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

IN REPLY REFER TO

AGAM-P (M) (12 Nov 68) FOR OT RD 683216

18 November 1968

SUBJECT: ~~Operational Report~~ - Lessons Learned, Headquarters, 25th Infantry
Division, Artillery, ~~Period Ending 31 July 1968~~ (U) ~~68~~

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11 15 Aug 68

12 23p

1. Subject report is forwarded for review and evaluation in accordance with paragraph 5b, AR 525-15. Evaluations and corrective actions should be reported to ACSFOR OT RD, Operational Reports Branch, within 90 days of receipt of covering letter.
2. Information contained in this report is provided to insure that the Army realizes current benefits from lessons learned during recent operations.
3. To insure that the information provided through the Lessons Learned Program is readily available on a continuous basis, a cumulative Lessons Learned Index containing alphabetical listings of items appearing in the reports is compiled and distributed periodically. Recipients of the attached report are encouraged to recommend items from it for inclusion in the Index by completing and returning the self-addressed form provided at the end of this report.

BY ORDER OF THE SECRETARY OF THE ARMY:

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19 OT-RD-683216

Kenneth G. Wickham
KENNETH G. WICKHAM
Major General, USA
The Adjutant General

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DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
HEADQUARTERS, 25TH INFANTRY DIVISION ARTILLERY
APO San Francisco 96225

AVDCDA-CO

15 August 1968

SUBJECT: Operational Report of 25th Inf Div Arty for Period Ending 31 Jul 68.
(RCS CSFOR-65)(R1)

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1. Operations: Significant Activities.

Operation TOAN THANG continued from last quarter. The forces deployed to the Capital Military District were successful in spoiling an all out May Day attack on Saigon. Approximately two enemy battalions, unable to consummate their attack on the capital, were trapped in the swamps to the southwest of Highway 1 near Duc Hoa. During the period 3-5 May over 10,000 rounds of artillery were poured into the area inflicting heavy casualties on the combined VC/NVA force.

During the early morning of 9 May, Fire Support Base (FSPB) Maury, vic XT6502, occupied by elements of 7/11 and 3/13 Arty, repulsed a strong ground attack (See Incl 1).

On 14 May, one medium battery was deployed to FSPB Patton (XT5921) and on 15 May, two light batteries were moved to FSPB Pope (XT5430). These moves were made to provide support for TF Daems in operations in the vicinity of the Mushroom.

The threat of a 1 June attack on Saigon began another concentration of artillery around the city. On 22 May, Brty C, 2/40 Arty came under OPCON of 25th Div Arty at FSPB Bishop vic XT7590, and the following day, A, 7/11 Arty was moved to the same location from Cu Chi. Two days later, on 25 May 68, B, 1/27, which had just become OPCON 25th Div Arty, closed into position at Tan Son Nhut Air Base. The same afternoon, the Div Arty Headquarters Forward CP moved into Tan Son Nhut. The concentration was completed the following day when C, 6/77 moved into FSPB Harrison and Hq and A, 6/77 became operational at Tan Son Nhut AB, all were redeployed from the vic of the Mushroom where the 6/77 had been supporting TF Daems. Between 25 and 28 May the decision was made to return the Div Arty Headquarters to Cu Chi Base Camp where established communication facilities provided better control of the situation. This was accomplished on 29 May.

While the defense of Saigon was the center of attention and the main reason for the artillery moves, the routine missions of supporting the maneuver elements

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as they ferreted the enemy out continued. The 1/8 Arty was in direct support of the Division's 2d Bde and 6/77 was direct support to the 3d Bde/TF Daems. The 2/77, 3/13 and various attached units performed Reinforcing and General Support roles.

Operation TOAN THANG (Complete Victory) Phase I ended 31 May and Phase II began 1 June. On 1 June Task Force Daems, support by B&C, 6/77 and B,1/27 moved against the enemy west of Saigon along the Oriental River, but the following day the operation was cancelled and by 3 June, the artillery had returned to positions on the western edge of the Capital.

During the first half of June there were few significant moves or operations other than a concentrated effort on the Saigon/Tan Son Nhut Defense Against Rocket and Mortar Attack (DARMA). This consisted of firing on known and suspected enemy launching positions to spoil possible attacks by fire and as quick reaction counter battery fire. This mission was assumed by the Capital Military Assistance Command (CMAC) on 5 Jul 68.

On 14 June, 2/77 replaced 6/77 as Direct Support to the 3d Bde. The 6/77 became General Support Reinforcing for the Division. On 8 June the 6/77 was assigned to the 23d Artillery Group and attached to 25th Div Arty. In mid-July, the 6/77 was relieved from its attached status and re-deployed to the Delta, IV Corps Area, under the operational control of the 9th Infantry Division.

To support the 3d Bde, 101st Air Cav Div in operations near the Sugar Mill, XT4405, B,2/77 and A, 2/319 moved into Fire Support Base Jackson vic XT4216 on 19 June. The following day C,2/319 relieved B, 2/77 at Jackson and B,2/77 returned to FSPB Stuard Vic XT 4819. The 2/319 Artillery Battalion is organic to the 3d Bde, 101st Air Cav. On 25 June, the 2/319 moved to Dau Tieng. The next day, C, 2/319 and C, 2/77 occupied FSPB Kearny vic XT 5152 to support 3/101 Air Cav reconnaissance in force (RIF) operations in the Michelin Plantation. The following day, the 2/319 was again on the move as A and C batteries moved from Kearny to FSPB Patton vic XT 5921. The first month of Phase II Operation COMPLETE VICTORY closed on a note of watchful waiting in expectation of a renewed enemy offensive early in July.

In the early morning hours of 4 July, the enemy launched a heavy attack by fire (rocket/mortar, RPGs and small arms) and a moderate ground attack against the Dau Tieng Base Camp. Artillery elements defending the western perimeter repulsed the attackers after they had reached the main bunker line. Four artillery men were killed and eight wounded in the fighting. Follow-up operations in the vicinity of Dau Tieng and the redeployment of the 3d Bde, with 2/77 attached, to OPCON Capital Military Assistance Command (CMAC) caused a large number of artillery moves between 4-6 July.

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B, 2/77 replaced A, 7/11 at FSPB Danford vic XS7798 on 4 July and on 6 July C, 2/77 also moved into Danford as the 2/77 came under CMAC control 5 July. A, 7/11 was shifted from Cu Chi to FSPB Hull vic XT 2638 on 6 July. The following day, C, 6/77 displaced from Cu Chi to Dau Tieng and on 8 July A, 7/11 moved into Tay Ninh from Hull. B, 7/11 moved from Hull to Schofield II vic XT3942 on 6 July where is supported reconnaissance in force operations by 4-23 Ing (Mech) south and west of Dau Tieng until 13 July when the battery moved into Tay Ninh. Also on 6 July, C, 7/11 moved from Dau Tieng to FSPB Kearny vic XT 5152; the battery returned to Dau Tieng on 8 July. By 13 July action around Dau Tieng had subsided and operations centered in the Trung Lap, Trang Bang Go Dau Ha area until late in the month when intelligence disclosed a major threat to Tay Ninh.

On 16 July A, 7/11 moved from FSPB Thomas III vic XT4052 to Dau Tieng and C, 7/11 moved from Dau Tieng to FSPB Wood vic XT4434. These moves were made to maintain support for the gast moving 4-23 Inf (Mech) as the Mohawks shifted their RIF operations from the Crescent area to the Bo Loi Woods.

Meanwhile, the 3d Bde, 101st Air Cav supported by its 2/319 Arty Bn at FSPB Houston vic XT4307 had conducted a three day operation in the vic of the Sugar Mill. The 2/319 reutrned to Patton on the 14th.

On 15 July the 6/77 Arty began departing the 25th Div Arty Tactical Area of Interest by convoy to the New Port Docks, Saigon, for redeployment to the Delta. The departure of 6/77 and the CMAC OPCON of 2/77 Arty left the 25th Div Arty critically short of light batteries for direct support missions. The 23d Arty Group provided partial relief when A, 2/13 arrived in Cu Chi 11 July to assume a General Support Reinforcing role.

There were no major artillery actions until 21 July when A, 3/13 (the Clan) moved from Stuart to Hampton vic XT4420 and C, 7/11 shifted to Hull vic XT2638 from Wood to provide support for the initial Cu Chi to Tay Ninh night convoy. The following day C, 7/11 joined the Clan's battery at FSPB Hampton. The next two days, 22-23 July, these batteries provided support for 4-23 Inf (Mech) as it destroyed a regimental size VC base camp, killing 14 enemy, 3 kilometers north of Go Dau Ha.

24 July was a day of redeployment as the 2/319 rotated its B Btry from the Screaming Eagles Base Camp at Phuoc Vinh to FSPB Patton to relieve C Btry which returned to Phuoc Vinh. The most significant moves were the result of an enemy threat in the Tay Ninh area. A, 3/13 and C, 7/11 convoyed from Hampton to Tay Ninh.

On 26 July the 25th Division/CMAC boundry became the Hoc Mon canal from the Saigon River to the Pineapple area vic XS6086. As a result, the 2d Bde elements and B, 1/8 at FSPB Pulaske II vic XT8005 were in the CMAC TAOR and were moved north to Crockett II vic XT7416 in the reduced 2d Bde area of operations.

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The reinforcement of Tay Ninh continued on 27 July with A, 2/13 moving there from Cu Chi. At Tay Ninh, the maneuver elements moved out from the base camp to hit the enemy before he could take the initiative. To support the 3-22 Inf, B, 7/11 Arty moved to FSPB Buell vic XT2153 and to support 4-23, C, 7/11 occupied FSPB Rawlins III vic XT2848.

Meanwhile, the 101st Air Cav 3d Bde conducted combat assault operations north of the Sugar Mill supported by the 2/319 Arty. The artillery moved into FSPB Jackson II vic XT4519 from Patton on 30-31 July.

The quarter closed with the spot light on Tay Ninh and the threatened enemy 3d Phase offensive still only a threat. During the quarter, Div Arty units made 133 moved, some by air, but most by convoy. A total of 256,006 rounds (193,100 - 105mm; 52,575 - 155mm; 10,381 - 8") were fired as Div Arty carried out its mission of providing artillery support to the maneuver elements of the Tropic Lightning Division.

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2. Lessons Learned: Commander's Observations, Evaluations and Recommendations.

a. Personnel

(1) Casualty reports.

(a) Observation: Timely and accurate casualty reports from forward observer parties are difficult to obtain.

(b) Evaluation: Frequent, prolonged separation of forward observer parties from their parent units and limited or non-existent communications with the parent unit make these reports difficult to obtain.

(c) Recommendation: Require the supported unit to identify and report artillery casualties through artillery channels.

(2) Pay for artillery liaison and forward observer personnel.

(a) Observation: Due to the nature of artillery liaison and forward observer personnel duties, they are usually far from their parent unit on pay day.

(b) Evaluation: This creates a need for additional transportation for pay officers to pay these personnel. It also causes poor pay service to these personnel. The supported units are interested in the welfare of these personnel and are willing to help relieve the problem.

(c) Recommendation: It has proven satisfactory to place liaison and forward observer personnel on the pay roll of the supported unit. This requires additional checking to keep up with personnel changes but results in better pay service and reduced transportation requirements.

b. Operations

(1) Radio traffic on fire direction (FD) nets

(a) Observation: Personnel other than liaison officer (LNO)/forward observer (FO), firing battery fire direction center (FDC) and controlling battalion FDC are using FD nets. This is most prevalent when a unit comes in contact.

(b) Evaluation: At times it becomes impossible for LNOs/FOs and FDCs to communicate with each other because of other traffic on their FD net.

(c) Recommendation: Personnel other than the LNO/FOs who have traffic for the FDCs should use their command or other frequency. Personnel or units having only one radio can switch to another frequency. This leaves the FD net free of all traffic except fire direction for which it was set aside.

(2) Protection of medium and heavy artillery

(a) Observation: Medium and heavy artillery with their larger silhouettes are very vulnerable to enemy direct fire weapons.

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(b) Evaluation: Protection can be provided by constructing shields of earth using a bulldozer and chain link fence. The chain link fence detonates enemy projectiles before they strike the hull of the weapon.

(c) Recommendation: Erect these shields on the side(s) of the weapon nearest the perimeter or most likely avenue of approach.

(3) Secondary explosions in M109 Howitzers

(a) Observation: Secondary explosions of ammunition stored in the interior ready racks of M109 Howitzers are more hazardous to howitzer sections than the effects of enemy fires alone.

(b) Evaluation: Direct fire shields (see (2) above) should be erected when possible. The M109 can take a direct hit and remain operational if there are no secondary explosions. When the possibility of a direct fire attack exists, the battery commander may decide to follow the recommendation below.

(c) Recommendation: When the situation warrants, ammunition in the interior ready racks may be removed to preclude secondary explosions should the howitzer receive a direct hit.

(4) Location of medium and heavy artillery in fire support bases.

(a) Observation: Occasionally medium and heavy artillery are placed on the perimeter of a FSPB.

(b) Evaluation: Medium and heavy artillery are improperly used when placed in a position on a FSPB perimeter, since these weapons are intended for long range heavy fires. The high explosive ammunition employed is not as effective as the Beehive ammunition used by the light artillery in perimeter defense. The large silhouette causes medium and heavy artillery to be an almost certain loss on the perimeter.

(c) Recommendation: Medium and heavy artillery are best employed in a central location in the fire support base with the crew compartment open to the interior of the position for ease of movement during an attack.

(5) Construction of perimeter defense bunkers

(a) Observation: Some perimeter defense bunkers do not have sufficient gun ports to the flanks.

(b) Evaluation: The lack of flank gun ports does not permit close-in interlocking fires. It also prevents fire along the perimeter line in the event the perimeter is broken.

(c) Recommendation: Perimeter bunkers should be constructed with gun ports on the flanks.

c. Training. Battery training programs.

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(a) Observation: The continually changing tactical situation and the very frequent detachment of batteries from their parent unit make a battalion training schedule impractical.

(b) Evaluation: The battery commander can best adjust training requirements, available time and facilities to the situation. The battery commander is the individual responsible for the performance of his unit and for making or recommending promotions; therefore, he is most concerned with the training achievement of his unit. A very flexible training program is necessary in a fast changing tactical situation.

(c) Recommendation: Establish battalion training programs which give the battery commanders wide latitude, authority, and responsibility for planning, conducting and supervising training in their batteries.

d. Intelligence. None

e. Logistics.

(1) Class V transportation.

(a) Observation: It is often impossible for a battery to move a minimal basic load of 1000 HE, 90 BH, 60 WP, 60 HC, 120 I'll, small arms ammo, and fuzes without seriously overloading its organic vehicles.

(b) Evaluation: In order to provide the fire support required, the battery must be adequately stocked with Class V. The battery also has to be ready to move at a moment's notice. With the bunker material and PSP required to build up a position area (as must be done at most fire support bases each time they are occupied), it is impossible for the battery to move its basic load. In some cases, overloading of 2½-ton trucks has resulted in dead-lining practically every 2½-ton truck in a battery. The replacement of organic 2½-ton trucks with 5-ton trucks would allow sufficient class V to be moved to support the maneuver elements and prevent overloading of vehicles.

(c) Recommendation: Organic 2½-ton trucks should be replaced by 5-ton trucks.

(2) Insect control in forward areas.

(a) Observation: It was noted that aerosol type insecticides in open areas and ventilated bunkers are at best moderately effective for a very short period.

(b) Evaluation: A #10 can filled 3/4 full with a mixture of diesel fuel and liquid insecticide, when placed upwind of the battery area and ignited, results in smoke being carried across the battery area ridding it of mosquitoes, flies, etc. The smoke is not hazardous to the health of the troops and it does not interfere with their duties.

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(c) Recommendation: Use of this field expedient method of insect control should be encouraged.

f. Organization: None.

g. Other: None

3 Incl

1. A comparison of the lessons learned in one battle and their successful application in a second
2. Organizational Structure of the 25th Inf Div Arty
3. Radar Training

GORDON SUMNER JR
COL, Arty
Commanding

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AVDCMH (15 Aug 68) 1st Ind
SUBJECT: Operational Report of 25th Inf Div Arty for Period Ending
31 Jul 68. RCS CSFOR-65 (R1)

DA, HEADQUARTERS, 25TH INFANTRY DIVISION, APO 96225, 25 August 1968

TO: Commanding General, II Field Force Vietnam, APO 96266

Forwarded with concurrence.

FOR THE COMMANDER:

W. F. Faught
W. F. FAUGHT
/m LTC, AGC
Adjutant General

AVFBC-RE-H (15 Aug 68) 2nd Ind
SUBJECT: Operational Report of 25th Inf Div Arty for Period Ending
31 Jul 68, RCS CSFOR-65 (R1)

DA, HQ II FFORCEV, APO San Francisco 96266 5 SEP 1968

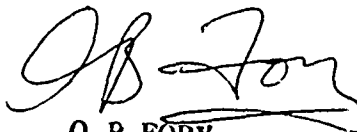
THRU: Commanding General, US Army Vietnam, ATTN: AVHGC(DST), APO 96375

Commander-In-Chief, US Army Pacific, ATTN: GPOP-OT, APO 96558

TO: Assistant Chief of Staff for Force Development, Department of the
Army, Washington, D.C. 20310

1. Subject report is forwarded.
2. This headquarters has reviewed and concurs with the Operational Report-
Lessons Learned of the 25th Infantry Division Artillery for the period ending
31 July 1968, as indorsed.

FOR THE COMMANDER:



O. B. FORY
1LT, AGC
Asst AG

AVHGC-DST (15 Aug 68) 3d Ind (U)

MAJ Klingman/ds/LBN 4433

SUBJECT: Operational Report of 25th Inf Div Arty for Period Ending 31
Jul 68. RCS CSFOR-65 (R1)

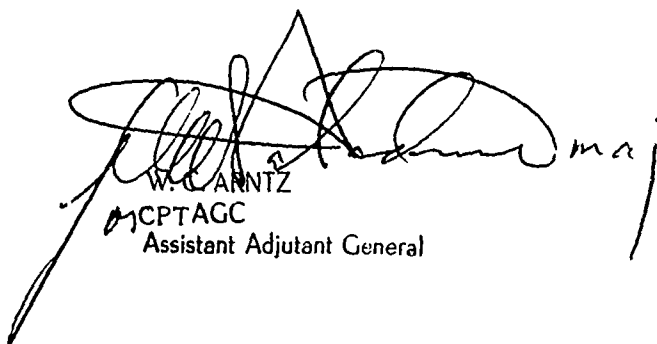
HEADQUARTERS, UNITED STATES ARMY, VIETNAM, APO San Francisco 96375 19 OCT 1968

TO: Commander in Chief, United States Army, Pacific, ATTN: GPOP-DT,
APO 96558

1. This headquarters has reviewed the Operational Report-Lessons Learned
for the quarterly period ending 31 July 1968 from Headquarters, 25th
Infantry Division Artillery.

2. Reference item concerning Class V transportation, page 7, paragraph
2e(1). The unit will be advised to initiate MTOE action.

FOR THE COMMANDER:


W.C. ARNTZ
MCPTAGC
Assistant Adjutant General

Cy furn:
HQ II FFV
HQ 25th Inf Div Arty

GPOP-DT (15 Aug 68) 4th Ind (U)
SUBJECT: Operational Report of HQ, 25th Inf Div Arty for Period Ending
31 July 1968, RCS CSFOR-65 (R1)

HQ, US Army, Pacific, APO San Francisco 96558 30 OCT 1968

TO: Assistant Chief of Staff for Force Development, Department of the
Army, Washington, D. C. 20310

This headquarters has evaluated subject report and forwarding indorse-
ments and concurs in the report as indorsed.

FOR THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF:


C.L. SHORTT
CPT, AGC
Asst AG

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BATTLE OF FIRE SUPPORT BASE MAURY I AND FIRE SUPPORT BASE PIKE VI (A comparison of the lessons learned in one battle and their successful application in a second)

During the period 9-12 May 1968, two fire support bases of the 25th Infantry Division Artillery came under intense enemy attack. The two attacks followed classic VC tactics and accordingly were almost identical in nature. The defense of both bases by US troops was also successful in each case, but lessons learned from the first defense, applied to the defense of the second fire support base, resulted in far less destruction of friendly equipment and fewer friendly casualties.

The fire support base designated as Maury I was composed of two 105mm towed howitzer batteries, B Battery, 7th Battalion, 11th Artillery and C Battery, 7th Battalion, 11th Artillery, and one 155mm SP howitzer battery, A 3/13. The battalion fire direction center of the 7/11 Arty was controlling fires in the base, and attached to it were two 40mm "dusters" from the 5/2 Arty. Although Maury I was located in what was probably the best available area in its immediate vicinity, the terrain was far from ideal. Hedgerows, bamboo thickets and woodlines surrounded the clear area, and adding to the difficulty of preparing the position was the advent of the monsoon season, making digging underground bunkers difficult.

At 0100 hours on 9 May 1968, Captain Kendall Jowers, battery commander of C, 7/11 Arty was finally preparing to take some much needed rest. He knew it would be short, for he had left word to be awakened when the guard in the exec post changed at 0200 hours. Shortly prior to 0200 hours, Captain Jowers was shaken awake by his radio operator and staggered over to the exec post bunker, just in time to glance at his watch, verify the 0200 hours switchover, and listen to the first mortar round explode outside the doorway.

While Captain Jowers and his men were pinned down by the intense mortar and RPG barrage, the enemy was beginning its ground assault. After launching two diversionary attacks against the northwestern and southwestern corners of the fire support base the main attack was directed against the western point of the triangle where the 155mm battery nestled less than 200 meters from a treeline.

By 0330 hours 1Lt Robert McLaughlin, the fire direction officer of C, 7/11 Arty, was frantically moving two 105mm howitzers to the southwestern side of the perimeter, hoping to relieve some of the pressure against the 155mm battery with the 105mm beehive round. But as this move was being executed the RPG fire was having a devastating effect on the 155mm howitzers. Only one M109 was still serviceable, and out of the other five, three had been completely destroyed.

Captain Luis Ortiz, the battery commander of the medium battery, was on his second trip to the battalion fire direction center when he noticed one of the M548 ammunition tracks burning. Oddly enough, though, the M548 which had been adjacent to the burning track was missing, and not until daylight would Captin Ortiz learn that the missing track was spread over the entire position in minute particles.

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The flare and gunships arrived by 0330 hours, the Air Force fighter aircraft by 0500 hours. At 0530 hours the relief elements of LTC A.S. Fullerton's 4th Battalion, 23d Mechanized Infantry Battalion, which had been racing to Maury from their night position since news of the attack had been broadcasted, finally battered their way into the beleaguered base and the din of battle sputtered to a halt. As the dazed defenders of Maury I picked their way through the expended canisters, wounded comrades awaiting evacuation, and widespread debris, the initial accounting of men and ammunition was begun.

All beehive ammunition had been expended, but due to the speed and accuracy of the assault against the medium battery, less than 10 rounds of 155mm had been fired prior to the destruction of the howitzers. The Dusters had done well. From protected berm positions, the two M-42's had expended a total of 1100 40mm rounds, resulting in at least two secondary explosions, despite the RPG wounds received by four crewmen.

Only 18 confirmed Viet Cong killed could be determined, and friendly losses numbered 10 killed and 66 wounded, of which 4 men later died of wounds received in the battle. These four men, along with seven others killed and thirty-nine wounded, were all artillerymen. Of the five M109s destroyed, one serviceable howitzer was pieced together from two damaged howitzers. Two M548s were destroyed, and one five ton truck was severely damaged. Also, fourteen M-16 rifles were either lost or destroyed and a few gas tanks ruptured.

And as the analysis of the battle continued, a few lessons began to emerge which, it was believed, if employed in a similar situation might reduce a few of the quoted statistics and increase enemy casualties. Inadequate attention to artillery ammunition storage caused many casualties. No bulldozer had been available to construct berms around the howitzers, and ammunition was protected on the sides only. Rather than being on the point of a triangle, the medium battery should have been more centrally located within the perimeter and away from a treeline. And finally, although the 105mm batteries expended their entire stock of beehive, its effect was reduced by poor fields of fire. The start of a battle is no time to move towed howitzers; positions should have been chosen early in the occupation of the fire support base which would have allowed maximum use of the beehive round.

On 11 May 1968, with the benefit of the lessons learned above, LTC Homer W. Kiefer, Jr., battalion commander of the 3d Battalion, 13th Artillery moved two batteries of 105mm towed howitzers, B Battery, 6th Battalion, 77th Artillery and A Battery, 1st Battalion, 8th Artillery, and one battery of 155mm SP howitzers, C Battery, 3d Battalion, 13th Artillery, into fire support base Pike VI. The batteries closed into the fire support base early in the afternoon and a bulldozer began constructing berms for the 155mm howitzers immediately. By nightfall, only the turrets of the howitzers were exposed; the 105mm batteries had been carefully positioned for maximum use of beehive and two howitzers, one from each light battery, had been placed at strategic spots on the perimeter some distance from the rest of the battery positions. While the terrain was much the same as that of Maury I, the nearby woodlines had been taken into careful account by the positioning of the two attached Dusters and by the excellent fields of fire enjoyed by the light batteries. The medium battery was positioned between the two light batteries, enabling it to support equally well all around the outside of the perimeter.

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At 0130 hours, on 12 May 1968, the searchlight crew at Pike VI had just finished sweeping across the southern end of the perimeter, having noticed no movement, and was working its way back. Its sweep was interrupted by approximately 400 mortar rounds, all falling in the space of 30 - 60 minutes--the battle of Pike VI had begun. Once again, the enemy launched an attack to draw attention to the south, and the Duster positioned on the extreme southern tip of the base had already begun firing its M60 machine gun at about 60 - 70 VC crawling through the field 100 meters to its front. The twin 40mm Duster itself managed only 12 rounds before an RPG, fired from a range of only 50 meters, hit the turret below the right gun and disabled both guns. Leaving 16 NVA bodies around the empty machine gun, the Duster crew fell back on the 105mm howitzer to its rear, just at the same time LTC Kiefer and three men arrived at the Duster to kill the remaining four enemy in the vicinity with small arms. As the small arms fire became ineffective against the withdrawing enemy, LTC Kiefer and his men joined the 105mm howitzer crew in chasing the retreat with a few well-placed beehive.

Meanwhile, LTC Kiefer's S-3, Major Ernest Young, was busily calling in the 155mm howitzer support from two additional batteries, B Battery, 3d Battalion, 13th Artillery located at Hoc Mon and C Battery, 2d Battalion, 35th Artillery near Saigon, both within easy range of Pike VI. And as the main attack was being launched from the west, the 105mm battery covering the entire sector fired round after round of previously prepared beehive and time rounds all with a very short fuze into the attacking enemy. The defense was entirely successful. The attack ended 2½ hours after it began, and while only 30-40 enemy bodies were found in the area immediately surrounding the fire support base, by nightfall, mopping-up operations had produced 110 body count. The artillery had lost only one killed and five wounded, while the total losses at the Pike VI base ran five killed and thirty wounded. Equipment losses were limited to one damaged Duster, easily repaired, and minor damage to two other vehicles.

Analysis in retrospect might point out that the application of the lessons learned at Maury I to Pike VI was no more than the application of basic artillery fundamentals in a counterinsurgency environment, and this is probably true. But until fundamentals are employed so often and so meticulously that they become second nature, the possibility always exists that something basic will slip by the wayside. Following is a list of those men interviewed for the account of the two battles. All were decorated on the battleground with the Silver Star for their gallantry, and without the aggressive leadership shown by each, the story of success at Maury I and Pike VI might well have been written by the enemy.

3 Incl

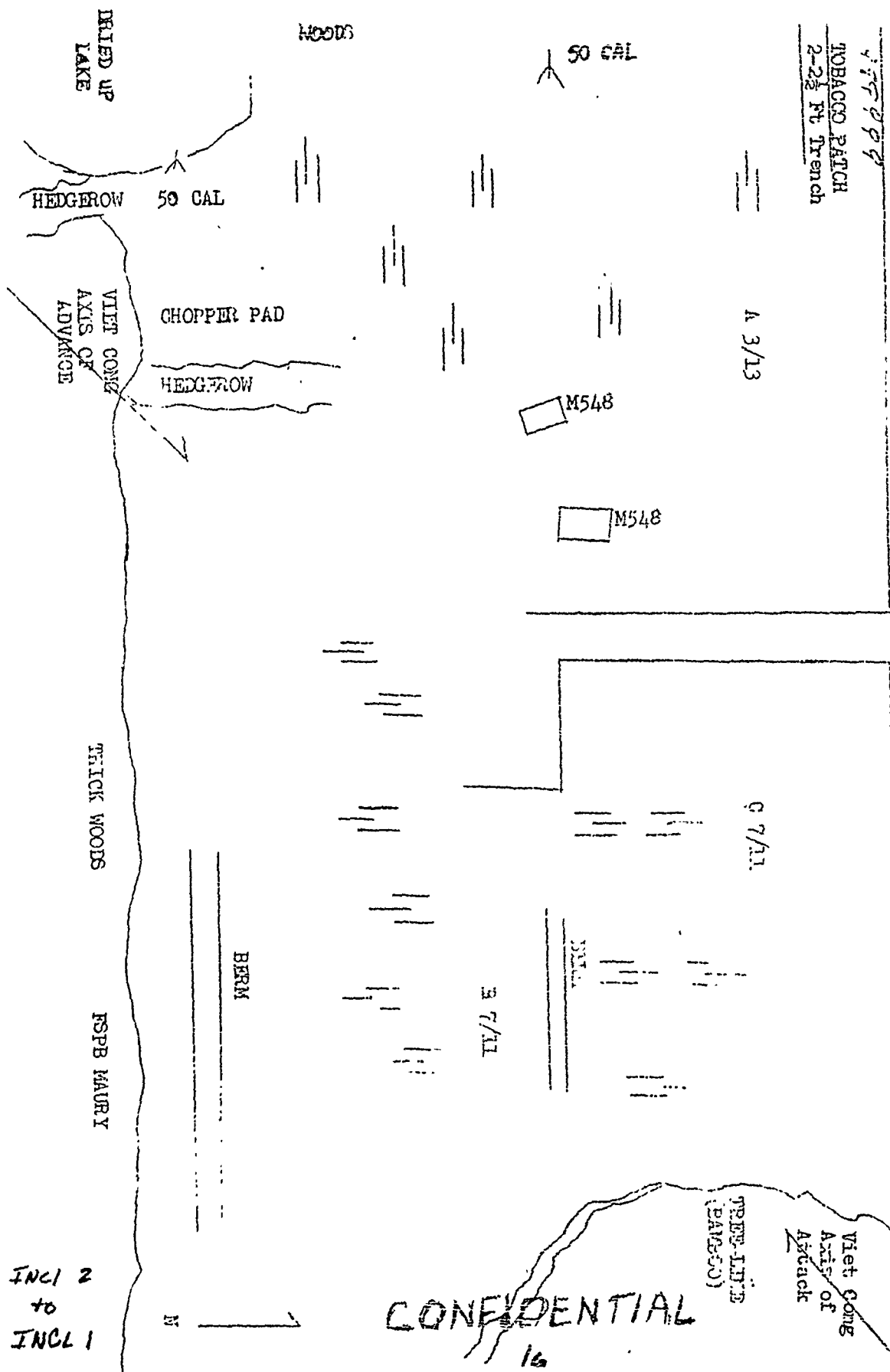
Incl 1 - Persons Interviewed, Withdrawn, HQ, DA

Incl 2 FSPB Maury

Incl 3 FSPB Pike VI

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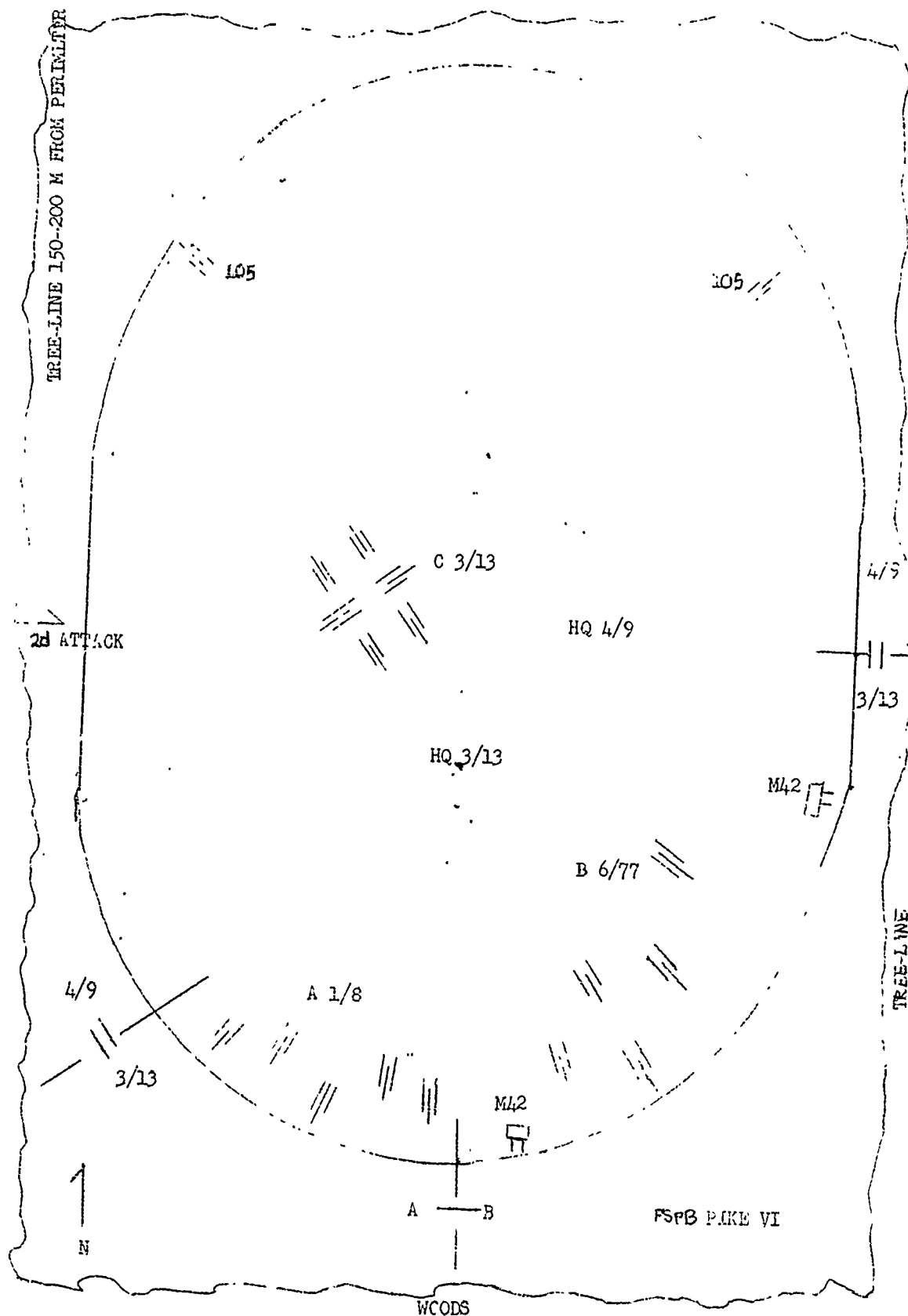
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Incl 2 to Operational Report of 25th Inf Div Arty for Period Ending 31 Jul 68. RCS CSFOR (R1)

Organizational Structure of the 25th Infantry Division Artillery

1. Organic and assigned units
 - a. 1st Battalion 8th Artillery
 - b. 2d Battalion 77th Artillery
 - c. 3d Battalion 13th Artillery
 - d. 7th Battalion 11th Artillery
 - e. 6th Battalion 77th Artillery (assigned until 8 June 1968)
2. Attached Units
 - a. B Battery 2d Battalion 35th Artillery (released 1 May 1968)
 - b. A Battery 1st Battalion 27th Artillery (released 9 May 1968)
 - c. B Battery 1st Battalion 27th Artillery (24 May - 22 June 1968)
 - d. 6th Battalion 77th Artillery (8 June - 13 June 1968)
 - e. A & B Battery 6th Battalion 77th Artillery (8 June - 15 July 1968)
 - f. C Battery 6th Battalion 77th Artillery (8 June - 21 June 1968)
 - g. A Battery 5th Battalion 42d Artillery (21 June - 23 June 1968)
3. Units under operational control of Division Artillery:
2d Battalion 40th Artillery (22 May - 3 June 1968)
4. General Support and General Support Reinforcing Units.
 - a. 1st Battalion 27th Artillery (1 May - 31 July 1968)
 - b. 2d Battalion 32d Artillery (1 May - 31 July) 1968
 - c. B Battery (Automatic Weapons) 2d Battalion 5th Artillery (1 May - 31 July 1968)
 - d. A Battery 2d Battalion 13th Artillery (11 July - 31 July 1968)

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Incl 2

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Incl 3 to Operational Report of 25th Inf Div Arty for Period Ending
31 July 68, RCS CSFOR-65 (R1)

Radar Training

Due to the effectiveness of the enemy's rocket attacks against Cu Chi Base Camp, a thorough radar training program was conducted by the S2 section during the month of May. This program consisted of two phases: 1. 105mm howitzers firing data which closely approximated enemy 122mm rocket characteristics and 2. live firing of captured 122mm rockets. The first phase was completed 16 May with firing from fire support base Crockett (AT7314) toward Cu Chi. Charge 6 fired at a range of 8km was used to obtain muzzle velocity and maximum ordinate close to those of the rockets. The captured ordnance was fired on 18, 19, 23, 24 and 30 May. The exercise on 18 May was another first for 25th Inf Div Arty, since this was the first 122mm Rocket to be fired by US Forces. The exercise on 24 May was a demonstration for the Commanding General, II Field Forces and the Commanding General, 25th Infantry Division. Firecracker ammunition was also demonstrated during this exercise. The first four firings were used to perfect location techniques. The Q-4 radar and crew were provided by 1/8 Artillery. All Q-4 personnel of the division were present for the final firing to become familiar with the location procedure and scope presentation.

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