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OPERATION HARVEST MOON

3 March 1966

Hq PACAF

Tactical Evaluation Center

Project CHECO

Prepared by

Mr. Kenneth Sams
Chief, SE Asia Team
Project CHECO
APO U.S. Forces 96307

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OPERATION HARVEST MOON

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OPERATION HARVEST MOON

Operation Harvest Moon was a combined U. S. Marine Corps - ARVN operation conducted in the Song Ly Ly valley of Quang Tin Province on 8-18 December 1965. In the first two days of the operation, two crack Vietnamese battalions, the 11th Rangers and the 1st Bn, 5th Regiment, were battered by the Viet Cong into ineffectiveness. The 5th Regiment headquarters was overrun. The USMC plan for ground and air support for the ARVN units in the initial phase of the operation broke down completely. Amid some bitterness, the commander, I Corps, withdrew from the combined operation and operated independently after the first two days. During the early hours of the operation, the Marine ground - air control unit became missing in action resulting in a breakdown of the planned system for air support. U. S. Air Force forward air controllers, who were denied access to planning for the operation, saved the day when they took over control of air strikes and led retreating ARVN units to safety on the 8th and 9th of December. There were two distinct Direct Air Support Centers working during the operation with a dangerous lack of coordination and control of air strikes in the early phase.

In Operation Harvest Moon, the Marines claimed a total of 407 Viet Congs killed and another 100 wounded, a relatively heavy toll. Yet friendly forces lost 137 killed, 350 wounded, and 92 missing. While there was a favorable kill ratio, the operation left much to be desired, particularly in its planning stages and its opening days. U. S. Air Force forward air controllers, who knew the operational area intimately,

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were not called upon to support ARVN or Marine units until an emergency developed. The Air Liaison Officer with the 2d ARVN Division, the element involved in the operation, sought access to planning sessions without success. The I Corp Direct Air Support Center (DASC) was not included in initial planning, because the Marines preferred to employ their own airborne DASC with ground FACs. It was this system which proved impractical in the initial stages of the operation. In effect, the vast experience of the USAF, gained through more than four years of operations in Vietnam, and the detailed knowledge of the operational area by FACs conducting daily visual recon, was ignored.

In final action reports prepared by Marine Task Force Delta of the 3rd Marine Division, which controlled the operation, there was no reference to the role of USAF FACs in saving a potentially disastrous situation. Neither did the 2d Division Army Advisor make any reference to the role of USAF in his after action report. Although two of the FACs were recommended for the Silver Star for the part they played in the operation, press coverage at the time ignored the role of the USAF. Even USAF reports, the U-55 and the OPREP-5, skimmed briefly over the USAF key support to the operation during its critical period.

This study covers the initial phases of Operation Harvest Moon and particularly the first two days which were critical. It seeks not only to portray the substantial USAF role but to study an operation which had two distinct systems for air control in operation.

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Operation Harvest Moon was planned in early December of 1965 after intelligence had revealed the presence of the 1st Viet Cong Regiment in the Que Son-Viet An-Hiep Duc Valley complex. On 4 December, the Commander of the III MAF met with the commander of I Corps to work out the plan. Both concurred in the intelligence indications and the necessity to launch a sizeable attack in that area to spoil VC plans and impede whatever progress they had made in establishing a base of operations. On 5 December, Task Force Delta, commanded by Brig Gen J. M. Platt, was established. Its major elements were the 2d Bn, 7th Marines and 3d Bn, 3rd Marines, supported by an artillery battalion made up of the 11th and 12th Marines. Plans also called for BLT 2/1, a Special Landing Unit, to act as reserve. Planning began on 5 December in coordination with the Commander I Corps, and on 7 December, plans and orders were completed and issued. The operation was scheduled to start at 0500 hours the following morning. ^{1/} The USAF ALO with the 2d Division, the ARVN unit involved in the operation, was denied access to the planning sessions although he tried repeatedly to gain admission. ^{2/}

Basically, the plan called for the ARVN 11th Ranger Bn and the 1st Bn of the 5th Regiment, both 2d ARVN Division units, to move southwest along Route 35 on an axis paralleled to and south of the Song Ly Ly River between Thanh Binh and Viet An into the area where the VC 1st Regiment was believed to be located. (The 1st VC Regiment was the same unit which engaged the Marines during Operation Starlite

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in August 1965. It also overran the District Headquarters of Hiep Duc in January 1966.) The ARVN units were to establish and maintain contact with the VC, after which the 2/7 Marines would be helilifted to the rear of the enemy. Other Marine units would be committed as required. The plan called for the ARVN units to secure two high points (BT 082325 and BT 093320)* by the evening of 8 December. Based on the VC reaction, the USMC Task Force would heli-land elements to pre-selected landing zones to "further develop the situation". The operation was to last 13 days, after which all elements of the Marines would return to their respective enclaves and the ARVN would "re-establish line of communications". ^{3/} Marine artillery and Marine air was designated to support both ARVN and USMC units. The operation order made no provision for support by USAF/VNAF tactical fighters nor for support by VNAF/USAF FACs in O-1 liaison aircraft. An airborne Marine DASC was established to control air support with forward observer teams on the ground with both Marine and ARVN units. The Marines also planned for FAC operations from helicopters and Army L-19s.

At 0830 on the 8th the 11th Ranger Bn and 1/5 Regiment, began moving southwest from Thang Binh along the Ly Ly River toward Viet An. At 1330 hours, the 11th Rangers met heavy enemy fire from an estimated VC battalion at BT 0934. The VC attacked from the northwest and southwest and engaged the Rangers in close combat. USMC Captain Gene Rogers, senior advisor to the 11th Rangers who accompanied the Vietnamese along with Marine forward observers, reported: "They hit us with rockets, mortars, machine guns, small arms, everything. They attacked

* See Attachment 1

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in mass and hit us from all sides. It was not an ambush as you think of an ambush. They were strategically positioned". ^{4/}

The 1/5 Regiment, on the left flank of the 11th, gave supporting fire but was unable to attack the VC as they forced the Rangers to withdraw northeast to the vicinity of BS 125355. A company of the 1/5 trying to reenforce the Rangers was halted by heavy small arms fire and friendly air strikes.

There were no USAF or VNAF liaison aircraft flying over the ARVN columns as they moved into the VC positions, according to Major Richard B. Davis, the ALO with the 2d ARVN Division, nor were any requested. It was highly possible, Major Davis said, that the VC positions might have been discovered by these low flying planes, as the FACs of the 2d Division knew this particular area quite well having flown daily visual recon missions over it. ^{5/}

Friendly air strikes were directed by Air Force O-1Fs from Da Nang which arrived on the scene to provide support, after being requested by the Marines. The Marine forward observation teams on the ground had been unable to contact the Marine Direct Air Support Center (Landshark) to get air support. The four-man forward observer USMC team with the 11th Rangers was listed as missing in action early during the engagement along with two US Advisors and 100 Rangers. The USAF FACs called to the operational area by the Marines, had no knowledge of the scheme of maneuver, frequencies, or other aspects of the battle. ^{6/}

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The USAF FACs took over direction of air support after the Marine airborne DASC, a ground DASC and Marine FACs in helicopters and Army L-19s, lost contact with each other. They contacted the Marine airborne DASC and the VNAF DASC at Da Nang and put in 47 USAF and Marine sorties were directed from TACC preplanned targets. ^{7/} (NOTE: There is no mention in the 2d AD OPREP-5 of any USAF Support to Operation Harvest Moon during the daylight hours of 8 December but the ALO 5th Regiment After Action Report refers to USAF fighters.)

The FACs flew under 1500 feet due to weather and received intense small arms fire but they succeeded in identifying friendly positions on the ground, relaying this to strike aircraft on close support missions. FACs and pilots reported these afternoon strikes destroyed 15 structures, two bunkers and two weapons positions and an estimated 194 VC were killed by air (five by body count). ^{8/}

While the 11th Rangers were under heavy attack from the Viet Cong, the 2d Bn, 7th Marines was still making its motor march from Chau Lai to the planned assembly area near Tan Ky (BT 3025). They did not close on this area until 1530, well after the 11th Rangers were beaten and dispersed. At that time, they prepared defensive positions and prepared for helicopter lift into the objective area. The plan for the operation did not anticipate ARVN contact with VC before D+1, when the Marines would be ready to go to their aid. The VC struck the ARVN forces on D-Day, thereby upsetting reaction plans.

The Rangers, with USAF directed air support, withdrew to the vicinity of BT 1255, and at 1630 hours, the ARVN Regiment was helilifted

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from Tam Ky by Marine helicopters to BT 130368 to reenforce them. By 1700 hours, the situation had stabilized somewhat and the remainder of the 11th, the 1/6, 1/5, and an RF Company prepared night positions. The VC had broken contact at 1445 hours and were reported moving north. One company of the 1/5 returned to the area of contact to recover casualties. The RF Company, 1/6, and elements of the 11th Regiment headquarters and 1/5 established a line from BT 101335 to 108342. At 2050, the 5/4 APC Troop arrived from Hoi An and established positions at BT 164417. ^{2/}

During the night of 8-9 December, the USAF supported the ARVN units with a flareship carrying a USAF FAC. The FAC monitored seven TPQ sorties flown by Marine F4Bs. Marine artillery support was also provided during the night.

At daybreak the following morning, USAF FACs again were called upon to direct close support after the enemy opened up a heavy attack on the 1/5 Bn and 5th Regiment headquarters. The enemy broke the ARVN perimeter at 0702 hours and the government forces shortly after began a disorderly withdrawal. Air Force O-1Fs from Quang Ngai were on a routine visual reconnaissance flight when they observed the situation and began directing fighters in support of the retreat. The O-1Fs saved many ARVN and US lives by directing the retreating forces away from VC ambushes which could be spotted from the low flying liaison planes. ^{10/} They also caused heavy enemy casualties by directing Marine aircraft and a AC-47 on VC positions.

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Overall air coordination by the Marines was still poor at this time. For example, Marine fighters were arriving over the battle area with no FACs available to put them on target until the USAF FACs took over. The USAF FACs, controlling the Marine fighters on close support missions, were interrupted by other fighters expending in the area, controlled by unknown agencies. The Tactical Air Control Center at Tan Son Nhut had advised the I Corps DASC that all resources were at their disposal if required. 11/

The 5th Regiment headquarters and the 1/5 Battalion were shattered as a unit, but dispersed survivors started being picked up by the 1/6 Regiment in the later morning hours. Also, at 0740, the USMC Forward Observer party, which has been missing since the early afternoon action of the previous day, reported in safe. USAF FACs searching for the missing Marine FO's had difficulty as they had no idea what radio frequency the Marines were operating on. The 5/4 APC Troop moved forward to join up with the 1/6 Battalion around 0800.

The hectic action on the morning of the 9th was described by Captain Lewis Keeby, one of three USAF FACs operating over the area starting at 0630. When he observed the fire fight below, Keeby contacted the US advisor with the ARVN ground force and the Marine airborne DASC. Artillery supporting fire was lifted and the FACs took over. Between 0630 and 0700, according to Keeby, the 5th Regimental headquarters was overrun and the US advisors were retreating with ARVN troops toward friendly positions about 6000 meters to the east. Around 0700, Keeby saw about 150 Viet Cong on the road between

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the CP and 1/6 Regiment. Air strikes were requested from the Da Nang DASC. Keeby marked the target and the other FAC, 1st Lt Harley E. Lawrence, put two Marine F4Bs on the attacking VC around 0730 hours. An AC-47, meanwhile, was dispatched to the scene. ^{12/}

The FACs were then directed by the 2d Division Army Advisor to find the 5th Regiment command post, and shortly after, Lt Lawrence found it. Flying over the retreating ARVN and advisors, he directed them to the 1/6 Regiment to the east. As Lawrence was leading the retreating 5th Regiment force east, Keeby directed the AC-47 against about 100 VC moving along the road behind the ARVN forces. After the AC-47 swept its gunfire along the road, there were no VC to be seen. Lawrence then took control of the AC-47 as Keeby went to look for the 1/5 Regiment. This was around 0815. At 0830 he located the 1/5 Regiment about 3000 meters away from where they should have been. They were moving directly toward some 200 VC in their line of retreat. Only about 50 men were left in the battalion with a corporal in charge. The US Army Advisor, Captain Miller, was with them. Keeby called Captain Lawrence Frahman, the FAC who had arrived from Da Nang, and told him to put an air strike south of the retreating ARVN. Bombs were dropped between the attacking VC and the retreating ARVN, close enough to friendly positions that the shock waves bounced Captain Miller around in his foxhole. Keeby and Lawrence then took control of the AC-47 and placed it on strikes to the east, northeast and north of the 1/5. The AC-47 on this and earlier strikes was credited with 150 KBA by an American advisor with the ground forces. ^{13/}

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The Marine airborne DASC took over control of missions at 0930 on the 9th. According to USAF FACs with the 2d ARVN Division, all the strikes on the 9th were directed by USAF FACs on O-1s since the Marine airborne DASC after 0930 released strike aircraft to the FACs. Marine A4 aircraft prepared the landing zones for the two Marine battalions helilifted in to support the surrounded ARVN units. ^{9-10²} During the night of 8-9 December, F4B aircraft controlled by an Air Support Radar Team performed TFQ-10 close air support missions 500 meters in front of ARVN lines.

USAF FACs, again operating in poor weather conditions, continued control of air strikes into the afternoon of the 9th, although the Marine airborne DASC was on hand to commit the aircraft to the FACs. At about 1300, two new FACs took over from Keeby and Lawrance. As these FACs were directing strikes around the 1/5, a Marine helicopter came in suddenly and unexpectedly and started directing Marine fighters to pre-strike a landing zone for the 2/7 Marines only a short distance away. This created considerable apprehension among the USAF FACs. In one constricted area, Marines in choppers were directing F4Bs on pre-strikes while USAF FACs were placing close support aircraft around ARVN units. ^{14/}

There was no shortage of strike planes on the 9th. In the early morning hours, aircraft on ground alert at Da Nang were launched and there were aircraft overhead all day. "We had more air than we could use", Keeby said. Two more FACs took over at 1500 and stayed overhead until 1800 when a flareship took over.

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Not until 1335 on the 9th did the 2/7 Marines complete its helilift from the vicinity of Tam Ky to BT 016318 (Attachment 2) to threaten the flank and rear of enemy units that had made contact with the 5th ARVN Regiment on the previous day. They started moving east toward the disorganized ARVN elements. Earlier around 1200, the 1/5 Regiment advisor and about 50 men had made their way to Hill 43 and set up a defensive perimeter with the VC all around them. (Attachment 2)

Air strikes directed by the USAF FACs in the O-1Fs and artillery fire suppressed the VC enough to allow an ammunition resupply to the surrounded ARVN element. The 1/5 Regiment advisor said that if it had not been for the O-1Fs, the enemy would have overrun his position. 15/ The air strikes and artillery also permitted medevac helicopters to fly in and out of Hill 43.

Another USMC Battalion, the 3rd Battalion of the 3rd Marines, was helilifted at 1400 to BT 144306 to reenforce the 1/5 Regiment, some 2500 meters to the northwest of the landing zone. At about this time, the 5th Regiment commander, Lt Colonel Hung, was listed as missing in action. The Marine 3/3 Battalion moved toward Hill 43 but at 1700 hours, it came under heavy fire from an estimated 200 Viet Cong using mortars and machine guns. By nightfall, some of the marines linked up with the 1/5 on Hill 43 and dug in defensive positions for the night. 16/ At 1800 on the 9th, the 3/1 Battalion of the ARVN 1st Division joined the action after it was helilifted to BT 152412.

On 9 December, 32 A4s, 29 F4s, four VNAF A-1s, two B-57s and two FC-47s flew close air support sorties in support of Marine and ARVN

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units. FACs and pilots reported 18 structures, 12 automatic weapons positions and one mortar position destroyed. They also reported 250 Viet Cong killed by air although only 19 were confirmed by body count. 17/

During the night of the 9th, the 1/5 Regiment on Hill 43 was under repeated attack by the Viet Cong, but these attacks were repulsed by outstanding artillery support provided by M Battery of the 4/11 Marines and ground fire from the defenders at close quarters. The situation was still highly fluid at this time and the Marines were preparing to send additional reinforcements to the battle area the following morning.

At 0945 on the morning of the 10th, two companies of USMC BLT 2/1 and elements of Command Group "A" were helilifted to BT 071293 and came under heavy small arms and mortar fire from Viet Cong in heavily fortified positions protected by barbed wire. Elements of two other BLT 2/1 Marine companies were landed via helicopter from the USS Valley Forge at BT 067304. The BLT 2/1 element stayed in contact until 1900 when the enemy broke off contact. A battalion perimeter defense consisting of F and G companies of BLT 2/1 and Company E, 2/7, was consolidated from coordinates BT 076302 to BT 079302 by 0300 hours on 11 December. 18/

The 3/3 Marines which was moving on Hill 43, secured the hill on the 10th at 1003 hours against light resistance and established defensive positions there. All survivors of the 1/5 ARVN Regiment were evacuated from Hill 43 by 1205. 19/

Around noon, when the ARVN survivors were removed from Hill 43, the ARVN withdrew from the combined operation, declaring they would use air

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support through USAF/VNAF channels for the remainder of the operation. A definite line of Tactical Area of Responsibility (TAOR) was established with the Marines in one area supported by Marine air and the ARVN in a separate area support through the USAF/VNAF DASC at I Corps. For the remainder of the operation which continued until 19 December, the ARVN forces were supported by the VNAF which provided continual air coverage, using O-1Fs and A-1 aircraft. 20/

Starting on the afternoon of the 10th, the 2/1 and 3/3 Marines moved out to link up with 2/7 battalion. The 2/1 battalion met significant enemy resistance as they moved out while the 3/3 met only light defensive positions in the vicinity of BT 085287. 21/

All the air strikes on the 10th in support of Marine forces were controlled by the airborne Marine DASC. Fixed wing aircraft flew 54 sorties in support of the operation and Marine F4Bs flew night support on TPQ-10 missions. ✓

Only light sporadic fire was received by the advancing Marines on the 11th and 56 close support sorties were flown by Marine aircraft. Although ground contact with the enemy was limited, substantial Marine air activity continued for the rest of the operation. On the 12th, for example, 85 Marine aircraft sorties were flown in support of the advancing Marines and the Marines reported 16 VC killed by air with another possible 265 killed by air action, along with numerous caves, trenches and gun positions destroyed. B-52s attacked enemy positions at 0730 hours on the 12th, the first of four such strikes conducted during the remainder of the operation. Moving in the wake of tactical air and B-52 strikes, the advancing marines uncovered large quantities

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of enemy fortifications, tunnels and caves. Marine A4 and F4 aircraft provided round the clock support to the Marine ground forces.

During the period 10-19 December, as the Marines continued search and destroy operations in the Viet An Valley and the mountains to the south, the ARVN units conducted similar operations in the valley east and north of Que Son. Like the Marines, the 5th Regiment elements received only sporadic fire from the communists and suffered only light casualties during this period. On the 17th of December, the ARVN 3/5 Regiment which was at Hiep Duc, left that enemy surrounded district capital together with local officials, one RF company and two RF platoons, plus an estimated 100-150 refugees. Moving under adverse conditions by foot over the mountain ridges, they reached the Viet An Post and stayed there overnight arriving the next day at Que Son without significant contact.

The significant phase of Operation Harvest Moon came in the first two days when the bulk of friendly casualties were sustained. In the overall operation, the Marines lost 44 killed in action with another three dying of wounds. There were 209 Marines wounded in action and one missing in action. ^{22/} The ARVN 5th Regiment had 49 killed in action, 101 wounded in action, and 61 missing in action. The ARVN 11th Ranger Battalion had 41 KIA, 40 WIA, and 38 MIA. Thus, total friendly casualties for the operation were 137 killed, 350 wounded, and 52 missing. ^{23/}

The ARVN reported that 300 Viet Cong were killed in action (body count) and another 107 killed by air. ^{24/} The US Marines reported a

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confirmed 407 Viet Cong killed with another 611 possibly killed and an estimated 100 wounded. There were 321 suspects detained and three ralliers, including two PAVN soldiers. Large quantities of enemy equipment, food and weapons were captured. 25/

Operation Harvest Moon revealed some major weaknesses in the mode of joint ARVN-US operations in the I Corps area. Some bitterness was expressed by the I Corps Commander, Maj Gen Thi, over the delayed Marine support to the attacked ARVN units on the 8th of December and it became necessary to hold a joint press conference at Da Nang on 12 December with General Thi and Marine General Walt emphasizing ARVN-USMC harmony. On the Air Force side, there was some dissatisfaction by the 2d Division ALO over the fact that the USAF had been left out of planning for the operation. However, the 2d Division FACs performed well on the two key days of the operation and two Army advisors, a Captain Miller with the 1/5 Regiment and Major Hansen with the 5th Regiment CP, said that the USAF O-1Fs saved them from disaster by leading them to safety and directing strikes against attacking VC units. However, the USMC Task Force Delta after action report makes no reference whatsoever to this USAF support. Nor does the after action report of the 2d Infantry Division. USAF FACs at Quang Ngai who were involved in the action have stated that while their Army and Marine counterparts have expressed considerable satisfaction orally with the FAC performance, they would not put it in writing. News dispatches of the action also omitted comments on the performance of the FACs.

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The USAF ALO-FAC team based at Quang Ngai and Da Nang was not called upon for its professionalism and its intimate knowledge of the area of operations. The experience of the USAF in more than four years of operations in Vietnam was not drawn upon in Harvest Moon. This is borne out in the after action report of the 2/7 Marines which pointed out several conclusions which had long been known to the Air Force. It reported that radio communications between ground teams carrying back packs and aircraft was difficult. It also reported the fact that napalm was more effective against weapons positions than other ordnance and it recommended that attack aircraft include napalm in their mixed ordnance loads for close air support missions. The 2/7th Marines also reported that the low cloud ceilings during the most of the operation curtailed the use of helicopters and aerial observers. 27/ These were facts well known to the Air Force and it was highly probable, in the opinion of the 2d Division ALO, that if USAF experience had been drawn upon, the results of the operation would have been different.

As it turned out, the timely arrival of USAF FACs in O-1F aircraft in the critical first days of Harvest Moon saved what could have been a disastrous situation, even though those FACs were not part of the planned operation. The O-1Fs, during this critical phase, were able to function effectively under adverse weather conditions when the Marine ground forward observer units and the airborne DASC were out of action. According to the USAF FACs, the area of the operation made it extremely difficult for anyone on the ground to see enough to exercise any control over air strikes. There was also the problem of how to mark the targets from the ground in a fast moving battle

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situation such as occurred on the afternoon of the 8th and the morning of the 9th. The helicopters also were not maneuverable enough to stay on top of the situation and direct fighter strikes into the target, according to the FACs. 28/

In its after action report, Marine Task Force Delta, while making no reference whatsoever to the O-1F aircraft and the USAF FACs, said that the operation "re-emphasized" the requirement for "positive and easy identification of widely separated friendly unit locations on the ground to aviators and observers airborne". It said that the identification problem stemmed from difficult terrain, adverse weather, and unfamiliarity of some pilots with the area. The report added that the 3rd Marine Division was seeking better solutions to existing air-ground identification procedures. 29/

The U. S. Army Advisor to the 2d ARVN Division said in his after action report that air support during the entire operation was excellent, except for periods of poor weather when no air support was available. He also made no reference to support by USAF forward air controllers. 30/

Shortly after Harvest Moon, General Westmoreland, COMUSMACV, requested that the 2d Air Division examine the possible advantage of placing Marine tactical air under the direction of the 2d Air Division. The 2d Air Division studied the matter and recommended that direction of tactical air should not be divided but placed under one commander and directed through a single, unified tactical air control system. 31/

In Operation Double Eagle, a major operation conducted by the Marines later in February in conjunction with the ARVN, the USAF was

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called into the planning on a limited basis. An ALO from the I Corps DASC sat in on the planning sessions and was present in the command post during the operation. However, in this operation, the Marines operated with their own Tactical Air Control System in their own area of operation, and the ARVN, moving in close proximity, employed the VNAF/USAF Tactical Air Control System (TACS). It is interesting to note that the Marines in this operation used forward observers operating from the back seats of Army L-19s.

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OPERATION HARVEST MOON

Footnotes

(References as noted provided in Copies 6 and 40)

- 1/ (S) After Action Report, Operation Harvest Moon, Task Force Delta, 3rd Marine Division Serial 00176, 28 Dec 65 (DOC 1).
- 2/ (U) After Action Report, Lien Kiet 18 (Harvest Moon), ALO, 5th Regiment (ARVN) undated (DOC 2).
- 3/ (S) After Action Report, Operation Harvest Moon, Task Force Delta, 3rd Marine Division, Serial 00176, 28 Dec 65 (DOC 1).
- 4/ (U) Stars and Stripes, Pacific Edition, Page 1, 10 Dec 65.
(Not provided)
- 5/ (C) Interview, Maj R. B. Davis, ALO, 2d Division (ARVN), 15 Feb 66. (Not provided).
- 6/ (U) Ltr, ALO, 2d Division (ARVN) to I Corps ALO, "Combat Operations After Action Report" (5th Regiment ALO, undated) 2 Jan 66 (DOC 3).
- 7/ (U) After Action Report, Lien Kiet 18 (Harvest Moon), ALO, 5th Regiment (ARVN), undated (DOC 2).
- 8/ (S) U-55 Report, 2d Air Division to CSAF, DO-05385, 13 Dec 65.
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- 9/ (U) Combat Operations After Action Report, Lien Kiet 18 (Harvest Moon), Senior Advisor, 2d Division (ARVN) to COMUSMACV, 24 Jan 66 (DOC 4).
- 10/ (U) After Action Report, Lien Kiet 18 (Harvest Moon), ALO, 5th Regiment (ARVN), undated, (DOC 2).
- 11/ Ibid.
- 12/ (C) Interview, Captain Lewis Keeby, ALO, Quang Tin Province, 15 Feb 66. (Not provided)
- 13/ Ibid.
- 14/ Ibid.

- [REDACTED]**
- 15/ (U) After Action Report, Lien Kiet 18 (Harvest Moon), ALO, 5th Regiment (ARVN), undated (DOC 2).
- 16/ (U) Combat Operations After Action Report, Lien Kiet 18 (Harvest Moon), Senior Advisor, 2d Division (ARVN) to COMUSMACV, 24 Jan 66 (DOC 4).
- 17/ (S) U-55 Report, 2d Air Division to CSAF, DO-05385, 13 Dec 65. (Not provided)
- 18/ (S) After Action Report, Operation Harvest Moon, Task Force Delta, 3rd Marine Division, Serial 00176, 28 Dec 65 (DOC 1).
- 19/ (U) After Action Report, Lien Kiet 18 (Harvest Moon), ALO, 5th Regiment (ARVN) undated (DOC 2).
- 20/ Ibid.
- 21/ (S) Msg, COMUSMACV to JCS, 43450, 11 Dec 65. (Not provided)
- 22/ (S) Msg, COMUSMACV to JCS, 44589, 21 Dec 65. (Not provided)
- 23/ (U) Combat Operations After Action Report, Lien Kiet 18 (Harvest Moon), Senior Advisor, 2d Division (ARVN) to COMUSMACV, 24 Jan 66 (DOC 4).
- 24/ Ibid.
- 25/ (S) After Action Report, Operation Harvest Moon, Task Force Delta, 3rd Marine Division, Serial 00176, 28 Dec 65 (DOC 1).
- 26/ (C) Interviews with Major R. B. Davis, ALO, Captains: Keeby, Rogers and Jones; LT LUKE, FAC's, 2d Division (ARVN) 15 Feb 66. (Not provided)
- 27/ (S) After Action Report, Operation Harvest Moon, 2/7 Marines, 25 Dec 65 (DOC 5).
- 28/ (C) Interview, Major R. B. Davis, ALO, 2d Division (ARVN), 15 Feb 65. (Not provided)
- 29/ (S) After Action Report, Operation Harvest Moon, Task Force Delta, 3rd Marine Division, Serial 00176, 28 Dec 65 (DOC 1).
- 30/ (U) Combat Operations After Action Report, Lien Kiet 18 (Harvest Moon), Senior Advisor, 2d Division (ARVN) to COMUSMACV, 24 Jan 66 (DOC 4).
- 31/ (S) Msg, 2d Air Division to CINCPACAF, DO 04670, 1 Feb 65 (DOC 6).

[REDACTED]

NOTE: The following documents are of interest to the reader
and are included in all copies:

Atch #1 - Operation "Harvest Moon" (Situation 8 Dec 65)

Atch #2 - Operation "Harvest Moon" (9 Dec 65 - Quang Tin
Province)

OPERATION "HARVEST MOON"

(Situation, 8 December 1965)

At 0830, 8 Dec 65, the 11th Rangers & 1/5 Btn began move down Hiway 35 toward objective.

11th Rangers attacked by large VC force @ 1300H. Bn suffered heavy casualties.

THANG DINH

1/6 Bn at Tam Ky, alerted at 1500H, and elements were airlifted in to assist 11th Rangers by 1630 Hours.

QUE SON

VIET AN

HIEP DUC

11th Ranger Bn elms disengaged and pulled back to set up defense-perimeter for night.

1/5 Bn, unable to help 11th Rangers, pulled into defensive perimeter for nightfall.

QUANG TIN PROVINCE

BT

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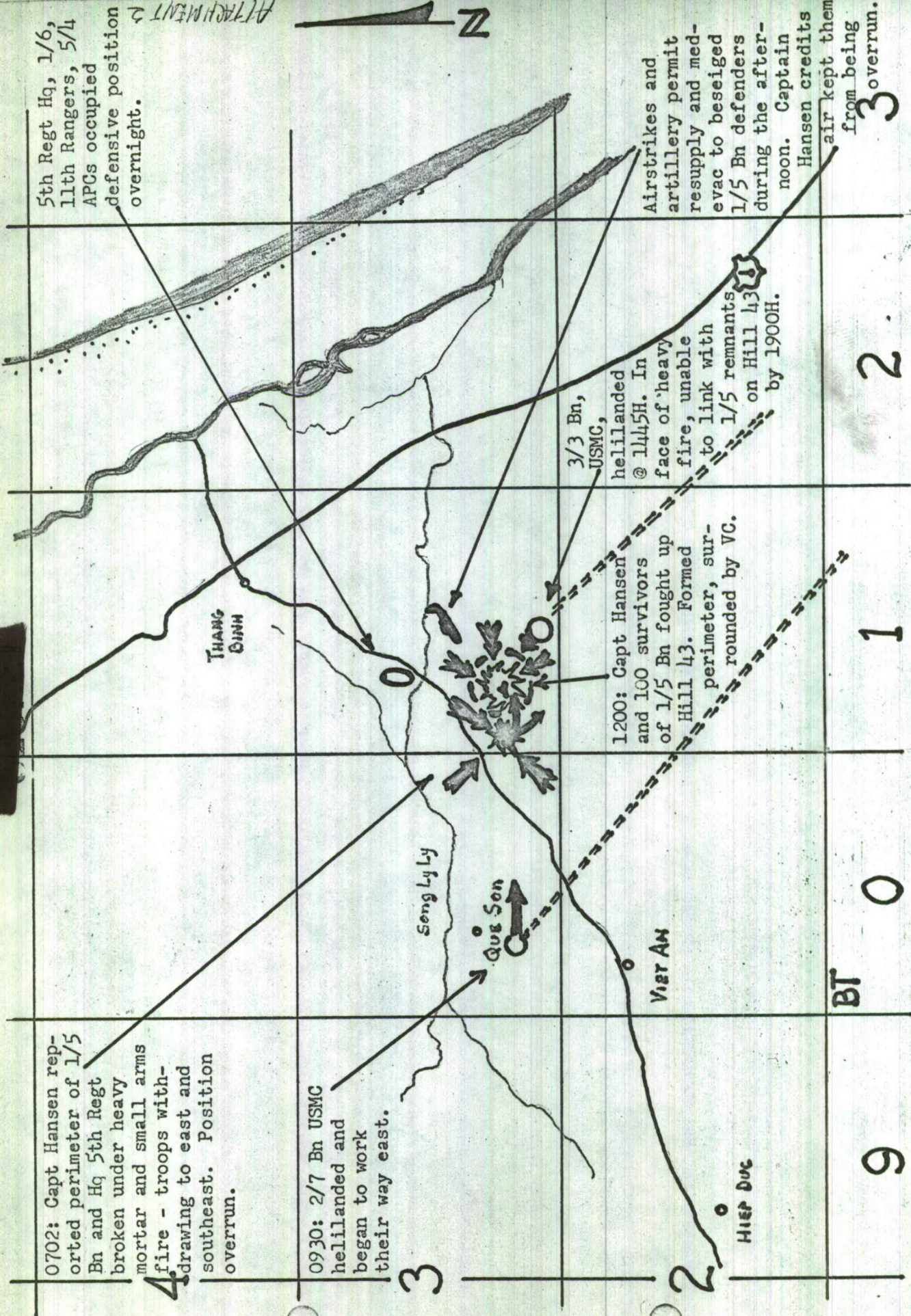
ATTACHMENT 1

0702: Capt Hansen reported perimeter of 1/5 Bn and Hq 5th Regt broken under heavy mortar and small arms fire - troops withdrawing to east and southeast. Position overrun.

0930: 2/7 Bn USMC helilanded and began to work their way east.

5th Regt Hq, 1/6, 11th Rangers, 5/4 APCs occupied defensive position overnight.

Airstrikes and artillery permit resupply and med-evac to besieged 1/5 Bn defenders during the afternoon. Captain Hansen credits air kept them from being overrun.



BT 0

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