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AGDA-A (22 Jun 71) FOR OT-UT-71B022

8 July 1971

SUBJECT: Senior Officer Debriefing Report: ~~LTC Michael S. Davison, CG,~~
IT Field Force Vietnam and Third Regional Assistance Command,
Period 15 April 70 thru 26 May 71 (U)

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1. Reference: AR 1-26, dated 4 November 1966, Subject: Senior Officer Debriefing Program (U).

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9 JUN 1971

SUBJECT: Senior Officer Debriefing Report -
Lieutenant General Michael S. Davison

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

1. Inclosed are three copies of the Senior Officer Debriefing Report prepared by LTG Michael S. Davison. The report covers the period 15 Apr 70 thru 26 May 71 during which time LTG Davison served as Commanding General, II Field Force Vietnam and Third Regional Assistance Command.
2. LTG Davison is recommended as a guest speaker at appropriate service schools and joint colleges.

FOR THE COMMANDER:

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as (Trip)
2 cys w/d HQ DA

For [Signature]
JACK F. COOK
CPT, AGC
Assistant Adjutant General

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DEBRIEFING REPORT
LIEUTENANT GENERAL MICHAEL S. DAVISON
COMMANDING GENERAL
II FIELD FORCE VIETNAM
and
THIRD REGIONAL ASSISTANCE COMMAND
15 APRIL 1970 - 26 MAY 1971

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- G - April 1971, GVN Areas of Operation

Note: A supplement to this report discussing radio research operations (ASA) in MR 3 will be forwarded as a separate document due to classification requirements.

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INTRODUCTION

It is not my intention to provide an all inclusive analysis of events occurring during my stewardship. Numerous studies, reports, and assessments have already documented the complete spectrum of II Field Force Vietnam operations. I shall, instead, convey my personal reflections and observations on topics which are particularly important to the understanding of events in Military Region 3. I shall review the mission, concept, and various aspects of the Cambodian Operation; briefly touch on the Wet and Dry Season Campaigns; and then, discuss Vietnamization, Pacification, Redeployment and Thai relationships, in that order.

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MISSION: My mission from COMUSMACV, upon assuming command of II Field Force Vietnam on 15 April 1970 was: to conduct operations with US and Free World Forces, in conjunction with Vietnamese forces, against the totality of the enemy's military, political, and economic effort in Military Region 3; to assist the Vietnamese in strengthening their armed forces; and to assist in maintaining internal security by participating in the pacification effort, to the fullest extent possible. While this mission remained valid throughout my tenure, the overthrow of Prince Sihanouk and subsequent events in Cambodia had far-reaching effects on its scope and implementation.

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CONCEPT OF OPERATION: Prior to my assumption of command LTG Ewell and his Vietnamese counterpart, LTG Do Cao Tri, III Corps Commanding General, pursued a military program aptly entitled "Dong Tien" (Progress Together). This program called for the close association of selected ARVN and US units, assignment of mutual areas of responsibility shown at Tab A, and combined operations to eliminate the enemy within Military Region 3 (MR 3). This program was very important to what followed during my tour as Commanding General, II Field Force Vietnam (II FFORCEV), since it served as the training ground for development of the combat skills of ARVN forces. It made them technically capable of implementing my concept that the operational mission of the Vietnamese regular forces should be to perform the interdiction role heretofore accomplished by US forces. The ARVN should keep the enemy main forces out of MR 3, and cut enemy supply lines into MR 3, so that US forces could get on with the overwhelmingly important objectives of Vietnamization and Pacification. I should add at this point that I never considered redeployment of US and Free World Military Assistance Forces (FWMAF) as a major objective per se. Redeployment was simply to be a by-product of successfully accomplishing Vietnamization and Pacification.

As events turned out, the year 1970 proved to be a momentous one for the Vietnamese and Free World forces alike; with the cross-border operations in Cambodia during April, May, and June being, without question, the most significant. These operations served as the capstone to the Dong Tien program, and the cornerstone to the great strides being made in Vietnamization and Pacification throughout MR 3 today.

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CAMBODIA

GENERAL: Shortly after my assumption of duties as Commander of II Field Force Vietnam, General Creighton Abrams personally tasked me to plan and execute a campaign to eliminate the North Vietnamese base areas in the Fishhook region of Cambodia adjacent to MR 3 (See Tab B). Later, this task was expanded to include the remaining enemy border base areas.

ARVN operations into Cambodia commenced on 14 April 1970, with several limited penetrations into the Angel's Wing, followed by a major ARVN thrust on 29 April, involving three combined arms ARVN task forces moving along Highway 1 in Cambodia (See Tab C). Subsequently, in a surprise move, General Tri rapidly and effectively extended his advance west to SVAY RIENG and TRABEK, thence north to PREY VENG and the CHUP PLANTATION. Meanwhile, allied forces achieved complete tactical surprise on 1 May when units of the 1st Cavalry Division, the 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment, and the 1st ARVN Airborne Division made a combined mechanized-airmobile assault into the Fishhook (Base Area 352), and rapidly moved to MIMOT and SNUOL (See Tab D). Shortly thereafter, units of the US 25th Infantry Division moved into Base Area 354, and the 9th ARVN Regiment moved into Base Area 350. From this point until the end of June, these forces conducted thorough searches of all base areas along the Vietnamese-Cambodian border, pursuing enemy forces and exploiting numerous caches of equipment, munitions, and foodstuffs. The material results of these operations are well known. Our success, I believe, was attributable to the professional caliber of the soldiers involved and the constant command attention to every aspect of the operation by all commanders.

OPERATIONAL ENVIRONMENT: One interesting aspect of the Cambodian Campaign was the operational environment from which it was launched. In Military Region 3, we were in a relatively static, counter-insurgency posture, operating out of fire support bases, with company, platoon, and even squad-size units conducting ambushes and search operations in specified areas. From these limited small unit operations, we suddenly changed to mobile operations involving the employment of battalions and regiments into the Cambodian sanctuaries. The primary aim was to isolate the enemy and block his routes of egress. This war of movement was followed by a reversion to the use of fire support bases and night defensive positions, from which companies searched painstakingly for enemy base camps and caches.

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Shifting from static to mobile warfare required units to display an ability to do many things to which they were not accustomed. One brigade headquarters had been in one place so long they had forgotten how to move to the field. They had difficulty locating their equipment, and determining which equipment was essential and which was excess to their current needs. We had to make another brigade headquarters move three time before they learned to operate in the field. Likewise, the artillery suffered from months of static warfare. They had to re-learn in Cambodia, how to shoot from a tactical march. I must say, however, that my Force Artillery commander, as a matter of policy, required frequent moves of his batteries between fire bases as well as refresher training concerning the full gamut of gunnery skills.

In every instance, proper prior planning was an essential ingredient of successful operations. We were using five airfields and had the problems of air-head organization and maintenance, bivouac and storage area management, air and ground movement control, and of course, the constant shifting of command posts. This diversity of air-head activity has to be planned in detail ahead of time and centrally controlled to avoid winding up with a mare's-nest of confusion. When I consider that this enormously complex operation was launched from a standing start with the key staff officers and commanders being made aware of the operation only a week before it started, I have nothing but praise and admiration for those who made it work.

There were three considerations that were important in the planning of this operation: intelligence, surprise, and task organization. Our intelligence effort got us into the general areas but could not pinpoint caches or base camps. Actually, our intelligence had absolutely no idea of the manner in which the NVA had established their storage areas. One might presume that, because they were in sanctuaries, they had made no great effort to dispose or conceal their supplies. Such was not the case. The Communists went to extraordinary lengths and at an enormous cost in man-hours, concealed and decentralized their logistics depots. Almost everything was underground in remote heavily jungled areas, far from existing high speed roads. It is interesting to note that never amongst the tons of documents we captured did we find a key to the overall NVA logistics layout.

It goes without saying that surprise makes for success. I think we had tactical surprise for the US part of the operation because we went in from a standing start. On 1 May, units were extracted from

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their normal operational areas and inserted into Cambodia. The 11th ACR had been working in War Zone C for several months, so it was already in assembly areas from which it moved across the border with alacrity. Two maneuver battalions of the 25th Division had been moved into the KATUM area within 24 hours of the start of the operation, but these movements could not be considered unusual. Events bear me out in this regard. There was no initial enemy opposition to speak of, and not until 14 May was the enemy capable of demonstrating any semblance of organized resistance. The psychological shocks experienced by the enemy were reflected in the 1300 enemy personnel who rallied as a result of the Cambodian Campaign. Additionally, we received reports of NVA units being sent to the rear for refusing to fight. All of this indicates that the enemy was neither prepared nor forewarned. Nonetheless, strategic surprise was not achieved, as evidenced by the enemy's reaction to safeguard his base areas after the overthrow of Prince Sihanouk, and by his awareness of the ARVN incursions on 14 and 29 April into the Angel's Wing.

Finally, we learned a lesson in task organization. The 1st Cavalry Division initially set up Task Force Shoemaker to run its Cambodian operation. Any time you set up an ad hoc organization, you have difficulty pulling people together, establishing a modus operandi, communicating properly, and coordinating fire support--to cite just a few problem areas. There are so many growing pains involved that it is just not worth the effort. Actually, the 1st Cavalry Division staff was fully capable of running not only the initial operation into the Fishhook but also all other activities of the division. Task Force Shoemaker was dissolved on 5 May.

In examining the tactical aspects of the operation itself, a number of particulars are worthy of note, one of which is the impact of environment on operational effectiveness. Those units which were accustomed to jungle operations enjoyed the most success in searching out and finding the enemy and his caches. Units that came to the Cambodian jungle from the delta regions of Hau Nghia and Long An Provinces had quite a transition to make. It is one thing for a company to conduct operations in the relatively open paddy terrain of the delta, and quite another to operate in the jungle where problems of control, movement, fire support coordination, and tactical deployment are magnified by the restrictions on visibility and movement.

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A unique problem was that of finding the caches. As I have said, our intelligence was only able to identify general areas to work in; from that point on, it was up to the troops on the ground. However, every effort was made to assist them in finding caches. Extensive use was made of aerial reconnaissance; but, with the exception of Rock Island East, which apparently was a distribution point and had its material above ground, the supplies were underground and well hidden in dense jungle. Cambodian Army officers who had assisted the NVA logistics effort during the Sihanouk regime were able to assist in locating some of the storage areas but, in the main, caches were found by painstaking infantry searches. We even resorted to the Navy's magnetic anomaly detectors, and conscientiously followed up on readings by the "Iron Barnacle", as the US 25th Infantry Division referred to this Navy gear. However, the instrument was too sensitive and would pick up empty C-ration and beer cans; consequently, only 10 percent of the readings proved fruitful. Prisoners and Hoi Chanhs proved useful on occasion, but this valuable resource was not fully exploited.

Thus, in the end, it was up to the troops on the ground. Try as we did, we could not come up with a scientific method to help units find caches. Troops had to develop a feel for it, just as they had to learn to fight in the jungle. Once a unit found its first cache, it soon acquired a sixth sense about them and could almost intuitively tell when it was getting into a hot area. Other units never did find caches.

Paradoxically, the enemy himself proved helpful. When resistance stiffened, we knew caches were usually to be found nearby. This was particularly true in the dense jungle of the Fishhook, where the 1st ARVN Airborne Division met with stiff enemy resistance. Rather late in the operation, it occurred to me to use Rome Plows as tactical weapons to clear the jungle and get the ARVN troops into the lucrative cache area. This method proved successful and aided in uncovering several base camps and cache sites. Had I thought of this Rome Plow use earlier in the operation, even greater results might have been obtained.

PSYCHOLOGICAL OPERATIONS: We initiated an aggressive and three-fold PSYOP program to support the campaign in both Cambodia and MR 3. Hard-sell themes identifying and highlighting the dangers of combat were directed at NVA and VC units in Cambodia. Concurrently, the potential refugee problem was recognized and successfully muted. PSYOP played a major role in this regard by warning the Cambodian people to stay away from the battle area, and advising them where to

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get help and medical assistance. In MR 3, an intensive PSYOP program was instituted to inform the populace, particularly the VC and VCI, of the reasons for the invasion of Cambodia and the successes achieved by ARVN and US forces. While the effectiveness of PSYOP operations is habitually difficult to measure, it was apparent from the development of defeatism among the VC that this program had a degree of impact. We made a great effort to exploit the psychological opportunity resulting from the Cambodian Campaign, and when II FFORCEV and III Corps resources were fully committed, additional MACV resources were requested, received, and put to use.

PROBLEM AREAS: Most of the problems encountered were the sort that the American Army, due to its great technical ability and the initiative of the American soldier could handle easily. For example, to move the tremendous quantities of supplies out of the cache known as the City, we just built a road into the area--a simple task in the dry season--and trucked them out, with the engineer's five ton dump trucks carrying the first loads.

Proper exploitation of detainees, prisoners, and Hoi Chanh was one problem we didn't solve soon enough. We picked up so many of these people that many were lost in the PW or Hoi Chanh cycle. Consequently, a very valuable intelligence source was lost. To rectify the situation, we developed a weekly register to identify the individual, his job, where captured, and the holding agency. Thus, all units were made aware of this available resource, and where to get further information.

There were two aspects of the withdrawal from Cambodia that required special attention: the movement of units and fire support coordination associated with the movement. The withdrawal of units from the Fishhook was complicated by the variety of US and ARVN units engaged in searching for caches, clearing land, fighting, or providing fire support. To provide effectively for the proper use of road and air space and the tactical conduct of the withdrawal, I made the US 25th Infantry Division Commander responsible for the operation.

With respect to fire support coordination, the primary factor was recognition that the Fishhook had not been completely cleaned out. Consequently, a comprehensive fire support plan was prepared to continue to hit likely cache areas and enemy base camps in an attempt to complete the destruction of the enemy's logistical system and to prohibit pursuit. The plan analyzed and developed those targets which

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could best be hit with B52 strikes, artillery, or tactical air support... then, air cavalry was interwoven into the pattern to provide post-strike assessments, exploit resulting successes and locate new targets.

ASSESSMENT: An assessment of the long term effect of the Cambodian Campaign can be broadly categorized into two major areas. First was the crippling disruption of the enemy's war machine, coming at a time when the enemy had to husband his existing resources while he was making efforts to reorient a logistical system vital to the prosecution of his war effort in South Vietnam. The overthrow of Prince Sihanouk forced him to turn his attention to securing lines of communication in Cambodia and bringing pressure to bear on the Lon Nol Government. Thus, at a critical moment for him, we were able to seize or destroy vast quantities of his materiel. While this in itself was an accomplishment, its real value was reflected in the cost to the enemy in terms of people, resources, and time required to replace these losses. Added to that were the losses in personnel and the severe strain we inflicted on his command and control system. We caused his headquarters to displace. We pre-empted his supply bases and training areas, and we severely disrupted his commo-liaison and infiltration routes.

The enemy experienced a psychological trauma which initially was evidenced by the surge of Hoi Chanh who rallied. Many of these were political cadre who had their faith in the "inevitable Communist victory" shaken for the first time. Following the Cambodian Campaign, documents captured throughout MR 3 have reflected a definite lack of resolve in the Communist ranks.

But perhaps the greatest, most far reaching and significant psychological impact was evidenced on the South Vietnamese side. In order to muster the troops necessary for both the ARVN and US Cambodian Campaign, security for most of MR 3 was turned over, for the first time, to the Territorial Forces. While their performance was not uniformly good, on balance they acquitted themselves well and demonstrated that they could handle the security role if enemy main forces could be kept at bay. This was to be the responsibility of ARVN forces. Yet, the ARVN forces had to be convinced they could do the job. The Cambodian Campaign provided the opportunity.

Over the years, the ARVN forces had developed into a sound organization. What was needed was confidence in their own ability to operate independently of US forces. But, as everyone knows, the great intangible

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in any military operation is what is in the minds of the soldiers and their leaders, and the communication between them. MR 3 was indeed fortunate in having as a commander the late Lieutenant General Do Cao Tri. He possessed a charismatic personality which infected all who came in contact with him. He thought in bold and dynamic terms, and was utterly confident of his ability to drive events to achieve his planned objectives. He served as a catalytic agent for his subordinates and his own qualities of soldiership seemed to permeate to the very lowest levels of his command. His soldiers, inspired with the necessary confidence and will to win, became undefeatable on the field of battle. Success followed on initial success, and suddenly, III Corps forces had acquired an international reputation.

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SUBSEQUENT STRATEGIES

WET SEASON: Having seen improvement in their own combat capabilities, and having planned and conducted their own operations, Vietnamese forces now believed themselves capable of operating independently to prevent enemy main-force units from entering Military Region 3. Consequently, while still occupied with the Cambodian Campaign, Gen Tri and I jointly evolved the Wet Season Strategy and published planning guidance in a letter of instruction dated 2 June 1970.

The Wet Season objectives called for ARVN forces to move to the border aligned in operational areas independent of US forces (See Tab E). The object was to interdict enemy lines of communication and infiltration routes in and from Cambodia. US forces were to free certain ARVN units for a mobile role.

In accordance with these objectives, pressure was maintained against the enemy through intensive interdiction of Cambodian base areas by artillery, tactical air, and when available, B-52 strikes. This inhibited reentry of the enemy into the border base areas. The majority of ARVN forces conducted continuous cross-border operations while other ARVN units, Territorial Forces, National Police and FWMAF continued to erode the enemy within MR 3.

Further weakening in the enemy situation and reduction in US forces resulted in revision of the joint planning guidance on 20 September 1970. In addition to the previously studied objectives, increased emphasis was placed on eliminating local-force units and the VC Infrastructure, isolating the enemy from the people, destroying or driving out the remaining main-force units, upgrading territorial forces, and advancing the Pacification and Development Program. During this phase of the Wet Season, the majority of III Corps forces continued cross-border operations. As US units continued redeployment from Vietnam, areas vacated by these units were taken over by ARVN or Territorial Forces.

DRY SEASON: Implementation of the Dry Season Strategy, initiated on 31 December 1970, followed systematically on the heels of the Wet Season by continuing the joint II FFORCEV and III Corps effort against the enemy (See Tab F). After Tet, ARVN forces launched wide and more aggressive cross-border operations, seeking out the enemy north and south of Route 1 and in the CHUP-DAMBE area. Concurrently, operations continued in MR 3, with Territorial Forces assuming an ever-increasing security role, as US units continued redeployment (See Tab G).

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VIETNAMIZATION

GENERAL: With the termination of the US ground role in Cambodia on 30 June 1970, we redirected our efforts to creating a situation in MR 3 that would best accommodate President Nixon's commitment to Vietnamization. Vietnamization had been progressing all along, with improvements reflected in the social, economic and political well being of the Vietnamese people. However, the psychological impetus gained by the ARVN, the Territorial Forces, and the Vietnamese people as a result of victories in Cambodia and the consequent reduction in enemy activity in MR 3, caused Vietnamization to advance at an accelerated rate. Concurrently, US forces devoted a greater percentage of their time to the training and development of Territorial Forces, in order that these forces could adequately assume responsibility for defending the populated areas of MR 3 against the internal Communist threat.

SHADOW SUPPLY SYSTEM: The Wet and Dry Season campaigns found ARVN regular forces, in continued cross-border operations along Highways 1, 7 and 13, keeping units of the 7th NVA, 5th and 9th VC (NVA) Infantry Divisions occupied. This prevented the reestablishment of traditional enemy infiltration routes into MR 3 and resulted in a situation in which the remaining main-force and local force units could only exist by parasiting themselves on the Vietnamese economic system. Our task, then, was to focus attention on enemy internal activities. Specifically, we concentrated our efforts on the VC Infrastructure (VCI) and the operation of the Shadow Supply System, a term used to define the total enemy economic effort required to support Communist military and political programs. Since tomes have been written on the VCI, most notably, "Viet Cong" by Mr. Douglas Pike, I will simply state that emphasis was placed at every command level to collect, analyze, and disseminate information on VCI organization, personalities, policies, locations, methods of operation, and the interrelationships that existed between different echelons in the infrastructure hierarchy. In addition, studies were initiated to determine the nature and extent of the Shadow Supply System in MR 3, in order to target it more effectively. These studies were helpful in educating personnel on the scope of VC taxation, bulk commodity transactions and movement, and VC involvement in black marketing and currency manipulation. The problem was to coordinate all friendly intelligence efforts in order to develop fully the structure of the system before we could properly select the best points to attack. Once ready to attack the system we then had to cope with the web of collusion, accommodation, and pay-off. The difficulty was not

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the absence of stringent resource control laws, but rather their implementation which takes the most forceful sort of Vietnamese leadership. Although, there have been occasional spectacular finds against the Shadow Supply System, by and large, we have only experienced some modest success in certain areas, and have yet to get the program really off the ground. We will not succeed until the highest levels of the GVN are willing to force the issue on collusion.

TARGETING INFILTRATION: In conjunction with attacks on the Shadow Supply System, a number of actions have been taken to focus intelligence collection resources on MR 3 base areas and infiltration routes. These actions served to identify, target, and terminate the Communist use of base areas in MR 3. Resources of the Surveillance Target Acquisition Night Observation (STANO) included: infrared and unattended ground sensors, side looking airborne radar (SLAR), vertical and panoramic photo cameras, YO-3A quiet aircraft, and the XM 3 personnel detector (SNIFFER). The reconnaissance plan to employ these resources divided MR 3 and adjacent areas of Cambodia into 100 square kilometer sections making maximum use of Army and Air Force systems for targeting purposes. This information, incorporated with ground radar, ground reconnaissance, and other information sources, proved to be extremely useful in identifying enemy base areas and infiltration activities. Commencing with the standdown of US forces, ARVN forces have increasingly taken over responsibility for the monitoring and control of unattended ground sensors. While the ARVN have not officially been authorized SNIFFER, some divisions are using them on a loan basis. Aerial surveillance is a responsibility of the Vietnamese Air Force and is limited to visual reconnaissance and aerial photography.

ORIENTING ON THE ENEMY: As a means of coordinating and orienting all US Free World, and GVN resources against the enemy, II FFORCEV and III Corps jointly instituted the "Orienting on the Enemy Program", on 27 August 1970. This program evolved out of operational concepts developed to coordinate continuing US, ARVN, Royal Thai, and Australian efforts against enemy activities in Bien Hoa and Long Khanh Provinces. The idea was to divide MR 3 into sections corresponding to major VC political subdivisions, and fix responsibility on friendly units to coordinate and monitor all enemy activity in that region. Other friendly units or agencies in the area were designated supporting agents. The primary objective of the program was to develop communications and coordination between agencies and organizations which, due to political boundaries or other reasons, had not habitually worked together in the

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past against the common enemy. As US forces were reduced, an increasing number of GVN monitoring agents were designated. While some of these agents developed successful programs, particularly the 11th ACR, others did not make as extensive an effort and derived few dividends from a program of obvious benefit. GVN monitoring agents were notably reluctant to take the lead in implementing the program. Nevertheless, I judge the program to be, on balance, well worth the effort to get it started.

TARGETING ENEMY UNITS: Following the 1970 US/ARVN Cambodian Campaign, enemy divisional units were unable to operate within MR 3 except for small scale incursions along the GVN-Cambodian border. With the enemy's border bases disrupted and his line of resupply interdicted, the separate enemy main-force and local force units remaining within MR 3 were vulnerable to attack. Accordingly, we made a concerted effort to target these units. Intelligence activities of all available agencies were correlated to develop detailed information on the location, strength and activity of enemy units and their sources of supply. Coordinated operations were then undertaken to wear down and defeat the remaining enemy forces. In general, US, FWMAF, and ARVN regular forces targeted enemy regiments and battalions while territorial forces oriented on enemy local forces and infrastructure. All friendly forces targeted the enemy's supply sources. As a result of constant operations, the enemy's strength within MR 3 was continually eroded. The number of main force infantry regiments dropped from 7 to 3 with the average strength of the remaining regiments rising, as a result of consolidation, from 633 to 670. The number of separate main and local force battalions was reduced by 6 and the average strength of the remaining main-force battalions fell from 155 to 110 and the local force battalions from 180 to 79 personnel.

PHUNG HOANG: The PHUNG HOANG program has as its purpose the coordinated attack on the VC Infrastructure (VCI). Agencies primarily involved in this task are the National Police and personnel assigned to various intelligence and operations coordinating centers of province, district, and village level. This program has met with only limited success due to a lack of conceptual understanding and motivation to learn by the Vietnamese at the district level. More importantly, there has been inadequate support down through GVN channels. The first factor is being overcome, in part, by assigning specially trained and highly intelligent young NCOs at the district level. These men are doing a

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splendid job in strengthening the Vietnamese skills in marshalling the information that is so necessary to an effective PHUNG HOANG program. The second factor, that of command interest, is more difficult to handle, and, of course, is essential if PHUNG HOANG is to be at all successful. There are several problems that confront us in this regard. On one hand the Vietnamese culture, due to its family oriented social structure and the loyalties that accompany it, militates against getting an effective PHUNG HOANG organization at the village level. It is unlikely that a villager will divulge information to a representative of the central government about members of his or other families who may be VCI. On the other hand, the GVN district, village or hamlet chief may be a party to a de facto accommodation with the VCI. The village chief knows full well that if he is too aggressive in pursuit of important VCI, his own health and welfare become increasingly jeopardized. Thus, it takes a man of very strong character at the district and village level to prosecute the PHUNG HOANG program. While every effort is being made to develop increased interest and attention on the part of senior GVN officials, in the final analysis PHUNG HOANG is a program which rests fundamentally on the Vietnamese will to come to grips with the VCI.

ARVN MOBILE FORCE: A significant factor in ARVN assuming the border interdiction role has been the release for mobile employment of the 18th Division. This was made possible by five developments: improvements in all facets of ARVN operations, a strengthened ARVN force structure, assumption of the security mission for increasingly larger areas of MR 3 by Territorial Forces, erosion of enemy troop strength, and US pressure in Southeast MR 3.

The confidence gained in the initial Cambodian Campaign was the major factor in improved ARVN performance. This confidence has been periodically reinforced by ARVN successes during Operation Eagle, the air-mobile relief of Kampong Cham; Operation Dai Phong, an airmobile raid in Cambodia against a suspected PW Camp; and other similar operations conducted during the 1971 Dry Season Campaign.

The ARVN force structure in MR 3 has been strengthened by activation of Headquarters, 3d Armored Cavalry Brigade, whose purpose is to provide command and control for III Corps armored cavalry regiments and attached units during tactical operations. This headquarters can function as a corps mobile headquarters, in addition to planning and supervising brigade level operations on a sustained basis.

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Coincident with the establishment of the ARVN Mobile Force, 26 territorial artillery platoons were activated. Tab G indicates the extent to which Territorial Forces have assumed the security role from ARVN. Constant operations by ARVN and FWMAF forces in MR 3, combined with continued cross-border incursions by ARVN forces, eroded enemy troop strength in MR 3 from 57,000 to 25,000 men. This freed the ARVN to continue mobile operations.

TERRITORIAL FORCES TRAINING: As a part of the Vietnamization program in MR 3, I directed that major emphasis be placed on the training of Territorial Forces during late 1970 and early 1971. Our efforts were concentrated in two areas: leadership training for Popular Force (PF) NCOs, and unit training for PF platoons. Since Regional Force companies had already generally demonstrated their ability to carry out any mission which might reasonably be given them, they continued joint operations with US forces but did not receive special attention after 15 January 1971. The training of the PF NCOs was carried out at the First Team Academy of the 1st Cavalry Division (AM), during the period 1-28 February 1971. This program trained 150 PF NCOs, from all parts of MR 3, in the basic skills required of small unit combat leaders. The program of instruction was devised by the CG, 1st Cavalry Division (AM), and included first aid, communications, mortar and artillery adjustment procedures, patrolling, map reading and land navigation, and weapons firing and mechanical training. The NCOs were trained primarily as instructors who could return to their units and impart the knowledge they had received. Concurrently, at my request, III Corps doubled the quota for Territorial Forces officers and NCOs at ARVN division academies. The 2d Bde, 25th Infantry Division, having received from the division, B Co, 1/27th Inf, began training Territorial Force units on 25 November 1970. This special company was organized and trained specifically to improve the training of the Territorial Forces. The division was screened for top-quality instructors, who were assigned to the company, given intensive training in the subjects they were to instruct, and organized into training teams. By 15 January 1971, this company had trained two RF companies and nine PF platoons-- a total of 293 personnel.

The company was also given the additional mission of training four similar companies from the 1st Cavalry Division (AM), after which all five companies were employed under the control of the CG, 1st Cavalry Division (AM), to train PF platoons within the provinces. The priority of districts in which platoons were to be trained was coordinated with

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province officials and advisors. Priority of platoons within a district, and the training requirements for each platoon, were determined by coordination with district officials and their advisors. This five company phase began on 18 January 1971 and terminated on 12 March 1971. During that time, 371 PF platoons were trained, for a total of 8,588 men. In addition, 200 Regional Force personnel, 440 Peoples Self Defense Force, and 50 village and hamlet officials participated in selected portions of the training.

PEOPLES SELF DEFENSE FORCE: The purpose of Peoples Self Defense Force (PSDF) is to support the Republic of Vietnam in maintaining security in the hamlets and to develop a spirit of community cooperation and development. With the reduction of US forces in MR 3, PSDF have been called on more frequently to protect people in the hamlets; however, the defensive capability of these groups has been marginal at best. Training is the critical problem area in the PSDF program. Although the leadership programs at the training centers are excellent, PSDF hamlet leaders have been reluctant to leave home for the length of time required to attend the training course. On site training has suffered from the magnitude of the task and the wide dispersion of personnel to be trained. GVN officials have tried to rectify the problem by assigning training missions to RF/PF units; however, this tasking is detrimental to RF/PF operational responsibilities. Thus far, the real value of the PSDF has been in their commitment to the GVN. The VC have correctly evaluated the PSDF more as a political than a military threat. PSDF represents community involvement in its own security, thus taking a stand for the GVN and against the VC. To foster development of this spirit, we have emphasized rallies, community picnics, and other programs to generate interest and prestige for the PSDF.

NATIONAL POLICE: The ultimate answer to civil order lies in the National Police. The GVN is acting to increase its size, efficiency and prestige. The primary emphasis should be in qualitative rather than quantitative improvement.

ARVN LOGISTICS: One uncertainty of Vietnamization that had caused much concern, was whether the ARVN logistics system could effectively support sustained operations. In both the initial incursions into Cambodia and the extended dry season campaign of 1971, the logistics system performed creditably. It did support III Corps, and tactical operations were never seriously constrained by logistic parameters. Furthermore, it was encouraging to see the improvement made in the interim between

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the two campaigns. There are areas that still require improvement. The movement of routine supply and maintenance actions is still disjointed and an unanticipated surge stresses the entire system; however, there has been steady improvement, and experience is developing stability and continuity. Logistical planning by the division and Corps staff has not been as thorough or as well coordinated as operational planning, particularly in providing for lines of communication and the recovery and retrograde of repairable equipment. Tactical commands do not always report their requirements accurately or on a timely basis. This deprives the Corps Commander and his staff of readiness information and inhibits the logistics system.

The 3d ARVN Area Logistics Command (3d ALC), although it did not always respond with the alacrity or efficiency desired, has been effective and has supported III Corps operations adequately.

US ARTILLERY EMPLOYMENT: In the months immediately preceding the Cambodian Campaign, my Force Artillery commander developed a concept for mobile employment of all calibers of cannon. He stressed positioning of heavy artillery at the scene of the action and employment of medium artillery in battery formations, rather than platoons. When the attack into Cambodia was launched, II Field Force heavy and medium artillery batteries were ready to respond to requirements for firepower to complement the swift armored thrusts and deep air mobile insertions. In several instances, US medium and heavy artillery was attached to LTG Tri's fast moving task forces and, for the first time, ARVN commanders learned to appreciate and use artillery correctly.

Since 30 June 1970, artillery employment in MR 3 has been governed by a three-fold mission: from bases in MR 3, provide fire support for ARVN forces operating in Cambodia; support US units in MR 3; and provide artillery coverage in support of territorial forces. Innovations, when they occurred, primarily were in the areas of control and composition.

The requirement to provide wide-ranging support for ARVN and US operations both in MR 3 and ARVN operations in Cambodia, coupled with the lack of any present or planned ARVN heavy artillery battalions has dictated the need to retain both medium and heavy US artillery units throughout MR 3. The initial drawdown proposal to redeploy towed 155mm battalions was changed to SP 155mm battalions in order to capitalize on the towed battalions' air mobile capability.

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Finally, with the reduction in US units, there has been an undesirable increase in the number of split batteries employed. This has resulted in stretching the battery's supply, maintenance, administrative, FDC, and supervisory capabilities and jeopardizing base defense.

ARVN ARTILLERY: ARVN artillery units are quite proficient in the normal fire support missions. Therefore artillery training concentrates on improving technical skills, and refining command, control and coordination procedures. In conjunction with III Corps we established combined fire support coordination centers in eight of the eleven provinces of MR 3. These FSCC's have contributed significantly to the improvement in supporting fires. Just prior to my departure, we launched an on-the-job training program to develop ARVN skills at artillery and air strike warning control procedures to prepare them for their eventual acceptance of this responsibility. As ARVN forces have become more qualified, training programs formerly prepared for ARVN artillery units have been made available to sector artillery sections.

TERRITORIAL ARTILLERY: Territorial artillery units were activated to release ARVN artillery units from their provincial fire support mission and to take over fire support in areas vacated by US forces. In all, forty-four territorial artillery platoons and one sector artillery command per province are to be organized in MR 3. At the time of my departure, 26 platoons had been activated, and deployed. Although these units are commanded by the sector commander, they remain a part of the regular ARVN artillery. While training and organization of these units has proceeded smoothly, tactical deployment fails to reflect the requirements of the existing enemy situation. Too much artillery is deployed in the Saigon area and not enough in Long Khanh, Binh Tuy, and Phuoc Tuy. As a result, I have had to deploy US artillery in those areas to provide adequate support for territorial forces. This arrangement ties US artillery to fixed positions, and fails to take advantage of the flexibility inherent in that arm. My efforts to obtain a change in ARVN plans for deployment of territorial artillery to the three Southeastern provinces have not been successful.

AVIATION: One of the key goals of Vietnamization has been to develop ARVN self-sufficiency in planning, allocating, controlling, and managing available air support. By the end of 1970, ARVN training in air support techniques had progressed to the point where, on 3 December 1970, I placed the 11th Combat Aviation Battalion, 12th Aviation Group,

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in direct support of III Corps. With the exception of three helicopters in support of the advisory effort, all helicopter support provided by this battalion was competently planned for, allocated, and controlled by III Corps. At the present time, III Corps processes nearly all its own requests for USAF and VNAF close air support. Only in the more sophisticated areas of air support, such as B52, Commando Vault, and Combat Skyspot, is advisory assistance still required. A similar degree of ARVN control has been established by III Corps, in processing requests for G2 air activities support.

Units repositioning and standdowns greatly affected my method of employment of airmobile resources. After the redeployment of the 1st Infantry Division, adjustments were made generally by redistributing US and ARVN units. I used the air cavalry units to cover larger areas of operation, assigning them on a number of occasions reconnaissance, surveillance, security, and economy of force missions. The air cavalry squadrons were given areas of operation, called reconnaissance zones, which were superimposed over the AO's of the ground units. As more US units deployed from Vietnam, the need for air cavalry units increased. The 1st Cav Div generated two additional provisional air cavalry troops from within their aviation resources, and the 12th CAG organized an additional air cavalry troop based upon its aerial weapons company. Since February 1971, I've employed up to six air cavalry troops in support of III Corps cross-border operations. The air cavalry "pink teams", reinforced with aerial field artillery (AFA) and tactical air support, have saved the day for the ARVN on several occasions. Regular employment of an air cavalry troop within a given AO develops a certain terrain familiarity in the personnel which greatly improves the reconnaissance effectiveness over large areas. Signs of enemy infiltration or buildup are more readily detected and more effectively exploited by cavalymen who have become familiar with the terrain they are working. During the operations in Cambodia this year, the need for ARVN aero-riflemen to work with the US air cav units became apparent. I instructed the 1/9th Cav to undertake a program to train ARVN aero-riflemen, called "Browns" rather than "Blues". We have used them in War Zone C and in Cambodia with great success to secure and rig downed US helicopters for extraction, and to a lesser extent to improve our collection of intelligence. AFA provides an additional fire support means available to the maneuver commander, and it has proved a responsive and effective means of

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reinforcing the fires of the air cavalry. We have employed AFA in a variety of missions, including providing cover for air insertions and extractions and extending the range of US and ARVN artillery, as well as reinforcing air cavalry units. I am convinced that the flexibility and utility of the Air Cavalry and AFA is such that it should be retained in some form so long as US combat forces remain in Vietnam. A comparison of the helicopter support presently being provided by US units and the planned capability of VNAF indicates three important areas in which ARVN helicopter support will be deficient when we are gone. These areas are Air Cavalry, Aerial Field Artillery, and Heavy Helicopter lift. The introduction of the CH-47C (Super Hook) would satisfy the heavy lift requirement; however, the VNAF lack of air cavalry and AFA capability poses a more serious problem which should be addressed.

ENGINEER: Engineer efforts in MR 3 have been characterized by joint planning and use of available resources to further the Vietnamization Program. In this regard, engineer projects have had a significant complementary effect on Pacification. For example, my engineers, in coordination with III Corps, developed a comprehensive plan to establish or upgrade to all weather capacity roadnets to 14 key heavy artillery fire support bases along the periphery of MR 3. These roadnets were necessary to enable the movement into remote areas of 8-inch howitzers and 175mm guns in order to support ARVN operations where only 155mm howitzers could previously be airlifted. The benefit to Pacification was reflected almost overnight in the boom in the local economy where roads were constructed or improved.

ARVN ENGINEER CAPABILITIES: The combat engineer battalions of the three ARVN infantry divisions and the 30th ARVN Engineer Group, under III Corps control, have proven themselves capable in a multitude of tasks, such as bridge repair, road construction, and airfield maintenance. Although capable, ARVN engineers are heavily committed in Cambodia, and should the enemy significantly increase his interdiction efforts in MR 3, it is unlikely that III Corps engineers could expeditiously repair the damage without outside assistance. A prime example of this is reflected in the 32 bridges identified as critical in MR 3. At the time of my departure, 22 of these bridges were assigned to US units for contingency maintenance and repair in the event of attack. As US forces continue to redeploy, GVN agencies will have to accept responsibility for these bridges. III Corps capabilities in this regard are already

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taxed, and no plans are forthcoming for an increase in their engineer capabilities.

ROME PLOW OPERATIONS: Examination of Rome Plow operations has led me to conclude that the most effective method of employment has proven to be with the Land Clearing Company (LCC) intact. This has insured adequate supervision and maintenance, both of which are essential to keep the unit operating at peak efficiency. Fragmentation of a LCC into platoon groups or smaller results in technical and operational supervision problems, a higher deadline rate and, consequently, lower yields in total acreage cleared per day. An effective operational schedule entails the tractor being operated during daylight, then maintained at night by organizational mechanics, while the driver sleeps. Fragmenting the company prevents this system from functioning, since sufficient maintenance support is not available to service detached groups of tractors.

The redeployment lists for Increment 6 included one LCC along with the battalion headquarters and maintenance company. The efficiency achieved by having a battalion headquarters command control element and the advantage of the maintenance company led me to propose a trade off of spaces to retain the total land clearing capability. I agreed to the substitution of one company in the 31st Engr Bn (Cmbt), in order to retain the LCC and battalion elements. This agreement was made with the realization that some projects, primarily pacification in nature, would have to be deferred or deleted entirely.

Experience has shown that cuts 200 meters in width are most effective in opening an area to allow friendly troops to get at enemy base camps. Of course, area cuts of greater scope have proven necessary when the enemy was located throughout a forested area, as was the case in the TRAPEZOID.

Rome Plows have been employed during tactical operations to cut through enemy resistance; however, one must be willing to take the increased risk of mines, booby traps, and B40 rocket attacks. Security for Rome Plows is best handled by mechanized forces since infantry is simply not able to keep up.

Recent Rome Plow operations in Hau Nghia Province have borne this out. An operation was conceived to clear areas of secondary growth and light jungle which contained a heavily booby trapped enemy sanctuary. Security was initially provided by several RF companies with the belief that ground troops would be able to respond quickly to enemy engagements in the

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relatively light vegetation. Experience in Hau Nghia proved that ground forces cannot react immediately with coordinated and concentrated firepower. Further, there is a lack of adequate command and control in RF units which makes it extremely difficult to coordinate timely and accurate response by artillery and air strikes. On the other hand mechanized troops, provide a much greater degree of command and control which allows for immediate and rapid response, and forces the enemy to disengage early in the contact. This enables the Rome Plows to sustain an acceptable cut rate and substantially lessens the probability of damage or destruction, heavy casualties and the likelihood of abandonment of several plows in the cut area.

In 1970, the 318th ARVN Land Clearing Company (LCC), was organized, equipped, trained, and became operational with US technology, employment guidance, and logistical support. Command, control and logistical support became an ARVN responsibility in early 1971. Since this change, significant difficulty has been experienced in maintaining the units combat effectiveness in order to conduct sustained operations similar to a US, LCC. Specific problems in maintaining the combat effectiveness of the 318th LCC are as follows: lack of command and staff interest in planning and programming for the employment of the 318th, inadequate security and direct support maintenance.

Finally, a very important part of the Rome Plow operation is the recording of cut information. Map overprints must be made periodically to disseminate data on cut locations to the commander in the field. These overprints also serve to correlate regrowth rates for future cut planning.

COMMUNICATIONS SECURITY: One area that has required and continues to require command attention is communications security. Time and time again, interrogation reports and captured documents have alerted us to well organized, trained, equipped, and managed NVA/VC communications intelligence operations in the Republic of Vietnam. The enemy has a substantial English language capability, and has effectively targeted US voice communication networks in the past. Consequently, I have taken a personal interest in our communications procedures in order to deny useful information to the enemy. In developing good communications habits, I prohibited the use of ad hoc codes which invariably only confuse the user. I established a working group to visit units and publish tips on good security practices, and emphasized the use of secure communications equipment and CIRCE codes. As a result, the command has made a lot

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of progress; but, this remains an area where there is always room for improvement, and backsliding is easy. Consequently, the commander must keep on top of communications security at all times. With regard to ARVN security practices in general, there is appreciable room for improvement. As much as I've emphasized to my advisors and to my counterpart the importance of encouraging ARVN forces to adopt sound security practices, little progress has been made. ARVN commanders are the worst abusers of comsec and ARVN forces as a whole appear to have little appreciation for the problem.

CIVIL AFFAIRS: As in past wars, the US soldier has proven himself to be compassionate and charitable to those less fortunate than himself. As a result, unit and even individually initiated projects to aid the Vietnamese people were pursued throughout MR 3. Unfortunately, many of these projects resulted in a reliance on US personnel which is detrimental to furtherance of the Vietnamization Program. For example, in one area of MR 3, a well staffed and equipped GVN dispensary was ignored because the people were conditioned to medical care from Americans. I established the requirement that all projects be a joint effort, controlled through civil affairs channels, and approved beforehand by responsible Vietnamese officials in the area. It was necessary that Vietnamese participate in all aspects of the projects so they would develop the expertise to carry on in the future and, of course, take pride in their own accomplishments. In the MEDCAP program, Vietnamese medical personnel were phased into the operation, and a complementary PSYOP campaign was initiated to publicize the location and capabilities of the GVN dispensaries. The soundness of this approach was borne out time and time again as US forces redeployed from Vietnam and our presence in MR 3 diminished.

THE ADVISOR: In general, the role of the US advisor is two-fold. First, he provides professional advice to the Vietnamese, and second, he provides support and assistance from US resources. My role as Senior Advisor to III Corps has not been typical, however. Working with men who have the professional credentials of Lieutenant General Do Cao Tri or Lieutenant General Nguyen Van Minh, has necessitated very little professional advice from me. My influence as an advisor resulted from General Tri's and Minh's use of me as a sounding board for their operational ideas. As the occasion required, I suggested points for consideration to either General Tri or General Minh, directing their attention to particular problems; however, the solutions were almost always generated by them. More than anything else, my role was to make certain that US operations were appropriately complementary and in tune with the overall allied effort, and to see to it that US resources were provided

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when essential to the success of an ARVN operation. Perhaps the best way to picture the relationship is to consider that the Commanding General of III Corps and I were co-chairmen of the overall allied effort in MR 3.

REDUCTION IN ADVISOR SUPPORT: It is apparent that the experience and confidence now evidenced by ARVN units warrants a drawdown of the US Advisory effort. Teams at battalion level have already been eliminated, and by the end of 1971, advisory teams at regimental level should be eliminated also. Advisory teams at division level, assisted by a few mobile training teams, will be able to provide the support, assistance, and expertise required. The qualifications of the advisor himself are important. Great emphasis should be placed on choosing the proper man to act as advisor. He must be a sensitive and perceptive man. Ideally, the division senior advisor should be a former commander of a US brigade in Vietnam, in order to bring top quality and stature to these positions. This enables the advisor to begin his relationship with the Vietnamese commander with a common combat background, something that is basic to development of rapport and mutual respect. Without these tools, development of an effective advisor-commander relationship is extremely difficult.

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PACIFICATION

POLITICS: The Cambodian Campaign of 1970 left an indelible mark on pacification in MR 3. Not since Tet, 1968, had there been an event of such long term psychological significance and political impact. Military successes in Cambodia, particularly those by ARVN forces, fostered a feeling of self-respect among the populace that enhanced the prestige and abilities of their leaders. The Government of Vietnam suddenly became associated with success, while the enemy increasingly became identified with failure. Increased Vietnamese confidence manifested itself in the emergence, for the first time in years, of divergent aims and objectives of the Vietnamese and Americans, and CORDS recommendations and suggestions started falling on deaf ears with increasing frequency.

As 1970 wore on, the government deftly handled the potentially explosive problem of settling or caring for more than 58,000 Vietnamese refugees and repatriates from Cambodia, increased the presence of the GVN at village level, demonstrated the effectiveness of locally elected officials in provincial political affairs, and placed continued emphasis on land reform, to cite just a few examples.

Although the GVN today is exerting more effective political control over the population in MR 3, it still has serious social problems to overcome: inflation, taxation, government responsiveness, corruption, and urban stagnation. Nevertheless, much has been done, and conditions are set for a stable and secure future, if the GVN has the will to attack these social ills.

ECONOMICS: The economic situation in MR 3 also benefited by the improved security and confidence derived from the Cambodian Campaign. Economic activity increased considerably in the rice, lumber, and rubber industries due to improved freedom of movement between provinces and increased willingness by entrepreneurs to undertake risks in reviving industries previously stagnated by VC presence. The overall economic situation can be considered as improved and the long term outlook appears favorable for continued growth and improvement.

PEOPLES INFORMATION: The People's Information (PI) program was unsuccessful because its implementation was left to the Vietnamese Information Service (VIS) which operated without direction, supervision, adequate facilities, or the necessary authority to insure success of this ambitious task. The designation of the VIS as the agency responsible

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for the PI program removed province and district chiefs from the chain of command, thus, no command emphasis was obtained. In 1971, implementation responsibility for the (PI) program rests with MR 3 province and district leaders, and significant improvement is anticipated.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT: The Local Government Program is designed to establish a functioning hierarchy of local government units which are democratically elected and capable of performing the management, financial, and legal functions necessary to implement development activities. By 1 March 1971, the local government program had experienced significant progress. Of the 3,338 village and 8,135 hamlet positions authorized in MR 3, 99 percent and 97 percent, respectively, were filled, and training of these officials was progressing well. The foundation for an effective local government system was established in 1970, and I anticipate that during 1971, local government in Vietnam will progress further and administer to the people's needs more effectively.

PUBLIC WORKS: Positive results have been realized in the public works area of interest; however, lack of equipment, spare parts, materials, and skilled manpower, adversely affected progress.

VILLAGE SELF DEVELOPMENT: The 1970 Village Self Development (VSD) Program envisioned improvement of political, economic, and social conditions in the village community, enabling the people to contribute actively towards national progress. On the 1970 program cut-off date of 28 February 1971, the eleven provinces and the municipality of Vung Tau had completed 3,836 projects, or 96.5 percent of the goal set for MR 3. While evaluation of the 1970 program showed a marked improvement over the 1969 program, the following problems were encountered: village residents experienced difficulty in understanding the program, new village officials elected in March were not oriented on the program, an inflationary spiral in the economy caused shortages in project funding, and merchants were unwilling to sell construction materials and farm equipment at the official government prices.

ACCELERATED RICE PRODUCTION. The program to establish self-sufficiency in South Vietnam's rice production involved informing people of the advantages of new agricultural practices and the use of recently developed high yield varieties of rice. With the aid of an effective publicity campaign, rice production in the 1970-71 crop year increased 40 percent over the 1969-70 crop year. Additional production increases are anticipated during the 1971-72 crop year, due to greater acceptance of high yield rice, and self-sufficiency (less Saigon) is expected.

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LAND-TO-THE-TILLER: The Land-to-the-Tiller (LTTT) Program was directed toward three groups: the tenant farmer who can make application for three hectares of land, the farmer/owner/operator who can declare his cultivated lands for retention, and the landlord who can declare his land for expropriation and compensation. The program's goal was to distribute 28,300 hectares of land, and the response in MR 3 was excellent. Application was made by tenants for 35,227 hectares, farmer/owner/operators declared 160,338 hectares for retention, and landlords declared 61,790 hectares for expropriation and compensation.

WAR VICTIMS: Between 15 April 1970 and 28 February 1971, 22,000 people were returned to their former homes under the GVN Return-To-Village Program. The GVN gave aid to 24,000 victims of military actions, 10,000 refugees were resettled, and approximately 200,000 needy and disabled war victims were assisted. The most noteworthy accomplishment of the War Victims Program was the assistance given by the GVN to 60,000 ethnic Vietnamese refugees who were forced to flee Cambodia as a result of Cambodian pressures and the affects of combat operations.

WAR VETERANS: The most significant accomplishment in the War Veterans Program was the initiation and near completion of a Veterans Housing Program. Some 1,500 units in MR 3 were 80 percent completed by the time I departed. This was a significant accomplishment which indicates that the GVN is expanding and implementing a sounder and more significant War Veterans Program.

SANITARY HAMLETS: The first sanitary hamlet program included water supply and animal housing improvements, water-seal latrine and garbage pit construction, general cleanup of dwelling grounds, and health education. The program was subsequently expanded to include immunizations by health workers, maternal and child care, and home visits to the sick and injured. The program in MR 3 has been successful; largely due to the excellent support obtained from local religious, political, and public health officials.

BLOOD BANK: The objectives of this program are to maintain an adequate supply of stored blood, and to develop and maintain a list of potential donors. Of the eleven provincial hospitals and the Vung Tau Municipal Hospital, five have a fully operational capability. The remainder are in varying degrees of development. This is a much needed program and one which must be fulfilled before an acceptable degree of self-sufficiency can be obtained. Public response to this program has varied in direct proportion to the support provided by public officials.

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JOINT MEDICAL FACILITY UTILIZATION: The two-fold objective of this program was to select certain provincial hospitals for joint use by civilians and military, and place all district maternity-infirmery-dispensaries on a joint use basis. Problems were experienced in ward overcrowding, differences in military and civilian ration allowances, and confusing command lines to the supervisory roles of the Ministry of Defense and Ministry of Health. However, the program resulted in better facilities for military patients, improved staffing of civilian hospitals, and elimination of dual resource requirements.

MEDICAL LOGISTICS DISTRIBUTION SYSTEM: The aim of this program is to establish regional and provincial storage and distribution facilities for medical supplies, to include, equipment for province hospitals and district maternity-infirmery-dispensaries. Medical supply warehouses have been constructed to support the storage and distribution requirements of Tay Ninh, Phuoc Long, Bien Hoa, and Gia Dinh Provinces and the Municipality of Vung Tau, and better inventory control, rotation, and security measures have been established. The success of this system satisfies a much needed requirement in the provincial public health program.

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REDEPLOYMENT

UNIT STANDDOWN: One derivative of the Vietnamization and Pacification efforts was the redeployment of US forces. For the most part, the phases of standdown, base transfers, and unit inactivations have been accomplished with smooth efficiency. The primary reason was the meticulous planning which produced comprehensive programs and directives to guide the phase-down. This was best exemplified by the advance redeployment planning of the 25th Infantry Division, which established a redeployment control center within the division staff, to monitor progress, collect, analyze, and collate reports from subordinate units, and provide direction and guidance, when required. As a result, the division was able to measure its progress against specific milestones developed in prior planning, and the Division Commander was able to determine whether his unit was ahead of the power curve or behind it. The control center proved to be essential in achieving success in redeployment operations, and subsequent withdrawals have borrowed from, and improved on, the success of the US 25th Infantry Division.

MATERIEL SAVINGS: In July 1970, USARV instituted a "Free-Turn-In" program intended to recover excess materiel, regardless of its condition or method of acquisition. During this period, September through December 1970, II Field Force units turned in over 57,533 Class II, VII and IX items, with an identified value in excess of 17 million dollars.

AMMUNITION EXPENDITURE REDUCTION: Following completion of Cambodian operations, we made an evaluation of ammunition expenditures to improve resource management. It was quickly evident that if properly managed, the quality of fire support could be improved while reducing ammunition expenditures significantly. We achieved expenditure reduction by placing command emphasis on improving the use of available intelligence, reducing non-productive firing in target categories of questionable value, developing better definition of targets, and emphasizing the effectiveness of surprise massed fires instead of volume delivery over a long period of time. Of particular interest was the effect of cutting out harassing and interdiction fires. By and large, these fires weren't hurting the enemy, and were having a detrimental psychological impact on the populace. What we really were doing was telegraphing to the people that an unsecure situation existed in MR 3. When we cut out harassing fires, an unbelievable calm settled over MR 3, and no noticeable increase in enemy activity or vitality could be detected. Restrictions were never placed on ammunition for troops in contact or on preparatory fires in support of operations.

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COMMUNITY RELATIONS: Despite occasional, isolated incidents, the attitude of Vietnamese toward Americans was generally favorable in this region. Although the press of combat frequently caused community relations to be relegated to a minor role, good relations were maintained as a by-product of the dramatic and highly visible contribution made by US forces in providing security and stability to the region. Considerable goodwill was generated by an abundance of military civic action projects carried out by US units. As the war receded, and US forces were withdrawn, the importance of a deliberate community relations program became evident. Community Relations Councils were established to provide a forum for discussion of problem areas and to recommend positive programs to maintain harmonious relations between US and Vietnamese personnel. The full dimensions of this program were just beginning to be evident as I departed.

TROOP UNREST: As the war wore on and US withdrawal continued, many of our younger officers and enlisted ranks experienced increasing frustration and dissatisfaction. This malaise was reflected in a wide array of problems that outwardly expressed the misunderstandings and alienation of many of our young soldiers. Each of these problems has areas that are unique but, in actuality, are interrelated, stemming from a common source. The problem that alienates most of the junior officers and enlisted men is the belief that senior officers and NCO's lack interest in them or their problems. While scarcely the prime cause, this situation is certainly a contributing factor to the Army's problems with drug abuse, racial tensions, and the retention of junior officers. A discussion of the characteristics unique to each area, and the programs and approaches developed to handle each, follows.

DRUG ABUSE: The drug problem in general, and the problem in the Republic of Vietnam specifically, is one of major concern to our Army and the Nation. We have an epidemic social problem on our hands. We have been slow to recognize it. Our efforts at drug education, rehabilitation, and enforcement in RVN are as yet tentative, fragmented and variable in emphasis. However, as I depart, it is clear that increased awareness of drug abuse is bringing new impetus to the establishment of comprehensive programs to combat the problem.

The overwhelming menace in drug abuse is heroin. The dimensions of the heroin problem are so enormous that they tend to sublimate any concern one might entertain about marijuana. There is no hard data on the extent of its use. However, I quite confidently estimate that 10-15% of all E-5's

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and below in II Field Force, attached, assigned, and OPCON units are heroin users. This estimate could range as high as 20-25% for some units and lower for others.

Rehabilitation programs are touching only a fraction of that number. This means that the Army in Vietnam is sending home, to the United States daily, a large number of heroin addicts.

I have been actively working with the drug problem in II Field Force since July 1970. It took me three months to create an awareness amongst my commanders that would enable the conduct of productive education, rehabilitation and enforcement programs. I mention this point in order to emphasize that education is a two-fold problem: not only the young soldier must be reached, but also the chain of command.

In early fall of 1970, a rehabilitation program was developed by Specialist Five Richard Tieden at my headquarters, that seemed to possess an essential ingredient which other programs lacked. Appropriately named Pioneer House, the program based its concepts and operations around honest inter-communication in relationships between people. It was designed to help the heroin addict recognize his problems and his reasons for turning to drugs, and to motivate him successfully to overcome his hangups and deal with his problems without the aid of a crutch. The exact cure ratio of Pioneer House is difficult to approximate due to the high number of indeterminants who conclude their tours without a chance for follow-up on their progress. However, the percentage of known cures has averaged 32%, the highest cure ratio in Vietnam. Ideas and concepts are being built into the program today that will expand the Pioneer House Program throughout MR 3. Travelling counselor teams are being developed to lecture units on the honest facts about drugs. In addition, guidance by the counselors will be made available to commanders in combatting the problem within their units and in laying solid ground work for establishing fluent communications, with the intent of preventing recurrences of the problem.

Rehabilitation must be back-stopped by enforcement. Therefore, in February 1971, I created a special enforcement detachment under the Provost Marshal, II Field Force. The enormity of the heroin problem dictates that we concentrate our drug investigative efforts on pursuing heroin sources, preventing introduction of heroin into troop billets and firebases, and prosecuting those who are detected using, in possession of, or dealing in heroin. The suppression of marijuana is incidental to

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the pursuit of heroin and no resources are allocated specifically to it. It is interesting to note that in many cases, the successful suppression of marijuana has caused the use of heroin in the unit to rise.

A major problem in combatting heroin is the lack of resources--in the main, personnel spaces, although additional facilities such as laboratories and equipment are also required. A comprehensive assault on heroin requires rehabilitation counselors, educational teams, CID investigators, laboratory analysts, clerks, military police and medical specialists. These people are not now available in adequate numbers nor do manning tables authorize certain of them.

RACE RELATIONS: A problem confronting commanders everywhere is racial relations. It is a volcanic situation that presents a challenging troop leadership problem. The essence of the problem is to convince a man with black skin, whose people have been deprived and degraded on an organized basis for 300 years, that he is going to receive an equal opportunity, and that he is going to be judged and treated as would someone with a white skin. I believe that it is most difficult for the average white officer or NCO to understand the sensitivities of our black soldiers. Some observers of the situation contend that it is necessary to over-compensate in assuring equitable treatment to black soldiers. This, of course, is manifestly unfair to the white soldier. The dilemma then, is how to accommodate properly the sensitivities of the black man without exacerbating some of the natural prejudices of the white man or, indeed treating him unfairly. It is a complex sociological problem with more than its share of frustrations. It nevertheless is one we must continue to work at diligently.

JUNIOR OFFICER RETENTION: One problem effecting the retention of junior officers is the belief of many that they are hampered or prevented from acquiring responsibility commensurate with their ability and having a sense of accomplishment in their assignments. All too often this is actually the case. Consequently, many young officers have adopted an apathetic attitude desiring only to finish their obligation and get out of the Army. We placed emphasis at all levels of command on making best use of a junior officer's educational background and on considering his future aspirations as a basis for his assignment dependent, of course, on existing requirements. We instituted other programs, such as favorable transfer actions, workday flexibility, scheduled counselling, and the providing of a broader perspective of overall operations in order to increase the morale and job satisfaction of junior officers. In addition, we formed Junior Officer Councils to identify

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possible problem areas and to recommend solutions. I cannot say, however, that we enjoyed exceptional success in retaining promising young officers.

PLANTATION PERSONAL AFFAIRS SERVICE: In an effort to mitigate service irritants and to deal with personal problems of a type a young soldier might be reluctant to take to his commander, we established the Plantation Personal Affairs Service at II Field Force Headquarters in January 1971. This office serves as an ombudsman for any individual seeking advice or assistance. While the service does not actually resolve the problem, it advises the man, makes referrals, and helps him make the necessary arrangements to bring about a rapid solution. The two man staff has been handling about 80 cases a month. In addition to daily case work, the staff conducts periodic "rap sessions" in the evening at the Service Club on subjects such as drugs, race relations, marriage counselling, and inter-personal relationships.

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MORALE AND DISCIPLINE

Notwithstanding the preceding comments concerning our problems, the morale and discipline of the combat and combat support units of II Field Force, by any standard of judgment, excluding that of the US press media, has been generally excellent. In the fall of 1970, a rash of stories appeared in the National Press and on television which may well have caused the uniformed to conclude that a catastrophic deterioration of morale and discipline was under way in the US Army in Vietnam. These stories had little basis in fact and, in the main, represented editorial bias and a compilation of rumors, gossip, and traditional soldiers' gripes.

An assessment of the performance of the infantry companies in IIFV revealed that during the period July 1970 - March 1971 and, in particular, during the above-mentioned period of press hue and cry, the performance actually improved. The number of friendly initiated contacts with the enemy per company per day steadily rose through the fall of 1970 and, after a slight decline at the turn of the year, rose again. In addition, the number of enemy eliminated per contact remained steady. It should be noted that this came at a time when the enemy, as a matter of policy, was avoiding contact with us. In addition, our forces were operating in platoon and even squad sized elements exclusively in the jungle. The enemy, for his part, was also operating in smaller groups and contacts were extremely fleeting except when we found him in bunker complexes. Throughout this period, our artillery firing accidents and incidents were at an all time low. The 12th Combat Aviation Group, deploying over 450 aircraft, established a USARV record in October and November of over 45 days without a flying safety accident. In addition, traffic safety statistics were on a heartening and steadily improving trend. We commenced a program of rotating infantry companies through a beach camp at Vung Tau. In spite of predictions of a disastrous incident rate in the city of Vung Tau, DR's were practically non-existent.

Of interest is the performance of the infantry battalions of the 2d Brigade (Sep), 25th Division and of the two brigades of the 1st Cavalry Division standing down during February - March 1971. These battalions continued to function in the field with a high degree of effectiveness until the very day of their withdrawal from the jungle to their base camps for standdown. In the last nine days before standdown, with every man in the battalion knowing the date of the standdown, the 1st Battalion, 5th Cavalry had 15 contacts with the NVA!

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I could go on at greater length sighting evidence of excellent morale and discipline. After 14 months commanding II FFV, my conclusion is that the young soldier of today is as responsive to good leadership as he ever was. I believe that our young soldiers in Vietnam are performing more creditably than their predecessors in the closing stages of WWII and Korea. Given the anti-military sentiment at home, the lack of public support for the American effort in Vietnam and the absence of appreciation for the sacrifices of our soldiers, it is indeed a tribute to our junior leadership that the Army continues to function with such a high degree of effectiveness. I believe that, in retrospect, objective non-military observers will judge the performance of the United States Army in Vietnam, whether it be in combat, in support, in advising or in civic action, to be one of its finest chapters.

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THAI RELATIONSHIPS

One of the rewarding aspects of my command of II Field Force has been the opportunity to be associated with the Royal Thai Army Volunteer Force (RTAVF). This unit, under the able leadership of Major General Erm Chirapongse, has made a significant contribution to the II Field Force effort to eradicate the enemy in Bien Hoa and Long Khanh Provinces. Upon assumption of command of II Field Force, I immediately sensed an alienation between the Royal Thai Forces and the remainder of my command and the Vietnamese officialdom. My efforts to rectify this situation and make the RTAVF as much a part of II Field Force as the US 25th Infantry Division or the 1st Cavalry Division were enormously aided by the arrival of General Erm in July 1970. This tough-minded, mission-oriented officer had an electric effect on the division.

In dealing with the Thais, I have found them to be extremely proud. The word Thai means "free", and the Thais are not hesitant to remind you that their country has never been conquered or been a colony of the western world. The Thais are perhaps the most Asian of Asians; extremely concerned with "face"; distrustful of Vietnamese; and staunch followers of Buddha. Once you refuse a Thai's request for assistance, he'll never ask you again for he has lost face.

In considering the capabilities and limitations of the RTAVF, one must remember that it is basically a light infantry unit without all the sophisticated hardware and equipment found in a US infantry division. Consequently, it must be augmented with combat support and combat service support if it is to perform adequately. While the Thai soldier as an individual is as good as any put in the field today, and in some respects, superior to his American counterpart, he lacks good small unit leadership.

Thus, with due consideration to ethnic background, "face", and the RTAVF's capabilities and limitations and with General Erm's strong hand at the helm, we were able to bring about real improvements in RTAVF performance. Hand in hand with this development was the rise of mutual cooperation and rapport between the Thais and GVN officials.

When planning an operation I solicited Thai viewpoints and opinions, and tried to convince them of the merits of a course of action before I issued an order. Having achieved their commitment in advance, I received their wholehearted cooperation in the execution of the order when issued.

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While this may seem to be an unorthodox approach to command, it prevented the loss of face by the Thais. At the same time, I instructed my staff to assist them in every way possible, and particularly in those areas where they were the weakest. Once they saw that we were interested in their welfare and willing to provide assistance, they willingly became members of the II Field Force Team and provided a valuable contribution to our operations. At the same time we assisted the Thais in their relations with the Vietnamese, encouraged close coordination and cooperation between other subordinate commanders and the Thais, and made every effort to have only officers and men of the highest quality assigned to the US Special Liaison Section (advisory detachment) with the RTAVF.

In summary, the achievement of the Thai contribution was the natural consequence of General Erm's strong leadership and the development of mutual rapport, understanding and confidence.

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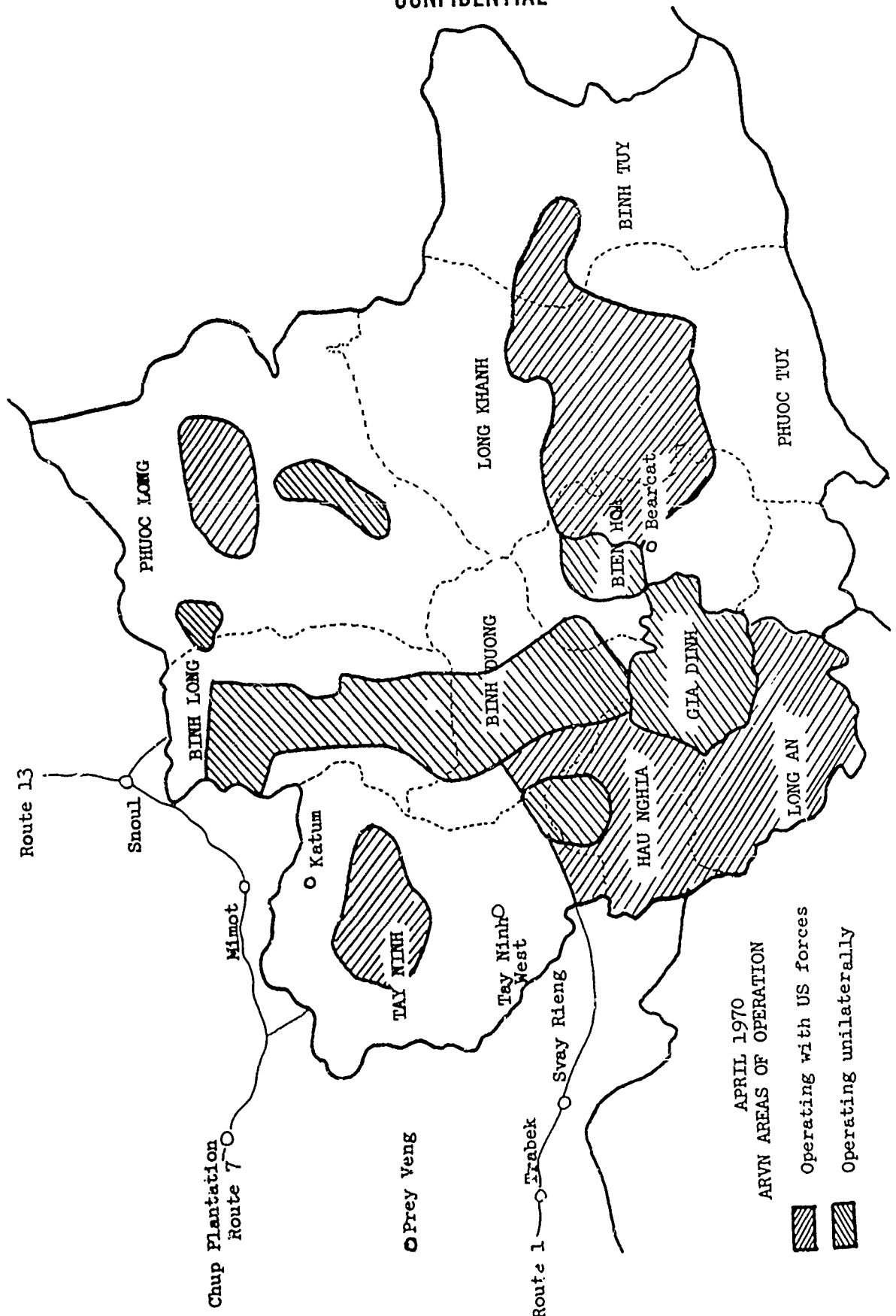
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CONCLUSION



We now find ourselves in the process of restructuring our basic role in MR 3. Present plans call for a combined tactical and advisory headquarters for the region. The remaining US combat troops will form a highly mobile and powerful reaction force, capable of moving anywhere on a moment's notice to counter an enemy threat or to supplement ~~our~~ Vietnamese ^{forces} ~~allies~~. The outlook for ~~our~~ Vietnamese ^{forces} comrades is one of cautious optimism. While the fortunes of the Vietnamese people, the Armed Forces and the government continue to rise, the task is not yet complete. ~~Much hard work remains.~~ The enemy is patient, persistent and implacable. Complex economic and social problems face the GVN. ~~Its programs are debilitated by corruption.~~ Its leadership is stretched thin. However, it has the upper hand at the moment. Political stability, economic progress and social reforms should see it through.

^{U.S.}
~~Our~~ remaining forces will provide training, logistical, and airmobile support to the Vietnamese. The Vietnamese will to persevere and stay the course is the critical factor.

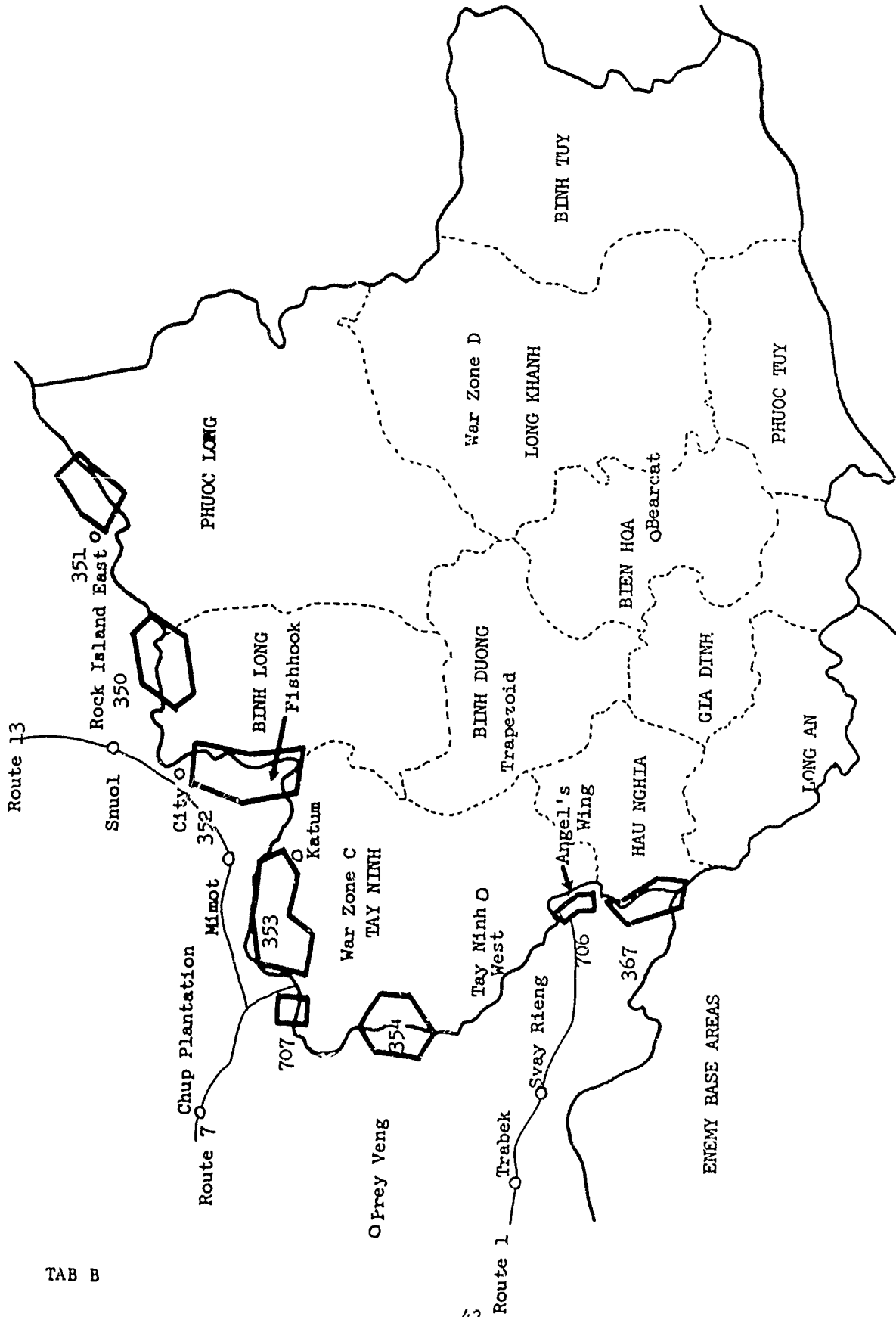
Michael S. Davison
 MICHAEL S. DAVISON
 Lieutenant General, USA
 Commanding



APRIL 1970
ARVN AREAS OF OPERATION

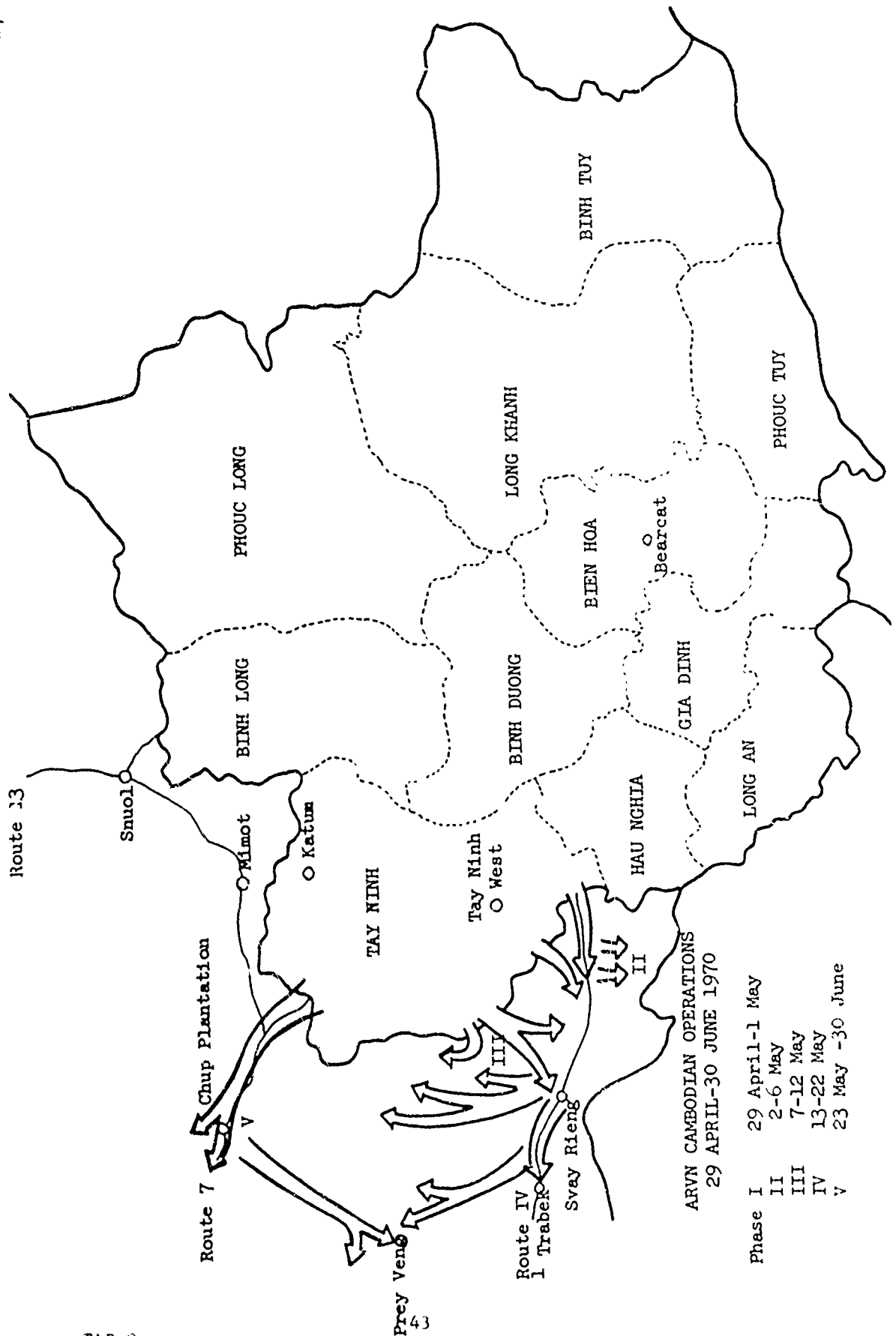
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-  Operating unilaterally

TAB A

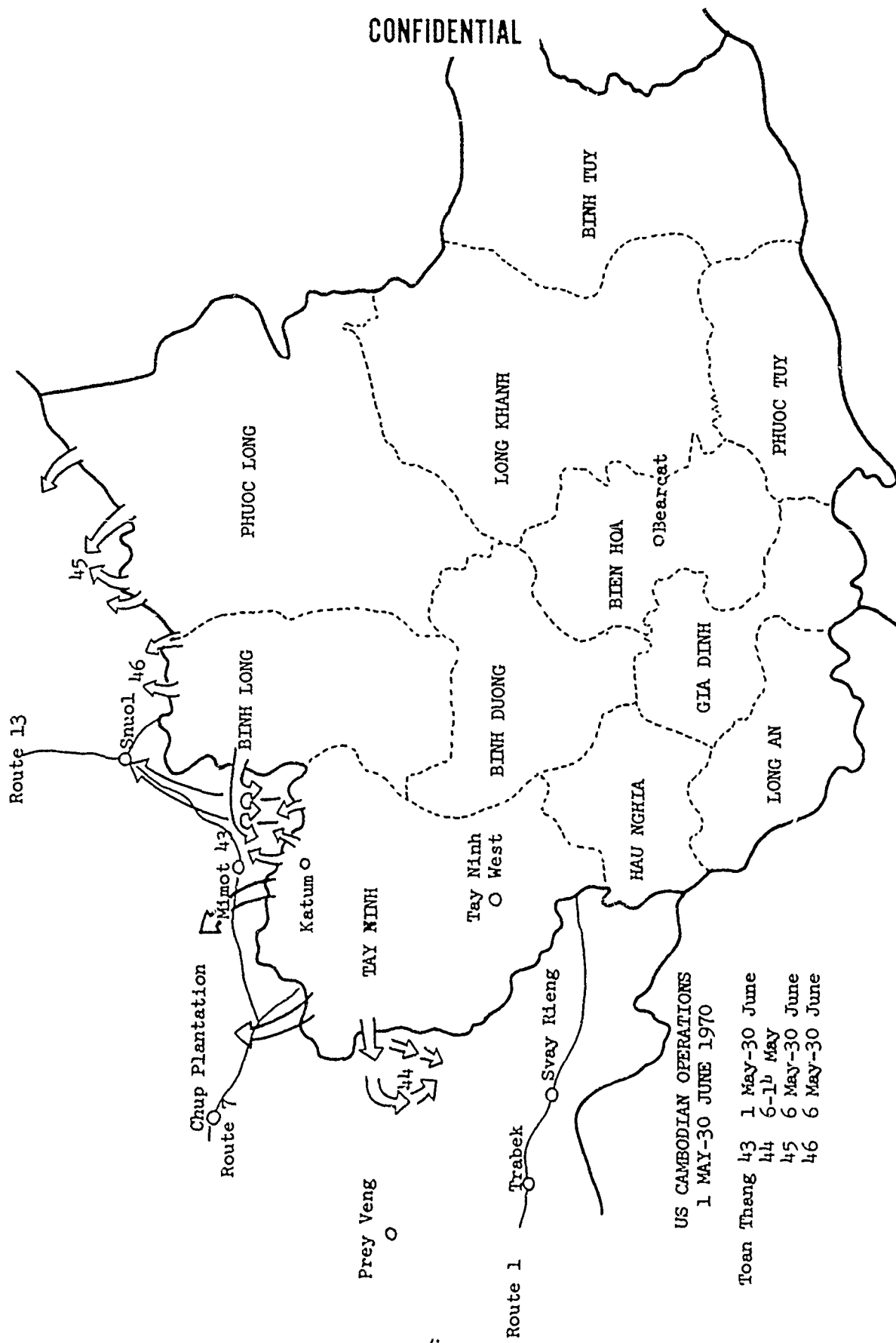


TAB B

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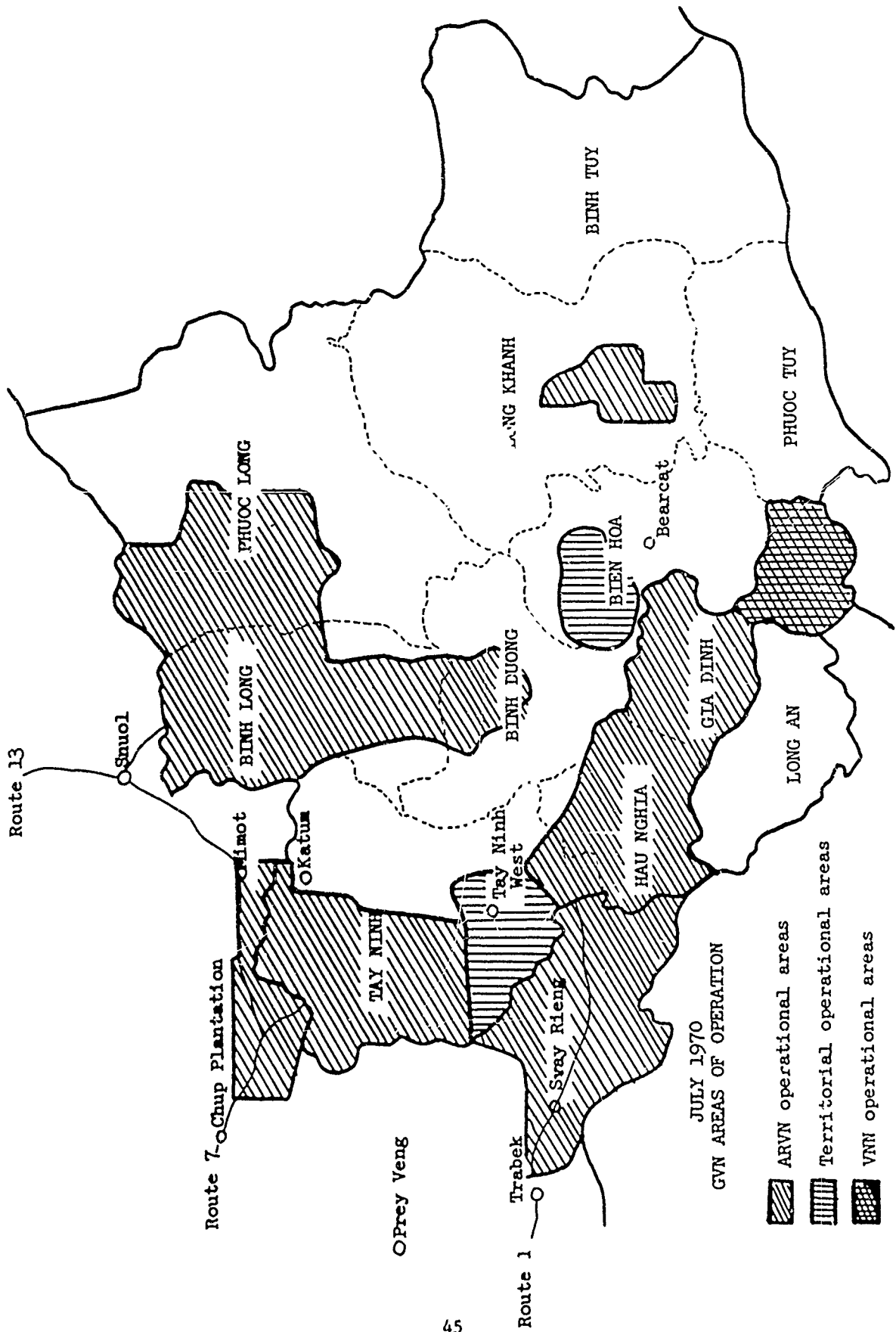
TAB C






US CAMBODIAN OPERATIONS
1 MAY-30 JUNE 1970

| | | | |
|------------|----|----------|------|
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| | 44 | 6-14 | May |
| | 45 | 6 May-30 | June |
| | 46 | 6 May-30 | June |

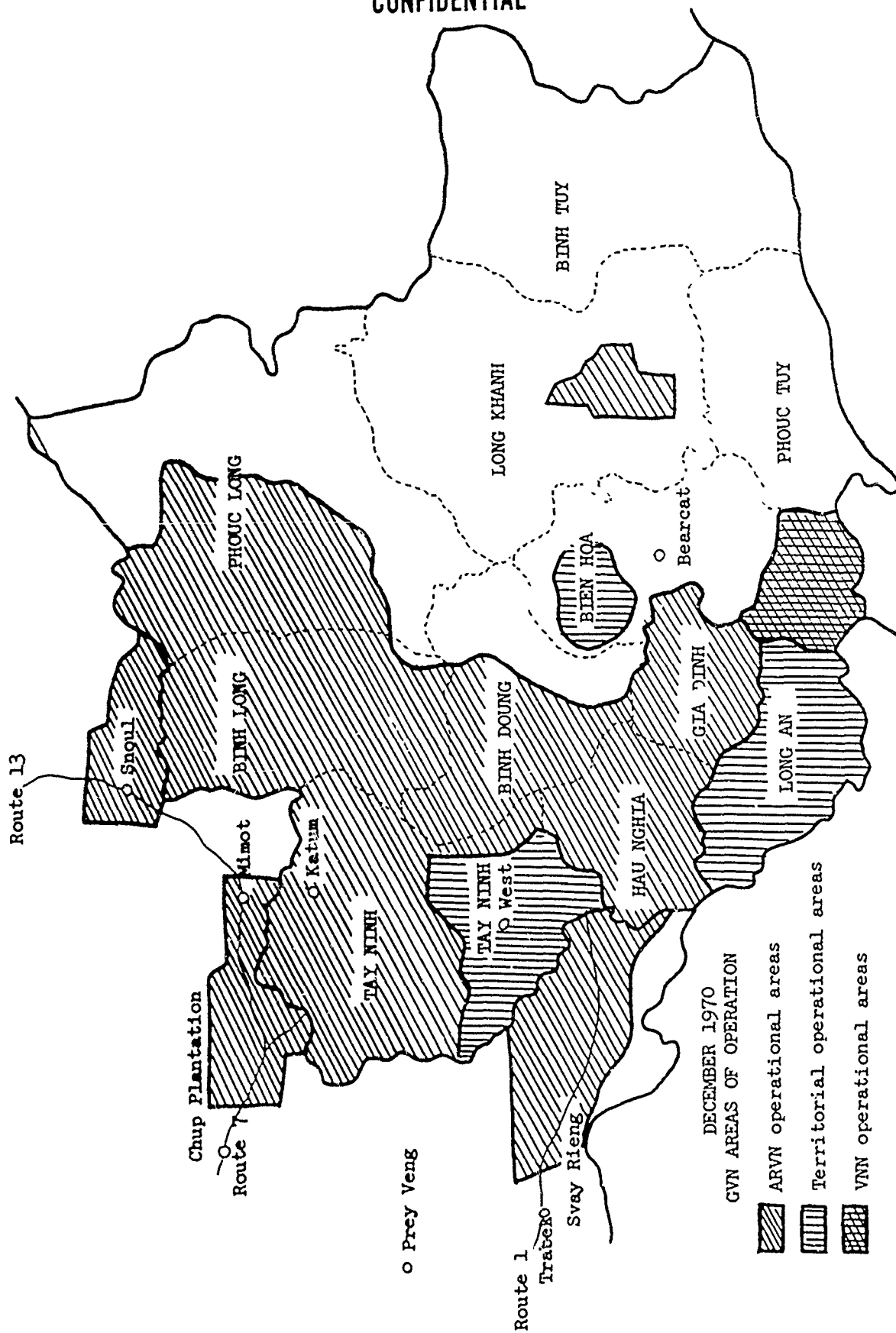
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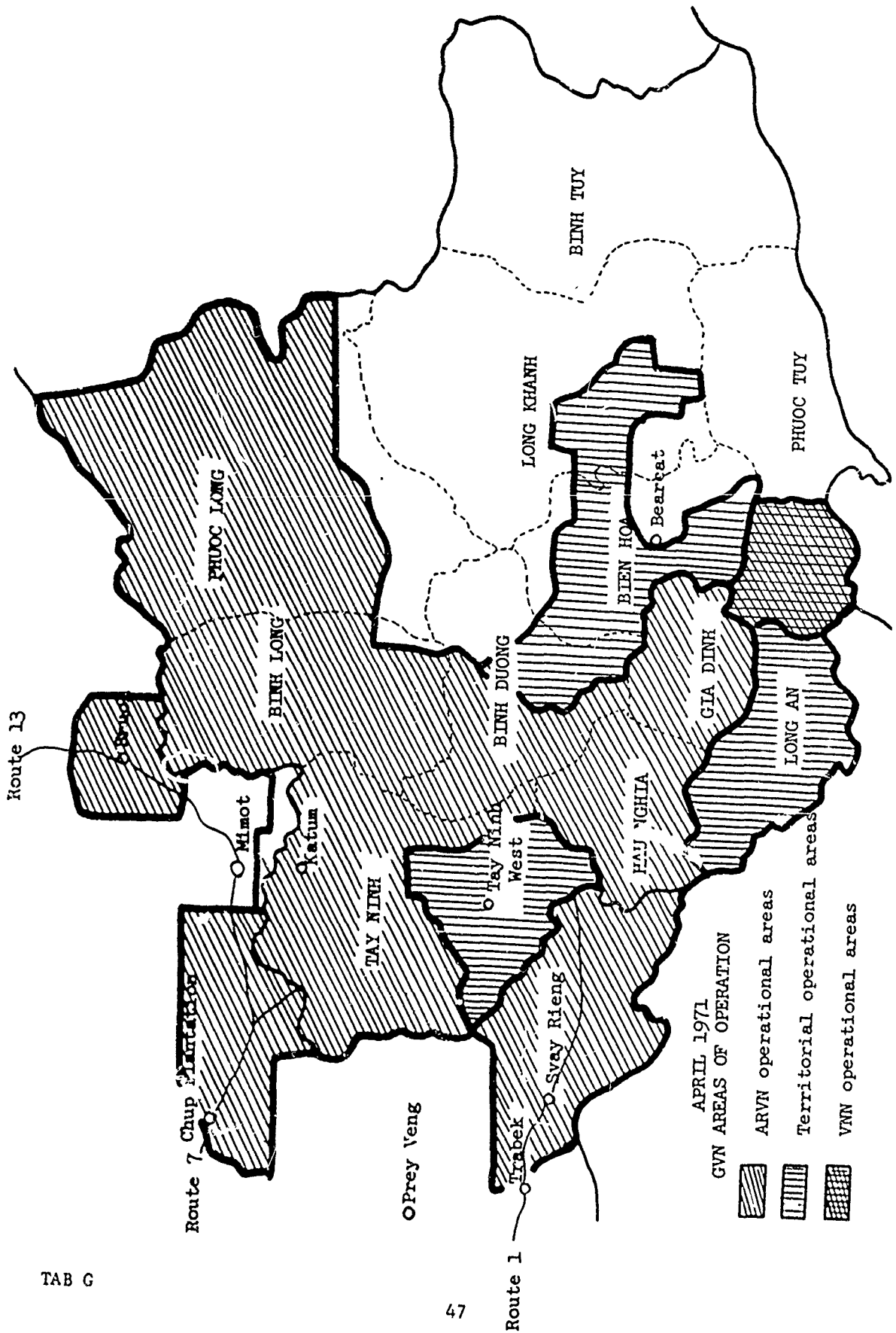
JULY 1970
GVN AREAS OF OPERATION

-  ARVN operational areas
-  Territorial operational areas
-  VNN operational areas

TAB E






TAB F



APRIL 1971

GVN AREAS OF OPERATION

-  ARVN operational areas
-  Territorial operational areas
-  VNN operational areas

TAB G

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