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Operation DENVER

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HEADQUARTERS, 173d AIRBORNE BRIGADE (SEPARATE)
APO SF 96250

OPERATION DENVER

AVAD-SC

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11 17 JUN 66

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

12 33b.

THRU: Commanding General
II Field Force, Vietnam
APO U.S. Forces 96227

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CASPER

TO: Commander
U.S. Military Assistance Command, Vietnam
ATTN: J34
APO U.S. Forces 96243

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OT-RD-66X256

In accordance with MACV Directive 335-6, the following report is submitted:

173d AIRBORNE BRIGADE (SEPARATE) OPERATION DENVER

1. GENERAL: Operation DENVER was conducted in the vicinity of Song Be Sector in the northern half of Phuoc Long Province during the period 10 April to 25 April 1966. The objective of the operation was to locate and capture or destroy Viet Cong and North Vietnamese Army personnel, supplies, and equipment.

The 173d Airborne Brigade (Separate) was the controlling Headquarters. Brig Gen Paul F. Smith is the reporting officer for this report.

The Task Organization and Task Force Commanders for the operation were as follows:

- | | |
|------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| a. Task Force 1/503 - Lt Col Tyler | Task Force 2/503 - Lt Col Walsh |
| 1st Bn (Abn), 503d Inf | 2d Bn (Abn), 503d Inf |
| 1 Sqd, Ingr Co | 1 Sqd, 173d Ingr Co |
| TRU Team | TRU Team |
| FAC Team | FAC Team |
| <u>1/1AR - Lt Col Preece</u> | <u>3/319 Arty - Lt Col Nordin</u> |
| 161st Fld Btry, RMZA | Task Force Rear - Lt Col Siska |
| Trp B, 17 Cav | 173d Spt Bn (-) |
| Co D, 16 Armor | 173d Admin Co |
| 173d Ingr Co | 105 Fld Btry, RAA |
| Co A, 82d Avn | 1st APC Trp, 173d |
| 173d Spt Bn (Fwd) | |

Rear Detachments of all assigned and attached units.

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2. Concept of Operation:

a. At 092000H Apr 1966, 173d Abn Bde (Sep) OPORD 5-66 was published outlining plans for the conduct of Operation DENVER. Because of the short notice on which the operation was initiated, the OPORD was concerned primarily with air movement of the Brigade into the Song Be area. Specific search and destroy missions were initiated by Frag Orders issued in the Area of Operations. Coordination was effected with ARVN Forces in the area, daily liaison was maintained, and joint participation of Allied Forces in specific actions was emphasized.

The operation was conducted in three phases as follows:

- (1) Phase I - Movement of Brigade by air to Song Be 10-13 Apr 66).
- (2) Phase II - Conduct of search and destroy operations (14-21 Apr 66).
- (3) Phase III - Redeployment of Brigade to Bien Hoa by air (22-25 Apr 66).

b. During the operation, Army Air Support was provided by six (6) different units. Tactical Air Support was provided by the 2d Air Division, USAF.

c. The Commanding Officer, TF Rear assumed responsibility for Brigade TAOR on D-Day. One (1) company from 1st Infantry Division conducted security operations in the Brigade TAOR throughout the period of the operation.

3. INTELLIGENCE:

a. Enemy Situation Before Operation: The operational area was known to contain at least one VC Provincial Battalion (C-270) and one Provincial Company (C-280). In addition, each district had approximately one company sized guerrilla unit, and each VC controlled hamlet had a security force composed of a minimum of one squad to a maximum of one platoon of guerrillas. Two VC captured in late March stated that the 602nd and 603rd NVA Battalions were located approximately seven kilometers to the northeast of Song Be and that the 605th NVA Battalion was located 22 kilometers to the west of Song Be. On 8 April 66, a rallier turned himself in to Dong Xoai (YT 0876). This rallier stated that the VC 271st Main Force Regiment was located vicinity YT 1173 as late as 30 March. Local Force elements could have been expected to be encountered anywhere in Phuoc Long Province with the exception of the few hamlets under government control. Several infiltration routes were known to exist to the west and northeast of Song Be, and it was felt that the reported NVA units were merely moving through the area in a southerly direction into War Zone "D". The chances of contacting elements of the VC 271st or 273rd Main Force Regiments in the vicinity (primarily south) of Dong Xoai (YT 0876) were fairly good. It was known that both of these units moved into this area during the latter stages of Operation SILVER CITY (9 March to 22 March 66).

b. Enemy Situation During Operation: Forty four contacts were made with VC forces during the period of the operation, of which 29 were VC initiated. VC forces encountered were of platoon size or smaller and believed to be local force elements. No evidence was found to identify the unit designations of the elements contacted. Highlighting the operation was the capture of a NVA Captain and his subsequent interrogation (see Incl 1 attached interrogation report) which revealed the location of the NVA 602, 603, 604, and 605 Battalions of the Bac Song Group, a regimental sized unit reportedly subordinate to the 250th Infiltration Group. He stated that he was in command of the advance party of the NVA 605th Battalion which was to infiltrate to the south, using the infiltration route to the northeast of Song Be. He further stated that his assignment was to guide the NVA 605th Battalion along the prescribed route (attached interrogation report) to Bunard (YT 2987), where another advance party/

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guide would assume responsibility. He did not know where the battalion would be taken after it arrived at Bunard (YT 2987). Visual reconnaissance revealed a trail which had been subjected to recent heavy vehicular traffic, extending from Bunard (YT 2987) south to a secondary road at YT 1969. This secondary road is a direct route into War Zone "D". Several Local Force VC of varying importance were captured. Aircraft received ground fire, small arms and automatic weapons from the area of operation on 16 different occasions.

c. Area of Operation:

(1) Weather conditions: The monsoon cycle in the area was the same as that in the Bien Hoa area. The rainy season extends from May through Nov.

(2) Terrain: The terrain throughout the area of operation was hilly. The mountain "Nui Ba Ra" (YU 1801) dominates the area around Song Be. There were a few scattered rubber plantations in the area, but the majority of the terrain consisted of hill masses covered with thick forest. The forests and plantation vegetation afforded good concealment and cover. Ground observation and fields of fire were restricted throughout the area of operation.

d. Final Analysis: Intelligence obtained during the operation, as well as that available before the operation began, points to the fact that heavily traveled infiltration routes exist to the east and west of Song Be. These routes are used by NVA and VC units to move supplies and troops from II Corps into III Corps, through Phuoc Long Province, into War Zone "D" and points further south and east.

A VCC stated that the NVA 602, 603, 604, 605 Battalions were located approximately 30 kilometers to the northeast of Song Be and that at least one of these battalions, the 605th, intended to infiltrate south using the route to the east of Song Be. This would indicate the presence of a new NVA Battalion and possibly an NVA Regimental sized force, in III Corps.

Throughout the operation intelligence was received indicating that the VC 271 Main Force Regiment, was located to the southeast of Dong Xoai, outside the area of operations, and remained in that area during the entire operation.

No major VC base camp areas were found in the operational area. The area was found to contain primarily VC Local Force guerrilla and security elements. Interrogation of a VC suspect revealed the presence of the VC Provincial Battalion which had been reported earlier. Numerous agent reports were received indicating the presence of at least one and perhaps two VC Local Force Companies within the Area of Operations.

4. EXECUTION:

a. D-2 (8 Apr 66): 173d Abn Bde (Sep) was notified at 1220H that Operation AUSTIN I, scheduled to begin at 090600H Apr 66, was cancelled. The Bde was instructed to be prepared for movement to an Area of Operations in a different location beginning 10 Apr 66.

b. D-1 (9 Apr 66): Notification was received on the morning of 9 Apr that the operation would take place in the Song Be (Phuoc Binh) area, (YU 1306), and would be a search and destroy operation. It was decided that, because of the small amount of time available for planning, the Operation Order would contain instructions for movement of the Brigade to Song Be. Subsequent combat operations would be initiated by fragmentary orders issued in the operational area. OPORD 5-66, Operation DENVER, was completed and issued on the evening of 9 Apr 66.

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c. D-Day (10 Apr 66): 173d Abn Bde (Sep) initiated Operation DENVER at 100700H Apr. The 1/503d Inf was airlifted to Song Be Airfield. Upon landing the 1/503d Inf deployed around the airfield and secured it for the introduction of subsequent elements of the Brigade. This was accomplished by 100924H. Elements of Trp E, 17th Cav, Btry C, 3/319 Arty, and elements of 173d Spt Bn were subsequently moved into the area using 35 sorties of C-130 aircraft. Movement was completed by 101900H.

There were no VC activities until 102310H, when elements of 1/503d Inf sighted and fired upon 3 VC vic of YU 132059. There were no friendly casualties from this encounter and VC casualties are unknown.

d. D+1 (11 Apr 66): The 173d Abn Bde (Sep) strength was increased in Obj area introducing the 2/503d Inf, 3/319th Arty (-), 173d Engr Co, the remainder of the Cav Trp, the Bde Fwd CP, and elements of 173d Spt Bn. Movement of the Infantry Battalion was accomplished by Army CV-2 aircraft. The 2/503d Inf closed into the objective area by 111520H and immediately assumed responsibility for security of Song Be airfield from 1/503d Inf.

All other units were lifted by C-130 or CV-2 aircraft and closed into the base camp at the following times: 3/319th Arty (-) 1440H, 173d Engr Co 1605H, and Trp E, 17 Cav elements at 1620H.

Bde CP Forward was operational as of 111100H. The engineer water point was operational at 111500H. The final sortie of the day landed at 111923H, carrying elements of 173d Spt Bn. The key locations at the end of D+1 were:

Bde CP - YU 141073
2/503d - YU 139071
E/17 Cav - YU 138071

1/503 - YU 141069
3/319th - YU 142071
Later Pt & Engr Co - YU 175100

e. D+2 (12 Apr 66) Build-up continued in the objective area with the introduction of 161st Fld Btry RNZA, Co A, 82d Avn, Co D, 16th Armor, and supplies. Movement was accomplished in 38 sorties of C-130 aircraft and was completed by 121810H.

1/503d Inf conducted six platoon size "Show of Force" patrols in the area within a five kilometer radius of Song Be airfield as directed by Frag Order 1 to OPORD 5-66. All platoons moved overland to selected LZ's searching for VC suspects and installations enroute. Departures were at irregular intervals between 0700 and 1000H. All patrols were extracted by helicopter, returning between 1330 and 1430H. None of the "Show of Force" patrols made contact with VC.

CP Locations of new units being introduced into the Area of Operations were: 161st Fld Btry RNZA - YU 148074
Co D, 16th Armor - YU 138068

f. D+3 (13 Apr 66): Build-up of the Airhead was concluded with the air-landing of the 1st Bn, RAR at Song Be Airfield. Air movement was accomplished by 21 CV-2 sorties and three sorties of C-130, beginning at 130700H. The 1st Bn, RAR closed into Song Be Airfield at 131022H.

Two separate search and destroy operations were conducted by 1/503d Inf, reinforced by Trp E, 17 Cav with one platoon of Co D, 16 Armor, and Btry B, 3/319th Arty attached. One ARVN Rifle Company and one ARVN armored car platoon conducted concurrent coordinated operations. Both operations involved a company size Eagle Flight linking up with a force moving overland, and both involved ARVN units. They were IAN Frag Order 2 to OPORD 5-66. (See App 2,3 to Annex B).

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The first operation was conducted southeast of Song Be and consisted of an overland movement by B Co, 1/503 and one ARVN Rifle company moving at 0625H, to position Green, while C Co was air lifted to LZ BLACK. The C Co air assault began at 1111H and was completed at 1125H. At this time, C Co began moving toward position WHITE, and B Co and the ARVN Rifle Co began a search and destroy operation astride Route TAN, with B Co on the south and the ARVN Co on the north. C Co moved from LZ BLACK into blocking Psn WHITE at 1140H, discovering numerous trenches and bunkers in the area and receiving occasional ineffective sniper fire. B Co and the ARVN Co continued to move along Route TAN toward the C Co blocking position. While searching a village complex, one member of B Co encountered a pressure type AP mine, resulting in one friendly MIA. B Co and the ARVN Co closed Psn WHITE at 1454H. All three companies were subsequently extracted by helicopter and returned to Song Be, closing at 1625H.

The second operation was conducted northwest of Song Be and consisted of an Eagle Flight by A/1/503d Inf linking up with Trp E, 17th Cav (reinf). Trp E, 17th Cav (reinf) departed Song Be at 130700H, escorting Btry B, 3/319th Arty, to establish a fire support base. At 0657H this force encountered 3 VC at YU 044135. The VC had only small arms and fled to the west. There were no friendly casualties. Btry B was laid and ready to fire in Psn BLUE at 0913H. One platoon of E/17 Cav was left to secure this fire support base, while the main force proceeded toward Psn BROWN. A VC mine was discovered at 0915H, located vic YU 033145, by lead elements of Trp E. By 0950H all elements had closed into Psn BROWN and were prepared to support the air assault on LZ RED, which commenced at 1025H and was completed at 1058H. Trp E, 17th Cav received automatic weapons fire from an estimated 12 to 15 VC located vic YU 993138 at 1055H. Fire was returned resulting in two VC KIA (BC). The remaining VC fled to the west. At 1240H one friendly MIA resulted when a member of Trp E stepped on a booby trap vic YU 995148. In the same vicinity, between 1250 and 1337H, three caches of rice totaling 2500 lbs, and two 55 gal drums, also full of rice were located.

At 1400H, Co A, 1/503d Inf and Trp E, 17th Cav effected link-up in the vicinity of XU 002142, where Trp E apprehended 13 VC suspects, one of which was later confirmed to be a VC. E/17 was released from OPCON of 1/503d Inf and A Co, 1/503d Inf proceeded toward LZ ORANGE. At 1545H Trp E encountered a VC sniper vic XU 055185 resulting in one friendly MIA, two MIA, one VC KIA (BC), and capture of one carbine. The extraction of Co A, 1/503d Inf from LZ ORANGE to Song Be began at 0800H and ended at 1830H. At 1832H Trp E, 17th Cav began its return to base camp, escorting Btry B, 3/319th Arty. All elements of this force closed into base camp at 1936H, thus concluding the operation. A reaction force of one infantry company was maintained throughout the day by the 2/503d.

g. D-4 (14 Apr 66): 173d Abn Bde (Sop) continued Operation DENVER by conducting two Battalion size search and destroy operations, employing both air-mobile and ground assaults, IAW Frag O 3 to OPORD 5-66. (See App 4, Annex B).

The 1/503d Inf conducted two company size Eagle Flights in the area south of Song Be. Co B was helilifted into LZ JADE at 0816H and conducted search and destroy operations in that vicinity. Seven VC were sighted on the LZ but no contact was made. At 0934H Co B discovered and destroyed four tons of rice at YU 135997, and also detained two male and six female suspects and eleven children. Later at 1045H seven additional tons of rice were located at YU 130997. At 1155H B Co received small arms fire from the village at YU 110976. Arty was fired and the village was swept with negative results. B Co continued searching the area until 1710H when it was extracted from LZ JADE by helicopter and returned to base camp. Captured rice, VC suspects, and refugees were also evacuated by helicopter.

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Co C, accompanied by one ARVN Ranger Plat, was helilifted into LZ OPAL at 0915H to conduct search and destroy operations in that area. At 1040H, C Co discovered 1000 lbs of rice at YU 197992, captured one VC, detained 33 refugees, captured an M1 carbine, two shotguns and a bicycle. C Co was extracted from LZ JADE at 1830H.

Co A, 1/503d Inf was held at Base Camp as a reaction force throughout the operation.

The 1st Battalion, RAR with 161st Fld Btry, RNZA, Co B, 16 Armor, one plat of Trp E, 17th Cav, one MF Co, and one plat of Armored Cars (ARVN), conducted search and destroy operations in the area northwest of Song Be. Units deployed by air assault and ground movement to the objective area. The overland elements, consisting of Co D, 1/RAR; 161st Fld Btry RNZA; Co D/16 Armor; one plat, Trp E, 17 Cav; one ARVN Co; and the ARVN Armored Car Plat, departed base camp at 0645H. They proceeded to LZ ORANGE without incident. The force closed into LZ ORANGE with the Arty Btry ready to fire at 0902H. Co's B and C, 1/RAR conducted an air assault on LZ DIAMOND at 1055H after a ten minute Arty and a five minute armed helicopter preparation. By 1112H the two company force had secured LZ DIAMOND, and commenced search and destroy operations that vicinity. At 1710H the ARVN Company made contact with 6 VC in a deserted village vic YU 035151. The VC were pursued and Arty was fired at them, with unknown results. At 1750H, three local force VC were contacted at YU 035174, resulting in two VC KIA (BC) and two M1 rifles captured. At 1900H a patrol from D Co made contact with an estimated 8 VC with three automatic weapons, vic YU 041141. Results were 1 friendly MHA and no VC casualties. 1/RAR and attachments remained in vic of LZ's DIAMOND and ORANGE through the night of 14 Apr 66.

h. D+5 (15 Apr 66) 173d Abn Bde (Sep) continued Operation DENVER, terminating one Battalion size search and destroy operation and conducting two company size Eagle Flights, IAW Frag O 4 to OPOFD 5-66 (see App 5, Annex B).

1/RAR continued search and destroy operations northwest of Song Be. At 0819H, and again at 0842H, B Co made contact with 3 VC. Results were negative on both occasions. B and C Co's were extracted from LZ DIAMOND at 1200H and returned to base camp. After extraction was completed, the remaining elements proceeded overland to base camp and closed at 1310H.

Co's A and C, 1/503d Inf conducted Eagle Flights to LZ LILLY and LZ DIAMOND respectively to conduct search and destroy operations in the area east of Song Be. Operations were supported by Btry C, 3/319 Arty, escorted to a fire support base by Trp E, 17th Cav. Co B, 1/503d remained at Song Be as a ready reaction force.

Btry C, 3/319th Arty was in position and ready to fire at 0730H vic YU 183105. A ten minute Arty preparation was fired on LZ LILLY from 0815H to 0825H followed by armed helicopter preparation. The 1st lift of Co A landed on LZ LILLY at 0832H without VC contact. Co A closed at 0848H. At 0915H two VC were contacted vic 257160. After being fired upon the VC fled, leaving one M1 carbine, one Mauser 98 rifle and one medical kit. At 0937H, two VC suspects were captured vic YU 253158. Later, at 0945H, Co A also located seven tons of rice, a tunnel complex, and 25 women and children. Bags were requested for the loose rice and a recovery party was left at LZ LILLY to evacuate rice and suspects. The recovery party captured two suspects at 1302H and two more at 1315H, one of them had 8000 Piastres in his possession. All were found vic YU 253158. The company (-) moved to Obj TULIP where contact was negative. A Company returned to LZ LILLY and was instructed to remain overnight and to continue extracting rice. At 1735H, sniper fire was received from vic YU 249162, resulting in one friendly KIA. Armed helicopters and TAC air strikes were used to suppress this fire. A deceptive extraction was made at 1840H to confuse the enemy.

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Co C, 1/503d Inf was airlifted into LZ EMERALD between 0904H and 0926H, and deploying one element to Obj PANSY and another to Obj ROSE. At 1110H two VC suspects were captured at YU 266146. Under interrogation, the two individuals stated that there were 50 VC in prepared positions across the river, vic YU 270142. Two elements of C Co crossed the river to investigate. An armed helicopter, firing suppressive fires in support of the crossing, overshot the target and fired into friendly troops, wounding three, at 1225H. A sweep of the suspected area was conducted with negative results. Two VC and their families were captured in a tunnel system vic YU 260138. All elements of C Co returned to LZ EMERALD at 1655H and were extracted by helicopter to Song Be.

While securing Btry C, 3/319th Arty, Trp E, 17th Cav elements picked up two Monks vic YU 185109 at 1130H. They stated that VC were in position at YU 213116 and also had a base camp at YU 218115. Arty was fired on the locations, resulting in three possible VC KIA. C Btry and Trp E, 17th Cav remained in position.

i. D+6 (16 Apr 66): 173d Abn Bde (Sep) continued Operation DENVER by conducting a Battalion size air assault and reconnaissance in force southwest of Song Be IAW Frag O 5 to OPORD 5-66. An armored link-up with Co A, 1/503d Inf was also conducted vic LZ LILLY IAW Frag O 7 to OPORD 5-66. Co A, 1/503d Inf continued search and destroy operation vic LZ LILLY. (See App 6 and 7, Annex B).

1st Bn, RAR and 161st Btry RNZA began movement into AO SPAIN at 0645H. Movement was by UH-1D and CH-47 helicopter to LZ JANE, B Co 1/RAR landing at 0710H and the 161st Btry at 0750H. The 2nd lift of UH-1D's placed A Co on LZ CINDY at 0820H, and the 3d lift landed D Co at 0845H, also on LZ CINDY. C Co was held at Song Be as a ready reaction force.

Co B secured the fire support base at LZ JANE and conducted limited reconnaissance in that area while Co's A and D conducted a reconnaissance in force toward Obj BILL. At 1015H, Co A discovered a 4-6 month old platoon size VC Camp vic YU 086905. At 1100H B Co found two 6 month old bunkers vic YU 074941. Co B made contact with 4 VC at 1255H vic YU 079947. The VC were fired upon but all escaped. Co's A and D, 1/RAR, were extracted from Psn BILL between 1610H and 1630H. The 161st Btry and Co B were then extracted from LZ JANE. All elements closed into Brigade Base Camp by 1710H.

Task Force DUNLAP, consisting of Co D, 16th Armor reinforced by two platoons, Trp E, 17th Cav, and one Co (-), 2/503d Inf, departed the Brigade base at 0700H with the mission of moving to LZ LILLY, linking up with Co A, 1/503d Inf, accepting captured supplies from Co A, and transporting these supplies back to the Song Be area. The task force encountered 4 VC at YU 222115 at 0945H. Arty fire was placed on the VC with unknown results. At 1250H one of the E/17th Cav vehicles broke down vic 220116 and was evacuated to Song Be by CH-47 helicopter. One VC suspect was captured at 1350H vic 258159. Two women and one child suspected of being VC dependents were also detained. Link-up was accomplished at 1400H and all elements of TF DUNLAP closed into the Co A, 1/503d perimeter. CO, TF DUNLAP was informed that the task force would remain at that location overnight under OPCON of CO, 1/503d Inf.

Co A, 1/503d Inf continued searching vic LZ LILLY and discovered two caches at 0820H, containing enough loose rice to fill 400 50 kilogram bags. At 1455H another 300 lbs of rice was uncovered in the same vicinity. Co A remained at LZ LILLY during the night of 16 Apr.

j. D+7 (17 Apr 66): 173d Abn Bde (Sep) continued Operation DENVER by returning Co A, 1/503d Inf, TF DUNLAP and Btry C 3/319th Arty to Song Be, and by initiating a battalion size search and destroy operation southwest of Song Be. (See App 7 and 8, Annex B).

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Task Force DUNLAP departed LZ LILLY at 0730H and proceeded without incident back to base camp, closing into that location at 1050H. Extraction of Co A, 1/503d Inf by helicopter began at 1120H, and the last element closed into the Brigade area at 1145H. Btry C, 3/319th Arty moved at 1150H and proceeded with security elements of Trp E, 17th Cav back to the Brigade base, closing at 1225H. At 1315H, 1/503d announced that it had assumed responsibility for security of the Brigade Base LAM Frag O 9 to OPORD 5-66. The 2/503d Inf began preparing for a four day search and destroy operation.

1/RAR initiated a two day search and destroy operation in AO NORWAY southwest of Song Be, IAW Frag O 8 to OPORD 5-66. 1/RAR and 161st Btry RNZA were airlifted into LZ SAM by a combination of UH-1D and CH-47 aircraft, beginning at 0745H and being completed at 1006H. A fire support base was established vic LZ SAM and secured by Co A. Co's B, C, and D conducted search and destroy operations toward Obj LARRY. At 1310H, D Co found a VC company size position which appeared to be about 6 months old. At 1710H, Co C located a battalion size base camp which appeared to be about one year old at YU 068833. 1/RAR ceased movement at 1820H and remained in the following locations for the night:

CP - YU 059858
A Co and 161 Btry RNZA - YU 076864
B Co - YU 061851
C Co - YU 056844
D Co - YU 050854

k. D+8 (18 Apr 66): Operation DENVER continued with one battalion size search and destroy operation in progress, and another being initiated. (See Appendix 9, Annex B).

The 2/503d Inf, supported by Btry A 3/319th Arty, Trp E, 17th Cav and one ARVN Ranger Co, began a search and destroy operation in AO IRELAND, located south of Song Be, IAW Frag O 10 to OPORD 5-66.

From 0655H to 0715H, Trp E 17th Cav conducted an air assault to secure LZ HARVARD as a fire support base. Btry A, 3/319th Arty was lifted onto HARVARD by CH-47 helicopter between 0745H and 0925H. Trp E 17th Cav remained as the security force. The 2/503d Inf conducted an air assault on LZ YALE after an Arty preparation. The 1st lift moved at 0337H and the last element closed LZ YALE at 1012H. One VC suspect and 1000 lbs of rice were captured vic YU 238996 at 1010H, and at 1015H another 500 lbs were located vic YU 293982. At 1030H several incidents occurred. A second suspect was captured; a trench and tunnel system were located at YU 238993, in which a suitcase full of documents was discovered; two more suspects were captured at YU 238993; and at YU 238984, a Mauser 98 rifle was captured when a VC sniper fired the weapon and then fled.

At 1110H, 2/503d Inf elements captured one wounded VC with a shotgun. The VC died later. At 1300H, 2/503d Inf elements detained three refugees and a VC suspect who stated that 30 to 40 VC cadre had been in a village at YU 242988. This area was searched by a patrol at 1400H. Three bags of clothing, three bags of rice and numerous documents were found. At 1405H, one ton of rice was located at YU 243990, and another ton at YU 244985. At 1730H one wounded VC was captured at YU 248980. He was armed with a French M-29 light machine gun and was carrying a packet of documents and a box of medical supplies. The 2/503d Inf ceased operations at 1755H and spent the night vic YU 249978.

The 1/RAR continued search and destroy operations in AO NORWAY and, at 0810H, Co C found a cache containing fifty 50 lb bags of salt in a company sized VC position approximately one year old. At 0915H A Co contacted one local force VC who fled upon contact, and Co C captured two VC vic YU 065819 at 0921H.

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At 1520H, 1/RAR began displacing to a new location. They were extracted by helicopter from LZ SAM and moved directly to LZ COLGATE in AO WALES. Movement was completed and all elements closed in at 1745H. A fire support base was established on LZ COLGATE to support subsequent operations and the night was spent in vic of that location. Positions of elements were:

CP - YU 286967
A - YU 286965
B - YU 288970
C - YU 284967
D - YU 288967
161st RNZA - YU 288969

At 2020H, Co B 1/RAR detained one suspect carrying medical supplies. Another was apprehended at 2345H under the same circumstances. The capture of this prisoner was a highlight of Operation DENVER, the prisoner being an NVA Captain. See paragraph 3 (Intelligence) of this report.

A reaction company was kept vic Song Be Airfield by the 1/503d Inf throughout the day.

l. D+9 (19 Apr 66): Search and destroy operations continued in AO WALES and AO IRELAND. (See App 10, Annex B).

At 1300H, movement of Btry A, 3/319th Arty from LZ HARVARD to LZ COLGATE was begun. The entire Btry closed in by 1410H. Movement of Trp E 17th Cav was begun at 1515H and was concluded by 1549H.

The 2/503d Inf continued searching operations to the south in AO IRELAND. There was no significant VC contact made during the day and perimeter was secured vic YU 255946 for the night.

The 1/RAR continued search and destroy operations in AO WALES south of LZ COLGATE employing three companies. Co C remained with 161st Btry, RNZA as security for the fire support base. There was no significant contact made with the VC. A perimeter was secured vic YU 299952 for the night.

m. D+10 (20 Apr 66): Operation DENVER continued with both battalions searching to the south in their respective AO's. 2/503d Inf closed LZ DUKE at 1145H and then continued south to vic YU 255904 where a perimeter was formed. At 1915H a VC with an automatic weapon approached an ambush patrol at YU 258903. The VC was fired upon with unknown results.

1/RAR captured 4 VC suspects at 1430H vic YT 288978. Investigation revealed that they were carrying 40,000 Piastres, medical items, and papers requesting food, hats, and 400 pairs of black pajamas. A perimeter was formed vic YT 289925.

n. D+11 (21 Apr 66): Operation DENVER continued with the two battalions continuing to search to the south, linking up for the night at LZ BAYLOR.

1/RAR commenced movement at 0800H, continuing search and destroy operations. At 1105H, one VC was encountered at YU 044194, resulting in one possible VC killed. At 1324H Co D made contact with an unknown number of VC at YU 290097, resulting in one VC KIA (BC), and 3 KIA (possible). At 1505H, D Co contacted 3 VC wearing black and white uniforms at YU 286901, but all escaped. 1/RAR linked up with 2/503d Inf vic of LZ BAYLOR at 1505H.

The 2/503d Inf commenced movement at 0930H and proceeded to search BUNARD village (YU 2788) where, at 1112H, they detained seven men and 23 women and children. The men were carrying two leather satchels containing clothing, documents, medicine, ammunition, and ID cards. At 1300H, Co C captured a VC

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suspect via YU 260880, and at 1605H, B Co received ten rounds of small arms fire from vic YU 183063. Link up was accomplished with 1/RAR as stated above.

c. D+12 (22 Apr 66): Operation DENVER continued with both battalions and the fire support base being extracted by helicopter to Song Le, and by the commencement of movement of the Brigade back to Bien Hoa. (See App 11, Annex E).

The extraction of 161st Btry, RNZA began at 0800H and continued until 0924H when the last element cleared LZ COLGATE. The 1/RAR was extracted from LZ BAYLOR beginning 0748H and was complete at 1005H. Both of these units, plus D/16th Armor were airlifted back to Bien Hoa during the afternoon.

The 2/503d Inf continued searching vic LZ BAYLOR. At 0745H, elements apprehended one refugee at YU 269880, and at 0750H two VC were sighted and fired upon in that same location. At 0905H, 28 Vietnamese were found hiding in bunkers and two in a hut vic YT 277893. Two were VC suspects. All others were treated as refugees. At 1000H, one VC was captured vic YU 277893. He had one hand grenade, and two bags of clothing and documents. Extraction of the 2/503d Inf began at 1200H and was complete at 1620H. Btry A, 3/319th Arty and Trp E 17th Cav were extracted from LZ COLGATE between 1000H and 1735H.

p. D+13 (23 Apr 66): Operation DENVER continued as elements of the Brigade returned to Bien Hoa. Perimeter security of the Song Le Airfield was assumed by the 2/503d Inf at 0700H. All elements of the Brigade except 2/503d Inf, one Arty Btry, Trp E 17th Cav, and elements of Spt Bn, were returned to the Bien Hoa area by a combination of C-130 and CV-2 aircraft.

q. D+14 (24 Apr 66): Air movement to Bien Hoa was suspended because of lack of aircraft. The Brigade (-) conducted normal security operations in the Bien Hoa area and the 2/503d Inf continued to secure Song Le Airfield. While returning from a night ambush site, a small patrol from 2/503d Inf encountered a booby trap vic YU 148084 and sustained a total of five casualties (NIA).

r. D+15 (25 Apr 66): Operation DENVER officially terminated when the last element of the 2/503d Inf was airlifted back to Bien Hoa, closing in at 1646H.

5. Supporting Forces:

a. 3d Bn, 319th Arty with 161st Fld Btry, RNZA attached, was located at the Brigade Base, vicinity of Song Le Airfield, in general support of the Brigade. For specific operations, batteries were placed in direct support of particular battalions or task forces and often displaced to establish separate fire support bases within supporting distance of a specific area of operations.

(1) Size of Force: Three (3) six (6) gun 105mm Howitzer batteries, one (1) four (4) gun Howitzer battery, and two (2) four (4) gun 4.2 inch mortar platoons.

(2) How and when employed:

(a) Preparations on landing zones were fired by Brigade Arty as follows:

RED	13 Apr
JADE	14 Apr
OPAL	14 Apr
DIAMOND	14 Apr

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LILLY 15 Apr
EMERALD 15 Apr
YALE 18 Apr
COLGATE 18 Apr

(b) On call missions from 10 Apr to 25 Apr 66.

(c) Harrassing and interdiction fires from 10 Apr to 25 Apr 66.

(3) Results: During Operation DENVER the Brigade Artillery fired a total of 806 missions expending 6,574 rounds. The ammunition expenditure breakdown was as follows:

	<u>MISSIONS</u>	<u>ROUNDS</u>
Bde Arty	614	5,103
Mortar Plat, 2/503	173	1,356
Mortar Plat, D/16	19	110

Artillery fires were effective during this operation. LZ preparatory fires successfully reduced VC resistance. On numerous occasions, fire was placed on areas of reported ground fire or VC sightings, resulting in the stopping of fire and dispersal of VC, undoubtedly inflicting casualties.

(4) Timeliness: Because of coordination effected in the Brigade Fire Support Coordination Center between Artillery, Army Air, and Air Force TAC Air, the timeliness of Arty fires was excellent.

b. U.S. Air Force:

(1) Size of Force: A total of 86 tactical Air Sorties were flown, expending 93.7 tons of ordnance, and 56 ALO/FAC Sorties were flown during Operation DENVER. In addition, 229 sorties of inter-theater aircraft transported 2618 tons of supplies and equipment into the area of operations.

(2) How and when employed:

(a) Elements of the Brigade were airlifted to and from the Area of Operations.

(b) TAC air provided pre-planned, on call, and quick reaction missions throughout the operation. Use of TAC air was limited because there were no major contacts. On 191830H Apr 66, a quick reaction mission was placed on the suspected location of a regular force VC battalion as reported by the NVA Captain captured on 182345H Apr 66. Results are currently unknown.

(c) An airborne FAC was available at all times during the operation, either in the air over the AO, or on strip alert. Ground FAC teams were furnished each task force employed.

(d) Resupply was provided from Bien Hoa to Song Be throughout the operation by inter-theater aircraft.

(3) Results and effectiveness:

(a) Limited TAC air support was utilized during the operation. No large VC formations were encountered and the number of VC killed by Air (KDA) cannot be determined. Several secondary explosions occurred due to TAC air strikes however.

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(b) The airborne and ground FAC's used during the operation were effective, resulting in timely and accurate support by TAC Air.

(4) Timeliness: See 5b(3)(b) above.

(5) Air Request Net Utilized: The SOP Air Request Net was utilized during Operation DENVER. Requests were initiated by the ground commander sent to the Brigade CP by either the ground FAC, Airborne FAC, or through Army channels, and then to II FFORCEV Direct Air Support Center (DASC). If a mission was requested when both FAC and TAC air were airborne, no further coordination was needed and the strike was conducted.

(6) Air Ground Marking System: In all cases during Operation DENVER, targets were marked for TAC Air by the airborne FAC utilizing white phosphorus rockets, except on one occasion when 1/503d Infantry used smoke grenades to mark the trace of their front line positions.

c. Army Aviation:

(1) Size of Force: During Operation DENVER, Army Aviation support was provided by the following units:

- (a) Co A, 82d Aviation Company
- (b) 173d Aviation Platoon
- (c) 161st Reece Flight (Australian)
- (d) 11th Aviation Battalion
- (e) 145th Aviation Battalion
- (f) 57th Aviation Company
- (g) 57th Medical Detachment (Helicopter Med)
- (h) 61st Aviation Company

(2) How and when employed:

(a) Heliborne Assault: 12 Separate company and battalion size heliborne assaults were conducted. These utilized 1,429 combat assault sorties.

- (b) Armed helicopter - 482 sorties.
- (c) Resupply flights - 662 sorties.
- (d) Command Liaison Flights - 357 sorties.
- (e) Command and Control Flights - 160 sorties.
- (f) Aerial Reconnaissance Flights - 131 sorties.
- (g) Psychological Operations Flights - 4 sorties.
- (h) RRU Flights - 16 sorties.
- (i) Aerial Artillery Observer Flights - 19 sorties.
- (j) Medical Evacuation Flights - 19 sorties, including 12 sorties flown by "Dust-Off" aircraft.

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- (k) Radio Relay - 11 sorties.
- (l) Miscellaneous - 102 sorties.
- (m) Total sorties flown - 3,392.

(3) Results and Effectiveness: Aviation support during Operation DENVER was excellent. All requested missions were accomplished with a minimum of time lag, except in one case where CH-47's arrived late. The following are examples of the outstanding support rendered:

(a) Co A, 82d Avn Co flew 1,170.6 hours in support of the Bde transporting 5,590 passengers and moving 178 tons of cargo.

(b) The 161st Recce Flight flew 132.8 hours in support of the Brigade, averaging 10.2 hours daily. Utilization was for Radio Relay, Command and Liaison, and Aerial Observation.

(c) The 57th Medical Detachment (Helicopter Medics) flew 15 hours in support of the Brigade, evacuating 19 injured personnel.

(d) Throughout the Operation, Army Aviation transported a total of 13,528 passengers and 323 tons of cargo.

(4) Timeliness: See 5c (3) above.

6. ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS:

a. General: To support Operation DENVER, a Fwd Bde Support Operations Center (BSOC) was established at Phouc Binh (YU 141073). Included were supply, transportation, maintenance and medical facilities from the 173d Support Battalion. Elements of 1st Log Command provided unit distribution to Brigade rear elements and resupply of the BSOC was by Air Force fixed wing aircraft from BIEN HOA Air Base. A total of 229 C-130 sorties delivered 1,216 tons of all classes of supply, vehicles weighing a total of 1,402 tons, and 1,419 personnel.

b. Supply and Transportation: Representatives from each unit involved in the operations were located adjacent to the BSOC. Resupply of deployed units was accomplished by road when possible and by rotary wing aircraft when otherwise inaccessible. 161 UH-1D sorties were flown, delivering 65 tons of supplies. Approximately 75 tons of all classes of supplies were required daily to sustain the Bde Task Force. Brigade Infantry Battalions moved to and from the operational area by CV-2 aircraft. A total of 167 sorties were flown to support these moves. The remainder of Bde elements moved by C-130 and CH-47 sorties. A total of 154 sorties of C-130 and 17 sorties of CH-47. No administration problems were encountered during the operation.

c. Maintenance: Because of lack of road access and limited number of Bde vehicles at the BSOC, Company "D" (Maint), 173d Support Battalion, provided a small contact team for mechanical, signal and armament maintenance. Repairs were made when possible, otherwise the equipment was received and processed to the rear. A total of 69 jobs were handled, 50 completed at the BSOC the remainder evacuated to the rear.

d. Medical: Company B (Medical), 173d Support Battalion operated a forward clearing station at the BSOC. The 57th and 254th Medical Detachments (Helicopter Ambulance) provided standby medevac coverage at the BSOC. A total of 12 medevac missions were flown in support of DENVER. When ro-

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quired because of severity of wounds, personnel were evacuated direct to the 93rd Evacuation Hospital. Wounded personnel coming into the Bde Clearing Station were treated as necessary and then evacuated to BLEN HON or returned to duty. During the operation, a total of 230 patients were treated at the clearing station.

c. Communications: The primary means of communications during the operation was FM radio. Wire communications were utilized within the Bde Base. Radio Relay systems were established to communicate with task forces when necessary. Secure teletype and VHF telephone patch systems were established to II FFORCEV and to the Brigade Rear Base at BLEN HON.

7. COMMANDERS ANALYSIS: The 173d Airborne Brigade (Separate) Operation DENVER was valuable as a training vehicle for the large number of replacements, both Officers and Enlisted men, who had arrived throughout the Bde. Areas in which additional training was needed were evident.

a. Civil Affairs/Psy Ops:

(1) Civil Affairs: During this operation, 65 families were relocated from insecure areas into more secure areas in the vicinity of the Province Headquarters at Song Bo. Our part in this operation was the transport of families and belongings to the Province Headquarters where they were delivered to the GVN Province officials for resettlement in established refugee villages.

(2) Civic Action: MEDCAP teams from Bde S5 worked in the area of operations daily at two sites. The Medical Company each day provided one doctor to work in the Provincial Hospital and one Doctor to work in the surrounding villages. A dentist was also provided on a daily basis to work one half day and to alternate in the surrounding villages. Brigade MEDCAP teams treated 2664 persons during the operation and the DENTCAP team treated 93 persons. Twenty tons of rice were recaptured from Viet Cong caches and returned to the Province Chief for distribution to needy families. This rice was extracted by helicopter from forward positions and deposited in the Province Headquarters. A rice recovery team was organized and used to good advantage during this operation. This team consisted of a 10 man engineer component and a 25 man security element. After caches were located by the forward elements this team could be mustered, Heli-lifted in, secure the area, and bag the rice, releasing the finding unit to proceed with its mission. After the completion of the rice bagging the helicopters extracted the rice and the recovery element. It was found that this method was very good with large caches, but that small caches could be more expeditiously handled by the finding unit. In other Civic Actions projects the 173d Engineer Company assisted the local forces in the construction of prefabricated homes for refugees entering the area. The Brigade also turned all empty ammo boxes, over to the Province for use in refugee and needy family home construction projects. Thirty five boxes of canned food stuffs were also distributed to needy families and refugees.

(3) Psychological Operations: Fourteen Psychological Operations speaker missions were flown in the operational area using the Chieu Hoi theme directed at the Viet Cong Guerrilla bands. Four leaflet missions were flown distributing 300,000 leaflets of the terror and Chieu Hoi type. The leaflets drops were made in area of suspected Viet Cong Guerrilla concentrations.

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b. Intelligence: Contacts with VC were few, all being with small VC local force units. None of these were positively identified. Evidence to confirm intelligence gathered prior to the operation was not gained. The NVN Captain who was captured on 18 Apr 66 may prove to be a very valuable informant if information gained from him proves reliable.

c. Tactical Operations: The Tactical elements of the Brigade gained valuable experience in airmobile operations and search and destroy techniques due to the large number of separate operations which took place. There was also adequate opportunity to request and adjust Arty fires and TAC Air strikes. The enemy reaction was to flee without engaging Brigade units, except by limited harrassing actions.

Results for Operation DENVER are as follows:

- (1) US forces:
KHA-1
WHA-16
- (2) Australian Forces:
WHA-1
- (3) New Zealand Forces:
None
- (4) Viet Cong Forces:
KIA - 16 (BC) 15 (ost)
VCC- 23
VCS- 45
Refugees- 97
Equipment Losses-
 - (a) Weapons: (3) US Carbines, (3) US shotguns, (2) German Mauser 98 rifles, (2) US M1 rifles, (1) French M29 LMG, (1) US .45 cal pistol.
 - (b) Ammunition: 483 s/a rds, (2) hand grenades, (3) rifle grenades, (1) 81mm mortar round.
 - (c) Other:
 1. Demolitions: 1 booby trap
 2. Commo: 1 radio
 3. Transport: 1 bicycle
 4. Rico: 34.4 tons
 5. Documents: 2167
 6. Miscellaneous: 2-55 gal drums, 1 medical kit, 422 assorted medical items, 2 compasses, 1 loudspeaker, 1 ground flare, 13 batteries, 1 carbine magazine, 3 M29 magazines

8. CONCLUSIONS AND LESSONS LEARNED:

a. Conclusions:

(1) Operation DENVER was valuable as a training vehicle. Areas in which a need for additional training was evident were:

Map Reading & Navigation
Adjustment of Arty Fire
March & Bivouac Discipline
Village Searching

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Detection and Avoidance of Booby Traps
Medevac Procedures
Handling of POW's, Suspects, and Refugees
Communications Security
Loading & Lashing of Vehicles for Air Movement

- (2) Arty H & I fires should be fired in small volleys.
- (3) Use of flares and illumination must be reduced.
- (4) An Airborne observer must observe every Artillery LZ preparation.
- (5) ARVN units in the area of operations must be involved in Brigade operations whenever possible.
- (6) A Psy-War plan must be worked out for each operation.
- (7) Response to fire requests must be rapid when intelligence reveals a lucrative target for either Artillery or Tac Air.
- (8) Medical Aid Tents should be located away from airstrips and Helipads (except Medevac pads) for sanitary reasons.
- (9) Prisoners of War, Suspects, and Refugees must all be tagged with as much complete information as possible. This is an absolute necessity.
- (10) Refugees must not be confused with other civilians. Ordinary civilians will have no desire to be relocated in refugee housing areas.
- (11) Trailer hitches should be welded on the front of some vehicles to aid in loading trailers aboard aircraft.
- (12) Battalions may be able to improve landing zones used for extraction to enhance speed and ease of operation.
- (13) There is little advantage to be gained by a quick search and destroy operation. A unit needs time to do a thorough job.
- (14) Loading plans for air movement must be selective. Mission essential equipment of all units should be brought in before administrative equipment for other units.

B. Lessons Learned:

- (1) To save time in recovering VC rice caches, each member of a unit should carry an empty rice bag with him. There will be no necessity to delay recovery while rice bags are brought forward.
- (2) Claymore mines must be positioned where they can be observed. If not observed, they can be turned around by the VC, to point at friendly forces.
- (3) It is a good idea to introduce replacements directly into an operation rather than allow them to wait in the rear area. The Battlefield indoctrination period is shortened considerably.

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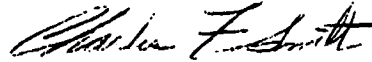
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(4) In many cases, a battlefield evacuation can be performed by an ordinary UH-1D helicopter just as satisfactorily as by a special Med-evac (Dustoff) aircraft, since Dustoff Aircraft are in high demand and short supply, ordinary UH-1D's may provide quicker reaction.

FOR THE COMMANDER:



CHARLES F. SMITH
Capt, AGC
Asst AG

ANNEXES:

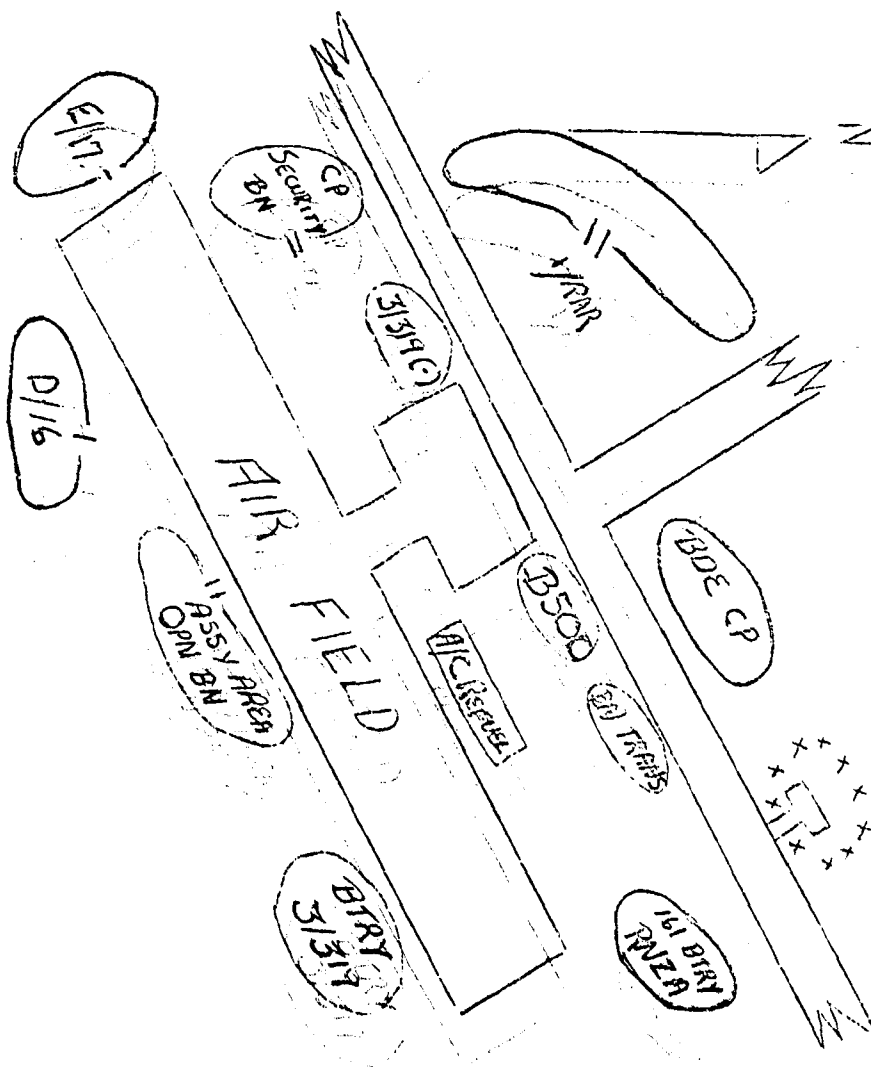
A-Bde Base Schematic
B-Opns Schematic

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ANNEX A (Base Camp Area Schematic)

(see Camp Area Schematic)

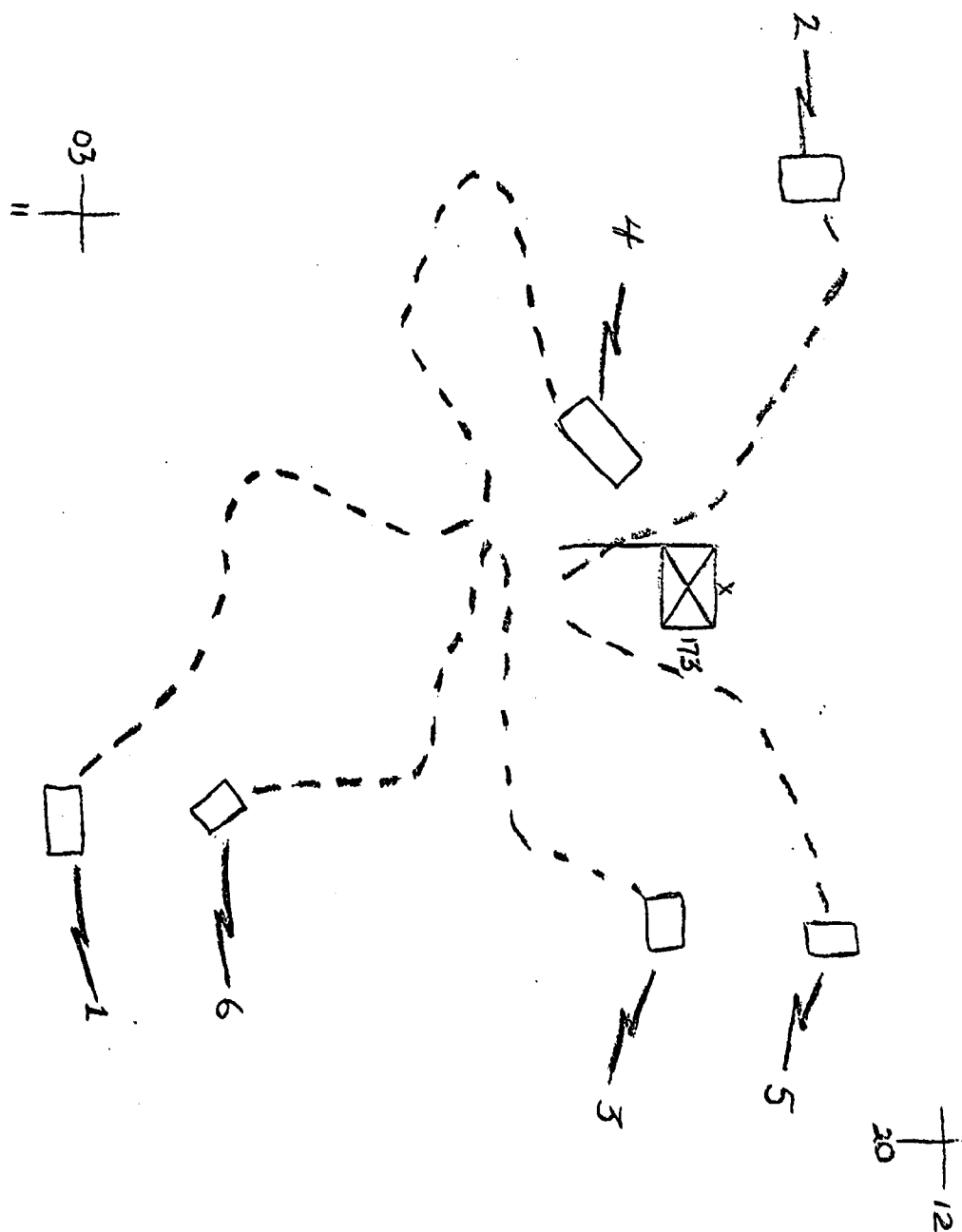


*1/503d Inf and 2/503d Inf alternated missions during the Operation. 2/503d was the security force from D+1 until D+7. 1/503d was security force from D+7 until D+14. 2/503d Inf Alternated missions during the Operation. 1/503d was the security force from D+1 until D+7. 2/503d was security force from D+7 until D+14.

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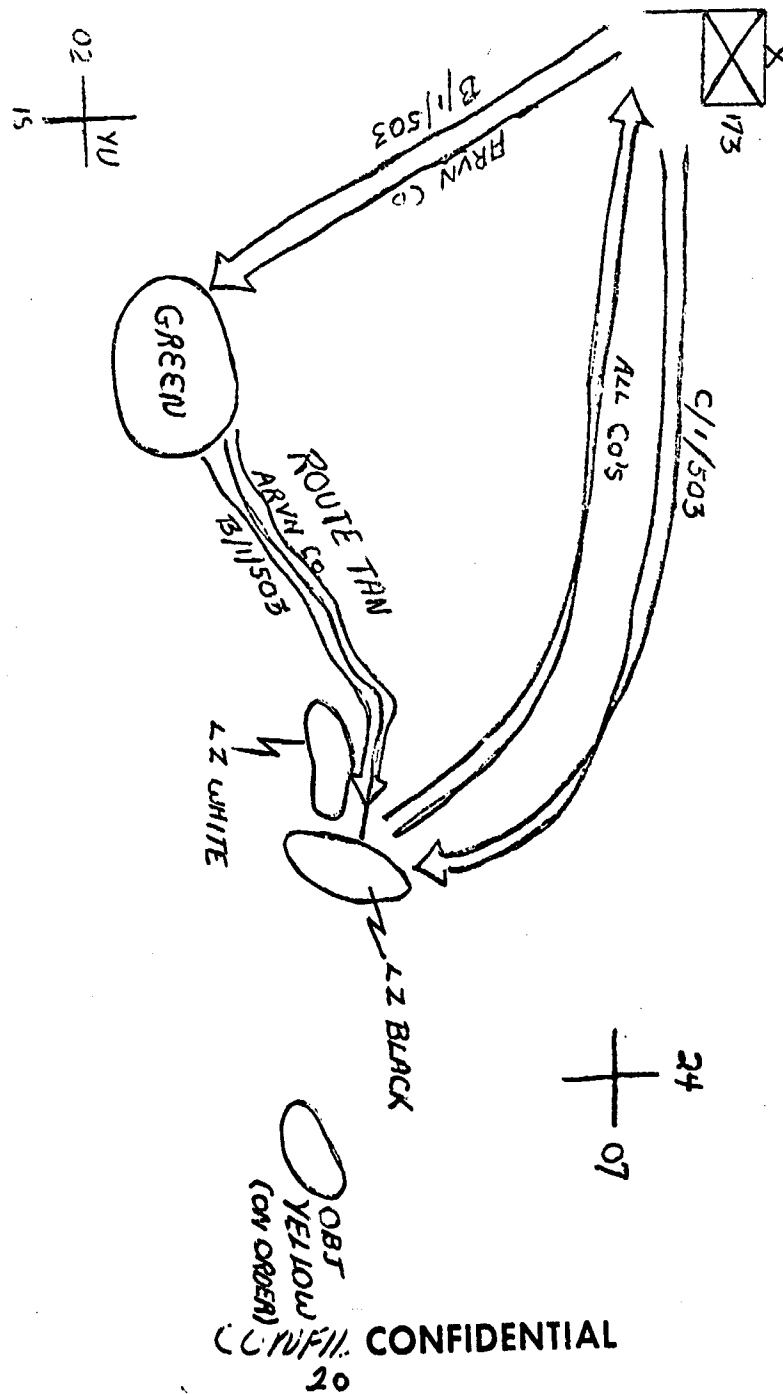
APPENDIX 1 (Frag Order 1, D+2) to ANNEX B (Opns Schematic)



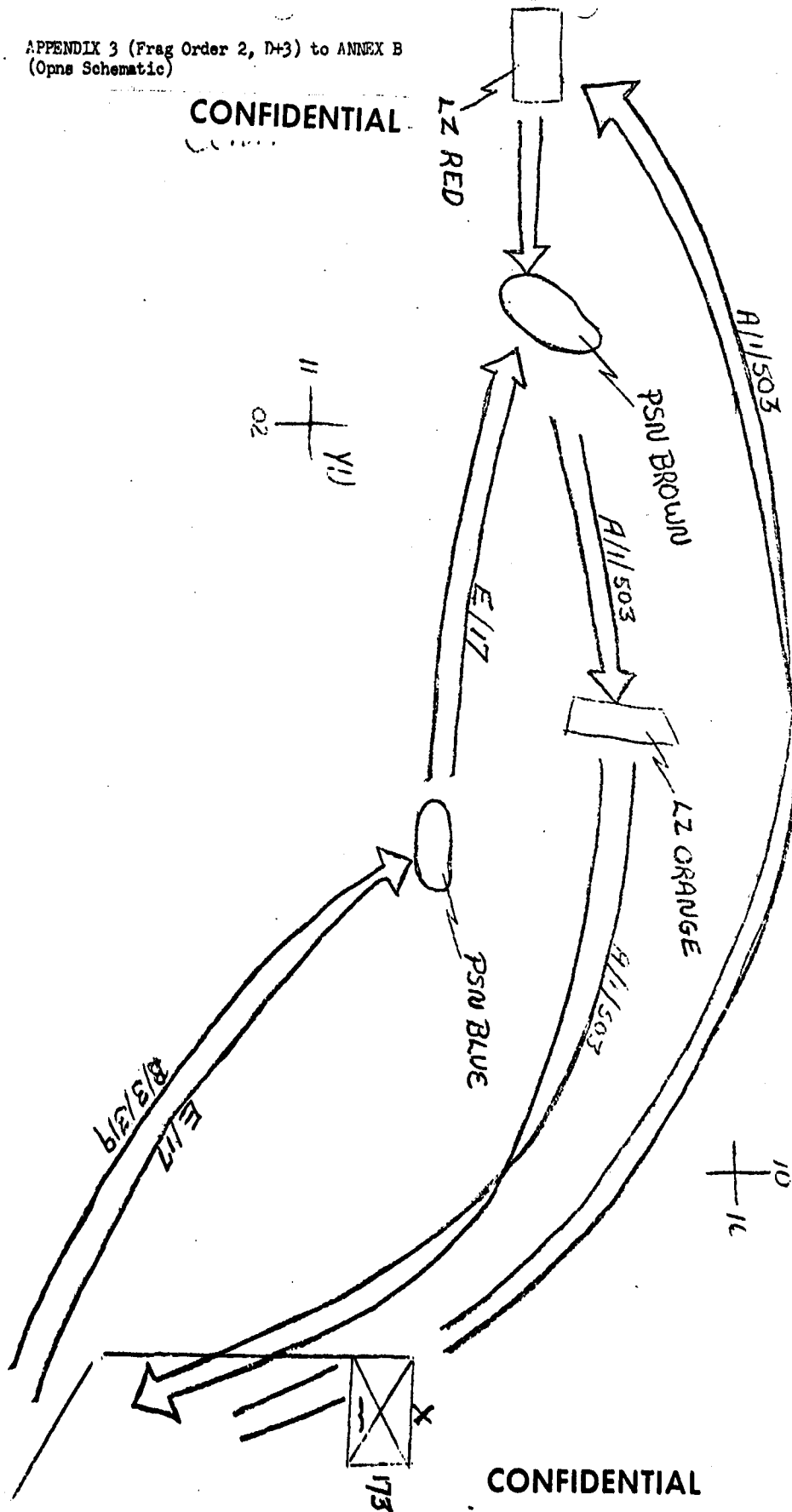
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APPENDIX 2 (Frag Order 2, D+3) to ANNEX B (Opns Schematic)



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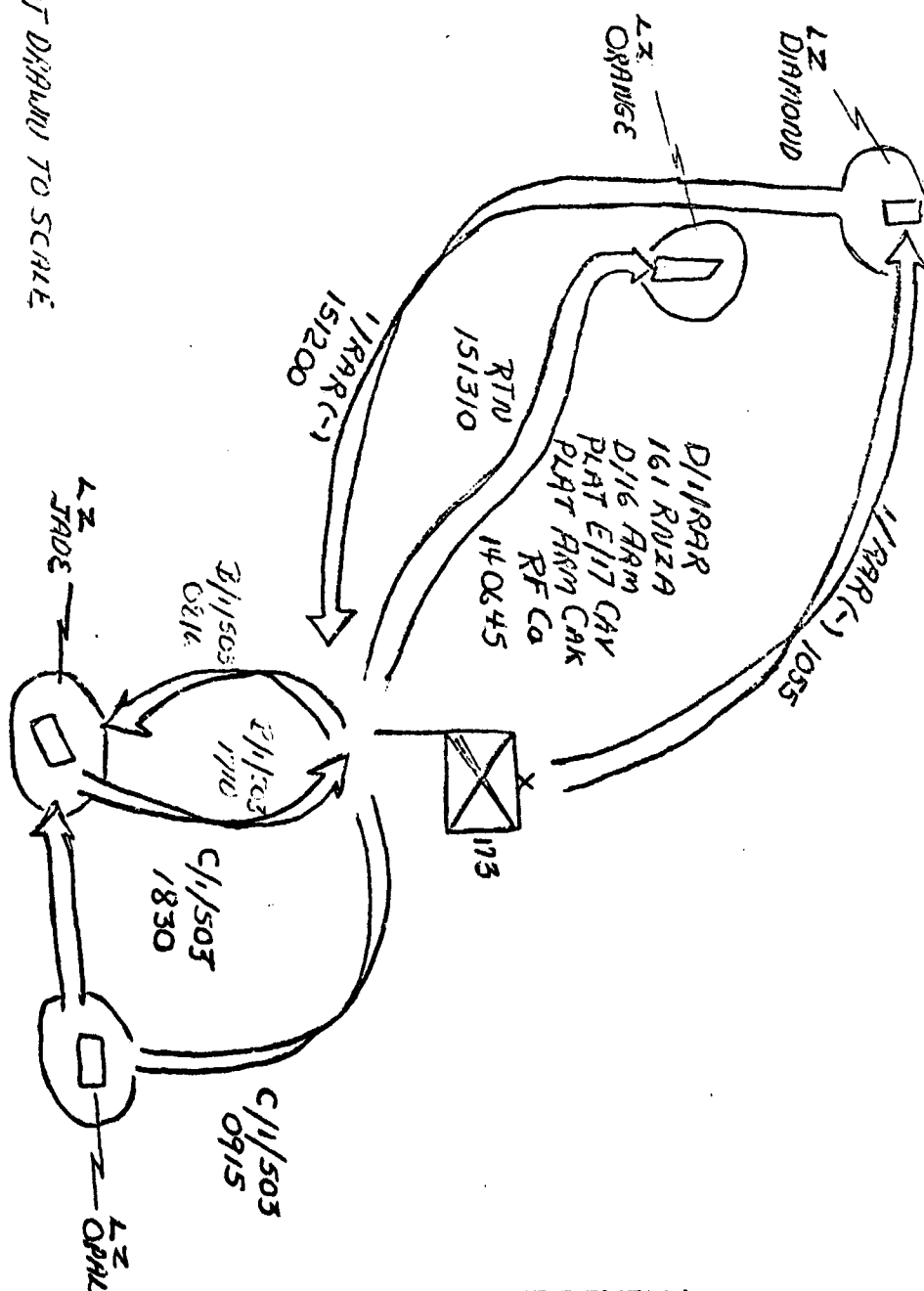


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APPENDIX 4 (Frag Order 3, D+4) to ANNEX B (Opns Schematic)

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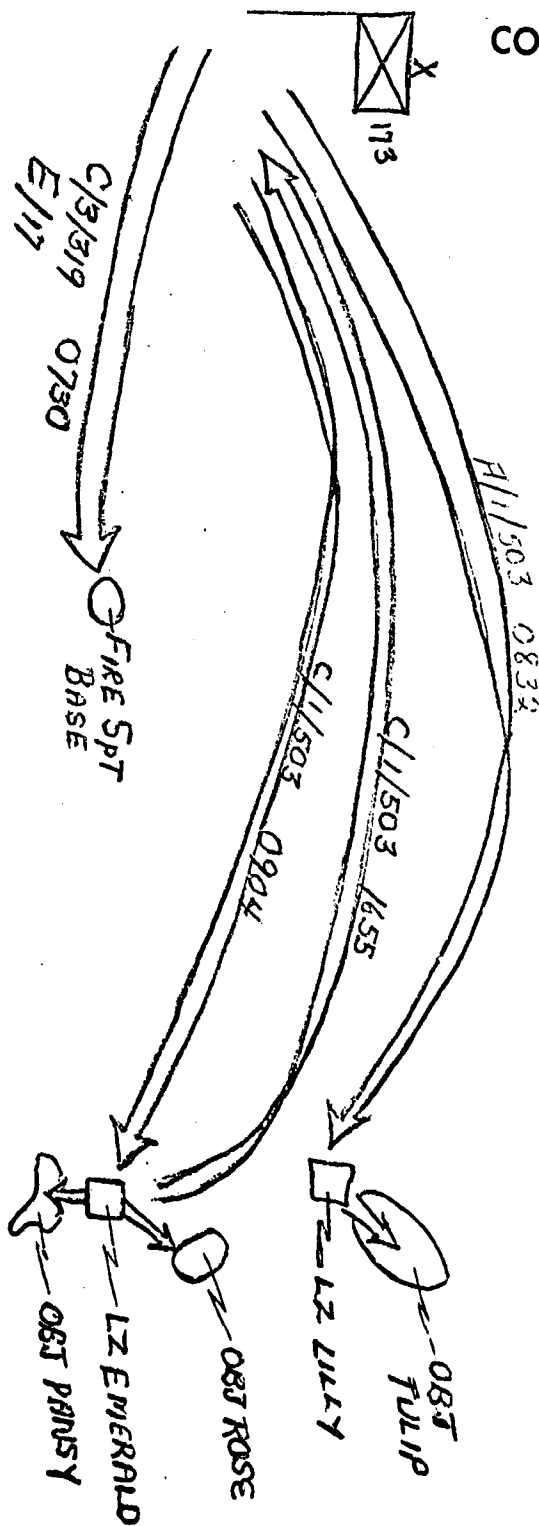


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APPENDIX 5 (Frag Order 4, D+5) to ANNEX B (Ops Schematic)

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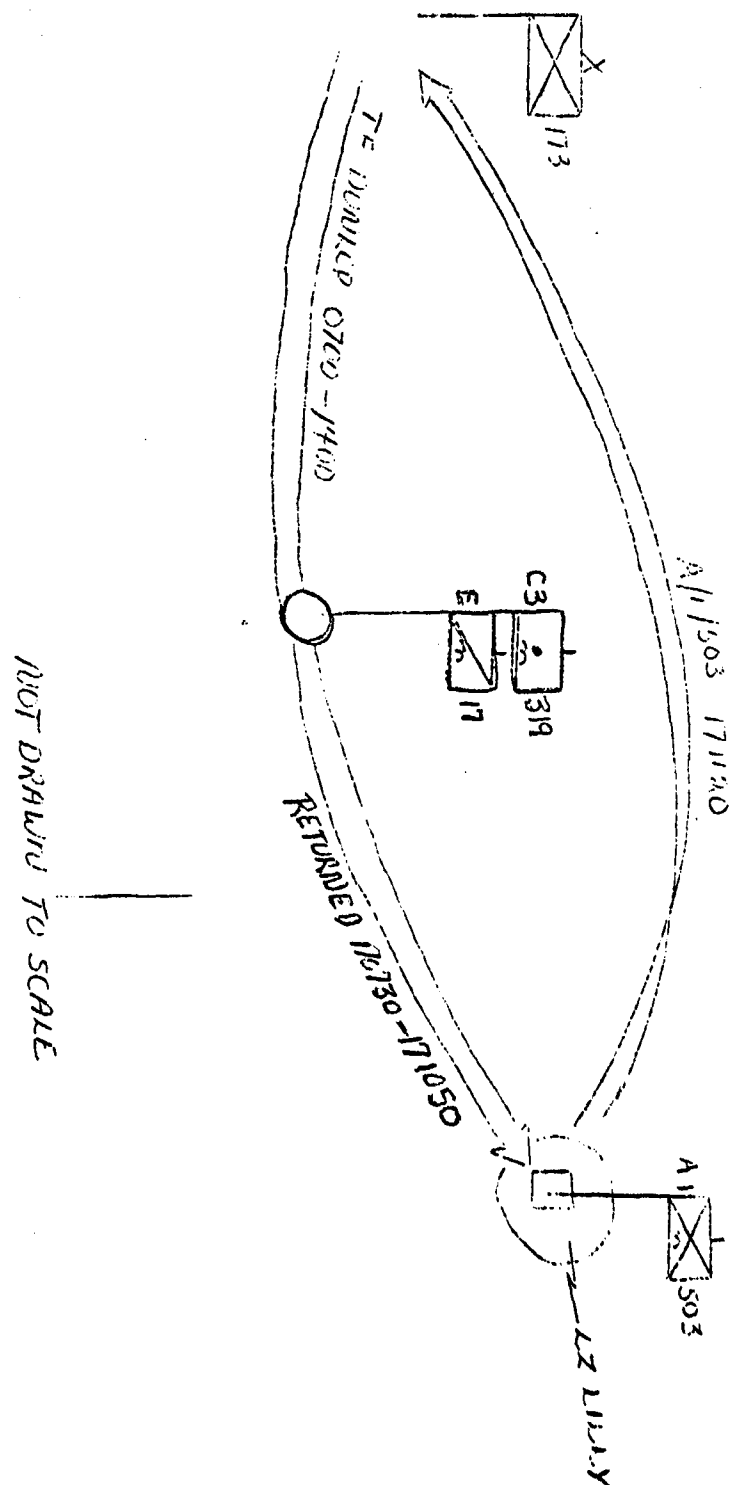


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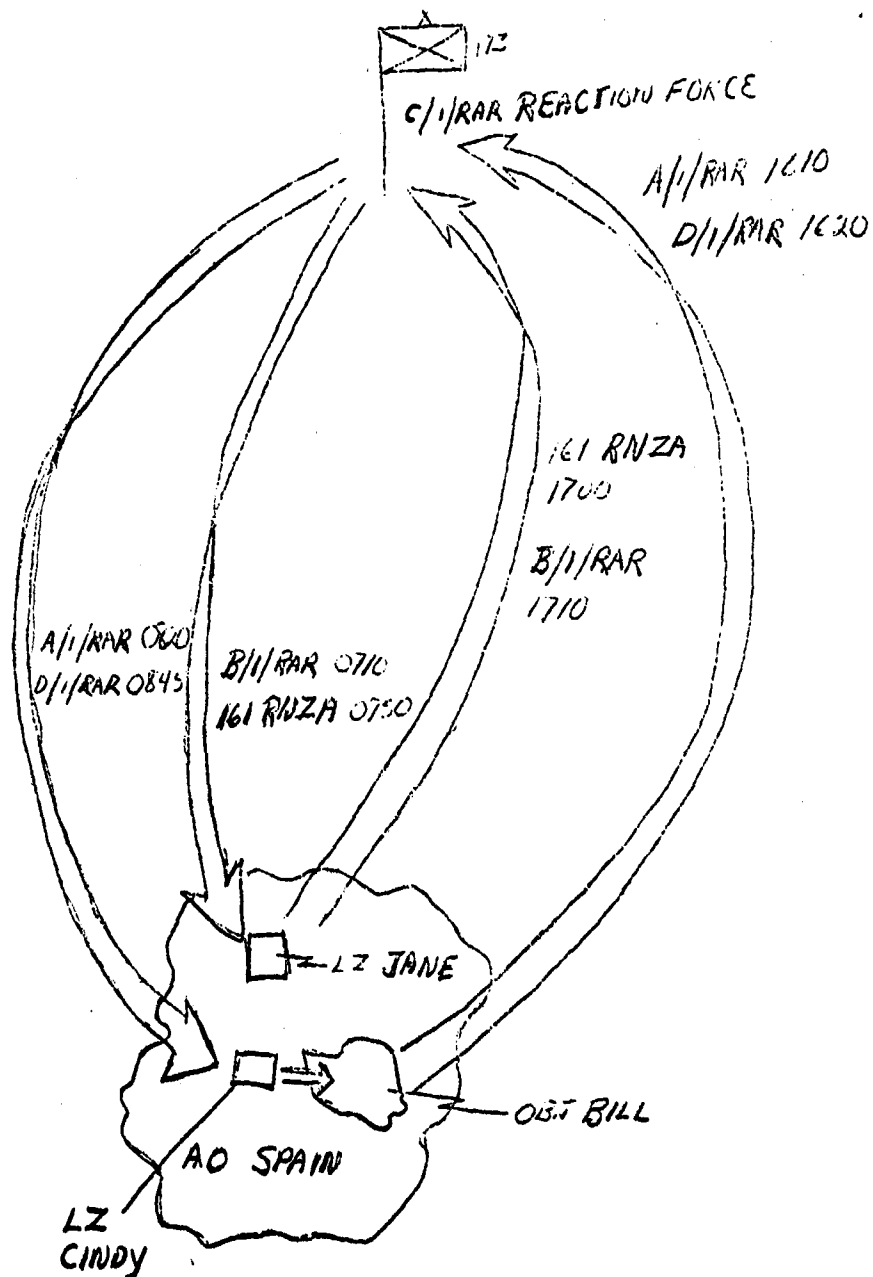
APPENDIX 6 (Frag Order 5, D+6, 7) to ANNEX B (Opns Schematic)



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APPENDIX 7 (Frag Order 5, D+6) to ANNEX B (Ops Schematic)

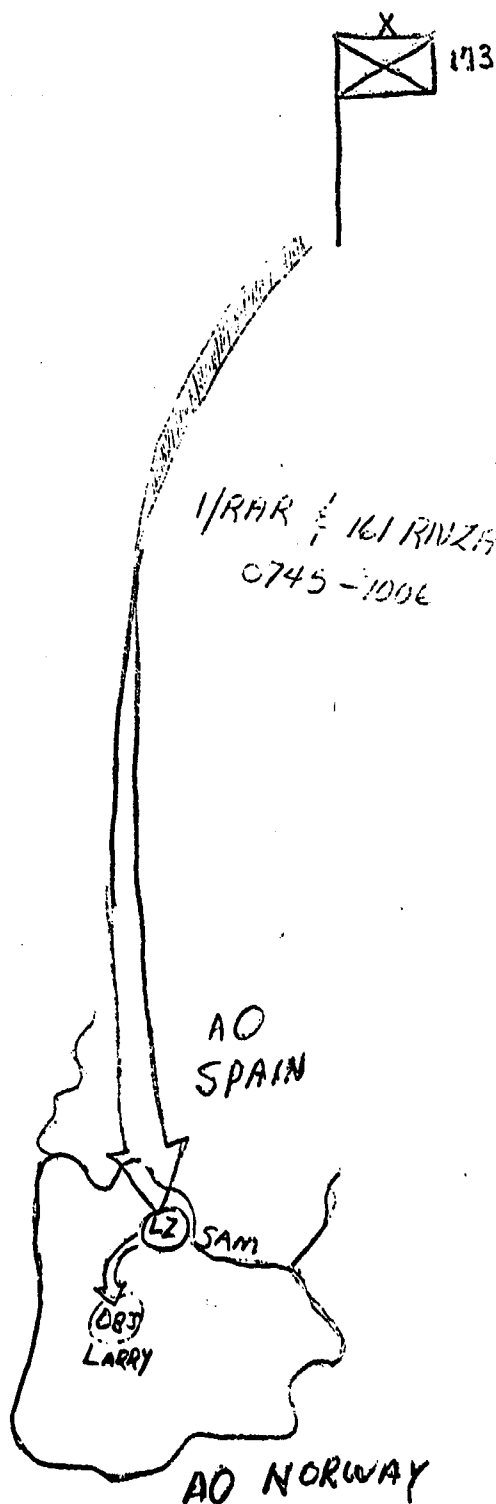


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APPENDIX 8 (Frag Order 8, D+7) to ANNEX B (Opns Schematic)



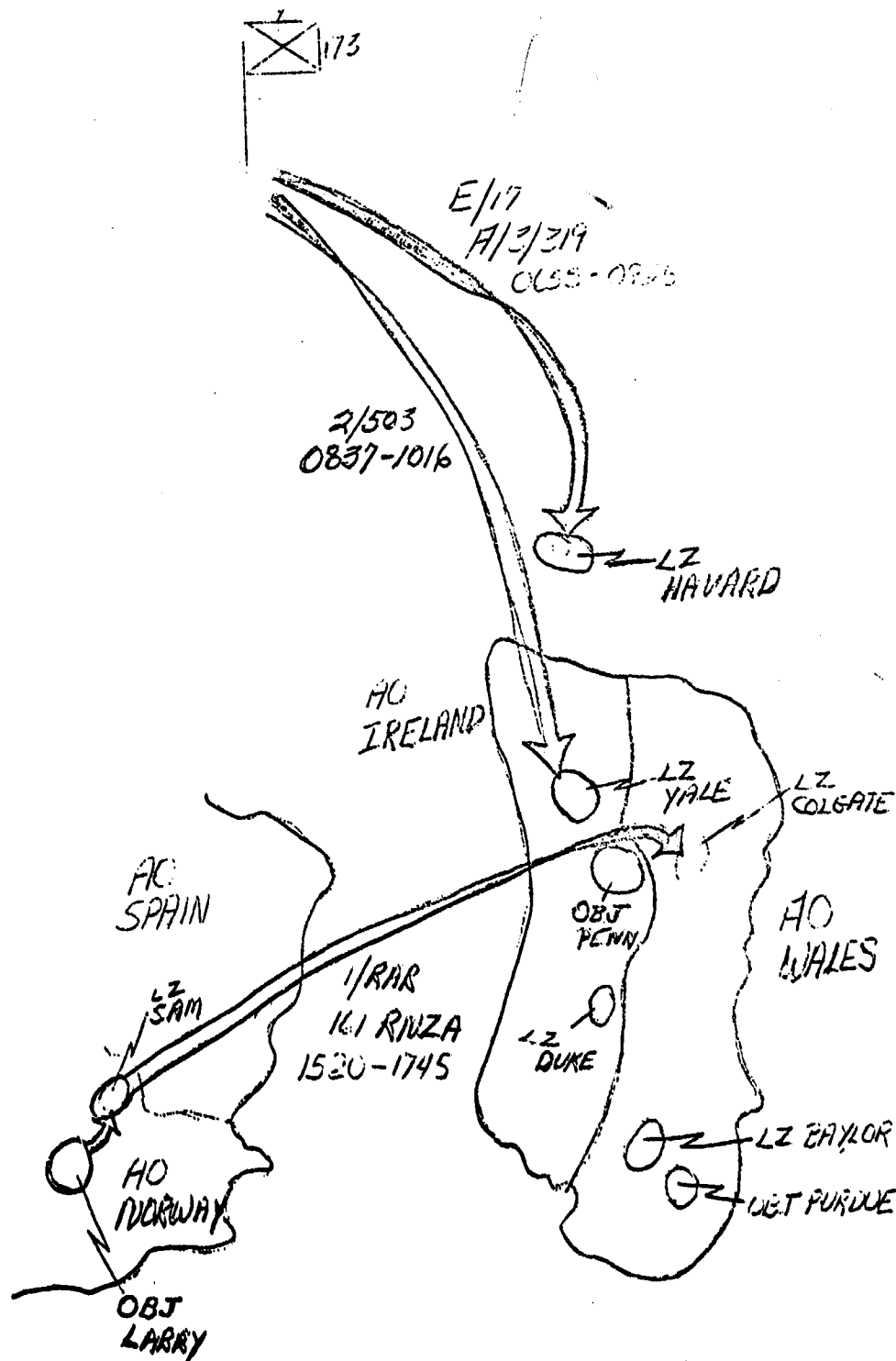
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APPENDIX 9 (Frag Order 10, 11, 14-8) to ANNEX B (Opns Schematic)



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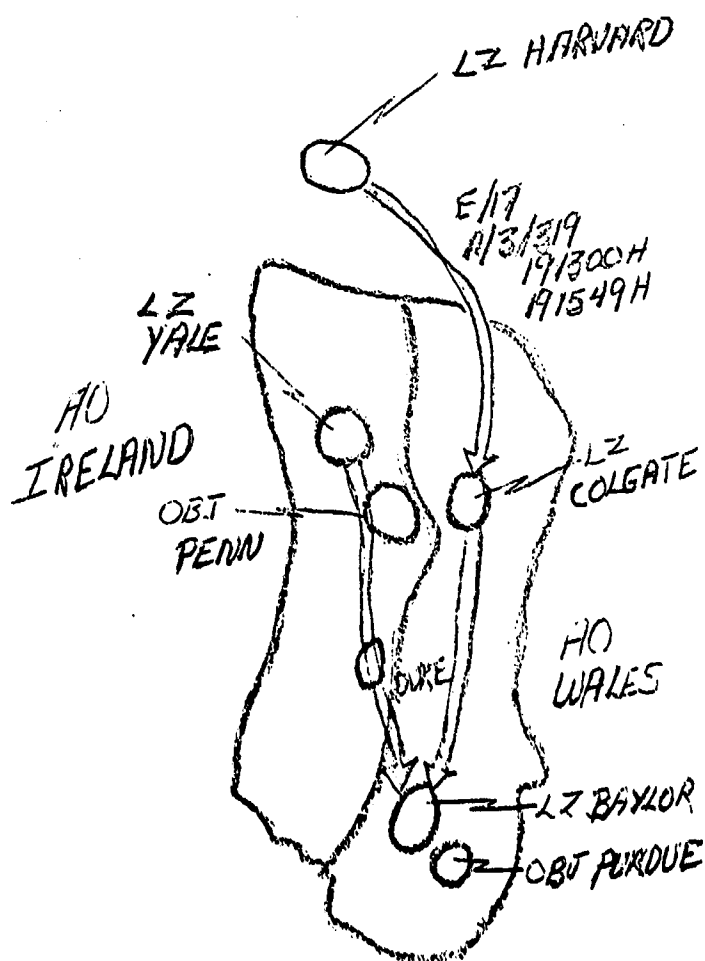
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APPENDIX 10 (Frag Order 10, 11, D+9-11) to ANNEX B (Opns Schematic)

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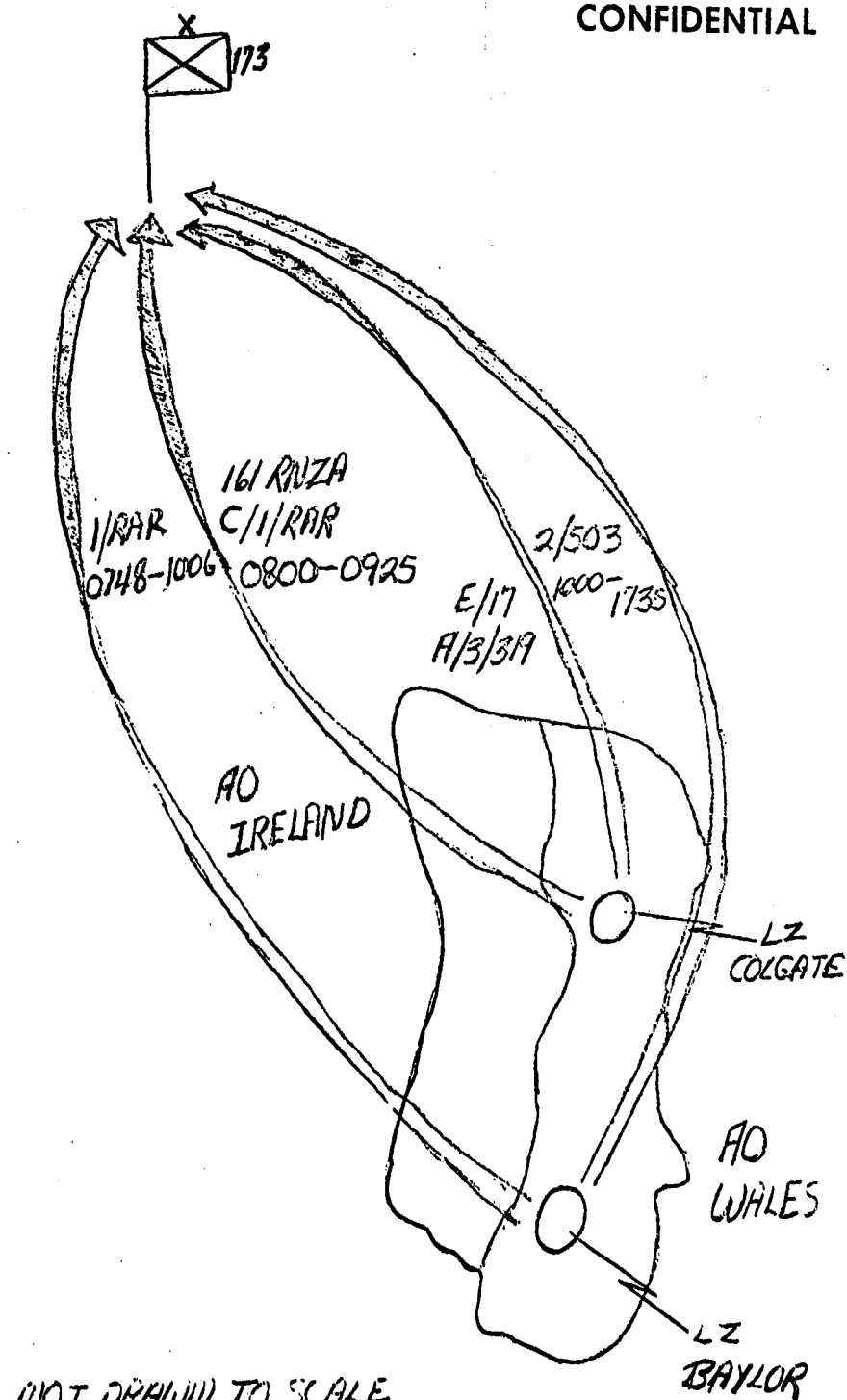
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APPENDIX 11 (Frag Order 10,11, D+12) to ANNEX B (Opns Schematic)

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PRELIMINARY INTERVIEW REPORT

1. Biographical Data:

Control Item Nr 66-5-930

- a. Full name: TRAN DONG
- b. Alias: TUYET & TIEN
- c. Rank: Captain (NVA)
- d. VC/NVA unit assignment and assigned duties: Assistant to Combat Training Chief at LAC SON Regiment Headquarters. Last Mission - sent to DIA DIEM BUNHAI II (YT 2787) on liaison trip to set up accommodations for the 605th Battalion, LAC SON Regiment which was moving south from their base camp area at YU 300355 and was due to arrive near DIA DIEM BUNHAI II (YT 285885) on 211100H Apr 66.
- e. Date and place of birth: 1930 at TRUNG DONG village, VAN MINH District, KHANH HOA Province.
- f. Home of residence: LAC SON Regiment Headquarters (YU 296377)
- g. Parents names: Father - TRAN THON (Deceased)
Mother - NGUYEN THI HANH
- h. Education: 3 years - PHAP-VIET School, VAN MINH District, KHANH HOA Province.
- i. Political tendency: Member of MLFSVN
- j. Marital status: Single
- k. Social class: Poor
- l. Prior military service: VIET MINH 1948-1957
NVA 1959 - Present
- m. Relatives working for RVN or RVNAF: TRAN NHIEU, age 32, brother in ARVN, PFC, 1954 at VAN MINH District, KHANH HOA Province. TRAN GIA, age 42 brother, GIANN Village Chief (Deceased 1953) at TRUNG DONG Village, VAN MINH District, KHANH HOA Province. NGUYEN GIAO, age 47, brother-in-law, ARVN squad leader, VAN MINH District, KHANH HOA Province. TRAN THUONG, age 47, cousin, ARVN Sgt VAN MINH District, KHANH HOA Province.

2. Circumstances of capture or return to government control.

- a. When: 182330 April 1966
- b. Where: YT 287970
- c. Captured by or returned to: Company B, 1st Royal Australian Regiment
- d. Documents and weapons in possession when captured or returned to government control: 1 US .45 cal pistol, with holster, transfer orders from MR6 to LAC SON Regiment, letter of introduction from GI CT6 (Staff office MR6) to LAC SON Regiment Headquarters, letter of recommendation from MR6 to 840th Battalion, letter of commendation from Political Officer at MR6.

3. Past Activities:

- 1945 to 1948 - lived in TRUNG DONG village, VAN MINH District, KHANH HOA Province.
- 1948 to 1954 - lived in KHANH HOA Province with various VIET MINH units.
- 1954 - Regrouped to NVN with 3000 people from KHANH HOA Province.
- 1954, November to December 1955 attended OCS at QUE LIN City, QUANG TRI Province, CHINA.
- 1956 to 1957 military service with 324th Division (NVA).
- 1957 to 1958 Worked as a woodcutter in TAN VAN village, THANH CUONG District, NGHIE AN Province, NVN.
- 1958, January to May 1960 Recalled to service and assigned to 34th Division 90th Regiment, 1st Battalion, 3d Company, 2nd Platoon.
- 1960, May to June 1961 - Military service in NVN with various units.
- 1961, June - Infiltrated with NVA unit through LAOS into SVN.
- 1961, July to May 1963 - with VC unit in KHANH HOA Province.
- 1963, May to April 1966 - Military Duty (VC) with various units.
- 1966 April - Captured.

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Infiltration route from NVN to SVN is as follows:

1. Left NGHE AN Province, NVN, 27 April 1961.
2. Went through QUANG NAM Province, NVN, 30 April 1961.
3. Entered LAOS 5 May 1961 passing through LA VI LANG and MUONG PHIN, LAOS May 1961.
4. Crossed Route #9 near TUNG XENG mountain late May 1961.
5. Left LAOS and entered SVN on 6 June 1961 at unknown location. 1 1/2 months after infiltration was completed source became a member of the NLF SVN on 20 July 1961.

Military Assignments:

1948 - 1954 3 months training at the KHANH HOA Provincial Unit, VIET MINH.
203 Independent Company (Squad Leader).
1954-1955 Attended OCS at QUE LAM City, QUANG TRI Province, CHINA.
1956-1957 Assigned to 324th Division as a platoon leader.
1957-1958 Civilian
1958 Recalled to service in NVN.
1958-1960 Platoon leader in 34th Division, 90th Regiment, 1st Battalion, 3rd Company, 2nd Platoon.
1960, May to Sep 1960 Assigned as Commanding Officer, 2nd Company, Infiltration Group 600.
1960, September to May 1963 Commanding Officer, 2nd Company, 120th Battalion. Source infiltration to SVN with this unit in Mid 1961.
1963, May to August 1964 Production Section Chief N16.
1964, August to September 1964 Inspected 840th Battalion in QUANG DUC Province K58 District.
1964, November to April 1966 N16 Staff, Assistant Chief for Combat Training
1966, 13 April to 19 April assigned to BAC SON Regiment as Assistant Combat Training Officer.
Source was involved in two harassing actions in May 1962 at SUOI RUA Stream, DA NOI District, KHANH HOA Province.

4. Areas of Special Knowledge:

Source was trained in NVN on the following weapons:

1. M16 A9
2. US BAR
3. TULLE SMG
4. 60mm Mortar
5. 81mm Mortar
6. 57mm M1
7. M16 MG (Water cooled)
8. US 45 cal pistol
9. M-1
10. Carbine

Source knew how to operate a PRC-10 radio.

Military movement - 605th Battalion, BAC SON Regiment was moving on 18 Apr 66 from their base position near PHUOC HOA (YU 300355) to a location near DIA DIEM EUNHAI II (YT 285825). Itinerary goes south from the base position to YU 3224 where they camped on the 1st night's march. This area is on the northern bank of the SONG LE River. The 605th Battalion resumed travel on 190030H Apr 66 moving southeast to a location on the northern bank of the stream located at YU3714. This was the 2d overnight stop. 605th Battalion was to leave this area on 201300H Apr 66 and travel south southeast arriving at the junction of the trail and Hwy #14 on 202400 Apr 66. They were to proceed southwest along Hwy #14 until daybreak. At this time they were to leave the highway on the eastern side at approximately 211100 Apr 66 and rest there for 2 days. Then on 23 Apr 66 they were to be met by an agent of the Central Committee of the NLF SVN and be taken further south. Source did not know their final destination. Source was to return to BAC SON Regiment Headquarters once the 605th Battalion was picked up by the above mentioned NLF SVN Agent.

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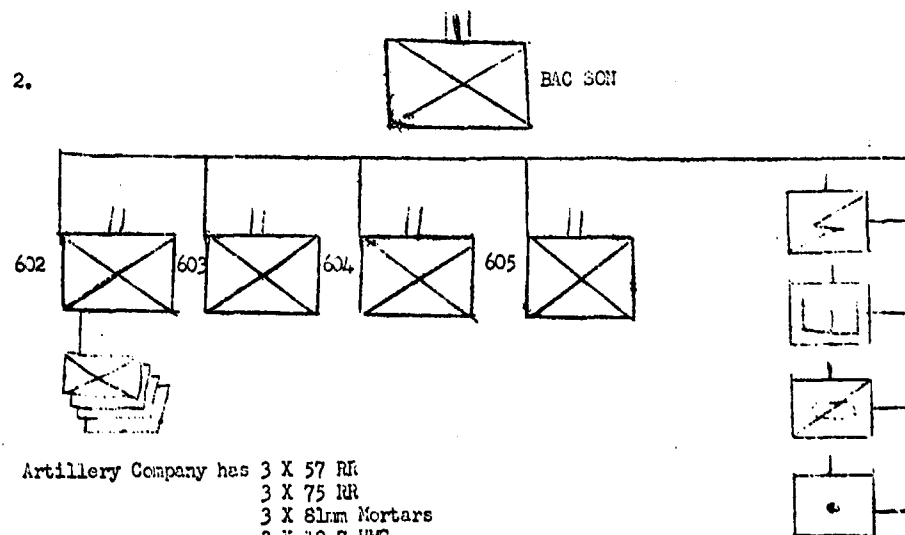
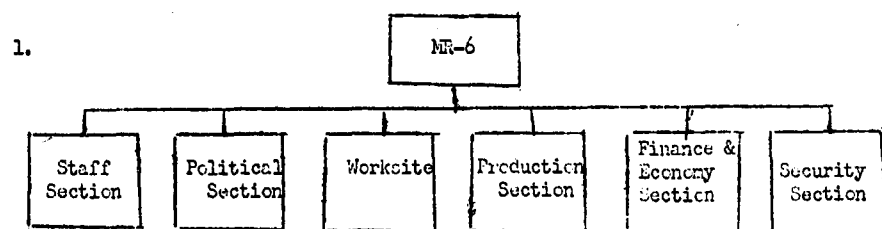
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PRELIMINARY INTERROGATION REPORT (Cont'd 66-5-930)

Source gave the following military organization:



Artillery Company has 3 X 57 RR
3 X 75 RR
3 X 81mm Mortars
3 X 12.7 HMG

The following personalities were obtained:

1. Sr Colonel NGUYEN VAN NGA - Chief NR-6
2. Col SAU HAT - Asst Chief NR-6
3. Lt Col NUOI CONG - Chief, Staff Section NR-6
4. Sr Capt LE VAN MAU - Asst Chief, Staff Section NR-6
5. Lt Col NUOI TRUNG - Chief, Political Section NR-6
6. Sr Capt LE VAN MAU - Asst Chief, Worksite NR-6
7. Sr Col NGUYEN VAN NGA - Chief, Worksite NR-6
8. Rank Unknown - CHINH TO - Chief, Finance & Economy Section NR-6
9. Maj NGUYEN LE - CO Bac Son Regt
10. Maj NGUYEN HAI - XO Bac Son Regt
11. Sr Capt HUYNH KIMAI - CO 604th Bn
12. Sr Capt NGUYEN BIEU - CO 603rd Bn
13. Sr Capt NGUYEN VAN THIEU - CO 605th Bn
14. Sr Col GIAP VAN CUONG - CO 34th Div (NVN)
15. Maj NGUYEN THUYET - CO 90th Regt, 34th Div
16. Sr Capt NGUYEN VAN TINH - CO 1st Bn, 90th Regt, 34th Div
17. Maj Gen NGUYEN DOAN - CG NR-4 (NVN)
18. 1st Lt NGUYEN LAU - CO 3rd Co, 120th Bn
19. Capt NGUYEN PHAP - CO, 4th Co, 120th Bn (Cmbt Spt)
20. 1st Lt LE HAI - XO 840th Bn

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PRELIMINARY INTERROGATION REPORT (Cont'd 66-5-930)

5. Assessment of source by interrogation/Intelligence officers.

- a. Source is in good physical condition.
- b. Source is knowledgeable on military matters.
- c. Source was confused at times during the interrogation as concerns dates, but otherwise he was very cooperative throughout the interrogation.

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