action Report, Operation EL PASO II/III
VHF Circuit Diagram EL PASO II

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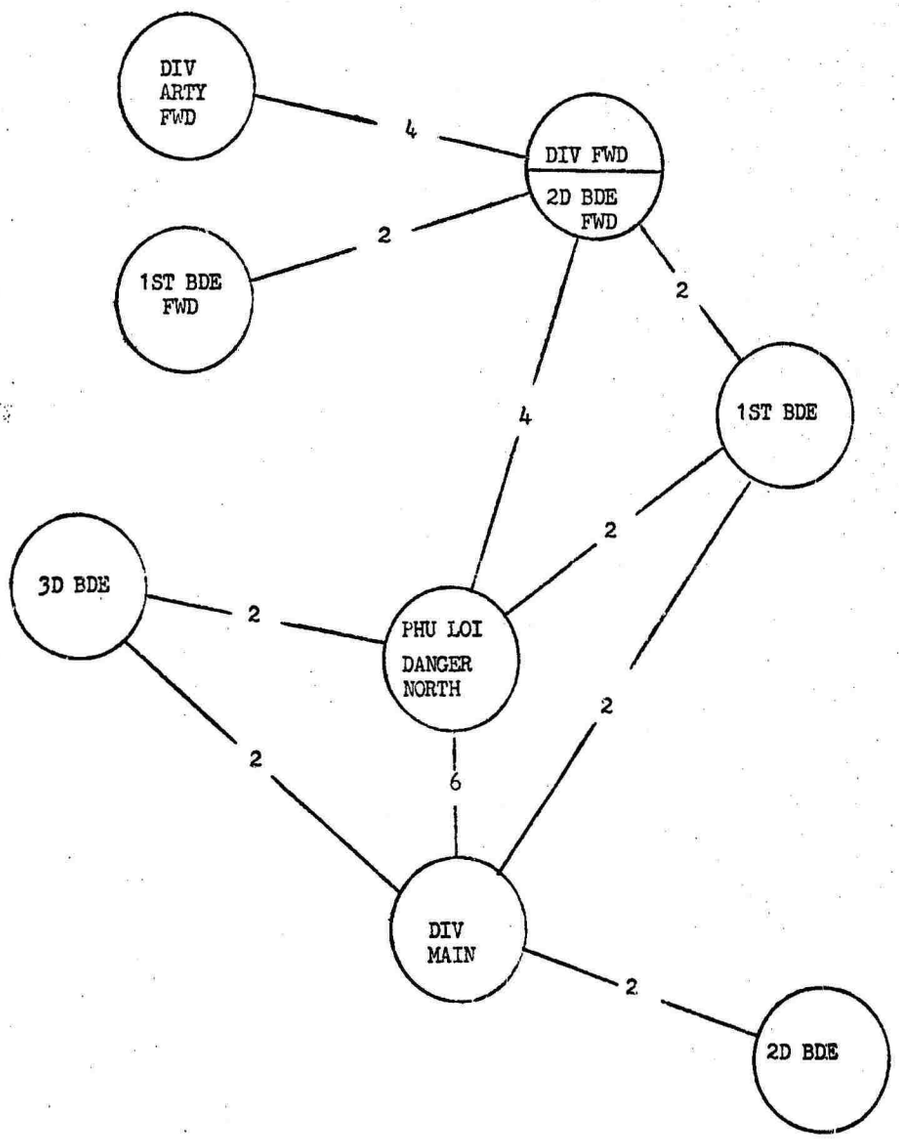


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AN LOC
79
77-79
QUAN LOI
77
71-77
54-77
PHUOC
VINH
71
54-71
LAI KHE
73
54
55-71
50-54
54-55
RELAY
PHU LOI
55
50-71
50-54
50-55
DI AN
50
50-72
BEAR
CAT
72

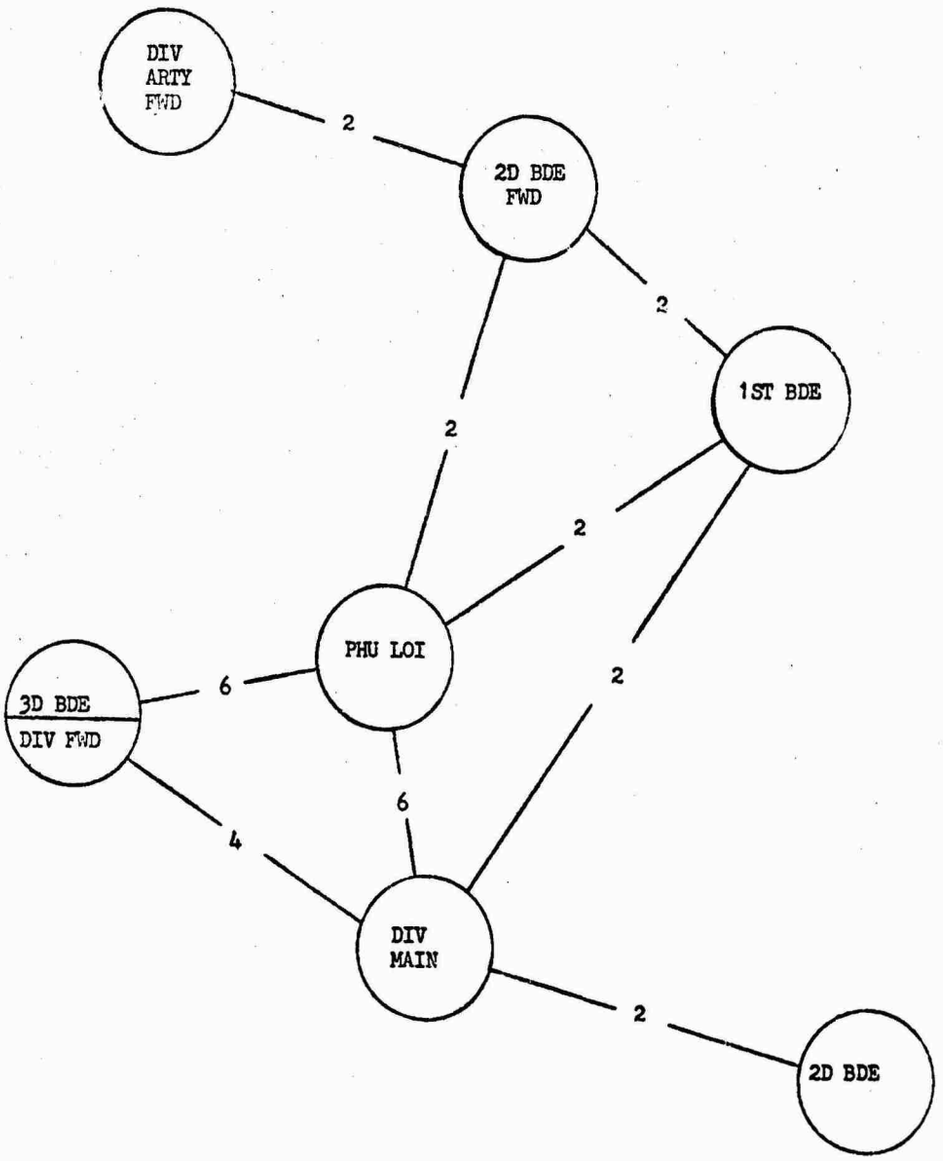
ANNEX L-3 Combat Operations After Action Report, Operation EL PASO II/III
Telephone Traffic Diagram, EL PASO II

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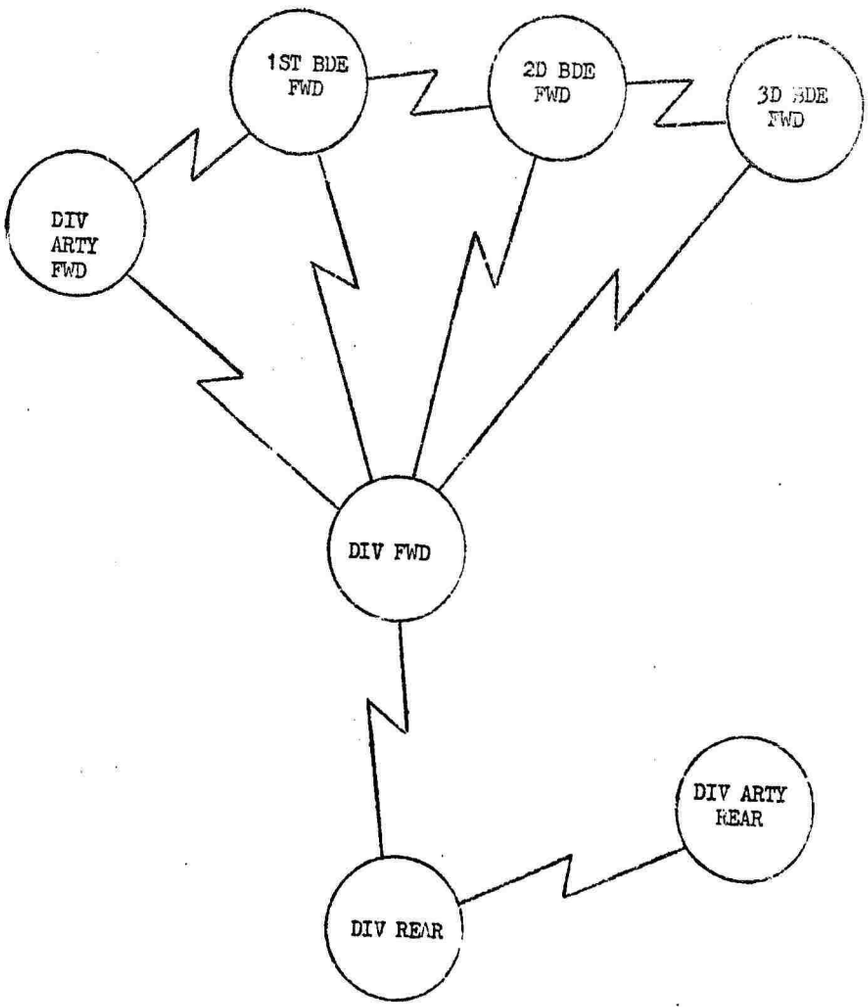
ANNEX L-4 Combat Operations After Action Report, Operation EL PASO II/III
Telephone Traffic Diagram, EL PASO III

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ANNEX L-5 Combat Operations After Action Report, Operation EL PASO II/III
HF Radio Diagram, EL PASO II/III

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ANNEX M

LIST OF COMMANDERS

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ANNEX M Combat Operations After Action Report, Operation EL PASO II/III
List of Commanders

1st Infantry Division	MG William E. DePuy
Division Artillery	COL Marlin W. Camp
1st Brigade	COL Sidney B. Berry
2d Brigade	COL Dewitt C. Smith Jr. (4 Jul - 14 Jul)
	LTC Herbert McChrystal (14 Jul - 24 Jul)
	LTC Sam S. Walker
3d Brigade	COL William D. Brodbeck
Support Command	COL Freddie W. Gramling
1st Bn, 2d Inf	LTC Richard Prillaman
2d Bn, 2d Inf	LTC Jack L. Conn
1st Bn, 16th Inf	LTC Lee S. Henry (2 Jun - 20 Jun)
	LTC Rufus G. Lazzell (20 Jun - 9 Jul)
	LTC George M. Wallace III
1st Bn, 18th Inf	MAJ John C. Bard (2 Jun - 14 Jul)
	LTC Warner S. Goodwin
2d Bn, 18th Inf	LTC Herbert McChrystal (2 Jun - 20 Jul)
	LTC Lewis R. Baumann
1st Bn, 28th Inf	LTC Robert Haldane (2 Jun - 1 Aug)
	LTC Jack G. Whitted
2d Bn, 28th Inf	LTC Kyle W. Bowie (2 Jun - 14 Jul)
	LTC Thomas R. Jones (14 Jul - 11 Aug)
	LTC Elmer D. Pendleton Jr.
1st Sqdn, 4th Cav	LTC Leonard L. Lewane
1st Engr Bn	LTC Howard L. Sargent (2 Jun - 16 Jul)
	LTC Joseph M. Kiernan Jr.
1st Avn Bn	LTC Harold G. Keebaugh (2 Jun - 14 Jun)
	MAJ John H. Humphreys (14 Jun - 20 Jul)
	LTC Oliva B. Butler
121st Sig Bn	LTC Russel R. Curington
1st Bn, 5th Arty	LTC David C. Rogers
1st Bn, 7th Arty	MAJ Elmer H. Birdseye (2 Jun - 2 Jul)
	LTC Carroll S. Meek
8th Bn, 6th Arty	LTC John R. McGiffert
2d Bn, 33d Arty	LTC Frank R. Tims (2 Jun - 15 Jul)
	LTC James R. Koenig (15 Jul - 1 Aug)
	LTC Charles D. Daniel
2d Bn, 13th Arty	LTC Gerald E. Robinson
11th Combat Avn Bn	LTC Joseph B. Starker

ANNEX N

AFTER ACTION REPORT 1ST BDE

CONFIDENTIAL

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

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AVDB-SP-O 20 August 1966

SUBJECT: Combat After Action Report

TO: Commanding General
1st Infantry Division
ATTN: AVDB-T
APO San Francisco 96345

1. (C) In accordance with MACV Directive Number 335-8, the following report is submitted.

1ST BRIGADE, 1ST INFANTRY DIVISION OPERATION

"EL PASO II"

2. (C) During the period 091000H June - 291325H June, 301240H June - 131330H July 1966, the 1st Brigade conducted search and destroy operations with the mission of locating and destroying VC forces and base camps in AN LOC and BINH DUONG Province XT8190, XT8090, XT8193, XT8392, XT7684, XT7658, XT5576, XT6380, XT4044, XT4060, XT5044, and XT5060 in the following AO's: BLUE, BLACK, GREY, GOLD, WHITE, GREEN, and FALCON. The 1st Bde OPORD 20-66 was issued at 092300H June outlining plans for the operation.

a. The reporting officer is Col Sidney B Berry Jr.

b. Task Organization and Task Force Commanders were as follows:

(1) Phase I (10-20 June)

1/2 Inf, Lt Col Richard L Brillaman, Commanding

2/2 Inf, Lt Col Jack L Conn, Commanding

2/16 Inf, Lt Col Richard Hathaway, Commanding

8/6 Arty (-), Lt Col John R McGiffert, Commanding

1st Engr Bn, Lt Col Howie Sargent, Commanding

(2) Phase II (20-24 June)

2/2 Inf, Lt Col Jack L Conn, Commanding

2/16 Inf, Lt Col Richard Hathaway, Commanding

8/6 Arty (-), Lt Col John E McGiffert, Commanding

C2/33 Arty, Capt Bruce Wulf, Commanding

1/5 Arty (-), Lt Col David C Rogers, Commanding

2/13 Arty (-), Lt Col Robinson, Commanding

1st Engr Bn, Lt Col Howie Sargent, Commanding

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(3) Phase III (24-28 June)

2/2 Inf, Lt Col Jack L Conn, Commanding

2/16 Inf, Lt Col Richard Hathaway, Commanding

8/6 Arty (-), Lt Col John E McGiffert, Commanding

C2/33 Arty

1/5 Arty (-), Lt Col David C Rogers, Commanding

2/13 Arty (-), Lt Col Robinson, Commanding

1st Engr Bn, Lt Col Howie Sargent, Commanding

1/2 Inf, Lt Col Richard L Prillaman, Commanding

(4) Phase IV (30 June - 13 July)

2/2 Inf, Lt Col Jack L Conn, Commanding

2/16 Inf, Lt Col Richard Hathaway, Commanding

8/6 Arty (-), Lt Col John E McGiffert, Commanding

C2/33 Arty

1/5 Arty (-), Lt Col David C Rogers, Commanding

2/13 Arty (-), Lt Col Robinson, Commanding

1st Engr Bn, Lt Col Howie Sargent, Commanding

1/16 Inf, Lt Col Rufus L Mazzell/Lt Col George Wallace, Cmdg

1/28 Inf, Lt Col Robert Baldone, Commanding

1/4 Cav (-), Lt Col Leonard L LeWanne, Commanding

ARVN AFC Troop, Lt Tan, Commanding

CIDG (ASSF Det A331), Capt Posey, Commanding

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3. (C) Intelligence:

a. Enemy Situation: Previous confirmed base camps utilized by 272 VC Regt between the MINH THANH and MICHELIN Rubber Plantations, vic XT5758, XT5767, XT6058, and XT6067. A major supply installation consisting of rice caches and a reported supply base containing 13 million piasters worth of supplies on the West side of SAIGON River, TAY NINH Province, vic XT4456 to XT4636 to XT4454 to XT4653. Airstrikes in the area on 19 May 66, uncovered an estimated 200 tons of rice and large storage buildings and an estimated 200 additional tons of rice. This logistical base was reported to have been operated by B-150 element of C-963 (RECON Service Group COSVN) and the area was secured by approximately 80 VC. During the period from approximately 15 June to 27 June VC 9th Division units were located Southwest of LOC NINH (XU728003) vic Cambodian border and in WAR ZONE "C". There was evidence that the VC were withdrawing to regroup. The VC activity was renewed on 30 June when the 271st Regt attacked our armored column vic LOC NINH. The obvious routes of withdrawal were again to the West toward the Cambodian border, possibly through Cambodia to War Zone "C". 272d Regt was suspected to be located vic XT604775 during this period. They were in a position, where at the time of their choosing, so as to attack MINH THANH road or Route 13 between CHON THANT (XT7662) and AN LOC (XT7568). Considered order of adoption was to attack convoys (columns) on MINH THANH Road, Route 13, and a remote possibility of attacking the MINH THANH base camp, attacking ARVN-US installations in AN LOC - QUAN LOI area.

b. VC Strength, Activity, and Situation During the Operation:

(1) The 272 VC Regt withdrew to the West as indicated, however, their speed of movement allowed them to clear the MINH THANH area of traffic prior to the commitment of the 1st Bde into a blocking/interdiction role. Base camps were located in the area as reported. Reports and evidence of activity revealed the 272 VC Regt did cross the SAIGON River into War Zone "C" as predicted in the intelligence estimate.

(2) The logistical base along the SAIGON River in TAY NINH Province did exist in the area. The intelligence reports of rice and supply caches were located in much greater quantity than estimated and covering a larger area than initially reported (see results). VC activity in this area consisted of contact with squad size elements in several locations simultaneously, harassing activity such as snipers, use of boobytraps and command detonated mines. Evidence gained from documents established the fact that the VC were from a rear service security element.

(3) The VC 271 Regt withdrew to the West toward the SAIGON River and Cambodia. Blocking forces on trails encountered elements of 271 withdrawing and units up to Bn size from 273 VC Regt.

(4) The 272 VC Regt was located in the general area that current intelligence indicated the attack on elements of 1st Bde vic XT6874 MINH THANH Road, was conducted by the entire 272 VC Regt. The location of the battle area and route of withdrawal were exactly as predicted by the 1st Bde.

(5) Accuracy of Intelligence: The intelligence gained during the operation and prior to major phases and engagements by the Bde were quite accurate. However, the estimation on number of base areas, amount of supplies and caches were less than the actual quantities found. There were also periods of time from 3-5 days where intelligence was of a negative nature. The ability of VC to deceive friendly forces as to their location and intention was proven throughout EL PASO II.

4. (C) Mission: From 1st Infantry Division OPORD 10-66 (Operation EL PASO II) dated 30 May 1966.

1st Brigade:

a. Attached 2/2 Inf arrival vic MINH THANH (XT6367).

b. Attached 2/16 Inf arrival vic MINH TH NH (XT6367).

c. Move by C130 aircraft to MINH THANH Airfield on 09 July 1966. 164

d. Conduct search and destroy operations in AO BLACK.

e. On order, conduct search and destroy and saturation patrolling operations in AO BLUE.

f. Secure arty base vic MINH THANH.

g. Defend MINH THANH Airstrip.

5. (C) Concept of Operation: One Inf Bn secures MINH THANH Airstrip and conducts company-sized patrolling in the MINH THANH Rubber Plantation and provide LNF. One Inf Bn conducts saturation patrolling in AO BLACK to locate VC Forces, prepare to block VC withdrawals from the Northeast (See Incl 1-3).

a. Fires:

(1) Arty: 2/13 Arty provides and coordinates arty fire support.

(2) Air:

(a) Preplanned requests to this Hqs by 0800H the day preceding the airstrike.

(b) Immediate requests: SOT.

(c) Armed helicopters support this operation as required.

b. 2/2 Inf:

(1) Establish Bn blocking position vic XT675940.

(2) Conduct saturation patrolling and search and destroy operations in AO BLACK.

c. 2/16 Inf:

(1) Secure MINH THANH Airstrip.

(2) Provide perimeter security for Btry C 2/33 Arty.

(3) Conduct company-sized patrols in AO BLUE.

(4) Provide a minimum of 1 rifle company as Rapid Reaction Force.

d. 1/28 Inf:

(1) Defend PHUOC VINH base area.

(2) Division Reserve.

e. B1/4 Cav: Secure base camp area.

g. 2/13 Arty: Direct Support.

h. HHC 1st Bde:

(1) Move 1st Bde T.C CP to Bde base area on 9 June 1966.

(2) Provide and coordinate support of 1st Bde TAC CP.

i. A/1 Engr Bn: Continue present mission.

j. Platoon continue present mission.

k. Coordinating instructions:

(1) XT80 East-West Grid line is coordinating line (No Fire line) with 3d Bde 1st Inf Div.

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(2) All indirect fires will be coordinated through Bde Arty LNO.

(3) Reports:

(a) Spot reports are required on Bn contact and loss of contact.

(b) Commanders' SITREP Bde HQs 1700H as of 1500H. Information received after 1500 will be submitted as a spot report.

(c) Situation reports required on the hour.

6. (C) Execution: The Bde initiated OPORD 20-66, Operation EL PASO II, on 9 June 1966, with Bde HQs moving by C-130 and CV2 aircraft to MINH THANH Airfield (XT6367), closing forward base area at 091325H June. Operations in AO's BLACK, BLUE, and GREY (10-14 June) were as follows: At 100745H, B2/16 Inf located old foxhole emplacements, vic XT615665 and XT595674, and destroyed them. Unit observed one (1) VC vic XT616670 at 0755H and engaged with SA fire. VC broke contact and fled into rubber. At 100844H, A2/2 Inf reported 50 VC XT673740. Arty fire was placed on target and unit conducted a sweep of the area that revealed traces of blood. A search of the area continued but unit reported negative contact. D6/6 Arty was directed to move from LAI KHE to CHCU THANH and was attached to Bde. At 100850H, armed fire teams received SA fire vic XT790464 on Route 13 while covering the convoy, resulting in one (1) US WHA. Convoy encountered one brush type roadblock and destroyed it resulting in one (1) VC WIA at 100935H vic XT789410. Convoy closed CHON THANH at 101140H without further incident. At 101320H, C2/2 Inf engaged 2 or 3 VC vic XT715750 resulting in one (1) VC KIA(BC) and one weapon captured. 2/2 Inf and 2/16 Inf commenced S&D operations in AO's BLACK and BLUE respectively at 110745 and reported negative contact. Between the period 111505H - 111605H the following incidents occurred: A2/2 observed and engaged 3 VC vic XT690740 but lost contact when VC dispersed and fled to the West. C2/16 Inf was directed to move to LOC NINH by CV2 aircraft for possible employment in 2/28 Inf area of operations. 2/2 Inf was directed to move and occupy positions vic MINH THANH Airstrip and conduct ambush and saturation patrolling operations vic MINH THANH Airfield. On 12 June, Bde elements conducted care and maintenance of personnel and equipmentconducted local patrols around the base area. There was negative VC contact during the period. At 130907H, A2/2 located and destroyed a VC base camp, mortar positions, and trench work vic XT625662. A2/2 reported 2 VC with steel helmets and weapons at 130920 vic XT642652, pursued as VC fled into jungle and broke contact. Unit was directed to return to Bn base area to prepare to conduct an air assault into LZ SUSAN (XT654584). At 100940E, B2/16 was directed to return to Bn base camp to be employed in an LZ vic XT738542. At 101030H, A2/16 picked up one (1) VCS vic XT738542. 2/2 Inf commenced combat assault at 131130H and closed LZ at 131226H reporting negative contact. During this period1/2 Inf and D1/5 Arty were attached to 1st Bde and conducted helilift to LZ vic XT738542. at 131453H and 131545H respectively. B2/16 commenced helilift into LZ XT738542 at 111535H and was attached to 1/1 Inf upon closing LZ. Operations in AO's BLACK, SILVER, and BLUE (14-17 June) were as follows: 1/2 Inf commenced S&D operations in AO BLOOD at 140843H, reporting negative contact and returned to base camp at 141542H. B2/16 and D1/5 Arty moved to and established new arty base vic XT738540 without incident. At 141604H, Plat C1/4 Cav received SA fire from both sides of road while moving to secure bridge vic XT765557, lead tank was damaged when it hit a mine resulting in 5 US WIA. Arty, air, and armed fire teams placed suppressing fire on target area resulting in 6 VC KIA and 1 KBA(BC). A1/28 and B1/28 Inf moved to LZ LIZ at 141216H closing at 141700H and were attached to 1st Bde with the mission of securing 3d Bde base camp. At 151410H, B1/28 received 2 WIA from a boobytrap vic XT793437 and 2 WIA from SA fire and a command detonated claymore vicXT792345 at 151646H while returning to LAI KHE base camp. 1/2, 2/2, and 2/16 conducted extensive saturation patrolling in assigned zones, all reporting negative contact. At 151655H B2/2 located a large VC base camp vic XT690551 consisting of 15 buildings, documents, and medical supplies. All buildings were destroyed and other items were evacuated. On 16 June at 0400 hrs, A1/28 was attached to 2/16 Inf and commenced S&D of assigned area at 0930 hrs. C2/2 located two (2) VC base camps at 161315H and 161330H vic XT678540 and XT689547 respectively. Base camp vic XT689547 showed signs of recent use and contained cooked rice, fresh food and 2 60 m home-made mortar rounds. All items were destroyed. A2/16 captured one VCS vic XT641669 at 161345H and turned him in to Bde I&W team. At 161350H, A1/28 located and destroyed 15 bunkers and foxholes vic XT617690.

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At 170953H, Recon Plat 1/2 Inf apprehended 2 VCS vic XT755585 and VCS were processed through intelligence channels. All other units reported negative contact after extensive patrolling during the day. On 18 and 19 June all units reported negative VC contact. On 20 June, Bde TAC CP and 2/16 Inf moved to DAU TIENG (XT4947) to commence S&D operations in that area. 1/2 Inf (-) returned to home base in PHUOC VINH with C1/2 Inf moving to HAI LEE to secure 3d Bde base camp. At 210909H, 2/16 Inf landed on LZ RED vic XT470515 and conducted a raid to seize a VC rice cache vic XT447537. B2/16 captured one (1) VC armed with German Mauser rifle vic XT459529 at 211035H. At 211045H, A2/16 killed one (1) VC vic XT469512, and at 1155 hrs located and destroyed 2 sampans vic XT470512. B2/16 engaged an unknown number of VC vic XT458525 resulting in 2 VC KIA(BC), 4 VC KIA(Poss), an AK weapon and SA ammo captured, and destroyed 4 huts and tunnel system. Unit also located and destroyed a [illegible] room, aid station and ammo area which contained 16 rds 7.62 ammo, ½ lb of TNT, 7 home-made grenades, 2 155mm rds, operating table and oxygen masks in the same vicinity. At 211322H, A2/16 located and evacuated a water pump vic XT471514. At 211510H, C2/16 conducted helilift into LZ PINK XT455553 and commenced movement to Obj 1 (XT447537). C2/16 located and evacuated 9.625 tons of rice in various stages vic XT447538 and destroyed it on 22 June. At 220820H, A2/16 located and destroyed a rice cache of 420 tons vic XT447537. A2/16 located and destroyed a booby-trapped grenade vic XT465523, 3 sampans and 4 huts vic XT465523 and 3 huts vic XT435524 at 220852H. C2/16 located and destroyed 4 tons of rice, 100 x 3 sheets of tin vic XT445550 at 221035H. At 221038H, A2/16 located and destroyed 1 hut vic XT455524. 2/2 Inf was alerted to move to LZ YELLOW (XT415528) and commenced move at 1131 hrs. C2/2 moved to vic LZ PURPLE (XT410565), B2/2 moved and seized objective 2 and A2/2 secured A2/13 Arty vic XT408515. At 221201H, C2/16 received SA fire vic XT445550 resulting in one (1) WIA. Fire was returned, and search revealed negative results. On 23 June at 0815 hrs, B1/2 Inf commenced move from PHUOC VINH to MINH THANH closing at 1035 hrs. At 230820H, A2/2 Inf received 10 rds SA fire vic XT415526 and placed 81mm fire on target area, fire suppressed, negative results. C2/2 located and destroyed thatched roof material vic XT406559 and Recon Plat 2/2 located and destroyed 1 hut, 6 - 5 gal cans of tobacco, 30 gals sauce, and 1 ton of rice vic XT406512 at 230140H and 230900H respectively. At 230923H, A2/16 located 1100 tons of rice and 5000 sheets of tin vic XT447543. While destroying rice cache, A Co received SA fire from estimated 6 VC vic XT447543 which resulted in 2 friendly WIA and 2 VC KIA(Poss). At 230930H, A2/2 located a VC training area vic XT405529 containing documents which were evacuated to Bde S-2. B2/2 located and destroyed a hut containing 2 truck tires, 4 tractor tires, one 3/4 ton trailor and a 400 gallon tank with 75 gallons gas at 230930H vic XT406517. At 231300H, B2/16 engaged an unknown number of VC vic XT446544 which resulted in 5 US WIA and 4 VC WIA (Poss). At 231321H, located and destroyed 2 handcarts vic XT453550. A2/2 destroyed platoon-sized base camp vic XT412533 with 15 foxholes and 50 bunkers at 231359H. At 231459H, B2/2 destroyed 2 huts, 7 - 50 lb sacks of flour and 1 ton of rice vic XT405510 and booby traps on trails leading to huts. B2/16 moving to LZ PINK (XT453553) received 5 US KIA and 10 WIA from a VC claymore vic XT452550 at 1615 hrs. Area was searched but revealed negative results. At 1710 hrs C1/2 Inf closed MINH THANH and joined 1/2 Inf vic LZ PINK. At 240828H, B1/2 was airlifted to vic LZ YELLOW to assume the mission of securing A2/13 Arty. B2/16 received sniper fire and rifle grenades vic XT455553 resulting in one (1) WIA and one (1) DOW. Unit returned fire which resulted in one (1) VC KIA(BC) and the capture of one chicom SMG AKS41. At 241000H, armed gunships received SA fire from vic XT423517 which resulted in one (1) WIA. B1/2 dispatched a patrol to check the area and patrol located and destroyed 5 huts and 1100 lbs of rice, vic XT421506. 2/2 Inf conducted air assault into LZ PINK closing at 1107 hrs. Units commenced S&D operations and A2/2 received mortar and rifle grenade fire vic XT459563 which resulted in 3 WIA. A2/2 returned fire with SA fire. Artillery was fired in support and an airstrike was called in to support Co A. B2/2 maneuvered to occupy blocking position but made negative contact. At 241155H, B1/2 destroyed one (1) hut and 3.3 tons of rice vic XT440500. At 1430 hrs A2/2 engaged an unknown nuber of VC positioned in fortified bunkers vic XT453570. VC broke contact at 1630 hrs and B2/2 conducted search of area and destroyed two (2) boats 45' long but could not re-establish contact. Action resulted in 1 US KIA and 5 WIA. VC casualties unknown. At 250522H, a VC claymore was detonated in B1/2 and A2/13 Arty's RON position vic XT409514 resulting in one (1) US WIA and at 0935 hrs, three men from B1/2 were wounded vic XT407502 by a boobytrap as unit began search and destroy operations in assigned zone. A2/2 located and destroyed one (1) 25 ft boat, 300 lbs of rice and two (2) 7½ motors were evacuated at 250955H. At 101225H, airstrike conducted vic XT400500 resulted in numerous SA rds going off, secondary explosions and 12 huts destroyed. At 251946H, A/2 Inf received 5 rds of rifle grenades in A/2/13 FDC position which

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resulted in three (3) WIA. 2/16 received 2 claymore and 3 mortar rds vic XT451551. VC broke contact at 1625H and unit pursued VC, but lost contact. Action resulted in 1 US KIA, 7 US WIA, and 1 VC KIA(BC) and 2 VC KIA(Poss). 2/16 Inf received an artillery short round in their RON position vic XT448548 at 251915H. At 251030H, A2/2 sighted and ambushed 7 VC vic XT458564 which resulted in 2 VC KIA(BC), 2 VC KIA(Poss), 1 - AK 7, and 1 - 1926 German Mauser Model 78 captured. B1/2 Inf located 10 tons of loose rice in a hut, 5 booby-traps and new type grenades vic XT433513 at 261120H. Grenades were evacuated to Bde S-2. At 261159H, B1/2 received SA and AW fire vic XT438513, fire returned. Action resulted in one (1) friendly DOW. Enemy casualties unknown. At 201230H, B1/2 received SA fire vic XT438513, armed fire teams and arty placed fire on target with unknown VC casualties. B1/2 continued to move and at 261340H located and destroyed a base camp with extensive bunkers and fortified positions vic XT438514. While destroying bunkers, unit received rifle grenades and SA fire resulting in 1 DOW and 4 friendly WIA, fire was returned and unit pursued, contact was lost at 261505H. Artillery fire and airstrike were placed on VC base camp. Search of area revealed negative VC casualties. At 271045H, B1/2 received SA sniper fire vic XT400500, mortar and arty fire placed on target. Area searched revealed splattered blood trails, trails were followed but were lost at 271135H. A CH47 aircraft received 2 rds of grenades and 15 rds of carbine fire vic XT448531 at 271135H. Armed fire teams fired suppressing fires and B2/16 searched the area with negative results. At 271432H B1/2 received sniper fire from vic XT405505. Mortar fire and direct arty fire were placed on target and plat was dispatched to search area. Plat located and destroyed 1.1 tons of rice and 2 huts, but did not make contact. A CH47 aircraft extracting tin, hit a tree and crashed vic XT441543 at 271520H which resulted in one (1) KIA and aircraft totally destroyed. Other crew members were evacuated for burns. On 28 June all units conducted maintenance of equipment and personnel in base camp areas. Bde returned to base camp area vic PHUOC VINH at 291745H. At 301530H, Bde began planning for continuation of Operation EL PASO II. At 301625H, 1/2 Inf conducted helaborne assault into LZ BLUE (XU670995) with A1/2 moving to and securing obj (XU665005). Unit reported negative contact. At 301650H, 2/16 Inf and 1/4 Cav(-) became OPCON 1st Bde with 2/16 moving to vic LZ YELLOW (XT7805) and 1/4 Cav (-) located vic XT723973. On 30 July, at 1040H, 1st Bde was directed to move to QUAN LOI (XT8190) and assume control of operations in the LCC/QUAN LOI area. 1/4 Cav (-) and 2/16 Inf became attached to 1st Bde with 1/2 Inf and 1/28 Inf who were airlifted into QUAN LOI from their bases at PHUOC VINH and SONG BE respectively. 1/4 Cav(-) and 2/16 Inf's action (Battle of BM 69 XT7895) took place at 0900 hrs, 30 June. Results of battle (See Incl 4 - Battle of BM 69). Bde issued OPORD 22-66 to Operation EL PASO II on 1 July 1966, and began conducting operations in the QUAN LOI/AN LOC area. At 010023H, B1/2 received one (1) KHA and two (2) WIA from an arty rd that was fired by an ARVN HAU that had not been coordinated. At 010517H, C1/2 Inf fired 179 rds at VC movement vic XT575946 with unknown results. 1/4 Cav(-) and 1/2 Inf linked up at Objective SOCCER (XT674996), at 010710H and C1/2 secured LZ BLUE for the arrival of A2/33 Arty. At 010833H, A & B Co 2/16 Inf, on blocking position SONGO (XU709011) located 20 more VC bodies and hundred graves. (NOTE: Bodies were from battle conducted by 1/4 Cav on 30 June.) B2/16 located a company-sized base camp vic XU714017 which consisted of bunkers, foxholes, 81mm mortar positions and 6 additional graves at 011085H. At 011096H 1/28 conducted helicopter assault and secured Objective BASEBALL (XT623995) and set up a blocking position in that area. B1/2 captured one (1) VC WIA with AK-47 weapon vic XT607997 at 011037H. VC stated he is member of 1st Bn, 271st Regt. At 011045, 2/16 reported consolidated VC bodycount at 116 VC KIA(BC), 15 VCS, and 350 VC KIA(Poss). At 011217H A1/2 engaged 2 VC vic XU622002, VC fled and company pursued with negative results. At 011500H, C1/28 observed 2 VC vic XT606993 and pursued but failed to establish contact. A1/28 captured two (2) VC WIA vic XT604993 armed with grenades but no weapons. At 011610H interrogation revealed that they were part of a 20 man rice carrying detail in 2 man groups and are members of 50th Co, 5th Bn, 4th NVA Regt stationed at LAOC DA. At 011615H, B1/28 engaged approx 10 VC vic XT610990, VC broke contact at 010715H. B1/28 received one KIA and 3 WIA. VC casualties unknown. Ambush patrol 1/28, engaged unknown number of VC at 012015H resulting in one friendly WIA, VC casualties unknown. Incidents occurring on 2 July are as follows: At 0550H 2/16 Inf was taken under fire and at approx 06 OH mortar fire was received followed by a ground attack from the North and Northwest. Co A & B [illegible] for arty, air, and armed fire teams to assist in repelling the estimated VC Bn force. Arty was placed on VC routes of withdrawal. At 0710H, Bde CO moved 1/28 Inf to vic XU606019 to support 2/16 Inf. Contact was broken at 0909H and results were: 21 VC KIA(BC), 40 VC KIA(Poss) due to numerous blood trails leading from perimeter; 1 RPG, 1 MAG, 1 claymore mine, 2 [illegible] assorted SA rifle,

12 sets web gear, and 1 packet of medical supplies. At 1340H B1/28 captured one VC vic XU598025 and located 2 VC KIA(BC); freshly dug mortar positions and 5 packs with gronades. While searching the area, B1/28 received SA fire from unknown number of VC at 1400 hrs. Unit returned fire and C1/28 was moved to a blocking position. Contact was lost at 1417 hrs and B1/28 suffered one WHA. Search was conducted of the area at 1538H and six freshly dug graves with VC bodies were located when Bn closed LZ ROSE vic XU590036. 2/12 was directed to move to QUAN LOI and closed at 1710H. 2/2 Inf became OPCON to Bde and was helilifted into LZ PINK (XU592025) at 1720 H. On 3 July, 1/2 Inf commenced operations in AO SNAIL (XU650060 center of mass) and reported negative contact. At 030759H, 1/28 commenced movement to Objective 2 (XU617047) and Objective 4 (XU635030 and 2/2 Inf moved to Objective 1 XU619032) and Objective 3 (XU632035). Both battalions reported locating freshly dug foxholes or graves containing bloody bandages along their routes to Objectives 1, 2, 3, and 4. 1/4 Cav(-) conducted an armored recon along Route SNEAK to Objective SOCCER and Route HAWK to Highway 13. All units reported negative contact during the day. All units returned to QUAN LOI on 4 July 1966. Bde elements conducted extensive patrolling operations, maintenance on personnel and equipment from the period 4-6 July, with all units reporting negative contact. On 6 July at 2030 hrs, Bde issued OPORD 25-66 (OLYMPIA/EL PASO II) with the mission of initiating operations to lure major Viet Cong forces to ambush and attack US forces to enable 1st Bde to destroy VC forces by offensive action. At 071300H, 2/2 Inf infiltrated to MINH THANH Plantation by CV2 and UH1D aircraft with Bn closing at 071821H. 1/4 Cav (-) secured Hwy 13 for move of 6/6 Arty(-) to Arty Base 1 vic XT705817. B1/2 secured the arty base. At 080915H, 1/28 Inf conducted deception landing operation. The objective of the simulated assault was to cause the VC to react to the assault, drawing them into the killing zone of the Arc Light Strike which was conducted at 081100H. C1/2 Inf departed QUAN LOI with ARVN ARC Troop at 081047H and joined 1/5 Arty(-) at 081110H vic AP LOC. On 9 July, Bde commenced Operation MINERVA/EL PASO II. (See Incl 5, Battle of SUOI LAP.) At 100123H ambush patrol 1/16 Inf killed one VC and captured his weapon vic XT641766. 1/16 Inf commenced S&D operations at 0635H and at 0724H C1/16 engaged an estimated VC squad vic XT634766, resulting in 2 KIA and 12 WIA. At 100755H B1/16 flushed an unknown number of VC vic XT652739. VC fled toward 1/16 Inf position. B1/16, at 100825H, located a VC Bn base complex vic XT659750 and made contact with an approx VC squad resulting in 3 VC KIA(BC), 1 VCC, 1 RL, 1 carbine, and 1 - 60mm mortar sight. A1/16 located a VC Bn-size base complex vic XT744775 with numerous grenades which were destroyed. While destroying base complex, Bn received fire from at least two (2) MG's and an estimated VC platoon-sized force. The Bn commander was wounded at this time and the company was ordered to back off to allow airstrikes and arty to hit objective area. 1/4 Cav(-), 1/2 Inf, and 1/28 Inf reported negative contact during the day. On 11 July all units reported negative contact for the period and at 111230H, the Bde paid tribute to TF Dragoon by positioning the Bde colors and an honor guard platoon at the battle site of 9 July 1966. The Brigade colors were dipped during the passing of TF Dragoon in honor of the valiant men of Hqs, B and C Troops, 1/4 Cav, B1/2 Inf. On 12 July Bde conducted care and maintenance of equipment for all units. All units prepared to return to their respective base camps on 13 July. Bde Hqs and 1/2 Inf conducted airlift by CV2, C123, and UH1D aircraft to AHUOC VIEN commencing at 130630H and closing at 132000H, terminating Operation EL PASO II.

7. Supporting Forces:

a. 2d Bn, 13th Arty:

(1) This organization consisted of Headquarters and Service Battery and three (3) firing batteries (A, B, and C) with C2/33, B1/5 attached and D6/6 Arty in GS.

(2) Bn moved by C130 and CV2 aircraft to QUAN LOI Airfield and later by C147 to MINH THANH Airfield. D6/6 Arty moved by road from TAN UYEN to arty base vic CAO THANH II initially.

b. Period and number of rds fired by type 9 June - 13 July:

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	Maneuver	Preparation	Total
105mm HE	13,634	2208	15,842
105mm WP	426	37	463
105mm Ill	122		122
155mm HE	1323	152	1475
8 inch HE	1552	110	1662

Total H&I Missions: 2803
Total Preparations: 62

c. US Air Force: In support of Operation EL PASO II (9 June - 13 July 1966) a total of 169 strike missions were flown by 1st Bde FAC's, resulting in a total of 543 sorties. The FAC pilots flew a total of 245 missions for 417 hours and 35 minutes directing tactical airstrikes. Fighter strikes as follows:

9 Jun 66 - 2	27 Jun 66 - 3
10 Jun 66 - 4	28 Jun 66 - 6
11 Jun 66 - 6	29 Jun 66 - 5
12 Jun 66 - 2	30 Jun 66 - 5
13 Jun 66 - 3	1 Jul 66 - 6
14 Jun 66 - 4	2 Jul 66 - 10
15 Jun 66 - 4	3 Jul 66 - 6
16 Jun 66 - 3	4 Jul 66 - 3
17 Jun 66 - 6	5 Jul 66 - 4
18 Jun 66 - 1	6 Jul 66 - 2
19 Jun 66 - 3	7 Jul 66 - 5
20 Jun 66 - 4	8 Jul 66 - 6
21 Jun 66 - 4	9 Jul 66 - 20
22 Jun 66 - 6	10 Jul 66 - 12
23 Jun 66 - 3	11 Jul 66 - 8
24 Jun 66 - 9	12 Jul 66 - 6
25 Jun 66 - 9	13 Jul 66 - 3
26 Jun 66 - 6	TOTAL: 169

8. Results of Operation:

a. Equipment evacuated:

Quantity	Item
5	US Carbine
5	7.62 Carbine
21	SA Weapons
1	AK-47

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1	PSS-44
3	60mm Mortars
1	75mm Recoilless Rifle
1	AK-47
18	M56 Assault Rifle
16	BAR
10 ton	Rice
1	Water Pump
1	M36 LMG
300 shoots	Tin
2	7 HP Motors
1	US .50 Cal MG
5	Chicom Rkt Launchers
1	Hvy MG Chicom
1	Lt Chicom MG
2	60mm Mortar
1	AT Launcher
2	Tripods for 57RR

b. Equipment Destroyed:

8	Arty Rds
2	CBU
1/2 lb	TNT
4	Claymores
1	.31 Cal MG
2	M53 LMG
6	Chicom LMG
1	.45 Cal Pistol
2	M72 LAW
8	Chicom Rkt Launcher
11,2066 rds	SA Ammo
19 rnds	60mm Mortar
22 rnds	81mm Mortar
239	Hand Grenades
3	60mm Rkts
18	AT Grenades
10 rds	75mm RR

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2	2.75 inch Rkts
2	AP Mines
25 tons	Salt
1579.5 tons	Rice
1300 lbs	Flour
300 lbs	Tea
30 gal	NUOC MON
2750 lbs	Fish (in Kegs)
.15 tons	Dried Fish
1000 tins	Sardines
30 gal	Tobacco
1	Hospital
11	Base Camps
54	Huts
75	Bunkers
5920 Sheets	Tin
10	Tires
4	Hand Carts
16	Bicycles
1	3/4 ton Trailer
1	400 gal Tank
900	Soup Ladles
20	Morosene Stoves
15	Thermos Bottles
500	Moo Moods
3000	Alum Pans
1	Bicycle Repair Shop
2	Outboard Motors
5 gal	Tar
1	Fish Net
500 lbs	Wax
5 Spools	Baling Wire
1 bag	Tooth Paste
1 bag	Tooth Brushes
130 gal	Gasoline
1210 gal	Motor Oil

1	PRC 10 Radio	172
13 sets	Webbing	
1	Mod Packet	

c. Friendly Losses:

Date	WHA	KHA	MHA	DOW
9 Jun 66	0	0	0	0
10 Jun 66	5	0	0	0
11 Jun 66	0	0	0	0
12 Jun 66	0	0	0	0
13 Jun 66	0	0	0	0
14 Jun 66	0	0	0	0
15 Jun 66	4	0	0	0
16 Jun 66	0	0	0	0
17 Jun 66	0	0	0	0
18 Jun 66	0	0	0	0
19 Jun 66	0	0	0	0
20 Jun 66	0	0	0	0
21 Jun 66	0	0	0	0
22 Jun 66	1	0	0	0
23 Jun 66	19	5	0	0
24 Jun 66	7	0	0	1
25 Jun 66	27	2	0	0
26 Jun 66	16	0	0	1
27 Jun 66	0	0	0	0
28 Jun 66	0	0	0	0
29 Jun 66	0	0	0	0
30 Jun 66	118	17	0	3
1 Jul 66	0	0	0	0
2 Jul 66	41	17	0	0
3 Jul 66	0	0	0	0
4 Jul 66	0	0	0	0
5 Jul 66	0	0	0	0
6 Jul 66	0	0	0	0
7 Jul 66	0	0	0	0
8 Jul 66	0	0	0	0
9 Jul 66	100	22	0	0

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10 Jul 66	13	2	0	0
11 Jul 66	0	0	0	0
12 Jul 66	0	0	0	0
13 Jul 66	0	0	0	0
TOTAL	351	65	0	5

d. Friendly Material Losses:

Quantity	Item
4	Tank, M48A3 (Damaged)
1	Tank, M48A3 (Destroyed)
8	APC, M113 (Damaged)
7	APC, M113 (Destroyed)

e. Enemy Losses:

Date	KIA(BC)	KIA(Poss)	Captured VCC	VCS
9 Jun 66	0	0	0	0
10 Jun 66	1	0	0	0
11 Jun 66	0	0	1	0
12 Jun 66	0	0	0	0
13 Jun 66	0	0	0	1
14 Jun 66	6	6	0	0
15 Jun 66	2	0	0	0
16 Jun 66	0	0	0	5
17 Jun 66	0	0	0	0
18 Jun 66	0	0	0	0
19 Jun 66	0	0	0	0
20 Jun 66	0	0	0	0
21 Jun 66	2	4	1	0
22 Jun 66	0	0	0	0
23 Jun 66	10	16	0	0
24 Jun 66	11	0	0	1
25 Jun 66	7	0	0	0
26 Jun 66	2	11	0	0
27 Jun 66	0	0	0	0
28 Jun 66	2	17	1	0
29 Jun 66	0	0	0	0
30 Jun 66	195	150	16	0
1 Jul 66	0	0	0	0

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2 Jul 66	32	40	1	0
3 Jul 66	0	0	0	0
4 Jul 66	0	0	0	0
5 Jul 66	0	0	0	0
6 Jul 66	0	0	0	0
7 Jul 66	0	0	0	0
8 Jul 66	0	0	0	0
9 Jul 66	235	300	6	1
10 Jul 66	3	0	2	0
11 Jul 66	0	0	0	0
12 Jul 66	0	0	0	0
13 Jul 66	0	0	0	0
TOTAL	508	548	32	8

9. Administrative Matters:

a. Administrative plans and procedures were adequate. The utilization of Army fixed-wing and rotary-wing aircraft for resupply greatly assisted in the rapid response to known requirements and changes due to the tactical situation.

(1) Supply:

(a) Techniques of supply used during the operation were of three types:

1 An average of three (3) CV2 aircraft were utilized daily to deliver supplies to the forward base areas at MINH THANH, DAU TIENG, and QUAN LOI from Brigade and Division logistical bases at LAI KHE.

2 An average of six (6) UH1D helicopters were used to deliver daily from forward base areas to night defensive positions. During the early morning and late afternoon hours maximum effort was placed on extractions of unnecessary equipment of night defensive positions.

3 CH47 helicopters were used to deliver the artillery ammunition in the forward artillery bases. UH1D aircraft were used whenever large LZ's were not available to support CH47 aircraft.

(b) During the operation, approx 125,000 lbs of materials daily to include Class I-V and mail, were delivered by CV2 aircraft. An undetermined tonnage of ammunition was delivered by CH47 and UH1D aircraft.

(2) Maintenance: No significant problems were encountered by attached units.

(3) Treatment of casualties and evacuation and hospitalization:

(a) Co D, 1st Med Bn, 1st Inf Div, operated as a part of the 1st Bde Task Force in support of Operation EL PASO II.

(b) The medical support unit moved from PHUOC VINH at 021230H Jul 66 utilizing 2 CH47's closing the forward base area at 021630H Jul 66. The unit set up a clearing station which was operated 45 minutes after arrival and began receiving patients at that time. Ground evacuation from this facility was not feasible and a MEDEVAC helicopter was on 24 hr stand-by at the location. On 9 Jul, the MED facility experienced a mass casualty situation. Commencing at approx 1154H, the facility received 119 KIRA, 9 injury, 19 ERA, and 13 illness patients until approx 1450H. Evacuation to the facility was accomplished primarily via MEDEVAC helicopters with minimal assistance from "slick" helicopters. The MED facility remained [illegible] throughout the operation

175 and rendered prompt and efficient service throughout the operation. In addition, MEDCAP operations were conducted treating approximately 20 Vietnamese and Montagnard patients.

(c) Results:

1. Total number of patients treated: 438.

   a. Illness: 117.

   b. Injury: 394.

   c. IRHA: 143.

   d. NHRA: 24.

2. Total number of patients evacuated from the Clearing Station to:

   a. Hospitals (93d Evac, 3d Surg, Bn Fld): 123.

   b. Base camps: 210.

3. Total number returned to duty: 105.

(4) Transportation: No significant transportation problems encountered during the operation. The large number of personnel, replacements, and others that were normal between forward and rear base areas utilized the regular daily shuttle and resupply ships between these two points.

(5) Communications: No major communications problems were experienced during the operation. The one-half AN/MRC-69 VHF communications facility was employed for the first time and provided all the requirements for VHF between the Division and Bde. FM communications between Bde and subordinate units was marginal and the use of airborne radio relay was extensively used throughout the operation.

(6) Medical Evaluation: The medical coverage during the operation was excellent. An increased incidence of fevers, diarrheal conditions, and skin problems was noted. This is to be expected any time there is prolonged exposure to the elements. The nutrition and physical condition of the troops was very good and they received expert medical care at all levels.

b. Personnel status during Operation EL PASO II:

Organization	Designation	Opn Initiated	Opn Terminated
HHC 1st Bde	Auth	122	122
	Assign	137	145
	PDY	141	157
	PIF	61	70
	PBC	80	87
1/2 Inf	Auth	829	829
	Assign	883	864
	PDY	798	689
	PIF	474	15
	PBC	324	673
1/28 Inf	Auth	829	829
	Assign	830	770

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DECLASSIFIED AFTER 12 YEARS.
DOD DIR 5200.10

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Organization	Designation	Opn Initiated	Opn Terminated
	PIF	250	516
	PBC	432	203
1/5 Arty	Auth	490	490
	Assign	501	502
	PDY	486	491
	PIF	290	342
	PBC	217	107

10. (C) Special Equipment and Techniques: No special equipment was introduced during the operation. The Brigade's scheme of maneuver for a type counter-ambush operation (Battle of BM 69 and SUOI LAP) was employed for the first time, and proved to be effective. A Brigade Tactical Command Post was organized and operated from the Brigade Forward Base Area.

11. (C) Commander's Analysis: a. The purpose of the operation in the vicinity of DAU TIENG was to locate and destroy enemy logistical bases. The 1st Bde employed two battalions (2/16 Inf and 2/2 Inf). The battalions were successful in locating the enemy supply points, but experienced difficulty in destroying the materials, particularly the rice that was uncovered. This operation lasted for six days and although the bulk of the supplies were located on the third day, only a small amount could be evacuated. The remainder was destroyed.

b. An operation of this type is more successful when uncovered materials are extracted. Extraction of enemy materials has the greatest psychological impact on the VC and the local population when uncovered materials, that have been confiscated by the VC, are redistributed to the people. Extraction of VC materials is a time-consuming task. I recommend the following for future operations:

(1) Transfer the area of operation to the ARVN forces after materials are located for extraction by ground means.

(2) Develop an efficient means of rice destruction and leave ARVN troops in the area until materials are effectively and completely destroyed.

c. The Battle of BM 49 with the 1/4 Cav and later the introduction of 2/18 Inf achieved excellent results. The organic firepower and supporting fires of artillery and air were effectively used and the enemy force was decisively beaten in the battle area. Positioning of the blocking forces was accomplished rapidly and blocking positions were across the most likely route of escape. However, later intelligence indicated that the surrounding enemy force escaped to the Southwest and to the Northwest, where no blocking forces were located. The attack against the blocking positions of 2/18 Inf on the morning of 2 July was probably made by an enemy reserve unit.

d. The Battle of SUOI LAP accomplished exactly what was intended: the 1/4 Cav Task Force lured the enemy into committing himself in ambush against a hard-fighting target, and then supporting fires and RRF maneuver forces inflicted heavy damage on the enemy.

12. (C) Conclusions and Lessons Learned:

a. Conclusion: The operation was extremely successful and all of the participating units carried out their missions vigorously and professionally. The downing of the armed CH47 in the midst of the battle could have caused a much more serious problem had it been forced down any distance from friendly forces. As it was, its presence on the battlefield tied down a fighting element for security which could have been more profitably employed elsewhere.

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b. Lessons Learned:

(1) Communications:

(a) Airborne radio relay has to be used when units are maneuvering through the jungle.

(b) Antenna RC-292 must be erected by all units at their forward tactical CP.

(c) Communications procedure and security was poor and continued emphasis should be placed on keeping transmissions SHORT.

(d) Each separate unit should be prepared to provide necessary equipment and personnel to link up both forward and rear echelons with next higher headquarters. 1st echelon maintenance should be performed before, during, and after each operation.

(2) Intelligence:

(a) Extensive aerial reconnaissance and Red Haze missions flown over the area were able to detect VC activity.

(b) VC regiments are capable of refitting, regrouping, and being prepared for a major operation in less than 30 days.

(c) VC units utilizing existing trails move rapidly through the jungle covering a considerable distance in a short time. Blocking forces placed further from the scene of battle would allow time for proper timely deployment of blocking.

(d) Reconnaissance in depth around the battle area should be allowed to be continued until it is certain that the withdrawing forces are located and fixed by the blocking forces.

(e) VC established positions in depth. Initial positions being in the ditches along the road. Recon by fire into the ditches may spring the ambush pre-maturely.

(3) Assault Helicopter Company:

(a) Assault helicopter companies placed in direct support of infantry brigades should in the true sense, be in direct support. On many occasions, helicopters were withdrawn from Brigade missions on direction of higher headquarters, without the Brigade being informed.

(b) Lack of ground communications within an assault helicopter company impairs its ability to react, especially when two or more lift companies are on a stand-by basis at a field location. This is further complicated when the air mission commander and supported unit commander are airborne with communications to the supported units only. This situation reduces mobile forces to the lowest level of communications, i.e. hand and voice signals over a distance which may extend to two to three thousand feet.

(c) A set number of helicopters should be given to commanders for the purpose of planning an operation. Additional helicopters should be designated as stand-bys for immediate replacement of helicopters involved in the lift.

(4) The S-5 requires an interpreter and a truck, 3/4 ton, in order to conduct Civic Action Activities and Psy War Operations.

FOR THE COMMANDER:

6 Incl
as

WILLIAM S TUCKERMAN
Captain, Infantry
Adjutant

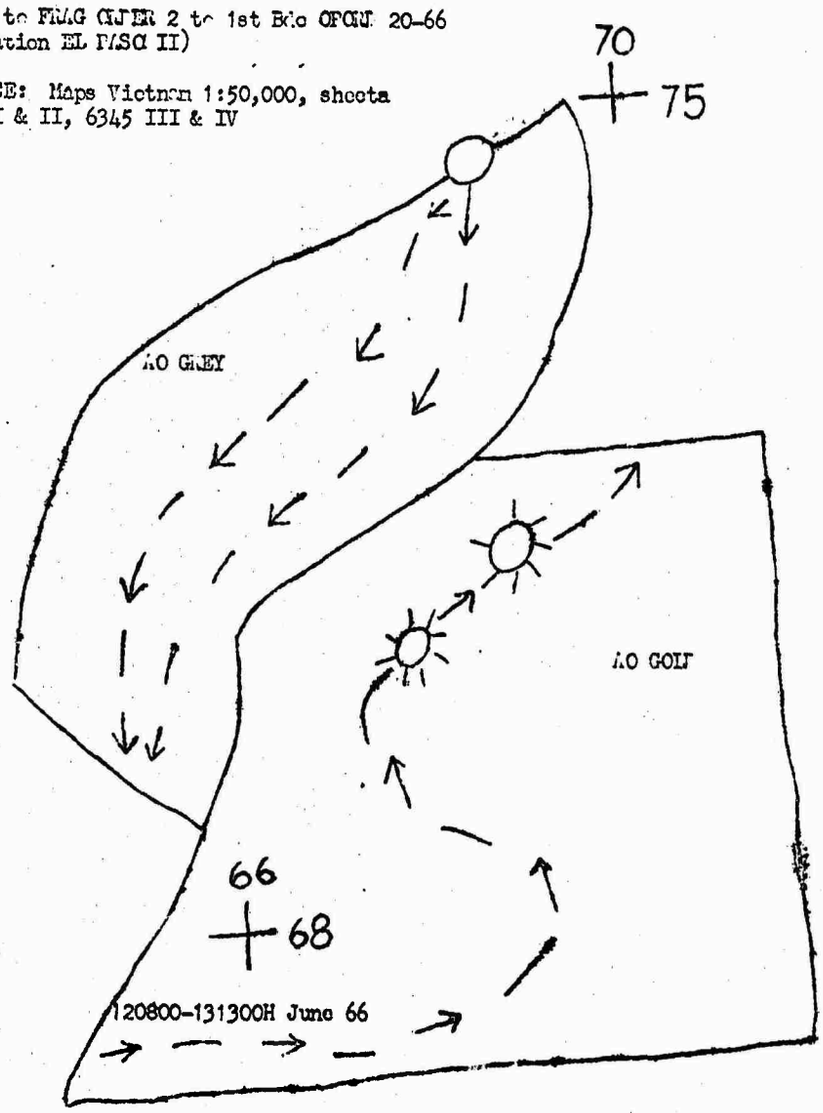
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MINH THANH (XT6367)
111515H June 1966
JHF-5

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Annex A to FRAG ORDER 2 to 1st Bde OPORD 20-66
(Operation EL PASO II)

REFERENCE: Maps Vietnam 1:50,000, sheets 6245 I & II, 6345 III & IV



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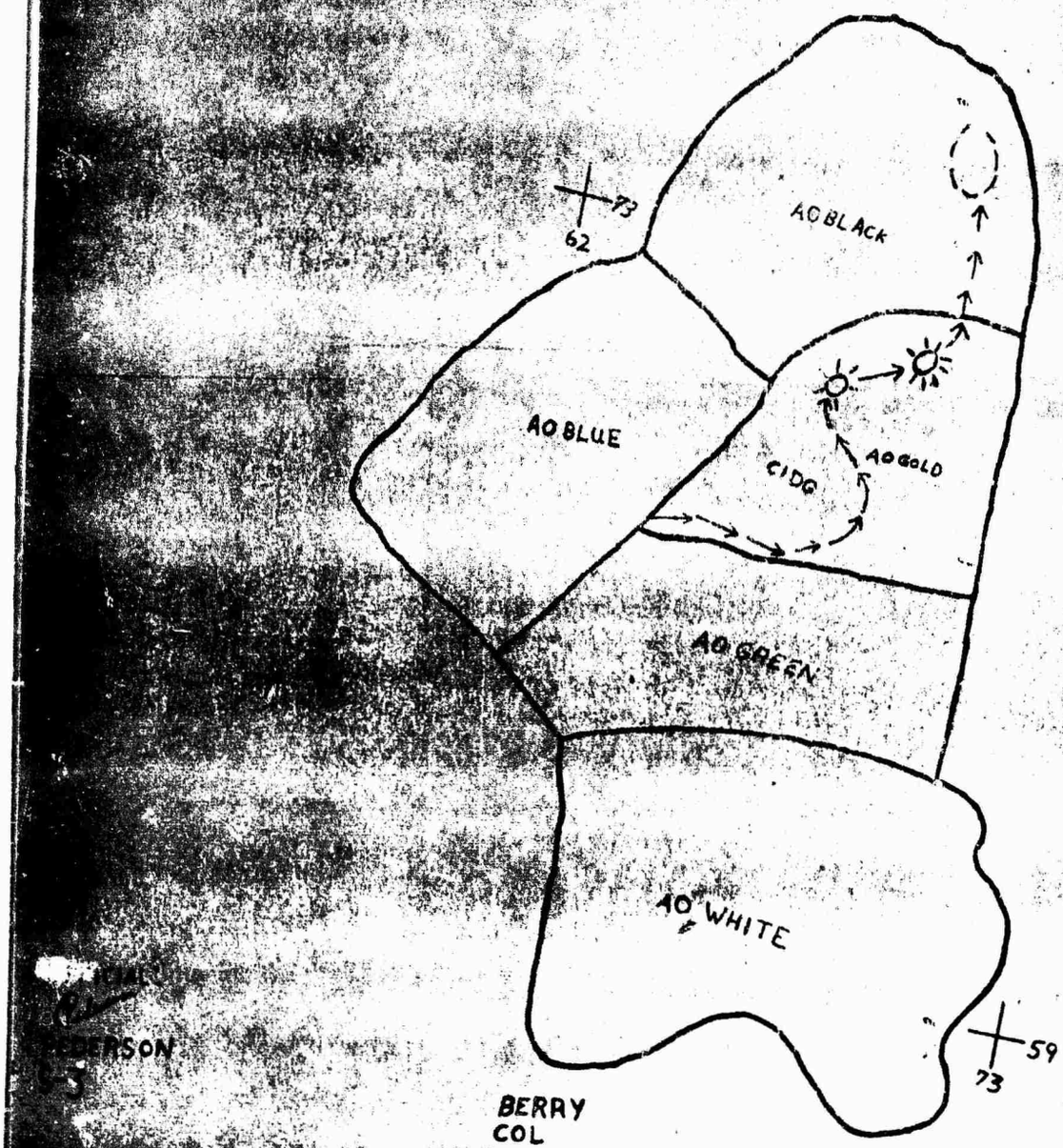
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ANNEX (MAP) TO OPORD 20-66 (OPERATION EL PASO II)
REFERENCE: MAPS VIETNAM 1:50,000 SHEETS
6245 I & II, 6345 III & IV

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MINH THANH (XT6367)
121500H JUNE 1966
JHP-5



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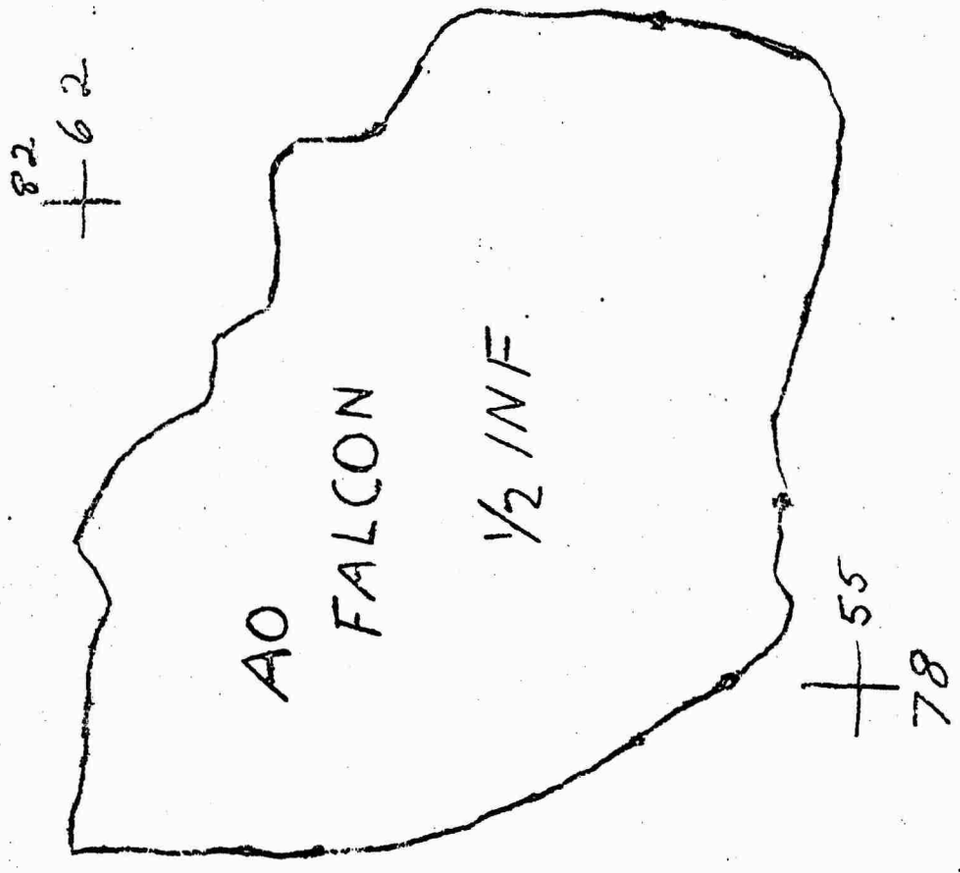
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MINH THANH (XT6367)
161600H June 1966
JHF-7

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Annex B (Op Overlay) to FRAG ORDER 6 to OPORD 20-66 (Operation EL PASO II)

REFERENCE: Maps Vietnam 1:50,000 sheets 6245 I & II, 6345 III & IV



ACKNOWLEDGE:

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Inclosure 5.

AFTER-ACTION REPORT - EL PASO II

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BATTLE OF SUOI LAP

9 July 1966

1st Brigade Task Organization

HHC, 1st Bde

1/16 Inf

1/18 Inf

1/28 Inf

2/2 Inf

1/4 Cav (-)

B 1/2 Inf

1/5 Arty (-)

B/6 Arty

C 2/33 Arty

ARVN APC Troop

2. Units locations during the attack as shown in sketch #1.

3. Sequence of events prior to, during and after the attack:

a. MISSION: 1st Bde positions forces, conducts a reconnaissance in force to lure VC forces into ambush/attack this force enabling 1st Bde to destroy VC force by offensive action.

b. Preparations FOR THE ATTACK: Preparation for the attack commenced on 7 July when 2/2 Inf began infiltrating to MINH THANH and two forward artillery bases were established south of AN LOC.

c. THE ATTACK: At 090625H, 1/18 Inf commenced movement to vic S-5 (XT 641705) and 2/2 Inf commenced move to vic S-11 (XT660694). During the movement along route, numerous sightings of VC were reported by Airborne FAC's and observers. At 0927H, Bde CO informed all elements that an attack was imminent. Airstrikes were called in and continued to support the move and shifted along the route between TOM (XT6673) and Cp 6. A squad of VC were reported vic XT663736 and an airstrike with napalm was placed on target. At 1103H, 1/4 Cav (-) reported 4 VC crossing road to their front vic CP6 (XT082743). Reconnaissance by fire involving heavy mortar, AW, and RR fire and at 1110H 1/4 Cav (-) reported being under attack from both sides of road. These fires were met by return fire from 1/4 Cav's organic weapons plus airstrikes from ARA. Suppressive fires from Armed CH47 and artillery were also used. 1/18 began moving toward the battle area to strike the right (South) flank of the VC positions. 2/2 Inf moved by foot to LZ S4 (XT680713) so as to be in position to attack the rear of the VC position. As the battle continued, 1/28 Inf was helilifted to position ND (XT689755) at 1120. Arty and air continued to hit both sides of the road and prep the 1/28 LZ. At 1235H, the VC force was estimated to be elements of 3 VC regiments. The fire fight continued throughout the movement of 1/28 Inf and airstrikes and artillery were placed on known and suspected VC locations and escape routes. Upon completion of 1/28 move, at 1410H 1/16 was airlifted into LZ NC (XT 676788). During the 1/16 assault, the attached ARVN APC Troop moved from Arty

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base 2 to AN LOC, loaded badly needed ammunition for 1/4 Cav and moved to position HANK (XT7480) then Psn DICK (XT6874). 1/16 closed LZ NC and moved to occupy Psn N5 (XT644766). At 1359H, 1/28 Inf reported engaging VC vic XT675742 and reported killing 85VC (BC) and 6 VCC, and continued to sweep west and south. The contact along the route decreased and it appeared the VC were starting their withdrawal. 2. Inf moved from psn vic X4 and was lifted into LZ NC. At 1555H, 1/18 made contact with a delaying VC force 800 meters northeast of psn TOM. Unit continued to push through the VC position which consisted of bunkers and trenches and reported killin 12 VC during the encounter. Artillery and airstrikes continued to be called on routes of withdrawal and suspected VC locations. During the enemy engagement 32 ai strikes were conducted in support which consisted of approximately 96 sorties. All airstrikes and artillery fire were highly effective and devasting.

3. SUMMARY OF ENEMY FORCES: Based upon interrogation of VC wounded and documents captured and found on dead VC, identified the 272 regt. The estimated streng of the VC force wae 2070 personnel.

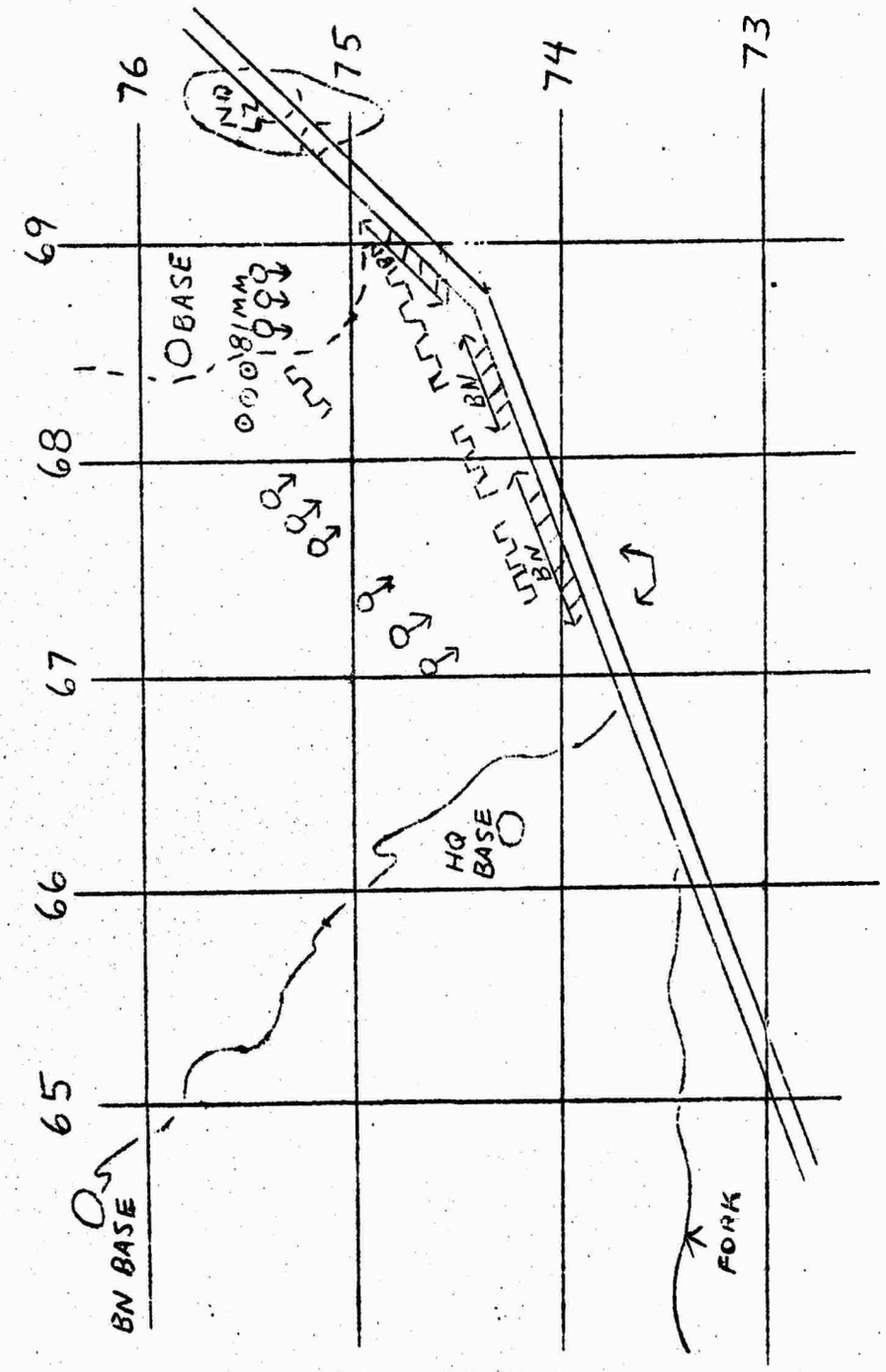
4. SUMMARY OF ENEMY LOSSES: During the engagement the VC had 238 KIA (BC), 1 VCC and 300 estimated KIA. Equipment lossee were as follows: 44 small arms weapon 13 crew served weapons, 10,513 rounds of small arms ammo, 177 grenades and 36 rds o large caliber explosive ordnance. The estimate of VC KIA's based upon the evaluati of routes, interrogation, blood trails, local and agent reports.

5. FRIENDLY LOSSES: A total of 22 KHA, 113 WHA and 3 DOW resulted from the engagement. Friendly equipment damaged included 1 M48A3 tank, 3 M113 APC's 1 CH47 Armed GO GO, and 1 UHID helicopter. Equipment destroyed: 4 M113 APC'e and 11 M14 rifles.

Inclosure 4 to After Action Report (EL PASO II)

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BATTLE OF SUOI LAP



CIVIL AFFAIRS/PSYCHOLOGICAL OPERATIONS

(Operation EL PASO II)

1. (C) General: During Operation EL PASO II a field team of the 246th Psychological Operations Company, in coordination with the Brigade S-5, supported the operation. Civic Action activities were limited to a great extent, due to the lack of transportation, interpreters, and the nature of the operation.

2. (C) Accomplishments:

a. Civic Actions:

(1) Villages along the road between QUAN LOI and AN LOC were visited to locate possible areas for Civic Actions and/or MEDCAP activities. This area was determined to be well-developed and the population appeared to be in good health. Candies and some foodstuff were distributed among the children.

(2) Brigade Surgeon conducted MEDCAP operations on 15 and 24 June, treating 143 RVN patients.

(3) Other Civil Affairs Activities:

(a) The Brigade S-5 provided 1760 pounds of rice on 17 June to the Special Forces Detachment 332 for further distribution to needy families.

(b) On 19 June the Brigade Catholic Chaplain held mass in the MINH THANH Catholic Church for 40 parishioners. Rosaries were given to all in attendance. 440 pounds of rice was given to the Catholic priest for needy parishioners. Negotiations were made to hire 50 civilian laborers each day to assist in clearing fields of fire, cutting grass, etc.

(c) Milk was provided to an infant whose mother was wounded by mortar fire and evacuated on 17 June.

(d) CA officer coordinated with Buddhist leaders on 22 June in MINH THANH and arranged for the supply of material for necessary repairs in RAGO DA. Also donated 150 pieces of clothing to be distributed to needy families.

(e) Presented school official at MINH THANH with sample material and student kits.

(f) On 25 June CA Section presented MINH THANH Village officials three (3) metal gates constructed by D/701 Maint Co.

(g) On 26 June CA Section provided 10 sheets of tin to a family for the repair of a house partially destroyed by mortar fire.

b. Psy Ops Activities: A total of 340,000 leaflets were dropped during the period 8-10 June 1966 and 480,000 leaflets were dropped between 24 and 26 June 1966 in support of the 1st Brigade.

(1) Sum ary of leaflets by theme:

(a) Safe conduct passes.

(b) Reward for information.

(c) CHIEU HOI appeals.

(d) Deception leaflets (Route 13 is open).

(e) US and ARVN power.

(f) Surrender instructions.

(2) Loudspeaker operations over combat areas: VC defeat and inevitable victory for the GVN and their allies was the theme of surrender instructions.

Inclosure 6

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3. (C) Problem Areas: a. The field team's of the 246th Psy Ops Co support of the 1st Brigade was limited because the 3/4 ton truck assigned to this element was not taken into the area of operations. The truck contains loudspeaker, tape recorder, and other psy ops facilities needed in the field operations. The vehicle also serves as a means of transportation to support Civic Actions activites.

b. Interpreter coverage for this operation was inadequate.

c. Exploitation of MEDCAP: Greater benefits from MEDCAP could be derived by more detailed planning, and adequate transportation to support leaflet drops, loudspeaker operations, and other CA activities.

4. (C) Recommendations: It is recommended that the following actions be taken:

a. That the 3/4 ton truck assigned to the Psy Ops Team supporting the 1st Bde be taken on future operations.

b. That an interpreter be made available to the Psy Ops Team and MEDCAP personnel.

ANNEX O

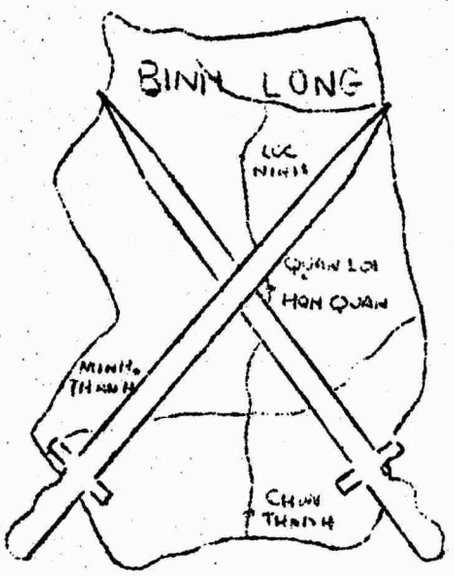
AFTER ACTION REPORT 2D BDE

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COMBAT AFTER ACTION REPORT



OPERATION ELPASO III

13 JULY - 24 AUG

2ND BRIGADE
1ST INF DIV

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DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
HEADQUARTERS 2D BRIGADE 1ST INFANTRY DIVISION
APO US FORCES 96345

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AVID-AMP 16 September 1966

SUBJECT: Combat After Action Report (MACV/RCS/J3/32)
(Operation EL PASO III) (U)

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. (U) NAME AND TYPE OF OPERATION: Operation EL PASOIII, Brigade Search and Destroy Operation.

2. (U) DATES OF OPERATIONS: 130700 July - 241305 August 1966.

3. (C) GENERAL: Operation EL PASO III was initiated by Headquarters, 1st Infantry Division FRAG O 65-66 dated 111400H Jul 1966. The original plan called for Brigade Headquarters to control from 1 to 5 battalions depending on the requirement and VC activity in the BINH LONG Province. The 2d Bde received verbal instructions to move to QUAN LOI at 110610H July 1966. The unit commenced its airlift from BEARCAT Airstrip at 120805H July 1966 and took over operational control of all units at 130700H July 1966, assuming responsibility for the defense of the AN LOC/QUAN LOI/MINH THANH areas. The Bde closed QUAN LOI at 151600H July 1966. 2d Bde OPORD 13-66 (EL PASO III) (U) issued 111200H July 1966 gave the Bde the mission of securing QUAN LOI Base and conducting combat operations in LOC NINH - HON QUAN - QUAN LOI and MINH THANH areas. Operating under this OPORD, the Bde moved to QUAN LOI, assumed responsibility of 1st Bde operations and initiated combat operations to destroy VC forces, facilities and bases in zones of operation. The Bde relinquished responsibility for the defense of MINH THANH and assumed responsibility for the defense of LOC NINH on 15 July 1966. On 151200H July 1966, 2d Bde OPLAN 14-66 (Operation PEGASUS) (U) was published for the reinforcement of units in the 2d Bde under attack at AN LOC/QUAN LOI/LOC NINH. The Bde continued the defense of assigned areas and on 180800H began operations under OPORD 15-66 (Operation UTE PASS/EL PASO III) (U). The operation entailed road clearing operations Hwy 13 from HON QUAN (XT7588) to vic TAN KHAI (XT7676) in close cooperation and coordination with GVN units to secure US/ARVN Engr Det repairing Hwy 13. At 181800H Operation UTE PASS/EL PASO III ended and the Bde continued with the defense of assigned sectors. On 220930 Opn SAN DIEGO/EL PASO III (U) commenced with ARVN elements and US forces conducting road clearing operations along Hwy 13 from HON QUAN (XT7588) to vic TAN KHAI (XT7676) and securing US/ARVN Engr Det repairing Hwy 13. Operations under OPORD 13-66 (EL PASO III) (U) continued with the Bde conducting extensive patrolling in the AN LOC/QUAN LOI/LOC NINH areas. On 020823H Aug 66, 2d Bde initiated operations under OPORD 17-66 (Operation CHEYENNE) (U) with the Bde in close coordination with 5th ARVN Div and BINH LONG Province Forces conducting offensive operations S of HON QUAN to locate and destroy VC forces and bases; to interdict VC communications or liaison routes, and to clear, repair, and secure Hwy 13 for the passage of ARVN convoys during the period 3-4 Aug 66. The Bde continued to secure HON QUAN/QUAN LOI/LOC NINH conducting extensive patrolling, road-runner operations, EAGLE FLIGHTS, night combat patrols and LRRP's. On 10 Aug 66 the Bde relinquished responsibility for securing LOC NINH. The Bde continued the defense of AN LOC/HON QUAN. On 24 Aug 66 the Bde commenced movement to PHU LOI to assume operational control of LAM SON operations.

DOWNGRADED AT 3 YEAR INTERVALS;
DECLASSIFIED AFTER 12 YEARS.
DOD DIR 5200.10

At 241055H a change of mission was given the 2d Bde and all elements were diverted to CAMP COX to prepare to conduct operations in support of Operation TOLEDO. The Bde ended Operation EL PASO III when the 1st Bde assumed responsibility for the defense of HON QUAN/QUAN LOI and units in that area came under their OPCON at 241305H.

Throughout Operation EL PASO III, the 2d Bde maintained a Rapid Reaction Force that could be employed in the event an element of the Bde made contact with a major VC force, to reinf[illegible] the defense of AN LOC/LOC NINH/MINH THANH or to reinforce ARVN elements conducting Special operations.

The operation was conducted in three phases. See paragraph 6. During the entire operation, 2d Bde elements were within Artillery range and received continuous artillery fire support. 2d Bde participation in Operation EL PASO III was conducted under 1st Infantry Division control.

a. Reporting Officer: Lt Col Sam S Walker, Commanding

b. Task Organization:

2/16 Inf: Lt Col W. S. Hathaway, Commanding
1/18 Inf: Lt Col W. S. Goodwin Jr, Commanding
2/18 Inf: Lt Col L. R. Baumann, Commanding
1/28 Inf: Lt Col R. L. Haldane, Commanding
1/4 Cav (-): Lt Col L. Lewane, Commanding
1/7 Arty: Lt Col C. Meek, Commanding
1/5 Arty: Lt Col D. Rogers, Commanding
8/6 Arty: Lt Col J. McGiffert, Commanding

c. Bde Troops:

128th Air Mobile Co (DS)
Det, Co B, 1st Engr Bn (DS)
2d Plat, Co B 121st Sig Bn (DS)
Team 2, 1st MI Det (DS)
HHC 2d Bde (-)

4. (C) INTELLIGENCE:

a. INTELLIGENCE PRIOR TO OPERATION:

Information prior to the operation was received from the G-2 1st Div and the S-2 1st Bde 1st Inf Div. It was estimated that the 9th VC Div Hq was located vic XT5789. Three Regts of this Div, the 271, 272, and 273 were believed to be in the operational area, however, they had been unlocated since the battle with the 1st Bde. The 101st NVA was also believed to be near the Cambodian Border vic XT5992. The 272d Regt was believed to be at less than 60% strength due to the sound defeat it suffered in early July 66. The 271 and 273 were also believed to be less than full strength due to prior battles in June. The actual status of the 101st NVA Regt was not known since it was believed to have been used to fill the other 3 Regts with replacements.

b. ENEMY SITUATION DURING THE OPERATION:

No major VC contacts occurred during the operation. All indications were that the 271, 272, and 273 Regts moved out of the operational area into rest areas to regroup and retrain. The only actual contact was believed to be with a company of the 101st NVA Regt when it attacked the village of AP LOC THANH vic XU7413 on 5 Aug 66. The remainder of the Regt was unlocated, however, no contact was made after extensive patrolling and reconnaissance.

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Other units identified in the area were local force units. They conducted acts of terror, propaganda, and tax collection. The major effort made by the VC was the interdicting of Hwy 13 between XT767760 and XT760690. Many road blocks were erected and two major bridges at XT767762 and XT766728 were destroyed. Tax collection was conducted throughout the area, especially along Hwy 13. No major effort was made by the VC to hinder the US road opening of Hwy 13 on 4 Aug 66. This would have been a logical plan of attack for the VC since the rice situation in the area had become critically short and the VC had kept the road closed. Since the VC did not hinder the convoy, it is believed that the major VC forces had moved out of the area and the VC was not in a position to conduct large scale attacks.

c. TERRAIN AND WEATHER:

The three major populated areas were surrounded by rubber plantations. Outside of these areas, the terrain consists of woods and jungle. LZ's are scattered throughout the area allowing fast deployment of heliborne operations. The jungle becomes very dense in the eastern portion of the operational area along the SONG BE River. To the west the jungle varies from sparse with secondary growth to very dense near the Cambodian Border. This area is covered with an extensive well used trail network moving out of Cambodia. The weather during the entire operation was generally the same. Early morning ground fog covered the area from 0700H until between 0930H and 1000H daily. Rain storms occurred about 3 to 5 days per week, usually in the late afternoon and early evening.

The major effect the weather had on operations concerned heliborne operations, USAF Air strikes, and visual reconnaissance. Most operations were delayed until mid morning when the fog lifted and permitted air operations.

Highway 13 is the major avenue of approach into the area. It is the only hard surface MSR leading into the operational area. The VC have attempted to keep this road closed to vehicular traffic and force the plantation to drop exports. The operation successfully opened this MSR and stopped the VC from the accomplishment of this mission. The SONG BE River is also a major avenue of approach, however, due to the dense jungle along the banks it did not appear to be in use by the VC.

d. FORTIFICATION: None reported of significance.

e. Civic Actions: During the course of Operation EL PASO III, Medical Civic Action Programs conducted throughout BINH LONG Province resulted in more than 1,200 treatments for Vietnamese and Montagnard personnel. In conjunction with these MEDCAPS, approximately 4 tons of food and 500 pounds of clothing were distributed. For the most part, the MEDCAP team was well received wherever they went. However, this welcome seemed more sincere in Montagnard villages. A great number of Vietnamese seemed reserved or distrustful of the US/GVN team, and were reluctant to give information, whereas the Montagnards, almost as a rule, talked quite freely. On one occasion, a Cordon and Search operation at AP TRA THANH, the good work of the Air Force MILPHAP team was impaired by several accusations of theft made by members of the hamlet against ARVN soldiers who had searched their homes. These charges could not be confirmed. The opening of Highway 13 for the rice convoy, and the attempts to keep this route open for use by the general public, did a great deal to create harmonious relations between US and GVN forces and the people of the province. C/A conclusions and recommendations follow:

(1) Conclusions:

(a) that the general attitude of most Vietnamese in the area is one of "watchful waiting".

(b) that the Montagnard population is more receptive to the US presence, and would be of great assistance.

(c) that many of the population of BINH LONG Province are in need of scheduled sick calls by qualified medical personnel (many personnel were unable to reach the Province Hospital for undetermined/varied reasons).

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(2) Recommendations:

(a) That more effort be expended to align the Montagnard population more firmly with US/GVN forces.

(b) That sufficient security be made available to CA officer of the unit in BINH LONG Province to enable both Air Force MILPHAP team and unit medical personnel to travel freely throughout the Province for scheduled sick calls.

(c) That US personnel exercise closer supervision of ARVN troops assisting in operations.

(d) That CA officer of any unit stationed in BINH LONG Province continue a vigorous program of MEDCAP's food distribution, and Civic Action projects.

f. Psychological Operations: During Operation EL PASO III, some 1,380,000 leaflets were dropped in the 2d Bde AO, and some 15 hours of loudspeaker missions were flown. As a result of those operations, four members of VC Co's A312, A306, and C45 took advantage of the Chieu Hoi Program. One of those returnees willingly made a tape-recording of a Chieu Hoi message addressed to members of his former unit, and the others refused due to professed concern for the welfare of their parents/families. Information received from these personnel is as follows:

(1) VC units cook between 0400-0600, 1100-1300, and 1600-1800 hours daily.
(2) VC continue to use force in many instances to recruit personnel.
(3) VC units suffer from lack of food, clothing, and medicine.
(4) VC units have a high rate of malaria.
(5) VC members strongly fear air-strikes and artillery fires, even though there are no indications that much more than harrassment is being done by H&I's. Three returnees stated that no members of their groups were killed by air or artillery, but that several were wounded.
(6) VC personnel have other fears, though to a lesser degree than fear of air or artillery. Some of those fears are:
  (a) Fear of malaria with no medicine.
  (b) Fear of death, and burial in an unmarked grave.
  (c) Fear for welfare of families.
  (d) Homesickness
  (e) Fear of starving
  (f) Fear of speaking freely among themselves.
(7) Some VC units do not pay their personnel. One returnee had never been paid.
(8) VC units are broken into three or four-man cells, and each member is afraid to discuss personal matters with the others for fear that one may be an informer.
(9) Leaflet and loudspeaker missions help, but wider coverage is necessary to insure that all VC become aware of the Chieu Hoi program.
(10) Colors which catch the eye should be used for leaflets. One returnee picked up a leaflet solely because of the color another because of the picture.
(11) Although VC leaders told new recruits that they will operate near their homes, this is seldom the case. The homesickness leaflet theme should be fully exploited.
(12) VC leaders tell the people that the chiefs (i.e. hamlet, village, District, etc) have too much power, and that this power should be in the hands of the people, but the people do not believe this. One returnee stated that VC propaganda "goes in one ear and out the other".
(13) Many members of VC units evidently want to return, but are supervised so closely that escape is virtually impossible. One Quy Chanh stated that he had been trying to escape for five months, another had been trying for three months.
(14) All returnees stated that while no overt attempts were made by their leaders to prevent their reading or holding leaflets they still felt subconscious fear of what might happen if leaflets were found in their possession.

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(15) All returnees stated that they had heard loudspeaker broadcasts. Two stated that the broadcasts helped them decide to return to GVN, a third stated that he had already made up his mind to return prior to hearing the broadcasts and that he didn't listen closely, the fourth stated that he had heard the broadcasts but didn't believe the theme (which was a general Chieu Hoi message) but rallied anyway.

(16) One returnee stated that her group was under orders to shoot at all U.S. aircraft while the others said that these orders emphasized Psy Ops aircraft. No attempt was made by the three units to drown out the messages from loudspeaker aircraft.

(17) One returnee stated that he was told by his leaders that the Americans were the aggressors, but that he didn't believe this. He further stated that once the VC were driven out of the country there would be peace, and that is what he wanted.

5. (C) MISSIONS:

a. 2 Bde deploys to QUAN LOI, relieves 1st Bde of responsibility of securing QUAN LOI Base, and conducts combat operations in LOC NINH/HAN QUAN/QUAN LOI/MINH THANH areas (12-13 July 66).

b. 2d Bde defends HAN QUAN/QUAN LOI/LOC NINH/MINH THANH areas and locates and destroys VC forces and installations. (13 July-24 Aug).

c. 2d Bde in close cooperation and coordination with GVN units, conducts road clearing operations along Hwy 13 from HON QUAN (XT7588) to vic TAN KHAI (XT7676); secures US/ARVN Engr Det repairing Hwy 13; covers withdrawl of US/ARVN Engr Det upon completion of operations (18-22 July).

d. 2d Bde in close coordination with 5th ARVN Div and BINH LONG Province Forces conducts offensive operations S of HON QUAN to locate and destroy VC forces and bases; to interdict VC communications/liaison routes, and to clear, repair and secure Hwy 13 for passage of ARVN convoy (2-4 Aug 66).

6. (C) CONCEPT OF OPERATIONS:

a. Maneuver: This operation was conducted in 3 phases as follows:

Phase I: a verbal order issued on 11 July, initiated this phase of Operation EL PASO III. On 12-13 July 66, Bde Headquarters moved to QUAN LOI by airlift and prepared to assume OPCON of units under 1st Bde control on 130700H July 66.

Phase II: On 130700H July 66, 2d Bde assumed operational control of 1/16 Inf, 2/16 Inf, 1/18 Inf, 2/18 Inf, 4/23 Inf, and 1/28 Inf, and relieved 1st Bde of missions in area of operations. Bde initiated combat operations to destroy VC forces, facilities, and bases in the QUAN LOI/HON QUAN/LOC NINH/MINH THANH areas.

Phase III: On 24 Aug Bde elements redeployed from operational area by air and returned to CAMP COX.

b. Fire Support: Fire support was provided by artillery, Tac Air and LIFT's. These were used for on call fires, and also to interdict VC concentrations and routes of withdrawl. The Bde was supported by a composite direct support artillery battalion, a 155mm/8" artillery battalion (-) in general support and the newly formed 1st Assault Artillery Battery (4.2 mortars). These units enabled the Bde to have continuous indirect fire support for all operations conducted. Extensive H&I programs were fired in the Bde operational areas. Whenever acft were available, the Bde maintained at least one helicopter fire team on stand by at the Bde CP or wherever it could best be utilized to support Bde elements. Additionally light fire teams were utilized to provide air cover for convoy moves and night recon flights using the Starlight Scopes. Upon attachment of D Troop 1/4 Cav the Aero Rifle Platoon and light fire teams were utilized extensively to support Bde operations furnishing column and aerial reconnaissance.

7. (C) EXECUTION:

a. Chronology:

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11 July - 2d Bde received verbal orders confirming move to QUAN LOI on 12 July to participate in Operation EL PASO III.

12 July - 2/16 Inf (-) remained attached to 3d Bde. The 1/18 Inf (-) continued under OPCON of Div. The 2/18 Inf (-) remained attached to the 1st Bde. The 4/23 Inf continued opns under OPLAN 9-66 (Opn UNIONTOWN). The 2d Bde Hqs and Btry B, 1/7 Arty commenced airlift from BEARCAT Airstrip at 120805H and as of 121700H a total of 13 lifts had closed QUAN LOI with 18 additional lifts required to close. The Bde had sufficient elements at QUAN LOI to allow full operations of the Bde Hqs.

13 July - At 130125H, Col De Witt C Smith, the 2d Bde CO, was stricken with what appeared to be a mild heart attack and was evacuated. Lt Col Herbert J. McChrystal CO of the 2/18 Inf, was immediately placed in command of the Bde. The 1/16 Inf and 2/18 Inf, both located at QUAN LOI, were attached to the 2d Bde effective 130700H. The 1/18 Inf at MINH THANH and the 1/4 Cav (-) at AN LOC were also attached to the Bde at 130700H. All attached units entered the Bde Cmd net at 130700H and the Bde entered the Div Cmd net and commenced Opn EL PASO III, as a 3&D operation: Remaining Bde support elements completed airlift opns into QUAN LOI at 131600H.

14 July - Bde continued Opn EL PASO III. The 1/16 Inf was detached from 2d Bde at 141630H and attached to 3d Bde at LAI KHE at approx 141700H. 2/16 Inf moved from LAI KHE and was attached to 2d Bde at 140921H. Bde continued to secure QUAN LOI with 1/28 Inf and 2/16 Inf; HON QUAN with 1/4 Cav (-) and MINH THANH with 1/18 Inf conducting daylight reconnaissance patrols and establishing 13 night combat patrols without contact. 2/16 Inf assumed the mission of Bde RRF.

15 July - Vigorous patrolling action was conducted by 2d Bde units in AO's without establishing contact. The 2/16 Inf and 1/28 Inf continued to secure QUAN LOI conducted daylight patrols to the N, NE, SW and NW and established 7 night combat patrols. The 1/18 Inf commenced airlift opns from MINH THANH to LOC NINH at 150855H and assumed responsibility for defense of LOC NINH at 151225H. 1/4 Cav (-) continued to secure HON QUAN - [illegible] and conducted daylight patrolling and local security opns at night. Operation EL PASO III, Ste D, continued in the HON QUAN/QUAN LOI/LOC NINH areas. Approx 80,000 leaflets of No 969 were dropped into an area bounded by coordinates XT6000, XT6087, XT6500, and XT6587.

16 July - The defense of QUAN LOI/HON QUAN/LOC NINH continued with units conducting extensive daylight and night combat patrols. The 2/16 Inf and 1/28 Inf continued to secure the QUAN LOI base and conducted 7 night combat patrols. 2/16 Inf conducted EAGLE FLIGHTS commencing at 160804H placing 4 platoons into 4 different LZ's. Patrols returned to base camp on foot without contact. The additional mission of securing the Engr work detail at the laterite pit (vicXT6186) was given the 2/16 Inf for indefinite period. 1/28 Inf conducted daylight patrols to the SSE, W, WNW without incident. 1/18 Inf continued to defend LOC NINH conducting 3 daylight and 3 reinforced squad size night combat patrols. At 161500H 5 VCs were apprehended by 1/18 vic XU723086. Interrogation showed 3 to be deserters from local SFC and were turned over to the SF. The remaining 2 suspects were turned over to the District Advisor. 1/4 Cav (-) continued to defend HON QUAN conducting an operation in coordination with 1/9 ARVN Inf ARC Troop into the rubber plantation 3-7km WSW of AN LOC without contact. At 161535H a plat of B Troop was dispatched to occupy and defend the high ground vic XT757899. During hours of darkness 3 combat patrols were established.

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17 July - Operation EL PASO III continued in the QUAN LOI/HON QUAN/LOC NINH areas. The 2/16 Inf and 1/28 Inf continued to secure QUAN LOI conducting 5 plat size daylight patrols to the N, E, SE, NW, and S without contact. During hours of darkness 7 combat patrols were established forward of the perimeter. 1/18 Inf secured LOC NINH conducting 3 plat size daylight patrols to the NE, E and W without enemy contact. Three combat patrols were established in the area during hours of darkness. 1/4 Cav (-) conducted 2 trp size patrols, consisting of elements from B 1/4 Cav, C 1/28 Inf and 3/1 Cav (ARVN) searching the area N & W of HON QUAN without enemy contact.

18 July - Bde continued to defend HON QUAN/QUAN LOI/LOC NINH and conducted operation UTE PASS/EL PASO XII S from HON QUAN along Hwy 13 to BM69 (XT765745) with negative contact. The operation consisted of two Task Forces, TF LEWAR composed of 1/4 Cav (-) and 2 Co's 2/16 Inf. TF HATHAWAY was composed of 2/16 Inf (-), 1 Co MP, US/ARVN Engr Det and 3/1 Cav (ARVN). Bde supporting troops were the 8/6 Arty (-), LIGHTHORSE Aslt Arty, 128th Automobile Co, 2d Plat 1st MP Co, 1/28 Inf (RRF) and 1/9 Inf (ARVN) (RRF). 1/18 Inf was placed on 30 minute alert to reinforce Operation UTE PASS/EL PASO III. The operation commenced at 180800H when TF LEWARE crossed the SP and moved S to secure Base I at 180907H. At 180900H, LIGHTHORSE Aslt Arty began lift into Base I closing at 180940. At 180938H, Base II was secured by TF LEWARE. At 181020H, LIGHTHORSE lift commenced bringing 2 plat Aslt Arty into Base II, and closed at 181046H. TF HATHAWAY closed and secured Base I and at 181225H began moving into Base II leaving 1 MP Co to secure Base I and LIGHTHORSE Aslt Arty. TF LEWARE continued to PL SUNSET without contact. Elements of TF LEWARE then started to move back N to secure route back to HON QUAN. LIGHTHORSE Aslt Arty was extracted from Base II at 181450H. Aslt Arty was then extracted from Base I and closed QUAN LOI. TF HATHAWAY moved back North from Base II picking up ARVN elements at Base I and moving N to RP in HON QUAN where ARVN elements were released. All elements of 2/16 Inf closed QUAN LOI at 181600H. TF LEWARE followed TF HATHAWAY and closed HON QUAN at 181740H. 1/18 Inf defended LOC NINH conducting aggressive daylight recon patrols and establishing 3 night combat patrols. At 181130H, 2 VCs were apprehended vic XU707007. During hours of darkness 2/16 Inf and 1/28 Inf conducted 6 combat patrols in the QUAN LOI area. 1/4 Cav (-) established 9 LP's in HON QUAN area during hours of darkness. At 181730H, an airstrike was called in by a 2d Bde FAC on 3 ox carts vic XT577837 resulting in 2 ox carts destroyed.

19 July - Opn EL PASO III continued with the Bde defending QUAN LOI/HON QUAN/LOC NINH areas. 2/16 Inf and 1/28 Inf continued to defend QUAN LOI with 2/16 conducting 1 Co size S&D operation to the NE and 1/28 Inf conducting 2 plat size patrols to the SE & W of QUAN LOI without contact. 6 night combat patrols were established forward of the perimeter. 1/18 Inf continued to defend LOC NINH conducting 1 Co size S&D to the W and 2 platoon size patrols to the SE and W. The units conducted 3 night combat patrols. 1/4 Cav (-) continued to defend HON QUAN with B and C Trp and C 2/16 Inf conducting mounted recon patrols in the area NE & SE of HON QUAN. One LP and 1 plat size combat patrol were established during hours of darkness. Although no contact was made with VC forces during the day, one report of two VC platoons in the vic of AP DUC VINH village (XT759603) was received through ARVN sources and unsuccessful attempts were made by elements of the 1/4 Cav (-) to locate these forces.

20 July - Bde continued to defend HON QUAN/QUAN LOI/LOC NINH. Opn SAN DIEGO/EL PASO III, a road clearing operation S along Hwy 13, commenced with elements of the Bde moving from QUAN LOI at 200615H. Elements were in position at HON QUAN and the SP to begin operation, when a series of holds placed on the operation due to below marginal weather resulted in the opn being cancelled at 200930H. 2/16 Inf moved back to QUAN LOI, defended assigned sector of QUAN LOI perimeter, conducted counter attack plan to reinforce HON QUAN in event of attack and established 4 night combat patrols in sector. The 1/28 Inf defended the entire QUAN LOI perimeter until 201730H when 2/16 returned to sector. 1/18 Inf continued to defend LOC NINH conducting 3 daylight operations. 1 plat size patrol was conducted to the W, 1 company size S&D in conjunction with ARVN elements to the N linking up and moving back S along Hwy 13 to LOC NINH. During hours of darkness, 5 combat patrols were established in the LOC NINH area. 1/4 Cav (-) after cancellation of Opn SAN DIEGO/EL PASO III conducted training exercises to the W of HON QUAN

with B Trp and to the N with C Trp without contact. Between 0025H to 200240H, 1/4 Cav (-) reported sporadic movements to the front. A patrol was dispatched in addition to the 3 night combat patrols already out. One of these patrols became engaged for a short time resulting in one US WIA. Another man was injured not as a result of hostile action; both required med-evac.

21 July - Bde continued Opn EL PASO III by conducting extensive S&D opns in the QUAN LOI/HON QUAN/LOC NINH areas. 2/16 Inf conducted 3 company size S&D opns to the E and S of QUAN LOI without contact and established 4 combat patrols during hours of darkness. 1/28 Inf (-) continued to defend QUAN LOI conducting local security opns during the day and establishing 3 combat patrols during hours of darkness. 1/18 Inf continued to defend LOC NINH conducting 1 Co size S&D opn to the SSE which was extracted by helicopter. During the opn B Co located what appeared to be some type of VC construction consisting of punji stakes and several 18' in diameter by 10' deep holes vic XU755061. Two plat size opns were conducted by 1/18 Inf to the N and W of LOC NINH without contact. During hours of darkness 4 combat patrols were established. 1/4 Cav (-) defended HON QUAN and conducted a S&D opn to the W of HON QUAN utilizing attached Inf Co while the Sqdn conducted maintenance. At 211040H a plat size recon patrol was dispatched to vic XT699901 to check on damage to a bridge by earlier opns.

22 July - Bde continued to defend QUAN LOI/HON QUAN/LOC NINH and conducted opn SAN DIEGO/EL PASO III in coordination with GVN units to clear Hwy 13 from HON QUAN (XT7588) S to vic TAN KHAI (XT7676), secure US/ARVN Engr Det repairing Hwy 13, and cover withdrawal of US/ARVN Engr Det upon completion of operation. The opn consisted of two task forces, LEWANE and HATHAWAY. TF LEWANE was composed of 1/4 Cav (-), A & C Co of 2/16 Inf(-), US/ARVN Engr Det, 1 Co 1/9 Inf (ARVN), 3/1 Cav (ARVN) and MEDCAP Team. Bde supporting trps were the 8/6 Arty (-), LIGHTHORSE Aslt Arty, B Btry 1/7 Arty, 128th Airmobile Co, and 2d Plat, 1st MP Co. Rapid Reaction Forces were 1/28 Inf (US), 1/18 Inf (US), and 1/9 Inf (ARVN). The opn commenced at 220930H when TF LEWANE elements crossed the SP. Elements of TF LEWANE continued to move S along Hwy 13 securing Base I at 221007H without contact. TF HATHAWAY moved behind TF LEWANE, passed thru Base I and moved behind C 1/4 Cav to secure Base II at 221019H. At 221027H, both Base I and Base II were secured by TF HATHAWAY. At 221044H L/H commenced lift into Base II closing at 221130H. Lift of L/H into Base I commenced at 221156H and was completed at 221236H. TF LEWANE continued moving S and secured LINE LONDON. Engr elements arrived at bridge location at 221307H and began repair work. At 221318H, TF LEWANE was instructed to dispatch a patrol to locate 1 US MIA from an earlier opn. At 221454 mission was completed with remains being recovered and identified. TF LEWANE continued to secure bridge site for Engr elements and TF HATHAWAY to secure Base I, Base II and B 1/7 Arty at XT778822 without contact. Engr elements completed mission at 221630H and TF LEWANE and HATHAWAY commenced to move back N along Hwy 13. At 221519H extraction of L/H from Base II began and was completed at 221600H. Extraction from Base I began 221649H and was completed at 221724H. B 1/7 Arty began moving at 221800H and closed QUAN LOI at 221835H. TF HATHAWAY released ARVN elements at HON QUAN at 221820H and closed QUAN LOI at 221915H. TF LEWANE arrived at CP 48 vic coords XT763807 where 1 VCS was apprehended by C 1/4 Cav at 221711H. At 221842H, all elements of TF LEWANE closed HON QUAN without further contact. 1/28 Inf defended QUAN LOI perimeter until return of 2/16 Inf. During hours of darkness 2/16 Inf and 1/28 Inf defended assigned sectors of QUAN LOI perimeter and established 6 combat patrols. 1/18 Inf defended LOC NINH conducting 3 daylight patrols to the W, S, & E. Co A moved out and RON vic XU759071 and established a patrol base and conducted opns. During hours of darkness 5 combat patrols were established. In conjunction with SAN DIEGO/EL PASO III, a MEDCAP was held at TAN KHAI (XT765775). 150 personnel were treated, 100 bars of soap and an estimated 200 flag T-shirts & black shorts were issued.

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23 July - The Bde continued Opn EL PASO III defending HON QUAN/QUAN LOI/ LOC NINH with minor enemy contact. Both the 2/16 Inf and the 1/28 Inf observed movement forward of the QUAN LOI perimeter during the early morning hours of 23 July. At 230145H, 2/16 Inf reported an incoming rifle grenade exploded vic XT823906 in the Co C defense area and at 230225H, the unit fired on movement to the front of the unit. Wire lines to Co A were discovered cut at 230220H vic XT822912. The 1/28 Inf B Co patrol fired on suspected VC forward of their position at 230112H. The patrol re-located itself approx 200 meters N of old psn and continued hearing movement to the front until 230200H. 1/28 Inf and 2/16 Inf continued to secure QUAN LOI with 2/16 conducting a plat size patrol to the E and 1 Inf/Cav team patrol to the SE. 1/28 Inf conducted 1 company size patrol W of QUAN LOI. Co C 1/28 Inf was relieved by 1/4 Cav (-). During hours of darkness 1/28 Inf and 2/16 Inf conducted 7 combat patrols. 1/18 Inf continued defending LOC NINH conducting 1 plat size patrol to the NW. Co A departed its RON psn at 230500H and conducted a village search in conjunction with ARVN troops. The company returned to LOC NINH at 231446H without any incidents. During hours of darkness 3 combat patrols were established. 1/4 Cav (-) continued to defend HON QUAN conducting a recon to the South. At 231510H, the patrol spotted 4-5 VC moving N vic XT714833, however, they managed to evade US attempts to capture them. During hours of darkness 7 combat patrols were established. The MEDCAP Team treated 125-150 personnel in HINH THANH (XU769087) village. The US AID Team distributed approx 1,500 lbs of various items in AP NINH THANH in conjunction with the MEDCAP Team.

24 July - 2d Bde continued to defend HON QUAN/QUAN LOI/LOC NINH. The 2/16 Inf and 1/28 Inf continued to defend QUAN LOI with 2/16 Inf conducting 2 recon patrols to the E and S without contact. 1/28 Inf rehearsed Opn SMASHER II to reinforce HON QUAN in event of attack. Elements closed QUAN LOI without incident. At 241233H a patrol was sent out by the Bn to check out area that firing was reported vic XT775828 with negative results. During hours of darkness 7 combat patrols were established in the QUAN LOI area. 1/18 Inf continued to defend LOC NINH with minor contact. 3 Platoon size daylight patrols were sent out to the NW, SE and ENE. C 1/18 apprehended 1 VCS at 241700H vic XT742088 and captured 1 plastic AP mine. 2 night combat patrols were established in the LOC NINH area. 1/4 Cav (-) defended HON QUAN with negative contact. At 240930 H the Cav (-) commenced rehearsal of their plan to support and reinforce QUAN LOI in the event it is attacked. 1 mounted daylight patrol was conducted N along Hwy 13 to the Golden Gate Bridge (XT722973). At 241446H 1 VCS was apprehended vic XT724969. Patrol closed HON QUAN without further incidents. 3 night combat patrols were dispatched forward of HON QUAN area.

25 July - Opn EL PASO III continued with Bde elements defending HON QUAN/ QUAN LOI/LOC NINH without contact. 2/16 Inf and 1/28 Inf continued to defend QUAN LOI with 2/16 Inf conducting 2 platoon size patrols to the NE and SE and 1/28 Inf (D Co) conducted a company size operation to the NW of QUAN LOI, establishing a patrol base, conducting patrols and returning to QUAN LOI. Co A 1/28 Inf conducted EAGLE FLIGHTS SE of QUAN LOI and established a patrol base vic XT869868. At 251004H a plat 1/4 Cav moved out and linked up with A Co 1/28 Inf with both elements returning at 251628H. 6 night combat patrols were established in the QUAN LOI area. 1/18 Inf continued the defense of LOC NINH, dispatching 3 platoon size recon patrols to the NE, E and W without contact. At 251315H, the Bn was alerted for possible movement to LAI KHE. 5 combat patrols were established during hours of darkness in the LOC NINH area. 1/4 Cav (-) continued to defend HON QUAN. At 250835H C 1/4 Cav and C 2/16 Inf escorted B 8/6 Arty from HON QUAN to a firing psn vic XT6991. Upon arrival at the psn at 251040H, C 2/16 secured the firing psn and C 1/4 Cav performed recon patrols to the N & W. At 251645H, units returned to HON QUAN without contact. Three combat patrols were positioned during hours of darkness.

with D Trp and to the N with C Trp without contact. Between 0025H to 200240H, 1/4 Cav (-) reported sporadic movements to the front. A patrol was dispatched in addition to the 3 night combat patrols already out. One of these patrols became engaged for a short time resulting in one US WIA. Another man was injured not as a result of hostile action; both required med-evac.

21 July - Bde continued Opn EL PASO III by conducting extensive S&D opns in the QUAN LOI/HON QUAN/LOC NINH areas. 2/16 Inf conducted 3 company size S&D opns to the E and S of QUAN LOI without contact and established 4 combat patrols during hours of darkness. 1/28 Inf (-) continued to defend QUAN LOI conducting local security opns during the day and establishing 3 combat patrols during hours of darkness. 1/18 Inf continued to defend LOC NINH conducting 1 Co size S&D opn to the SSE which was extracted by helicopter. During the opn B Co located what appeared to be some type of VC construction consisting of punji stakes and several 18' in diameter by 10' deep holes vic XU755061. Two plat size opns were conducted by 1/18 Inf to the N and W of LOC NINH without contact. During hours of darkness 4 combat patrols were established. 1/4 Cav (-) defended HON QUAN and conducted a S&D opn to the W of HON QUAN utilizing attached Inf Co while the Sqdn conducted maintenance. At 211040H a plat size recon patrol was dispatched to vic XT699901 to check on damage to a bridge by earlier opns.

22 July - Bde continued to defend QUAN LOI/HON QUAN/LOC NINH and conducted opn SAN DIEGO/EL PASO III in coordination with GVN units to clear Hwy 13 from HON QUAN (XT7588) S to vic TAN KHAI (XT7676), secure US/ARVN Engr Det repairing Hwy 13, and cover withdrawal of US/ARVN Engr Det upon completion of operation. The opn consisted of two task forces, LEWANE and HATHAWAY. TF LEWANE was composed of 1/4 Cav (-), A & C Co of 2/16 Inf(-), US/ARVN Engr Det, 1 Co 1/9 Inf (ARVN), 3/1 Cav (ARVN) and MEDCAP Team. Bde supporting trps were the 8/6 Arty (-), LIGHTHORSE Aslt Arty, B Btry 1/7 Arty, 128th Airmobile Co, and 2d Plat, 1st MP Co. Rapid Reaction Forces were 1/28 Inf (US), 1/18 Inf (US), and 1/9 Inf (ARVN). The opn commenced at 220930H when TF LEWANE elements crossed the SP. Elements of TF LEWANE continued to move S along Hwy 13 securing Base I at 221007H without contact. TF HATHAWAY moved behind TF LEWANE, passed thru Base I and moved behind C 1/4 Cav to secure Base II at 221019H. At 221027H, both Base I and Base II were secured by TF HATHAWAY. At 221044H L/H commenced lift into Base II closing at 221130H. Lift of L/H into Base I commenced at 221156H and was completed at 221236H. TF LEWANE continued moving S and secured LINE LONDON. Engr elements arrived at bridge location at 221307H and began repair work. At 221318H, TF LEWANE was instructed to dispatch a patrol to locate 1 US MIA from an earlier opn. At 221454 mission was completed with remains being recovered and identified. TF LEWANE continued to secure bridge site for Engr elements and TF HATHAWAY to secure Base I, Base II and B 1/7 Arty at XT778822 without contact. Engr elements completed mission at 221630H and TF LEWANE and HATHAWAY commenced to move back N along Hwy 13. At 221519H extraction of L/H from Base II began and was completed at 221600H. Extraction from Base I began 221649H and was completed at 221724H. B 1/7 Arty began moving at 221800H and closed QUAN LOI at 221835H. TF HATHAWAY released ARVN elements at HON QUAN at 221820H and closed QUAN LOI at 221915H. TF LEWANE arrived at CP 48 vic coords XT763807 where 1 VCS was apprehended by C 1/4 Cav at 221711H. At 221842H, all elements of TF LEWANE closed HON QUAN without further contact. 1/28 Inf defended QUAN LOI perimeter until return of 2/16 Inf. During hours of darkness 2/16 Inf and 1/28 Inf defended assigned sectors of QUAN LOI perimeter and established 6 combat patrols. 1/18 Inf defended LOC NINH conducting 3 daylight patrols to the W, S, & E. Co A moved out and RON vic XU759071 and established a patrol base and conducted opns. During hours of darkness 5 combat patrols were established. In conjunction with SAN DIEGO/EL PASO III, a MEDCAP was held at TAN KHAI (XT765775). 150 personnel were treated, 100 bars of soap and an estimated 200 flag T-shirts & black shorts were issued.

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29 July - Bde continued to defend HON QUAN/QUAN LOI/ LOC NINH with minor contact. 2/16 Inf (-) and 1/28 Inf continued to defend assigned sector of QUAN LOI defense perimeter conducting 6 night combat patrols without contact. 2/16 Inf (-) continued laterite pit security detail and conducted 2 plat size recon patrols to ESE and ENE without contact. A reinforced squad was sent to investigate the reported VC location vic XT832908 and on arrival found no indication of VC activity. 1/28 Inf conducted 2 company size patrols to the NW and S of QUAN LOI without contact. 1/18 Inf continued to defend LOC NINH conducting 4 squad size patrols to the W, NE, E, and S. A fifth patrol composed of the 1/18 recon plat and CIDG Co departed LOC NINH for an RON psn vic XU7810/8 without contact. 1/18 patrols apprehended 1 VCS vic XU707085 at 290900H and a second VCS vic XU762106 at 291019H. 1 patrol from Co B 1/18 discovered three hand grenades rigged as booby traps and attached to trees vic XU774078. Six combat patrols were positioned in the LOC NINH area during the night. 1/4 Cav (-) continued to defend HON QUAN/AN LOC conducting 2 mounted recon patrols to the W & SW of HON QUAN without enemy contact. A combined US/ARVN outpost located on hill 128 (XT757899) rec'd 5-6 rds of sniper fire from an unknown number of VC vic XT748895 and XT748904 at approx 291505H. The VC were engaged by both MG and Arty fire, with unknown results. Two combat patrols were dispatched for the night. The MEDCAP Team treated 40 persons in vic of the laterite pit (XT699843).

30 July - 2d Bde continued Opn EL PASO III defending HON QUAN/QUAN LOI/ LOC NINH without contact. At 301515H, Special Forces Camp HON QUAN, reported information received from 2 sources locating a VC plat vic XT722994, stopping trucks and lambrettas informing them they could pass 30 July but that the road would be closed on 31 July 66. At 301740H, 1 VCS was apprehended vic XT823914 without proper identification. 2/16 Inf (-) and 1/28 Inf continued to defend QUAN LOI with 2/16 Inf (-) conducting six squad size OP's and assuming responsibility for defense of entire QUAN LOI perimeter at 300620H. During hours of darkness, 2/16 Inf (-) conducted 6 combat patrols forward of the perimeter. 1/28 Inf continued to defend assigned sector of QUAN LOI perimeter until [illegible]. At 300630H Bn was alerted to move to LZ [illegible]. At 300645H the lift commenced with last elements clearing QUAN LOI at 300915H. 1/18 Inf continued to defend LOC NINH conducting 4 daylight reinforced squad recon patrols without contact. At 301300H, a LRRP was dropped into an LZ and moved to RON psn vic XU632078. The recon plat returned from a 2 day opn with CIDG Co having had negative contact. 1/18 established a 36 hour OP vic XU665095. 1/4 Cav (-) continued to defend HON QUAN/AN LOC conducting two daylight recon patrols trp size to the W, SW, and to the SSE with nog contact. 2 night combat patrols were established in the area during hours of darkness.

31 July - Bde continued Opn EL PASO III defending HON QUAN/QUAN LOI/ LOC NINH without contact. The 2/16 Inf (-) and 1/28 Inf continued to defend QUAN LOI perimeter conducting 6 night combat patrols during hours of darkness. 1/28 Inf returned to QUAN LOI at 311237 hrs and at 311515H assumed responsibility for its assigned sector of the defensive perimeter. 2/16 Inf (-) conducted 6 reinforced squad size recon patrols covering the area forward of the QUAN LOI defense perimeter for a distance of approx 1,500 m without contact. A LRRP consisting of US/CIDG personnel was airlifted into an LZ vic XT665814 at 311644H with an ETR of 1 Aug. 1/18 Inf continued to defend LOC NINH conducting four reinforced squad size recon patrols to the NW, W, NE, & E without enemy contact. The LRRP that RON W of LOC NINH on 30 July returned at 311610H without contact. 1/4 Cav (-) TF NEWMIE conducted a recon in clrng Hwy 13 to the [illegible] Bridge vic XT722973 without contact. During hours of darkness, two combat patrols were established in the area.

1 Aug - 2d Bde continued Opn EL PASO III defending HON QUAN/QUAN LOI/ LOC NINH with minor enemy contact. The 2/16 Inf (-) and 1/28 Inf continued to defend HON QUAN conducting 6 combat patrols during hours of darkness forward of the perimeter. 2/16 Inf (-) conducted 3 reinforced squad size combat patrols to the E without contact. The LRRP made contact with an estimated 10 VC vic XT665814 at 011955H. Estimate 1 VC KIA (prob), 1 VC WIA, 1 captured US carbine and 1 SA wpn unk type. The LRRP was extracted at 011454H without further contact. 1/28 Inf conducted two daylight reinforced squad size recon patrols to the W and S of QUAN LOI with nog contact.

1/28 Inf continued defend LOC HENH until extract. by airlift. At [illegible]2Z all elements of 1/18 minus trains were lifted to QUAN LOI closing by 011823 H. 1/H Asslt Arty commenced lift out of LOC HENH at 010825H and closed QUAN LOI at 011715H. B 2/33 Arty lift was completed at 011605H. 1/28 RON at QUAN LOI and conduct maintenance. 1/4 Cav (-) continued to defend HON QUAN/AN LOC with 1 Inf/Cav Team(2 plat size)conducting opns to the E to link up with 2/16 LRRP which was extracted. 2 combat patrols were established during hours of darkness forward of the perimeter.

2 Aug - 2d Bde continued Opn EL PASO III with the initiation of Opn CHEYENNE at 020023H with the movement of TF McGIFFERT through the SP and on the way to planned firing psns at BASE WHISKEY. At 020520H, TF LEWANE crossed the SP followed by TF HATHAWAY at 021010H. At 021053H, TF LEWANE encountered a command detonated claymore, suffering 1 KIA and 3 WIA. At 021231H, a second mine exploded vic XT768758 damaging one vehicle and wounding 2 men. By 021700H, TF HATHAWAY had established its planned RON psn vic CP 3 and patrols had been dispatched throughout the area. TF GOODWIN moved by vehicle to its selected RON psn vic CP 15. At 021755H L/H elements commenced lift into TF GOODWIN RON psn and closed at 021843H. TF LEWANE was located at its selected RON psn at Obj DELTA at 1910H. All elements conducted patrols and secured assigned A/O and Hwy 13. 1/28 Inf assumed responsibility for the QUAN LOI/HON QUAN defense area at 020700H. Co B was moved to HON QUAN/AN LOC and conducted local security ops establishing 1 night combat patrol and 5 LP's forward of the perimeter. In the QUAN LOI area, 1/28 Inf (-) conducted 2 daylight patrols to the S and N and established 3 night combat patrols forward of the perimeter, without contact. At 020945H, D Trp, 1/4 Cav gun team received AW fire vic XT715775 suffering no damages. During the day's operations 2 AP mines and 1 claymore mine were captured and destroyed.

3 Aug - 2d Bde continued Opn EL PASO III and Opn CHEYENNE. 1/28 Inf (-) continued to secure QUAN LOI base conducting 6 OP's fwd of base area and 3 night combat patrols without contact. B Co 1/28 Inf continued to secure HON QUAN/AN LOC conducting local security during daylight hours and 1 night combat patrol in the area during the hours of darkness without contact. At 030730 H, TF LEWANE started moving S to secure Hwy 13 toward Obj X-RAY. At 030724H, lift of L/H commenced from vic CP 15 to Obj DELTA. TF GOODWIN began moving by foot from CP 15 to Obj DELTA, closed and secured it at 031100H and began moving N to link-up with TF LEWANE which was moving S along Hwy 13. Elements of A 2/16 also began moving S from Obj X-RAY and at 031218H made a link-up with ARVN elements moving N along Hwy 13 from CHON THANH. At 031516H the road was open and usable and at approx 031615H, convoys from the S began entering the 2d Bde AO with last elements closing HON QUAN at 032025H. The convoy moved thru 2d Bde AO without incident. At 031400H A 2/16 Inf located 1 AT mine vic XT766685 and destroyed it. At 031410H A 2/16 suffered 1 US WIA as a result of enemy fire. TF GOODWIN at 030740H located and destroyed 1 AP mine vic XT765755. TF LEWANE located and destroyed 2 claymores vic XT766720 at 031040H, 1 AT mine vic XT765720 and 4 AP mines vic XT766719 at 031140H. All units continued to conduct patrols and secure Hwy 13 in assigned AO's. LFT in support of ops received AW fire vic XT751768 at 031605H. 2d LFT in support of Bde ops received 1 rd SA fire vic XT762758 at 031820H. Bde MI's manned a CP vic XT765821 without contact. D Trp 1/4 Cav placed under OPCON of Bde at 031355H conducted 1 lightning bug mission and 1 STARLIGHT mission.

4 Aug - 2d Bde continued Opn EL PASO III with the completion of Opn CHEYENNE convoy and road security elements commenced movement of resurfacing material at 040646H. By 040845, the 2 Bde's portion of Hwy 13 had been cleared and repaired sufficiently for the southbound convoy to begin moving. Lead elements of the convoy crossed the SP vic HON QUAN at 040910H. TF GOODWIN and TF HATHAWAY conducted Eagle Flights throughout their AO's returning at 041155H without enemy contact. At 041059H an estimated 6 VC were observed vic XT792792 and taken under fire by light fire team. At At 041410H, TF GOODWIN received SA fire from the vic XT770746, resulting in 1 US WIA. Fire continued sporadically until 041427H at which time a rifle grenade was fired into friendly psns without inflicting casualties. The area from which the SA fire and rifle grenade originated was taken under suppressive fire by gun ships which placed a heavy volume of fire, both machine gun and rockets, into the suspected enemy location.

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At 041451H, two 60mm rds were fired into friendly pers and both air strikes and arty were called for. Friendly air placed its ordnances on the area E of Hwy 13 (XT770746), and on completion of the air strikes, arty fire was delivered into the area. At 041522H the I/H atry commenced airlift from psn DELTA back to QUAN LOI, completing the movement at 041625H. Following the movement which was completed at 041625H, and using the same aircraft, TF GOODWIN began its air movement which was completed at 041720H. TF HATHAWAY commenced its move N along Hwy at 041735H and at 042007H made a coordinated move with TF McGIFFERT back to QUAN LOI. All convoy elements returned to 2d Bde AO without incident. TF LEWANE 1/4 Cav (-) commenced moving from 2d Bde AO at 041500H and upon leaving the Bde AO was detached from the 2d Bde. B Trp remained with the 2/16 Inf and returned to HON QUAN with one company of the 2/16 Inf (-). 1/28 Inf (-) continued to defend QUAN LOI conducting 5 night combat patrols in sector after 2/16 Inf's closure. 1/28 Inf positioned local security during the day at both QUAN LOI and HON QUAN. MEDCAP Team treated approx 150 personnel and gave approx 165 cholera shots in TAN KHAI (XT767770).

5 Aug - 2d Bde continued Opn EL PASO III defending HON QUAN/QUAN LOI/LOC NINH without contact. The 1/28 Inf, 1/18 Inf and 2/16 Inf (-) continued to defend QUAN LOI conducting 9 combat patrols fwd of perimeter during hours of darkness without contact. 2/16 Inf (-) defended assigned sector of QUAN LOI conducting 2 plat size daylight patrols to the W and N without contact. C 2/16 and B 1/4 Cav moved from HON QUAN/AN LOC to establish a fwd arty base vic XT 745932 to support LOC NINH. 1/18 Inf defended assigned sector of QUAN LOI conducting 3 daylight patrols to the W, NW, & N without contact. A LRRP was dropped in an AO vic Hwy 13, 5 km S of LOC NINH extending 3½ km S down Hwy 13 and 2 km on either side of Hwy 13. The patrol was dropped in at 051303H, and was extracted at 051749H. At 051340H, a VC body was found vic XU723016 and several SA rds were heard. A VCS was apprehended at 051725H vic XU732037. 1/28 Inf defended assigned sector of QUAN LOI and maintained on min alert status to move to LOC NINH. 1 LRRP was lifted into AO S of 1/18 Inf AO. At 051645H, 1 VC body was found vic XT7226 with expended cartridges near the body. 2/18 Inf defended LOC NINH upon closure. 2/18 was committed to LOC NINH when ARVN PF elements N of LOC NINH came under attack for the 2d night in a row. The Bn commenced its lift into LOC NINH at 051115H and closed at 051520H with trains to follow as lift became available. The Bn (-) defended LOC NINH airfield without contact. C 2/18 moved from LOC NINH to LZ vic XU742062 at 051341H and secured it and prepared to receive I/H plat. I/H lifted into its arty base vic XU742062 closing at 051630H. 2d Plat, 1st MP's conducted a CP vic XT785888 and 422 persons and 92 vehicles were checked. MEDCAP was conducted at Montagnard village near laterite pit (XT798844), treated 60 personnel, gave 60 children shirts, took 50 blood samples for malaria and distributed 200 lbs of miscellaneous canned foods.

6 Aug - Bde continued Opn EL PASO III defending HON QUAN/QUAN LOI/LOC NINH with 2/16 Inf (-), 1/18 Inf and 1/28 Inf continuing to defend QUAN LOI conducting 8 combat patrols during hours of darkness. 2/16 Inf (-) continued to defend assigned sector of QUAN LOI conducting 2 plat size recon patrols to the E and SE. 1 plat size EAGLE FLIGHT was conducted into an LZ vic XT857975. The patrol moved to PZ vic XT840945 returning to QUAN LOI without contact. Team Charlie (C 2/16 and B 1/4 Cav) continued to secure fwd arty base to the N of HON QUAN. Team Charlie conducted 3 night combat patrols in the vicinity. 1/18 Inf defended assigned sector of QUAN LOI perimeter conducting 3 plat size patrols to the W, NW & N. A patrol from C 1/18 apprehended 2 VCS vic XT810913 at 061100H and A 1/18 patrol took VCS vic XT785916 at 061300H. 1/18 Inf inserted 2, 5-7 man LRRP into an AO S of the CAM LE Bridge vic XT707953 and vic XT750966 without contact. 1/28 Inf continued to defend assigned sector of QUAN LOI perimeter conducting 2 plat size patrols S of perimeter and airlifting a 5-7 man LRRP into an AO N of the CAM LE Bridge vic XT740995 without contact. 2/18 Inf (-) continued to defend LOC NINH airfield conducting 2 night patrols fwd of the perimeter. C 2/18 continued to defend I/H element in its firing psn vic XU742062. 1 plat size patrol with an 11 man Engr detachment was airlifted into an AZ vic XU711190 at 061430H. The patrol reached the LZ at 061441H, secured it by 061450H and the Engr detachment then accomplished their cratering mission on Hwy 13 at that location. The element was extracted without incident.

At 041451H, two 60 mm rds were fired into friendly psns and both air strikes and arty were called for. Friendly air placed its ordnance on the area E of Hwy 13 (XT 770746), and on completion of the air strikes, arty fire was delivered into the area. At 041522H, the L/H arty commenced airlift from psn DELTA back to QUAN LOI, completing the movement at 041625H. Following the movement which was completed at 041625H, and using the same aircraft, TF GOODWIN began its air movement which was completed at 041720H. TF HATHAWAY commenced its move N along Hwy at 041735H and at 042007H, made a coordinated move with TF McGIFFERT back to QUAN LOI. All convoy elements returned to 2d Bde AO without incident. TF LEWANE 1/4 Cav (-) commenced moving from 2d Bde AO at 041500H and upon leaving the Bde AO was detached from the 2d Bde. B Trp remained with the 2/16 Inf and returned to HON QUAN with one company of the 2/16 Inf (-). 1/28 Inf (-) continued to defend QUAN LOI conducting 5 night combat patrols in sector after 2/16 Inf's closure. 1/28 Inf positioned local security during the day at both QUAN LOI and HON QUAN. MEDCAP Team treated approx 150 personnel and gave approx 165 cholera shots in TAN KHAI (XT767770).

5 Aug- 2d Bde continued Opn EL PASO III defending HON QUAN/QUAN LOI/ LOC NINH without contact. The 1/28 Inf, 1/18 Inf and 2/16 Inf (-) continued to defend QUAN LOI conducting 9 combat patrols fwd of perimeter during hours of darkness without contact. 2/16 Inf (-) defended assigned sector of QUAN LOI conducting 2 plat size daylight patrols to the W and N without contact. C 2/16 and B 1/4 Cav moved from HON QUAN/AN LOC to establish a fwd arty base vic XT745932 to support LOC NINH. 1/18 Inf defended assigned sector of QUAN LOI conducting 3 daylight patrols to the W, NW and N without contact. A LRRP was dropped in an AO vic Hwy 13, 5 km S of LOC NINH extending 3½ km S down Hwy 13 and 2 km on either side of Hwy 13. The patrol was dropped in at 051303H, and was extracted at 051749H. At 051340H, a VC body was found vic XU723016 and several SA rds were heard. A VCS was apprehended at 051725H vic XU732037. 1/28 Inf defended assigned sector of QUAN LOI and was maintained on 30 minute alert status to move to LOC NINH. 1 LRRP was lifted into AO S of 1/18 Inf AO. At 051645H, 1 VC body was found vic XT7226 with expended cartridges near the body. 2/16 Inf defended LOC NINH upon closure. 2/18 was committed to LOC NINH when ARVN PF elements N of LOC NINH came under attack for the 2d night in a row. The Bn commenced its lift into LOC NINH at 051115H and closed at 051520H with trains to follow as lift became available. The Bn (-) defended the LOC NINH airfield without contact. C 2/18 moved from LOC NINH to LZ vic XU742062 at 051341H and secured it and prepared to receive L/H platoon. L/H lifted into its arty base vic XU742062 closing at 051630H. 2d Plat, 1st MP's conducted a CP vic XT785888 and 422 persons and 92 vehicles were checked. MEDCAP was conducted at Montagnard village near laterite pit (XT798844), treated 60 personnel, gave 60 children shirts, took 50 blood samples for malaria and distributed 200 lbs of miscellaneous canned foods.

6 Aug - Bde continued Opn EL PASO III defending HON QUAN/QUAN LOI/ LOC NINH with 2/16 Inf (-), 1/18 Inf and 1/28 Inf continuing to defend QUAN LOI conducting 8 combat patrols during hours of darkness. 2/16 Inf (-) continued to defend assigned sector of QUAN LOI conducting 2 plat size recon patrols to the E and SE. 1 plat size EAGLE FLIGHT was conducted into an LZ vic XT857975. The patrol moved to a PZ vic XT840945 returning to QUAN LOI without contact. Team Charlie (C 2/16 and B 1/4 Cav) continued to secure fwd arty base to the N of HON QUAN. Tm Charlie conducted 3 night combat patrols in the vicinity. 1/18 Inf defended assigned sector of QUAN LOI perimeter conducting 3 plat size patrols to the W, NW & N. A patrol from C 1/18 apprehended 2 VCS vic XT810913 at 061100H and A 1/18 patrol picked up 1 VCS vic XT 785913 at 061300H. 1/18 Inf inserted 2, 5-7 man LRRP into an AO S of the CAM LE Bridge vic XT707953 and vic XT750966 without contact. 1/28 Inf continued to defend assigned sector of QUAN LOI perimeter conducting 2 plat size patrols S of perimeter and airlifting a 5-7 man LRRP into an AO N of the CAMLE Bridge vic XT740995 without contact. 2/18 (-) continued to defend LOC NINH airfield conducting 2 night combat patrols fwd of the perimeter. C 2/18 continued to defend L/H element in its firing psn vic XU742062. 1 plat size patrol with an 11 man Engr detachment was airlifted into an LZ vic YU711190 at 061430H. The patrol reached the LZ at 061441H, secured it by 061450H and the Engr detachment then accomplished their cratering mission on Hwy 13 at that location. The element was extracted without incident.

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7 Aug - 2d Bde continued Opn EL PASO III with 2/16 Inf (-), and 1/28 Inf continuing to defend assigned sectors of QUAN LOI conducting 9 night combat patrols fwd of the perimeter. 2/16 Inf (-) conducted 2 platoon size EAGLE FLIGHTS to an LZ NE of QUAN LOI. 1 platoon moved N approx 6 km and was extracted . 1 platoon moved by foot back to QUAN LOI from LZ. Three 5-7 man LRRP's were put into AO 2/16 approx 15 km SSW of QUAN LOI. Each patrol was dropped into different LZ's moved on designated routes and were extracted from 3 different LZ's. At 071150H 1 LRRP located 6 foxholes, 3 overhead shelters and some documents vic XT663828. Tm Charlie continued to defend D Btry 8/6 fwd arty base vic XT7492 conducting 2 daylight mounted recon patrols to the W and NW without contact. 1 element of Tm Charlie was dispatched to the W of the Arty base to check out a suspected VC location. 1/18 defended QUAN LOI area conducting 3 plat size recon patrols to the W and N. Three 5-7 man LRRPS were dispatched to an AO approx 20 km W of QUAN LOI. Units went into 3 different LZ's and were extracted from 3 different PZ's without contact. 1/18 Inf was alerted for movement back to CAMP COX. 1/28 Inf defended assigned sector of QUAN LOI conducting 2 company size opns to the S without contact. 2/16 Inf (-) continued to defend LOC NINH airfield in coordination with ARVN units. 2 plat size daylight patrols were conducted to the SE without contact. C 2/16 continued to secure the L/H in arty psn vic XU742062 without contact. At 071545H, the 1/18 S-2 flying VR of Bde AO received 1 rd SA fire vic XT763902 doing very minor damage to the aircraft. At 071625H, LRT received SA fire vic XT669944 fire was returned with unk results. The village of PHU MEMNG 2 (XT811927) was visited with an AF MILPHAP Team, Dr Yario, and assistants from 1/18 Inf. Security was provided by 1/18 and attached MP's. 120 personnel were treated, 120 cholera shots and 75 other shots for minor ailments were given. An excess of 200 lbs of canned milk and fruits were distributed.

8 Aug - 2d Bde continued Opn EL PASO III defending HON QUAN/QUAN LOI/ LOC NINH without contact. 2/16 Inf (-) continued to secure assigned sector of QUAN LOI and conducted 1 plat size patrol to the E. At 081252H unit was alerted to assume the defense of the entire perimeter on or about 9 Aug when 1/18 Inf and 1/28 Inf departed. 2/16 Inf sent out 3 night combat patrols foward of psns. 1/18 Inf commenced airlift opns to return to CAMP COX at 081010H; however, the opn was temporarily suspended at 081122H and all airlift diverted to early movement of the 1/28 Inf. At 081252H the Bn was ordered to assume responsibility for the 1/28 Inf portion of the QUAN LOI defense perimeter and relief in place was accomplished by 081536H. The Bn remained ready to re-initiate airlift opns upon completion of the 1/28 Inf movement. 3 night combat patrols were positioned in the area during the night. 1/28 Inf was alerted for movement to PHUOC VINH at 081122H. All planned opns were immediately cancelled and airlift opns commenced at 081253H. The airlift was completed at 081845H with a total of 31 sorties being flown by C-123, CH-47 and CV-2 aircraft. 2/16 Inf continued to defend the LOC NINH area and conducted one reinforced squad size patrol to the E. 3 combat patrols were emplaced during the night. Although there was no enemy contact with US troops in the area, at 082059H, a RF plat had contact with an estimated plat size VC force vic XU727035. A MEDCAP was conducted at AP HONG PHAP (XT859848) treating 100 persons, pulled 30 bad teeth, issued 150 hygiene kits, 150 T-shirts and 150 shorts. Approx 80,000 leaflets were dropped and a ½ hour Chieu Hoi Tape was played in an area [illegible] coordinates XT5890, XT6390, XT5886 and XT6386.

9 Aug - Bde continued Opn EL PASO III with minor contact. 2/16 Inf (-) continued to secure assigned sector of QUAN LOI perimeter and at 090942H assumed responsibility for the entire QUAN LOI perimeter. Tm Charlie sent 1 plat Cav to QUAN LOI to assist 2/16 Inf (-) in securing QUAN LOI. 3 LRRP's were dropped into AO 2/16 approx 25 km SW of QUAN LOI. LRRP will RON vic XT723783 and be extracted on 10 Aug. Team Charlie conducted a screen from the fwd arty base N on Hwy 13 to CAM LE Bridge with neg contact. 1/4 escorted Arty S of AN LOC that was supporting 2/16 LRRP's. At 091400H Team Charlie (-) displaced from fwd arty base N of AN LOC and returned to HON QUAN/AN LOC and assumed responsibility for its sety. 3 night combat patrols were established fwd of Tm Charlie psns. 2/16 Inf (-) in QUAN LOI established 3 night combat patrols. 1/18 Inf RON at QUAN LOI defending assigned sector of perimeter until 090942H. At 091000H Bn commenced moving to CAMP COX with combat elements closing at [illegible]. Tm trains were moved later.

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[illegible] assumed UNITONTOWN, ELDORADO missions at LONG BIN[illegible] ending in vic at 091635H. 2/18 Inf (-) continued to secure LOC NINH airfield conducting 2 squad size recon patrols to the E with nog contact. Co C 2/18 Inf and L/H reinforced to operate S of LOC NINH from arty base. 2 night combat [illegible] were established in the area during hours of darkness.

10 Aug - 2d Bde continued Opn EL PASO III conducting patrols and reconditioning units. The 2/16 Inf patrolled N and E of QUAN LOI with HHC 2d Bde sending a patrol to the W. Plat of B 1/4 Cav was detached from 2/16 Inf (-) at 101350H and returned to AN LOC. 4 night combat patrols were established fwd of the QUAN LOI perimeter. 2/18 Inf conducted 3 squad size recon patrols to the S & E of LOC NINH without contact. C 2/18 and L/H aslt arty were airlifted from LOC NINH to QUAN LOI closing at 1150H. The Bn (-) commenced its move using UH-1D's at 102103H. Upon closure at QUAN LOI the Bn assumed responsibility for the W sector of the defense perimeter. MEDCAP's were conducted at APHUNG LAP (XT876862) and APHUNG YEN (XT870862). A total of 140 persons received medical treatment, and 36 dental treatments were also performed. The team issued 34 school kits, 250 flag T-shirts, 250 black shorts, 100 hygiene kits, and 400 bars of soap.

11 Aug - 2d Bde continued Opn EL PASO III with 2 Inf Bns and a Cav Trp. 2/16 Inf (-) conducted reinforced squad size patrols N and NE of QUAN LOI. A third patrol was inserted by helicopter into an LZ 6,000 meters NE of QUAN LOI closing at 111640H without contact. 3 combat patrols were positioned in sector during hours of darkness. Tm Charlie conducted mounted recon patrols N and S along Hwy 13 from AN LOC during the day without contact. During the hours of darkness 2 combat patrols were conducted by Tm Charlie. 2/18 Inf closed QUAN LOI at 110700H and immediately assumed its portion of the Bde defensive perimeter. During the day the Bn improved defensive positions and conducted local security opns in zone. 3 combat patrols were positioned in sector during hours of darkness. A Chiou Hoi tape was broadcasted along Hwy 13 from AN LOC to CHON THANH. Total time was 2 hours and substance of tape was that the VC had blown up the bridge at TAU O.

12 Aug - 2d Bde continued Opn EL PASO III with two Bns in QUAN LOI and an Inf Cav Team in HON QUAN/area. 2/16Inf (-) continued to defend QUAN LOI and conducted reinforced squad size patrols in AO's to the NE, SE and W with 1 plat as security for the laterite pit and the Bn (-) on 4 hour alert as Bde RRF. Tm Charlie conducted a route recon 7,000m S of AN LOC without contact. 1 platoon of B 1/4 Cav was attached to A 2/18 Inf, and 1 plat B 1/4 Cav provided security for Engr det working on CAM LE Bridge. Two combat patrols were positioned during hours of darkness. 2/18 Inf provided A 2/18 as Bde RRF to support AN LOC for security of A 1/5 Arty. Bn (-) conducted local security opns and was Bde RRF. During hours of darkness 2/16 Inf (-) and 2/18 Inf (-) conducted 6 night combat patrols in the QUAN LOI area. A 2/18 (+) and 1/5 Arty were in support of a coordinated US/ARVN opn.

13 Aug - EL PASO III continued with some task organization. QUAN LOI continued to be defended by 2 Bns conducting 8 night combat patrols in the QUAN LOI area. 2/16 Inf (-) conducted 3 plat size patrols to the N, NE & E without contact. A sniper squad was sent out E of QUAN LOI and vic XT853916. Tm Charlie continued to provide security for B/6 arty (-) and HON QUAN/AN LOC without contact. A fwd arty base, established during the day, returned after firing it. 2 combat patrols were established during hours of darkness, 2/18 Inf conducted 3 platoon size LRRP's to the NW, W & S of QUAN LOI without contact. Local security operations were conducted in the immediate QUAN LOI area and Bn (-) acted as Bde RRF. C 2/18 apprehended 5 VCS vic XT795920 at 131200H. After interrogation, suspects were released. A MEDCAP was conducted vic XT800852 with 100 personnel treated and 100 cholera shots given, 250 sets of flag T-shirts & shorts were issued.

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14 Aug - 2d Bde continued Opn EL PASO III with two Inf Bns and 1 Cav Trp conducting 6 night combat patrols fwd of the perimeter at QUAN LOI and 2 in the AN LOC area without contact. 2/16 Inf (-) continued to defend QUAN LOI and conducted 1 plat size recon patrol into AO BRAVO (XT830950) and established NCN pos. Unit had neg contact. 2/16 Inf (-) remained RRF to support B team opns. The sniper squad returned at 140915H without contact. 2/18 Inf continued to defend assigned sector of QUAN LOI & conducted 2 plat size opns without contact. Tm Charlie continued to defend AN LOC Airfield and conducted 1 Inf/Cav recon opn to the N without contact. 1 plat of B 1/4 Cav provided security for engineers who completed work on CAM LE Bridge. At 140725H the team gave 2d Bde instruction on type sling loads for CH-47's with approx 60 personnel attending. The 2d plat, 1st MP Co conducted a check point vic XT789891 and the following was checked: 1,253 personnel and 247 vehicles. 8 personnel were detained by the National Police for no ID's and 1 was detained for mutilated ID card.

15 Aug - 2d Bde continued EL PASO III with the same task organization conducting a total of 7 night combat patrols in the QUAN LOI/HON QUAN area. 2/16 Inf (-) continued to defend assigned sector of QUAN LOI perimeter sending out 2 reinforced sqd size patrols to the N and ESE without contact. The plat that RON in AO BRAVO closed QUAN LOI without contact. Tm Charlie continued to provide security for the HON QUAN/AN LOC area conducting 1 Inf/Cav recon patrol in close coordination and cooperation with a Co of 1/9 Inf (ARVN) and 2/1 Cav (ARVN) to the N, W, & S without contact. 2/18 Inf (-) continued to defend assigned sector of QUAN LOI perimeter conducting 6 reinforced squad size recon patrols to the S, SE, W & NW without contact. At 150940H, A Co (reinf) began airlift into MINH THANH by C-123 and UH-1D aircraft to conduct recon and combat patrolling in close coordination and cooperation with CIDG forces. 1 Plat L/H Asslt Arty and B 1/7 Arty (-) were DS to A 2/18.

16 Aug - 2d Bde continued to participate in the defense of AN LOC/ QUAN LOI/MINH THANH with 2 Inf Bns and 1 Cav Trp. 2/16 Inf (-) conducted three squad size patrols to the N, NW, & SE of QUAN LOI, provided security detail for laterite pit without contact, was on 1 hour alert as Bde RRF and conducted airmobile training. Tm Charlie conducted Inf/Cav route recons to the N and S of HON QUAN/AN LOC without contact and continued to secure 8/6 Arty (-) base. 2/18 Inf (-) continued opns in the QUAN LOI area maintaining 1 company on 30 minute alert as immediate reaction force for MINH THANH and conducted airmobile training at QUAN LOI strip. A 2/18, L/H, and B 1/7 Arty (-) continued to operate in the MINH THANH area conducting 6 recon patrols without contact. Hqs 1/7 Arty was alerted and returned to CAMP COX. 8/6 Arty (-) moved their Hqs to QUAN LOI and assumed mission of DS for 2d Bde with B 1/7 Arty and A 1/5 Arty at QUAN LOI and B&D of 8/6 Arty at HON QUAN/AN LOC. A total of 7 night combat patrols were conducted in the QUAN LOI/HON QUAN area during hours of darkness.

17 Aug - 2d Bde continued Opn EL PASO III defending HON QUAN/QUAN LOI/ MINH THANH with 2 Inf Bns and 1 Cav Trp conducting 8 night combat patrols fwd of perimeter during hours of darkness without contact. 2/16 Inf (-) conducted 3 squad size recon patrols to the N, NE & SE in assigned sector of QUAN LOI perimeter without contact and provided security for the laterite pit. Unit remained Bde RRF on 1 hour alert. Tm Charlie continued to defend HON QUAN/AN LOC Airfield and provided security for 8/6 Arty (-). Security was also provided for MEDCAP conducted at DUC VINH vic XT758801. At 170930H, a suspected VC tax collection point was reported at TAN KHAI vic XT767757 and an element of Tm Charlie as well as MEDCAP Team went to that location and reported negative evidence of any VC activity in that area. 2/18 Inf (-) continued opns in QUAN LOI area conducting 4 squad size recon patrols to the W, SW, S, & SSE in assigned sector without contact. 1 Co remained on 30 min alert to support element at MINH THANH. A 2/18 Inf (+) continued to defend MINH THANH and started extraction at 170845H and closed QUAN LOI at 171658H. At approx 171100H, a CV-2 enroute to QUAN LOI reported receiving SA fire 4 miles S of AN LOC on the W side of Hwy 13. An element checked out the area with neg results. A MEDCAP was conducted at DUC VINH (XT760801) and 150 personnel were treated. 100 sets of T-shirts and shorts, 150 newspapers and 700 bars of soap were issued.

18 Aug - 2d Bde continued Opn EL PASO III defending HON QUAN/QUAN LOI conducting 8 night combat patrols in the area without contact. 2/16 Inf (-) conducted 3 reinforced squad size patrols to the NNW, NNE & E in assigned sector of QUAN LOI perimeter without contact and continue to provide security for Engr laterite pit. Unit continued mission of Bde RRF on 1 hour alert. Tm Charlie conducted two reinforced patrols N and S of AN LOC on Hwy 13 without contact. 2/13 Inf (-) conducted 6 LRRPs into an AO NW of AN LOC. At 181124H, 2/13 C-1 LRRP investigated an area which was suspected of being a VC base camp (XT645934). A search of the area turned up nog results. NHC 2d Bde conducted a squad size recon patrol W of QUAN LOI and at 181001H heard 4 rds SA fire from vic XT798918. A thorough search of the area was conducted with nog results.

19 Aug - 2d Bde continued to participate in the defense of HON QUAN/ QUAN LOI with two Inf Bns and 1 Cav Trp. During the day 2/16 Inf (reinf) commenced Opn BURLINGTON with an airmobile assault on an LZ E of TAU O Bridge. A 2/16 departed HON QUAN at 190805H and secured fwd arty base for 8/6 Arty (-) at 190905H. Arty immediately began registration, followed by a prep of LZ BLUE. Tm Charlie (RRF) departed AN LOC at 190934H and secured psn CHARLIE vic TAN KHAI at 191003H. Recon plat 2/16 (reinf) landed in LZ BLUE at 191024H after arty prep and suppressive fires from armed helicopters in LZ area. Final elements of B 2/16 closed LZ BLUE at 191120H with no contact. TAU O Bridge was secured by 191225H and the Engr work detail and materials arrived. Air strikes were employed W of Hwy 13 while securing the bridge area. Engr work was completed at 191645H with Engr elements being extracted followed by B 2/16 at 191748H. 1 Plat of B 2/16 [illegible] RON S of TAU O Bridge. On extraction of B 2/16, Tm Charlie displaced to fwd arty base to relieve A 2/16. A 2/16 closed QUAN LOI at 191930H and assumed portion of defensive sector. Tm Charlie provided security for fwd arty base and was RRF for plat RON at TAU O Bridge area. 2/13 Inf continued to secure assigned sector of QUAN LOI perimeter and provided Bde RRF conducting 6 squad size patrols N, W & S in sector. 6 night combat patrols were established fwd of QUAN LOI perimeter.

20 Aug - 2d Bde continued to participate in Opn EL PASO III defending HON QUAN/QUAN LOI conducting 6 night combat patrols in the two areas. 2/16 Inf (-), 1 plat C 2/16 and 1 plat B 1/4 Cav defended the entire QUAN LOI perimeter conducting 3 daylight patrols to the N, NE, & E without contact. The plat that remained S of TAU O Bridge was extracted at 201126H without incident. Tm Charlie (-) continued to secure HON QUAN/AN LOC upon closure from fwd arty base at 201245H. 2/13 Inf defended assigned sector of QUAN LOI perimeter until lift started at 200630H. At 201740H the lift was complete and the Bn closed LAI KHE, came under OPCON of the 3d Bde as well as B 1/7 Arty which moved to LAI KHE.

21 Aug - 2d Bde continued Opn EL PASO III defending HON QUAN/QUAN LOI with 1 Inf Bn and 1 Cav Trp conducting 7 night combat patrols fwd of the two areas. EAGLE FLIGHTS dropped plat size patrols in to the N, E, SE & W with elements moving from LZ's in cloverleaf patterns with nog contact. Tm Charlie (-) conducted a plat size Inf/Cav recon patrol to the N, W & S of AN LOC with nog contact.

22 Aug - 2d Bde continued to participate in Opn EL PASO III defending AN LOC/QUAN LOI with one Inf Bn and one Cav Trp. 2/16 Inf (-) conducted 3 squad size recon patrols to the NW, NE & S without contact. 4 combat patrols were conducted in the QUAN LOI area. [illegible] Tm Charlie continued to defend HON QUAN/AN LOC conducting an Inf/Cav route recon from AN LOC S 8 km thru the rubber W of AN LOC, N to the CAM LE Bridge and returned without contact. Two combat patrols were established in the AN LOC area during hours of darkness.

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23 Aug - 2d Bde continued Opn EL PASO III defending AN LOC/QUAN LOI without contact. 2/16 Inf (-) continued to defend the entire QUAN LOI perimeter conducting 1 plat size patrol, 2 reinforced sqd size patrols and dispatching 1 sniper sqd without enemy contact. At 231030H the S-3, thru an interpreter, was informed by Montagnards from the village of PHU MIENG (XT790913) of a dud arty rd that was received incoming at approx 230100H. An EOD Tm with security elements was dispatched to the village. After digging 6' the rd was determined to be imbedded in earth at a depth of at least 8' and was not considered dangerous, therefore it was left in the ground. Tm Charlie stood-down on its planned Inf /Cav patrolling mission and received mission to remain in AN LOC and be RRF for ARVN elements conducting a road clearing opn from HON QUAN to LOC NINH. A total of 6 combat patrols were conducted in the HON QUAN/QUAN LOI area during hours of darkness.

24 Aug - 2d Bde continued to participate in EL PASO III defending AN LOC/QUAN LOI with one Inf Bn and one Cav Trp until OPCON and responsibility for 2d Bde missions was assumed by 1st Bde at 241305H. 2/16 Inf (-) initiated three reinforced squad size and one plat size patrol and had no contact while under OPCON of 2d Bde. Tm Charlie initiated 2 plat Inf/Cav recon patrols W of AN LOC in the rubber and N & S along Hwy 13 and had no contact while under OPCON of 2d Bde. At 240853H, the 2d Bde commenced airlift from QUAN LOI to PHU LOI and at 241055H received a mission change and was diverted to CAMP COX to prepare for future missions. All elements of the 2d Bde closed CAMP COX at 241720H.

8. SUPPORTING FORCES:

(C) a. Artillery: 1/5 Arty (-), 1/7 Arty (-), and 8/6 Arty, which were in Direct Support of the 2d Bde at specified dates throughout this opn, operated effectively. The 8/6 Arty (-) was in General Support of the Bde for the entire operation, except for the period when its Hqs took over Direct Support mission. Arty fire support for 2d Bde was rapid and responsive throughout Opn EL PASO III.

b. Air Force: TAC Air was employed on both preplanned and immediate targets. The Bde ALO and S-3 Air processed all air strikes, requesting an average of 8 strikes daily, of which an average of 4 strikes daily were received. The effects of TAC Air strikes were hard to gauge, however, as troops usually did not enter all areas struck. Bomb seedings were requested for areas of intensified VC activity, but results were unknown due to lack of observation. A new system of night bombing, called SKY SPOT, was used on occasion with a high degree of accuracy on targets and a quick reaction time by the Air Force. Air Force lift was utilized to move troops and supplies from one base to another, regularly, but was often severely hindered by weather and landing field conditions.

c. Army Aviation: Army Aviation was used extensively to conduct tactical troop moves, EAGLE FLIGHTS, resupply and command and control. Movements made were well coordinated and effectively executed.

d. GVN Armed Forces: Operations were conducted frequently with GVN Forces. In these operations RF companies from BINH LONG Province and units of the 9th ARVN Regiment operated successfully in close coordination and cooperation with 2d Bde.

9. (C) RESULTS:

a. Friendly Losses:

KIA: 1
WIA: 8
Equipment: 1 tank

b. Enemy Losses:

KIA: 2 (BE)
KIA: 1 (prob)
VCS: 32
Ox carts: 3
Plastic AP mines: 1

Enemy Losses (cont)
AP Mines: 5
Claymores: 3
Rifle Grenades: 1
Grenades: 3

10. (C) ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS:

a. Personnel:

(1) Strength

(a) Prior to operation

Unit	Authorized	Assigned	PDY	PIF	PIC
2/16 Inf	829	833	739	601	138
1/18 Inf	829	795	709	507	202
2/18 Inf	829	895	850	648	202
1/28 Inf	790	771	657	459	198

(b) After operation

2/16 Inf	829	828	766	568	198
1/18 Inf	829	850	787	548	239
2/18 Inf	829	893	847	613	234
1/28 Inf	790	819	706	508	198

b. Administrative Plans: There were no significant problems encountered during this operation in the field of administration.

c. Logistics: The Bde trains consisted of the Bde assistant S-4 and the battalion S-4's located at LAI KHE (for resupply of all classes of supply from the Logistical base in that location); and the Bde S-4, C Company 1st Med Bn, contact teams B Co 701st Maint Bn and representatives of the battalion S-4 sections at the forward area in QUAN LOI.

(1) Medical: Support for the Bde in the field was furnished by a forward element of C Company 1st Med Bn and by forward elements of the individual battalion's stations. Daily sick call was held at aid station level. The forward clearing station was used for initial evaluation of casualties and provided definite treatment for minor wounds. More serious cases were evacuated by Dustoff helicopter which was on standby basis 24 hrs a day at the forward area. This system was generally quite effective as had been the case on prior operations.

(2) Maintenance: Contact teams of Signal, automotive, armament and small arms adequately fulfilled all repair requirements.

(3) Supply: Prescribed loads were adequate.

(4) Transportation: Resupply within the Bde was conducted utilizing air delivery techniques from the logistical base at LAI KHE. The basic aircraft used was CV-2 with occasional C123's to supplement when necessary. No major problems were encountered in resupply from LAI KHE but occasional difficulty was encountered in movement of personnel, mail and material to and from base camp at LAI KHE. This problem was solved late in the operation by the assignment of one CV-2 aircraft per day directly to the Bde.

(5) Class III: There were no problems encountered in refueling of aircraft and vehicles.

11. (C) SPECIAL EQUIPMENT AND TECHNIQUES:

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a. Special Equipment: The only items of special equipment used by 2d Bde were the Anti-Intrusion Device and the 105mm howitzer "Beehive" round. The anti-intrusion devices were emplaced around ambush patrols and forward of perimeters, receiving a high degree of troop acceptance. Since none of these positions were actually probed, the overall merit of the device cannot be commented upon. In a like manner "Beehive" ammunition was distributed to various howitzer firing positions, but was never employed against an attacking enemy.

b. Techniques: Throughout Operation EL PASO III 2d Bde units endeavored to master established techniques and develop new ones. In this regard the operation demonstrated the potential of displacing 4.2 inch mortars (1st Assault Arty) by UH-1D helicopter to provide assaulting units prompt and responsive fire support, the value of saturating areas under dense jungle canopies with 5-7 man recon patrols to determine evidence of recent VC movement, the need for airborne radio relays when elements are operating in dense vegetation on the fringe of radio reception, the importance of bringing the air mission commander into the planning for air mobile operations at the earliest possible time, and the importance of effecting close cooperation with local GVN forces and enlisting their participation in these operations.

12. (C) COMMANDER'S ANALYSIS: When the 2d Bde moved to QUAN LOI on 12 July it was virtually a new unit. Gone were most of the officers and non-commissioned officers who had served in it since its arrival in country. In their place were men, new to the 2d Bde and new to Vietnam. Rapidly fashioning themselves into an effective fighting unit, these men of the 2d Bde held major VC forces at bay in BINH LONG Province and prevented the VC from exerting their influence along Highway 13. After having controlled this road for so long a period of time, the 2 Bde's control of this area doubtlessly caused VC to lose a great deal of prestige among the populace.

13. (C) CONCLUSION AND LESSONS LEARNED:

a. Conclusion: While VC activity in the EL PASO III operational area was a minimum, the operation was a success in that during it the Bde crystallized into an effective fighting force, and one that will make its presence felt to the Viet Cong in the months to come.

b. Lessons Learned:

(1) 4.2 inch Mortar Support. During the operation elements of the 1st Assault Artillery Battery (Lighthorse Artillery) were airlifted by UH-1D helicopters into the battle area on repeated occasions. This technique provided an effective means of insuring close and continuous fire support for infantry units. The LZ's available were often small ones, which allowed a maximum of only 4 UH-1D aircraft to land at a time. Since the Battery required that helicopters land the mortars at individual firing positions, accurate positioning of the helicopters was required. By landing a group of two to four helicopters in a single lift with a time interval of two to three minutes between lifts, a smooth and orderly entry and exit from the LZ was obtained.

(2) Long Range Recon Patrols. The Long Range Reconnaissance Patrol (LRRP) technique was employed regularly into areas approximately 6 kilometers square. This area was saturated with up to five patrols of five to seven men each, which were inserted and extracted by helicopter. In all instances these returned to base with required information on the area. This fact showed that basic Infantrymen could be sent out on long range reconnaissance patrols and accomplish whatever missions they were assigned.

c. Rapid Reaction to Intelligence Gained by LRRP: LRRP's are an effective means of performing reconnaissance of a large area. When employing this technique, sufficient helicopters to move a RRF of at least a company should be at the airstrip with personnel standing by on strip alert for immediate employment.

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d. Radio Relay. When operating in thick jungle ... is often necessary to put an airborne relay in support of ground units. This relay should in all cases be a fixed wing aircraft. It should be assigned to support only one battalion at a time. It should never be allowed to become a "crutch"; units should continually try to establish contact with base station.

e. Joint Operations. When operating in close proximity to CIDG or ARVN units, coordination of operations and fire support is essential. A daily briefing attended by representatives of all of the units operating in the area proved to be an effective method of accomplishing the coordination.

f. Services. When a battalion operates independently from a base, such as LOC NINH, for extended periods of time, services such as shower points, a mobile PX, and laundry facilities should be made available. A shower point does much to raise the morale and appearance of a unit.

g. Air Mobile Operations. Landing Zones used for airmobile operations were of varied size and configuration. A reconnaissance with the air mission commander prior to the operation, a thorough briefing, and strict adherence to the plan developed, insured success of an operation. In all instances the air mission commander should be brought into the planning at as early a time as possible.

h. Armored Vehicle Launched Bridge. The availability of an AVLB would greatly enhance the mobility of 1/4 Cavalry and should be provided that Squadron as a TOE item.

FOR THE COMMANDER:

Charles F. Bamford

CHARLES F. BAMFORD, II
Major, Infantry
Adjutant

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ANNEX P

AFTER ACTION REPORT 3D BDE

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

AVDB-WB-C 20 August 1966

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

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

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

1. NAME AND TYPE OF OPERATION: Operation EL PASO II - Security and Search and destroy.

2. DATES OF OPERATION: 021430 June 1966 to 141300 July 1966.

3. LOCATION OF OPERATION: BINH LONG and PHUOC LONG Provinces.

4. COMMAND HEADQUARTERS: 3D Brigade, 1st Infantry Division.

5. UNIT COMMANDERS:

Colonel William D Brodbeck, Commanding Officer 3d Brigade
Lt Col. Kyle W Bowie, CO 2/28 Infantry
Lt Col. Lee S Henry, CO 1/16 Infantry (2 June - 20 June 1966)
Lt Col. Rufus C Lazzel, CO 1/16 Infantry (20 June - 10 July 1966)
Lt Col. Herber McChrystal, CO 2/18 Infantry
Lt Col. Robert Haldane, CO 1/28 Infantry
Lt Col. Leonard L Lewane, CO 1/4 Cavalry
Lt Col. Frank R Ti[illegible], CO 2/33 Artillery

6. TASK ORGANIZATION: The Task Organization changed throughout the operation. The following units were at various times under OPCON of the 3d Brigade during Operation EL PASO II:

Headquarters 3d Brigade
2/28 Infantry
1/16 Infantry
1/28 Infantry
2/18 Infantry
1/4 Cavalry (-)
2/33 Artillery

AVDB-CE-C 20 August 1966
SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report (MACV/GC3/J3.32)

7. SUPPORTING FORCES:

a. Artillery:

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(1) Size of Force: The size of the artillery force supporting the 3d Brigade Task Force during Operation EL PASO II varied as the tactical situation varied. While at LOC NINH from 2 June to 6 June the artillery consisted of 2/33 Artillery minus one battery. On 6 June an additional artillery battery, C Battery 2/13 Artillery, was attached to 2/33 Artillery and moved to MINH THANH and C Battery 1/7 Artillery was moved to HON QUAN and attached to 2/33 Artillery. On 26 June, C Battery 2/13 Artillery moved to vic SONG BE and was detached from 2/33 Artillery. On 27 June B Battery 1/5 Artillery and C Battery 2/13 Artillery vic SONG BE were attached to 2/33 Artillery and C Battery 1/7 Artillery at QUAN LOI was detached. 2/33 Artillery (-) moved to SONG BE on 30 June 1966. A Battery 2/33 Artillery was detached and moved to XT815905. On 2 July the 2/33 Artillery moved elements from SONG BE to LOC NINH. Firing batteries under 2/33 Artillery at this time were B Battery 1/5 Artillery and C Battery 2/13 Artillery. On 16 July Headquarters Battery 2/33 Artillery moved back to LAI KHE from LOC NINH terminating EL PASO II for the artillery. B Battery 1/5 Artillery moved to PHUOC VINH and C Battery C Battery 2/13 Artillery moved to PHU LOI on 16 July 1966.

(2) How and When Employed: The 2/33 Artillery, at times being reinforced by GS artillery, was in direct support of the 3d Brigade Task Force. It was also used to reinforce other artillery units supporting other Brigades. During Operation EL PASO II the battalion with attached batteries expended 21,227 rounds of 105mm in support of the 3d Brigade Task Force, 2d Brigade Task Force and Division operations.

(3) Results of Artillery Fire: Throughout operations the fires of the artillery were accurate and violent. The artillery provided highly effective close in fires to the 2/28 Infantry in the Battle of LOC NINH RUBBER PLANTATION. It was responsible for forcing the VC to flee and caused many VC casualties as the VC attempted to escape. Enemy losses attributed to the artillery supporting the 3d Brigade Task Force were 18 KIA (BC), 14 KIA (Possible) and 3 mortars neutralized.

b. Air Force: The Air Force contributed significantly to the high degree of success of Operation EL PASO II by flying 514 preplanned close air support sorties and 159 immediate sorties. Close air support was considered the decisive factor in the success of the battle on 8 June along Highway 13. The 3d Brigade FAC's were also used to call in airstrikes for the 1st Brigade in support of the 2/18 Infantry on 2 July 1966. In spite of the weather on 2 July which was ragged overcast condition about 350 feet above ground level, 19 immediate strikes were directed by 3d Brigade FAC's against the VC force assaulting the 2/18 Infantry. These strikes were credited with breaking the VC assault. The performance of the FAC's and strike pilots was outstanding. The fighter sorties were flown as listed below:

2 June	0
3 June	0
4 June	2
5 June	3
6 June	0

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7 June	0
8 June	6
9 June	7
10 June	3
11 June	9
12 June	9
13 June	23
14 June	15
15 June	6
16 June	16
17 June	4
18 June	20
19 June	12
20 June	17
21 June	20
22 June	14
23 June	22
24 June	10
25 June	12
26 June	19
27 June	22
28 June	7
29 June	17
30 June	20
1 July	34
2 July	26
3 July	12
4 July	17
5 July	17
6 July	10
7 July	3
8 July	12
9 July	37
10 July	3
11 July	4
12 July	5
13 July	0
14 July	9
TOTAL	514

c. Army Air Support: During Operation EL PASO II the 3d Brigade Aviation Section flew a total of 319 missions for a total of 459.3 hours. The section operated forward maintenance elements to accomplish daily maintenance at the Brigade Forward CP locations. The section scheduled two CH13's daily in support of Brigade operations. No significant operational problems were encountered by the Brigade Aviation Section on this operation. The 173d Aviation Company (Airmobile, Light) was often in direct support of the 3d Brigade during Operation EL PASO II and provided the Brigade with outstanding support.

8. INTELLIGENCE:

a. Estimate of VC Strength: Intelligence received prior to Operation EL PASO II was not received in the form of a detailed intelligence Annex, but instead came in the form of a classified TWX. The TWX stated that documents had been obtained indicating the VC 9th Division would begin a monsoon offensive in BINH LONG Province by attacking and destroying ARVN Forces and the US Special Forces Camps in the LOC NINH (XU7309) or AN LOC (XT7588) areas. The enemy was believed to have the capability of employing four main force regiments supported by four heavy weapons battalions in addition to employment of smaller main or local force units. The VC were believed to be capable of reinforcing within 48 hours by two main force regiments and one heavy weapons battalion. It was also believed that the VC would support their capabilities with extensive road blocks and mining along Hwy 13 in the vicinity of AN LOC and LOC NINH and extensive mortar attacks on the airfields at AN LOC and LOC NINH.

b. Source of Intelligence Received Prior to the Operation: Headquarters 1st Infantry Division was the primary source of prior intelligence information. Detailed information was not given due to eminence of the VC threat. A great deal of low-level intelligence information was received from Special Forces Camps at AN LOC, LOC NINH, and SONG BE, and also from ARVN authorities in the same locations. Headquarters, 1st Infantry Division estimated accounts of VC capabilities and probable courses of action proved to be quite accurate as the situation developed.

c. Situation Anticipated in the Objective Area: US Forces were deployed primarily in a defensive posture, prepared to react and exploit VC contacts. As a rule the VC do not conduct major ground assaults against US held areas. The reason for this is that the US defensive positions cover a large area, they are not fixed, they can be rapidly reinforced and they ususally are well patrolled. It was felt the VC would probably employ ambush techniques against small US force elements, mortar attacks on installations, and if VC forces could be fixed they would fight.

d. Situation Encountered During the Operation: There were two major engagements by 3d Brigade Task Force units, one on 6 June by A Troop 1st Squadron 4th Cavalry and one by 2d Battalion 28th Infantry on 11 June 1966.

On 4 June 1966 VC forces fired approximately 25-35 mortar rounds on 3d Brigade Task Force and 1/9th Infantry ARVN positions around LOC NINH Airfield. At the same time an estimated 2 VC squads successfully infiltrated the town of LOC NINH and assassinated the police chief. At approximately 0545 hours 5 July 1966 VC forces attached a Popular Forces platoon vic XU742132 and at same time the hamlet chief of hamlet vic XU741158 was assassinated. During this same time period ground troops patrolling around the LOC NINH area found indications of VC fortifications with overhead cover and further excavation of existing drainage trench systems throughout the LOC NINH Rubber Plantation. The VC terror campaign directed against loyal GVN leaders and the existance of recently constructed fortifications confirmed the VC intentions of conducting a major campaign in the LOC NINH area.

AVDB-WB-C 20 August 1966
SUBJECT: Combat Oporations After Action Report (MACV/RCS/J3/32)

On 8 June 1966 at approximately 1440 hours A Troop 1/4 Cavalry while traveling north along Highway 13 made contact with what was initially reported to be 100 VC vicinity XT7674. The VC detonated a mine to halt the lead vehicle of the convoy and then employed recoilless weapons and mortar fire along the convoy. Waves of infantry assaulted the vehicles and personnel from both sides of the road utilizing the traditional Viet Cong ambush technique of a brief, violent attack with maximum firepower. The VC were, however, soundly defeated by close tactical air support and return fire by the personnel of A Troop 1/4 Cavalry; and they were later driven from the battlefield by the 2/18 Infantry. VC forces were later identified as elements of the VC 272 Regiment. They lost 105 killed by body count including the battalion commander of the 1st Battalion, and an estimated 200 killed whose bodies were not counted.

At 0730 hrs 11 June 1966 two platoons of A Company 2/28 Infantry and a platoon of CIDG soldiers from the LOC NINH Special Forces Camp made contact with an estimated force of 50-60 VC vic XU710100. Contact was maintained throughout the day with final contact being broken at approximately 1730 hours. As the situation developed during the day C Company was sent to reinforce A Company. Both companies soon became engaged with at least two company size units, one by A Company vic XU175096 and one by C Company vic XU722112. Throughout the engagement the VC seemed well organized, well trained and responded well to tactics of fire and maneuver. At one point during the battle the VC very effectively used fire and maneuver to inflict heavy casualties on the reconnaissance platoon when they attempted to assault the VC positions vic XU722122. The reconnaissance platoon attempted to flank the VC positions by moving from west to east across Hill 177. The VC, evidently realizing the situation, set up a base of fire from the east side of Hill 177 and maneuvered an element around the back slope of the hill. Attacking from the north, the VC engaged the reconnaissance platoon in a drainage ditch and placed a heavy volume of fire down the ditch inflicting heavy casualties on the platoon. VC forces in this area were over-run and scattered by use of artillery supporting fires and an assault by C Company. A Company reinforced by B Company conducted an assault against remaining VC forces vic XU715-096 causing them to break contact and move south. They later split moving southwest and southeast to escape CIDG blocking forces. VC forces were identified as the 707 battalion, 273 Regiment. They lost 98 killed by body count.

Throughout the remainder of the operation no major contacts were made by 3d Brigade Task Force elements although other Division elements made significant contacts with the 271 and 272 Regiments. From captured prisoners it was learned that 9th VC Division had been reinforced by North Vietnamese infiltraters.

e. Terrain Features, Obstacles and Weather: Terrain in BINH LONG Province starting from the southern border and working north for about fifteen kilometers was flat with sandy soil. The land then became hilly with the hills becoming larger towards the north. There were two mountains in the province, the C IO Mountain just south of the QUAN LOI Rubber Plantation and the DONG LONG Mountains three kilometers west of LOC NINH. Vegetation consisted primarily of rain forest

jungle except for the northwestern corner which has thin forested areas and large rubber plantation areas along Highway 13 in the AN LOC and LOC NINH areas. The two principal rivers in the province serve as the western (SAIGON RIVER) and eastern (SONG BE RIVER) boundaries for the province.

Weather during the period was characterized by the monsoon season with early morning low ceilings and poor visibility. Late morning and early afternoon ceilings were 1500 to 2000 feet with moderate to heavy rains in the late afternoon and evenings. All airmobile operations were restricted to periods of favorable weather conditions.

9. MISSION: There was no formal written order initiating Operation EL PASO II. The 3d Brigade received a verbal FRAG ORDER on 2 June 1966 to dispatch 1 infantry battalion to LOC NINH on 2 June to assist the defense of the LOC NINH area and to establish a Brigade TAC CP at HAN QUAN. Subsequent missions were received during the operation and as the situation change.

10. CONCEPT OF OPERATIONS:

The initial concept of operations was to provide security to the LOC NINH airfield with one infantry battalion. Subsequently other units were committed to the area thus increasing the security mission to include the HAN QUAN area. With the addition of more forces the 3d Brigade concept was to provide security to the assigned areas and to conduct operations within the area of operations in an attempt to locate and destroy VC forces.

11. EXECUTION:

The 3d Brigade Task Force initiated Operation EL PASO II at 021430 June 1966 with the movement of the 2/28 Infantry by fixed wing aircraft from LAI KHE to LOC NINH. Upon arrival at LOC NINH the 2/28 Infantry began preparing defensive positions around the LOC NINH airfield in conjunction with 9th ARVN Regiment Forces and the CIDG forces. A 3d Brigade TAC CP was move to HAN QUAN and began operating on 2 June 1966. D Troop 1/4 Cavalry was moved to LOC NINH and placed under OPCON of the 3d Brigade. The 2/33 Artillery (-) was moved to LOC NINH to support 2/28 Infantry.

On 3 June the 2/28 Infantry continued to improve defensive positions around LOC NINH airfield and conduct local patrolling. Negative contact was reported. D Troop 1/4 Cavalry conducted visual reconnaissance around the LOC NINH area. At 031145 hrs June the armed helicopters of D Troop 1/4 Cavalry located a fortified village vic XU618004 and destroyed 2 buildings and damaged 3 more. D Troop 1/4 Cavalry inserted 2 delta teams into an area southwest of LOC NINH along the border at 031915 June 1966.

On 4 June the 2/28 Infantry continued to defend the LOC NINH area and conduct local patrolling in conjunction with ARVN forces. No contact was reported. The two LRRP teams from D Troop 1/4 Cavalry continued to operate along the

Cambodian border and at 1530 hrs one team spotted 34 VC carrying individual weapons, one 81mm mortar and one 30 cal machinegun vic XU592939. The VC were moving from Northeast to Southwest. At 2220 hrs 8 incoming 81mm mortar rounds coming from vic XU775086 landed around the LOC NINH airstrip hitting and damaging 3 LOH and 4 UH1D from D Troop 1/4 Cavalry. At the same time A Company 2/28 Infantry patrol spotted approximately 150 personnel vic XU727088. Additional incoming mortar rounds came into the area and hit the southern edge of the LOC NINH airstrip hitting the ARVN camp. Also, the VC ambushed the LOC NINH police station wounding the police chief and another policeman. At 2230 hrs A Company 2/28 Infantry and the Special Forces camp reported more incoming mortar rounds. Armed helicopters from D Troop 1/4 Cavalry knocked out 3 mortar positions vic XU718080, XU717076, and XU717070. Again at 2245 hrs more incoming mortar rounds hit the ARVN camp and the village of LOC NINH. A Company 2/28 Infantry patrol returned and mortar fire was placed on XU727088. All enemy mortar fire ceased by 2300 hours. Airstrikes were called into the areas to the south and west of LOC NINH. The VC mortar attack resulted in the following casualties: 2/28 Infantry - 2 KIA; 2/33 Artillery - 1 WIA; D Troop 1/4 Cavalry - 4 WIA; 2/9 ARVN Regiment - 18 WIA; CIDG - 5 WIA and 1 civilian killed and 3 civilians wounded. 3 LOH and 4 UH1D from D Troop 1/4 Cavalry were damaged.

On 5 June the 2/28 Infantry dispatched patrols to investigate the areas where suspected VC mortar positions were located. A patrol from A Company 2/28 Infantry found a well dug in mortar position along with 20 rounds of 81mm cannister, 15 rounds of 81mm mortar and numerous foxholes vic XU725087. The mortar fire from 2/28 Infantry the night of 4 June had covered the area well as evidenced by shattered trees in the area. The 2/28 Infantry continued to improve their defensive positions around the LOC NINH airfield. D Troop 1/4 Cavalry was seriously hampered by the mortar attack on 4 June which had damaged their aircraft. At 1230 hours LRRP #1 made contact with 6 VC vic XT603924. As the team was extracted they received fire and the door-gunner killed 2 VC. The extraction helicopter was slightly damaged by the fire.

On 6 June the 2/28 Infantry continued to improve defensive positions around the LOC NINH airfield and conduct local patrolling in conjunction with ARVN Forces. D Troop 1/4 Cavalry conducted inspections on their aircraft. At 1250 hrs the 1/16 Infantry was moved by fixed wing aircraft from LAI KHE to LOC NINH closing at 1615 hours. The 1/16 Infantry then conducted a combat assault into an LZ southeast of LOC NINH vic XU7603 and established a base area vic XU771043. C Battery 2/13 Artillery was moved by CH47 and C123 aircraft into the LOC NINH airfield and then to the 1/16 Infantry base area. The 3d Brigade CP displaced from HAN QUAN and LAI KHE to LOC NINH. There was negative enemy contact during the day.

On 7 June the 2/28 Infantry continued to provide security to the LOC NINH airfield and conduct local patrolling in conjunction with ARVN Forces resulting in negative contact. The 1/16 Infantry continued to improve their defensive positions and conduct 1 company S&D operation and 2 platoon size S&D operations. A Company 1/16 Infantry conducted an S&D operation in the village at XU770060 and in the village at XU770085 where they picked up 5 VCS. Villagers stated that

around the 1st of June, 20-30 VC dressed in various uniforms and armed with carbines were seen north of the village moving east to west. D Troop 1/4 Cavalry conducted visual reconnaissance around the area of operations and spotted new fortifications around the village vic XU7913. The 3d Brigade CP remained at LOC NINH.

At 080730 June 1966 A Troop 1/4 Cavalry departed PHU LOI enroute to AN LOC. They stopped at LAI KHE, refueled, picked up a platoon from D Company 1st Engr and departed at 1215 hours. At 1415 hours the lead vehicle hit a mine vic XT765-745 which stopped the column. Immediately the column was taken under fire by intense recoiless rifle and mortar fire. The column returned the fire and called for close air support. The 3d platoon was leading at the time and the second platoon pushed through them in order to place maximum fire on the enemy. The main attack of the VC was placed along 3 kilometers of road and all platoons were fully engaged. It was reported that a tank and an APC were cut off from the main body. The FAC immediately contacted this element and brought in close airstrikes as the VC made attempts to overrun their position. The unit moved into a perimeter in order to evacuate the wounded. The FAC reported that the VC had captured 1 APC and driven into the jungle with the lights on. After the fighting had subsided the trail party of A Troop 1/4 Cavalry was called up from CHON THAN to retrieve the disabled vehicle. The lead vehicle of the trail party hit a mine and the trail party came under mortar and recoilless rifle fire. One tank took two direct hits from a mortar throwing the vehicle commander from the vehicle. With the aid of close air support the trail party was able to continue on and effect link-up with the main body. The 2/18 Infantry landed to the north and swept south joining A Troop 1/4 Cavalry in their HON position vic XT766748.

On 9 June the 2/18 Infantry and A Troop 1/4 Cavalry continued to police the area of the Battle on 8 June 1966. Upon completion, A Troop 1/4 Cavalry and 1 company 2/18 Infantry moved by road to the HAN QUAN Airfield and the 2/18 Infantry (-) was lifted by air to the same location. Here they began to prepare defensive positions. A and B Companies 1/16 Infantry remained at HAN QUAN during the day as RRF under OPCON of 2/18 Infantry. At 1829 hours A and B Companies 1/16 Infantry returned to the 1/16 Infantry base area vic XU771043. The 2/28 Infantry continued to provide security to the LOC NINH area and conducted local patrolling with negative contact. The 2/2 Infantry remained in a blocking position vic XU673740 during the day and at 1520 hours came under OPCON of the 1st Brigade. C Battery 2/33 Artillery completed their move to MINH THANH closing at 1025 hours and came under control of 2/13 Artillery at 1900 hours. A Battery 2/33 Artillery was located at LOC NINH, C Battery 2/13 Artillery located vic XU771043 and C Battery 1/7 Artillery at HAN QUAN. The Brigade CP remained at LOC NINH.

On 10 June the 1/16 Infantry conducted local S&D operations in their TAOR with negative contact. The 2/18 Infantry continued to improve defensive positions around the HON QUAN airfield and conduct local patrolling vic HON QUAN. A Troop 1/4 Cavalry remained attached to 2/18 Infantry and conducted care and maintenance of equipment at HON QUAN. C Company 2/28 Infantry conducted a combat assault into an LZ vic XU715181 at 1500 hrs and searched the village vic XU712175 with negative results. C Company 2/28 Infantry was extracted from this same LZ at

1705 hours. A and B Companies 2/28 Infantry conducted local patrolling vic LOC NINH and provided security to the LOC NINH airfield. The Brigade CP remained at LOC NINH.

On 11 June 1966 the Battle of LOC NINH Rubber Plantation occurred involving a large VC force and the 3d Brigade. The battle was conducted under the canopy of the gently rolling LOC NINH Rubber Plantation two kilometers west and northwest of LOC NINH (XU737097). Vegetation under the 60 foot rubber trees was negligible. Weather for the operation was fair with the exception of heavy ground fog in the early morning. The fog delayed the heliborne portion of the operation from 0600 hrs until 0815 hrs when the ground fog dissipated sufficiently to allow the HUID helicopters to make their lift of one CIDG platoon and one platoon from A Company 2/28 Infantry into the LZ vic XU702112.

The ground blocking elements, two platoons from A Company 2/28 Infantry, departed the LOC NINH area at 0715 hrs along ROUTE RED and ROUTE BLUE, respectively. At 0735 hours these elements reported receiving SA fire from approximately one platoon of VC vic XU715093. A Company's 81mm mortars were fired into the area with unknown results. In the same vicinity, at 0810 hours, the blocking elements had three wounded by SA fire from the VC positions at the top of Hill 150. The 81mm mortars from A Company were again called on the hilltop. Following the mortar barrage the two blocking platoons moved into positions to the south and east of the VC locations on Hill 150 vic XU715095.

The heliborne elements after their initial landing, headed south toward their original objective of the Village Number 10 complex, centered at XU710100. At 0849 hours the blocking elements reported receiving machinegun fire from a bunker at XU717095. Upon receiving this information the CIDG-A Company elements altered their mission and moved south to assist against what was now estimated to be at least one VC platoon entrenched on top of Hill 150. A Company's platoon moved to the north of the VC position tying in with the two blocking forces on the east and south thus forming a U-shaped ring open to the northwest. The CIDG platoon attempted to penetrate the VC position from the northwest but was repulsed by heavy SA and AW fire coming from the well entrenched enemy. The CIDG elements then displaced, tying in with A Company's blocking elements on the south. 81mm mortars were immediately called in to the north sealing off any VC route of withdrawal.

Due to the intensity of the fighting C Company was alerted at 0910 hrs to be prepared to move on foot to assist A Company. At 0940 hrs C Company was ordered to move in support of the elements around Hill 150. By 1030 hrs A and C Company had linked up, C Company moving around toward XU713098. As C Company moved to effect tie in, A Company indicated that VC were moving to the northeast toward Hill 177, vic XU721111. C Company was then ordered by the battalion commander to move north to intercept and attack the VC in that vicinity.

Upon approaching XU720104 C Company ran into intense ground fire from at least one VC company firmly entrenched in bunkers with overhead cover in the vicinity of Hill 177. Artillery and 4.2 inch mortar fire was called on the VC positions and to the north to prevent the VC from escaping. At 1200 hrs C Company requested ammunition resupply and further assistence to maneuver against the enemy force. In less than fifteen minutes two helicopter loads of ammunition were air-dropped on C Company's front lines. The Reconnaissance Platoon was immediately dispatched on foot from LOC NINH with still additional ammunition and a mission of aiding the C Company attacking elements south of Hill 177.

The reconnaissance element moved to A Company's CP location, vic XU720092 and then proceeded north to assist C Company, killing 3 VC snipers along the way. At 1330 hrs recon and C Company linked up with recon being placed on C Company's left flank vic XU717104. In preparation for an assault, more artillery was fired on the VC positions around Hill 177. The attack commenced at 1425 hrs with C Company on line east to west and the recon platoon pinching in on VC trenchwork from the west along a ridgeline running north vic XU715113.

At this point the VC concentrated their fire on recon and C Company platoon on the left, hurling grenades and firing SA from the trees. Simultaniously, the VC began hitting the Recon Platoon's left flank with intensified SA and AW fire. The recon in turn attempted to fall back to prevent the VC enveloping movement. While in the process of accomplishing this maneuver the VC moved a machinegun into a trench occupied by the remaining recon elements resulting in the VC over-running the positions. C Company immediately countered with its reserve platoon, climinating the VC resistance, pushing the enemy off Hill 177 into the artillery volleys to the north and northwest, terminating this portion of the battle at around 111615 Jun.

Meanwhile, in the A Company area to the south, consecutive assaults from the north and west failed to dislodge the VC from their entrenched positions, A CIDG Company moving west on patrol was diverted into a blocking position vic XU700090. A Company's 81mm mortars continued to pound the VC positions, but to no apparent avail. The battalion commander of 2/28 Infantry then decided to commit his final reserve, B Company, at 1430 hrs, at the same time moving the CIDG Company east to XU713090 into a more advantageous blocking and maneuvering location.

When B Company linked up with A Company at 1500 hrs the A Company elements were repositioned to allow the artillery to fire a preparation all along Hill 150 prior to an assault by B Company. In the meantime the CIDG platoon attached to A Company and positioned vic XU714093 retreated to the south after their interpreter had been killed by the VC, thus creating a gap in the A Company lines on the south. The Special Forces advisor then joined A Company until the battle ended.

Following a sixteen volley artillery bombardment, B Company assaulted Hill 150 at 1630 hrs completely over running the VC positions. The VC fled to the south and ran into a heavy volume of fire from the CIDG blocking force, causing the VC to scatter southwest in complete disorganization.

After the final assault, consolidations were made in the battalion zone of action, casualties were evacuated, ammunition resupply was effected and the battlefield was policed of VC bodies and equipment with a thorough search of the entire area. The 2/28 Infantry then moved on foot back to base camp locations around the LOC NINH airstrip, final elements closing at 112100 June 1966.

On 12 June 1966 the 1/16 Infantry and C Battery 2/13 Artillery moved by road from their base area vic XU771043 to a new base area vic XU740060. C Company 1/16 Infantry, which was attached to 2/28 Infantry at LOC NINH, was released at 0800 hrs and moved by foot to the new battalion area. The 2/28 Infantry continued to provide security to the LOC NINH airfield and conduct local patrolling with negative contact. At 0950 hrs A Troop 1/4 Cavalry reinforced with a platoon from C 2/18 Infantry and recon platoon from 2/18 Infantry moved to a blocking position vic XT680913 where they closed at 1100 hrs. At 1008 hrs B Company 2/18 Infantry conducted a combat assault into an LZ vic XT657913. B Company 2/18 Infantry then secured the village vic XT6791 and completed the search at 1338 hrs with negative results. B Company 2/18 Infantry then moved on a S&D operation to a RON position vic XT680892 where they closed at 1610 hrs. A Troop 1/4 Cav then moved back to the HON QUAN airfield where they closed at 1535 hours. The Brigade CP remained at LOC NINH.

On 13 June the 2/28 Infantry continued to provide security to the LOC NINH airfield and conducted local patrolling. A rallier from the VC unit defeated by the 2/28 Infantry on 11 June reported that his unit was vic XU6812. Also an agent reported that the VC were evacuating bodies from the area of the battle on 11 June. Airstrikes were called in these areas. A Company 2/28 Infantry then dispatched a patrol to check the areas. The patrol found twelve 81mm mortar rounds and tronches vic XU719111 as well as several VC bodies from the 11 June battle. Also 2 typewriters were found in a trench vic XU719112. One Vietnamese body with no identification and his hands tied behind his back was found vic XU720111. The 1/16 Infantry conducted local S&D operations, patrolling activities and continued to improve defensive positions vic XU740063. B Company 2/18 Infantry moved from their RON position vic XT686894 at 0905 hours to search the village vic XT6887. The village was searched with negative results. At 1030 hrs A Troop 1/4 Cavalry moved from HON QUAN and picked up B Company 2/18 Infantry and transported it back to HON QUAN where it closed at 1216 hours. The Brigade CP remained at LOC NINH.

On 14 June 1966 the 2/18 Infantry was division reserve at HON QUAN and C Company 2/18 Infantry was on a 30 minute alert as RRF for an ARVN Convoy. A Company 2/18 Infantry was moved by air from HON QUAN to QUAN LOI airfield (XT-815905) to secure that area for the movement of the division TAC CP on 15 June. A Troop 1/4 Cavalry remained attached to 2/18 Infantry at HON QUAN. The 1/16 Inf conducted S&D operations to the east and southeast of LOC NINH with negative results. The 2/28 Infantry continued to provide security to the LOC NINH airfield and conducted local patrolling with negative contact. The Brigade CP remained at LOC NINH.

On 15 June the 1/16 Infantry conducted S&D operations to the east and southeast of LOC NINH with negative contact. The 2/18 Infantry remained as division reserve and provided security for the movement of the division TAC CP from HON QUAN to QUAN LOI. A Company 2/18 Infantry continued to secure QUAN LOI. A Troop 1/4 Cavalry and a recon platoon from 2/18 Infantry secured the road from HON QUAN to QUAN LOI. B Company 2/18 Infantry was moved by air from HON QUAN to QUAN LOI at 0800 hrs. C Company 2/18 Infantry was moved by air to QUAN LOI. The 2/28 Infantry continued to provide security to the LOC NINH Airfield and conduct-

ed S&D operations north and west of LOC NINH with negative contact. The Brigade CP remained at LOC NINH.

On 16 June the 1/16 Infantry continued to conduct S&D operations to the east and south of LOC NINH. At 141100 Jun A Company 1/16 Infantry reported that the villagers at XU769080 had seen 20 VC to their south. The VC were reportedly moving south. The 1/16 Infantry had negative contact throughout the day. The 2/18 Infantry continued to provide security for the division TAC CP and improved defensive positions around the QUAN LOI airfield. A Troop 1/4 Cav remained attached to 2/18 Infantry at HON QUAN. The 2/28 Infantry continued to provide security to the LOC NINH airfield and conducted a company S&D operation to the west of LOC NINH to vic XU7011 and returned with negative contact. The Brigade CP remained at LOC NINH.

On 17 June the 1/16 Infantry in conjunction with a CIDG Company conducted a cordon and search of a village vic XU7204. B Company 1/16 Infantry moved to a blocking position north of the village prior to 1st light and the CIDG company moved up from the south prior to first light. The east-west road through the village was observed in order to capture any VC attempting to leave. At 0600 hrs the CIDG company searched the village with negative results. Upon link-up of the CIDG Company and B Company 1/16 Infantry at 0745 hrs B Company 1/16 Infantry returned to their base area. The 2/18 Infantry continued to secure the division TAC CP and conduct patrolling vic QUAN LOI. A Troop 1/4 Cavalry remained attached to 2/18 Infantry at HON QUAN. The 2/28 Infantry continued to provide security to the LOC NINH airfield and conducted a company S&D operation to the northeast of LOC NINH. A Company 2/28 Infantry discovered some newly constructed bunkers vic XU727111. A Company 2/28 Infantry continued to S&D northeast to XU770148 then moved west and south back toward LOC NINH. At 1443 hrs A Company 2/28 Infantry made contact with 7 VC vic XU740130. 2 VC were hit. One of the wounded VC escaped and the other wounded VC was captured with an M2 carbine. A Company 2/28 Infantry then moved into the village at XU4713 and picked up 2 VCS. A Company 2/28 Infantry closed back into LOC NINH at 1829 hours. The Brigade CP remained at LOC NINH.

On 18 June 1966 A Troop 1/4 Cavalry departed HON QUAN for PHU LOI and came under OPCON of 1/4 Cavalry. 1/4 Cavalry (-) moved from PHU LOI to HON QUAN and upon arrival at 1615 hrs came under OPCON 3D Brigade. The 2/18 Infantry continued to provide security to the Division TAC CP and conducted local patrolling around QUAN LOI. At 1530 hrs a Popular Forces unit (vic XT832894) made contact with a VC force and C 2/18 Infantry dispatched a patrol to assist. The patrol received about 30 rounds of carbine fire vic XT832894 resulting in 1 WIA. 3 PF were also wounded. A search for the VC was conducted with negative results. The 2/28 Infantry continued to provide security to the LOC NINH airfield and conducted a company size airmobile assault vic XU658060. C Company 2/28 Infantry conducted a passage of lines through ARVN and closed back into LOC NINH with negative results at 1615 hrs. The 1/16 Infantry conducted a company size S&D operation to the southeast of LOC NINH. At 0950 hrs C Company 1/16 Infantry found 26 two-man foxholes vic XU747077 which had been used in the past 2 or 3 days. C Company 1/16 Infantry continued to S&D south to XU745996 then west to

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vic XU728995 where a reinforced squad stay-behind force was dropped off. C Company 1/16 Infantry (-) then moved to a RON position vic XU729014. At 1350 hrs the stay-behind patrol spotted 2 VC squads moving along trail vic XU729995 and took them under fire hitting 3 VC. The VC fled with half of them fleeing east and about half fleeing west. 2 VC fled south. They carried their wounded with them. C Company 1/16 Infantry (-) moved down to assist the stay-behind patrol. C Company 1/16 Infantry swept through the area and attempted to regain contact with the VC but contact was lost. C Company 1/16 Infantry then returned to their RON position vic XU726015. A platoon size ambush patrol returned to XU728995 at 1755 hrs. At 1955 hrs this patrol fired on 3 VC vic XT728995. One was wearing a blue and red neckerchief. The VC fled. The Brigade CP remained at LOC NINH.

On 19 June C Company 1/16 Infantry searched the area vic XT728995 where the stay-behind patrol had made contact the night before. The search revealed where a body had obviously been laying throughout the night, a VC hut, VC sandals, pools of blood and evidence that a body had been dragged away. At 0800 hrs C Company 1/16 Infantry reported that civilians stated that this area vic XU725014 is used by the VC as a tax collection point. C Company 1/16 Infantry S&D from their RON position northeast back into the battalion base closing at 1155 hrs with no further contact. The 2/18 Infantry continued to provide security to the division TAC CP and conduct local patrolling vic QUAN LOI. The 2/28 Infantry continued to provide security to the LOC NINH airfield and conduct local patrolling. At 1730 hrs B Company 2/28 Infantry moved to a RON position vic XU750825 in order to be in position for the village cordon and search on 20 June. Also 1 CIDG Company departed LOC NINH at 1700 hours for a RON position vic XU763130 in order to be in position for the village operation on 20 June. The Brigade CP remained vic LOC NINH. The 1/4 Cav (-) conducted route reconnaissance to the north and east of HON QUAN. At 0955 hrs B Troop 1/4 Cavalry received AW fire from XT743958 and XT746965. Fire was returned with unknown results. 1/4 Cavalry (-) remained at HON QUAN.

On 20 June the 2/28 Infantry and 1 CIDG Company conducted a cordon and search of the village vic XU7413. B Company 2/28 Infantry surrounded the southern half of the village by 0620 hrs and the CIDG Company surrounded the northern half by 0800 hrs. 1 platoon from A Company 2/28 Infantry moved up Hwy 13 at 0600 hrs and began to search the village at 0800 hrs. Psy/Ops and MEDCAP were used in the village. All villagers were searched and questioned. The VC who had been captured on 18 June near the village and four other CIDG men with masks on were used to identify VCS. A total of 34 VCS were taken to LOC NINH. The operation ended at 1400 hrs and all elements of 2/28 Infantry closed back into LOC NINH at 1605 hrs. The 2/18 Infantry with two companies and the 1/4 Cavalry (-) conducted an operation northwest of HON QUAN in conjunction with BINH LONG Province forces. At 07[illegible] hrs C Troop 1/4 Cavalry and two RF Companies moved from HON QUAN to blocking position RED along Hwy 13 (XT725966 to XT737940). One RF Company and one ARVN cavalry troop moved to blocking position YELLOW (XT710928 to XT732928). A and B Companies 2/18 Infantry mounted on APC's of B Troop 1/4 Cavalry moved from HON QUAN to a drop-off point vic XT698928. A and B Companies 2/18 Infantry then moved on foot to get into position to sweep east with A Company on the north and B Company on the south. At 0710 hrs, 2/20 Inf (-) and C Btry 1/7 Arty moved to HON QUAN. B 1/4 Cav blocked on the southwest of the RF

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force vic XT7092. At 0920 hrs the RF forces reported finding evidence that a VC platoon had been in the vic of XT737953 but had departed. At 1530 hrs B Company 2/18 Infantry found a small old base camp vic XT725947. The 2/18 Infantry (-) reached blocking position RED at 1625 hrs and by 1730 hrs all forces began extracting. All forces closed by 1817 hrs with 1/4 Cavalry (-) at HON QUAN and 2/18 Infantry and C Battery 1/7 Artillery at QUAN LOI. The 1/16 Infantry conducted S&D operations southeast and northeast of LOC NINH. The recon platoon was told by a civilian vic XU768042 that 100 VC were seen on about 18 June vic XU7805 moving north. They were supposedly accompanied by 4 or 5 Chinese advisors. At 1220 hrs recon platoon found a small camp vic XU790035 which was about 50 meters by 50 meters in size and contained 10 to 12 foxholes and several camp fires. It appeared to have been occupied 2 to 3 days before. The 3d Brigade CP remained at LOC NINH.

On 21 June the 3d Brigade TF continued Operation EL PASO II. The Brigade continued extensive patrolling and S&D operations vic LOC NINH and HON QUAN. C Troop 1/4 Cavalry conducted a route recon from HON QUAN to MINH THANH closing into MINH THANH at 211845 hrs with negative contact. Upon closing, C Troop 1/4 Cavalry came under OPCON of 1st Brigade. 1/16 Infantry continued on standby for possible commitment vic SONG BE. At 210800 June B Company 1/16 Inf began to S&D southeast to vic XU779047, then northeast to vic XU786057, then northwest to vic XU756077, then southwest to the battalion base area closing at 211400 June with negative contact. At 210830 June C Company 1/16 Infantry (-) began to S&D south to vic XU742018, then northwest to XU731031, then northeast to the base area closing at 211300 June with negative contact. C Company 1/16 Infantry and C Battery 2/13 Artillery remained vic XU740060. The 2/18 Infantry continued to provide security to the division forward CP and conducted local patrolling. The recon platoon 2/18 Infantry was attached to C Troop 1/4 Cavalry for their move to MINH THANH. 1 platoon from C Company 2/18 Infantry provided security for C Battery 1/7 Artillery which displaced to a position south of HON QUAN to support C Troop 1/4 Cavalry in their movement. One platoon of B Company 2/18 Infantry patrolled to the south of HON QUAN and returned at 121545 June with negative contact. C Battery 1/7 Artillery returned to QUAN LOI at 1600 hrs. 2/18 Infantry (minus recon platoon with C Troop 1/4 Cavalry at MINH THANH) and C Battery 1/7 Arty remained vic QUAN LOI. The 2/28 Infantry continued to provide security for the Brigade CP and LOC NINH airfield and conducted local patrolling and S&D operations. A Company 2/28 Infantry began to S&D at 210730 hrs June to check the high ground to the north east of LOC NINH. A Company 2/28 Infantry moved to vic XU772122 with negative contact and returned to the battalion base area. B Company 2/28 Infantry remained on alert for movement to the 1/16 Infantry area for the purpose of securing C Battery 2/13 Artillery if 1/16 Infantry was committed to the SONG BE area. 2/28 Infantry and 2/33 Artillery remained vic LOC NINH airfield. D Troop 1/4 Cavalry returned to OPCON of 1/4 Cavalry from 2d Brigade at 201700 June. D Troop 1/4 Cavalry escorted C Battery 1/7 Artillery to a firing position vic XT7983. Upon arrival B Troop 1/4 Cavalry conducted an area recon west and southwest of HON QUAN. At 210730 June, C Troop 1/4 Cavalry with recon platoon 2/18 Infantry attached moved from HON QUAN to MINH THANH to recon the route. C Troop 1/4 Cavalry had negative contact. Upon moving into MINH THANH C Troop came under OPCON of 1st Brigade.

232 On 22 June at 0655 hrs the recon plt 1/16 Infantry which had been in a night ambush position vic XU771078 returned to the battalion base at 220655 June with negative contact. A report was received that VC were stopping traffic vic XU722995 taxing and taking food. At 220300 June C Company 1/16 Infantry (-) moved south to vic XU745998, then west to vic XU7229 in an attempt to ambush the VC in the area. C Company 1/16 Infantry had negative contact. C Company 1/16 Infantry picked up an ABC camera team vic XU717997 and proceeded north to the battalion base area closing at 221315 June with negative contact. At 0305 hours A Company 1/16 Infantry moved to vic XU7560.

At 220630 June the 2/18 Infantry began to S&D north vic XT836973. They discovered several documents and two uniforms which were evacuated. C Company 2/18 Infantry continued north to a RON position vic XT838996 closing at 1000 hours 21 June with negative contact. The 2/18 Infantry (-) and C Battery 1/7 Arty remained vic QUAN LOI airfield. The 2/28 Infantry continued to provide security for the Brigade CP and the LOC NINH airfield and conducted local patrolling and S&D operations vic LOC NINH. At 1105 hrs C Company 2/28 Infantry found 4 RPG2 rocket launcher rounds and booster charge which were evacuated to Brigade Headquarters. C Company 2/28 Infantry continued S&D closing back into the battalion base area at 1420 hrs. At 1300 hrs B Troop 1/4 Cavalry conducted a road reconnaissance along Hwy 13 to the south. B Troop (-) moved south as far as XT765610 clearing out four road blocks on Highway 13 vic XT765735, XT765733, XT765730 and XT766635 with negative enemy contact. At 1352 hrs the helicopter gunteam supporting B Troop 1/4 Cavalry received SA fire from XT765530 and returned the fire with unknown results. 1 platoon B Troop 1/4 Cavalry performed MEDCAP activities in the village vic XT7092. B Troop 1/4 Cavalry closed back into HON QUAN at 221630 June. 1/4 Cavalry (-) remained vic HON QUAN.

On 23 June at 0640 hrs 1/16 Infantry began to move by foot to the LOC NINH airstrip. Because of a shortage of aircraft, 1/16 Infantry had to suttle back to LAI KHE and PHOUC VINH by all available aircraft. 1/16 Infantry (-) moved to LAI KHE where they assumed the base camp security mission and C Company 1/16 Infantry moved to PHOUC VINH where they came under OPCON of the 1st Brigade. All elements of 1/16 Infantry had departed LOC NINH by 1415 hrs. The 2/18 Infantry continued to provide security for the division forward CP and the QUAN LOI airfield. The recon platoon 2/18 Infantry remained with C Troop 1/4 Cavalry at MINH THANH. B Company 2/18 Infantry (-) was attached to B Troop 1/4 Cavalry for a 40 day operation. C Company 2/18 Infantry and C Battery 1/7 Artillery remained vic QUAN LOI. The 2/28 Infantry continued to provide security for the Brigade CP and LOC NINH airfield. At 0800 hours B Company 2/28 Infantry departed LOC NINH airfield and moved by foot to vic XU7406 where they took up positions to provide security for C Battery 2/13 Artillery. Upon the departure of the 1/16 Infantry, the 2/28 Infantry (-) repositioned forces to cover the area vacated by B Company 2/28 Infantry and then conducted local patrolling vic LOC NINH. 2/28 Infantry (-) continued with 2/33 Artillery (-) in the vicinity of LOC NINH airfield.

At 230645 June B Troop 1/4 Cav and B Company 2/18 Infantry (-) began to move along Highway 13 to provide security around the destroyed bridge vic XT722-972. Upon arrival at the bridge B Company 2/18 Infantry began to recon to the north of the Bridge. B Troop 1/4 Cavalry sent a platoon to recon to the south and east of the bridge. The public works officials who were to repair the bridge never

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showed up. B Troop 1/4 Cavalry and 2/18 Infantry (-) returned to base camp area closing at 1410 hours. 1/4 Cavalry (-) remained vic HON QUAN airfield.

On 24 June at 0730 hrs C Troop 1/4 Cavalry with the recon platoon of the 2/18 Infantry moved from MINH THANH to HON QUAN. B Troop 1/4 Cavalry and A Company 2/18 Infantry moved south from HON QUAN to CHANH THANH to secure Highway 13 and to escort artillery elements to HON QUAN. A Company 2/18 Infantry made contact with a small group of VC vic XT764726 at 0950 hrs and captured one Chicom rifle, a quantity of SA ammunition and web gear. The 2/28 Infantry conducted local patrolling and S&D operations to the east and south of LOC NINH and picked up 1 VCS. The 3d Brigade CP remained vic LOC NINH. 2/18 Infantry continued to provide security for the division forward CP. At 0745 hours one platoon of B Company 2/18 Infantry departed with C Battery 1/7 Artillery as a security force. C Btry 1/7 Artillery displaced to vic XT7680 in order to support the move of 1/4 Cavalry. A Company 2/18 Infantry was attached to B Troop 1/4 Cavalry for the clearing of Highway 13 south from HON QUAN to CHON THANH. One platoon of B Company 2/18 Inf conducted a S&D operation to the east to vic XT8493 to confirm an agent report that 50 VC had been digging in at that location. The patrol found that the report was incorrect and returned to QUAN LOI at 1600 hours with negative contact. C Company 2/18 Infantry remained on standby as RRF for possible commitment to assist the 1/4 Cavalry. C Battery 1/7 Artillery and 1 platoon from B Company 2/18 Infantry returned to QUAN LOI at 241505 June. At 0805 hours B Company 2/28 Infantry picked up 1 VCS vic their perimeter and evacuated him to the District officials for investigation. A Company 2/28 Infantry sent a patrol to vic XU725091 and C Company 2/28 Infantry sent a patrol to vicinity XU760105. Both patrols had negative contact and returned to base camp by 1200 hours. 2/28 Infantry (-) and 2/33 Artillery (-) remained vic LOC NINH airfield. At 0645 hours the 1/4 Cavalry picked up A Company 2/18 Infantry at QUAN LOI and escorted C Battery 1/7 Artillery and one platoon of B Company 2/18 Infantry to a position vic XT7680. B Troop 1/4 Cav then proceeded south with B Company 2/18 Infantry to clear the road to CHON THANH. The 3 platoons of A Company 2/18 Infantry were dropped off at critical bridge sites along the way. B Troop 1/4 Cavalry then proceeded to CHON THANH to pick up 8/6 Artillery (-) who was to be escorted back to HON QUAN. At 0925 hours B Troop 1/4 Cavalry received SA fire vic XT755745 and placed artillery fire on this location with unknown results. At 0950 hrs D Troop 1/4 Cavalry with an element of A Company 2/18 Infantry received SA fire from vicinity XT764726. Artillery fire was called in immediately and a platoon from 2/18 Infantry was lifted into the area. A Company 2/18 Infantry found an old fort with a bunker in the northeast corner and a few 55 gallon drums filled with sand. A tunnel complex in the center of the fort was destroyed. On the east side of the fort an unwired mine was destroyed. In the fort A Company 2/18 Infantry captured a Chicom 56 rifle (SN614628) which had 1 round in the chamber and 2 in the magazine. A Company 2/18 Infantry found and destroyed in the fort the following items: One AT round, 31 M1 clips with ammunition, 6 BAR magazines with ammunition, 109 loose rounds of 30 cal ammunition, 2 pieces of Chicom web gear and one Chicom grenade. At 0950 hrs D Troop 1/4 Cav found a bunker complex vic XT768728. Artillery fire was called in resulting in the destruction of several of the bunkers. D Troop 1/4 Cavalry arrived at CHON THANH at 0945 hours. At this time the platoon from A Troop 1/4 Cav departed for LAI KHE where it closed at 1505 hours. C Troop 1/4 Cavalry was released from OPCON 1st Bde at 0730 hours and departed MINH THANH for HON QUAN. C Troop 1/4 Cav

235 arrived vic XT7680 at 1400 hrs to act as RRF and await the return of B Troop 1/4 Cavalry, from CHON THANH. B Troop departed with 8/6 Artillery (-) at 1235 hrs for HON QUAN. B Troop 1/4 Cavalry picked up the platoons of A Company 2/18 Infantry and together they closed into QUAN LOI at 1505 hrs. B Troop 1/4 Cavalry continued onto HON QUAN closing at 1608 hrs. C Troop 1/4 Cav closed HON QUAN at 1625 hrs where the 1/4 Cavalry was located. A Troop 1/4 Cav remained at LAI KHE and D Troop remained at PHU LOI.

At 250025 June B Company 2/28 Infantry heard noises to their front and threw a grenade. It was believed that a VC was hit but a search of the area at first light proved different. At 0700 hrs B Company 2/18 Infantry and C Company 2/18 Infantry each conducted platoon size patrols to the north and south of QUAN LOI with negative contact. The 2/18 Infantry conducted range firing for new arrivals in the QUAN LOI area. 2/28 Infantry continued to provide security for the Brigade CP and the LOC NINH airstrip. B Company 2/28 Infantry provided security for C Btry 2/13 Artillery vic XU7406. At 2103 hrs an ambush patrol from B Company 2/28 Infantry engaged 12 VC vic XU743054 with SA. The patrol fired a claymore mine on the VC, moved back and called in mortar and artillery fire on the VC. The area was searched but no VC were found. At 250920 June A and B Companies 2/28 Infantry sent out patrols to the north and east of LOC NINH to recon the high ground. All patrols closed back into the base area with negative contact. At 1520 hrs B Company 2/28 Infantry detained 3 VCS vic XU746055. The VC were turned over to district officials. At 1525 hrs A Company 2/28 Infantry dispatched a patrol to vic XU723090. The French plantation supervisor stated that there were VC located there. A Company 2/28 Infantry patrol returned at 1720 hrs. with 1 box of 7.9 MG ammunition, (Approximately 250 rounds) and a pack containing a small quantity of medical supplies. B and C Troop 1/4 Cav continued to provide security for the HON QUAN airfield and conducted extensive care and maintenance of equipment.

On 26 June at 0005 hrs B Company 2/18 Infantry ambush patrol engaged an estimated company size VC force vic XT8068898. Contact was maintained for approximately 20 minutes until the VC fled to the east, southeast and south. A platoon from B Company 2/18 Infantry was dispatched immediately to reinforce the ambush patrol. While attempting to reach the patrol they encountered an unknown number of VC approximately 1000 meters west. Contact was maintained for 5 minutes. During this battle 3 VC were killed by body count. When the battlefield was policed the following items were found: 4 sets of web gear, 8 frag grenades, 5 Chicom type grenades, 2 hammocks, 3 ponchos, 400 rds 7.62 ammunition, 4 AR 74 magazines with ammunition, 1 BAR magazine with ammuntion, 1 Chicom drum magazine with canvas bag, 2 empty Chicom MG boxes, 1 first aid packet, 1 entrenching tool, and 200 feet of detonating cord. All items except the two weapons were destroyed. Friendly losses were 4 KIA and 5 WIA. At first light A Company 2/18 Infantry moved out in an attempt to catch the VC but had no contact. After completely policing the battlefield and surrounding areas a total of 5 VC KIA by count were found and it is estimated that there were another 21 VC KIA. A Company 2/18 Infantry closed QUAN LOI at 261250 June. The 2/18 Infantry, C Btry 1/7 Arty remained vic QUAN LOI. The 2/28 Infantry continued to provide security for the Bde and the LOC NINH airstrip. At 261100 June 1 platoon from C Company 2/28 Infantry conducted a combat assault into an LZ vic XU768072, with negative contact and S&D north to vic XU770120. The platoon then moved southwest back to LOC NINH closing at 261450 June with negative contact. At 261500 June A Company 2/28 Inf was allerted for movement to SONG BE.

They began moving at 261700 June. They closed at 261915 June and were attached to 1/28 Infantry. 2/28 Inf remained vic LOC NINH airfield. B Company 2/28 Inf remained vic XU7604. At first light 1/4 Cav (-) moved to the east and south of QUAN LOI in conjunction with 2/28 Inf in an attempt to intercept the VC escaping from the 2/28 Inf. At 1345 hrs B Troop 1/4 Cav (-) and C Troop moved to the north to recon the route to the area around QUAN LOI as originally planned. 1 platoon from B and C Troop went north to the bridge vic XT722972 in an attempt to find the crossing. ARVN forces moved south from LOC NINH with a bulldozer and began work on a ford on the south of the river. 1/4 Cav conducted MEDCAP activities in the village vic XT7083 and XT7282. Elements of the 1/4 Cav closed HON QUAN at 1828 hrs. 1/4 Cav (-) remained vic HON QUAN. 1 platoon of B and C Troop remained vic bridge at XT722972. The 1/28 Infantry came under the OPCON of the 3d Bde upon closure of the 3d Bde TAC CP at SONG BE at 1850 hrs. The 3d Bde aviation section conducted starlight missions on route 13 from LAI KHE north to the Cambodian border from 2000 to 2130 hrs and detected no VC movement.

On 27 June the 2/18 Infantry plan was cancelled and the battalion conducted local patrolling vic QUAN LOI airfield. The 1/28 Inf continued to provide security for the NUI BA RA airfield. At 1950 hrs an ambush patrol from A Company 1/28 Inf while leaving their RON positions made contact with an estimated squad of VC vic YU251093 resulting in 1 US KIA and 3 US WIA. Fire was returned with unknown results. At 0855 hrs B Company 1/28 Inf destroyed 16 huts and shot 4 pigs vic YU266096. At 0900 hrs B Company 1/28 Inf destroyed 3 river craft vic YU270098. At 0935 hrs a fire team orbiting this area received SA fire from vic YU258136. Fire was returned with unknown results. 1/28 Inf then began to S&D to the west closing into RON position at 1945 hrs. The 2/28 Inf began movement by air from LOC NINH to SONG BE. C Company 2/28 Inf along with elements of Headquarters 2/28 Inf remained vic LOC NINH airstrip. 1/4 Cav upon cancellation of the originally scheduled operation for 27 June was released from OPCON 3d Bde at 1200 hrs. The 173d Avn Company moved [illegible] 12 tons of rice captured by ARVN forces Vic XU9914 and distributed it to the local villagers. The 2/33 Artillery (-) moved from vic LOC NINH airfield to vic SONG BE.

On 28 June at 1540 hrs B Company 1/28 Infantry captured a British 9 mm sten submachinegun, 2 magazines of ammunition, a medical kit and medicine in a hut vic YU237085. The 1/28 Inf continued to S&D to the west of its RON position reaching the SONG BE River [illegible] vic YU198090. An attempt was made to cross the river using ropes. The attempt was unsuccessful because the heavy rains caused the river to rise and the current to become very swift. The operation originally planned was then postponed and the 1/28 Inf moved north to the bridge vic YU189110 where they crossed the river and where picked up by vehicle. The 1/28 Inf closed into NUI BA RA airfield at 281505 June 66. At 0900 hrs elements of the 2/28 Inf remaining at LOC NINH began movement of personnel and equipment to SONG BE by 0130. The last elements of 2/28 Inf closed into NUI BA RA airfield at 1730 hrs. At 0930 hrs A Company 2/28 Infantry conducted a combat assault in an LZ vic YU185-035 to secure a base for C Btry 2/13 Arty. The planned operation was postponed and C Btry 2/13 Artillery did not move. A Company 2/28 Inf then conducted local patrolling vic the LZ with negative contact. The 2/28 Infantry (-) remained Vic NUI BA RA Airfield. A Company 2/28 Infantry remained vic YU185035.

AVDB-HT-C 20 August 1966
SUBJECT: Combat Operation After Action Report (MACV/RCS/J3/32)

257 On 29 June at 1051 hrs 1/28 Inf conducted a combat assault into LZ RED vic YT197995. The 1/28 Inf had negative contact on landing and closed into the LZ by 1150 Hrs. The 1/28 Inf then began S&D to the east with A company on the north and B Company in the center and C Co on the south. At 1215 hrs C Co 1/28 Inf found an extensive tunnel network and 10 tons of rice stored in bins above the ground vic 698991. All were well camouflaged. The rice was destroyed. At 1305 hrs C Co 1/28 Inf located a small VC base camp vic YT199989. In the base camp was 200 lbs of rice, 2 bicycles, 4 bunkers, 1 tunnel 50 meters long and fresh foot prints leading to 7 huts. All were destroued. At the same location C Co 1/28 Inf found a brief case of ammunition, documents and medical supplies which were evacuated. At 1630 hrs A Co 1/28 Inf made contact with 2 VC vic XT208997. The VC were taken under fire with unkn results. At 1915 hrs1/28 Inf closed into their RON position vic YT204994 with no further contact. At 1010 hrs C Btry 2/13 Arty arrived in the area of A Company 2/28 Inf and A Co 2/28 Inf assumed responsibility for security of the Arty base. The 2/28 Inf (-) remained vic NUINARAAirfield as Brigade reserve and security for the airfield. At 1400 Hrs A Co 2/28 Inf had 3 WIA from a booby trapped grenade vic YU200045. At 1650 hrs an A Co 2/28 Inf patrol made contact with about 20 VC vic YU191041. A short fire fight developed. Gunships and artillery were called in on the VC with Unk results. The VC broke contact at 1910 hrs and fled to the north. The 2/28 Inf (-) remained vic NUI BA RA Airfield. A Company 2/28 Inf and C Btry 2/13 Arty remained vic YU183036. A Co 1/28 Inf picked up 1 VCS who was evacuated for further investigation

On 30 June at 1500 hrs 1/28 Inf conducted a combat assault from LZ RED into OBJ 1. Upon landing 1/28 Inf received scattered sniper fire. Patrols searched the area with negative contact. At 1020 hrs 1/28 Inf was ordered to QUAN LOI. 1/28 Inf (-) was on OBJ 1 and A Co 1/28 Inf was on LZ RED. Both elements were moved from their respective locations to NUI BA RA Airfield closing at 1350 hrs. The last lift of C Co 1/28 Inf was lifted directly from OBJ 1 to QUAN LOI. 1/28 Inf (-) was then lifted from NUI BA RA Airfield to QUAN LOI. Upon closing QUAN LOI the 1/28 Inf came under OPCON of 1st Brigade. At 0900 hrs B Co 2/28 Inf conducted a combat assault vic YU190134 and secured the area for arrival of B Btry 1/5 Arty by CH47. At 1500 hrs A Co 2/28 Inf patrol found several well camouflaged bunkers with overhead cover, several houses with under ground tunnels and one bag of rice. All were destroyed. At 1510 hrs C Btry 2/13 Arty moved to NUI BA RA Airfield and at 1545 hrs A Co 2/28 Inf moved by foot from their RON position to NUI BA RA Airfield closing at 301745 Jun. 2/28 Inf (-) remained at NUI BA RA Airfield. B Co 2/28 Inf and B Btry remained vic YU190134.

On 1 July 2/28 Inf (-) continued to provide security for the Brigade CP and NUI BA RA Airfield. Local patrolling was conducted with negative contact. 2/28 Inf remained vic NUI BA RA Airfield and A Company 2/28 Inf and B Btry 1/5 Arty (-) remained vic BASE 2.

On 2 July the 3d Brigade Task Force departed the SONG BE area and returned to the LOC NINH area and prepared for possible commitment in that area. 2/28 Inf moved from the NUI BA RA Airstrip to the LOC NINH Airstrip. The 1/16 Inf was alerted to be prepared to move from LAI KHE to the LOC NINH area. At 1135 hrs the Battelion was instructed to move lead elements to the LAI KHE Airstrip. At 1215 hrs 1st lift departed LAI KHE. At 1735 hrs the 1st lift of the 1/16 Inf departed. The Brigade CP returned to LOC NINH.

On 3 July the 1/16 Inf remained on alert for possible commitment into LZ BLACK or to reinforce HAN QUAN or QUAN LOI. The 1/16 Inf continued to assist in the defense of the LOC NINH airfield. At 2030 hrs A Co 1/16 Inf began to S&D to the northeast to vic XU773111 and XU773140. At 0930 hrs the remaining elements of the 2/28 Inf closed LOC NINH area. At 0715 hrs C Co 2/28 Inf moved west from LOC NINH to vic XU685066 in order to secure the area for C Btry 2/13 Arty. 2 platoons of B Co 2/28 Inf secured the road from LOC NINH to XU685066. At 1130 hrs C Btry 2/13 Arty moved by road to their location, closing at 1202 hrs. B 2/28 Inf (-) remained vic LOC NINH Airfield. C Co 2/28 Inf and C Btry 2/13 Arty remained vic XU685066.

On 4 July at 2030 hrs A Co 1/16 Inf began to move to the northeast from LOC NINH. At 0550 hrs A Co 1/16 Inf dropped off a platoon ambush vic XU764092. A Co 1/16 Inf (-) continued to the north to vic XU773140 arriving at 0800 hrs. A Co 1/16 Inf then returned to battalion area closing at 1320 hrs. At 1215 hrs B Co 1/16 Inf was placed on 30 minute alert for possible commitment to assist in protection of a downed CH47. B Co 1/16 Inf was taken off alert at 1315 hrs when A Co 2/28 Inf secured the downed CH47. The 1/16 Inf remained vic LOC NINH Airfield. At 0735 hrs C Co 2/28 Inf moved to vic XU589064 to secure a new area for C Btry 2/13 Arty. C Btry closed into the new area at 1302 hrs. At 0800 hrs A Co 2/28 Inf began to S&D to the northwest. At 1225 hrs A Co was ordered to move south to vic XU697101 where the CH47 had gone down. A Co 2/28 Inf arrived at this location at 1315 hrs. A CIDG company arrived at about the same time and a perimeter was formed around the CH47 with A Co 2/28 Inf on the east and CIDG Co on the west. At 1715 hrs 2 men from C Co 2/28 Inf were injured by a short 81mm mortar, a round fired by C Co 2/28 Inf.

On 5 July the 1/16 Inf (-) continued to provide security for the LOC NINH Airfield. At 2015 hrs C Co 1/16 Inf began movement to a patrol base vic XU 803057 where they closed at 0340 hrs. Upon closing C Co 1/16 Inf sent out 2 platoon size ambush patrols vic XU814053 and XU812060. C Co 1/16 Inf continued patrolling vic their patrol base until 1500 hrs when they moved to POSITION MIKE XU770040 to rest. At 2015 hrs they moved southwest to a patrol base vic XT735997. At 0630 hrs one platoon of B Co 1/16 Inf conducted a combat assult into LZ BETTY (XU808123) they then moved southwest back to battalion base area closing at 1125 hrs with neg contact. At 0640 hrs one platoon of B Co 1/16 conducted a combat assault into LZ MARY (XU766034) and then moved back to battalion base closing at 1425 hrs with neg contact. The 1/16 Inf (-) remained vic LOC NINH. A Co 2/28 Inf and one CIDG Co remained overnight vic XU697055. C Co 2/28 Inf and one CIDG company continued to provide security for C Btry 2/13 Arty vic XU689064. At 0800 hrs A Co 2/28 Inf began to S&D north to vic XU700110 and then southwest to the battalion base area closing at 0915 hrs with negative contact. At 1318 hrs a platoon from B Co 2/28 Inf patrolled vic XU715076 and returned at 1635 hrs with negative contact.. The 2/28 Inf (-) remained vic LOC NINH. C Co 2/28 Inf and C Btry 2/13 Arty remained vic XU689064.

On 6 July at 2015 hours C Company 1/16 Infantry moved from POSITION MIKE (XU770040) to a patrol base vic XT733994. At 0700 hours C Company 1/16 Infantry sent out a platoon size patrol to recon Hwy 13 from XT720986 to XU723005. At 1035 hours the

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Recon Platoon 1/16 Infantry was lifted into LZ YELLOW (XU725013) and moved south to block and recon the area around LZ YELLOW. The Recon Platoon 1/16 Inf then was ordered to recon to the west of the stream vic XU712013. C Company 1/16 Inf found 5 VC bodies vic XU725013 and 5 VC bodies vic XU726016. It was believed that these bodies were from the battle of 30 June. The Recon Platoon also found the following equipment: 2 AT rockets, 5 Chicom Grenades, 5 Rifle grenades, 1 sixty mm mortar round, 250rounds linked 30 cal ammunition, 30 rounds 30 cal M1 ammunition, 30 rounds Chicom 7.62 carbine ammunition, 1 gun cart and a T and E mechanism for 7.62 machinegun. C Company 1/16 Inf then moved to LZ YELLOW where they wre extracted by UH1D at 061520 July 1966. The Recon platoon remained vic LZ YELLOW and attempted to ambush any VC coming into the area. At 1600 hrs the recon platoon began to S&D north back to LOC NINH closing At 1745 hrs. At 1010 hrs one platoon of A Company 1/16 Inf conducted a combat assault into a LZ vic XU830068 and began to S&D to the northwest. They were extracted from a PZ vic XU819085 at 1910 hrs with negative contact. At 0655 hrs the recon platoon and the AT platoon 2/28 Inf began to S&D to the northwest vic XU710125. There were approximately 100 emplacements and bunkers discovered vic XU710119. 12 bunkers were destroyed. The recon platoon and AT platoon returned to LOC NINH closing at 1430 hrs with negative contact. B Company 2/28 Inf relieved C Company 2/28 Inf of the security mission around C Btry 2/13 Arty. The relief was complete at 0945 hrs and C Company 2/28 Inf moved to a patrol base vic XU700109. A patrol was dispatched to the northwest and found a frequently used spring vic XU712095. At 1330 hrs C 2/28 Inf found 3 huts and 3 observation post on hill 182 vic XU693120. Arty was called into the area resulting in 4 secondary explosions. C Company 2/28 Inf departed the patrol base at 1515 hrs and closed back into the battalion base area at 1635 hrs. 2/28 Inf (-) continued to secure LOC NINH area. B Company 2/28 Inf remained with C Btry 2/13 Arty.

On 7 Jul at 2000 hrs B Company 1/16 Inf began to S&D east to vic XU 773072, then north to XU775085, southwest to XU750020, and then northwest to the battalion base area closing at 1600 hrs with negative contact. At 0859 hrs the recon platoon 1/16 Inf conducted a combat assault into LZ MARY and S&D northwest to the battalion base area closing at 1330 hrs with negative contact. The 1/16 Inf remained vic LOC NINH Airfield. At 0820 hrs A Company 2/28 Inf conducted a combat assault around the village vic XU712152. A Company 2/28 Inf searched the village for VC and VCS and completed the search at 1040 hrs with negative results. At1113 hrs a patrol from A Company 2/28 Inf made contact with 5 VC vic XU707147. SA and arty fire was placed on the VC and it was estimated that 1 VC was Killed and 1 wounded. The patrol pursued the VC but they fled. At 1430 hrs A Company 2/28 Inf found 3 huts and 2 foxholes vic XU705146. VC propaganda was found in the huts and destroyed. A Company 2/28 Inf was extracted and closed the battalion base at 1615 hrs. B Company 2/28 Inf conducted extensivepatrolling and continued to secure C Btry 2/13 Arty.

8 July 1/16 Inf commenced movement by CV2 air craft from LOC NINH to QUAN LOI. At 1430 hrs a UH1D began to shuttle the 1/16 Inf to QUAN LOI. The last element of 1/16 Inf departed LOC NINH a 1630 hrs and upon closure into QUAN LOI came under OPCON of the 1st Brigade. 2/28 Inf at 0730 began clearing the road from LOC NINH to XU691065 for movement of C Btry 2/13 Arty. By 0920 hrs B Company

2/28 Inf (-) had secured the western portion of the route and the recon platoon and AT platoon of 2/28 Inf had secured the eastern portion of the road. C 2/13 Arty then commenced their movement to LOC NINH closing at 1310 hrs. B 2/28 Inf and the recon platoon along with the AT platoon closed LOC NINH at 1405 hrs with negative contact. The 2/28 Inf assumed responsibility for the sector vacated by 1/16 Inf. The 2/28 Inf remained vic LOC NINH.

On 9 July the 2/28 Inf continued to provide security for the LOC NINH Airfield and the Brigade CP. The 2/28 Inf dispatched 4 platoon size patrols. All patrols closed back into the battalion base area by 1320 hrs with negative contact. The 2/28 Inf and Brigade CP remained vic LOC NINH Airstrip.

At 0330 10 July 2/28 Inf (-) began to S&D to vic XU702100. A Company 2/28 Inf (-) returned to LOC NINH Airstrip at 0832 hrs with negative contact. At 0858 hrs one platoon from C Company 2/28 Inf S&D to vic XU765082. The Platoon returned to LOC NINH at 1135 hrs with negative contact. 2/28 Inf and Bde CP remained vic LOC NINH airfield.

On 11 July 1966 at 0755 hrs the recon platoon 2/28 Inf began S&D west to a patrol base vic XU692092 where they conducted extensive patrolling. The recon platoon returned at 1335 hours with negative contact. At 0800 hrs a platoon from B Company 2/28 Inf began to S&D southeast to vic XU755061. B Company 2/28 Inf closed back into LOC NINH at 1553 hrs with negative contact. At 0905 hrs one platoon from C Company 2/28 Inf began to S&D to vic XU765105 and returned to LOC NINH at 1300 hrs with negative contact. The 2/28 Inf remained vic LOC NINH Airstrip.

On 12 July 2/28 Inf continued to provide security for the Brigade CP and LOC NINH Airfield and conducted local security patrols. The 2/28 Infantry also conducted small unit training in hand and arm signals, immediate action drills and weapon zeroing. The battalion remained vic LOC NINH Airfield.

On 13 July at 0800 hrs B Company 2/28 Inf (-) S&D to vic XU692095. B Company 2/28 Inf destroyed on Chicom grenade, (booby trap) vic XU715104. B Company 2/28 Inf (-) returned to LOC NINH at 1512 hrs. The 2/28 Inf remained vic LOC NINH airstrip along with 3d Bde CP.

On 14 July the 2/28 Inf continued to provide security to the LOC NINH Airfield and conducted local security patrols around the LOC NINH area. A Company 2/28 Inf was on a one hr alert as RRF for the ARVN convoy between AN LOC and LOC NINH. The 3d Bde CP moved to LAI KHE at 141300 July. The Bde TAC CP remained vic LOC NINH Airfield. The 1/18 Infantry replaced the 2/28 and the 2d Brigade assumed responsibility for the LOC NINH area, thus ending Operation EL PASO II.

12. RESULTS

a. Friendly Losses:

3 June	9 WIA, 2 KIA
4 June	10 WIA, 5 KIA
5 June	2 WIA

8 June	16 WIA, 1 KIA
9 June	4 WIA
11 June	33 WIA, 33 KIA
12 June	1 WIA
14 June	1 WIA
15 June	1 WIA
23 June	8 WIA
24 June	4 WIA, 1 KIA
25 June	11 WIA
29 June	6 WIA
5 July	2 WIA
7 July	4 WIA, 2 KIA
9 July	41 WIA, 12 KIA
10 July	9 WIA, 3 KIA
13 July	3 WIA
TOTAL:	165 WIA 59 KIA

b. Enemy Losses:

5 June	1 KIA (BC), 17 VCS, 15 rounds 81mm mortar
6 June	1 VCS
8 June	105 KIA (DC), 100 KIA (Est), one 57 rr, 1 AK47
10 June	1 KIA (BC), 1 Chicom AKW rifle captured
11 June	108 KIA (BC), 1 VVC, 1 German 7.92 MG, 1 RRG-2, 1 Chicom carbine, 27 rounds 60mm mortar, 1 60 mortar
12 June	3 VCS
13 June	12 rounds 81mm mortar
14 June	1 VCS
17 June	2 VCC, 3 VCS, 1 US carbine, 1 rifle grenade launcher
18 June	250 lbs salt destroyed
20 June	34 VCS
22 June	4 RPG-2 rounds and 80 rounds 7.62 ammunition captured
24 June	1 VCS, 109 rounds 30 cal ammunition, 1 AT and 1 AP mine, miscellaneous equipment destroyed.
25 June	3 VCS, 3 rounds 60mm mortar
26 June	5 KIA (BC), 15 KIA (Pos), 1 Russian carbine, 1 PRG-2 rocket launcher with 1 round, 400 rounds 7.62 ammunition
28 June	1 submachine gun
29 June	1 KIA (BC), 1 VCS, 1 M1 rifle, 10.5 tons rice, 2 bicycles
30 June	1 KIA (BC), 1 VCS
1 July	25 tons rice
2 July	1 VCC
4 July	2 KIA (DC), 1 (Est)
7 July	2 KIA (Est), 4 VCS
TOTAL:	224 KIA (BC), 118 KIA (Est), 3 VCC, 52 VCS

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13. ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS:

The logistical base for the 3d Brigade Task Force was located at the Brigade base camp in LAI KHE for the entire operation. TheBrigade elements were resupplied daily by CV2 to the forward logistical base and from there to the forward bases by UH1D helicopter as required. Maintenance control teams were provided by the direct support unit, C Company 701st Maintenance Battalion. Equipment which could not be repaired or replaced on site was exchanged from the base camp. Medical service was provided by B Company 1st Medical Battalion. A MASH surgery team attached, provided the medical facility with the capability of performing major surgery. Patients were evacuated as required. No major logistical problems were encountered.

14. SPECIAL EQUIPMENT AND TECHNIQUES:

a. The technique of cordon and search of a village was almost perfected in the operation by the 2/28 Infantry on 20 June. The essential points to be stressed are:

(1) Cordoning the village without being detected.

(2) Psy/Ops broadcasts to explain to the people what is happening and what they should do.

(3) A ready airmobile RRF to block escape of any personnel who slip the cordon.

(4) A black list of known or suspected VC.

(5) ARVN assistance and district assistance in searching and questioning.

(6) A definite technique of questioning and identifying all personnel.

(7) MEDCAP and civic action activities.

b. The US Air Force MEDEVAC helicopters were used to evacuate wounded from dense rubber trees on 11 June 1966.

15. COMMANDER'S ANALYSIS:

Some lessons learned during Operation EL PASO II were:

a. The VC attempted to fortify the high ground around LOC NINH in preparation for an attack on that town. Extensive patrolling not only detected these VC fortifications but decisively defeated a VC battalion and disrupted VC plans. The best defense is aggressive and continuous patrolling to insure the enemy cannot move in and build up for an attack.

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b. Air traffic control was furnished by Pathfinders from the 1st Aviation Battalion. Recommend a Pathfinder team be attached to the 3d Brigade when it is necessary to support a fixed airfield. Minimum equipment necessary will include runway lights and radio communications with FM and UHF capabilities. Personnel should not be rotated throughout the operation without proper coordination with Brigade Headquarters.

c. When Air Force aircraft are utilized to lift elements of this Brigade it is imperative that an air combat control team be established at both the point of embarkation and the point of debarkation. This is not only to have adequate control to prevent a serious accident but to be able to give instructions to the pilots so as to make loading and unloading more efficient.

d. The FAC's need a radio with the capability of covering the same frequency range as the ground troops. All command frequencies of units within the 3d Brigade except the Brigade Command Frequency are above 51.0 MC FM which puts them out of range of the present FAC radios. It is necessary for the FAC to be able to monitor the actions of the ground commanders in order to understand what is going on and enabling him to provide much better close air support with much greater assurances of troop safety.

SIDNEY M MARKS
Colonel, Infantry
Commanding

Copies Furnished:

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

ANNEX Q

AFTER ACTION REPORT DIVISION ARTILLERY

CONFIDENTIAL

HEADQUARTERS
1ST INFANTRY DIVISION ARTILLERY
APO US Forces 96345

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AVDB-RAS 23 September 1966

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

THRU: Command Channels

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

1. (U) Operation EL PASO II/III - security, search and destroy.

2. (U) 2 June 1966 - 3 Sep 1966.

3. (C) CONCEPT OF OPERATION:

a. Artillery Support

1st Inf Div Arty	Col. Marlin W. Camp
2/13 Arty (-)	Lt. Col. Gerald E. Robinson
DS 1st Bde (9 June-28 June) with	
C/2/33 Arty atchd (9 June-28 June)	
D/1/5 Arty atchd (13 June-27 June)	
B/8/6 Arty atchd (10 June-18 June) w/fires controlled by Div Arty	
2/33 Arty (-)	Lt. Col. Frank R. Sims (2 June-15 July)
DS 3d Bde (2 June-16 July) with	Lt. Col. James R. Koenig
C/2/13 Arty atchd (6 June-16 July)	(15 July-16 July)
C/1/7 Arty atchd (8 June-27 June)	
B/1/5 Arty atchd (27 June-16 July)	
8/6 Arty (-)	Lt. Col. John M. McGiffert
GS (18 June-27 June)(6 July-17 July)	
DS 2/18 Inf (27 June-6 July) with	
C/1/7 Arty atchd (27 June-8 July) with	
B/1/5 Arty (-) (3-how) atchd (1 July-2 July)	
A/2/33 Arty atchd (30 June-4 July)	
1/LHAA (17 July-21 Aug)	
D/8/6 Arty atchd (27 June-3 Sep)	
B/8/6 Arty atchd (9 June-3 Sep)	
1/5 Arty (-)	Lt. Col. David C. Rogers
DS 1st Bde (6 July-16 July) with	
A/1/5 Arty atchd (6 July-11 July)	
A/2/33 Arty atchd (6 July-11 July)	
C/1/7 Arty atchd (8 July-12 July)	
B/1/7 Arty atchd (13 July-16 July)	

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1/7 Arty (-) Lt. Col. Carroll S. Meek
DS 2d Bde (17 July-16 Aug) with
B/1/7 Arty atchd (17 July-20 Aug)
A/1/5 Arty atchd (17 July-16 Aug)
B/2/33 Arty atchd (17 July-1 Aug)

b. Deployment: Artillery support was provided by assigning 105mm Bns in direct support of the Brigades. These artillery battalions varied in size from two to four batteries. For certain special operations a Battalion (-) or one battery was attached to a single infantry battalion. The deployment and fires of the direct support artillery units were controlled by the supported unit (for details see appropriate Brigade reports). General support and reinforcing artillery was provided by 155mm and 8 inch howitzers from the 8/6 Arty. The GS and GSR artillery batteries were positioned at various times in the AN LOC - QUAN LOI - CHON THANH base camp areas, or, for special one or two day operations, moved to forward field positions to provide support; such as from 7-11 July when the 8/6 Arty was located at "artillery position 1" and fired in support of 1st Bde convoy ambushed on 9 July. The GS artillery fires were controlled by the forward element of Division Artillery. For some special operations the 8/6 Arty was assigned a direct support mission.

c. Fire Support Coordination: Boundaries between AO's were established as fire coordination lines. The Div Arty Fire Support Element moved forward and was co-located with the Division TOC.

d. Army Aviation Support: Division Artillery Aviation Section, augmented with one O-1F aircraft from the 74th Aviation Company, provided aerial observation over convoys and Brigade areas of operation during daylight hours. Radio relay, artillery adjustment, recon and command liaison were performed as required. The aircraft were maintained and operated from Division Artillery field locations. Aircraft requiring major repair or intermediate maintenance and inspection were replaced with aircraft available at the PHU LOI base camp. Total hours flown on operation EL PASO II/III are as follows:

OH-13's	1008 hrs
O-1F	151 hrs
Total	1159 hrs

e. Artillery Warning to Aircraft: Artillery/mortar advisory was provided by each Brigade in their respective areas of operation. Each direct support battalion provided information to the Brigade advisory center. Advisory information for the QUAN LOI and AN LOC area was provided by the air traffic controllers from the 1st Avn Bn. This headquarters controlled all artillery in the QUAN LOI/AN LOC area and forwarded the advisory information to the air traffic controller. The system was considered to be adequate.

f. Artillery LNO's and FO's: Direct support artillery battalions provided LNO's and FO's to the supported unit. 8/6th Arty and Div Arty provided LNO's to ARVN.

g. Div Arty Base Organization and Security: CO HHB Div Arty was responsible for organization of the Div Arty base and coordination of security with the 2d Bn, 18th Infantry while in the forward base areas.

h. Metro: Electronic met messages were received from the Div Arty met section at PHU LOI (until it became inoperable) and from PHUOC VINH and CU CHI. A visual flight team was available in the QUAN LOI area. This team corrected the electronic met messages with actual wind data at QUAN LOI. This correction was not always accomplished due to the weather limitations on visual met observations. However, in most cases, the electronic met proved very satisfactory.

i. Control and Clearances of Fires: Div Arty and each direct support Bn cleared fires with the ARVN headquarters nearest their locations for their responsible units. Bde and Bn AO's were cleared as free fire areas prior to conduct of an operation.

j. Artillery Preparation Fires on LZ's: Preparations were planned and executed by direct support battalions and reinforced on-call by general support artillery. Units conducted registrations or fired check rounds in the vicinity of LZ's prior to firing preparations.

4. (U) EXECUTION: For narrative summary of operations see appropriate Brigade reports.

5. (U) Breakout of ammunition expenditures and artillery missions are included in Brigade reports. The 8/6 Arty while in a GS role fired 14,250 rounds HE, 344 rounds WP and 284 rounds Illum of 155mm and 9,449 rounds of 8 inch during 4,282 missions. (87 registrations, 3,080 H&I, 371 anti-personnel, 270 anti-equipment and 474 others).

6. (C) ADMINISTRATION:

a. Participating Strength:

	Start of Operation	End of Operation	Casualties
Div Arty (-)	60	100	1 WIA
8/6th Arty (-)	299	264	0
2/33d Arty (-)	249	249	0
2/13th Arty (-)	318	316	2 WIA
1/5th Arty (-)	289	278	0
1/7th Arty (-)	220	214	0

b. Awards and Decorations: Div Arty personnel received 177 awards and decorations for actions during EL PASO II/III.

7. (C) INTELLIGENCE/CIVIL AFFAIRS:

a. Intelligence and Civil Affairs: 1st Infantry Division G2 and Brigade S2's provided the intelligence support before and during the operation. A great deal of low level intelligence information was received from the Special Forces camps at AN LOC, LOC NINH and SONG BE and also some ARVN authorities at sector and village level.

b. Surveillance: Electronic surveillance equipment was not employed by Div Arty. Red Haze and SLAR flights provided targets which were fired on by artillery. Surveillance of target areas and suspect locations was accomplished by aerial observers during times of good visibility.

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8. (C) LOGISTICS AND SUPPLY:

a. General: Logistical support of the artillery elements during the operation (particularly during EL PASO II) was complicated by frequent cross attachment of batteries, both divisional and non-divisional, from their parent battalion to other battalions and by attachment to infantry elements. The frequent movement and change in assignment resulted in delays and misrouting of some supplies. This adverse condition was partially compensated for by having all artillery trains elements operate from LAI KHE and coordinate closely and directly on logistical support. The Div Arty S4 section acted as a clearing house and radio relay station in an effort to keep parts and supplies moving to the proper battery.

b. Ammunition was supplied by a combination of means. The basic requirement was fulfilled by Air Force C-123 or C-130 lift from BIEN HOA to the airstrip closest to each battery position. The ammunition was then shuttled to the battery by vehicle or helicopter. This system was supplemented by a large initial overland movement of ammunition from LONG BINH to CHON THANH when the GS battalion was committed. On two occasions ammunition was lifted from base stocks at LAI KHE directly to battery positions. This base stock was subsequently replaced by Air Force lift from BIEN HOA. Movement of ammunitions to and from the LZ's by helicopter became more effective and less time consuming as A 22 containers and slings became available. At the close of EL PASO II, the Div Arty S-4 could move 1000 rounds of prepackaged ammunition to any position within one hour.

c. Other supplies: The operation of a single logistical base and the responsiveness of the S&T element there resulted in excellent support of the forward elements. The only problem concerning these supplies was caused by the frequent movement and cross attachment as discussed above.

d. Maintenance: Company C, 701st Maintenance Battalion provided outstanding direct support maintenance and back-up organizational maintenance for the forward elements.

e. Medical: Medical support of artillery units was provided by organic medical sections. Medical evacuation was to the nearest clearing location or to a specific medical facility in special cases. Non-emergency cases were evacuated routinely by resupply aircraft.

f. Transportation: Sufficient ground transportation means were introduced into the operational area to satisfy artillery requirements and, to a large extent, fulfill the short haul requirements of various infantry and support elements. Aerial resupply worked well despite bad weather and soft airstrips.

g. Summary: Logistical support of the 1st Infantry Division Artillery in this rapidly moving operation was adequate.

9. (C) COMMUNICATIONS: The RC-292 antenna was elevated an additional 24 feet by using a mast kit (AB 235/C) and stakes (GP-2). This helped overcome the effect of heavy vegatation and dampness and provided a good readable signal to about 50 miles. A system of mounting radios in the CP tent without the use of remotes was employed and proved very effective.

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10. (C) MEDICAL:

a. Outpatient: During the operation of the Div Arty medical aid section in the forward area from 9 June to 26 July a total of 202 patients were treated as follows:

(1)	URI	57
(2)	Skin disease	34
(3)	Gastro intestinal	14
(4)	VD	5
(5)	Possible malaria	1
(6)	Insect bite	3
(7)	Injuries	61
(8)	Other	20
(9)	Vietnamese Nationals	7

Of the injuries, there were only five that were injured from hostile actions.

b. Field Sanitation: Sanitation and mess facilities were generally adequate but required constant attention.

11. (C) CONCLUSIONS AND LESSONS LEARNED:

a. Conclusion: Artillery adequately and continuously supported the operation.

b. Lessons Learned:

(1) Combined artillery-air operations can be conducted simultaneously in the same area. Detailed pre-planning to include the establishment of safe air corridors allowed the continuation of artillery preparations during airmobile operations. The establishment of fire coordination lines with artillery employed on one side and air on the other enhanced this continuous fire support capability.

(2) Infantry and armored cavalry platoon sergeants and platoon leaders must be thoroughly trained in artillery adjustment and observer procedure. This is essential so that they can call for artillery fires when their assigned artillery forward observer is wounded or out of action.

(3) Use of airborne artillery observers proved effective. They were able to rapidly report ground activity not detectable by personnel on the ground and provided accurate and timely observed artillery support to the ground gaining arms.

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(4) Habitual association of units should be maintained in the interest of unity of effort and timely response to orders. Only in cases of tactical necessity should batteries be attached to other than their parent unit.

FOR THE COMMANDER:

/s/Thonas M. Bowes
/t/THOMAS M. BOWES
Major, Artillery
Adjutant

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Major, Artillery